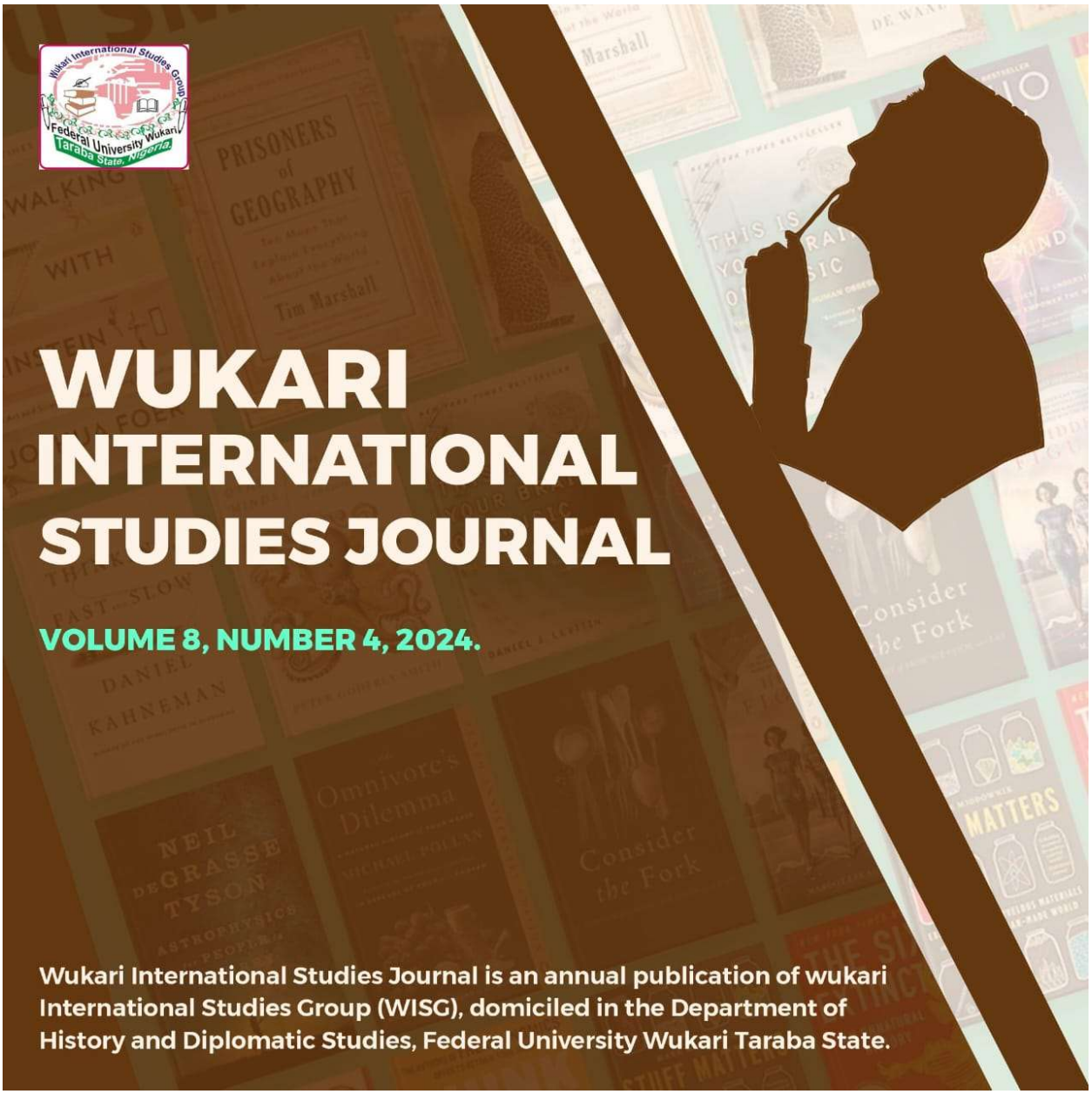
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UNREST AND UNFILLED STOMACHS: UNRAVELLING THE LINKAGE BETWEEN ARMED CONFLICT AND FOOD INSECURITY IN NORTH CENTRAL REGION OF NIGERIA

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KEYWORDS
Armed Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Food Insecurity, Religious Extremism, Resource Competition

ABSTRACT
This study investigates the link connecting armed conflict and food insecurity in Nigeria's North Central region. Due to resource competition, political and ethnic tensions, historical grievances, and religious extremism, the region has seen protracted armed conflicts. Food security has declined as an outcome of disruptions in agriculture, infrastructure, and market systems. Considering this, the purpose of this study is to shed light on the many linkages between food insecurity and armed conflicts in Nigeria's North Central region and also to suggest measures to address the challenges to enhancing food security conditions in the troubled region's armed conflict-affected settings. Therefore, unpacking the link between armed conflict-affected settings and various aspects of food insecurity is required. Data were gathered and examined in order to ascertain the current state of knowledge, study, and focus on various aspects of armed conflict and their disastrous effects on food insecurity in the region while using a scoping review technique to investigate the link between armed conflict and food insecurity concerns in Nigeria's north central region. The findings will help policymakers, practitioners, and researchers involved in conflict resolution and food security initiatives better understand the complex dynamics of armed conflict and food insecurity in the region. This research is critical for developing context-specific policies and interventions to tackle the challenges faced by conflict-affected communities while also promoting long-term peace and food security in Nigeria's North Central region.

Introduction

Persistent armed conflicts in Nigeria's north-central area have far-reaching social, economic, and political effects. This region, located between the country's predominantly Muslim north and predominantly Christian south, is distinguished by its diverse array of religious, ethnic, and cultural identities (Adogame, 2013). However, the region has a long history of armed conflicts, which are mainly caused by a number of interconnected factors. Religious extremism and radicalization pose an obstacle to North Central peace and stability. While differences in religion are not the only source of conflict in the region, extremist groups have used existing divides to advance their ideological aims (Chakraborti & Garland, 2012). These groups' activities, often characterized by attacks on communities and property destruction, have intensified tension and violence in the region.

Ojo (2023) argues that the impact of armed conflicts in the North Central region have been catastrophic. A lot of people have died, and large populations have been displaced, resulting in major humanitarian crises. Infrastructure destruction, including healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and markets, interfered with essential services and hampered economic development. Furthermore, armed conflicts have harmed food security, worsening an already perilous situation in the region (Abubakar & Amurtiya, 2023). Researchers are interested in conducting empirical studies on the socioeconomic consequences of armed conflicts at the micro as well as the macro levels. In keeping with macroeconomic studies, countries adapt successfully to the adverse economic jolts caused by conflict and ultimately revert to their pre-conflict growth direction (Korn & Stemmler, 2022). Armed conflicts have been found to have short-term adverse effects on food security and economic growth in general (Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019).

The comprehension of the causes and dynamics of armed conflict in the North Central region is crucial for creating productive interventions and policies to deal with the underlying issues and foster peace-building efforts for long-term food security. It is possible to mitigate conflicts and create sustainable pathways to peace and stability in the North Central by addressing underlying grievances, improving governance and security, and encouraging dialogue and reconciliation among different groups.

Methodology

Using a scoping analysis method, the study investigates the relationship between armed conflict and food insecurity realities in the North Central region of Nigeria. Articles were gathered and analysed primarily to determine the current level of knowledge, research, and interest on the various formations of armed conflict and their devastating impacts on food insecurity in the region. A scoping review is viewed in this context as a method for connecting and summarising evidence-based research with the objective of deciding the most significant aspects of a phenomenon of research that can be employed to guide policy evaluation (Munn, McArthur, Mander, Steffensen, & Jordan, 2020).

The approach resulted in the collection and thorough review of research studies, as well as online material. Therefore, relevant reports, policy documents, and academic literature were reviewed and analysed to understand the historical context, policy responses, and existing interventions related to armed conflict and food insecurity in the North Central region. Google Scholar, Web of Science, ProQuest, ISI, and Scopus were employed for these studies by utilising terms such as 'armed conflict,' 'food insecurity,' and 'linkage' in general. These expressions were then mixed to contain the terms 'Nigeria' and 'North Central region,' in specific.

Causes of Armed Conflict in the North Central Region

The various causes of armed conflicts in the North Central region are analysed below;

a. Farmers/Herders conflict

In North Central Nigeria, a popular pseudo-empirical and anecdotal narrative contends that herdsmen militancy is part of the millennial jihadist's magnificent design to Islamize the region's people. This cynical viewpoint is strengthened by the region's herdsmen militancy, which is regularly directed at non-Muslim communities (Igbokwe & Iwuoha, 2019). Rapid population growth and the growing consequences of climate change have intensified resource use disputes between farmers and herders

in Nigeria (Day & Caus, 2020). As argued by Sheidu and Patrick (2023), climate and environmental conditions cause herders to transfer their cattle south, away from their primary grazing pastures in the Northern region. Flooding is a result of climate change and unpredictability in Nigeria. Flooding damaged over 676,000 hectares of farmland during the 2022 rainy season, reducing harvest and increasing the risk of food insecurity, according to the National Emergency Management Agency (Valavanidis, 2023). This increases struggle for limited land resources with farmers in the North Central region, leading to conflicts and confrontations between farmers and nomadic herders (Eke, 2020). Nomadic herders feed their animals (e.g., cattle) on farms, inflicting yield and economic losses to farmers. Farmers may respond by maiming cattle or evicting herders from their communities in retaliation. In retaliation, the herders fight back, and farmers/herders conflicts occur (Agyemang, 2017). Despite conflicts between herders and farmers have existed for a long time (Mbih, 2020), their occurrences and severity are increasing (George, Adelaja, Vaughan, & Awokuse, 2022). These conflicts have a direct effect on food insecurity because they have a direct effect on farmers' ability to cultivate farm land and/or access food through markets. Many farms in Nigeria's North Central region, primarily in Benue, Kogi, and Plateau states, have been abandoned due to fear of being killed or raped, as the majority of these farmers are women (Atim & Gbamwuan, 2022). During attacks, most women are allegedly abused, molested, and murdered by herdsmen.

Agrarian states in the Middle Belt valley have continually raised alarm. about the ongoing killings (Steve, 2018). The advanced weapons available to the Fulani herders revealed their boldness. They used to only carry and rely on machetes, long wooden staffs, and bows and arrows. They are, however, now displaying the Soviet assault rifle, AvtomatKalashnikova (AK47). They have used these weapons to terrorize farming communities across the country. Thus, from 2010 to 2013, Fulani herders were responsible for only 80 deaths, rising to 1,229 deaths in 2014. (Nwozor, OLANREWAJU, & Ake, 2019). More than 10,000 people are thought to have died as a result of Fulani herders' violence against farming communities over the last decade (Awotokun, Nwozor, & OLANREWAJU, 2020).

Armed conflicts that end in the injury or death of household members, crop yield losses, and farm property destruction can have an immediate and direct impact on household food insecurity by decreasing the immediate availability of food (Nnaji, 2022). George et al. (2022) argues that farmers who have been greatly affected by farmer-herder conflicts can also change their agricultural practises from lucrative commercial cultivation to subsistence agriculture to meet the food demands of their households. This restriction on herders' and farmers' activities endangers their livelihoods and food security (Dary, James, & Mohammed, 2017).

b. Fulani Ethnic Militia (FEM)

It is worth mentioning that new groups are emerging and requesting the right to autonomy. Militia groups targeting various communities in the North Central states increased in the year 2020. Given the religious and ethnic ties, the current wave of violence against societies has been linked to Fulani ethnic militia and could be interpreted as an ethno-religious conflict (Nwankwo, 2015). Fulani ethnic militia (FEM) violence has risen substantially in the

past few years, rendering it one of the world's most deadly groups (Chinwokwu & Michael, 2019). In Nigeria, Fulani pastoralists own roughly 90% of the national herd, including the majority of cattle, camels, goats, and sheep (George, Adelaja, Awokuse, & Vaughan, 2021). While the Fulani's primary territory is in northern Nigeria, drought, climate change, and the Boko Haram insurgency have forced them to relocate to the country's North Central region.

The Fulani Ethnic Militia (FEM) substantially decreases the total agricultural output for Nigerian homes. This is accomplished by reducing the total area of land utilised for agriculture (Fadare, Zanello, & Srinivasan, 2022). This is consistent with the findings made by Adeoye (2019), that several farmers in Nigeria's North Central region were compelled to leave their farms and relocate to more urban and suburban areas. In addition, FEM conflicts decrease crop production substantially because increased forced migration creates a land supply-demand inconsistency in many farming communities. This has worsened existing tensions in Nigeria's North Central region between Fulani and farming communities (Ojo, 2020).

Conflicts involving FEM, according to (ACLED, 2020), are complex and difficult to categorize. Some refer to FEM conflicts as religious conflicts because the vast majority of Fulani are Muslim and have regular disputes with predominantly Christian farmers (Ojo, 2020). The FEM also frequently clashes with other groups from the Eggon, Jakun, and Tiv communities, emphasizing the ethnic nature of FEM conflicts (Kallah, Ibrahim, & Jacob, 2022). Fulani militias, on the contrary, are not a centralised armed group with a clear mission. Their assaults are more opportunistic and less targeted and well-planned. However, because many of their attacks are against civilians, their use of terrorism as a tactic within ongoing farmer-herder tensions demonstrates terrorist characteristics (Nwozor et al., 2021).

c. Ethno-Religious conflicts

In the North Central region, ethno-religious conflicts are causing displacement within the region, food insecurity, and recurring outbreaks of violence between herders and farmers. It is clear that this is a conflict between indigenous farming communities or farmers and Hausa Fulani. In Plateau state, the clashes are more about ethnic and inter-ethnic relations, in addition to interactions between the Hausa-Fulani and other Jos Plateau communities (Anjide & Amaechi, 2022). Religion, on the other hand, is frequently used as rhetoric in clarifying conflicts. Despite their intermittent and sporadic nature, victims may perceive these conflicts as persistent and make modifications to cultivated areas to reduce their risks (Harari & Ferrara, 2018). The amount of land cultivated is more fixed in the short term than other agricultural inputs. Farmers will choose to reduce the amount of land dedicated to agriculture only if the likelihood of future attacks is extremely high (Mbah, Iwuamadi, Udeoji, Eze, & Ezeibe, 2021).

This means that, while ethno-religious conflicts are widely perceived as opportunities rather than pre-planned or targeted attacks, households in affected areas may not share those perceptions, resulting in food insecurity (Eke, 2020). Ethnic and religious tensions have been present in the North Central region for a number of years. This violence has resulted from the competition for power and access to land between nomadic and farming communities. Several individuals have

been murdered because of their ethnic or religious background. Fewer trucks are transporting food to the country's south, affecting food quantity and prices. Insurgency caused damage to farming activities and other related businesses, leading to a substantial decline in farm outputs.

d. **Organized criminal gangs**

A new group known as "bandits" has emerged in Nigeria's North Central region, further complicating the country's already complicated security situation. They mostly target villages in the region under the pretence of kidnapping and cattle rustling (Punch, 2018). According to Berdal and Serrano (2002), banditry is a form of organised criminal activity in Nigeria that involves kidnapping for ransom and looting villages for economic gain. In banditry operations, the existence of a clandestine organization with the ultimate goal of gaining illegal profits via the use of threats is common.

Rural bandits often operate during the night while villagers are sleeping, leading to the ransacking of some villages in Plateau, Benue, and Nasarawa states. Such attacks tend to be erroneously linked to Fulani militancy during debates in society. So, the most recent spate of banditry is thought to have evolved from Fulani militancy to a new practise of criminal activities in the country, which involves robbery and kidnapping (Egwu, 2016). Bandits are organised criminal groups that are accountable for herd theft and herder murder. It has been linked with a primitive accumulation model that includes cattle rustling, looting, rape, and kidnapping. Despite the Nigerian government's assertion that bandits are entirely to blame for the large bulk of kidnappings and deadly attacks in the North Central region, there is evidence of Boko Haram's involvement, either directly or indirectly (Cooke, Sanderson, Johnson, & Hubner, 2016).

Fundamentally, the bandits' hostility toward the agrarian population in the North Central region, which has resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent Nigerian farmers, is having a negative impact on the region's food supply. The bandits' primitive activities have discouraged farmers from going to the farm, which has a knock-on effect on food production, leading to food insecurity.

Linkages between Armed Conflict and Food Insecurity in the North Central Region

The North Central region of Nigeria has been addressing a complex and linked set of issues, including armed conflicts and food insecurity. One of the primary ways armed conflicts contribute to food insecurity is through the disruption of agricultural activities (Dago, 2021). The North Central region is majorly agrarian, with agriculture serving as the people's major source of income (Odey, 2002). However, armed conflicts often result in the destruction of farmlands, looting of agricultural produce, and displacement of farmers from their land (Atim & Gbamwuan, 2022). Fear of violence and loss of personal safety prohibit farmers from using their fields, resulting in lower agricultural productivity and crop yields. As a result of the disruption in agricultural activities, food production decreases, making communities more reliant on external sources for food.

Armed conflict areas are home to an estimated 489 million of the 815 million hungry people (FAO, 2019), and one out of every four individuals lives in a post-conflict country (Rockmore, 2017). Armed conflicts aggravate food insecurity in numerous ways. Armed conflicts have an effect on supply-side production through decreasing input availability (such as labour), increasing uncertainty in price and profit, and rendering it more challenging for farmers to sell their produce. When goods and market mechanisms fail, food availability and accessibility suffer as a result. Understanding the impacts of armed conflict on food security is therefore critical in international and national efforts to combat food shortages to accomplish the SDGs, or Sustainable Development Goals 2.

Furthermore, armed conflicts in the North Central region have a direct effect on food availability and access. Conflict-related violence frequently destroys infrastructure, such as roads, markets, and storage facilities (Smith, 2018). This disruption of critical food supply chains limits access to food and increases its cost. In addition, conflicts can cause the displacement of populations, forcing people to abandon their homes and communities (Floranza & Asio, 2019). Due to the destruction of their livelihoods, limited resources, and reliance on external aid, displaced people frequently face barriers to food access.

The link between armed conflicts and food insecurity is not one-way. Food insecurity, in turn, can be a catalyst for armed conflicts. Inadequate food access and limited economic opportunities create fertile foundation for social upheaval and conflict (Mudasiru & Fatai, 2020). When communities fail to meet their fundamental food demands, tensions rise, and competition over scarce resources intensifies (Dominelli, 2012). This can lead to conflicts between different ethnic or religious groups, exacerbating existing divisions and grievances. Thus, addressing food insecurity is crucial for preventing and mitigating armed conflicts in the North Central region.

Effects of Armed Conflict on Food Security in the North Central Region

The rate of armed conflicts has risen exponentially, hindering the country's economic development, while the drive to plant new crops decreases with each attack. It is worth highlighting that grain production in Nigeria's North Central region has reduced by 40%. More than 35% of local farmers have been forced to leave their ancestral homes and farms. According to reports, the agricultural sector suffered greatly in the region that was affected, particularly the cultivation of common crops like corn, rice, millet, cowpeas, and sorghum (George et al., 2022). Conflict can influence the diversity of food by reducing agricultural output due to insecurity, an absence of inputs for farming and support services, destroying food-producing and distributing systems, destroying facilities such as markets and roads, and decreasing revenue combined with price hikes (Nwozor et al., 2019). Lower diversity of diets, for example, in the North Central region may be linked to a lack of options during conflict, as well as adjustment to eating habits when confronted with conflict.

As a result of direct conflict exposure, armed conflict affects the output from agriculture, land, labour, and physical structures. Farm production disruption is associated with the output effect. Livestock and crop products are not only frequently destroyed, but the types that are relatively transportable are taken off to serve members and sympathisers of terrorist organizations (George et al., 2021). As a result of cattle rustling and kidnapping, the majority of pastoralists have fled. Many pastoralist families have moved to avoid the ongoing upheaval. Some pastoralists sold their livestock in order to buy food or pay a ransom. Others lower stock levels to avoid bandit attacks. Low food production, market disruptions, and a growing number of IDPs reliant on the market for food have kept staple food prices in North Central above normal (Dago, 2021).

Farming activities and labour, in general, have declined dramatically, limiting alternative sources of income. Daily earnings dropped due to a labour shortage and a lack of demand. For income, some affected households have turned to labour migration, while others have turned to minor trading, crafts, and water hawking (Usman & Eyo, 2022). George, Adelaja, and Weatherspoon (2020) estimates the effects of attack on land possession, rented land, cultivated land, values of land, and patterns of farming. They presented findings indicating that the percentage of land left fallow rises as the intensity of armed conflict attacks increases, as does the average distance between cultivated plots and the residence. And that increasing the intensity of attacks discourages mono-cropping and encourages mixed cropping. They also discovered that as farmers' experience with violent conflict increased, so did their expectations about the value of their lands, leading to food insecurity. For example, the impact of armed conflicts on food security in Nigeria's Benue State cannot be overstated. Benue State, in the North Central region, has seen long-running armed conflicts between farming communities, primarily of the Tiv ethnic group, and pastoralist communities, primarily Fulani herders (Odey, 2002). Farming communities have been displaced and farmlands have been destroyed as a result of the conflicts, which are motivated by rivalry for land and resources (Okoli, 2016). These conflicts significantly impacted food production and disrupted local food systems, resulting in a rise in food insecurity among the affected communities (George et al., 2021).

Therefore, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET, 2021), household members in the North Central region will remain displaced and will face difficulties in carrying out normal daily life. Furthermore, many households are unable to cultivate traditional crops due to displacement and must rely on inadequate community and market support. During the lean season, when staple costs are extremely high, they have few economic choices. As a result, food shortages will befall the households with the most vulnerability in the coming years.

Efforts in Addressing Armed Conflict and Food Insecurity in the North Central Region

A number of measures have been put in place to combat food insecurity in conflict-affected areas of Nigeria's North Central region. Between the years 2015 to 2018, the Nigerian government heightened its commitments to preserve land for Fulani herders by sending in a number of bills to the national assembly intended to be passed into legislation. These attempts were in line with the idea of resource appropriation, which refers to the unjust distribution and use of national resources via government instruments to favour a particular group at the expense of others (Olumba, 2022). Among the bills were the National Grazing Reserve (Establishment) Bill, 2015 (HB 448), the National Grazing Route and Reserve Commission (Establishment) Bill, 2016 (HB 539), and the National Grazing Reserves Agency (Establishment) Bill, 2016 (Allison, 2019). Legislators from Nigeria's North Central region and Southern part of the country opposed the bills, and they were never passed.

In a similar vein, on July 1, 2019, President Muhammadu Buhari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria disclosed a new initiative to resolve the herders/farmers conflict in Nigeria, termed "RUGA Settlement." President Buhari argued that "RUGA" will end armed conflict in Nigeria and increase agricultural productivity (Olumba, 2022). According to Kabir (2021), the seventeen state governors of the North Central and Southern Nigeria jointly prohibited cattle grazing in the open in May 2021. However, President Buhari, on the other hand, reaffirmed his endorsement of open grazing and a revival of cattle grazing routes in Nigeria on June 10, 2021.

It is also paramount to state that the current administration of President Ahmed Bola Tinubu is not unmindful of the state of food insecurity in the country. He portrayed this by declaring a state of emergency on food insecurity on July 13, 2023, with some of the immediate intervention strategies to include engaging the country's security apparatus to safeguard farms and farmers, allowing farmers to go back to their farms without fear of being attacked, and to activate the already mapped out land banks of 500,000 hectares so as to increase the availability of arable land for farming which will immediately impact food output and drastically reduce the herders/farmers conflict (Punch, 2023).

Conclusion

Nigeria's North Central region is dealing with the twin challenges of armed conflict and food insecurity. Armed conflicts have a direct impact on food production, impede the agricultural system, worsen environmental challenges, and widen disparities in socioeconomic status. Food insecurity has far-reaching consequences in the region, affecting the productivity, health, and general welfare of its people. Given the study's findings about the long-term negative impact of conflict on agricultural labour supply, Nigeria's leaders need to do more to avert the spread of armed conflict in the country. It is crucial to address food insecurity and armed conflicts in the North Central region for reasons other than only human rights and social justice but also for Nigeria's general stability and development. It necessitates a comprehensive and integrated approach that recognises the interdependence of peace, agriculture, and food security.

Recommendations

These recommendations seek to address the interrelated concerns of armed violence and food insecurity in Nigeria's North Central area, with an emphasis on practical actions:

a. Strengthening agricultural systems and market infrastructure can protect the region from conflict shocks and promote long-term food security. Ethnic tensions often destroy agricultural assets and market systems, exacerbating food insecurity.

b. Improving long-term food security requires policymakers to address basic sources of conflict, such as resource rivalry and historical grievances. By promoting peace and

stability, people may re-establish their livelihoods and food production systems.

c. Collaboration among entities involved in conflict resolution, humanitarian relief, and food security programs is crucial to address the diverse character of these concerns, as interventions that leverage expertise and resources across sectors can be more comprehensive and effective in addressing the root causes of food insecurity in the North Central region.

d. Importantly, investing in early warning measures, such as data gathering and analysis tools, allows policymakers and humanitarians to address food security issues before they worsen.

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GEOPOLITICAL VARIATION IN THE REPORTAGE OF SECURITY BY *THE NATION AND DAILY TRUST* NEWSPAPERS (2010-2020): A PROGNOSIS

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KEYWORDS
Goepolitics, Security, Nigerian Press, Reportage

ABSTRACT
This study explores the geopolitical trajectory in the reportage of security issues in Nigeria by The Nation and Daily Trust newspapers between 2010 and 2020.The two national dailies have within the period under study engaged reckless reportage of insecurity news in the geopolitics of information dissemination, which endangers the lives of many innocent Nigerians in order to favour their states of operation and deepen acceptability in their constituencies, hence promoting unhealthy Northern and Southern dichotomy to the detriment of national security. The main objective of the study is to unveil and measure the geopolitical variation in the coverage of security threat bedevilling the country by The Nation and Daily Trust newspapers between 2010-2020.The study employs content analysis. For the content analysis, front page and editorial columns were identified as units of analysis, whereby five (5) frames tagged by the research as geopoliticization, glorification, escalation, de-escalation and neutral (GEOGLOESDEN) were content analysed. The study hinged on Framing Theory as the theoretical framework. The study depicts that the ownership control has made The Nation and Daily Trust newspapers to report security challenges in a subjective manner, thus, promoting the existing Northern and Southern dichotomy in their reportage of security situation. The two national dailies are expected to be nationalistic and report security issue in an objective manner instead of framing narratives that can exacerbate tension. The study, therefore, recommended among other things that The Nation and Daily Trust newspapers should strive hard to outgrow reporting insecurity based on geopolitical disposition as a way in bridging the menace of insecurity in Nigeria. They should strive hard to engage in an in-depth and

analytical reportage of security threats without giving credence to subjective and speculative information.

1.1 Introduction

Generally, the media reports issue whose effects make audience predispose to an avalanche of messages that are both beneficial and counterproductive to development path. Nigeria as a sovereign state is under severe internal socio-economic and security challenges. In essence, these security challenges have social, economic, political and environmental implications. Security issues in Nigeria are intricately linked to the activities of ethnic militia, religious bigots, insurgents, terrorists, armed bandits, armed robbers, kidnappers, Indegineous People of Biafra (IPOB) among other criminal elements which resulted in the loss of lives, displacement of persons and destruction of properties. The influence and power of press in building, unifying or destroying a nation state, particularly a heterogeneous society such as Nigeria is all possible with its coverage. This explains Shehu's (2006:p.28) submission that "whatever the audience makes of media information or messages is determined by the way such messages are mediated.

The Nation and Daily Trust newspapers often reports security related issues some of which seems to be sensational and subjective on the basis of Northern and Southern dichotomy. The fact that Daily Trust is largely a Northern based newspaper while, The Nation is largely a Southern based newspaper makes their pattern of reportage of security issues of interest in academic discourse. The geopolitical context and placement of some of their reports and the variations involved between 2010 and 2020 is the focus of the paper.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There have been divergent views about the performance of The Nation and Daily Trust newspapers in the reportage of security issue which could result in different perceptions by the public. So, there is a need for a clearer presentation and analysis of their pattern of reportage of security situation. The scourge of insecurity in Nigeria particularly in the way it has been reported between 2010-2020 by The Nation and Daily Trust newspapers has become a monster which possess serious challenges to the security terrain in Nigeria. It multifaceted manifestations include culpable homicide, extrajudicial killings, secessionist agitation, cybercrime, armed robbery, kidnapping, farmer-harder conflicts, ritual killings have some variations which worth studying a prognosis to interrogate their pattern in the wording and placement with their potential to widen the geopolitical appeals. In most of the aforementioned security threat the two national dailies appears to be escalators of the crises through disinformation and sensational reportage. Hence, the study.

1.3 Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

i. To what extent did geopolitical considerations influence the pattern of reportage on security issues bedeviling Nigeria by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers between 2010 and 2020?

ii. How could the pattern of reportage by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* lead to escalation or de-escalation of insecurity facing the country between 2010 and 2020.

iii. How has the prominence given to the issue of insecurity by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers between 2010 and 2020 drew the attention of government and the public in search for solutions?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

i. Ascertain whether the geopolitical considerations influence the pattern of reportage on security issues bedevilling Nigeria by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* between 2010 and 2020.

ii. Determine whether the pattern of reportage by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* lead to escalation or de-escalation of

insecurity facing the country between 2010 and 2020.

iii. Interrogate whether the prominence given to the issue of insecurity by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers between 2010 and 2020 drew the attention of government and the public in search for solutions.

1.5 Conceptual Discourse

Certain terms have been operationalized authoritatively and base on the context they were used in this study, this include: the concept of press, geopolitics and insecurity.

1.5.1 The Concept of Press

These are media of communication which are actively involved in processing and mediating reality by presenting timely accounts of events in the society. The print media have a mechanism that depends on information dissemination. These include newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets and comics that carry messages to the populace by appealing to their sense of sight. One common thing about the print media is that they involve the pressing of ink on paper using plates and blocks, and special machines. The print media includes books, newspapers and magazines. (Turow, 2012:p20).

1.5.2 The Concept of Geopolitics

According to Cottle (2019:p.14) The concept of geopolitics is quite multifaceted and diversely gained crucial importance already with the emergence of ideas on spatial and geographical substantiation of the behavior of states in the international arena. Literally, it has to do with the politics that is determine by geographical location. For this research, Nigerian geopolitics was analyzed through operational variables, history, and geography. It is therefore, operationalized as the type of reportage on security situation by *The Nation and Daily Trust* newspapers that is geared towards projecting certain geopolitical interest through inappropriate choice of words and regional slang in the news item on security due to their locations. This reveals the fact that the phenomenon of geopolitics of security reportage by the two national dailies under study has the potential to exacerbate Northern and Southern dichotomy, hence deepening acceptability in their respective geopolitical zones to the detriment of national security.

1.5.3 The Concept of Insecurity

Insecurity is the state of being subject to danger or injury. The anxiety that is experienced when one feels vulnerable and insecure. (Michael,201:p.32) affirms the foregoing definition of insecurity as " a state of being not secure, lack of confidence. This article operationalizes insecurity to mean lack of safety or the existence of danger; hazard; uncertainty; lack of trust; doubtful; inadequately guarded or protected; lack of stability; disturbed; lack of protection and unsafe. Insecurity will make you lose trust, be frightened, unsettled, oppressed, lose focus, and be devastated and lose your humanity as a result of pattern of reportage along geopolitics by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers.

2.1 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

A number of literature were reviewed. This section attempts a synthesis of the arguments and counter-arguments as to the proper role of the media in conflict reporting with particular reference to the Nigerian experience. The disputation centres on whether in covering conflicts the press contribute to the escalation or de-escalation of the security threat. McCombs & Mauro (1984), Gerbner (2012), Chaffee (2018), Sandman (2019) and Umechukwu (2020) agrees that the press is both agents of political communication and propaganda. Omu (2014,p:19) notes, “The early Nigerian press was essentially a political press which took on the opposition to the government”. Galadima & Enighe (2017:p.12) supports this view that: “The press was owned and run by nationalists to confront the colonial government." It was ‘press of protest’ in which, Umechukwu (2011) said, seditious and criminally libelous articles were written against the colonial government in the name of nationalism. However, this helped in the constitutional reforms and the granting of self-government to The Nationalists.” There is a consensus amongst scholars about the role the press could play in political reporting which is a primary area of development in any polity. Politics without so much emphasis determines the wellbeing of a society.

Shaw & McCombs (1972) did comprehensive work on Agenda Setting and are in

acknowledgement of the fact that press surveillance of events and issues revolves around setting agenda for civic concern and action. Generally, it is held that media professionals or reporters determine what is news, which political happening or condition will be covered or prescribed and which to downplay or give prominence in their coverage of national and international issues. *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers' captions and reportage of security issues with specific focus on their front page and editorial categories especially from the period under study.

2.2 Theoretical Perspective

This study hinges on Framing Theory as its theoretical framework. Framing has been a leading political communication studies approach for more than three decades. The concept of framing was first posited by Gregory Bateson in 1972. He sees psychological frames as a "spatial and temporary bounding of set of interactive messages" that operates as a form of metacommunication. Framing describes the practice of thinking about news items and story content within familiar context (Goffman, 1974). The major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives and be construed as having implications for multiple values or considerations. In view of its wide usage, scholars from divergent fields have applied the model for different research purposes (Ruigrok & van Attevelt, 2017).

Framing relates to the agenda-setting tradition but expands the research by focusing on the essence of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic. The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning (Goffman, 1974). Framing theory suggests that how something is presented to the readers or audience influences the choices people make about how to process that information. Frames are abstractions that work to organize or structure message meaning. The most common use of frames is in terms of the frame the news or media place on the information they convey, framing theory explains that the media create this frame by introducing news items with predefined and narrow contextualisation. Frames can be designed to enhance understanding or are used as cognitive shortcuts to link stories to the bigger picture. Although framing theory can be criticised due to its difficulty to measure, it is relevant to this study as it helps in depicting the relationship between the way *DailyTrust* and *The* Nation newspapers frame news and its potential exacerbate security situation between 2016 and 2020.

3.1 Methodology

Data in this study is mainly generated from the daily reports of the two newspapers from 2010 to 2020 and a quantitative content analysis is employed for the analysis. This consists of all editions of the selected newspapers published in Nigeria within the eleven (11) years study period i.e. between 2010 and 2020 respectively. This amounted to 8,030 editions for the two newspapers i.e. 3,650 per each. The Nation and Daily Trust newspapers have been chosen through the use of Stratified Sampling Method by dividing the Nigerian newspapers into two geo-political zones i.e. northern and southern based newspaper respectively. The Nation as a Southern based newspaper while, Daily Trust a Northern based newspaper respectively. Notwithstanding, in political communication parlance, the relevance of the newspaper can only be determined through its selling and circulation. According to Newspapers' Circulation Figures Vs Sales Figures (2020), Statista Search Department (2021) Daily Trust newspaper is the most widely circulating and most selling newspaper in the Northern states. While, The Nation and Punch newspapers are going hand-in-hand in terms of their circulation and selling in the Southern states of Nigeria.

Thus, the study employed simple random sampling technique (balloting) in which each of the highest selling and most circulating newspapers in the Southern Nigeria were assigned a number and put in a container, closed it, shake them very well, brought them out and chose the *TheNation* newspaper at random to represent Southern based newspapers. While, *DailyTrust* was on the other hand, chosen being the highest selling and most circulating newspaper in the Northern Nigeria to represent Northern based newspapers generally. Afterward, the study employees cluster sampling by dividing the publications of the two national dailies under study on monthly publications. This is to say a cluster for each newspaper for a period of one month. This allows for easier identification of the issues of insecurity and the way the news are placed. Thereafter, the research adopted Systematic Sampling Technique and selected the sample size of 15 for the study. The samples were selected viz:

Population = 31

= 31

15

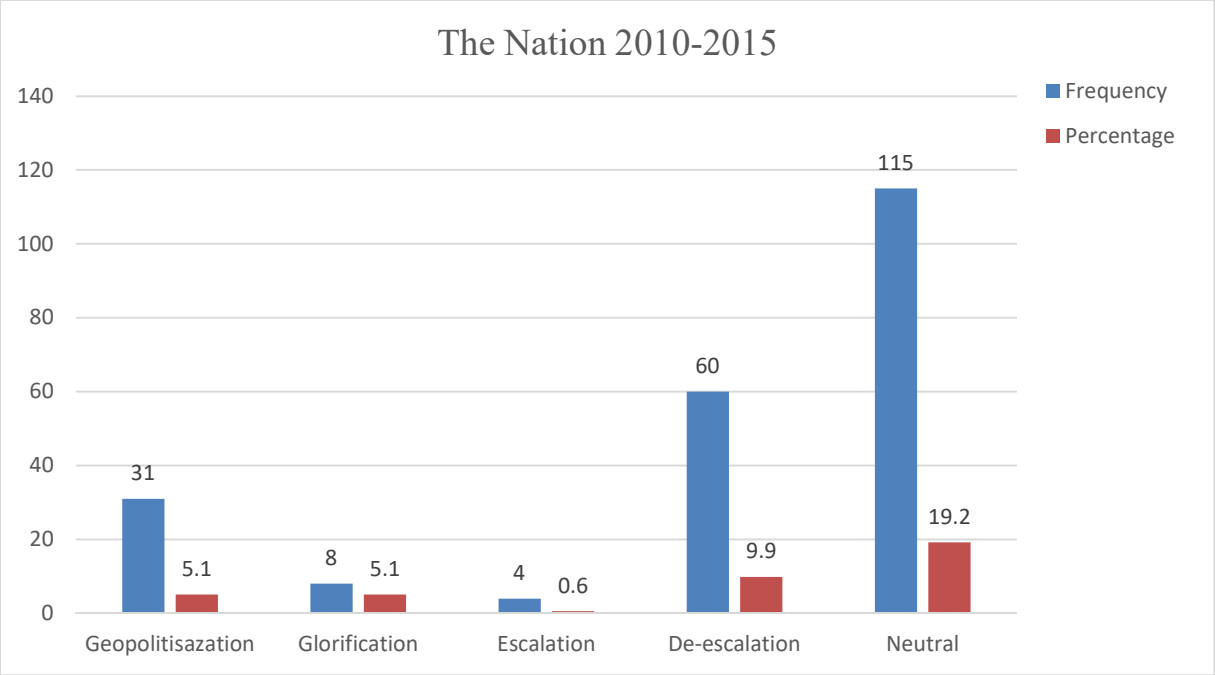
= 2 nth

Hence, 2nd January was picked through the use of simple random sampling procedure which means any reportage that fold on the even numbers days, thus, the remaining elements are as follows: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30. Therefore, the same procedures was utilized for the remaining elements under study. The unit of analysis for this study are the news stories that appeared on front pages and editorials published on the insecurity. According to Ohaja (2012:p,10), Martin & Fabos (2014:p,22) held that "if you want to know the opinion, character, interest and direction of the newspaper, look out for its front page and editorial". So, this informed our decision to study the aforementioned categories of The National dailies under study.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

This segment offers critical reflections and discusses the empirical findings of the study. It also presents and analyses the data generated through content analysis and attempts to interpret the implications of the results. The data are sourced from the two selected newspapers and coded within the context of what the paper tagged as Geopoliticization, Glorification, Escalation and De-escalation (GEOGLOESDEN). The coding system yielded n917 news items upon which analysis of the study is based. The aim of the content analysis is to reveal and understand the dominant frames in the coverage of insecurity that helps in answering the research questions. The data are sampled and analysed quantitatively using simple frequency and percentage (%).

Figure 4.1: Coverage Comparison and Variation of the Frames by *The Nation* Between 2010 and 2015



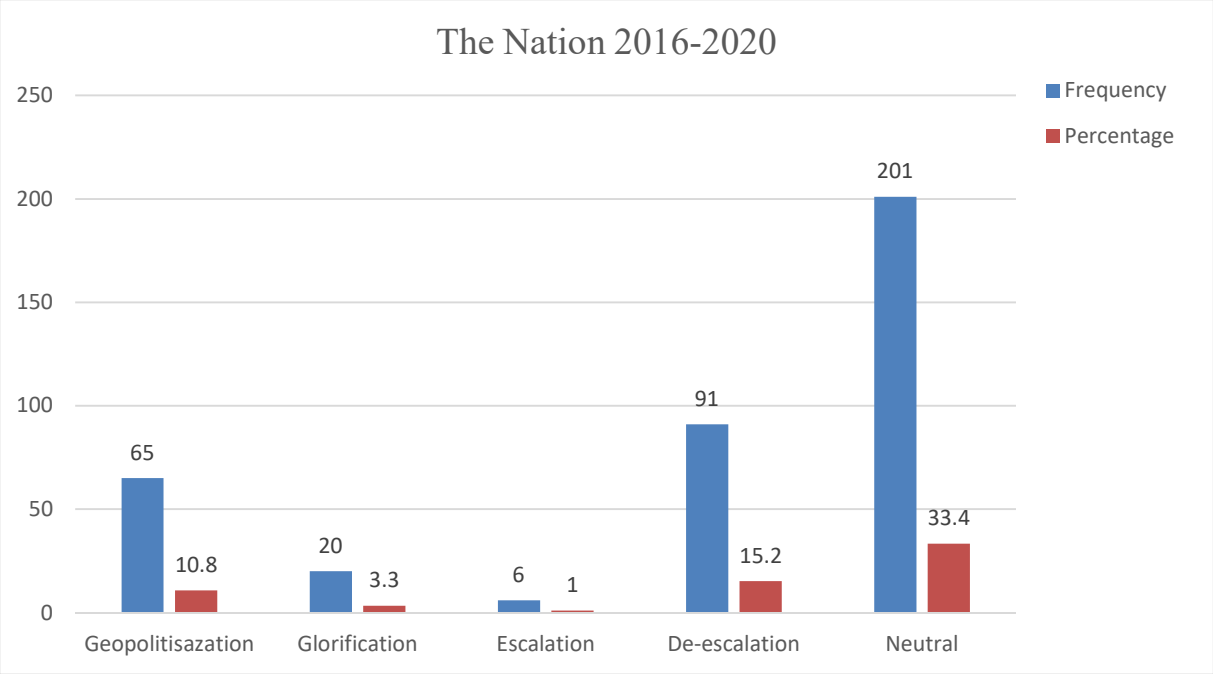
Source: Field Work,2023

The data from figure 4.1 shows that the reportage of *The Nation* between 2010-2015 on the basis of geopolitization framed is (31) which represents 5.1%, glorification of insecurity frame has eight (8) representing 1.4%, in the same vein, the coverage that can led to escalation of insecurity constitutes four (4) frames representing 0.6% only and de-escalation reports has sixty (60) representing 9.9% only. It is obvious from the foregoing that the pattern of coverage by The Nation newspaper within the trend of GEOGLOESDEN has increased from 2010-2015 respectively.The two excerpts out of many, from the editions of *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers established that;

Jos, Jang and Genocide: The violence broke out when a Hausa Man, Mallam Kabiru of Dute Uku in Jos Local Government was reconstructing his House which was destroyed two years ago. Some Biron citizens who felt that the Hausas should not be allowed to rebuild destroyed houses nor return to where ever they had been expelled during previous crisis started stouning the workers. (*DailyTrust*, February 4,2010:14 Editorial Page).

The Predators: Oyo government has to check the excesses of Bororo Fulanis in its domain. Bororo Fulanis have turned Oyo indigenes into victims of barbarious slaughter and rape. The stories pass as though they are harmless rituals. But this is unfair, not only to the indigenous people in Oyo villages, but to the idea of justice. The nefarious activities of the Bororo Fulanis in a set of Oyo villages should attract the attention of the higher authorities of the police. In these times when the settler-indigene dialectic is overwhelming our debate, we should not subsume, but their nationalities are often vague. (*TheNation*, March 12,2010:15 Editorial).

Figure 4.2: Coverage Comparison and Variation of the Frames by The NationBetween 2016 and 2020



Source: Field Work,2023

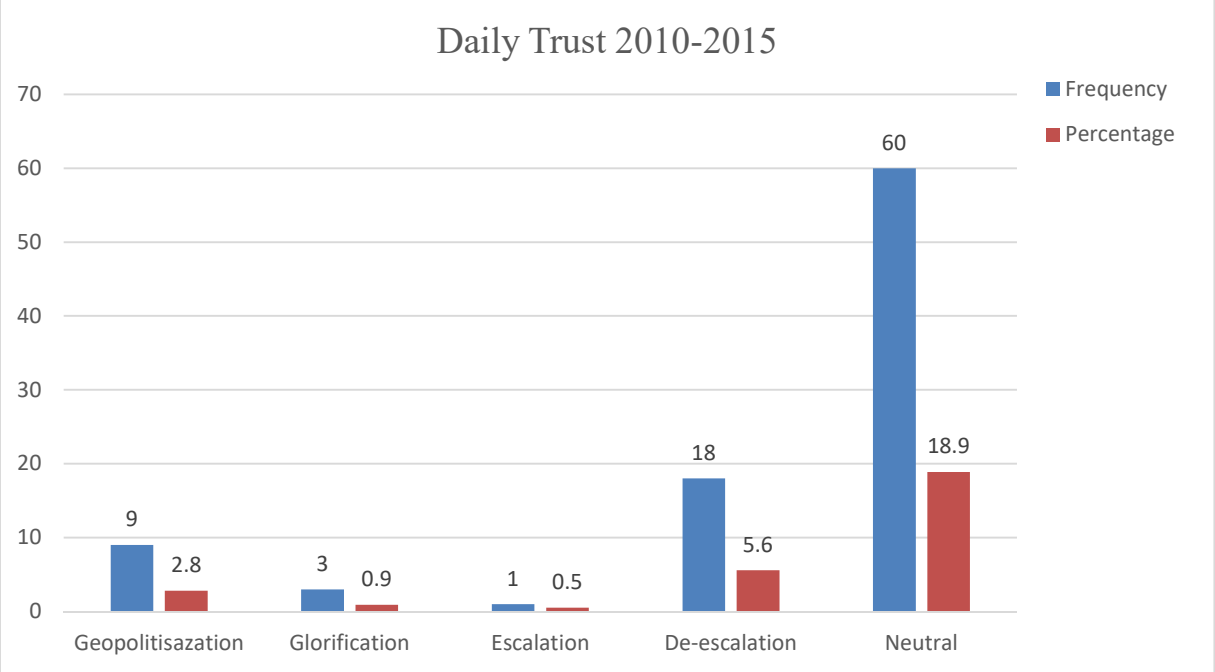
The data from the figure 4.2 reveals that the reportage of *The Nation* between 2016-2020 on the basis of geopolitization framed were sixty five (65) representing 10.8%,glorification of insecurity frame had twenty (20) representing 3.3%, similarly, the coverage that may led to escalation of insecurity constitutes six (6) representing 1% and de-escalation were ninety one representing 15.2% only.It can be assumed that the findings above depict that *The Nation*

newspaper gave move prominence the context of what the paper identified by the study as GEOGLOESDEN between 2016-2020 compare to 2016-2020 respectively.Two excerpts, out of many, from the editions of *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers reviewed confirmed that;

Robbery Suspect or Mistaken Identity: Musician lies in critical condition after being shot over alleged robbery, I only went to the police to clear my name victim: IS Stanley Ukphabia, popularly known as Desty Randy a armed rober or a victim of circumstance? This is puzzle many residents of Mando, a sleepy suburb of Kaduna, are trying to resolve. Many who are close to him believe he cannot be involved in a crime. But the Imo state-born hiphop artist based in Kaduna is currently lying critically ill at the Barau Dikko specialist Hospital, Kaduna after a gunshot he received from the police on the allegation that he was involved in armed robbery. (*TheNation*, August 20, 2011:12 Front Page).

Police Rearrest Suspected Serial Killer in Ibadan: The Police Command in Oyo State says it has rearrested Sunday Shodipe of Southern extraction, the alleged serial killer who escaped from detention at an Ibadan Police Command.The spokesman of the Oyo State Police Command,Gbenga Fadeyi, confirmed the rearrest of Shodipe to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) yesterday.(*DailyTrust*, August 24,2020 Front Page 44).

Figure 4.3: Coverage Comparison and Variation of the Frames by Daily Trust Between 2010 and 2015



Source: Field Work,2023

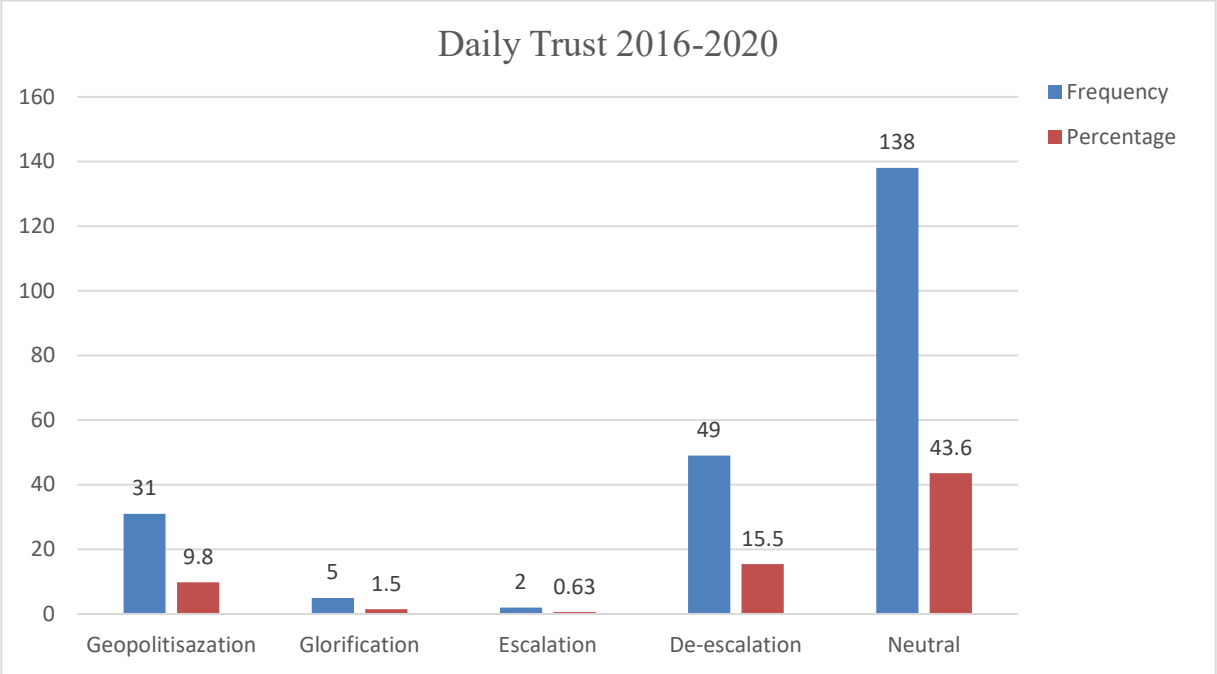
The data in figure 4.3 indicates that out of the entire news items featured by *Daily Trust* between 2010-2015, geopoliticization has nine (9) representing 2.8%, news that indicated the tendency of glorifying insecurity were three (3) representing 0.9%, in the same vein, on escalation of insecurity has one (1) only representing 0.5% while, de-escalation of insecurity were eighteen (18) representing 5.6% only. This depicts that the pattern of GEOGLOESDEN in the *DailyTrust* newspaper has increased from 2010-2015 respectively.The two excerpts out of many, from the editions of *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers established that:

Fulani Herdsmen Kill SERVICOM Boss in Niger: THE Director-General of SERVICOM in Niger State, Alhaji Saidu Ibrahim, has been killed. He was allegedly hit with cutlass last weekend by two warring Fulani herdsmen while trying to mediate between them in Sabon Daga village on

Minna-Bida Road. "For the avoidance of doubt, the late Alhaji Ibrahim was on his way to Bida when he noticed two Fulani men fighting. He had driven past them, but reversed to mediate between them. "(*TheNation*, September 14,2010:8, Front Page).

Secret Killings Persist in Jos: The Spate of secret killings in the restive city of Jos, Plateau State with the discovery of the corpse of city resident Adamu Harma Abubakar, who was abducted by unknown gunmen last Friday. According to Hajiya Khadija, who is an official of Jama'atuNasril Islam and Chairperson of Hausa Fulani Muslim Women Peace Forum in Plateau State, said the killing of Adamu was part of the ongoing secret killings in some part of Jos by non-Muslims. (*DailyTrust*, March 24, 2010: Front Page).

Figure 4.4: Coverage Comparison and Variation of the Frames by *Daily Trust* Between 2016 and 2020



Source: Field Work,2023

The data in figure 4.4 above depict that out of the entire news items featured by *Daily Trust* between 2016-2020, geopoliticization had thirty one (31) representing 9.8%, news based on glorification of insecurity were five (5) representing 1.5%, escalation of insecurity had two (2) representing 0.63% while,de-escalation of insecurity were forty nine (49) representing 15.5% only. In comparison, the findings above reveal that *Daily Trust* newspaper gave more prominence to the insecurity from 2016-2020 within the context what the study tagged as GEOGLOESDEN perspectives.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The essence of the is to confirm the findings of the research. This will be done by responding to each of the research questions raised, relying on the results of the analyses, some excerpts from the editions of *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers reviewed by the researcher, responses of the interviewees, the theory employed by the researcher.

Commencing with Research Questionb1(RQ1, to what geopolitical considerations influence the pattern of reportage on security issue bedeviling Nigeria by The Nation and Daily Trust between 2010 and 2020?), the results obtained in the analyses in figures 4.1,4.2,4.3 and 4.4 were relied upon in determining the answer to RQ1. Figures 4.1,4.2,4.3 and 4.4 reveals that *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers have during the period under study, significantly devoted a number of front pages and editorials while reporting

insecurity thereby projecting the interest of their states of operation, hence promoting unhealthy Northern and Southern dichotomy. On news reports, *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers have nine hundred and seventeen (n917) news items on the security issue that meet the selection criteria whereby *TheNation* had six hundred and one (601) representing 65.5% mostly in favour of the interest of Southern states of Nigeria, while Daily Trust had three hundred and sixteen (316) equivalent to 34.5% largely in favour of the Northern states. It also indicates that out of six hundred and one (601) news items featured by *TheNation*, five hundred and ninety-eight (598) representing 99.5% appeared on front page; while only three (3) representing 0.50% were editorial stories, whereas, out of three hundred and sixteen news items (316) devoted by *DailyTrust*, three hundred and seven (307) representing 97.2% were editorial stories; while only nine (9) representing 2.8% were editorial news. This has clearly shown the interest and preference that *TheNation* newspaper has given to the Southern geopolitical zone, while *Daily* Trust is for Northern geopolitical zone within the period under study.In addition, significant number of the audience of *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers,3.9% have believed that the newspapers have jettison the huge gap that existed in the quest for information balance between the two goepolitical zones of Nigeria i.e Northern and Southern geopolitical zones of the country.

For Research Question 2 (RQ2,How could the pattern of reportage by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* led to escalation or de-escalation of insecurity facing the country between 2010 and 2020.).Figures 6.3,6.5,5.6,5.7 and 5.8, excerpts from the editions of *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers were heavily relied upon in establishing RQ3.The analyses in figure 5.5 clearly shown that 2.11% of news items reported by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers featured in their front pages and editorials can led to escalation of the menace of insecurity thereby pleasing their states of the operation, promoting rivalry between the Northern and Southern geopolitical zones of the country, hence they can hold this country to ransom.

In respect to Research Question 3 (RQ3,How has the prominence given to the issue of insecurity by *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers between 2010 and 2020 drawn the attention of government and the public in search for solutions?),the research relied on the results obtained from figure 5.1,some excerpts obtained from the editions of *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers, Newspapers' Circulation Figures Vs Sales Figures (2020) to establish RQ5.It was found that the two national dailies under study featured nine hundred and seventeen (n917) news items on the issue identified that meet the selection criteria which *TheNation* had six hundred and one (601) representing 65.5%,while *DailyTrust* had three hundred and sixteen (316) equivalent to 34.5% only. The above clearly depicts that both the two newspapers under study have given prominence to the issue under investigation, but the analyses clearly have shown that *TheNation* newspaper has given more prominence to the issue of insecurity than *DailyTrust*. However, it was observed that both the two national dailies gave favourable attention to their states of the operation on basis of geopolitical inclination. The prominence given to the issue is significant enough to draw the attention of government and public in search for solutions, because no any meaningful development will be achieved in the atmosphere of rancour and acrimony.

5.1 Conclusion

The study set out to establish the pattern of geopolitical variation as it pertains the reportage of security related news by *DailyTrust* and *TheNation* newspapers in order to achieve its objectives, the study utilised content analysis and weighted the coverage of each of the newspapers under study.Although, the above findings indicates that the two national dailies were succeeded in prioritizing neutrality in their reportage of security situation, the newspapers however engaged in the reportage of security issue in favour of their respective geopolitical zones to the detriment of national security, hence reporting security threat facing the country without giving credence to an in-depth and analytical reportage.The front page and editorial columns of the newspapers demonstrates that *DailyTrust* has favoured the interest of Northern geopolitical zone of the country, while,*TheNation* was Pro-Southern geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

5.2 Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, it is suggested that *DailyTrust* and *TheNation* newspapers should perform their functions diligently for peace, unity, growth and development. *TheNation* and *DailyTrust*

newspapers should do much more than reporting insecurity on the ground of supporting their respective constituencies, but also involve mechanism for ensuring peace-keeping process through their coverage.

The study recommended that *TheNation* and *DailyTrust* newspapers should strive hard to outgrow reporting insecurity based on geopolitical disposition, as that will go along way in bridging the menace of insecurity to the barest minimum in Nigeria.

They should avoid unethical reportage of security threats de-emphasizing the propensity of geopolitical leaning associated with their coverage of security issue bedevilling Nigeria. This will help in promoting peaceful coexistence for development.

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YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY IN KOGI STATE; ISSUES AND PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT
The paper clarifies how youth political engagement in electoral democracy is understood and the activities that constitute challenges for successful democratic process in Kogi State. The paper further explains youth participation in electoral democracy and they desire for equal representation and good governance. These desire were punctuated by money politics, electoral financing and electoral violence. The electoral series held between 2015 and 2023, revealed political violence and outrageous elections expense at all tiers of electoral contest, which infiltrate to produce declared winner without integrity. It is proof that cost of registration and administration of campaigning hinder youth participation in politic. Sadly, previous empirical studies failed to indicate the derogatory implication of money politics and how has electoral expenditures overtaken the place of merit. This situation further introduces youth as instrument of destruction that crept Nigeria political event. The paper explained how this perception affects electoral integrity in Kogi State. This paper examines youth participation in electoral democracy, and how electoral expenditure has hindered youth participation in electoral democracy, a signals to poor political culture. The paper adopted descriptive methods. This approach relies on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources rely on copies of questionnaire. Secondary sources rely on textbook, journal, conference proceeding and Nigeria daily. The study adopted Marxist theory of Democracy. The finding indicates huge electoral expenditures, political inequality and compromised political space overtaken the place merit, which restrict youths from electoral contest. The paper recommends youth sensitization on political culture, with the view to exposing the risk associated with money politics and electoral violence in Nigeria.

Introduction

Youth participation in electoral democracy in Kogi State did not reflect the basic elective principles of democracy, which connotes political equality devoid of coercion, hostility and threats (Godwin, 2024), whose outcome must reflect model of democracy. Michael, (2018) argues youths have been negatively assembled by ruling class to perform role of thugs. The elite took advantage of their economic situation to exploit and drives they selfish motive. We have in mind the experience of 2019 governorship election in Kogi State where politicians hire the service of youths they recruit as thugs, arm them with weapons, and reward them for terrorizing the political opponent; to also thwart a successful democratic process in the State. Youth participation is exigent (Godwin, 2024). This is because young people are left out the way to assemble as political thugs for politicians who seeking political power. Gauba, (2007) revealed that young people have marred by inability to defend and return accurate polling results, though, political elite failed to provide youth the platform to compete in Nigeria; especially with the podium to expressing their views and exerts influence, regarding political, economic and social decisions (Kolawole, 2005). Youth were denied opportunity to influence governmental decisions in a representational manner; where they could mobilize support in their large number to secure political gains (Afolayan, 2015). The negative role of youth in politics, affected the electoral integrity in Kogi State. Nigerian youths must be encouraged to participate positively and actively in political processes.

Godwin, (2024) revealed that youths partake in most compromised electoral process, which produce declared winner without integrity in the State. For instances, the electoral series held between 2015 and 2023 in Kogi State, further prove how youth were used as instrument of violence during elections (Tenuche and Egwemi, 2020). Most enlighten youth were recruited as 'data boys', whose activities revolves propaganda and negative criticism to run-down opposition parties (Jibrin and Michael, 2020). It was alleged that youth considered this a means of survival as participation. Youth were involving in series of actions related to activism, these actions cover organizing demonstrations and wearing campaign logos to getting contact with politicians. Confronted with these extensive varieties of possible activities, several significant recommendations have been made by researchers to change their nature of political engagement (Hoskins, 2013). Still, in present times, protest, demonstrations, picketing, and boycotts were organized by politicians to hinder youth from positive engagement in politics (Vite, 2018; Hern, 2016), these factors cannot provide for country that are search for transparency and enthronement of trust in the electoral process.

Given were the basic changes in the approach why youth were unable to engage properly with political issues in Kogi State; maybe possibly because they are poor and money politics adopted by ruling classes to secured victory at the polls, Forestiere, (2015) in his writing forbid perception of money politics as he argues that money politics will render the voting power of electorate useless.

Tenuche and Egwemi, (2020) observes that cost of funding political activities, registration, administration of campaigning logistics during elections; most likely to hinder youth participation in politics. Sadly, money played critical role in Nigeria politics it has taken center stage in political process. The strategy of votes buying adopted by ruling classes target at preventing youth positive participation in politics. Though youth placed much regards to negative participatory democracy, because of its financial rewards (Kingsley, 2013). The paper argues that this perception creates unbalance political arrangement between youth and governing class. Thus, youths are often the least age group in to be saddle with responsibility in Nigeria. The issues about perfect way to motivate and improve youth's political engagement as profess by Tonge & Mycock, (2009), are insignificant to the circumstance of the newer democratic setting.

Elections are the baseline for all democracies (Godwin, 2014). It is a precious activity in a democratic set up. It is an important tenet of democracy which allows the people to have a government of their choice (Godwin, 2024). Note that election is not only meant to ensure the legitimacy of political office holder through regular consent of the people, but also to provide a plain ground for democracy to thrive. Without which, the people are bound to be helpless and democracy losses all its meaning. But in the case of Nigerian, Afolayan, (2015) argues money is central in politics. On this note the paper agree that all parties involved in electoral democracies need money to play an active role which relates to expenditure of the candidates or parties during elections, Kogi State

is not an exception. Nonetheless, money politics repudiates youth participation in electoral democracy; for lacking require capital to fund and financed all the processes leading victory.

The paper is set to re-establish youth political ambitions, as it recommends positive participatory democracy. As it suggests political equality among citizens as approved by law, within where repudiates could be provide electives position of governance. No sooner than later, money bags in Nigeria politics who dictate the selecting process will have retired from politics. It is against this background that the paper set out to examine the implication of money politics and how has it constitute issues to youth participation in electoral democracies in Kogi State, with the view to exposing the associated risk, therefore, attempt contribution in form of recommendations to end unequal representation arising participatory democracy in Kogi State.

Statement of Research Problems

This paper discusses what add up to challenges for youth participation in electoral democracy in Kogi State. Elections are basic tenets of democracy. Unfortunately, over the years, electoral democracy has been dogged with disagreement arising from youth negatives engagement and inability to defend polling results (Godwin, 2024). The paper has in mind, where ruling class had failed to provide platform for positive competition; especially with the podium, youth can be expressing their views and exerts influence in politics. It is disheartening to note that youth participation in electoral democracy have been obstructed due to nefarious activities and strategies of political actors.

Youth play vital parts to ensuring they bring change to the society. This they do by political participation through formulation of political parties, vying for political position (Michael, 2018). But the perception of overbearing influence of 'godfathers' resulted to engaging political thugs, to oppress and intimidate opponents, thus, provide them means of livelihood. This attempt often changes the perception of average Nigerian on political realities and the integrity of electoral democracy.

The involvement of money bags (political godfathers) in Nigeria politics dictate the selecting process of whom emerge as candidate, this it says, makes the disgruntled groups to find other less constructive channel for the expression of their discontent. The paper set out to examine how youth participation, constitute challenges for electoral democracy in Kogi State.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study includes, to:

1. Examine youth participation in electoral democracy between 2015 and 2023 in Kogi State,
2. Analyze challenges prohibiting youth participation in electoral democracies in Kogi State
3. Identify and recommend measure to enhances positive engagement of young people in electoral democracy

Research Questions

1. How has youth participated in electoral democracy between 2015 and 2023 in Kogi State?
2. What constitute challenges for youth participation in electoral democracies in Kogi State?
3. Is there any measure to end negative engagement of young people in electoral democracy?

Marxist Theory of Democracy

Marxist theory of democracy adopts to evaluate this paper with reference to class character. Marxist criticizes common form of liberal democracy arrangement in a capitalist society, where majority workers were deprived of benefits. For Marxist, liberal democracy exclusively serves the interest of the capitalist class.

In spite of its vast representative institutions, liberal democracy hardly serves the interest of the people on whose behalf power is exercise. According to Marx and Engel, the executive of the modem state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" {Communist Manifesto; 1848). Here he refers modem state as established model of liberal democracy. John (1978), has

enumerated the following outstanding reasons advanced by Marxists; he write that there are great inequalities of wealth, power and influence; which is associated with the wealthy, because them alone can afford to provide their children with the expensive schooling needed to fix them positions of power and influence; it gather large organizations of people and create social inequalities to deprived less privilege access to power, influence and followership and Power and influence depend greatly on information, while the wealthy placed the poor in a position of gathering information, to control the distribution of it. No doubt, most liberal democracy involve in larger economic inequalities.

The application of this theory is derives from the argument of Marxist over political inequality create by liberal democracy. In their view liberal democracy exclusively divided the states into the 'haves' and 'have-nots', the haves represent the wealthy (ruling class) and the have-nots represent the youth (voters) whose interests are diametrically opposed to each other. Political power is only a handmaid of economic power. It is therefore, quite natural that the political institutions are bound to serve the interests of the wealthy depriving (youth) the voters equal opportunities. The political institutions in a capitalist society, pays lip-service to 'sovereignty of the people' in order to derive political right. It operates in a situation where all sections of society accept the legality of governing class in relations to roles impose on youth (voters) to continue serving they common interests.

In this situation, the state create government, pretends to chose representatives of proletariat and bourgeoisie. By implication youth who representing the strength of working class have no right to vote on parity, this was draw from the belief that both do not have equal share in governance. As it create an impression that the State has taking care of youth (workers) interests.

But, these were position of liberal democracy, to simply provide legitimacy to the ruling class that is not neutral. John (1978) has elucidated that "so long as the capitalist mode of production prevails, society remains divided into two antagonistic classes' capitalists and workers, who represent the ruling class and ruled classes respectively''. The state, being the agent of ruling class is mandate to serves at expense of the ruled class. The paper writes that youth who represent the ruled class was denied equal opportunity, the situation that breeds injustice, but this was widely accepted as a standard.

Under this ideology, the youth are made to believe that they are being ruled with their consent. But blindly follow bourgeois against their consent. Thus liberal democracy, in Marxist view, State is capable of preventing youth participation in electoral democracy so long as the nominees remain in power to serve the purpose, dictated by the State. And if, these economic and social inequalities are not removed, the liberal democracy will continue to serve as true democracy. But this position would not be acceptable to Marxist advocates.

Concept Democracy and Electoral Process

There is no universally accepted connotation of democracy. Various intellectuals have diverse view and explanations on the conceptualization of democracy. Democracy is the rule of the people (Falade, 2014). In this classic meaning of democracy, is a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by them (Appadorai, 2004). It require a common man with certain level of ability and character, rational conduct, active participation in the government and the understanding of public affairs; independent judgment, tolerance and unselfish devotion to public interest, to participate.

The paper write that democracy is the ultimate authority of governance, should though rest with the people themselves. when this idea is sought to be implemented through the mechanism of representative democracy, it is possible that the people may become inactive after choosing their representatives till the next general elections. (Gauba, (2007) avers that the small section of the citizens participates in the discussion that is beneficial to them who are loyal to their representatives. Such affairs confined citizens to votes the politicians, the political party and the programmes of their choice. Provided the activities capture their private interest. This implies that citizen participation is not a necessary cconditions of democracy, but it confined voters to vote for the politicians and political parties of their choice during the periodic elections. In other words, modem democracy is primarily the rule of politicians in which youths play a very limited role, at regular intervals.

Dahl (1991) writes that democracy is a competition between two or more elite groups for the power to govern the whole society, requiring only a low level of youth participation. Democracy believes in the principles of mutual discussion and persuasion. Mohammed and Garba (2019) believe that democracy as a system of government entails healthy competition between parties for an all effective positions of governance, devoid of violence for all encompassing levels of political participation in the selection of leaders through the conduct of periodically free and fair elections, and the observation of fundamental human rights.

The paper sees that the foregoing definitions and conceptualizations imply that democracy is essentially a people-centered form of government. In other words, when the citizens themselves play an active role m the process of formulation and implementation of public decisions, their activity is called political participation. The conventional mode of political participation includes voting, standing for officee, campaigning for a political party or contributing to the management of a community project, like public safety, cleanliness drive, or the maintenance of a public protest.

The place of elections, particularly in their transition process, in Kogi State had failed to strengthen democratic consolidation; especially the probity of electoral processes, in an emerging democracy, where administrative processes are weak and distrust across political actors in the State. Usually, electoral process is expected to add to democratic consolidation through free and fair election where the electorates are provided with the ample opportunity to vote for the candidates and parties that will represent their varying interests (Olakunle, Bamidele, Ake, Oluwaseun and Afolayan 2019). But in Kogi State, the electoral process brought about unnecessary political instability; as youths were recruited to play the game against the rule. It implies that the state proved unable to organize credible elections acceptable to all democratic players, particularly the opposition parties.

Youth Participation in Electoral Democracy

We have it in mind that democracy is the form of government connoting collective participation and anti-thesis to tyranny. This conception suggesting is that electoral democracy is a process leading to a form of government that emphasizes sovereignty or autonomy of the people (Omotola, 2006: 28). On electoral democracy and participation, Dahl (2000:34-40) elucidate the following criteria, which includes, participation of voters in elective representatives, freedom of expression, and judicial independence in electoral justice. At one extreme position of Dahl, we re-write that the concept popular participation has two key aspects such as participation and accountability. If the people are sovereign, they have right to participate in politics themselves. They also possess the right to hold those who govern them accountable for their action.

But at times, democracy built only on popular participation and political will of the people, sometimes failed to serve and protect the interest of people. So agree that, popular participation will mean little unless the country has democracy that is accountable, also where such opportunity is not restricted to those with adequate financial resource to participate. On this note, Todaro, (2008: 178) suggested that for successful electoral democracy, participation and accountability must be guaranteed by the laws of the land. And the principle of inclusion, equality and equity, require that everyone share equally or at least fairly in these key aspects of popular sovereignty. To fulfill this task of ensuring youth participation and accountability effectively, the electoral procedures must meet the following basic criteria. For instance, the elections must be meaningful, competitive, free, secret, fair, frequent, inclusive, and equal voting right.

The paper is concerned about applying these criteria to secure fair participation of youth in electoral democracy and justice. But if such is infringing upon therefore democracy is trading on illegal, unethical acts or deceitful conduct that will strike a harsh blow against democracy. Perhaps, the paper consented that these criteria reflects a vital requirement for democratic societies to obtain fairly participation of youth in electoral process. On this note Chukwu (2007:75) argued that all modern democracies hold elections but not all elections have youth participation in forming representative government. The reason is simple, not all modern democracies that hold elections adhere to the rules. The paper argues that others restrict and confined the youth to the role of manipulate the election results continue to remain in power. This sets of public officers considered politics as do or die affairs, and it is peculiar with the

developing nations in general and Kogi state in particular.

In Kogi State, youth in participatory democracy had little opportunity to participation in the decision-making process. Thus, under the prevailing system youth have little knowledge and understanding of political problems; voters are so indifferent to voting; political representatives are unwilling to public accountability and abuse of power are rampant in the whole administration. Hence citizen participation is not only a necessary condition of good society, but it is an essential part of good society.

Issues of Money Politics in Election

Money Politics is basically how parties fund their political activities at various stage of electoral process (Tenuche and Egwemi, 2020). In Kogi State, money politics is critical, but continue to constitute a great threat to democratic development. It is the hub of political process, which appears to be so dominant in the entire culture of electoral process. The disparaging implication of this paper is about use of money to hinder youth from exercising their political right. Though, Ojo, (2008) argues that money politics bothers around the entire electoral cycle including processes and procedures of political party operations and linked costs with electioneering. It is imperative to note that every political process requires funding in order to effectively operate; therefore, money is a necessary requirement for the success of any democratic system.

However, Tenuche and Egwemi, (2020) avers that the specific purpose the money serves in electoral activity are important issues for questioning. The paper argues that issues of money politics arises only when it set limits and restricting others contending candidate from participation for lacking adequate funds had violated the political right of other relevant actors. In a situation where it is over subscribed the institutions governing the processes of elections become compromised.

Money politics in Kogi State has continued to constitute a great threat to youth participation and country's nascent democracy. On this note, Onuoha and Ojo, (2018) revealed that money politics does not guarantee free, fair and credible electoral process. But the paper submits that the idea of money politics is to undermine credibility of youth seeking elective positions, under the watch of money bag. The paper also has in mind the general elections and primariess held in 2015 and 2023 in that regard were victim of the circumstances. Thus, youth can't have participatory democracy amidst money politics, these practice has infused Kogi democratic experience.

Democracy has been the most accepted system of government adopted by most countries in the world. Democracy is anchor on collective participation of both the ruler and the ruled in decision making process. The level of population growth and complexity of society in modern time renders the ancient Greek direct participation impossible with a possible adoption of more expedient representative democracy which is a situation where people are elected in a manner that the interest of the people are duly projected in decision making process (Jibrin and Michael, 2020). The paper sees popular participation and accountability, as opportunity to freely choose their representative, hold them accountable for their actions. Ogundiya and Baba, (2007) write that election in contemporary society, the youth remains an essential part of a democratic process, to enables them decide and form a government at regular interval.

The paper argues that the cases of 20015, 2019 and 2023 general election in Kogi State expresses how nasty to hold successful elections in the study area. Where, for example, youth were recruited as thugs to truncate the entire electoral process. Against this background Tenuche and Egwemi, (2020:203) explicitly submit that the core attribute of democracy lies in the ability of the electorate to choose their representative in government through free and fair election. Not on the trend of votes buying and monetization of electoral process that undermines the outcome of the process, especially for lacking fund to seek political power. This is a threat to electoral democracy in Nigeria.

Research Methodology

The survey research method was adopted for this study. This method was used because it is appropriate for obtaining responses relating to the objectives of the paper. The paper adopted questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. The areas of study were Dekina, Lokoja and Okene LGA respectively. The populations of this study includes: political parties member, electorate and youth

appointees from the selected Local Government Area, Kogi State. National Population Census (2006), 23,112 is the official figure for those within the ages of 18 to 35 years (National Population Commission, 2006).

i Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sampling technique was used to select the respondents. This was purposive sampling procedure. The researchers purposively chose the population of study because, it allows for the deliberate selection of the elements that made up the sample (Dekina, Lokoja and Okene youths) the purposive sampling was used to pick 180 respondents. Twenty respondents (20) were drawn from among political party, electorate and youth appointees from the selected LGA. The secondary source relies on library.

Data were analyzed using Mean Score Analysi**s (**five point Likert type of scale). **Decision Rule:** the mean of these weights is 3 [(5+4+3 + 2 + 1) ÷ 5 = 3]. A mean score of 3 or more implied that the respondents agreed to that particular research statement, while a mean score less than 3 implied that most of the respondents disagreed with the item associated with that mean score.

ii Data Presentation and Result Analysis

This section presents the analysis of data collected from political party, electorate and youth appointees in the selected LGA. Out of one hundred and eight (180) copies of questionnaire distributed, one hundred and seventy-eight copies (178) were retrieved and analysed. The results of respondents are presented below:

Table 1 Youth participation in electoral democracy in Nigeria

s/n	**Statement of Research Variables**	**(5) SA**	**(4) A**	**(3) U**	**(2) D**	**(1) SD**	$\overline{X}$	**Decision**
1	Youth is confined to votes for politicians, parties and programmes of choice	78	69	9	19	3	4.10	Agreed
2	Youth restricted from power to govern their society	76	65	15	20	2	4.08	Agreed
3	Very small section of youth participate in any discussion in Nigeria	92	49	14	21	2	4.16	Agreed
4	Participatory democracy don't denote the actives involvement of youth in policy formulation and implementation process in Kogi State	90	51	24	10	3	4.20	Disagreed
5	Youth modes of political participation includes voting, public protest and political thugs as means of survival	85	50	15	16	12	4.01	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 shows the extent to which youth participate in electoral democracy in Kogi state. The mean of frequency table in each of the statement of research variables shows that 740(4.1) of the total respondents agreed that youth is confined to votes for politicians, parties and programmes of choice. The findings also shows that 727(4.08) of the total respondents agreed that youth restricted from power to govern their society. Equally the findings reveal that 742(4.16) of the total respondents agreed that Very small section of youth participate in any discussion affecting their lives in Kogi State. Furthermore, the finding show that 749(4.20) of the total respondents agreed that Participatory democracy don't denote the actives involvement of youth in policy formulation and implementation process in Kogi State. The finding of indicate that 714 (4.01) of the respondents agreed that Youth modes of political participation includes voting, public protest and political thugs as means of survival.

Interpretations from the table reveal that the calculated mean of the table is greater than weights of the means, as such; it implied that the respondents agreed youth participation in electoral democracy is mere means of survival and did not play the role to reflect the basic principle of democracy, whose outcome denotes the active involvement of individuals and groups in the governmental processes to affect their lives.

Table 2 Money politics, gimmicks and youth participatory strength

s/n	**Statement of Research Variables**	**(5) SA**	**(4) A**	**(3) U**	**(2) D**	**(1) SD**	$\bar{X}$	**Decision**
1	The role of money in election is a threat to democracy	69	78	3	19	9	4.00	Agreed
2	Money politics and vote buying debased the power of electorate in Kogi State	76	65	2	15	20	3.91	Agreed
3	Political finance trends, relating to registration, campaign and party funding restrict youth participation	49	92	14	2	21	3.82	Agreed
4	The strategy of money politics induce voters during election, has overtake the place of merit in Kogi State	85	60	20	7	6	4.18	Disagree d
5	Vote buying exchanging political rights of voters for material rights	55	86	10	13	14	3.84	Agreed

Source: *Field Survey, 2024.*

Table 2 shows how money politics and gimmicks have reduced their participatory strength in electoral democracy in Kogi State. The mean of frequency table in each of the statement of research variables shows that 713(4.00) of the total respondents agreed that the role of money in election is a threat to democracy. The findings also show that 696 (3.91) of the total respondents agreed that Money politics and vote buying debased the power of electorate in Kogi State. Equally the findings reveal that 680(3.82) of the total respondents agreed that Political finance trends, relating to registration, campaign and party funding restrict youth participation. Furthermore, the finding show that 745(4.18) of the total respondents agreed the strategy of money politics induce voters during election, has overtaken the place of merit in Kogi State. The finding of indicate that 685 (3.84) of the respondents agreed that Vote buying exchanging political rights of voters for material rights.

Table 3 Measure to enhance youth participation in electoral democracy

s/n	**Statement of Research Variables**	**(5) SA**	**(4) A**	**(3) U**	**(2) D**	**(1) SD**	$\bar{X}$	**Decision**
1	Free sales of nomination and interest forms	84	57	11	21	5	4.08	Agreed
2	Outright control of monetization of entire electoral process	76	65	15	20	2	4.08	Agreed
3	Ensuring equal representation	69	72	13	4	20	3.93	Agreed
4	Sensitization of electorate over the danger of illicit act of money politics	90	51	24	10	3	4.20	Disagree d
5	Credible and transparent of electoral management body	63	78	8	19	10	3.92	Agreed

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

Table 3 shows Measure to enhance youth participation strength in electoral democracy in Nigeria. The mean of frequency table in each of the statement of research variables shows 728(4.08), 727 (4.08), 700(3.93), 749(4.20) and 699 (3.92) respectively of the total respondents agreed; that the role of money in election is a threat to democracy. The findings also show that 727 (4.08) of the total respondents agreed that free sales of nomination and interest forms, outright control of monetization of entire electoral process, ensuring equal representation, sensitization of electorate over the danger of illicit act of money politics and credible and transparent of electoral management body. This implied that the respondents agreed the above statement of research variables are measure to enhances youth participation in electoral democracy in Kogi State.

Discussion of findings

The table reveal the calculated mean of the table, which is greater than weights of the means, as such; it implied that the respondents agreed that there many cases where youth participation in electoral democracy is mere means of survival and did not play the role to reflect the basic principle of democracy, whose outcome denotes the active involvement of individuals and groups in the governmental processes to affect their lives.

In the second table the respondents agreed there many cases where money politics has taken center stage in its political process to tricky and punctuate youth participatory in electoral democracy in Kogi State. These were explicitly demonstrated in between 2015 and 2023 elections, while youths were confined to perform the role of thugs during and after the elections. Most braved and enlighten youth were recruited as political thugs and 'data boys', whose participation revolves intimidation, electoral fraud, propaganda and violence considered as means of survival (Jibrin and Michael, 2020). The implication of money politics and scheming adopted by ruling and governing classes target at recruiting the youths as thugs to secured victory at the poll. Similarly, Tenuche and Egwemi, (2020) submit that the few with financial and political ambition used their wealth to hijack the parties of their choice. Ezekwesili in Tenuche and Egwemi, describe Nigeria electoral politics as cash and carry democracy. It is a danger and grave one at that to Nigeria democracy.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The paper discussed challenges associated with youth participation in electoral democracy in Kogi State. It provides explanations on how has money politics hinder youth participation in electoral democracy in Kogi State. In attempt to investigate this challenge; the study establishes strong inadequacies on the existing studies and to recommend the following

The electoral management should set limit to electoral finance to accommodate all participant of electoral process.

In political space during election where equality is replaced by political inequality cannot produce electoral integrity. Thus, such should not be allowed to declared winners without integrity.

The paper recommends sensitization of youth and electorate on the danger of illict act of money politics and vote buying that abounds today Again to re-strategies political finance trends-relating to registration, campaign and party funding; on the danger of illicit act of money politics that restrict youth participation. Finally, the electoral management body should be transparent in the discharge of their duties, while setting out guidelines for the funding of electoral democracy in Kogi State and beyond.

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CORRUPTION AND ITS IMPACT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
Corruption in Nigeria is a severe hindrance to the country's long-term prosperity. This study examines the many impacts of corruption on Nigeria's sustainable development trajectory. It is based on a comprehensive examination of existing literature, including insights from many scholarly sources. The study begins by defining corruption and sustainable development in Nigeria, delving into their historical contexts and philosophical frameworks. It investigates corruption's evolution and its complex relationships with political, economic, and social factors. Various forms of corruption are investigated in the political, corporate, judicial, and law enforcement sectors, with institutional inadequacies, rent-seeking behaviour, and cultural issues identified as major drivers. Furthermore, the analysis examines the impact of corruption on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on economic consequences such as misappropriation of public funds and decreased foreign investment, as well as social and political consequences such as eroded trust in governmental institutions and societal unrest. The study also assesses existing anti-corruption efforts in Nigeria using case studies and empirical facts, building on lessons from similar situations. Finally, it identifies research gaps, examines future directions, and makes policy recommendations for combating corruption and promoting sustainable development in Nigeria.

Introduction

Nnoli's (1980) ground-breaking work, "Corruption and Political Culture in Nigeria," delves exhaustively into the historical and cultural underpinnings of corruption, which is profoundly established in Nigerian politics. This investigation into the origins of corruption establishes a solid basis, shedding light on its pervasive existence in Nigeria. Building on this foundation, new empirical studies such as Olawale and Garuba's (2015) paper "Corruption and Sustainable Development in Nigeria: Mapping the Path Forward" provide essential insights into the complex effects of corruption on sustainable development efforts.

Also, policy-oriented papers such as the World Bank's assessment of "Corruption in Nigeria: Analysis of Bribery and Public Trust" carefully examine the complicated policy consequences of corruption on efforts towards

sustainable development. These assessments are supplemented by case studies, such as Adeleke and Olatunji's (2019) study on "Corruption and Environmental Sustainability: Examining Oil Pollution in the Niger Delta Region," which provide concrete examples of how corruption stifles sustainable development efforts.

Despite these scholarly efforts, Ibrahim and Mohammed's (2022) paper "Corruption and Economic Development in Nigeria: An Analysis Using Panel Data" identifies a major vacuum in the literature. Specifically, there is a lack of awareness about how corruption connects with critical areas such as healthcare and education, limiting progress towards sustainable development goals. Recognising this vacuum, future study must focus on unravelling the intricate dynamics of corruption in healthcare and education, as well as its negative impact on Nigeria's long-term growth. This is especially important considering corruption's standing as a significant impediment to reaching global development goals, such as the World Bank's 2030 target of reducing extreme poverty and creating shared prosperity among the world's poorest 40%.

Corruption's negative impact extends beyond the economic sphere, eroding public trust, damaging social contracts, and deepening inequities. Furthermore, in vulnerable situations, corruption fuels instability and terrorism, creating cycles of antagonism and disenfranchisement. Combating corruption is not just a moral duty, but also a practical requirement for promoting equitable growth and protecting democratic institutions. Nations may limit the negative impacts of corruption and set the path for long-term growth by improving openness, accountability, and the rule of law.Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and a major oil producer, is at a critical point in its growth. Despite its abundant natural resources, pervasive corruption stifles growth, sustaining underdevelopment and wealth disparity.

The importance of eliminating corruption cannot be emphasised, as it undermines governance systems and erodes public trust. Without coordinated measures to combat corruption, sustainable development would remain elusive, with disastrous effects for both the economy and the population.

In conclusion, while various studies have shed light on the origins and consequences of corruption in Nigeria, there is still a pressing need for comprehensive evaluations of its impact on long-term development outcomes. By using rigorous methodology, researchers may contribute to a better understanding of corruption's systemic effects and inspire evidence-based policy initiatives aimed at promoting a fairer and prosperous future for Nigeria and beyond, highlighting the importance of this work.

Conceptual analysis of the term Corruption and Sustainable Development

Corruption and sustainable growth are two distinct notions with quite different consequences. The claim that bribery has a significant impact on sustainable development highlights this divide. Numerous studies have found that the influence of corruption on a nation's long-term growth differs depending on the effectiveness of its institutions.

a. Corruption

Corruption is a complex phenomenon that defies clear definition due to its multifarious nature, which involves the abuse of entrusted power for personal benefit at the expense of the common good. Scholars and professionals from several fields have investigated its various appearances, causes, and consequences. Rose-Ackerman (1999) defines corruption as "misuse of public power for private benefit," which includes bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism (World Bank, 1997). Economic views, such as Tullock's (1967), emphasise incentives and possibilities for corruption, whereas institutional viewpoints focus on legal frameworks and cultural norms. According to Bandura (1990), situational variables and moral disengagement mechanisms have a role in maintaining corruption.

Corruption stifles economic progress by distorting markets, discouraging investment, and undermining public trust (Mauro, 1995). It exacerbates social inequities by diverting resources away from critical services (Kaufmann et al., 2000) and erodes democratic government by weakening the rule of law. Corruption prevention efforts include legal, institutional, and cultural actions aiming at increasing accountability (Rose-Ackerman, 2001). Transparency systems and whistleblower

protections discourage corrupt behaviour (Sung, 2004), but international collaboration, aided by organisations such as Transparency International, promotes anti-corruption principles (Doig and Theobald, 2000).

Khan (1996) defines corruption as activities that deviate from established norms for personal gain, but Black and Garner (2000) highlight the abuse of public positions. Toyo (2006) links corruption to societal decline, particularly in Nigeria. Corruption, derived from "Corruptus," denotes ethical degeneration (ADB, 2003), undermines democratic institutions (Johnston, 2000), and stifles economic growth (Gupta et al., 1998). Adverse effects include lower birth rates and literacy (Gupta et al., 1998), as well as increased wealth disparity (Ahlin and Bose, 2007; Foellmi and Oechslin, 2007; Kulshreshtha, 2007). To summarise, corruption is a persistent issue with ramifications for governance, economic prosperity, and social justice. Addressing it involves an awareness of its causes and consequences, as well as attempts to increase transparency and accountability.

b. Sustainable Development

Since its inception, the notion of sustainable development has evolved through numerous stages, gaining substantial attention from businesses and organisations interested in its historical evolution (Tomislav, 2018). It has gained widespread acceptance across disciplines, emerging as one of the most commonly referenced principles of sustainable development (Tomislav, 2018).

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) defines sustainable development as development that fulfils current demands while preserving future generations' ability to meet their own (WCED, 1987). This definition emphasises two crucial concepts: prioritising the world's poor's basic needs and acknowledging present and potential constraints (Daniela & Rupert, 2006).

According to Seer (1977), sustainable development includes more than just capital accumulation and economic progress, emphasising the significance of correcting disparities in food, employment, and income. To ensure long-term development, a theoretical socioeconomic framework is required to achieve aims such as increasing real income, improved educational outcomes, healthcare, and general quality of life (Pearce, 1989). Harwood (1990) defines sustainable development as an approach that prioritises increasing human benefits while conserving environmental resources. Lele (1991) defines sustainable development as a structural era of change that can continue indefinitely. Duran et al. (2015) suggest that sustainable development encourages environmentally friendly development by allowing for the sustainable use of resources.

The Brundtland Report, published in 1987, popularised the notion by defining sustainable development as development that fulfils current needs without jeopardising future generations' ability to satisfy their own needs. Since then, sustainable development has been widely explored and argued, with numerous scholars expressing their perspectives (UN, 2015). Scholars such as Daly (1996) and Costanza et al. (1997) emphasise the significance of understanding ecological boundaries and incorporating ecological principles into economic decision-making.

Furthermore, the social dimension of sustainable development has received attention, with authors such as Sen (1999) emphasising the necessity of increasing individuals' skills and freedoms. Furthermore, the notion has evolved to include broader problems like as governance, equity, and cultural diversity, as evidenced by the concept of sustainability transitions (Grin et al., 2010). To summarise, sustainable development is a diverse and dynamic notion that evolves in response to shifting societal requirements, environmental concerns, and economic realities.

Historical Roots of Nigerian Corruption

Corruption in Nigeria is a complicated issue that has persisted throughout its history, from colonial times to current governance structures. The colonial heritage has left an indelible mark on Nigerian society, including exploitative economic practices, resource extraction, and hierarchical administrative systems that create a culture of patronage and bribery (Falola & Matthew, 2008). British rule also sowed seeds of discord with its "divide and rule" policy, aggravating ethnic and regional conflicts that continue to feed corruption.Nigeria's significant oil reserves, discovered in the 1950s, created a contradictory cycle of opulence and corruption.

While oil funds flooded the country, they were also used by political elites to accumulate personal fortune, resulting in rampant corruption and mismanagement in the oil sector (Ross, 1999). The lack of openness aggravated the problem, continuing the cycle of corruption.

Nigeria's weak institutions have allowed corruption to grow with impunity. The legal system is inefficient, anti-corruption institutions are frequently ineffectual, and accountability measures are severely weak. As a result, corrupt people typically avoid prosecution, weakening efforts to eliminate corruption (Transparency International, 2021). Ethnic politics exacerbates the problem, with politicians using ethnic allegiance to concentrate power and resources for their own groups, frequently at the expense of others (Diamond & Leonardo, 2005). This winner-take-all mindset encourages corruption and nepotism, continuing a cycle of inequality and injustice.

Military dictatorship in Nigeria fostered corruption, as dictators utilised their positions to enrich themselves while suppressing dissent (Ihonvbere& John, 2001). The lack of democratic accountability throughout these administrations allowed corruption to grow unabated, leaving an indelible mark on Nigeria's government landscape. Clientelism and patronage networks are prevalent in Nigerian politics, with politicians rewarding loyal followers with favours and resources in exchange for political devotion (Bayart, Stephen, &Béatrice, 1999). This system values personal ties over merit, promoting corruption and dependency in the political system.

In the final analysis, corruption in Nigeria is firmly ingrained in its historical, political, and socioeconomic processes. Addressing this chronic issue requires comprehensive reforms that target institutional weaknesses, promote transparency, and build an accountability culture at all levels of government.

Magnitude and Types of Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption in Nigeria remains a stubborn and ubiquitous problem, permeating all aspects of society and inhibiting progress. Bribery is a common activity, with both governmental officials and private persons involved in criminal transactions. Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) shows Nigeria's sad reality, with a score of 25 out of 100 and a rating of 149th out of 180 evaluated nations, indicating rampant corruption. Embezzlement and misappropriation of funds increase Nigeria's corruption problems, particularly among public officials tasked with managing resources for development projects and critical services. The Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) has released a damning report exposing enormous losses of over $42 billion due to crude oil theft and pipeline vandalism between 2009 and 2018 (NEITI, 2019).

Nepotism and cronyism foster a culture of favouritism and unearned privilege by allowing individuals to gain positions of power through personal relationships. This technique, as extensively documented by Olaniyan and Olowu (2004), frequently results in inept persons having crucial responsibilities, increasing inefficiency and corruption within organisations. Electoral fraud tarnishes the democratic process and calls into question the legitimacy of Nigeria's elections. Eunomia's 2021 investigation found that voter intimidation, ballot stuffing, and result manipulation impair the integrity of electoral outcomes. Corporate corruption exacerbates Nigeria's problems, as corporations use bribery, fraud, and tax evasion to obtain an unfair advantage in the marketplace. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) believes that business wrongdoing causes enormous losses of around $6 billion every year.

Judicial corruption undermines public trust in the judicial system, with reports of judges seeking payments to influence court decisions. Human Rights Watch (2020) emphasises the absence of judicial independence and accountability, which exacerbates the systemic problem. Police corruption undermines trust in public institutions, with widespread allegations of extortion and complicity with criminals. A survey conducted by the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) echoes public perception, with 94% of Nigerians believing in police corruption. Addressing corruption necessitates collaborative effort from governments, civil society organisations, and the global community. Measures such as increasing openness, strengthening anti-corruption legislation, and creating accountability systems are critical to combating Nigeria's widespread corruption and paving the path for long-term development and prosperity.

The impact of corruption on sustainable development in Nigeria

Corruption casts a pervasive shadow over Nigeria's efforts to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a variety of areas, impeding progress in poverty alleviation, healthcare, education, infrastructure development, environmental sustainability, and social equity. In the field of poverty alleviation, corruption syphons off resources meant for programmes designed to help the poor, significantly undermining their effectiveness. Funds intended to help the needy are regularly misused or embezzled by corrupt authorities, aggravating the situation of the country's poorest residents (Transparency International 2019).

Corruption in the healthcare sector causes resource misallocation, resulting in dilapidated healthcare facilities and the growth of counterfeit medications. Healthcare budget theft and the frequency of bribery during procurement processes result in inadequate healthcare services, exacerbating health inequities and limiting progress towards SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) (UNDP Nigeria, 2018). Corruption hampers efforts to improve educational performance by allowing examination misconduct, theft of educational money, and the sale of teacher positions. Such misconduct jeopardises access to quality education, reinforcing cycles of poverty and inequality (Human Rights Watch, 2016).

Corruption's negative impact extends to infrastructure development, where it results in low quality construction, exaggerated expenses, and project delays. The diversion of funds intended for infrastructure projects limits investment in essential areas such as transportation, energy, and water supply, stifling economic growth and sustainable development (World Bank, 2019). In terms of environmental sustainability, corruption contributes to ecological deterioration by encouraging illicit logging, oil theft, and pollution, notably in the environmentally fragile Niger Delta region. Poor implementation of environmental legislation, as well as collusion between corrupt officials and extractive businesses, exacerbate ecological damage, endangering biodiversity and human health and impeding progress towards SDG 13 (Al Jazeera, 2020).

Furthermore, corruption exacerbates socioeconomic imbalances by fostering an environment of impunity in which the wealthy and well-connected benefit at the expense of the marginalised. Disparities in access to critical services like clean water, sanitation, and justice exacerbate the marginalisation of vulnerable demographics like women, children, and minority communities, impeding progress towards social fairness and inclusion (The Guardian, 2020). Finally, corruption appears as a major hindrance to Nigeria's pursuit of the SDGs, stifling efforts in poverty alleviation, healthcare, education, infrastructure development, environmental sustainability, and social fairness. To nurture an environment of integrity and good governance, comprehensive changes must be implemented, including strengthening institutions, increasing transparency and accountability systems, and encouraging civic engagement.

The Economic, Social, and Political Implications of Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption weaves an insidious pattern through Nigeria's broad economic landscape, leaving a trail of economic disaster. This issue not only depletes public coffers but also undermines the potential for long-term economic progress, prolonging a cycle of poverty and inequality. According to Transparency International, Nigeria is frequently ranked as one of the most corrupt countries in the world, a questionable distinction that puts a long shadow over its economic prospects. One of the most visible effects of corruption is the loss of public cash. Misappropriation, embezzlement, and bribery shift resources meant for the common good into the wallets of a privileged few. The extent of this loss is enormous, with estimates indicating that billions of dollars are lost each year due to corrupt activities (Transparency International, 2023). This money, which were intended for infrastructure development, healthcare, and education, are instead syphoned away, continuing the cycle of underdevelopment and poverty.

Furthermore, corruption discourages foreign direct investment (FDI), preventing overseas enterprises from entering the Nigerian market. Investors are concerned about the widespread corruption that pervades numerous sectors, seeing it as a substantial risk to their investments (Ayadi & Amoussouga, 2020). This reluctance to spend stifles economic diversification and

innovation, limiting Nigeria's ability to compete in the global market. Another aspect of corruption's economic impact is the distorting of market mechanisms. When bribery and kickbacks drive corporate transactions, resource allocation becomes skewed, favouring those with political ties over merit or efficiency. This distortion stifles competition, discourages entrepreneurship, and undermines free-market principles (Ogbeidi, 2020).

Furthermore, corruption slows economic growth by reducing productivity and efficiency. Misallocation of resources, along with the erosion of public trust, generates an atmosphere that discourages investment and entrepreneurship. Bureaucratic red tape and rent-seeking behaviour stifle innovation and dynamism in the economy (Kubo, 2019). Perhaps most egregiously, corruption worsens income disparity, widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Those with authority and influence use their positions for personal benefit, exacerbating the disparity between the wealthy elite and the destitute masses (Ayadi&Amoussouga, 2020). This inequality affects social cohesiveness and perpetuates the poverty cycle by making it difficult for individuals who lack finances to access basic services and opportunities.

In conclusion, corruption has a significant impact on Nigeria's economy, draining public finances, discouraging investment, distorting market mechanisms, limiting growth, and worsening inequality. Addressing this ubiquitous issue demands broad reforms aimed at increasing openness, strengthening institutions, and developing an accountability culture. Only through concentrated anti-corruption efforts will Nigeria be able to realise its full economic potential and chart a course for long-term growth.

Corruption, in its various manifestations, such as bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism, has a significant social and political cost. Its implications are broad and diverse. First, corruption undermines trust in government institutions. When citizens view individuals in authority to be corrupt, they lose faith in these institutions' ability to serve the public's interests fairly and effectively. This erosion of confidence frequently results in lower civic engagement and compliance with laws and regulations (Rothstein, 2011).

Second, corruption promotes political instability by creating a climate of uncertainty and unpredictability. It encourages rent-seeking behaviour and the establishment of patronage networks, which can destabilise governments and spark power battles between rival factions (Khan, 2016). Furthermore, civilizations plagued by corruption frequently see increased social instability. This unhappiness originates from feelings of injustice and animosity, especially among marginalised groups that bear the brunt of corruption's consequences. People can express their dissatisfaction with corrupt elites through protests, marches, and even violent conflict (Uslaner, 2008).

Corruption can increase ethnic and religious tensions. It fosters patterns of discrimination and exclusion, making particular groups feel disproportionately victimised or denied chances as a result of corrupt behaviours. This exacerbates existing societal differences and feeds intergroup conflict (Treisman, 2015). Furthermore, corruption is a major danger to democracy and good governance. It disrupts the election process by allowing affluent individuals and special interest groups to buy influence, threatening political equality and accountability (Persson et al., 2010).

Furthermore, corruption undermines the rule of law, stifles economic development, and thwarts efforts to increase government transparency and accountability (Mauro, 1995).To summarise, corruption undermines trust in government institutions, contributes to political instability, fuels social discontent, exacerbates ethnic and religious conflicts, and poses severe challenges to democracy and governance. Its insidious effects pervade every part of society, needing coordinated measures to tackle it successfully.

Anti-Corruption Initiatives and Policy Responses in Nigeria

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has been active in investigating and prosecuting corruption, financial crimes, and money laundering cases, leading in convictions and asset recoveries (Ezra, 2020). However, its effectiveness is hampered by low resources, political influence, and insufficient cooperation with other law enforcement authorities. Similarly, the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) works to

eliminate corruption in the public sector through preventive measures, enforcement actions, and public education (Babajide 2018). However, like the EFCC, the ICPC has issues such as insufficient money, political influence, and capacity constraints.

To improve the efficacy of these anti-corruption agencies, actions such as strengthening institutional independence, increasing financial allocations, and encouraging inter-agency coordination are required (Ezra, 2020; Babajide, 2018). The Nigerian government's whistleblower programme was implemented to encourage people to disclose cases of corruption (Ugwu, 2019). Despite financial incentives, whistleblowers continue to fear retaliation and a lack of proper protection. To improve the policy's effectiveness, it is critical to provide legal protections for whistleblowers, ensure timely and effective responses to disclosures, and resolve confidentiality issues (Ugwu, 2019).

Nigeria's membership in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) demonstrates its commitment to transparency, citizen engagement, and anti-corruption initiatives. Nonetheless, implementation of OGP obligations has been slow, notably in areas such as asset disclosure and beneficial ownership transparency. To increase the impact of OGP activities, implementation must be accelerated, civil society engagement encouraged, and commitments held accountable (Obi, 2019). Nigeria has legal frameworks in place to tackle corruption, including the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act and the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act (Adeyemi, 2020). However, enforcement of these rules is inconsistent, and legal loopholes impede prosecution efforts.

To solve these difficulties, it is critical to strengthen legal frameworks, close loopholes, and ensure enforcement is free of political interference (Adeyemi, 2020). To summarise, Nigeria has implemented numerous anti-corruption efforts, regulations, and institutional structures. However, its usefulness is frequently hampered by issues such as insufficient finance, political meddling, and a lack of collaboration. To support anti-corruption initiatives, it is critical to overcome these difficulties, strengthen legislative frameworks, increase institutional capacity, and promote transparency and accountability.

Case Studies and Empirical Evidence on the Impact of Corruption on Sustainable Development in Specific Sectors or Regions of Nigeria

The Nigerian oil and gas industry have long struggled with widespread corruption, as evidenced by historic examples such as the "Malabu Oil Deal," in which billions of dollars were allegedly syphoned through unethical means. This widespread corruption has hampered Nigeria's road to sustainable development, preventing much-needed investments in critical sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, and education (Transparency International, 2019). Similarly, corruption in the construction sector, including bribery and embezzlement, has slowed Nigeria's infrastructure development. Mismanagement of project money, notably in road construction, has resulted in inadequate infrastructure at exorbitant costs, compromising the country's long-term development goals (Akinola, 2018).

Similarly, corruption in the healthcare industry has prevented many residents from receiving high-quality care. Embezzlement of monies intended for healthcare infrastructure and drug procurement, as well as irregular payment of healthcare personnel, have all contributed to inefficiencies and lower healthcare results, increasing existing disparities (Adegoke, 2020). Corruption in the education system manifests itself in a variety of ways, including exam fraud and misappropriation of monies intended for school development. Bribery in the admissions process reduces the quality and accessibility of education in Nigeria, prolonging inequality and impeding skill development (Onyebuchi, 2019). These case studies and empirical research highlight the negative impact of corruption on Nigeria's long-term growth in a variety of sectors. Combating corruption is critical to promoting openness, accountability, and equitable development in the country.

Comparative Analysis: The Impact of Corruption on Sustainable Development in Similar Contexts

Brazil, like Nigeria, has long faced institutional corruption. Brazil has adopted an impressive approach to addressing this issue, establishing dedicated anti-corruption agencies such as the Federal Police and the Public Prosecutor's Office. These entities have played key roles in carrying

out high-profile investigations, such as "Operation Car Wash" (Operação Lava Jato), which resulted in the conviction and incarceration of numerous politicians and business people engaged in corruption scandals.

Furthermore, Brazil has introduced transparency initiatives, such as the Public Information Access Law (LAI), which empowers citizens by providing them with access to government information, thereby enhancing responsibility. Ferraz and Finan (2008) highlight the importance of decentralisation in Brazil's fight against corruption. Their research reveals that distributing government resources and decision-making processes can reduce corruption, showing that decentralisation is a potentially beneficial strategy.

South Korea, a country that has previously struggled with severe corruption, has made significant headway through a multidimensional approach that includes legal reforms, powerful enforcement measures, and shifts in public attitudes. Notably, the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) has played an important role in fighting corruption and promoting transparency as an independent oversight agency. Furthermore, South Korea has passed strict anti-corruption legislation, such as the Kim Young-ran Act, which limits the value of gifts that public officials can accept. South Korea's effectiveness in combating corruption is also due to a robust civil society and citizens' active participation in anti-corruption efforts.

By comparing these tactics to Nigeria's situation, valuable insights into successful anti-corruption measures and sustainable development initiatives emerge. Nigeria might explore strengthening its anti-corruption institutions, establishing stronger legal frameworks, increasing transparency initiatives, and cultivating a culture of accountability and civic involvement to handle its own corruption issues and pave the path for long-term prosperity.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, it is clear that combating corruption in Nigeria is critical to promoting sustainable development. Nonetheless, there are significant gaps in the existing literature, giving potential for future research to give essential insights and tactics for eliminating corruption.

Future study recommendations include diving deeper into the core causes of corruption using interdisciplinary studies. These investigations should look into historical, cultural, economic, and political variables that contribute to corrupt behaviour. Furthermore, measuring the impact of existing anti-corruption efforts is critical for advising policymakers about more targeted approaches. Research into institutional reforms, capacity-building activities, the role of technology, social and behavioural interventions, community engagement, and cross-border collaboration is also critical.

Policy recommendations focus on legislative reforms, institutional strengthening, transparency and accountability promotion, ethical leadership development, civil society participation, and international cooperation. These policies seek to enact comprehensive anti-corruption legislation, invest in institutional capacity development, improve transparency in government operations, promote ethical leadership, foster partnerships with civil society and international organisations, and develop a long-term national strategy for combating corruption.

Nigeria can considerably combat corruption and promote sustainable development for the benefit of its citizens and future generations by resolving these gaps in the literature and implementing the recommended measures.

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PUBLIC POLICY AND INEQUALITY IN NIGERIA: AN INTERROGATION

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ABSTRACT
Inequality is a pressing issue in many societies and Nigeria in particular and policymakers face the challenge of creating effective policies to address it. This is why people-based policymaking is germane in developing policies that are tailored to the specific needs of different groups. Hence, addressing the root causes of inequality, it is possible to create a more just and equitable society for all. The paper adopts a qualitative research design, drawing on secondary sources such as policy documents, scholarly articles, official reports, relevant blog post, newspapers and books to examine the correlation and impact of public policy on inequality in Nigeria. Using content analysis, the study identified themes and patterns in the sourced secondary data and equally interpret the findings using the Pareto principle which states that a small number of causes are responsible for the majority of outcomes, can help to identify the most important factors that need to be addressed. The study recommends that the government should prioritize the fight against systematic corruption in Nigeria by allowing the principle of the rule of law prevail. The study also recommends for an increase in funding for social safety net programs, such as unemployment benefit, food assistance, in order to help reduce poverty and inequality.

Introduction

Nigeria as a country is bedeviled with the multifaceted menace of inequality which stretches from economic, social, and political. The level of inequality has since worsened since its post-colonial inception especially in terms of income and opportunity. Studies show that the covid-19 pandemic, the fuel subsidy removal, insecurity among other factors are responsible for such quack mires (Nwachukwu, 2021). Paradoxically, the country has a growing economy, but the benefits of this growth have not been evenly distributed, and a significant portion of the population remains in poverty. Despite Nigeria's economic growth, over 46% of the population still lives below the poverty line (Worlbank, 2023 cited in Fayokemi, 2023). In addition, inequality has led to increased social tensions and violence, as well as political instability. The lack of opportunity for the poor

has also led to a brain drain, with many of the country's best and brightest leaving for other countries in search of a better life. Reports show that the country has a high Gini coefficient, which clearly translates the level of inequality in the country. According to the Statistica (2024a) the Gini coefficient for Nigeria as at 2023 is 0.35 and a 0.468 in 2019, which indicates a high level of inequality. This can be attributed to a variety of factors, including the country's reliance on oil as its main source of income, the prevalence of corruption, and the lack of equal access to education and healthcare. These factors create a cycle of poverty and inequality that is difficult to break, leading to negative consequences for the country as a whole.

From past studies, there is a complex relationship between public policy and inequality in Nigeria. On the one hand, public policy can be used to reduce inequality by providing access to basic services like healthcare and education, as well as creating opportunities for employment and economic development. On the other hand, public policy can also contribute to inequality by creating barriers to access and by reinforcing existing power structures and inequality (Awortu, 2014; Salau, 2012; Ihonvbere, 2010; Maduekwe, 2011;) Hence, Public policy plays a crucial role in addressing issues like inequality among others, but the country's policies have so far been inadequate in achieving this goal (Salau, 2012; Ihonvbere, 2010; Maduekwe, 2011).A number of policies have been formulated and aimed at reforming the economy and providing more opportunities for the poor, but these efforts have been limited by the entrenched power of the wealthy elite. In addition, the political system has been characterized by instability, making it difficult to implement long-term solutions. It is against this backdrop that this paper assess public policy and inequality in Nigeria, while looking at the correlation, and the measurable of the former on the later within the socio-economic dimension. The paper is partitioned as follows and includes this introduction. The remaining parts of the paper shall include the following: the methodology, followed by a review of related literature, theoretical framework, and the discussions followed with a conclusion and recommendations.

Methodology

This paper adopts a qualitative research design, drawing on secondary sources such as policy documents, scholarly articles, official reports, relevant blog post, newspapers and books, to examine the correlation and impact of public policy on inequality in Nigeria. Using content analysis, the study will identify themes and patterns in the sourced secondary data, and equally interpret the findings using relevant theories and public policy concepts. The study will use case studies to provide specific examples and explore the effects of public policies on different groups of people in Nigeria. Finally, the study will draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the findings.

Conceptual Review

Inequality

Inequality is defined as the unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, and power among individuals or groups in society. In Nigeria, inequality manifests itself in a variety of ways, including income inequality, educational inequality, health inequality, and gender inequality (Ojo, 2018). Similarly, Haughton &Khandker cited in Ojo (2020) argued that inequality is the uneven distribution of resources especially among the different classes within a society. This corroborates the findings of a report by the United Nations (2013) which states that the disparities in the economic and social distribution are a bane to development. Economic inequality is often tied to other forms of social inequalities that plagues Nigerians, especially those being marginalized on the ground of ethnicity, religion or language (Kabeer, 2010). The impact is often felt by those marginalized or socially excluded groups and they are mostly concentrated in disadvantaged locations. The social, economic and spatial inequalities also contribute to political inequalities (UNDP, 2013). Inequality to Bryce (1923) is the differences in wealth among men and woman, especially in the distribution of worldly wealth. Bryce definition when looked at critically points to the structured system of gender inequality which is a major form of inequality in Nigeria.

Appadorai (1975) defines equality as the opposite of inequality- the unequal provision of opportunities for all: the right to work, to provide wages, to reasonable hours of labour and leisure and to self-government in industry,

so that everyone may have a fair start in life and the chance to develop the best that he is capable of. Deductively, it can be asserted that because men's differences in need and capacity are too great to be sustained for a lengthy period of time, at least there should be a leveled playing ground to allow persons, gender, income, caste, race, religion and affiliations. Interestingly, Hume (1922) warned that concepts like inequality and equality can best be understood from a relative and not absolute lens. He holds that "wherever we depart from equality, we rob the poor of more satisfaction than we add to the rich". The rule of equality is useful and has been shown by history to be not wholly impracticable. By adopting it, we avoid the ugly spectable of an economic system in which the luxury of a few is paralleled by the misery of the many.

Public Policy

According to Lindblom (1979) public policy refers to the actions and decisions of governments that are intended to address societal problems and achieve specific goals. This definition highlights the link between public policy and the exercise of state power. Ideally, it involves a range of actors, including elected officials, government bureaucrats, interest groups, and citizens (Easton, 1965). According to (Ojo, 2020) the process of developing and implementing public policy is complex and contentious, but it is essential for addressing societal challenges and improving the lives of citizens. According to Osaghae (2010) public policy can be defined as a purposive course of action undertaken by a government to address a societal problem or achieve a specific goal. The actions taken in the pursuit of public policy are determined by a complex set of factors, including political institutions, societal values, and economic conditions. Additionally, the effectiveness of public policy is determined by a variety of factors, including the clarity of goals, the availability of resources, and the level of public support for the government/policy.

One of the leading definitions of public policy comes from political scientist John Kingdon (2003), he holds that public policy is "a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern." This definition highlights the intentionality of public policy and its focus on addressing issues of concern in the eyes of the government. Another scholar, Dryzek (1987) defines public policy as "a course of action taken by a government in response to social or economic issues." Dryzek's definition emphasizes the importance of considering the context and the social and economic factors that influence public policy. Similarly, Dye (1996) sees Public policy as whatever governments choose to do or not to do. Dye's definition emphasizes the element of choice in public policy and highlights the fact that governments have the power to both act and refrain from acting. At this juncture, it is worth noting that public policy is a complex and evolving field. This accounts for the different approaches and definitions of the concept. Hence, it can be concluded that it is the most pertinent tools that can be employed to address inequality, and it's important for policymakers to continually evaluate and adapt their policies based on the changing needs of society.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Pareto principle/theory to explain the correlation between public policy and inequality in Nigeria. The concept was first developed by the Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto in the early 1900s. Pareto observed that a small number of individuals or firms tended to have a disproportionate amount of wealth or income, and he proposed the 80/20 rule as a way to explain this phenomenon (Pareto, 2014). The Pareto principle, suggests that a small number of inputs can lead to a disproportionately large impact. In the context of public policy and inequality in Nigeria, this means that a few key policies could have a major impact on reducing inequality. Marginal returns, or the diminishing returns of additional efforts, suggest that the most impactful policies may have already been implemented. The Pareto principle provides a useful lens for analyzing the potential for reducing inequality through public policy in Nigeria (Thomas &Kvilhaug, 2022).

As there are no roses without thorns, there are a few criticisms that have been raised about the Pareto principle and its use in analyzing policy effectiveness. One criticism is that it oversimplifies the complexity of real-world problems and ignores the many factors that contribute to inequality. Another criticism is that it can lead to a focus on the "quick wins" rather than long-term solutions to inequality (Friedrich, 1965). Despite this criticism the Pareto's principles will be used to explain the correlation

between inequality and public policy in Nigeria. This is because the principle has some distinctive strengths: It can help to prioritize policy options based on their potential impact, which can be useful for decision makers who are faced with limited budget as is always alleged in the case of Nigeria. Again, it can provide a quantitative measure of policy outcomes, which can be useful for evaluating the effectiveness of policies.

Dimensions of Inequality in Nigeria

Inequality in Nigeria is multidimensional and nebulous. According to (Ikpe, 2016) inequality is largely due to the uneven distribution of wealth and resources, as well as the lack of opportunities for the poor to improve their economic status. To Ikpe (2016) multiple dimensions of inequality in Nigeria is comprised of economic inequality, political inequality, social inequality, and gender inequality. In terms of economic inequality, there is a large disparity between the rich and the poor, with the richest 10% of the population owning 70% of the country's wealth (Ogunbode,2016; Nwachukwu; 2021). Political inequality is evident in the concentration of power and resources among a small elite, while social inequality is reflected in the lack of access to basic services for many Nigerians. Finally, gender inequality is a major issue, with women facing discrimination in areas such as education, employment, and property ownership.

Political inequality

Political inequality is one of the most protested form of inequality in Nigeria (Oyediran&Olorunfemi, 2015; Ogunbode, 2016; Ikpe, 2016). One of the central aspects is the unequal distribution of political power. For example, a small group of elites hold most of the political power, while the majority of the population has little say in how the country is run. This is reflected in the country's high level of corruption and the lack of accountability of politicians to the people they represent. In addition, there is a lack of transparency in the country's political system, making it difficult for ordinary citizens to participate in the political process.Badejo (2006) argued that another form of political inequality is the unequal access to resources. This vein of argument maintains that Nigeria's political elite controls a disproportionate share of the country's wealth and resources, while the majority of the population has limited access to basic services such as healthcare and education. This inequality is further exacerbated by the lack of investment in infrastructure and social programs, which disproportionately affects the poor (Oyediran&Olorunfemi, 2015; Ogunbode, 2016; Ikpe, 2016).

Another dimension of political inequality is the lack of representation of marginalized groups in the political process. For example, women are severely underrepresented in government and politics, holding only 6% of seats in the Nigerian parliament (Statistica, 2024b). Similarly, people from minority ethnic groups are also underrepresented, and their voices are often not heard in the decision-making process (Mustapha, 2005). One of the main causes is the country's colonial history, which has left a legacy of inequality and marginalization. The country's first post-independence government was dominated by a small elite from the north of the country, and this legacy of power concentration has continued to the present day. Another cause is the lack of political reforms, which has allowed the existing political system to become entrenched and resistant to change (Badejo, 2006).

Social Inequality

Social inequality is a complex phenomenon. In the political lens, one of the main concepts in this context is "power." Inequality is caused by unequal access to power, and this power is expressed in many ways. For example, those who have more wealth also tend to have more political power, because they can use their wealth to influence politicians and shape policy. Another concept that is related to power is "social exclusion," which refers to people being excluded from certain groups or opportunities. This can happen because of discrimination, or simply because of a lack of resources or knowledge (Emuze, 2011). One of the main social dimensions to inequality in Nigeria is educational inequality, which is also a major issue in the country. Research has shown that there are significant disparities in educational attainment between different groups in Nigeria, with certain regions and ethnic groups having lower levels of education than others, particularly for women and girls (Ajayi & Oluwafumi, 2014; Oyediran & Olorunfemi, 2015). Barkindo (2007) argued that This is related to the high levels of poverty in the

country, which make it difficult for families to afford school fees or other expenses related to education. In addition, there are cultural norms and religious beliefs that can discourage girls from attending school. Another important issue is the high rate of child marriage, which prevents girls from completing their education and limits their opportunities in life.

In addition to education, there are also issues of social inequality related to health care. There is a large gap in health outcomes between the rich and poor in Nigeria, and this is especially evident in maternal and infant mortality rates. In addition, there is a lack of access to clean water and sanitation, which contributes to a high rate of preventable diseases. This inequality in health care is related to the overall inequality in wealth and social status in the country (Olukoshi, 2011; Barkindo, 2007). Social inequality is interlinked with the political inequality. Barkindo (2007) and Emuze (2011) argued that many issues of social inequality are related to political representation and participation. For example, women are underrepresented in elected office, and they face barriers to participating in political life. The same is true for people from certain ethnic groups and other marginalized communities. Even when people are able to participate in the political process, there is a lack of trust in the government and its institutions, which can lead to apathy and disillusionment.

Gender Inequality

Gender inequality is another major issue in Nigeria, and it manifests in many different ways. Women are less likely to be employed, and when they are employed, they are often paid less than men for doing the same work. They also have fewer opportunities for advancement and often face harassment and discrimination in the workplace (Barkindo, 2007; Olukoshi, 2011). The most pronounced form of gender inequality in Nigeria is violence against women and girls. Women and girls face a high risk of violence in many different forms, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking (Olukoshi, 2011). This violence is often not reported or addressed, and even when it is, there are often few resources available to support survivors. These forms of violence are an important part of the gender inequality that exists in Nigeria.

Economic Inequality

There is a significant level of economic inequality in Nigeria, with a small number of people controlling a large percentage of the country's wealth. According to the World Inequality Database, the top 1% of earners in Nigeria control around 43% of the country's wealth. This level of inequality has been linked to a number of social and economic problems, including poverty, crime, and unrest. It is also thought to be a factor in the country's low level of human development (Abebe et al., 2016). One of the main causes of economic inequality in Nigeria is the country's dependence on oil (Onifade, 2014; Uche, 2012). The oil industry is highly lucrative, and those who work in the industry or have access to oil revenues tend to be much wealthier than the average person. In addition, the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a few elites has led to a lack of competition and investment in other sectors of the economy. This has limited opportunities for people to move out of poverty and improve their standard of living.

According to Ajayi&Oluwafemi (2014) the countries education system is an important cause of economic inequality. The quality of education is often very poor, and there is a significant disparity in educational opportunities between different regions and socioeconomic groups. This has led to a large gap in skills and knowledge between the rich and the poor, which in turn has contributed to economic inequality. In addition, the country's health system is also quite unequal, with those who can afford private healthcare having access to much better care than those who rely on the public system (Emuze, 2011).

Reassessing Public policy and Inequality in Nigeria: The Nexus (Applying Pareto's Principles)

It is evident that there is a lot of variation in the relationship between inequality and public policy, which is obviously dependent on the specific policies that are in place, but especially its impact on the lives of the common people (Nwachukwu, 2021).In the context of the limitations of the National Cash Transfer program and other social programs in Nigeria, the Pareto principle is used in this section to explain why the programs have had limited success in reducing inequality. Applicably, the

Pareto's principle suggests that the high levels of corruption and weak institutions retards policies for equality in Nigeria (Vilfredo, 2014). Evidently, assessing the National Cash Transfer Program (NCTP) using the Pareto's lens, it is evident that the program has not had a significant impact on reducing inequality in Nigeria because, though, the program targets poor and vulnerable households with cash transfers, it is limited in scale and does not reach a large number of people. This is due to the high bureaucratic corruption that plagues the Nigerian social and political systems respectively. The program is also not well-funded, which limits its ability to make a significant impact. Furthermore, the program has not been successful in addressing some of the underlying causes of poverty, such as lack of access to education and healthcare.

Another example is The Home Grown School Feeding Program (HGSFP) which was launched in 2016 as part of the Federal Government of Nigeria's National Social Investment Program (NSIP). The program is designed to provide free meals to students in public primary schools and encourage the development of local farming and food production. The HGSFP has been implemented in 34 states and the Federal Capital Territory, reaching over 9.6 million children in 2019 (Uwa et al., 2020). The HGSFP has faced some challenges, including inadequate funding, food shortages, and challenges with the delivery of food to schools. Again, the policy lacked the structure for sustainability. When assessed critically, it is evident that the bureaucratic corruption plays out in the implementation of the policy, hence retarding any growth that program aims to achieve. A small portion of corrupt individuals have a colossal impact on over 200 million people. This policy can be described as the 20 for 80 in the war against inequality through policies, however, the 20 is deaminized further expanding the inequality gap in Nigeria.

A similar policy is the N-Power Program, the program has been implemented through a number of different initiatives, including the N-Power Knowledge Initiative, N-Power Volunteer Corps, and N-Power Build. The N-Power Knowledge Initiative is a skills acquisition program that provides training in various fields, such as software development, animation, and creative arts (Uwa et al., 2020). The N-Power Volunteer Corps is a paid volunteer program that aims to improve access to basic education, primary healthcare, and agricultural extension services. N-Power Build provides technical and vocational training in various trades, such as plumbing, carpentry, and masonry (Ogbondah & Aguocha, 2020; Uwa, 2020). A government report shows that the N-Power Volunteer Corps increased the income of participants by an average of 20%, and it also increased the likelihood of participants being employed after the program by 35% (FGN, 2022). According to Ogbondah & Aguocha (2020) the N-Power Knowledge Initiative has also been shown to improve the employability of participants, with over 80% of participants reporting an increase in their skills after the program. These are just some of the positive impacts of the program on the lives of beneficiaries. In the critical lens of the Pareto principles, the N-Power program has not had a significant impact on reducing inequality in Nigeria. The program provides training and skills development for young people, but it is limited in scope and does not reach a large number of people. In addition, the program does not address some of the structural issues that contribute to inequality, such as lack of access to education and healthcare, as well as limited job opportunities.

Similarly, the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Program (GEEP) was created to increase access to credit for microenterprises and small businesses, particularly those run by women and young people. The program provides loans through a network of microfinance banks, as well as capacity building and training for beneficiaries (NBS, n.d; Igwe; 2019). There are three main components of the program: TraderMoni, MarketMoni, and FarmerMoni. TraderMoni provides loans of up to N50, 000 (about $135) to microenterprises, while MarketMoni provides loans of up to N350, 000 (about $945) to small businesses. FarmerMoni provides loans of up to N500, 000 (about $1,350) to farmers. The program also provides support for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the form of training and mentorship (Igwe, 2019). However, the program provides loans and other forms of financial assistance to micro, small, and medium enterprises, but it does not have the resources to reach a large number of businesses. Additionally, the program does not address some of the underlying issues that contribute to inequality, such as lack of access to credit and other forms of support for small businesses. Hence, the policy is limited in its ability to reduce inequality in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The unequal distribution of resources and opportunities, known as inequality, is a major challenge for policymakers. The Pareto principle can be used to understand and address the issue of inequality in public policy. By focusing on both improving existing programs and designing new ones, it's possible to make progress in reducing inequality. However, this is a complex and challenging process, and it requires strong institutions and a commitment to transparency and accountability. Addressing this challenge requires a two-pronged approach, focusing on improving existing programs and designing new ones that are specifically tailored to address inequality. However, it's important to note that this process is complex and requires strong institutions and a commitment to transparency and accountability. Without these factors in place, it will be difficult to achieve the desired results. In order to create policies that effectively address inequality, it's important to consider the various factors that contribute to inequality. These factors can include socioeconomic status, gender, race, age, and geographic location. It's also important to understand how inequality affects different groups and regions. Once these factors are understood, policymakers can develop targeted policies that address the specific needs of different groups. This approach is known as evidence-based policymaking.

Recommendation

The study recommends that the government should prioritize the fight against systematic and bureaucratic corruption in Nigeria by allowing the principle of the rule of law prevail. Secondly, since the role of government is vital as the major driver of the economy through its monetary and fiscal policy actions, it can catalyze the economy to the desired state by either increase or decrease in spending, monetary policy rates regime, trade options and the stabilization of the exchange rate, promotion of free-market economic policies that will promote growth which ultimately will raise living standards. The study also recommends for an increase in funding for social safety net programs, such as unemployment benefit, food assistance, in order to help reduce poverty and inequality.

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OUT-OF-POCKET PAYMENT ON HEALTHCARE: IMPLICATION ON THE HEALTH STATUS OF WOMEN IN ENUGU STATE, SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA

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Women, Out-of-pocket, healthcare, Enugu State, South-East Nigeria, medical bill

ABSTRACT
Health care expenses in Nigeria are done mainly through Out-of-pocket (OOP) expenses. Women irrespective of their age, status and location have need for medical care and this creates a burden on their expenses due to OOP medical expenses. This study therefore, examines the implications of healthcare payment through OOP medical expenses on the health status of women in Enugu State, South East Nigeria. A cross sectional study was conducted in Nsukka LGA and Enugu urban both in South – East Nigeria. Quantitative data was collected from 522 female respondents through structured questionnaire. The result shows that women irrespective of their place of residence are aware of health insurance scheme ($p<0.00$) and utilization of health insurance (0.00). There is also a significant relationship between employment status and encountering the challenge of paying for medical treatment due to cost of healthcare ($p< 0.01$). Furthermore, women in spite of their locality indulge in self-medication ($p<0.00$), patronize patent medicine dealers ($p< 0.00$) and roadside herbal medicine dealers ($p< 0.00$). The study

concludes thatthe reliance on out-of-pocket payments for healthcare services, particularly among uninsured women in Enugu State, Nigeria, has significant implications for their health status. This practice introduces financial barriers that may result in delayed or forgone care, leading to self-medication, utilization of informal healthcare providers, and ultimately, adverse health outcomes. Moreover, the regressive nature of these expenditures exacerbates disparities, disproportionately affecting women, female-headed households, and the poor. To address these challenges, policymakers are urged to consider universal health insurance coverage and reforms in the healthcare sector to alleviate financial burdens and promote healthcare equity.

Introduction

Out-of-pocket expenditures refer to the direct payments individuals make to healthcare providers when they use medical services. It is usually made at the time of illness. It reflects the actual expenses individuals bear for healthcare services rendered at the point of use, irrespective of economic fluctuations (World Health Organisation Observatory, 2022). They are expenses not covered by a person's insurance plan, and include charges such as co-payments, deductibles and coinsurance (Mangan & Coombs, 2017). It is obtained when government owned hospitals are unable to provide free healthcare services and when individuals use the services of private owned hospitals. These are expenditure on drugs, injections, consultation, laboratory tests, medical examinations, surgeries and other medical procedures and hospitalization fees.

The high cost of consultation, treatments and/or hospitalization however constitute a financial burden for sick persons (Adeniji, 2021) and their households (Naz & Sriram, 2024) and increases their poverty level (Aregbeshola & Khan, 2018).Out-of-pocket cost burden falls most heavily on patients who are least able to bear it, both in terms of their health and in terms of their income (Health Pocket, 2019).Also, when evaluating expenses in relation to income, out-of-pocket spending tends to burden the poor disproportionately, leading to regressive and often catastrophic financial outcomes. Conversely, when considering expenditures relative to consumption, the affluent bear a higher burden, resulting in progressive patterns. Particularly in low-income nations, where the extreme poverty line of $1.90 per day prevails, out-of-pocket expenses significantly contribute to impoverishment, emphasizing the stark impact on economically disadvantaged populations (Wagstaff, Eozonou & Smitz, 2020). OOP expenditures often constitute a major access barrier to needed health care and makes individuals to seek alternative and harmful alternatives or they could decide to forgo needed medical attention (Aregbeshola & Khan, 2018).

As reported by the 2018 National Demographic and Health Survey, only about three percent (3.0%) of women and men age 15-49 have health insurance in Nigeria (National Population Commission & ICF, 2019) which could be an alternative to OOP expenditure on health. The implication therefore is that more people engage in out–of-pocket health expenses to pay for their medical bills. Health insurance however, is a social security mechanism that guarantees the provision of needed health services to persons on the payment of some amount at regular intervals and protects them from financial hardships occasioned by large or unexpected medical bills (Adefoju, 2014). This scheme therefore ensures that individuals who have the insurance get the necessary treatment without forgoing or postponing medical treatments due to lack of money. In Nigeria, however, health insurance can be obtained from private organizations or from government agencies.

Studies have shown that women have higher rates of healthcare utilization, as shown by significantly higher rates of hospitalization and outpatient encounters (Bashiru & Xicang et al., 2015). As payment for health costs are mainly done through Out-of-pocket expenses, this have placed women in a disadvantageous position because they need more medical care services than the men folks especially within their reproductive ages. Women within the reproductive age that is, years between puberty and menopause, which is acknowledged as a time of health risks specifically, associated with sex and reproduction and may result in a significant burden of mortality and disability. This period is equally associated with high mortality and disability associated with HIV/AIDS and maternal conditions. Women are equally exposed to health problems related to pregnancy, childbearing, contraception, cancer, maternal conditions and sexually transmitted infection (World Health Organization, 2009). Therefore, the burden of these health costs is high and poses a challenge to women as they equally have higher out-of-pocket medical costs and affects their healthcare utilization.

Women in underdeveloped countries face the challenges of poverty whereby they are unable to afford basic necessities of life, health services, good drinking water, food and nutrition, good and affordable housing. Single mothers as well as older women living who women who live alone have higher risks of poverty than men in similar types of households. Lone mothers with children are more likely to be poor than lone fathers with children (United Nations, 2015). Poverty scourge in sub-Saharan Africa gives way to lack of knowledge, hunger and malnutrition, sicknesses and inability to access credit facilities, short life span and hopelessness (Abiola & Olaopa, 2008 in kaka, 2013). Studies have also shown that low income people, older people including women tend to pay a greater share of their incomes towards Out-of-pocket health costs (Mangan & Coombs, 2017).In addition, women are shortened by ownership of properties including land, economic independence, economic empowerment and social integration than men (Ajala, 2017). This is also worsened by a high likelihood of widowhood where women experience denial of rights and inheritance (Durojaiye, 2013). More so, lower proportions of women than men have savings due to gender pay gap, unpaid labour and gender job segregation. All these factors negatively influence the health status and healthcare utilization among older women including lower rates of hospitalization and outpatient encounters. The plight of women are worsened by economic recessions which are accompanied by loss of jobs and increased prices of goods and services which affect all sectors of the economy including the health sector (Raaber, 2010).

Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey of 2018 reported that 51.6% women aged 15-49 reported that they have serious problems in accessing health care for themselves when they were sick and it was attributed it to their inability to get money for medical payment (National Population Commission & ICF, 2019). Studies have also shown that women are often forced to difficult tradeoffs between healthcare and other family needs such as school fees, rents, feeding or other basic needs. This is because out-of-pocket health care cost is considered high relative to their income. And since women, unlike men, are subjected to triple burden of disease, namely, non-communicable and communicable diseases and reproductive health related diseases (Ladusingh, Kumar & Thangjam, 2018), this could impact negatively on them due to the burden of Out-of-pocket expenses. National Academics of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2018) also identified that women all over have higher health-care utilization than men and these health-care utilizations occur during and after menopause. Studies have also shown that women are more likely to have chronic conditions that require ongoing medical treatment, are more likely on the average to use prescription drugs, suffer from mental health problems more than men (Borchelt, 2018).

Bottom of Form

It has been identified that the poverty rate of families with children headed by women is higher than those headed by men or those headed by married couples (Borchelt, 2018). OOP expenditure on health further impoverishes poor families and plunges them into more hardships and may push household's consumption expenditure below poverty line. As reported in Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey of 2018 the least and most common problems women face in accessing health care are getting money for treatment (46%) and getting permission to go for treatment (11%). This gets tougher with women who have five or more children, who more often reported that getting money for treatment is a challenge (51%) along with the difficulty in getting to the health

facility due to distance (29%) (NPC & ICF, 2019). Therefore, to stay financially secure, women may forgo needed care, postpone diagnosis of serious health problem or go without needed treatment which can leave them in poor health. Since women make up the majority of the poor people in Nigeria, the implications of OOP payments for health care access from a gender perspective have little attention (Onah & Govender, 2014).

Statement of the problem

Enugu State, along with Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, and Imo, constitutes the South-East zone of Nigeria. According to the National Population Commission and ICF (2019), the total health insurance coverage for women in this zone, including those enrolled in employer-based, community-based, and privately purchased insurance, is extremely low, with percentages as low as 2.1%, 0.5%, and 0.6% respectively. Consequently, women in these states, including Enugu, predominantly rely on out-of-pocket (OOP) payments for healthcare expenses. This reliance imposes a significant financial burden on women from diverse backgrounds, spanning age, socioeconomic status, and geographic location. Moreover, research indicates that women in Enugu State face challenges in land ownership, with a limited percentage having their names on title deeds (0.7%) or owning land without formal documentation (0.08%) (NPC & ICF, 2019) This situation limits their access to ownership of land necessary for livelihood, such as homes, agricultural land, and income-generating opportunities (APXN Property, 2024; Udoekanem, David & Onwumere, 2014). As a result, the ability of women to generate income for medical expenses is further constrained, particularly considering the low coverage of health insurance.

Previous research, such as the study conducted by Wagstaff, Eozenou, and Smitz (2020), concentrated on broader healthcare access problems, neglecting the particular difficulties that women encounter in relation to out-of-pocket costs and how it affects their behaviour when seeking healthcare. Furthermore, there is a lack of thorough examination on the differential impact of out-of-pocket (OOP) spending on households, particularly in relation to women's socioeconomic status, caregiving responsibilities, and health requirements. In addition, there is a dearth of study on the coping techniques utilised by women in Enugu State to handle out-of-pocket healthcare expenses. Given these circumstances, it is imperative to examine the impact of OOP healthcare expenses on women in Enugu State.

Conceptual framework



Fig 1: Determinants of women's access to healthcare

The framework in fig 1 provides a comprehensive lens through which to examine the multifaceted factors contributing to disparities in healthcare access and outcomes of women.

Conceptual review

Health outcome: Health outcomes serve as critical indicators of the effectiveness, equity, and efficiency of healthcare systems and interventions.

Health Insurance Coverage: The extent of health insurance coverage among women in Enugu State, reflecting whether women have access to insurance schemes that can offset or reduce out-of-pocket healthcare expenses.

Health Status: The overall health status of women in Enugu State, including physical, mental, and reproductive health outcomes, influenced by their access to and utilization of healthcare services, as well as their ability to manage out-of-pocket healthcare payments.

Out-of-pocket Healthcare Payments: This refers to the direct payments made by women for healthcare services, including consultation, treatments, medications, hospitalization, and other medical expenses.

Socioeconomic Status: Women's socioeconomic status, including factors such as income, education level, employment status, and household wealth, which influence their ability to afford healthcare and manage out-of-pocket payments.

Theoretical orientation

The Health Belief Model (HBM) was initially developed by researchers at the United States' public health services in the 1950s, with updates made during the 1980s. The Health Belief Model posits that an individual's health-related behaviors are influenced by their perceptions of susceptibility to a health threat, the severity of the threat, the benefits of taking action to

reduce the threat, and the barriers to taking action. It was designed to predict health behavior and understand why individuals may fail to adopt disease prevention strategies or undergo screening tests for early detection. The model was later expanded to include patients' responses to side effects and adherence to medical treatment (LaMorte, 2019; Boskey, 2020). According to the HBM, individuals' perceptions of their health status inform their willingness to change health behaviors. The model posits that individuals are likely to take action to prevent illness if they believe they are susceptible to a condition, perceive it as having serious consequences, believe that a specific action could reduce severity or lead to positive outcomes, and do not perceive significant barriers to taking that action.

The HBM focuses on two main aspects: perceived susceptibility and severity of illness, and perceived benefits and barriers to health behavior. Some scholars have added two additional constructs: cues to action and self-efficacy (LaMorte, 2019; Boskey, 2020). The HBM can help understand why women in Enugu State may perceive themselves as vulnerable to health issues such as maternal mortality and infectious diseases, worsened by limited healthcare access due to financial constraints. Despite these barriers, they would recognize the benefits of healthcare services and may be encouraged by external cues like community programs to seek care despite out-of-pocket payments. Their self-efficacy in navigating the system and accessing resources also influences their health-seeking behaviors. However, the model has been criticized for not considering individual attitudes and beliefs that influence health behavior, ignoring environmental and economic factors that may hinder or facilitate recommended actions, and overlooking social norms and access to information. Critics suggest that the model is overly simplistic and propose the need for more complex causal models in HBM research (Champion & Skinner, 2008).

Materials and Methods

Study area: The study area is Enugu State, situated in southeastern Nigeria, boasting a population of approximately 3,267,837 individuals, with females accounting for 1,671,795 (National Population Commission, 2006). Established in 1991 through the partition of Anambra State, Enugu serves as both the capital and the largest city within the state. Notable towns within Enugu State include Enugu, Nsukka, Agbani, and Awgu, all strategically positioned. Enugu State shares boundaries with Imo, Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Benue, and Kogi States. Nsukka, a significant urban center in Enugu State, is nestled within the Udi Hills, boasting an elevation of 1,300 feet (396m).

Study population: The target population for this study consisted of all women aged15-50 in Enugu State. The focus on this segment of the population was justified with the fact that women have higher rates of healthcare utilization due to their higher rates of hospitalization and outpatient encounters (Saeed & Xicang et al., 2015). The target population was estimated at 1,372,989 (NPC, 2020). A multi-stage cluster sampling procedure, which entails successive selection of local government areas, community clusters and respondents were employed. The towns were grouped into two clusters based on their proximity to the capital of Enugu State. Cluster A (Enugu-East) are largely urban while cluster B (Nsukka) were largely rural. The essence of this clustering was to ensure that women from both urban and rural areas were adequately captured in the study.At first, two local government areas were picked using simple random sampling by balloting. They include: Nsukka and Enugu-Eastlocal Government Areas.

Secondly, from each of the LGA, three communities were selected also through simple random sampling by balloting. Thirdly, 87 women of child bearing age (15 – 50 years) were purposively selected for the study from each of the six selected communities, resulting in a total of 522 participants. Data collection utilized self-administered methods. Enugu State was specifically chosen for this study due to findings from the 2018 National Demographic Survey in Nigeria, which revealed that only 3.2% of women in the South-East region, comprising Enugu, Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, and Imo States, had any form of health insurance, indicating that the vast majority, 96.8%, lacked health insurance coverage (NPC & ICF, 2019). This underscores the prevalence of out-of-pocket expenditure among residents of Enugu State.

Data collection: An interviewer-based questionnaire, designed to provide information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the

respondents as well as the implications OOP on healthcare access of the women was administered.

Data analysis: The data collected was processed and analyzed using SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequency tables was employed in characterizing the respondents. Chi-square ($\chi 2$) analysis was also utilized to illustrate the relationship between socio-demographic variables and the implications of OOP on women with $p<0.05$.

Presentation of Results

Table 1: Socio-demographics of respondents

Variables		Frequency/Percentage
Age group	15-35years (young women) 36 and 50 (older women) **Total**	301(57.7%) 221(42.3%) **522(100%**)
Marital status	Single Married Widowed Separated **Total**	164(31.4%) 290(55.6%) 45(8.6%) 23(4.4%) **522(100%)**
Employment status	Employed Unemployed **Total**	332(63.6%) 190(36.4%) **522(100%**)
Monthly income	N0-N59,000(low income) N60,000 & above (high income) **Total**	364(69.7%) 158(30.3%) **522(100%)**
Place of residence	Rural Urban **Total**	261(50.0%) 261(50.0%) **522(100%)**

Table 1, shows the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. The respondents in this study were women of child bearing age and had a mean age of ±23.5 years. A greater proportion of the respondents were between the ages of 15 -35 years and are referred to as young women (57.7%). Most of the respondents were married (55.6%) and a greater percentage (63.6%) wasemployed. More of the respondents fall into the low income bracket and earn between N0-N59,000 (69.7%). There is equal representation of rural and urban dwellers (50%) respectively.

Table 2 Awareness of Health Insurance Scheme (HIS)

Variables		Awareness of HIS		Total N=522	p-value
		Yes	**No**		
Age	Young Older	141(27.0%) 116(22.2%)	160(30.7%) 105(20.1%)	301(57.7%) 221(42.3%)	0.20
Employment status	Employed Unemployed	159(30.5%) 98(18.8%)	173(33.1%) 92(17.6%)	332(63.6%) 190(36.4%)	0.46
Monthly income	Low High	170(32.6%) 87(16.7%)	194(37.2%) 71(13.6%)	364(69.7%) 158(30.3%)	0.08
Place of residence	Rural Urban	98(18.8%) 159(30.5%)	163(31.2%) 102(19.5%)	261(50%) 261(50%)	0.00

Table 2 shows the awareness of Health Insurance Scheme. The results show that slightly above half of the respondents are aware of health insurance. The younger respondents (27.0%) the employed (30.5%) the low income earners (32.6%) as well as urban dwellers (30.6%) are mostly aware of health insurance scheme. The Chi-square analysis shows a

significant relationship between place of residence and awareness of health insurance scheme (p<0.00).

Table 3: Utilization of Health Insurance Scheme (HIS)

Variables		Utilization of HIS		Total N=522	p-value
		Yes	No		
Age	Young	107(20.4%)	194(37.2%)	301(57.7%)	0.62
	Older	74(14.2%)	147(28.2%)	221(42.3%)	
Employment status	Employed	115(22.0%)	217(41.6%)	332(63.6%)	0.62
	Unemployed	66(12.6%)	124(23.8%)	190(36.4%)	
Monthly income	Low	126(24.1%)	238(45.6%)	364(69.7%)	0.98
	High	44(8.4%)	103(19.7%)	158(30.3%)	
Place of residence	Rural	48(9.2%)	213(40.8%)	261(50%)	0.00
	Urban	83(15.9%)	178(34.1%)	261(50%)	

Table 3 shows that the utilization of health insurance among the women respondents were low (34.7%). The results show that that the utilization of health insurance is more among the younger women (20.4%), the employed respondents (22.0%), low income earners (22.1%) and the urban dwellers (15.9%). The Chi-square analysis shows a significant relationship between place of residence and utilization of health insurance (p<0.00).

Table 4: Ability to access needed medical care

Variables		Access to needed medical care		Total N=522	p-value
		Yes	No		
Age	Young	76(14.6%)	225(43.1%)	301(57.7%)	0.90
	Older	55(10.5%)	166(31.8%)	221(42.3%)	
Employment status	Employed	81(15.5%)	251(48.1%)	332(63.6%)	0.62
	Unemployed	50(9.6%)	140(26.8%)	190(36.4%)	
Monthly income	Low	55(10.5%)	238(45.6%)	364(69.7%)	0.96
	High	126(24.1%)	32(6.1%)	158(30.3%)	
Place of residence	Rural	100(19.2%)	161(30.8%)	261(50%)	0.11
	Urban	83(15.9%)	178(34.1%)	261(50%)	

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents by their ability to access medical care when needed. The results show that access to needed medical care is low (25.1%). The study found out that more of the young women (14.6%), the employed (15.5%), high income earners (24.1%) and rural dwellers accessed needed healthcare treatment regularly. The Chi-square analysis shows no significant relationship between all the socio-demographic variables and ability to access the needed medical care (p>0.05).

Table 5: Accessing respondents who have had the challenge of paying for medical treatment

Variables		Ever had issues paying for medical treatment Yes	No	Total N=522	P-value
Age	Young	156(29.9%)	145(27.8%)	301(57.7%)	0.28
	Older	145(27.8%)	96(18.4%)	221(42.3%)	
Employment status	Employed	192(36.8%)	140(26.8%)	332(63.6%)	0.01
	Unemployed	89(17.0%)	101(19.3%)	190(36.4%)	
Monthly income	Low	191(36.6%)	173(33.1%)	364(69.7%)	0.34
	High	90(17.2%)	68(13.0%)	158(30.3%)	
Place of residence	Rural	149(28.5%)	112(21.5%)	261(50%)	0.13
	Urban	132(25.3%)	129(24.7%)	261(50%)	

Table 5 shows the distribution of the respondents by those who experience challenges in paying for medical expenses. The result shows that slightly half of the respondents have had challenges in paying medical bills. Also, more of younger respondents (29.9%), the employed (36.8%), low income earners (36.6%) and rural dweller (28.5%) have had issues with paying for medical treatment. The Chi-square analysis shows a significant relationship between the employment status of the respondents and encountering challenge of paying for medical treatment ($p<0.01$).

Table 6: Implications of out of the pocket expenses on women

Socio-demographics		Forgoes medical treatment Yes	No	Total N=522 (100%)	p-value
Age	Young	260(49.8%)	41(7.9%)	301(57.7%)	0.09
	Older	179(34.3%)	42(8.0%)	221(42.3%)	
Employment status	Employed	276(52.9%)	56(10.7%)	332(63.6%)	0.42
	Unemployed	163(31.2%)	27(5.2%)	190(36.4%)	
Monthly income	Low	308(59.0%)	56(10.7%)	364(69.7%)	0.62
	High	131(25.1%)	27(5.2%)	158(30.3%)	
Place of residence	Rural	220(42.1%)	41(7.9%)	261(50%)	0.90
	Urban	219(42.0%)	42(8.0%)	321(50%)	
Socio-demographics		**Self-medicate due to cost Yes**	**No**	**Total N=522**	**p-value**
Age	Young	190(36.4%)	111(21.3%)	301(57.7%)	0.71
	Older	136(26.1%)	85(16.3%)	221(42.3%)	
Employment status	Employed	200(38.3%)	132(25.3%)	332(63.6%)	0.16
	Unemployed	126(24.1%)	64(12.3%)	190(36.4%)	
Monthly income	Low	229(43.9%)	135(25.9%)	364(69.7%)	0.74
	High	97(18.6%)	61(11.7%)	158(30.3%)	
Place of residence	Rural	199(38.1%)	62(11.9%)	261(50%)	0.00
	Urban	127(24.3%)	134(25.7%)	261(50%)	

Socio-demographics		Patronize roadside herbal drug sellers Yes	No	Total N=522	p-value
Age	Young	103(19.7%)	198(37.9%)	301(57.7%)	0.37
	Older	84(16.1%)	137(26.2%)	221(42.3%)	
Employment status	Employed	118(22.6%)	214(41.0%)	332(63.6%)	0.85
	Unemployed	69(13.2%)	121(23.2%)	190(36.4%)	
Monthly income	Low	132(25.3%)	232(44.4%)	364(69.7%)	0.75
	High	55(10.5%)	103(19.7%)	158(30.3%)	
Place of residence	Rural	91(17.4%)	170(32.6%)	261(50%)	0.64
	Urban	96(18.4%)	165(31.6%)	261(50%)	
Socio-demographics		**Patronize patent medicine vendors Yes**	**No**	**Total 522(100%)**	**p-value**
Age	Young	257(49.2%)	44(8.4%)	301(57.7%)	0.14
	Older	178(34.1%)	43(8.2%)	221(42.3%)	
Employment status	Employed	272(52.1%)	60(11.5%)	332(63.6%)	0.25
	Unemployed	163(31.2%)	27(5.2%)	190(36.4%)	
Monthly income	Low	298(57.1%)	66(12.6%)	364(69.7%)	0.17
	High	137(26.2%)	21(4.0%)	158(30.3%)	
Place of residence	Rural	215(41.2%)	46(8.8%)	261(50%)	0.55
	Urban	220(42.1%)	41(7.9%)	261(50%)	

Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents by the implications of paying medical expenses through Out-of-pocket and the results show that some of the respondents forgo medical treatment (84.1%). A high proportion of the young respondents (49.8%), the unemployed (52.9%), low income earners (59.0%) and rural women (42.1%)had forgone medical treatment due to their inability to pay their medical expenses. Additionally, the study revealed that the majority of the respondents engage in self-medication (62.4%). Specifically, more of the younger respondents (36.4%), the employed (38.3%), the low salary earners (43.9%) and rural dwellers (38.1%) indulge in self-medication when sick due to personal expenses they will incur on medical services.

On patronizing roadside herbal drug sellers, young respondents patronize roadside herbal drug sellers (19.7%) more than their older counterparts (16.1%). A higher proportion of the employed respondents patronize roadside herbal drug sellers (22.6%) compared to those who were unemployed (13.2%). Low income earners who patronize road side herbal drug sellers were more (25.3%) than those who earned high income (10.5%). Those who reside in urban area were slightly higher (18.4%) than those who reside in rural area (17.4%).

On the practice of patronizing patent medicine vendors, almost half of the respondents, made up of the young women patronize patent medicine vendors due to their inability to pay medical expenses (49.2%). Also, the percentage of employed who patronized patent medicine vendors when sick was more than half of the respondent (52.1%). More of the low income earners patronize patent medicine sellers (57.1%). However, those who buy medicine from patent medicine vendors in the urban area were slightly higher (42.1%) than those who reside in the rural area (41.2%).

Discussion of findings

Out-of-pocket expenditure refers to any direct payment made by individuals or households for healthcare services, including tips and non-monetary contributions, aimed at improving health. This includes payments to healthcare providers, purchasing medications,

medical devices, and other goods and services geared towards improving health. These expenses are considered part of private health expenditure, representing the financial burden individuals bear for their healthcare needs beyond what is covered by insurance or public healthcare systems. This study examined the implications of healthcare payment through OOP health expenses on the health status of women in Enugu State, South East Nigeria. It was revealed that awareness of national health insurance is average while its utilization was poor. This implies that a significant proportion of healthcare spending among the women were carried out through Out-of-pocket medical expenses and burden borne by the individual at the time of illness. The study also found out that both awareness and utilization of national health insurance were more among the young women, the employed and low salary earners.

On the respondents' ability to access regular needed medical care, the result showed that only a few respondents (25.1%) were able to. However, the ability to access needed medical care were higher for the young women, the employed and high salary earners. Studies have shown that poorer populations tend to incur higher catastrophic health spending and seek no, or lower quality of health care than less-poor populations (Seeberg et al., 2013; Brown et al., 2014). This implies that poverty could make families to choose not to seek health care because they cannot afford to pay for their health care. Thus a study by Bintabara, Nakamura and Seino (2018) in Tanzania identified that women's health problem can be alleviated by improving uptake of health insurance scheme.

The implication of women not being able to access needed health care leads to forgoing medical treatment. The result shows that a high proportion of young women (84.1%) forgo medical treatment due to medical cost. However, the unemployed, low salary earners and rural women forgo medical treatment due to the cost of medical treatment. This result is similar to a study by Rezayatmand, Pavloma & Groot (2012) which found out that Out-of-pocket payment can decrease the use of preventive services and the taking up of preventive medication especially among the poor. Uninsured people find it difficult to afford needed medical care, prescription drugs, delay or forgo them because of cost (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2016). Also, women with minimal income may decide to forgo medical treatment, delay diagnosis of serious health problem or go without needed treatment which can leave them in poor health. A study by Gunja, Tikkanen, Seervai and Collins (2018) found out through a study carried out in United States that women have the greatest burden of chronic illness, highest rates of skipping needed health care because of cost, difficulty affording their health care, and are least satisfied with their care. Furthermore, a study by Dominic, Ogundipe and Ogundipe (2019) found out that the average income leads to a negative effect on women's health outcomes in Africa. This is as a result of the weak average income in Sub-Saharan African economies due to widening income inequality. A study by Fawole and Adeoye (2015) also found out that women who have influence over money earned, further improved use of skilled antenatal and delivery care.

Another consequence of user fee identified was self-medication which was found to be high (62.4%). This study revealed that a greater percentage of the younger respondents, the employed, the low income learners and those in rural areas indulge in self-medication. The study by Carrasco-Garrido, Hernández-Barrera, López de Andrés, Jiménez-Trujillo and Jiménez-García (2010) found out that the prevalence of self-medication is higher in women than men in Spain and this could be attributed to low income among others. Another study by Ebrahimi, Atashsokhan, Amanpour and Hamidzadeh (2017) found out that the prevalence of self-medication, in women who had become ill at least once was high at 63.9% before pregnancy and 43.5% during pregnancy. Variables such as lack of insurance and high school education also contributed to the use of self-medication before pregnancy amongst women. In addition, another study carried out in Iran byKarimy and Rezaee-Momtaz et al. (2019) found out that 76% of women studied had a history of self-medication and factors that predisposes them to self-medication were health insurance status and education level amongst others. Self-medication practice which involves the use of medication without the prescription of health care professionals results to a lot of side effects including drug resistance, drug side effects, health hazards and death.

This study equally revealed that women's inability to pay on the spot for their medical expenditure could lead them to patronize roadside herbal drug sellers (35.8%). The study

found out that the proportions of young respondents, the employed, low income earners and urban dwellers who patronize road side herbal drug sellers were higher. In a similar study carried out by Nyeko, Tumwesigye, and Halage (2016) it was revealed that it was common for pregnant women in Gulu District to use herbal medicines and this was attributed to poor access to conventional western healthcare.

Patronage of patent medicine vendorswas also identified as an alternative in situations where women are not able to afford health care expenses. The result shows that 83.4% of the women surveyed patronize patent medicine dealers when sick. Those which the study identified that patronize patent medicine vendors mostly were the young women, the employed, low income earners and those who reside in urban areas. The implication is that they buy medicine off the shelves without proper diagnosis and treatment by qualified medical personnel.

Conclusion

The practice of out-of-pocket payments for healthcare services poses significant implications for the health status of women who are not insured in any health insurance scheme. The major aim of health insurance is to reduce the risk of high healthcare expenditure. Despite efforts to improve healthcare access, the reliance on direct payments at the point of service utilization introduces several challenges. These challenges include financial barriers that disproportionately affect individuals, potentially leading to delayed or foregone care, self-medication, patronizing roadside herbal vendors and patent medicine sellers, inadequate treatment, and adverse health outcomes. Furthermore, the regressive nature of out-of-pocket expenditures on women, female headed families and poor families may exacerbate existing disparities, widening the gap in healthcare access and outcomes between different socioeconomic groups. Understanding the specific implications of out-of-pocket payments on the health status of women in Enugu State, Nigeria is crucial for designing targeted interventions and policies to alleviate financial burdens and improve healthcare equity in the state.This study recommends that policy makers should have a rethink about making National Health insurance available to all Nigerians irrespective of their gender, area of residence, employment status, income level and age. This study also advocates for a reform of the health sector to protect women from the burden of medical expenditure.

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ARE THE MEDIA SERVING BOKO HARAM TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA?

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Media, terrorism, Boko Haram, publicity, journalism

ABSTRACT
This study investigates the intricate relationship between media, terrorism, and the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria. It specifically, analyses the unintentional facilitation of terrorism via media reportage in Nigeria with special focus on the Boko Haram sect. The complex dynamics between media portrayal, terrorist activities, and the broader socio-political landscape in the context of Boko Haram provides the backdrop for this investigation. Through a nuanced exploration and analysis of data collected from secondary sources guided by framing theory of communication studies, the study aims to shed light on the multifaceted interplay of media narratives, terrorism, and counterterrorism efforts, offering insights into the role of the media in shaping public perceptions and responses to the Boko Haram insurgency. The study recommended responsible journalism and fact-checking towards striking a balance between media roles and Boko Haram's tactics.

1. Introduction

In an era defined by unprecedented connectivity, globalized communication has emerged as a double-edged sword, wielding both the power to unite and the potential to sow discord. This intricate relationship between media and terrorism has given rise to new challenges for international security, with extremist groups exploiting the interconnected nature of our digital world to amplify their messages and reach a broader audience (Weimann, 2008; Kampf 2014). Boko Haram, a notorious terrorist organization based in West Africa, stands as a compelling case study in understanding how globalized communication facilitates and propels terrorist activities towards extending the literature in that regard. Boko Haram's genesis can be traced back to the early 2000s, with its evolution marked by a disturbing blend of ideological extremism, regional instability, and a calculated manipulation of media platforms. Concurrently, the rise of globalized communication channels has fundamentally altered the landscape of terrorism. No longer confined to clandestine meetings and coded messages, terrorist organizations now leverage the ubiquity of social media, online forums, and other digital platforms to disseminate propaganda, recruit followers, and coordinate operations.

As a matter of fact, terrorists primarily aim to manipulate and exploit the media to convey messages of violence, thereby gaining widespread publicity (Peresin, 2007). Conversely, nations, whether on a national or international scale, must integrate both domestic and global media into their counterterrorist strategies. In democratic countries with a free media, it is unrealistic to anticipate that the media will respond directly to a country's inquiries in line with national security expectations. The news media can inadvertently aid terrorists by broadcasting their heinous acts to a broad audience (Rather, 2012). Supporting this perspective, Azeez (2009) asserted that reporting on terrorism poses numerous dilemmas and paradoxes for journalists, whose responsibility is to objectively, fairly, and accurately inform the public. Consequently, there remain unresolved questions within the field of mass communication regarding how the media report on terrorism. These questions include whether the media inadvertently align themselves with the goals of terrorists, who seek inexpensive publicity; whether the media might be exacerbating the perceived threat and fear by reporting on terrorism instead of alleviating public concerns; and whether the media genuinely maintain objectivity and accuracy in their reporting on terrorism and in their portrayal and framing of terrorists.

This research seeks to dissect the intricate interplay between media and terrorism, with a specific focus on how globalized communication has become an enabler for Boko Haram's activities. By unravelling the mechanisms through which this terrorist organization exploits the digital realm, we aim to shed light on the broader implications for counterterrorism efforts in an era dominated by rapid information dissemination and digital interconnectedness. Understanding the role of globalized communication in the context of Boko Haram is of paramount importance for several reasons. First, it provides insights into the evolving tactics of terrorist organizations, which, in turn, informs counterterrorism strategies. Second, the study contributes to the broader academic discourse on the relationship between media and terrorism, offering nuanced perspectives on the challenges posed by the digital age. Lastly, the findings hold practical implications for policymakers, security agencies, and the international community in their pursuit of effective counterterrorism measures.

To navigate this complex terrain, our research seeks to answer this fundamental question: How does Boko Haram utilize globalized communication for its activities? This study is qualitative in design. It collected secondary data from newspapers, journals and the Internet which were descriptively analyzed under the analytical guide of framing theory in communication studies, in achieving the research objectives.

2. Media in the Context

Media serves as a communication channel that has effectively unified the world into a singular entity. Derived from the Latin word "medium," meaning in the middle, the term encompasses traditional mass communication systems, content generators, and various technologies facilitating mediated human speech. This broad scope includes conventional publishing (newspapers, periodicals, or books), traditional electronic media (broadcasting, broadband, cable, or satellite), motion pictures, video gaming, recorded music, advertising, and adaptations of the Internet for these media forms (Hoag, 2008).

Information and messages traverse from the sender to the receiver through a designated channel, known as the media. Whether conveyed through spoken, written, or printed words, or any sign, the medium serves as the conveyer of meaning, sometimes coded in the form of electronic messages. Beyond this scientific understanding of the media concept, there exists a colloquial interpretation, portraying it as a process or instrument designed to reach a vast audience, comprising readers, viewers, or listeners. In common parlance, "media" and "mass media" are often used interchangeably, with the term "media" originating alongside the advent of newspapers and magazines (Pushparaj, 2014).

The media serves as a tool for disseminating information and entertainment to vast populations. Numerous Internet-based newspapers, journals, and periodicals have already established a significant presence (Kumar 2008). Web newspapers are gaining increasing popularity, with online editions of major newspapers being as widely embraced as their print counterparts. Mass media has played a pivotal role in fostering social awareness and offering people a convenient way of navigating

through life (Rajan, 2011). Therefore, media encompasses various communication channels with the overarching goal of reaching a broad audience, including the entire population of a country.

3. Understanding Terrorism

The concept of terrorism remains a contentious subject in literature, lacking a universally accepted definition. Neither academic nor international legal circles have reached a consensus on the precise meaning of terrorism. The challenges arise from the politically and emotionally charged nature of the term (William, 2009). Despite numerous attempts, the international community has struggled to formulate a comprehensive definition of terrorism. In the 1970s and 1980s, United Nations efforts encountered obstacles, primarily stemming from disagreements among members concerning the use of violence in conflicts related to national liberation and self-determination. This divergence has prevented the establishment of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

In response to this, the international community has embraced a series of sectorial conventions that delineate and criminalize various forms of terrorist activities. Since 1994, the United Nations General Assembly has condemned terrorist acts using a political description of terrorism. According to this description, implies criminal acts designed or intended to instill terror in the general public, a group of persons, or particular individuals for political purposes. They condemned such acts as unjustifiable. This condemnation applies regardless of the political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious, or any other nature invoked to justify such acts (Burgess, 2002).

Moreover, terrorism is inherently a pejorative term, carrying negative connotations typically applied to adversaries, opponents, or those with whom one disagrees and would prefer to ignore. The label "terrorist" becomes unavoidably subjective, often influenced by one's sympathies or opposition to the person, group, or cause in question (Diaz-Paniaga, 2009). Diaz-Paniaga also emphasizes that providing a precise definition of terrorist activities in international law serves three purposes: to declare the act as forbidden, to express societal condemnation for wrongful acts, invoking social censure and shame; and by establishing and reaffirming values, criminalization may serve as a deterrent to terrorism in the long run.

4. Theoretical Underpinning

This study adopted framing theory of the communication studies as the framework of analysis. The definitions of news frames in both theoretical and empirical literature are extensive. Gitlin (1980) describes frames as persistent cognitive patterns used to organize discourse through selection, emphasis, and exclusion. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) view frames as "interpretative packages" that provide meaning to issues, with a central organizing idea that helps make sense of events. Cappella and Jamieson (1997) suggest that frames activate cultural knowledge, morals, and values, creating contexts that define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies.

When applied to terrorism, Framing Theory explores how media coverage can influence public perception, spread fear, and potentially serve the interests of terrorist organizations by amplifying their message and reach. In media reportage of terrorism, it is noteworthy that media decides which terrorist events to cover and which aspects to highlight, influencing public focus and concern, and that media's portrayal of terrorists, victims, and authorities can shape audience perceptions and attitudes towards terrorism and security policies. In fact, extensive media coverage can prioritize terrorism over other issues, affecting public and political agendas, and their graphic imagery and sensational headlines can evoke strong emotional reactions, heightening fear and anxiety.

5. Brief History of Boko Haram Terrorism

Boko Haram, a radical sect, is a product of history, and its precise date of establishment is still debated. While most local and foreign media trace its origin to 2002 when Mohamed Yusuf became its leader, Nigeria's security forces date its origin to 1995 when Abubakar Lawan established the *Ahlulsunna wal'jama'ah hijra* sect. Initially peaceful, Boko Haram turned radical under Yusuf's leadership in 2002, launching a short-lived armed uprising in June

2009 to establish an Islamic state in the north, which was violently crushed by the military.

Yusuf established a religious complex with ulterior political goals, serving as a recruiting ground for future jihadists. The group attracted members from neighbouring countries and spoke only Arabic. The complex was later relocated to Yusuf's home state, Yobe. Boko Haram has been described as a Sunni Salafi jihadist group, opposing not only Western education but Western culture and modern science as well. The term "Boko Haram" comes from the Hausa word "Boko," meaning non-Islamic education, and the Arabic word "Haram," figuratively meaning sin. The group seeks to establish an Islamic state governed by Sharia, attributing societal issues to the embrace of Western civilization (Kelechi, 2014). Boko Haram is officially known as *Jama'atu Ahli-Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad*.

The Nigerian government initiated an action in 2009, leading to clashes and deadly confrontations with security forces. The group opposes Western education, culture, modern science, and democracy and has conducted sophisticated attacks, including bombings, since its formation (Murtada & Ahmad, 2014; Kyari, 2014; Nossiter, 2012; Hamid & Baba, 2014; Ekwueme cited in Popoola, 2012).

6. Media, Terrorism, and Boko Haram

Broadly, the media play a crucial role in the global counterterrorism effort (Ngige, Badekale, & Hamman, 2016). However, certain media forms, particularly private organizations associated with groups advocating for independent states, and unregulated social media platforms, have the potential to exacerbate various forms of terrorism and other criminal activities. Over the past years, Nigeria has faced diverse terrorism challenges, significantly impacting lives and properties valued in billions of Naira (Chukwuere & Onyebukwa, 2018). Boko Haram terrorism is one of them. The ongoing conflict with Boko Haram, an extremist group operating in northern Nigeria, presents a significant security challenge for the Nigerian government. This conflict has tragically resulted in the loss of over 10,000 lives, countless injuries, and widespread destruction of property. In addressing such challenges, the role of the media in informing and engaging the public is crucial.

A responsible and informed media plays a vital role in conflict resolution and reconciliation. By providing accurate and balanced reporting, the media can foster understanding, promote dialogue, and hold authorities accountable. This can contribute to a more peaceful and stable society. The potential of the media in this regard is immense. By highlighting the human cost of the conflict, giving voice to diverse perspectives, and promoting constructive solutions, the media can be a powerful force for good. It is therefore essential for both the government and the public to recognize and support the media's role in addressing this complex and sensitive issue.

The drumbeat of conflict, unfortunately, can become the rhythm of the news cycle. Popoola (2012) observed that insurgency and conflict provide ready-made stories, like a chef's pantry perpetually stocked with tension and drama. These narratives, while captivating audiences, can line the pockets of media houses, creating a potentially exploitative dynamic. Some, like Hoffman (2006), suggest a symbiotic relationship between insurgents and the media, both feasting on the spotlight.

In the case of Boko Haram in Nigeria, this spotlight amplifies their message, spreading grievances and potentially attracting recruits. Critics warn of this "bread and butter" syndrome, where sensationalism trumps deeper understanding. Yet, Igoe (2010) counters that professional journalists view insurgency as a vital public policy issue deserving substantial coverage. They argue that journalistic ethics, like objectivity and balance, act as a guardrail against exploitation, ensuring diverse perspectives are represented. This is not to say the media's role is simply passive observation. Hamid and Baba (2014) emphasize the media's "surveillance function," acting as a vigilant watchdog, alerting the public to impending dangers. This responsibility demands not just reporting on conflict, but analyzing and contextualizing it, illuminating the broader landscape within and beyond society.

The dance between media and insurgency is indeed a delicate one. Finding the right steps requires a commitment to responsible journalism, prioritizing accuracy, fairness, and context. Only then can the spotlight shine a light on understanding, not just fuel the flames of sensationalism.

Imagine a stage bathed in the harsh glare of publicity, where violence becomes the macabre script and fear the captive audience. This is the unsettling scenario at the heart of the debate surrounding media coverage of terrorism. On one side stand terrorist groups, desperate for attention and seeking to exploit the media's insatiable appetite for conflict. On the other, stand journalists and the public, caught in the crossfire between the right to know and the potential amplification of terror.

At the crux of the argument lies a chilling logic: terrorists, unable to afford billboards or prime-time slots, resort to violence as their twisted marketing campaign. Every explosion, every bullet fired, becomes a desperate plea for the spotlight, a twisted bid for infamy. Scholars like Ekwueme and Obayi (2012), Keranen and Sanprie (2008), and Hoffman (2003) echo this, suggesting that media coverage becomes the oxygen that fuels these flames of terror. Laqueur (1977) goes so far as to say that the success of every terrorist operation hinges on the spectacle it creates, its place in the global news cycle.

This symbiotic relationship, however, comes at a steep price. Nacos (2000) argues that attention lends terrorists legitimacy, their voices amplified through headlines and airwaves. He paints a stark picture: without the media's megaphone, a terrorist act becomes a silent scream, a tree falling unheard in the vast forest. Caught in this web of fear and responsibility, governments face a daunting dilemma. Should they silence the media, effectively censoring the narrative of terror? This, as Wilkinson (1997) points out, aligns with media censorship, a strategy employed by some states to control the flow of information and potentially stifle the glorification of terrorists. But at what cost? The public, meanwhile, craves information, hungry for details and desperate to understand the world they live in. This right to know, championed by Brinson and Stohl (2012), Ross (2007), and Picard (1981, 1986), becomes a counterpoint to government control. But can unfettered coverage, in turn, amplify the terrorists' message, playing into their hands?

Navigating this treacherous terrain requires a delicate dance, a tightrope walk between transparency and caution. Responsible journalism becomes the key, wielding fact-checking as a shield against sensationalism and prioritizing nuanced narratives over knee-jerk reactions. Only then can the media truly fulfil its role as a watchdog, illuminating the darkness without inadvertently feeding the flames.

As long as the battle for attention continues, this dance will remain. But by acknowledging the complexities, by embracing responsibility, and by prioritizing truth over spectacle, we can hope to transform the stage from a platform for terror into a space for understanding, empathy, and ultimately, perhaps, even peace.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The interplay between media, terrorism, and Boko Haram in Nigeria presents a complex and multifaceted challenge. It's a story woven from threads of fear, misinformation, and the desperate struggle for power and understanding. Media coverage in Nigeria inadvertently amplify terrorist messages and legitimize their actions through the very act of reporting. Sensationalized headlines and graphic imagery fuel fear and play into the hands of those seeking notoriety. Boko Haram has historically used media attention as a tool to spread fear, recruit new members, and gain political leverage. They understand the power of imagery and narratives, and exploit them to their advantage. But then, promoting responsible journalism that prioritizes accuracy, context, and diverse perspectives, and also, fact-checking, avoiding sensationalism, and giving voice to marginalized communities are essential in dismantling Boko Haram's manipulative tactics.

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UTILIZATION OF UNIVERSITY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY-NIGERIA

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KEYWORDS
Undergraduate Students, University Health Care Clinic, Utilization & Gombe State University

ABSTRACT
The study examined the utilization of university health care services among undergraduate students in Gombe State University. The study employed accidental sampling technique to administer 601 copies of structured questionnaires to students that visited the university clinic for treatments. The findings of the study revealed that, the university clinic accommodate received more female students compared to male. The study found that most of the university staff are accommodative as showed by the majority respondents. The time given to students in the clinic always clashes with lectures. The study revealed the types of illnesses taken students to university clinic include indigestion/conspiration, cold fever, malaria fever, typhoid fever, headache and general body pain, feminal problems and antenatal services among pregnant women. The study shows that students indicated satisfaction with the treatment received. The study however revealed inadequate personnel, lack of drugs, unfriendly approach of staff, inadequate facilities and delay in administering health care services among the challenges students encounter in utilizing the university health care facilities. The study concluded by recommending the need for upgrading the university health care clinic with sophisticated medical equipment to enable diagnose of diseases mostly taken students to the university clinic. Also, more medical personnel should be employed to help the experienced and old medical staff mostly with increase in the population of students in the university. This research has further contributed to the literature on utilization of university health care services among undergraduate students. There was no any empirical research of this nature in the study area and on this note, the findings of the study differed from other previous related study in the university because it has showcased a new knowledge on perception, type of illnesses taken students to university clinic and level of satisfaction of the

treatment received and challenges students encounter in accessing the university health care clinic.

1.1: Introduction

Safe and effective health care is central to morbidity and mortality reduction and improving productivity of individuals, communities and societies generally. Organizations, institutions and governments strive to provide health care services for their people through delivery systems such as in-house clinics, primary health care centres or clinics, secondary and tertiary level facilities. Despite these efforts, insufficient access to health care services has remained a major barrier to utilization of public health care services which is attributed to inherent health systems weaknesses and inappropriate aligned health care policies (User & Mairiga, 2020).

In public organizations and institutions like universities in Nigeria, students are perceived to be exposed to a wide range of obstacles that affects their health care behaviour or need is increasing. As it is known that every university has its own health care clinic where students seek first hand health care services. Students in this respect largely encounter problems while making attempts to utilize the health care services. The challenges students encountered have implications on their level of utilization and hence tends to affect their perception. If students are well attended to and the administration system adjudged by the students to be efficient, it will influence their decision to visit the health care clinic again, otherwise, they seek health care services far away from the university (Tunde, Ishaq & Emeka, 2014).

Furthermore, most of the university health care clinics in Nigeria are underequipped or lack sophisticated equipment to treat chronic and degenerating diseases like diabetes, asthma and hepatitis among others. Some universities do not have sufficient drugs to treat infectious like malaria, typhoid and dysentery among others. Many studies conducted on students' utilization of university health care clinics have revealed that poor funding of most of the universities has affected the type of health care facilities available (Nasiru et al, 2023). Similarly, most of the health care facilities in universities especially the public ones are mere dispensary or first aid treatment centres. The universities does not have adequate drugs and health care instruments that can meet the emerging trends of health care crisis.

In Gombe State University, there are a number of factors that affect the utilization of health care clinic among students. These include inadequate bed space, inadequate personnel and delay in attending to patients who are mostly students. These factors have prevented students from utilizing the university health care clinic. Although, the university management has tried to address these challenges, but with increase in population of students coupled with poor access to water supply and electricity and the emerging relatively new health concerns such as AIDS and sexually transmitted infectious (STIs), these challenges still persist and pose health care challenges especially among the undergraduate students. It is on this note that this study examines the utilization of the university health care services among undergraduate students in Gombe State University.

1.2: Statement of problem

Health care services include a wide range of services in health promotion, illness prevention, early detection of diseases and management of health care problems. In this respect, health care services are designed to meet the health needs of the community through the use of available health facilities with health manpower carrying out their professional duties (Obiechina & Ekenedo, 2013). Globally, universities do have health care centres which are expected to provide adequate health care services to the university community and its environs. The university health care centres seems to provide students access to affordable and superior health care services. The evaluation of health care services among students across universities in the nation's states revealed that most students benefitted and utilized health care services.

In Nigeria, it has been noted that, cost of health care services, distance of health care facilities, waiting time and quality of health care

services were found to be contributory to the non-utilization of health care facilities among students in the universities. In a study of some factors affecting utilization of health care services in the University of Benin stated that easy accessibility to the medical centre, time spent in waiting for treatment, students-medical staff relationship and availability of drugs were among factors affecting the utilization of services (Alakija, 2000). In another study on access and utilization of health care services at the University of Jos health centre found that patterns of diseases treated at the health centre include malaria fever, respiratory tract infections, peptic ulcer, hypertension, diabetes, genitourinary infections, typhoid fever among others (Usar & Mairiga, 2020).

Furthermore, perceptions and patients level of satisfaction has received little research and it is unclear whether the issue is being addressed in university health care clinics. In Nigerian universities also, studies on students' utilization of health services are sparse. The aim of the study therefore is to determine the utilization of university health care services among undergraduate students in Gombe State University.

1.3: Theoretical framework

Anderson model of health care utilization was adopted and used as theoretical framework for this study. The theory was developed in 1968 as a model looks at three categories of determinants of health care utilization including predisposing characteristics, enabling characteristics and need based characteristics. The predisposing characteristics according Anderson represent the proclivity to utilize health care services. Individuals in this respect is more or less likely to use health care services based on demographic, position within the social structure and beliefs of health care services benefits. Similarly, the enabling characteristics includes resources found within the family and the community. Family resources comprises economic and the location of residence. Furthermore, community resources incorporates access to health care facilities and availability of persons for assistance. Finally, the need based characteristics includes perception of need for health care services, whether individual, social or clinically evaluated perception of need.

Anderson has further expanded the scope of the health care utilization model to include the health care system. In this respect, the health care system includes health policy, resources and organization, as well as the changes that affect them overtime. Resources comprises the volume and distribution of both labor and capital including education of health care personnel and available equipment. Organization also refers to how the health care system manages its resources which is ultimately influences access to and structure of health care services. The revised model looks at how organizations distributes its resources and whether or not the organization has adequate labor volumes to determine if an individual uses health care services. In addition, the revised model includes recognition that consumer satisfaction reflects health care use (Ahmad et al, 2019).

The Anderson model of health care utilization is relevant for this study because of its flexibility which provide a robust analytical framework for discussion. The theory examines the perception of individuals concerning utilization of health care services, level of satisfaction received from the treatment of illnesses as well as the challenges individuals encounter in accessing health care services. This is more relevant in explaining the conditions of the university health care services among undergraduate students who reported to the university clinic and received treatment for various illnesses by viewing their perceptions, level of satisfaction of the treatment they received and the challenges they encounter in accessing health care services.

1.4: Conceptual clarifications

- **Health care personnel:** These are health workers mainly physicians, nurses, physician assistants, emergency medical technicians and other authorized persons acting under the directions of an attending physician and administrators of university's health care clinics. These personnel work in the clinic and treat different kind of ailments or sicknesses.
- **Health care utilization:** Refers to the continuum that embeds measures such as the quantity of health care services used, the volume of services delivered or the number of clients served and the

percentage of occupancy or attendance at the health care clinic.

- **Undergraduate students:** Refers to students registered and undertake degree courses in different field of specializations in colleges and universities in Nigeria.
- **University health care clinic:** Refers to clinics sited in the university where health care services are provided to staff and students. The health care clinic in some universities in Nigeria are seen as hospitals or teaching hospitals where patients, students and staff received medical treatments whenever they are sick.

1.5: Purpose of the study

This study aims to investigate the utilization of the Gombe State University health care services among undergraduate students. Specifically, the study seeks to examined

i. Perception of students concerning the university health care clinic

ii. The types of illnesses taken students to university clinic and level of satisfaction of the treatments received

iii. Challenges students encounter in accessing the university health care clinic

2.1: Materials and methods

The study area is the Gombe State University Clinic situated within the main campus of the university. The university health care clinic has been in an existence since the establishment of the university in 2004. The main aim of establishing the university clinic is to: provide efficient health care services to the members of the university community including students and provide advisory health care services to individuals who are in need of health care counselling. Due to increase in population of students and high demand for health seeking solutions especially for students, most of the resources and facilities such as medical personnel, bed space, drugs and other facilities have overstretched and hence many students face difficulties accessing the health care services in the university clinic.

Therefore, from the population of 21,487 students in 2022/2023 academic session across all the faculties and medical college, 601 students represented the sample size for the research. The selection of the sample size was done with the aid of Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Calculator for Research Activity with margin of error of 4% and 95% confidence level. Questionnaire was used and administered on the respondents. The study has further employed accidental sampling technique to collect data from the sampled population of the students who visited the university clinic during the period of the research study. The accidental sampling technique was employed to collect the information on perception of students concerning the university health care clinic, the type of illnesses taken students to university clinic and level of satisfaction of the treatment received and challenges students encounter in accessing the university health care clinic.

The data obtained from the administered questionnaire was analyzed using tables and percentage. The analysis was done with the aid of a statistical package for the social sciences (version 16).

3.1: Results

Table 3.2: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Age	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
16-20 years	132	22.0
21-25 years	360	60.0
26 years and above	108	18.0
Total	**600**	**100.0**
Sex	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Male	240	40.0
Female	360	60.0
Total	**600**	**100.0**
Marital status	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Single	528	88.0
Married	72	12.0
Total	**600**	**100.0**

Level of studies	Frequency	Percentage
100L	204	34.0
200L	156	26.0
300L	48	8.0
400L	168	28.0
500L	24	4.0
Total	**600**	**100.0**

The table 3.2 shows socio-demographic characteristics of the students including the age, sex, marital status and level of studies. The 22.0% of the students were aged between 16 to 20 years, 60.0% aged between 21-25 year and 18.0% aged 26 years and above. Similarly, 40.0% of the students were male and the remaining 60.0% were female. Also, 88.0% of the students were single and 12.0% were married. Furthermore, 34.0% of the students were in 100 Level, 26.0% were in 200 Level, 8.0% were in 300 Level, 28.0% were in 400 Level and 4.0% were in 500 Level.

Table 3.3: Perception of students concerning the university health care clinic

	Response				
	Excellent	**Very good**	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
Administrative efficiency	120 (20%)	216 (36%)	144 (24%)	84(14%)	36 (6%)
			Agree	**Disagree**	**Undecided**
Most of the university clinic staff are not accommodating			108 (18%)	300 (50%)	192 (32%)
The university clinic is cheaper than outside clinics			468 (78%)	96 (16%)	36 (6%)
The time given to students for health care services always clashes with lectures			300 (50%)	228 (38%)	72 (12%)
Most of the staff of the university clinic are too old and need to be replaced			142(23.7%)	290(48.3%)	168 (28%)
University clinic uses Doctors who are not qualified			96 (16%)	396 (66%)	108 (18%)

The table 3.3 gives information on respondents' perception of the university health care clinic. It shows from the table that, the administrative efficiency of the health care clinic is appreciative and also good as indicated, where 20% viewed the administrative efficiency is excellent, 36% viewed also as very good, 24% opined that it is good and 14% indicated that, it is fair. Only insignificant proportion of the respondents were not satisfied with the administrative efficiency of the university clinic. In the same vein, the perception of students concerning the operation and general facilities as well as staff of the university clinic shown also in table 2, shows 18% of the respondents indicated that, most of the staff of the university clinic are not accommodating. The 50% of the respondents opposed to the assertion that, the university staff are not accommodating and the remaining 32% were undecided. This analysis implies that, most of the university clinic staff are accommodating and caring.

Furthermore, the perception of students on the assertion that, the university clinic is cheaper than the outside clinics indicated by the majority respondents (78%) believed that, treatment of illnesses in the university clinic is cheaper than the clinics outside the university. Also, 50% of the respondents opined that, the time given to students for health care services usually clashes with lectures, as they do left lectures to visit the university clinic, while 38% disagree with that assertion where they see problem with the time. Similarly, on whether staff of the university clinic are too old and need to be replaced with especially young and energetic staff to improve the efficiency of the health care clinic, while a negligible proportion of the respondents held the opinion that, the university clinic staff are too old and need to be replaced, majority of the respondents (48.3%) held the opinion that, there is no need for the staff to be replaced. This shows that, the staff in the university clinic are energetic and performing well by attending to students and staff of the university. Also, 28% of the respondents were undecided. Finally, majority of the respondents (66%) disagree with

the assertion of using students Doctors who are not qualified, they believed Doctors working in the university clinic have been screened and found capable of handling health related cases.

Table 3.4: Type of illnesses taken students to the university clinic and level of satisfaction of the treatments received

	Level of satisfaction			
Illness	**Highly satisfied**	**Satisfied**	**Not satisfied**	**Total**
Indigestion/conspiration	120 (29.4%)	216 (52.9%)	72 (17.7%)	408/600
Cold fever	120 (28.6)	240 (57.1%)	60 (14.3%)	420/600
Malaria fever	192 (39.0%)	216 (43.9%)	84 (17.1%)	492/600
Typhoid fever	192 (41.0%)	192 (41.0)	84 (18.0%)	468/600
Headache & general body pain	228 (46.3%)	204 (41.5%)	60 (12.2%)	492/600
Eye problem	72 (17.1%)	228 (54.3%)	120 (28.6%)	420/600
Cough & catarrh	168 (36.8%)	228 (50.0%)	60 (13.2%)	456/600
Stomach pain	156 (36.1%)	240 (55.6%)	36 (8.3%)	432/600
Feminal problems	108 (27.3%)	204 (51.5%)	84 (21.2%)	396/600
Antennal services	25 (50%)	20 (40%)	05 (10%)	50/600

The various illnesses that take students to the university clinic and level of satisfaction are shown in table 3.4 above. The table shows 29.4% of the respondents indicating highly satisfied with treatment of indigestion/conspiration from the university clinic, 52.9% viewed that, they satisfied with the treatment received and 17.7% viewed that, they are not satisified with the treatment of indigestion/conspiration they received from the university clinic. Similarly, 28.6% of the respondents viewed their high level of satisfaction from the treatment of cold fever, 57.1% viewed that, they are satisfied and 14.3% also indicated that, they are not satisfied with the treatment of cold fever from the university clinic. Also, respondents' opinions regarding the level of satisfaction they received from the treatment of malaria fever indicated majority opinions viewing their satisfaction with 43.9%.

The 41.0% of the respondents further viewed that, they are highly satisfied with the treatment received from typhoid, 41.0% also satisified and 18.0% were not satisfied with the treatment they received from typhoid fever. Also, with regard to the treatment of headache and general body pain, 46.3% of the students reported high level of satisfaction, 41.5% indicated that, the services given them is satisfactory, while the remaining 12.2% indicated not satisfaction from the treatment of headache and general body pain in the university clinic. Similarly, majority of the respondents were also satisfied with the level of treatment received from eye problem in the clinic with 54.3% and 28.6% indicated not satisfaction from the treatment of eye problem as well in the university clinic. The respondents also from the majority opinions observed that, they are satisfied with the treatment of cough & catarrh with 50.0% and also a very significant percent of the student indicated high level of satisfaction and 13.2% indicated no any satisfaction as well.

The analysis further shows respondents opinions regarding the level satisfaction from the treatment of stomach pain in the university clinic. The majority respondents (55.6%) indicated they are satisfied with the service rendered, while also a significant proportion of the respondents (36.1%) indicated high level of satisfaction and 8.3% viewed no any satisfaction from the treatment rendered. Finally, 51.5% of the majority respondents viewed their satisfaction with the services rendered to them on Feminal problems they face, 27.3% have also indicated that, they are highly satisfactory and the remaining 21.2% indicated no satisfaction.

Similarly, from the pregnant women who visited the university clinic for antenatal services, 50% of them viewed that, they are highly satisfied with the services they received, 40% indicated that, they are satisfied and 10% viewed that, they are not satisfied with the antenatal services received from the university clinic.

Table 3.5: Challenges students encounter in accessing the university health care clinic

	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate personnel	130	21.7
Lack of drugs	115	19.2
Unfriendly approach of staff	93	15.5
Inadequate facilities	122	20.3
Delay in administering health care services	140	23.3
Total	**600**	**100.0**

The challenges students encounter in accessing the university health care clinic as shown in table 4 above indicated that, inadequate personnel, which is the cause of most of the delays complained from the students. Also, lack of drugs was also one of the challenge undergraduate students in the university encountered in accessing the health care services. This is also the reason why many students prefer to go home when they are sick in order to get better treatment. Inadequate facilities ranges from insufficient bed space was among the most problem identified and finally delay in administering health care services. These are the common challenges affecting students accessing the university clinic for the treatment of many identified illnesses mention in table 3.

4.0: Discussion

The study set out to investigate healthcare services utilization among undergraduate students of Gombe state university. The study revealed the majority age group that utilize the university's healthcare services are between 21-25 years of age 360(60%). The female gender 360(60%) utilize healthcare services more than their male counterpart. This is in agreement with the outcome of many researches in gender utilization of healthcare services (Abednego Nzyuko Masai et al 2021). There are more single students 528(88%) that utilize the university's healthcare services compared to married students 72(12%). This indicates the preference to complete tertiary education and training before marriage. 100 level students were found to be the majority of students that utilize the university's healthcare services.

The perception of students with regards to the administrative efficiency of the university's healthcare clinic is positive with 480(80%) response. The findings revealed that the staff of the clinic are accommodating to students with 300(50%) of the responses. A good number of the responses were undecided 192(32%) and 108(18%) were in agreement that the university clinic staff are not friendly and accommodating. The distribution clearly demonstrates the need for improvement in terms of patient – healthcare provider relationship. The students overwhelmingly agreed 468(78%) that the university clinical healthcare services are cheaper than outside clinics. Half of the responses 300(50%) are in agreement that clinic time usually clashes with their lecture time table except for Saturdays and Sundays. This is in the nature of illness as it occurs without prior notice. Therefore, the students and management are not to blame, according to Talcott Parson (1981).

The distribution on the need to replace some of the university clinic staff, 142(23.7%) supports the replacement of some of the clinic staff due to age, while 168(28%) were undecided. Majority of the responses 396(66%) disagreed that the university clinic employ unqualified medical personnel in healthcare service delivery. This supports the power of medicine and notion that it is a specialized profession that does not harbor quacks but well trained and skilled professionals in the science and art of healing. The findings on level of satisfaction with diagnoses and treatment received in the clinic revealed that patients with eye and feminine problems are less satisfied with diagnoses and treatment. Other diseases treated at the clinic include indigestion/constipation, cold fever, malaria, typhoid, headache and antenatal

services. The treatment of these diseases recorded between 80-90% levels of satisfaction. Antenatal services recorded the highest level of satisfaction. This rating is a good scorecard for the clinic. The distribution on challenges students encounter in accessing healthcare services at the university's clinic include inadequate healthcare personnel which results in long hours of waiting.

5.0: Conclusion

The study has shown that majority of undergraduate students indicated high level of satisfaction on the level of treatment received from the university clinic. The students have positive perception about the operation and general facilities as well as staff of the university clinic. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that inadequate personnel, delay in administering health care services and lack of drugs were the major factors that undermine the efficiency of health care service delivery among undergraduate students in Gombe State University. The study therefore recommended the need for upgrading of the university health care clinic with sophisticated medical equipments to enable diagnose of diseases mostly taken students to the university clinic. Also, more medical personnel should be employed to help the experienced and old medical staff mostly with the increase in the population of students in the university.

Author's contribution

HYB, NA, AU & FWE developed the study idea, designed, analyzed and interpreted the data. The authors also wrote the final draft of the article. Some staff of the university clinic were involved in the study with respect to the distribution of the questionnaires. All the authors have participated in critically reviewing the article and approved the final draft for publication.

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MEDIA IN AN ERA OF DIGITAL GLOBALIZATION: THE ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT
The 21st century has witnessed unparalleled digital revolution, driven by the proliferation of digital technologies, which has transformed how individuals' access, consume, and engage with information. The internet, mobile devices, and social media platforms have connected people across the globe, creating a global digital ecosystem where information transcends physical boundaries. This digital globalization has introduced numerous benefits, including democratizing knowledge access and fostering cross-cultural understanding, but it has also raised complex ethical challenges. This text explores the complex ethical considerations that arise in the era of digital globalization. It addresses issues related to media ethics, social media use, data privacy, and the impact of legislation on digital citizenship. The Social Responsibility Theory was used as a critical framework emphasizing the need for responsible and ethical media practices in a rapidly changing landscape. One of the primary ethical concerns in the digital age is the safeguarding of individual privacy and data security. The collection, storage, and utilization of personal data by corporations, governments, and online platforms have raised significant ethical dilemmas. Additionally, the ease of information dissemination on digital platforms has led to the rapid spread of disinformation, misinformation, and fake news, challenging the ethical responsibility of individuals and organizations to verify and counter false narratives. This study concludes that, the digital age's ethical landscape is complex and multifaceted, shaped by technology, society, culture, and individual agency. Understanding and addressing these ethical challenges are crucial as societies adapt to the opportunities and complexities of digital globalization. This study thus called on individuals, organizations, policymakers, and educators to navigate the digital era with responsible and ethical practices,

upholding democratic values while embracing the benefits of digital interconnectedness.

Introduction

The 21st century has witnessed an unprecedented revolution in communication and information dissemination, primarily driven by the proliferation of digital technologies. This digital revolution has reshaped nearly every aspect of society, including how individuals' access, consume, and engage with information. The advent of the internet, mobile devices, and social media platforms has connected people across the globe in ways previously unimaginable, facilitating the rapid exchange of ideas, news, and culture.

In this era of digital transformation, the concept of globalization has taken on new dimensions. Geographic borders have become increasingly permeable in the digital realm, allowing information and content to flow seamlessly across national and cultural boundaries. This phenomenon has given rise to a global digital ecosystem where information transcends physical limitations. Scholars and communication experts argue that, while the digital globalization of information and media has brought about numerous benefits, such as democratizing access to knowledge and fostering cross-cultural understanding, it has also introduced a complex web of ethical challenges. These challenges emerge from the intersection of technology, communication, and culture and require careful consideration to navigate ethically. (Ward, 2010).

There is no doubt that, with the digitization of personal information and the pervasive use of data-driven technologies, concerns about individual privacy and data security have intensified. Ethical dilemmas arise from the collection, storage, and utilization of personal data by corporations, governments, and online platforms. This position is buttressed by Ward (2010), that the ease of spreading information on digital platforms has led to the rapid dissemination of disinformation, misinformation, and fake news. These phenomena challenge the ethical responsibility of individuals and organizations to verify information and counter the spread of false narratives.

Despite the global reach of digital media, not all populations have equal access to technology and information. The digital divide, characterized by disparities in internet access, digital literacy, and technological infrastructure, raises ethical questions related to equity and inclusivity in the digital age. According to Rao & Wasserman (2007), the globalized digital environment creates opportunities for cross-cultural exchange but also poses ethical dilemmas regarding cultural sensitivity, representation, and the potential for cultural appropriation in digital content. Thus, balancing the fundamental right to freedom of expression with the need to combat online harassment, hate speech, and the spread of harmful content presents ethical challenges for online platforms and governments.

In view with the above statement, as individuals participate in the global digital discourse, questions of digital citizenship and responsibility come to the forefront. Ethical considerations include online behavior, digital etiquette, and the responsible use of technology. (Christians et al, 2008).

The ethical landscape of the digital age is complex and multifaceted, shaped by the interactions of technology, society, culture, and individual agency. Understanding and navigating these ethical challenges are imperative as societies continue to adapt to the opportunities and complexities of digital globalization. (Radojković & Miletić, 2006). As such, this study seeks to delve into the intricate ethical dimensions of the digital globalized environment, shedding light on the multifaceted ethical considerations that underpin this transformative era. Through rigorous analysis and exploration, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the ethical implications of digital globalization and provide insights for individuals, organizations, policymakers, and educators to navigate this complex ethical terrain.

Conceptual review

The concepts of digital globalization and media have been reviewed in this section of the study.

Digital Globalization

The term is used to describe the process of global interconnectedness and interdependence that has been greatly accelerated and facilitated by digital technologies and the internet. It refers to the global integration of digital systems, data, and information flows, transcending geographical boundaries and transforming various aspects of society, economy, culture, and communication.

Dimitrios (2018) opine that globalization is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that encompasses the interconnectedness of economies, cultures, societies, and nations on a global scale. The stressed that, it involves the increasing interdependence and integration of various aspects of human life, such as trade, finance, technology, communication, and culture, across national borders. Globalization reflects the growing interconnectivity and interdependence of the world's nations, leading to a more interwoven and interrelated global community.

Waters (1995) cited in Mylona & Dimitrios (2018) define globalizationas a social process in which the constrains of geography on social and cultural agreements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receded. It is argued that globalization is traced through three areas of social life. Firstly, the economy: social arrangements for the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods and tangible services. Secondly, the policy where social arrangements for the concentration and application of power, especially insofar as it involves the organized exchange of coercion and surveillance as well as such institutionalized transformation of these practices as authority and diplomacy, can establish control over population and territories. Finally, culture, where social arrangements for the production, exchange and expression of symbols that represent facts, affects meanings, beliefs, preferences, tastes and values.

Thus, globalization is a multidimensional and intricate process that has evolved over the past few decades, profoundly impacting the world in various ways. While it's challenging to encapsulate its complexities in a single definition, it can be elucidated as the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence among countries and regions on a global scale. McKingsey Global Institute (2016) explains that, the interconnectedness of globalization manifests across several domains:

At its core, economic globalization refers to the integration of national economies into a single global economy. It involves the flow of goods, services, capital, and technology across borders, facilitated by trade agreements, multinational corporations, and advancements in transportation and communication.

According to McKingsey Global Institute, cultural globalization encompasses the dissemination of ideas, values, beliefs, and cultural products (such as movies, music, fashion, and cuisine) on a global scale. It leads to greater cultural exchange, hybridization, and the sharing of diverse cultural elements worldwide. Ultimately, the diversity of these cultural elements plays pivotal role such as technological advances, especially in information and communication technologies, have played a pivotal role in globalization. The internet, smartphones, and social media platforms have facilitated instant global communication, the spread of information, and the rise of the digital economy.

In tandem with McKinsey Institute assertion, Gazi Md. Muidul Haque (2020) contends that political globalization involves the increasing interconnectedness of political systems and governments. International organizations like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and regional blocs such as the European Union exemplify efforts to address global challenges and promote cooperation among nations. He stressed that, it environmental concerns transcend national borders. Issues like climate change, deforestation, and biodiversity loss require international cooperation and agreements to address effectively. Environmental globalization acknowledges the shared responsibility of all nations in preserving the planet.

Social globalization relates to the global flow of people, ideas, and social norms. Migration, for instance, leads to multicultural societies, while global movements for human rights and social

justice advocate for common principles and values worldwide.

Financial markets and institutions operate on a global scale, affecting economies and financial stability worldwide. The global financial system allows for the movement of capital across borders, impacting currencies, interest rates, and investments.

The spread of diseases, such as pandemics, illustrates health globalization. Additionally, advancements in medical research and pharmaceuticals are often the result of international collaboration and information sharing.

Education has become more international, with students studying abroad and universities collaborating on research projects. Online learning and the availability of educational resources worldwide have furthered this trend. Dimitrios (2018) affirms that, globalization has its proponents which emphasizes on its potential for economic growth, cultural enrichment, and the spread of knowledge. However, it also has critics who point to issues like income inequality, cultural homogenization, environmental degradation, and loss of national sovereignty. In essence, globalization is a multifaceted phenomenon that has far-reaching consequences, reshaping the world in ways that are both promising and challenging. Each of the above elements mentioned plays a significant role in fostering economic growth in all nations.

Media

The word media is the plural form of the word medium. They are Latin in origin. Medium means an agency or means of doing something. In other words, it can be called as means, method, way, form, agency, avenue, channel, vehicle, organ, instrument or mechanism. If we go for a broader definition of media then we can say that the intervening substance through which impressions are conveyed to the senses or a force act on objects at a distance, (Gazi Md. Muidul Haque 2020). Now if come to the word media it means a series, collection, or aggregation of medium through which mass people can be reached. In technical sense the word has a different meaning which refers to;

i. Objects on which data can be stored. These include hard disks, floppy disks, CD-ROMs, and tapes.

ii. In computer networks, media refers to the cables linking workstations together. There are many different types of transmission media, the most popular being twisted-pair wire (normal electrical wire), coaxial cable (the type of cable used for cable television), and fiber optical cable (cables made out of glass).

Importance of media

Mass communicated media saturate the industrialized world. Omojola (2010), cited in Joshua Suleiman (2018) contends that, the television in the living room, the newspaper on the doorstep, the radio in the car, the computer at work, and the fliers in the mailbox are just a few of the media channels daily delivering advertisements, news, opinion, music, and other forms of mass communication. Because the media are so prevalent in industrialized countries, they have a powerful impact on how those populations view the world (Barnes, 2006).

Nearly all of the news in Africa comes from a major network or newspaper. It is only the most local and personal events that are experienced first-hand. Events in the larger community, the state, the country, and the rest of the world are experienced through the eyes of a journalist. Not only do the media report the news, they create the news by deciding what to report. The "top story" of the day has to be picked from the millions of things that happened that particular day. After something is deemed newsworthy, there are decisions on how much time or space to give it, whom to interview, what pictures to use, and how to frame it, Liutauras Ulevičius (2005). Often considered by editors, but seldom discussed, is how the biases and interests of management will impact these determinations. All of these decisions add up to the audience's view of the world, and those who influence the decisions influence the audience.

Theoretical perspectives

The study is anchored on the social responsibility theory. The theory emerged as a response to the criticisms and concerns about the functioning of the media, particularly in the United States, during the twentieth century. This theory advocated for a more responsible and ethical role for the press in society, recognizing that the media wielded significant power and influence over public opinion and had the potential to shape the direction of a nation.

In the early to mid-twentieth century, the press in the United States was facing criticism for various reasons. Some of the major concerns included: In response to these concerns, the Commission on Freedom of the Press was established, with Robert Maynard Hutchins serving as its chairman. This commission issued a special report in 1947, which called for a socially responsible press. The report highlighted the need for the media to recognize their role as stewards of public information and to act responsibly in the interests of society.

Later, scholars such as Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm expanded upon the Social Responsibility Theory. They elaborated on the principles and responsibilities that the media should uphold in a democratic society. These principles included accuracy, fairness, balance, and a commitment to public service. This theory advocated for media accountability, that the media organizations should be accountable for their actions and decisions. This includes owning up to errors, correcting misinformation, and being transparent about their sources and methods.

In the context of the present digital globalization, the concept of social responsibility remains relevant. With the internet and digital platforms, media outlets have a global reach, and their impact is profound. Ensuring that media organizations act responsibly, ethically, and in the best interests of society is a shared responsibility among media professionals, regulators, and the public.

Thus, Social Responsibility Theory emerged in response to concerns about the role and conduct of the press, particularly in the United States. It advocates for a responsible and ethical media that serves the public interest and upholds democratic values. In today's digital globalized world, the need for a socially responsible media remains essential to maintain the integrity of information dissemination and promote a well-informed and engaged citizenry.

Literature Review

This section of the study reviewed relevant literature to the study.

Netizens in era of digital globalization

The term Netizen has spread widely since it was first coined. Welcome to the 21st Century. You are a Netizen (Net Citizen), and you exist as a citizen of the world thanks to the global connectivity that the Net provides. You consider everyone as your compatriot. You physically live in one country but you are in contact with much of the world via the global computer network (Hauben, and Hauben, 1997). Micheal Hauben and Ronda Hauben, as far back as 1995 propounded the concept of “Netizens” which happens to be a portmanteau of the words net and citizen. The word, which was simply a reflection of the early stages of the global evolution from social citizenship to digital citizenship argued that social limitations and conventions no longer prevented potential friendships or partnerships. In this manner “Netizens” are today meeting each other from far and wide, close or far, it is also true that they probably wouldn’t have met were not for the internet and social media. It can be said that with globalization, the internet now has its own citizens, as well as what qualifies them as such. Thus, it can also be argued that the boundaries shattered by the internet gave birth to the present-day digital citizen.

According to Oxford University Press (2020) cited in Lynch (2021), we live in the information age era, also known as the computer age, the digital age, and the new media age. Mckinsey Global Institute (MGI) (2016) explain that “the world has never been more deeply connected by commerce, communication, and travel, than it is today.” It is however, not surprising to see that digital globalization is the main reason for this transformation. Digital globalization, which is defined largely by flows of data and information, is now considered a new form of globalization. It is also clear to see that the soldiers of the present global digital transformation are the netizens, it can easily be argued that the internet has helped present day “Netizens” and in other

words digital citizens to reach audiences that were once thought of as unreachable, and this reach is not restricted to one area alone. Digital technology as well as digital globalization has brought about the democratization of the media by creating channels for participants. It is now possible for people to get information in real-time and in many cases, with digital video evidence. Anyone can sit on his computer, or mobile device and disseminate information to a very wide audience, sometimes this type of freedom leads to the spread of false and libelous content. This of course has brought up a lot of ethical issues that have quizzed both experts and scholars. Using today's high digital technology, a journalist shapes reality and sells it as a product to users, on the market. The ethics of this profession depends on self-control or self-censorship of a person who selects the product – a journalist. In the confusion and race for time of a modern man, and trying to follow some streams of modern communication in the new media, there is another issue of responsibility imposed on a consumer of media. Media should educate the public about their basic human rights. What is the objective of media quality, in other words what is the method by which media achieves quality? Which is more important, ethics or a method of obtaining information? Ethics depends on the method. A good or bad method sets an ethical limit, within which is the ultimate ideal – the truth lies.

Social Media Use and Ethics

Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) define social media as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 by allowing the creation and exchange of user-generated content. It can be argued that social media is a social tool of communication that allows for interaction in multiple ways. Cormode and Krishnamurthy (2008) explain that internet use was primarily configured around “passive” consumption of static content posted on websites without any meaningful input or interaction on the part of the content's readers or viewers and this era marks the first generation in the evolution referred to as Web 1.0. In pursuit of modernity through the use of social media, normal citizens as well as journalists along with citizen journalists, need to realize that there is a need to have the values of ethics and integrity in the management and handling of social media tools, be it in their personal life or even in their professional life. Ethics means sound moral principles and it focuses on a good grip of clean character, while integrity refers to the set of superior quality that exists among individuals and the quality is based on the principles that adhere to honesty and high moral practice. If ethics and integrity are ignored while using social media, the problem of misuse will appear. Social media users freely give their personal information as a prerequisite for joining social networking as well as social media sites (Barnes, 2006). It can be argued that though the angle of fake and libelous content is an issue of concern in terms of the use of social media, there are are also questions about legislation of laws that bother on social media particular and digital citizenship in general, issues such as whether or not our present laws are up to date with our present digital realities always spring up from time to time. Other issues such as digital rights and responsibilities are sensitive areas that must be given close attention. It is also true that the way big social media sites like Facebook handle big data and algorithms raises serious ethical questions. A good example of data mismanagement and target marketing through the use of algorithms as in the case of the Facebook and Cambridge Analytica scandal in which private data was shared with a third party, has opened a can of worms that also begs for urgent legislation.

The 2019 Social Media Bill

The bill aims to prevent the transmission of false statements or false declaration of facts with a view to counter the effects of such transmissions in Nigeria. Among the ways of achieving this would be to suppress the financing, promotion and endorsement of whatever is considered a false statement. Measures will be put in place to detect, control and safeguard against coordinated inauthentic behavior, including the misuse of online accounts, and defaulters will be sanctioned.

The bill equally describes what should be seen by law as constituting a false statement of facts that warrants sanctions. This includes being prejudicial to the security of Nigeria, to public health, public safety, public tranquility and public finances of the country. Other ways in which one could be liable is by transmitting statements capable of influencing the outcome of an election, inciting feelings of enmity, hatred or ill-will between differently groups of persons. It can however be argued that for social media to

be regulated, states must reflect through their laws and policies to ensure that same rights that individuals have offline are protected online, particularly the right to freedom of expression, speech, and access to information.

It can be said that the 2019 social media bill was long awaited and anticipated, but at the same time it must be noted that the bill should not stop at the desk, it should be applied without prejudice or partiality. Also, the new laws must not trample on the democratic rights of the citizens, especially when it comes to the issue of freedom of speech and access to information.

Conclusion/Recommendation

The digital era has ushered in unprecedented opportunities and challenges for individuals, societies, and the media. Digital globalization, driven by technology, has transformed the way we access and share information, transcending geographical boundaries. While this transformation has brought many benefits, it has also given rise to complex ethical dilemmas. Media ethics, particularly in the age of digital communication, have become a central concern. The Social Responsibility Theory underscores the importance of responsible and ethical media that serve the public interest. However, the rapid dissemination of information through social media has introduced new challenges, including the spread of false information, misuse of personal data, and the need for legislation to ensure responsible online behavior. The study thus recommends that:

1. Educational institutions and media organizations should collaborate on initiatives to promote media literacy. It is crucial to enhance media literacy and digital citizenship education, equipping individuals with the skills needed to critically assess and navigate the digital information landscape.

2. Media organizations should adhere to ethical standards, promote accuracy, fairness, and transparency in reporting, and hold themselves accountable for errors. Journalists should prioritize responsible reporting over sensationalism.

3. Media organizations should establish mechanisms for public accountability, including ombudsmen or independent bodies to address complaints and ethical violations.

4. Efforts should be made to bridge the digital divide, ensuring that all populations have equitable access to technology and information. This includes investments in digital infrastructure and digital literacy programs.

5. Companies that develop algorithms for content curation and distribution should prioritize ethical considerations, such as minimizing the spread of harmful content and promoting diverse perspectives.

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FISCAL BALANCE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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KEYWORDS
Fiscal balance, debt profile, debt service, sustainable economic development

ABSTRACT
This study analyzed the effects of fiscal balance on sustainable economic development in Nigeria from 1981 to 2022. Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) model was employed in estimating the variables. The ARDL results indicated that the relationship between fiscal balance and sustainable economic development followed a long-run path. The study found that fiscal balance to GDP ratio, external debt to export ratio, and public debt service to revenue ratio had negative impact on growth rate of real GDP per capita (GDPgr). Total debt stock to GDP ratio had positive effect on GDPgr. Domestic debt to domestic investments ratio and recurrent expenditure to GDP ratio exerted negative and non-significant effect on GDPgr. Debt for gross fixed capital formation as a percentage of GDPand trade openness exerted positive and significant effect on GDPgr. The study recommended that the government should focus on viable capital investments that have the potential to generate revenue that can service public debt in order not to create debt that are not sustainable. Government should take proactive measures to ensure that public debt is employed in key productive sectors of the economy to boost domestic production and enhance export receipts in foreign currency capable of repaying the externally borrowed funds. There is need for government to reduce recurrent

expenditures since it does not lead directly to revenue generation, capital formation, savings and investment in such manner that it would increase economic assets, boost production, and promote sustainable economic development.

***GEL* Classification**: H60, H62, H63, K23, Q01

1.0 Introduction

Sustainable economic development is the prerequisites for improving standard of living of societies and an important indicator of economic well- being. The most effective tool for economic developmentis sound macroeconomic policies that are focused on gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) to increase productivity, national income, reduce inflation, generate employment and create wealth. Most emerging market countries are unable to generate enough revenue to finance national budgets which make them rely on borrowing, thereby making public debt a major economic policy issue confronting governments (Mankiw, 2020). Fiscal balance also referred to as government budget balance is the difference between general government revenues and expenditures in a given year. Fiscal deficit arises when expenditure items of government are higher than the revenue items. Fiscal deficit are financed mainly through public borrowing. Continuous budget deficits by nations demonstrate that government expenditure is high relative to its revenue and this gap has been identified to be filled with public debt (Mankiw, 2020; Odili, 2022).

Borrowing is an important instrument of fiscal policy available to government to fund the development of a nation. Studies (Huang, Panizza, & Varghese, 2018; Muhammad, Ruhaini, Nathan & Arshad, 2017) have observed that public debt impacts negatively on the growth of most emerging market economies. These studies opined that when the cost of servicing debt expands beyond the coping capacity of the economy, it impacts negatively on its ability to achieve the desired fiscal and monetary policy objectives and this may constrain the ability of government to undertake productive investment projects thereby impeding economic growth and development (Mhlaba & Phiri, 2019).Public debt may promote economic development when the borrowed funds are invested in sustainable projects that generate revenue for servicing of the debt. Public debt accumulation therefore does not reduce economic growth but rather, not being able to utilize public debt for productive investment and gross fixed capital formation coupled with inability to service debt obligations that impedes growth and development (Odili, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria began to experience debt problem from the early 1980s when foreign exchange earnings plummeted as a result of the collapse of prices in the international oil market and external loans began to be acquired indiscriminately (Ukwuoma & Imandojemu, 2019). The debt crisis, which is the combination of accumulated debt stock and difficulty servicing those loans, imposed debt burdens on Nigerians. This is reflected in the fall in real gross domestic product growth rates per capita, investment rate and export earnings.

In spite of the economic reforms such as the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP), adopted by Nigeria since 1986, Nigeria has continued to experience worsening economic conditions that encouraged high levels of foreign borrowing. Since the inception of the debt crisis, the growth performance has been very disappointing due mostly to the increased outflow of resources in debt service payments. The acquired loans appeared not to have yielded a rate of return higher than the cost of borrowing to repay the debt. Nigeria has a history of debt-servicing difficulties due to insufficient domestic resources evidenced by the fact that on several occasions the countries were in debt-service arrears(World Bank, 2018).

Numerous studies have been carried out on the impact of public debt on economic growth and development in Nigeria. Ajayi and Edewusi (2020) discovered that external debt had negative long-run and short-run impact on economic growth of Nigeria, while domestic debt exerted positive long-run and short-run

effect on economic growth of Nigeria. Other studies (Ajayi & Edewusi, 2020; Said & Yusuf, 2018; Favour, Ideniyi, Oge & Charity, 2017; Dada, 2012) revealed the accumulation of public debt and debt service paymentsare growth inhibiting,while (Ude, Ugwu & Onwuka, 2016; Bakare, Ogunlana, Adeyeye & Mudashiru, 2016)recorded that debt-financed fiscal imbalance positively affect economic growth and development. The lack of consensus in literature on public debt pressure on economic growth and development in Nigeria and across the globe is related to the methodological differences, geographical location, time differences, and the nature of the data employed, which were generally diverse and often contradictory, suggest the need for a further empirical investigation and consequently, this study contributed to the existing literature by providing new empirical evidence on the impact of fiscal balance on sustainable economic development in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Economic theory on open economies suggests that reasonable levels of public borrowing by a developing country can enhance its economic growth and development through capital accumulation and productivity growth which leads to improvement in per capita income and standard of living (Madow, Nimonka, Brigitte & Camarero, 2021; Odili, 2022). Countries at their early stage of development have small stocks of capital but may have investment opportunities with huge capital outlay and higher rates of return. The low level of revenue generation in developing countries should therefore be supplemented by borrowing. If borrowed funds are employed in productive investment and given suitable macroeconomic environment, sound policies and economic incentives, sustainable growth and development would be achieved and allow for timely debt repayments through borrowing (Matandare and Tito, 2018; Ndieupa, 2018).

Although the literature on debt hardly explains why these countries have not been able to use the borrowed funds to generate sufficient output for sustainable economic development, critics of external funding in general maintain that it does more harm than good (Udeh, Ugwu, & Onwuka, 2016). Furthermore, the debt financing and growth literature suggests that there is a unidirectional causal link between indebtedness and growth (Birini, Jemali, and Ferroukh (2016). World Bank (2022) indicates that since heavily indebted low-income countries have been servicing their debt by squeezing imports and investments to generate trade and equivalent saving surpluses, they have also been paying a high price in terms of forgone consumption and output growth. This study conceptualizes that a reasonable level of borrowing in developing countries starved of funds can foster sustainable economic development.

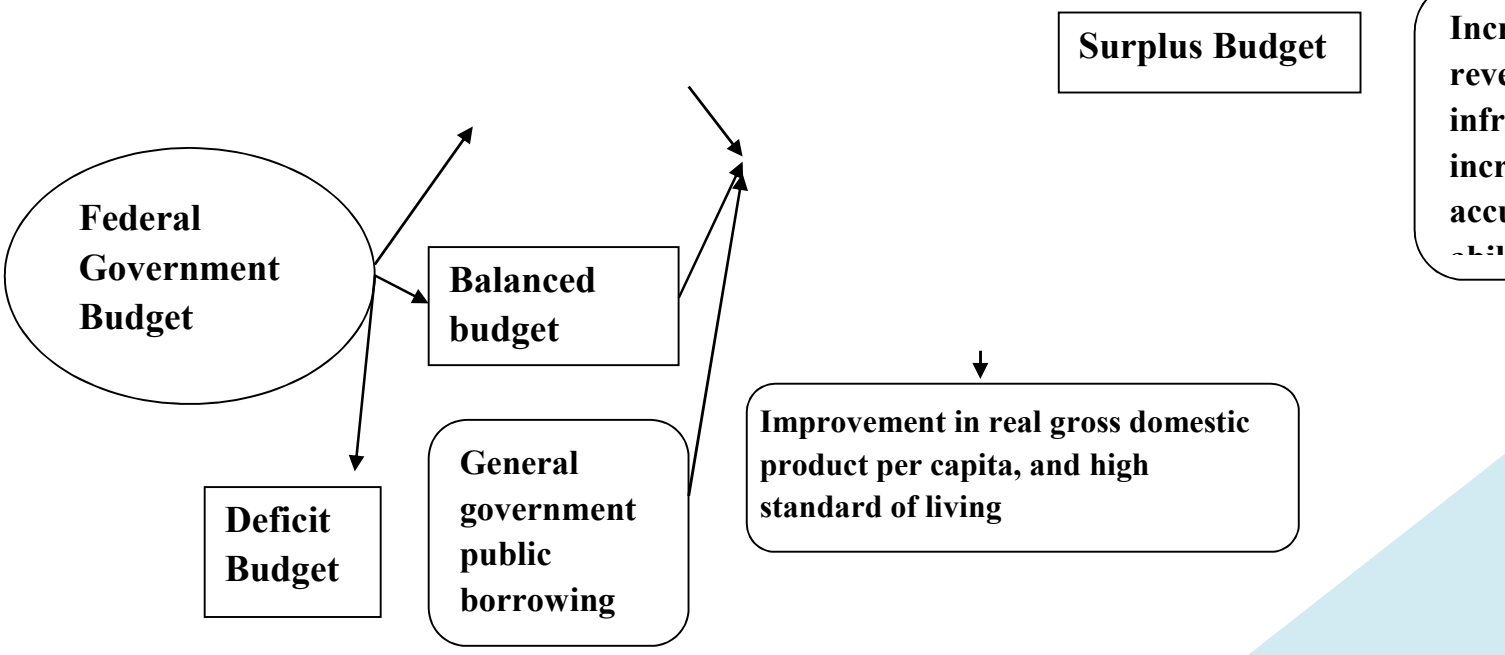




Figure 1: Conceptual framework on fiscal balance and sustainable economic development
Source: *Authors, 2024*

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinning of this study is hinged on the Keynesian theory of increasing economic activity. According to Keynes (1936) the growth and stability of an economy depends on the intervention of the federal government. The Keynesian economists are of the view that private sector decisions may lead to inefficiency in macro-economy of a nation. Keynes therefore suggested that monetary and fiscal policy actions by the government are necessary to direct the economy on the right path to growth. These policy actions will ensure stability in productivity and in business cycles and hence accelerates economic activities which will generate employment opportunities, increase output and foster sustainable growth and development (Odili, 2022). Keynes is of the opinion that during periods of low output, two approaches that have the potentials of pulling an economy out of recession are to reduce interest rate, and increase government expenditure in infrastructure. This can be achieved in a capital resource constricted economy by borrowing. This also implies a reduction of monetary policy rate to commercial banks by the CBN and the commercial banks to reduce its lending rate to their customers.

2.3 Review of Empirical Literature

Odili (2022) appraised Nigeria's debt status and its effect on macro-economic performance from 1981 to 2018. The study used Autoregressive-Distributed Lag (ARDL) bounds testing approach in estimating the variables that were sourced from the CBN statistical bulletin and the Debt Management Office. The short-run results showed that debt servicing had negative effect on real gross domestic product (RGDP), while long run result revealed insignificant effect. Domestic debt had positive and significant effect on RGDP. External debt was found to have negative andsignificant impact on RGDP. This study recommended that expansionary fiscal policies of government should focus on capital expenditure funding. It further suggested that massive investment is needed in agriculture, manufacturing, trade, logistics and tourism in Nigeria.

Similarly, Ikue, Medee, Denwi, and Sodipo (2021) examined the sustainability of public debt as well as the causal relationship between fiscal and trade deficits in Nigeria from 1960-2019. Co-integration and granger causality were employed to test the sustainability of budget and trade deficits. The results from the analysis show that Nigeria public debt policies are not sustainable. This implies that revenue generated was below expectation which made the federal government to depend on internal and external debt to meet expenditure needs.

Ajayi and Edewusi (2020) studied the effect of public debt on economic growth of Nigeria. In the study, secondary time series data spanning thirty-seven years (1982–2018) were analysed using Johansen co–integration test and Vector Error Correction Model and findings from the study show that external debt exerted a negative long-run and short - run effect on economic growth of Nigeria while domestic debt exerted a positive long–run and short–run effect on economic growth of Nigeria. The study recommended that policy makers should integrate appropriate measures towards ensuring suitable management of public debts and government should ensure that contracted national debts are directed towards productive investments to spur growth of the economy.

In Ghana, Adi (2019) studied the impact of public debt on economic growth spanning the

period 1965 to 2017 using Johansen co-integration test, Dickey fuller augmented unit root test and Vector Error Correction Model (VECM) to analyse the time series data. The result showed that public debt has a positive impact on economic growth in Ghana indicating that during the years 1965-2017, loans acquired were used for developmental projects that have had a positive impact on the economy.

In another study by Akhanolu, Babajide, Akinjare, Oladeji and Osuma, (2018), on the effect of public debt on economic growth in Nigeria, a quantitative research technique was adopted for the study and secondary data from 1982-2017 was gathered. Inferential analyses were conducted and findings from the study demonstrated that internal debt exerts a positive impact on economic growth while and external debt revealed an inverse relationship with economic growth. The study suggested that borrowed funds particularly external debt should be minimized.

In another related study, Anning, *et al.,* (2018) examined the impact of public debt on economic growth in Ghana by running Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression using time series data spanning from 1990 to 2015. They focused on external debt, domestic debt, investment spending, imports, inflation, government expenditure and national savings as their independent variables. In effect, they regressed economic growth on external and internal debt to find the relationship between the variables. They found that there is a negative relationship between debt (domestic and external) and growth in the economy of Ghana. Just as the previous researchers discussed earlier, Anning *et al.*, (2018) concluded that there are certain debt/GDP thresholds for sustainable and steady growth, but they failed to show it in their submission.

In South Africa, Ncanywa and Masaga (2018) explored how public debts impact on the investments and economic growth using quarterly data spanning from 1994-2016. Their objective was achieved through multiple econometrics tests. The incorporated variables were, gross domestic product, public debt, investment and government deficit. The results of VECM validated the short run association relating public debt and economic growth. Granger causality results have shown that public debts can Granger cause economic growth, and there is bi-direction association amongst the two variables.

The works of Said and Yusuf (2018) examined public debt and economic growth in Tanzania. The quantitative research approach was adopted as secondary time series data spanning forty-five years was collated. Co-integration and Vector Error Correction Mechanism (VECM) Approach were used in analysing data collated in the study. The VECM estimate showed that there is a negative relationship between public debt and economic growth in Tanzania over the study period. In addition, granger causality test revealed that there is no causal relationship between public debt and economic growth. Premise on these findings, the study suggested government and policy makers should stop the accumulation of external debt stock overtime and prevent concealing of the motive behind external debt; external debts should be used only for productive investment of highest priorities that would help in yielding returns for economic reasons (productive purposes) and not for social or political reasons.

Matandare and Tito (2018) evaluated the impact of public debt on economic growth in Zimbabwe. The study employed quantitative research design. Secondary time series data spanning thirty-six years (1986- 2016) were collected from the World Development Indicators database. Data were analysed using inferential statistics. Findings showed that external debt had negative impact on economic growth in Zimbabwe. It further ascertained that exchange rate and inflation were found to have negative significant effect economic growth in Zimbabwe and domestic debt exerts a significant positive effect on economic growth. Based on the findings, the authors advanced that the government should step up efforts to boost sources of domestic revenue to finance its growth plans as external debt accumulation weighs down economic growth and suggested the need to diversify the economy as crucial and government should develop new sectors which can generate revenue to contribute towards economic growth.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Nature and Sources of Data

The data used for the study are secondary data spanning from 1981–2022collected from

the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Statistical bulletins, and World Development Indicators (WDI).

3.2 Model Specification

The model used in this study followed the approach adopted in the work of Dombi and Dedak (2019) but was modified to capture sustainable economic development as stated in equation1.

GDPgr = F (FB, TD,ED, DD, DS, DR, DR,TO) …… (1)

Equation 1 is expressed in econometric form as:

GDPgr= α0 + α1FBt +α2TDt + α3EDt + α4DDt+ α5DSt+ α6DGt +α7DRt+α8TOt+ εt……. (2)

Where:

GDPgr = Growth rate of real GDP per capita;

FB = fiscal balance as a percentage of GDP;

TD= Total debt as a percentage of GDP;

ED= External debt as a percentage of export receipts;

DD, Domestic debt as a percentage of Domestic investments;

DS= Debt service payment as a percentage of revenue receipts;

DG= Debt on gross fixed capital formation as a percentage of GDP;

DR= Debt on recurrent expenditure as a percentage of GDP;

TO= Trade openness;

α0 = intercept;

α1−α8 = regression coefficients;

ε1 = error term; and

t = the period in years.

Table 1: Model variables, definition, *a priori* expectation, and source

Variables	Definition	*a priori* expectation	Source
GDPgr, Growth rate of real GDP per capita	The ratio of real GDP to the average population of a specific year.	+-	World Bank, (2018; Eberhardt (2019).
FB,Fiscal balance	Difference between government's revenues (taxes and proceeds from sales of assets) and its expenditures expressed as a ratio of GDP.	-if (α_1<0)	Dombi and Delak, 2019
TD, Total Debt	The ratio of all government financial contingent liabilities (external and domestic) to GDP.	-if (α_2<0)	Dombi and Delak, 2019 Alusiba, A (2020).
ED External debt	Measured as a percentage of export receipts.	- if (α_3<0)	Dombi and Delak, 2019
DD, Domestic debt	Measuredas a percentage of Domestic investments;	- if (α_4<0)	Dombi and Delak, 2019
DS, Debt service payment.	The ratio of all financial expenditures made by the government to cover the repayment of principal and interest on both external and domestic debts to revenue receipts for a particular period of time.	-if (α_5<0)	Dombi and Delak, 2019

DG, Debt on gross fixed capital formation.	Includes government financial contingent liabilities incurred for the purpose of capital development in the country expressed as a percentage of GDP.	+if (α_6>0)	Adi, B.S (2019); Alusiba, A (2020).
DR, Debt on recurrent expenditure.	Government financial contingent liabilities incurred for recurrent expenditures expressed as a percentage of GDP.	-if (α_7<0)	Adi, B.S (2019) Alusiba, A (2020).
TO,Trade openness	Measured as the total sum of Nigeria's exports and imports as percentage of GDP.	+if (α_8>0)	Dombi and Delak, 2019

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistic

The descriptive statistic of the set of data under consideration in this study was carried out to show their basic features. The outcome of the descriptive statistic is displayed in Table 2

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

	GDPGR	FB	TD	ED	DD	DS	DG	DR	TO
Mean	0.348536	-2.61502	31.65801	131.2381	37.67902	14.73610	3.041709	5.181751	133.5002
Median	1.190000	-2.51000	24.19000	83.19000	34.17000	10.67000	2.640000	4.900000	128.6616
Maximum	12.37000	0.690000	80.71000	444.6200	74.46000	42.06000	8.080000	10.85000	234.6431
Minimum	-15.80000	-7.67000	7.130000	5.040000	8.930000	3.250000	0.540000	2.890000	44.87754
Std. Dev.	5.338724	1.648482	23.06367	150.0226	14.36210	10.26019	1.829982	1.542606	56.30941
Skewness	-0.87726	-0.83371	0.822401	1.004828	0.528616	1.090682	1.027423	1.292302	0.358626
Kurtosis	5.093254	4.385342	2.190624	2.993741	2.456653	3.235424	4.127712	5.554296	1.742420
Jarque-Bera	10.75232	7.721754	5.092013	5.899480	1.744554	8.223529	9.385554	23.55787	3.219722
Probability	0.003525	0.031053	0.064612	0.031456	0.378225	0.016379	0.009130	0.000014	0.230164
Observations	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41

Source: *Authors, 2024*

The mean values of GDPgr show that on average, Nigeria has a GDPgr of 0.35%. Within the period, as shown by the minimum and maximum values, GDPgr of Nigeria ranged from -15.80% to 12.37%. The standard deviation of GDPgr shows that the Nigerian GDPgr was volatile with an index point of 5.338724. Based on the skewness, GDPgr had a distribution that was negatively skewed (long left tail). The Kurtosis value for the GDPgr was greater than 3, implying the series has higher values than the sample. The null hypothesis of "normal distribution" based on the Jarque-Bera test was not normally distributed.

Fiscal balance, the average of -2.61502 was recorded, implying that Nigeria has been on fiscal deficit. The range of values of FB in Nigeria was from -7.67000 low and 0.690000 high. The standard deviation was 1.648482. In terms of skewness, the FB was negatively skewed. The Kurtosis was greater than the threshold of 3, implying the series of FB had higher values than that reported by the mean. Regarding the Jarque-Bera test, the null hypothesis of non-normally distributed was obtained.

4.2 Tests for Stationarity

Stationarity of the variables were tested with Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Perron (PP) to avoid spurious regressions. The results of these tests are reported in Table 3

Table 3: Unit root test results

Variable	ADF @ level; I(0)		ADF first difference; I(1)		Status
	t-Statistic	Prob.	t-Statistic	Prob.	
Augmented	**Dickey**	**Fuller(ADF)**	**test for**	**unit root**	
GDPgr	-2.814199	0.2010	-10.57081	0.0000	I(1)
FB	-3.166641	0.1057	-7.198292	0.0000	I(1)
TD	-2.765478	0.2180	-4.286670	0.0083	I(1)
ED	-3.327219	0.0765	-7.549509	0.0000	I(1)
DD	-2.724627	0.2329	-4.671211	0.0030	I(1)
DS	-2.209247	0.4717	-5.831124	0.0001	I(1)
DG	-2.967623	0.1537	-9.276235	0.0000	I(1)
DR	-3.794656	0.0272	-	-	I(0)
TO	-2.230861	0.4603	-5.915052	0.0001	I(1)
Phillips-Perron (PP) test for unit root					
GDPgr	-4.108831	0.0127	-	-	I(0)
FB	-3.249644	0.0896	-10.01450	0.0000	I(1)
TD	-2.489698	0.3313	-4.286670	0.0083	I(1)
ED	-3.322390	0.0772	-7.554206	0.0000	I(1)
DD	-2.113011	0.5231	-4.634847	0.0033	I(1)
DS	-1.975815	0.5964	-9.074698	0.0000	I(1)
DG	-3.007474	0.1429	-9.256354	0.0000	I(1)
DR	-3.794656	0.0272	-	-	I(0)
TO	-2.223828	0.4640	-5.910600	0.0001	I(1)

Source: *Authors, 2024*

The results of the ADF and PP show that the stationairty of the variables are either integrated at level (I(0)) or first difference I(1)) and no variable was integrated oforder two (I(2)). This result makes the ARDL approach to co-integration appropriate (Pesaran, Shin, & Smith 2001).

4.3 Lag Selection Criteria

The optimal lag length was selected based on the lag selection criteria presented in Table 4.

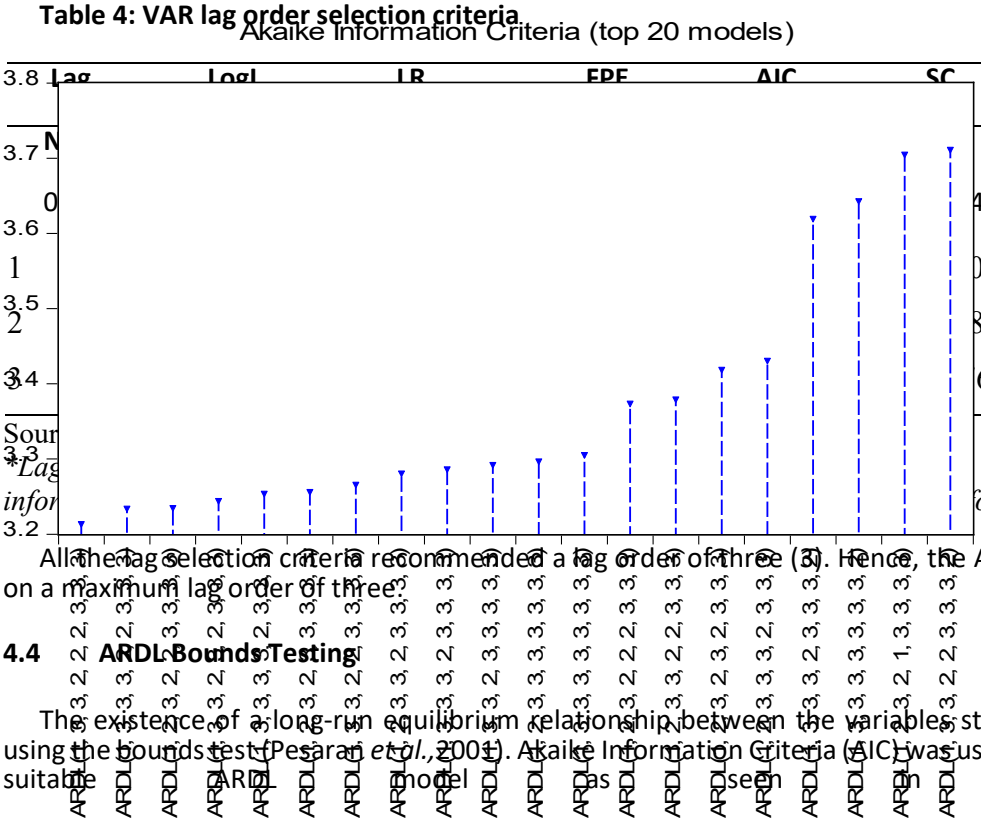
Table 4: VAR lag order selection criteria

Lag	LogL	LR	FPE	AIC	SC	HQ
N						
0					49725	58.24745
1					057	53.02212
2					839	51.68123
3					634*	46.38047*

Sour

**Lag* *5% level);AIC; Akaike*

infor *ormation criterion.*



All the lag selection criteria recommended a lag order of three (3). Hence, the ARDL model was based on a maximum lag order of three.

4.4 ARDL Bounds Testing

The existence of a long-run equilibrium relationship between the variables studied was established using the bounds test (Pesaran *et al.*, 2001). Akaike Information Criteria (AIC) was used to identify the most suitable ARDL model as seen in Figure 2.

Fig. 2: AIC model selection plot

Source: *Authors, 2024*Among the top 20 models, the optimum models that produced the lowest AI Care ARDL (1, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3).

The results of the ARDL bounds tests are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Bounds test for co-integration

Test Statistic	Value	K
F-statistic	7.003652	8
Critical Value Bounds		
Significance	I(0) Bound	I(1) Bound
5%	2.65	3.78

Source: *Authors, 2024*

The results of the bounds test show that the values of the F-statistic (7.003652) is significantly greater than the upper bound critical values at 5% levels, which implies the rejection of the null hypothesis of no co-integration and confirms the existence of a long-run relationship between the dependent variable (GDPgr) and the explanatory variables.

4.5 Long-Run ARDL Estimates

The long-run estimates of the variables are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Results of long-run ARDL estimates

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
FB	-0.027525	0.011421	-2.410112	0.0243
TD	0.077198	0.067698	1.140334	0.2976
ED	-0.088929	0.015783	-5.634435	0.0013
DD	-0.077959	0.049964	-1.560311	0.1697
DS	-0.197415	0.074010	-2.667414	0.0138
DG	2.099297	0.495434	4.237285	0.0055
DR	-2.068324	1.397346	-1.480180	0.1893
TO	0.131760	0.025034	5.263127	0.0019

Source: *Authors, 2024*

The fiscal balance to GDP ratio,external debt to export ratio, and public debt service to revenue ratio, show that a unit increase in FB, ED and DS negatively influenced GDPgrby 0.027525, 0.088929, and 0.197415units respectively.Total debt stock to GDP ratio was observed to be positive and implies that GDPgr increased by 0.077198 units due to an increase in TD. Domestic debt to domestic investments ratioand recurrent expenditure to GDP ratio exerted negative and non-significant effect on GDPgr. The negative estimated coefficients show that a unit increase in DD and DR resulted in 0.077959 and 2.068324units decrease in GDPgr. Debt for capital expenditure to GDP ratio and trade openness turned out positive and significant. The estimated coefficient showed that a unit increase in DG and TO resulted in 2.099297 and 0.131760 units increase in GDPgr.

4.6 Short-Run Dynamics

The essence of the ECM is to study the pressure of the estimated long-run equilibrium on the short-run dynamics and the *a priori* is that error-correction coefficients, which examines the adjustment from shock, are expected to be statistically significant, negatively signed, and have a sizable range of values which has to be between zero and one. Table 7 displays the results of the ECM.

Table 7: ECM model results

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-62.49682	3.401557	-18.37300	0.0000
D(FB)	-5.564257	0.433572	-12.83352	0.0001
D(TD)	-0.027092	0.056581	-0.478816	0.6190
D(ED)	-0.001762	0.004901	-0.359518	0.8816

D(DD)	-0.254375	0.041531	-6.124947	0.0009
D(DS)	-0.631913	0.052579	-12.01834	0.0000
D(DG)	-2.420587	0.514636	-4.703493	0.0041
D(DR)	-1.399166	0.382928	-3.653862	0.0106
D(TO)	0.099636	0.008207	12.14028	0.0001
ECM(-1)	-0.212347	0.008651	-24.54595	0.0000
R-squared	0.886926			
Adjusted R-squared	0.865447			
F-statistic	40.94836			
Prob (F-statistic)	0.000000			
Durbin-Watson stat	1.917593			

Source: *Authors, 2024*

The short-run estimates of the independent variables indicate that DS, TD, ED, DD, DG and DR had adverse effect on the GDPgr. This implies that the impact of public debt on the Nigerian economy could be felt within a short period. This could be attributed to the fact that Nigeria is a highly indebted country experiencing exchange rate depreciation coupled with foreign reserves depletion.

The ECM presented in Tables 7 shows the speed of adjustments from a short-run shock (disequilibrium) to long-run equilibrium adjustments. The estimated coefficient of the ECM was-0.212347. This indicates that approximately 21% deviation of GDPgr from its long-run level is adjusted in one year. However, the adjustment mechanism was relatively slow, which implies that any short-run disequilibrium would last long before stability is observed.

The adjusted R-squared associated with the regression model shows the collective effect of the independent variables on GDPgr. The adjusted R-squared shows that the explanatory variables collectively explained approximately 87%, of the total variations in GDPgr in Nigeria. The overall fit of the regression models measured by the F- statistic, is statistically significant, implying that the explanatory variables jointly explain the dependent variable.

4.7 Diagnostic Tests

The robustness of the outcome of the results were ascertained based on diagnostic tests which ensure that the stability and the correct functional form of the models were specified to avoidance serial correlation and heteroscedasticity (Jarque & Bera, 1987). The results are presented in Table 8.**Table 8:**

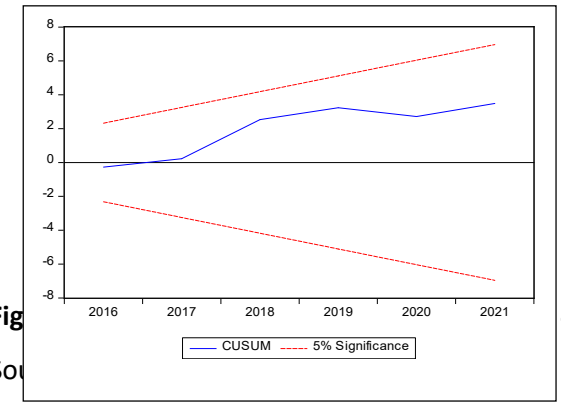
Diagnostic tests

Test	**Prob.**
Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM Test:	0.4697
Heteroskedasticity Test: Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey	0.8901
Jarque-Bera	0.8205

Source: *Authors, 2024*

The tests of serial correlation based on the Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM test of residuals confirmed the absence of any serious serial correlation since the F-Statistic was statistically insignificant. The test of heteroscedasticity based on the Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey test also reported a statistically insignificant F-statistic at 5% level, thus indicating the absence of heteroscedasticity among the residuals, that is, the residuals were homoscedastic. The Jarque-Bera test confirmed that the residuals of the ARDL were normally distributed since its probability value was greater than 0.05. This gives the assurance that the results from the models are reliable, efficient and suitable for forecasting, policy formulation and decision making.

Figure 3 and 4show that the cumulative sum of recursive residues (CUSUM) and the cumulative sum of recursive residues of squares (CUSUMSQ) for the ARDL model was within critical limits for the 5% significance level, indicating that the ARDL model specification is stable.



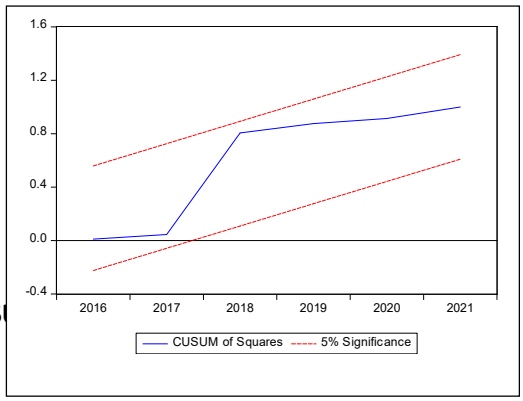


Fig **4: CUS**

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4.8 Discussion of Findings

Fiscal balance to GDP ratio, external debt to export ratio, and public debt service to revenue ratio, show that a unit increase in FB, ED and DS negatively influenced GDPgr. This is an indication that Nigeria has been running fiscal deficits due to her inability to generate adequate revenue to cover expenditure and the amount of government revenue committed to debt servicing in Nigeria discouraged capital accumulation and investment and hence economic growth and development. This finding is inconsonance with the findings of Ajayi and Edewusi (2020); Mhlaba and Phiri, (2019); and Owusu-Nantwi and Erickson (2016) that the ability of countries to borrow and service their debts is largely dependent on the countries' ability to invest the borrowed funds into viable economic activities that could generate adequate revenue for debt servicing. Favour *et al.,* (2017) have shown that there is gross mismanagement of public debt and revenue in which could explain the adverse result of fiscal balance. The findings are also in consonance with Oyedele et al. (2016); Mwaniki (2016) who showed that external debt becomes less burdensome and enhances economic growth when the debtor is able to generate adequate export revenue to service the debt, thus averting the problem of exchange rate risk.

Total debt stock to GDP ratio was observed to be positive and implies that GDPgr increased due to an increase in TD. This is in line with prior studies by Odili, 2022; Akhanolu, *et al*., (2018); Mhlaba and Phiri, (2019) and Adi (2019) in which it was observed that total debt did not significantly explain economic growth in Nigeria. This scenario was attributed to over indebtedness or debt overhang, that is, when a country borrows more than it can cover from its GDP or a situation where total debt is growing rapidly than the rate of GDP growth, causing the inability to raise funds to cover the debt in the future.

Domestic debt to domestic investments ratio and recurrent expenditure to GDP ratio exerted

negative and non-significant effect on GDPgr. This is a clear indication that domestic debt may have crowding–out effect thereby reducing the quantum of investible funds in the hands of private investors, hence low private investments. This is because when the government borrows from domestic financial institutions or issues bonds they tend to reduce the funds available to private investors thus reducing investments in the country. This finding is in tandem with Idris and Ahmad (2017); Siew-Peng and Yan-Ling (2015) which showed that the crowding out of domestic investments would likely become inevitable when the government continuously borrow domestically for a long time. Similarly, the works of Matandare and Tito, 2018; Idiniyi *et al*., 2016; Bakare *et al*., 2016 were in agreement with the findings of this study and indicated that recurrent expenditure of government do not go directly into economically productive ventures rather they are mostly channelled to consumption. This explains why the DR did not have a statistically significant effect on GDPgr in the long-run.

Debt on capital expenditure to GDP ratio and trade openness turned out positive. The significance of the DGand TO variables indicated that public debt on capital expenditure and infrastructural development enhanced economic growth, while foreign trade assisted indebted countries to generate foreign exchange through exports and enhance productivity through the importation of foreign capital goods and other resources that are not available domestically to boost production. These findings were in tandem with those of Matandare and Tito (2018); Ndieupa (2018); Idiniyi *et a,l*. (2016) reported that accumulating capital stock with public debt brings about sustainable economic growth and development.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study investigated the effect of fiscal balance on sustainable economic development in Nigeria. Results showed that sustainable economic development of Nigeria was majorly determined by FB, DS, ED, and DG. This study concludes that government borrowing by a developing country has the potential of fostering economic growth and development through capital accumulation and productivity growth which leads to improvement in real gross domestic product growth rate per capita income and standard of living. This is only possible when public debt is not too high and the borrowed fund is employed in capital accumulation and productive investments. This study therefore recommends that the government should focus on viable capital investments that have the potential of generating returns that can service public debt. Government should take deliberate efforts in ensuring that public debt is employed in key productive sectors of the economy to boost domestic production and enhance export receipts in foreign currency capable of repaying the externally borrowed funds. Development of infant industries is therefore imperative. There is need for government to reduce recurrent expenditures since it does not lead directly to revenue generation, capital formation, savings and investment in such manner that it would boost production, improve standard of living and promote sustainable economic development.

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POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES AND THE PREVAILING CHALLENGES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA: AN ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT
Strategic planning and implementation of well thought out policies is critical for the enthronement of good governance which brings about sustainable development in any country. However, available data shows that poverty is steadily on the rise in Nigeria, despite the country's effort in the implementation of diverse poverty alleviation programmes. Thus, such a worrisome trajectory appears to be linked to so many factors such as corruption, debt burden, rising rate of unemployment especially among youths, overdependence on oil, lack of political will to address poverty, ethno-religious conflicts among others. It argued that efforts to alleviate poverty through poverty alleviation programmes will remain an exercise in futility without first addressing fundamental, societal hiccups like corruption, economic inequality and ethno-religious conflicts. Methodologically, this study adopted documentary method while relying on content qualitative content analysis to analyze data gathered. The study likewise utilized abstractions from the theory of post-colonial state which served as its theoretical framework of analysis. Findings showed that unless selfless and responsible political leadership is entrenched in Nigeria, which would lead to tackling fundamental problems associated with income inequality, corruption, political instability and other related vices in the Nigerian society, the fight against poverty may remain unresolved and the search for sustainable development will continue to be a mirage. The study therefore, recommended among others that the government should first address societal hiccups to the success of poverty alleviation programmes, such as economic inequality, ethno-religious conflicts and corruption. This will engender a fair and favourable playground for the poverty alleviation progrmames to thrive and be successful.

Introduction

The post-colonial history of Nigeria is fraught with development strategies targeted at reducing the sufferings of the masses. Since independence in 1960, Nigeria had launched and implemented over 40 poverty reduction programmes, all targeted at poverty reduction. Onah (2021) identified some of the established programmes as; Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), the Green Revolution, the Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the Better Life Programme (BLP) for rural women; a gender specific programme designed to improve the life of rural women, the Family Support Programme (FSP), the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), the Strategic Grains Reserve Authority (SGRA), the Accelerated Crop Production (ACP), the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP), the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the Vision 2020, the N-Power, among others.

Similarly, the country had adopted, and domesticated several global and continental development plans, all targeted at mitigating the grave effect of poverty. Some of these global plans include: the Lagos Plan of Action; the United Nation's New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s; the Africa-Europe Summits' Cairo Plan of Action; the World Bank led Strategic Partnership with Africa; the International Monetary Fund-led Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPS), the Japan-led Tokyo Agenda for Action, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD); the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among others. Successive administrations in Nigeria, both civilian and military had ostensibly demonstrated its concern for the plights of the ordinary citizen in Nigeria. Nkom (1989, p.10) observed that motivated by the desire to advertise their "concern" for the sufferings of the ordinary citizen, successive governments in Nigeria have tried to outdo each other with the introduction of new strategies and programmes portrayed in sleek slogans and captivating acronyms.

To secure legitimacy and garner political support, successive governments have embarked on desperate endeavors to sanitize their poverty reduction programs, aiming to distinguish them from the initiatives undertaken by their predecessors (Nkom, 1989). In most cases, "achievements" claimed to have been recorded for such programmes in speeches, statements and media releases were often at variance with the reality on ground. Poverty alleviation strategies and their aims have often been formulated by individuals who are disconnected from the impoverished, rural setting, resulting in a limited and uncertain understanding of poverty. Government officials often fail to involve the general population in the planning and execution of poverty reduction programs, which has resulted in a lack of continuity and disconnect from the citizens. This has ultimately led to the failure of many poverty reduction initiatives in Nigeria, resulting in limited visible development nationwide. According to Liu et al. (2015), sustainable development and poverty reduction go hand in hand.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other global frameworks present Nigerian leaders with an additional avenue to demonstrate their unwavering commitment in the fight against poverty. As the nation persistently strives to combat this issue, these initiatives provide Nigerian leaders with an opportunity to intensify their efforts. Internationally, ending poverty within the globe is outlined by the United Nation in the agenda 2030 as the first goal among the seventeen SDGs (Campagnolo & Davide, 2019). Many countries around the world, particularly in Africa, are taking deliberate steps to eradicate poverty by adopting and implementing policy frameworks, all of which have the potential to help alleviate poverty. Nigeria should not lag behind in these endeavors.

However, the defining features of the Nigerian society appear to be impeding the success of poverty alleviation programmes. The country is replete with corruption, income inequality, ethno-religious crises, and unemployment especially among youths among others. This paper takes a look at both past and current poverty reduction programmes articulated and implemented by the Nigeria state with emphasis on the different challenges militating against the success of the different poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria. More specifically, the point of departure of this study from other earlier studies is its tendency to be

predictive: that the vision 2030 sustainable development goal for poverty alleviation in Nigeria will, like its predecessors, end in futility; given the current economic stance of the country.

Conceptual Definition

Poverty reduction: A conceptual exposition

There are now "two schools of thought" in the conceptualization of poverty. One of the schools teaches classical economics, which defines poverty as the absence of tangible wealth or income. Arinze (1995), who defined poverty as "the lack of income needed to acquire the minimum necessities of life," supported this point of view. "Several types of poverty may be distinguished depending on such factors as, time or duration (long, short terms, or cyclical)," according to Aliyu (2003). Even while poverty may be pervasive in a population, its actual incidence is restricted in scope and direction. "Poverty has economic, social, and political ramifications," claim Gbosi and Philip (2004). The impoverished experience material deprivation, social alienation, and political excommunication.

In general, the concepts of poverty are as follows: inability to obtain necessities or goods; lack of or restricted access to resources that can be used for production. Therefore, those people or households in a given community who are unable to afford a certain basket of essential goods and services are thought to be impoverished. "In this context, basic goods are defined as: food, shelter, water, health care, political and civil rights to participate in decisions pertaining to socioeconomic conditions, and access to productive resources, including education, working skills, and tools" (Ajakaiye & Adeyeye 2001 in Gbosi, 2004). Accordingly, efforts and tactics targeted at lessening the frequency and intensity of poverty in a society are considered to be part of poverty reduction in this study. Therefore, encouraging sustainable socioeconomic growth and development, putting in place social safety net programs, empowering and integrating the public, sustainable development, and good governance are some strategies for reducing poverty.

Sustainable Development

"The concept of sustainable development does not refer to the preservation of nature, but rather to the internalization of strategies, and thus adding new resources to enable economic growth and prosperity to be shared by all," write Barter and Russell (2012). According to Ba-Blewitt (2008) and UNSGHLPS (2012), "sustainable development refers to a series of processes and practices, involving action, and focusing on the improvement of human life." Additionally, it offers a long-term plan to end poverty, lessen inequality, promote inclusive growth, and increase the sustainability of production and consumption. Thus, this study is consistent with the UN's (2005) definition of sustainable development, which defines it as development that satisfies current demands without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to satiate their own. According to Dannbach (2003), integrated decision making is the fundamental tenet of sustainable development, with the integration of environmental, social, and economic issues into all facets of decision-making serving as its foundation.

Theoretical Framework

The Marxist idea of Africa's post-colonial state serves as the foundation for this essay. Marxists view the state in its broadest sense as upholding an order that ultimately serves the interests of the ruling class. This is so that it maintains the circumstances that give rise to the dominance of the ruling class. Ake (1985, p.5) notes the following:

> The state represents a particular form of class domination wherein the ruling class is separated from the system of institutional mechanisms of domination and the state itself is seen as an objective force assisting society. This is achieved through the mediation of commodity exchange.

The state's ability to organize the circumstances that allow the elite class to maintain its dominance in a mature capitalist society is a noteworthy aspect of its nature. This is because the state is not a direct tool of the class that it serves. From both the ruling class and the ruled class, it seems to be comparatively independent (Draper, 1974, pp.74-84).

According to Ekekwe (1980), the state's relative autonomy is essential for structuring the capitalist hegemony in addition to allowing it to supposedly serve the interests of society as a whole. According to Marxist theory, the state under capitalist Western formations may be acting in the bourgeoisie's best interests, but this does not always seem to be the case because the state is typically perceived as neutral, which is the same as claiming that it is class neutral. According to Ake (1985, p. 3), "the state is by no means independent of the mode of production, even though it is institutionally constituted so that it is independent of the social class, including the hegemonic class." Therefore, class dominance still exists under the state, but the state's independence tends to hide this from the "ordinary eye."

According to Ekekwe (1985, p. 12), the state in advanced capitalist societies differs from that in post-colonial formations in that, while in the former it serves to uphold the social and economic relations that allow for bourgeois accumulation, in the latter case, the state acts as a direct tool for capital accumulation for the dominant class or its constituents due to factors related to the degree of development of productive forces. Thus, the state was a crude weapon of colonial capital, according to Ake (1985, p. 10), which was employed to force Africans into commodity relations, alter their pattern of production, and stop the creation of an African bourgeoisie that was capitalist. The colonial state played a key role in bringing its economy into line with that of the metropolitan state. The development of orthodox capitalist culture in the colonies was prevented by the pervasive role of the colonial state in the economy, which was primarily intended to serve metropolitan capitalism. As a result, capitalist accumulation took the form of utilizing the state apparatus as an instrument for personal enrichment.

In the context of this study, the state in Nigeria serves as a direct tool for public officials to accumulate primitive goods at the expense of development initiatives and the interests of the general populace. Because of Nigeria's instrumentalist nature, relevant public officials perceive the management of poverty reduction initiatives like NAPEP, NDE, N-Power, YOU-WIN, and even the SDGs programs as a chance to materially benefit themselves (Onah, 2021). Against this backdrop, it becomes clear why the Nigerian political elite is unwilling to make significant investments in human capital training, which is the cornerstone of combating poverty, particularly in the country's informal economy. This is so that state officials in charge of these poverty-reduction initiatives would be prevented from using investments in human capital as a means of embezzling money. This hypothesis provides an explanation and understanding for Nigeria's incapacity to develop and carry out sincere and long-lasting programs aimed at reducing poverty.

Methodology

This study adopted the documentary method in collecting secondary data. According to Aniche and Ofodum (2018, p.45) the “documentary method is an instrument for gathering in-depth information. The documentary method relies on secondary sources of data gotten from textbooks, journals, reports etc. It involves the extraction of information or data from already existing works, and therefore, not generated in direct response to an investigator’s stimulus. Data so generated were analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

Strategic Planning, Policy Implementation and Poverty Reduction in Nigeria

Before her independence, available data revels that Nigeria had a comparatively low rate of poverty in the years after gaining independence. In comparison to now, the poverty rate was quite low at this time, hovering around 15%. The Cable News (2024) reports that the poverty rate in Nigeria is predicted to increase to 38.8 by the end of 2024, more than double what it was in the years immediately after independence.

According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics, 131 million Nigerians are classified as multidimensional poor, and 71 million live in extreme poverty, according to a Punch newspaper report published in 2023. More so, scholars such as Khan and Cheri (2016) and Nambiappan et al. (2018) argues that the nation is the fourth-largest producer and exporter of palm oil worldwide in addition to being one of Africa's top producers of crude oil. Nigeria undoubtedly has a wealth of resources at its disposal, including a very fertile area that is ideal for agriculture as well as minerals like limestone, iron ore, columbine, gypsum, and kaolin, to name a few. Regardless of all the plentiful human and mineral resources in Nigeria, there is

the prevalence of high rate of poverty in the country, where over one hundred million of its population is living in abject poverty (Jaiyeola & Bayat, 2020).

Hussaini (2014) notes that in a bid to address the poverty crisis in Nigeria, many poverty reduction program strategies have been initiated and implemented by both past and present leaders. These strategies were executed through the adoption of different administrative plans which were categorized into three phases: the Pre-SAP era, the SAP era, and the democratic era (During the pre-SAP era, many efforts were put by the Nigerian government or in collaboration with some international donor agencies. These programs include Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), River Basin Development Authority (RBDA), Green Revolution (GR), Agricultural Development Programs (ADPs), and National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) (Antia-Obong & Otung, 2019). Although there is a degree of success achieved by some of the Pre-SAP era programs, most of them lacked sustainability and were diverted from their original focus, as a result leading to their failure.

The 1980s saw a severe rise in poverty, which made living in the nation extremely challenging. This caused the government to try to control the situation by implementing SAP; nevertheless, this did not satisfy the desires of a large number of Nigerians (Ogbuke et al., 2020). During the SAP era, numerous initiatives were created and put into action, including as the Family Support Program (FSP), Better Life Program (BLP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN), and Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI) (Hussaini, 2014). Notwithstanding the different poverty reduction programs initiated in the country, poverty continues to raise its ugly head, and this can be traced to corruption, program inconsistency, lack of political will, poor implementation, lack of focus, and lack of sustainability of the programs (Rabiu, 2022).

There were great hopes for the country's progress out of poverty when the democratic system was restored in 1999. Various initiatives were put into place, including the National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP), the Poverty Alleviation Program (PAP), and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) (Aliyu & Dansabo, 2017). Many programs, such as the Social Investment Program (SIP), the N-Power volunteer corps scheme, the National Homegrown School Feeding Program, Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), the Micro Credit Scheme (MCS), and the Trader Moni scheme/initiatives, were introduced during the Buhari administration in an effort to lessen the widespread poverty (Abubakar, 2019). However, many social analyst and scholars alike posits that efforts to reduce poverty in Nigeria lack sincere commitment in identifying the poor and the multidimensional nature of poverty in the country. Therefore, most of the efforts being made are not even targeting the actual poor but are used as an avenue for the elites to accumulate materialistic resources to themselves.

The majority of both the past and current government expenditures are devoted to these initiatives aimed at raising the average citizen's standard of living while maintaining the impoverished population's status quo. According to Yusuf (2020), the Nigerian Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs was given N258.4 billion between January and September 2020; of that amount, N96.3 billion was expended during that time. The tragedy is not unrelated to the widespread corruption and robbery of public funds by Nigerian political leaders, which is one of the main reasons that all the programs started and intended to lower poverty among the general populace in the nation have not been executed effectively (Momoh & Attah, 2018). Below is a tabular presentation of some poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria from 1972 till date

Tabular Presentation of some Poverty Reduction Programmes in Nigeria (1972 till Date)

SN	Programme	Objective	Year	Administration
1	National Accelerated Food Production Programme	To facilitate a substantial growth in the cultivation of maize, cassava, rice, and wheat in the Northern states through subsistence farming methods within a limited timeframe.	1972	General Yakubu Gowon
2	Operation Feed the Nation	The initiative was implemented with the aim of enhancing food production across the nation by engaging and involving individuals from all sectors, empowering them to be self-sufficient in providing for their own nutritional needs.	1976	General Olusegun Obasanjo
3	Green Revolution Programme	The initiative focused on enhancing the output of food and essential resources to guarantee food security and self-reliance in staple commodities. Additionally, it aimed to enhance the production of livestock and fish to fulfill domestic and international demands, as well as to broaden and vary the country's foreign currency earnings by cultivating and processing export crops.	1980	Alhaji Shehu Shagari
4	Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure	The initiative aimed to facilitate a holistic advancement in Nigeria's food production, road networks, and rural infrastructure.	1986	General Ibrahim Babangida
5	The Nigerian Agriculture Land Development Authority	The objective of the authority was to provide strategic public assistance for land development, facilitate and encourage improved utilization of Nigeria's rural land and its resources, enhance lucrative employment prospects for rural residents, elevate the quality of life for rural communities, and focus on attaining food security through self-sufficiency and self-reliance.	1993	Chief Ernest Shonekan
5	Family Support Programme	Provided for the creation of an empowerment initiative aimed at supporting local producers of goods and services, as well as aspiring entrepreneurs in	1993	

		cottage industries. It also outlines the requirements for accessing loan facilities, and establishes guidelines for loan repayment within the program.		Chief Ernest Shonekan
6	National Poverty Eradication Programme	Obasanjo initiated the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) in 2000; however, PAP was subsequently discontinued and substituted with the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in 2001. NAPEP adopted a multifaceted approach to eradicating poverty, which included the Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP) focusing on skills training for self-reliance, the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) aimed at providing unemployed youth with opportunities for skill acquisition, wealth generation, and employment, the Mandatory Attachment Programme which involved providing credits and trade training, Rural Infrastructure Development which aimed at overall improvement in rural development, and the Social Welfare Services Scheme (SOWESS) which focuses on providing social and welfare services to its beneficiaries.	2001	President Olusegun Obasanjo
7	National Special Programme on Food Security	During the tenure of OlusegunObasanjo, this initiative was implemented across all 36 states of the federation. The primary aim of this scheme was to enhance agricultural output and eradicate poverty in rural areas.	2002	President Olusegun Obasanjo
8	Root and Tuber Expansion Programme	The initiative spans across 26 states and was formulated to tackle the issues surrounding food production and rural impoverishment. Its primary objective was to enhance the farming practices related to root and tuber crops among agricultural workers in order to secure food security.	2003	President Olusegun Obasanjo
9	Agricultural Transformation Agenda	The initiative was established with the goal of shifting the narrative surrounding agriculture from being solely a business venture to being viewed as a crucial development issue. Its primary objective was to entice private investors to invest in agriculture, enhance the value of locally produced goods,	2011	President Umar Yar'Adua

		transform the overall perception of agriculture, and generate employment opportunities for the burgeoning youth and female population in Nigeria.		
10	Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWĪN)	The central aim of the scheme is to empower the Nigerian youths by providing grants to small business owners.	2011	President Goodluck Jonathan
	The Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (Sure-P),	Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) was aimed at ensuring youth development through youth empowerment programmes that were aimed at creating jobs and alleviating poverty	2012	President Goodluck Jonathan
11	National Social Investment Program (Nsip)	with the aim of ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable populations, including children, youth and women	2015	President Muhammadu Buhari
12	N-Power for youth empowerment	The programme was designed to provide young Nigerians with job training and education	2015	President Muhammadu Buhari
13	Conditional Cash Transfer programme	Designed to directly supports the 'most vulnerable' by providing 'no-strings-attached' cash to those in the lowest income group, helping to 'reduce poverty, improve nutrition and self-sustainability, and supporting development through increased consumption.'	2016	President Muhammadu Buhari
14	Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme	The micro-lending investment programme was targeted at entrepreneurs with a focus on young people and women. It provides cost-free loans to beneficiaries, helping to reduce business start-up costs	2016	President Muhammadu Buhari

15	TraderMoni scheme	designed to provide small loans without collateral to small-scale traders or artisans that may not be able to access loans or credit through banks and traditional financial institutions	2016	President Muhammadu Buhari
16	Home-Grown School Feeding Programme	Geared towards increasing school enrollment by providing meals to schoolchildren, particularly those in poor and food-insecure regions.	2016	President Muhammadu Buhari
17	MarketMoni and FarmerMoni	Targeted at market women and farmers, respectively. These were to improve the traders' standards of living by expanding their businesses.	2017	President Muhammadu Buhari
18	Nigerian Youth Investment Fund, (NYIF).	The NYIF aimed to financially empower Nigeria youth to generate at least 500,000 jobs between 2020 and 2023	2020	President Muhammadu Buhari
19	Market Moni 2.0	To help in promoting the development of locally established businesses, petty traders, and market women micro-enterprises across the country.	2023	President Bola Tinubu
20	Conditional Cash Transfer" (CCT)	The CCT programme was introduced by former President MuhammaduBuhari as part of his administration's 2016 Social Intervention Scheme to reduce poverty in Nigeria.	2023	President Bola Tinubu

Source: Authors' Compilation (2024) from Data Generated from Secondary Sources

The fight against poverty in Nigeria and some identified challenges

Globally, the essence of political leadership is service to the citizenry and also for the provision of good governance. However, in the case of Nigeria and some other African countries the situation seems different as this can be seen in the continuous rise in the poverty level resulting to social vices. The corrupt practices and behaviours exhibited by those in position of power and authority are worrisome and calls for concern. The following are some challenges militating against poverty eradication in Nigeria:

Corruption: Corruption is one of the causes of the increasing poverty level in Nigeria. In any successful government, the public sector is determined by the effective utilization of workers. Regrettably, however, the public sector in Nigeria is damaged by a high level of corruption, bribery, and fraud. This scenario has led to inefficiency, diversion of resources, and general infrastructure decay in the country (Ogunlana, 2019). Pathetically, this corruption exists at all levels (government, private and individual) in Nigeria (Salihu & Gholami, 2018). In line with the above, Agbo (2024) reports how the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) detained a former Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Sadiya Umar-Farouq, for questioning over allegations of corruption in the handling of N37.1 billion social intervention funds during her tenure. This amongst others are corruption cases which stand as a reason for poverty increase in Nigeria.

Debt burden: One of the things that raises Nigeria's poverty index is debt load. This is due to the fact that funds required for economic expansion and development are periodically diverted to pay off debt that has been incurred. As a result, less money is anticipated to be spent on social and physical infrastructure for the benefit of the underprivileged (Omoniyi, 2018a). The government's ability to implement effective programs to reduce poverty in Nigeria is being hampered by the steadily declining price of crude oil and the rising proportion of external debt. It is also worthy to note that the cyclical borrowings which the nation engage in, increases the debt profile of the country internationally with Nigeria‟s total public debt stock rising continuously from NGN8.32 trillion in September 2013 to NGN22.7 trillion in March 2017 (Okafor et al., 2021).

Unemployment: Unemployment is also a factor that increases poverty in Nigeria. When people are unemployed, the cost of living becomes very high for them, and their standard of living remains very low. Their source of livelihood drains over time. Hence, there is a strong correlation between poverty and unemployment (Ucha, 2010). Hence, unemployment plays a huge role in the continuous rise of poverty among households and individuals, leading to limited access to education and health opportunities, access to good housing, increase family vulnerability, and loss of self-confidence.

Overdependence on oil: The Nigerian government's over-reliance on crude oil has resulted in the total abandonment of all other economic sectors in favor of oil. Nigeria's economy is facing significant challenges as a result of the misappropriation of oil riches by its government and the current global oil price collapse, which is making poverty there worse. Literature has shown that agriculture is a very good industry that might improve Nigeria's standing in international trade; yet, the country's poverty and crime rates have increased as a result of the overreliance on oil at the expense of agriculture (Adeniyi & Dinbabo, 2020).

Lack of Political will: Another significant factor contributing to Nigeria's growing poverty is a lack of political will. Research has demonstrated a relationship between the political system and the decline in poverty in any given country. In actuality, there is more to Nigeria's growing poverty than just looking at its causes and giving remedies. Put another way, the government must genuinely commit to developing policies and implementing actions aimed at lowering poverty in Nigeria. Only when there is political will from the leaders—and Nigerian politicians lack this—is this achievable. Deficit of political will is a significant roadblock to progress. For instance, the entire development goal will be impacted if leaders misuse the funds allocated for development.

Insecurity: Nigeria has long struggled with a number of security issues, and the nation's level of insecurity is still a major worry. The general state of insecurity in Nigeria, which includes, but is not limited to, insurgency, abduction, communal strife, farmers-herders' fights, and ethno-religious conflict, among other things, contributes to the entrenchment of poverty in the impacted areas. Nigeria's progress has been

severely hampered by insecurity, which has raised the nation's poverty rate. The nation's economic development may be hampered by the persistent destruction of property and loss of life. Any community's economic activity may be severely hindered by the insecurity. As a result, the rate of poverty in society has increased (Akpa & Nebeife, 2017).

Nepotism: Favoritism toward members of one's own family, close friends, political party, religious or ethnic group, and other people is known as nepotism. Given that it frequently results in a lack of accountability, meritocracy, transparency, and fairness, it can have a substantial impact on the growth of a country. Because nepotism is so pervasive in Nigerian politics and government, it frequently leads to the nomination of unfit and inept people to important posts. This impairs the competence and accountability principles and makes it more difficult for government institutions to operate effectively. Appointing people based only on personal ties frequently results in dishonest public servants, poor policy execution, mishandling of public monies, and stagnation in critical areas including infrastructure, healthcare, education, and economic growth.

Conclusion

The study established that poverty reduction strategies adopted by successive government to stem the tide of poverty has not been totally successful. This is largely due to existing societal obstacles to the poverty alleviation programmes such as economic inequality, ethno-religious conflicts, corruption among others. Furthermore, successive governments failed to take into consideration economic realities at various times when formulating or implementing their various poverty alleviation programmes. Therefore, the study concludes that unless the government first tackles the aforementioned societal hiccups to the poverty alleviation programmes, as well as narrow its views and become more realistic in the set goal and timeframe for achieving such goals, efforts to alleviate poverty in Nigeria through poverty alleviation programmes will remain an exercise in futility.

Recommendations

Arising from the above, this study recommends the following:

i. Government should first address societal hiccups to the success of poverty alleviation programmes such as economic inequality, ethno-religious conflicts and corruption. This will engender a fair and favourable playground for the poverty alleviation progrmames to thrive and be successful.

ii. Feasible and realistic goals within a projected time that is achievable should be set. The condition of the Nigerian economy and the prevailing socioeconomic realities should be considered before establishing poverty alleviation programmes in order for them to be successful.

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CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AND PERFORMANCE OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN CALABAR METROPOLIS

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KEYWORDS
Covid-19, Pandemic, Viral, Covidiots, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

ABSTRACT
This study was embarked upon to empirically evaluate the impact of Coronavirus pandemic on performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Calabar Metropolis. Survey research design was used to gather information for the study. The study also used secondary sources of information. This paper is different from other scholars work by delving into COVID 19 pandemic and SMEs performance unlike others that concentrated only on COVID 19 pandemic and its effect on education. The study has also contributed to literature by exploring other countries affected by COVID 19 pandemic in education, health and agricultural activities. Ordinary least square multiple regression technique was used to analyze the data. From the study, it was revealed that there was a significant impact between lockdown and performance of SMEs in Calabar metropolis. There was significant relationship between restrictions on movement and performance of SMEs within Calabar metropolis. Furthermore, the findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between market closure and performance of SMEs. Finally, there was significant relationship between social distancing and performance of SMEs within Calabar Metropolis. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government should revive the

economy by providing palliatives (in form of cash) and other incentives that will cushion the effect of Covid-19 on production and performance of SMEs in Calabar Metropolis.

Introduction

Covid-19 in any case called Coronavirus illness 2019 was announced by World Health Organization (WHO) as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on 30th January, 2020. Covids are group of infections that can cause disease like chilly, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). A new covid was distinguished as the reason for an infection episode that started from Wuhan in China in 2019. The virus infection is presently known as the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV-2). The illness it causes is known as Coronavirus infection 2019 (COVID-19).

On 26 March 2020, UNESCO announced that there were 1.5 billion students from 165 nations who are out of school. This was caused by COVID-19. The pandemic has caused total closure of schools in over 192 nations all around the world with 91.4% of the absolute number of selected students in these nations briefly constrained out of school (UNESCO, 2020). It added that about 1.6 billion students across the world are at present constrained to avoid schools as social distancing is being upheld locally and territorially in order to contain the spread of Coronavirus illness.

In Nigeria, the record instance of Coronavirus began when an Italian employed in Lagos was flown into the ancient city of Lagos from Milan, Italy on 25 February, 2020 (NCDC, 2020). As at the period of composing this paper, Nigeria has announced more than one hundred and fifty thousand (150,000) cases of Coronavirus. Consequent upon the spread of the virus and in line with the decisions of other nations, Nigeria ordered a total close down of all schools. The decision was a welcome development from National University Commission (NUC). The government also suspended all other forms of social and religious gatherings at all levels whether in towns or villages. The working population were all advised to work from home all in a bit to control the spread of the virus. The private and government schools were not left out, say for instance from - nursery, primary, secondary to tertiary were all affected. The consequences of Covid-19 will be felt for a long time to come in education sector. This is even happening at a time when the federal government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigeria are attempting to arrive at an agreement to resolving a prolonged strike action which has paralyzed universities in Nigeria for months counting from October, 2020.

Information gathered was that lockdown was more prominent in South America, Africa and some parts of Europe (UNESCO, 2020). Albeit, Africa recorded the lowest death and Covid-19 related cases comparable to other continents. It is envisaged that the education of an African child would be the most impacted post Covid-19 era as a result of backwardness of economic and technology of most African countries (UNESCO, 2020). Besides, pharmaceutical therapy and other preventive methods, social distancing is considered to be the best measure of limiting the spread of Covid-19. The effective operation of social distancing stresses that schools be shut until government is sure that the pandemic has been contained enough for the safety of schools. This emergency quagmires exposed the many inadequacies and imbalances in our education frameworks (Schleicher, 2020).

In March, 2021, Our country, Nigeria received about four million doses of the COVID-19 vaccines called AstraZeneca/oxford vaccine produced by the Serum Institute of India (SII), transported through the COVAX Facility, a partnership between CEPI, Gavi, UNICEF and WHO. Furthermore, it was noted that the vaccines have undergone thorough regulatory processes at global and country level proven to be safe and effective. As at this period, March, 2021, more than 150,000 Nigerians diseased with the virus and over 1,800 lives lost, the way for recuperation for Nigerians has quite begun. Nonetheless, the reality remains whether not all Nigerians will actually want to take the vaccine in view of numerous conspiracy theories circulating in Nigeria.

The importance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nation building cannot be overemphasized. It assumes a critical role in economic growth and improvement of any Nation. SMEs is a good employer of labour in Calabar and Nigeria in general. It aids the growth of local technology and built indigenous entrepreneurs. SMEs accounted for 90 per cent of all businesses in Nigeria. It also contributes more than 90 per cent of all economic activities and more than 50 per cent of all employment opportunities in other continents. SMEs contribute 40 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developing Nations (Bularafa and Adamu, 2020).

Economist scholars are also very keen to point out that SMEs in Nigeria can do better, but are struggling due to weak economic growth and poor government policies. The Nigerian government had been coming to terms with oil price decline shock from 2014, with the GDP hovering around 2.3% in 2019 (Onyekwena and Ekeruche, 2020). They likewise noted that subsequently, highlight shows that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) modified the GDP growth for Nigeria in 2020 from 2.3% to 2% due to the low prices of crude oil and the restricted fiscal space. Also, Nigeria's debt profile has been inconvenient for stakeholders since the latest figures show the ratio of debt service-to revenue is at 60% (Babalola, 2020). The situation is probably going to deteriorate amid the decrease in income related to the declining oil price. These macroeconomic variables will exaggerate the economic effect of the Covid-19 Pandemic and make it harder for SMEs to climate the crisis. Small and medium businesses are finding it difficult to survive due to pandemic globally. The brunt of the novel diseases is being felt in the current market conditions. The restraints of movements have constrained many businesses to either cut down operations or close down. In addition, the reduction of consumer spending limit imply that Nigerians can only spend on indispensable products. Moreover, since SMEs depend partially on imported products for business, they would experience shortage of resources for processing. Many scholars that have written on Covid 19 pandemic in Africa and beyond concentrated on education leaving Covid 19 and SMEs untouched. This study is an extension of existing scholarship on Covid 19 pandemic and its effects. Finally, the resilience of SMEs is necessary to the recovery of the Nigerian economy from the pandemic as they are the country's economic mainstay.

Statement of the problem

On everyday bases (as at the time of writing this paper), the easing phase of the pandemic has perceived an upsurge in the number of cases signifying the chances that the Covid 19 cases might continue to heighten in future as it is presently even though the curve is flattening gradually. The coronavirus pandemic has presumably antagonistically impacted negatively within global economy by disrupted supply chain and flow of goods and services of SMEs in Calabar Metropolis and its environs. In regard, no company is immune to the challenges and the repercussions of the health crises situation which has continued to last for many months. It has brought unprecedented challenges to government, corporate organizations and many stakeholders in Nigeria and beyond. It has constrained many SMEs and other companies across the globe to observe restrictions on movement. In the same vein, regulatory bodies and government allow providers of essential services to go on with their normal businesses while observing social distancing rules. The pandemic has also caused private driven enterprises to lay-off their staff and also caused a cut in payoff of staff salaries while providing services as a way to contain the spread of the virus. With all business avenues in Nigeria currently observing Covid-19 protocols and some schools required to provide educational services through virtual learning, a number of consistent challenges are affecting businesses and education groups. The naira to dollar exchange rate is skyrocketing on daily basis resulting to high cost of imported materials used for production in Nigeria (Okoi, Iheanacho&Okoi, 2023). Another instance is cybercrime challenges, kidnapping, robbery and other related crimes have been on increase within this period of Covid 19 in Nigeria.

Covid -19 had brought economic shocks and food insecurity in Nigeria. A large number of individuals worldwide are currently facing food insecurity as a result of the pandemic. Families of SMEs worldwide are probably to struggle as their take home are drastically reduced due to job losses, restricted movement and mounting costs of living within Calabar and its environs. Covid-19 had caused economic and financial hardship to many small businesses. The

pandemic has affected the purchasing power or rate of consumers and productivity of supermarkets, eatries /fast-food, hotels and stores within Calabar. Some SMEs were forced to lay off some of their labourforce while others SMEs enforced salary cut among its workforce. The pandemic has caused socio-economic damages such as ban on sporting activities, limiting number of persons that congregate in churches, ban on political and cultural events.

In other to contain the spread of the pandemic, the government announced lockdown, social distancing and wearing of nose masks that results in the shutting of markets, public offices, business organizations, churches, mosque and social events. Additionally, restrictions on movements of persons, goods and services in Calabar caused incredible losses for businesses and companies. Customers of Banks found it cumbersome and impossible to access loan facilities within this period. Facilities were only given to those that have the technical know in the banks.

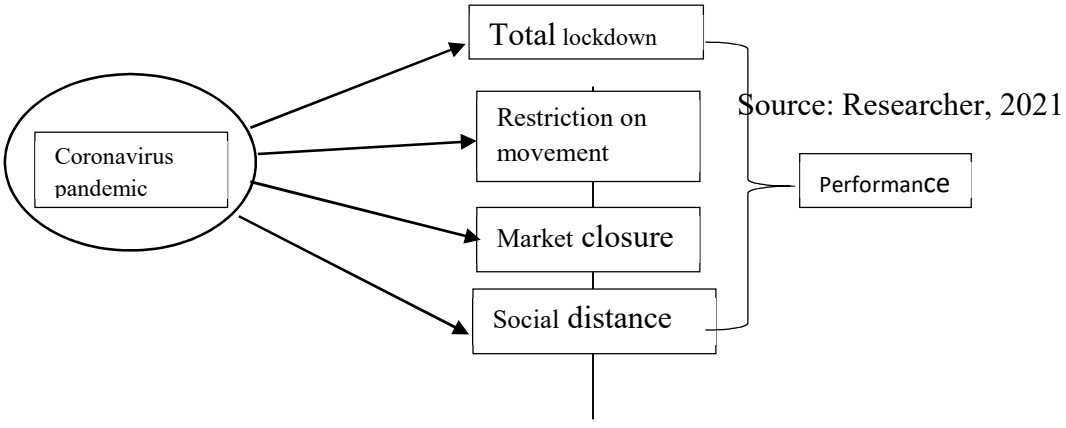
For now, they are scanty literature on Covid-19 pandemic in Cross River State and its environs. Moreover, researchers that have carried out investigations in this area concentrated on the impact of Covid-19 on education and health. This study fills the gap by delving into investigating the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Calabar Metropolis.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this paper is to assess the effect of Covid-19 pandemic on performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Calabar Metropolis - Cross River State. Other specific objectives are: to evaluate the effect of total lock down on Small and Medium (SMEs) Enterprises performance within Calabar metropolis, to examine the impact of restrictions on movement on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) within Calabar metropolis, to x-ray the effect of market closure on the performance Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) within Calabar metropolis, evaluate the effect of social distancing on performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) within Calabar metropolis.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework showing coronavirus pandemic and performance of SMEs in Calabar Metropolis

The conceptual framework depicts the linkage between the independent variables (total lockdown, restriction on movement, market closure and social distance) on dependent variable (performance of SMEs).



Theoretical Framework

The study anchored on Viral Modernity Theory (VMT) propounded by Michael A. Peters (2020). This theory is based on the nature of viruses, the ancient and critical role they undergo in evolution and culture as well as the basic application to knowing the role of information and forms of bio-information in the social world (Peters, Jandri and MCLaren, 2020). Viral modernity theory evaluates the impact of informationon infectious diseases and their consequential effects on education, businesses and socio-cultural activities of people. The proponents also explain that media plays part in the fight against pandemics and identifies some journalists,and bloggers as messengers of inaccurate information on social media and described it as a way of helping to fuel panic, hysteria and stigma that are associated with infectious diseases outbreak (Peters et al., 2020). This study used modernity theory to discuss the epidemiology of COVID-19 in Calabar and its environs and its impact on businesses.

Literature and empirical review

Tailor (2020) explored the effect of Covid – 19 on Nigerian socio-economic well-being, health sector pandemic preparedness and the role of Nigeria social workers in the war against Covid – 19. The study used phenomenological and exploratory research design. The study concluded that Covid – 19 had a devastating impact on the socio-economic well-being of Nigerians as practically all sectors of Nigerian economy was shut down except the medical sector. The study added that the Nigerian health care system was under equipped, funding problems and not proactive to handle any epidemic. It was recommended that government should give more care to the Nigerian health sector in terms of financing, equipping hospitals, and training and retraining of medical staff.

Adiyoh, Ze and Dalibi (2020) x-rayed the effect of Covid – 19 pandemic on small and medium scale businesses in Nigeria. The paper's major objective was implication of the Covid- 19 pandemic on Nigeria's economy and ways that have been put in place to slow down the effects were looked into or addressed. The study used descriptive statistics such as graphs, bar charts etc for further analyses. It was discovered that the constraint to movement, the gradual slow in consumer spending power and reduction in buying of foreign goods directly affecting SMEs in Nigeria. The paper concluded that Covid – 19 pandemics has brought hardship to Nigeria's health sector and the economy. The paper recommended that government should do more in terms of intervention mechanism to enable SMEs be more proactive in adjusting to this novel condition.

Musa and Aifuwa (2020) explored the topic titled "Coronavirus pandemic in Nigeria: How can Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) cope and flatten the curve? The major objective was to bring out measures and strategies to be put in place for the survival of businesses. The method of analyses was theoretically driven as literature on Covid – 19 was reviewed comprehensively. Tables and graph were used for further description. The study came up with a model on how businesses in Nigeria can survive and assist lighten the curve of the deadly disease through severe adherence to health policies and counselling, use of technological mechanisms and provision of isolation room on temporal bases with basic protective kits in business organizations.

Upoalkpajor et al (2020) explored the impact of Covid – 19 on education in Ghana. The objectives of the study were to find out the correlation between corona virus disease and education as well as determine the preventive measures of Covid – 19 in educational sector. The paper used descriptive research survey design. The population of the study was made up of all senior students and all senior high school teachers in Tamale Metropolis. The major instrument used in the research paper was questionnaires. It was found that relationship exist between corona virus disease and educational sector. Moreover, there was impact of Covid – 19 on education while social distancing measures should be implemented and extended school dismissals was also recommended if substantial transmission is noticed.

Nantwi and Boateng (2020) x-rayed Covid – 19 and education in Ghana: A tale of chaos and calm. The paper explored extend at which the dreaded diseases had made life unbearable and strategies put up by government to limit the spread. The paper threw its weight on emergency e-learning as adopted by other countries. The theory used was viral modernity theory by Michael A. Peters (2020) and

conspiracy theory. The paper concluded that the government, educational bodies or agencies, parents and all stakeholders should put necessary arrangements in place to promoting continuous education. The paper recommended that online training or virtual learning should be adopted within this period for smooth operation in education. It added that partnership/collaboration between governments, educational agencies, institutions and telecommunication agencies to offer free data to lecturers and students within this period. Finally, there should be basic fumigation and disinfection in schools to create a healthy environment for learning.

Ngogi (2020) examined the applicability of blended learning in academic recovery during epidemic outbreak and discussed the impact of Covid – 19 on education. The paper used simple percentages, tables, pie chart, bar chart for illustrating number of learners affected by Covid – 19 across the world and Africa. The paper was theoretically examined. It was found out that the lock down of schools regionally and locally in many countries all over the world predicted on prevention of the spread of Covid – 19. The author noted that there was no existing vaccine for the virus and that the pandemic may not be totally cured in the nearest future. It was also discovered that blended learning would enable learners and lecturers have access to online learning materials as interaction between the lecturers and students are carried out. It was recommended among other things that computer application technology should be made compulsory subject in all schools. Lastly, schools should have access to technology – based learning.As at the time of writing this paper, they are scanty literature on Covid-19 pandemic in Cross River State, particularly, the Capital city known as Calabar Metropolis and its environs. In addition, scholars that carried out theoretical investigation in this area concentrated on the impact of Covid-19 on education and health. This study fills the gap by delving into empirical investigation of the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Calabar Metropolis.

Research Methodology

Descriptive cross sectional research design was adopted for this study. This design tries to find out the what, where and how of an event or activity. The design inspects the prevalence of a disease or condition in a defined population at a single point in time without influencing the variables. (Okoi, Okoi & Akeh, 2023). . The purposive (opinion) sampling technique was used because it serves the purpose of the researcher in terms of which units are included in the sample. In this study, the Taro Yamane formula was used to compute. This method is chosen in order to enable us use it as a generalization using the findings. Therefore, a total population of 10,568 was used. The population sample size used for the study which is 385 respondents was computed using Taro Yamane formula. Since the finite population is known, the formula is used as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N\,(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size

N = Actual population

e = level of tolerable

1 = constant

Therefore:

n =?

N = 10,568

e = 0.05

1 = constant

Thus:
$$n = \frac{10,568}{1 + 10,568\,(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{10,568}{1 + 10,568\,(0.0025)}$$

$$= 385.41$$

n = 385 approximately

Based on the computation above the sample size that best represent the population used for the study is 385 respondents. In addition, personal interviews present a good platform for close interaction and rapport between the researcher and the respondents. Simple linear regression was adopted to test lock down, restrictions on movement, market closure and social distancing against performance of small and medium-scale enterprise in Cross River State.

The modelling follows:

$$Y = ß_0 + ß_{1x1} + ß_{2x2} + ß_{3x3} + ß_{4x4} + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y= Profitability of SMEs; X_1=Lock down; X_2 = Restriction on movement; X_3 =Market closure; X_4 = Social distancing; ε=Error estimate; $ß_1$-$ß_4$=Regression coefficients; $ß_0$=Constant

4.0 Data presentation and Discussion of Results

4.1 Table 4.1

Covid -19 has affected the performance of businesses in Calabar Metropolis

Items	SA	%	A	%	U	%	D	%	SD	%
Business profit has dropped significantly during coronavirus in Calabar Metropolis	65	18.79	72	20.82	83	23.99	61	17.63	65	18.77
Business growth is becoming difficult during the pandemic period	69	19.94	78	22.54	56	16.18	77	22.25	66	19.09
Business work at restricted hours because of Covid-19 thereby affecting returns	68	19.65	82	23.73	67	19.34	58	16.76	71	20.52

Source: *Computed by researcher, 2021.*

The result in table 4.1 confirmed that 65 (18.79 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that business profit has dropped significantly during covid-19 pandemic, 72 (20.82 per cent) agreed, 61 (17.63 per cent) disagreed, 65 (18.77 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 83 (23.99 per cent) were undecided. 69 (19.94 per cent) of the respondents strongly that business growth is becoming difficult during covid-19 period in Calabar, 78 (22.54 per cent) agreed, 77 (22.25 per cent) disagreed, 66 (19.09 per cent) strongly disagree, while 56 (16.18 per cent) were undecided. Moreover, 68 (19.65 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that business work at restricted hours because of covid-19 thereby affecting returns, 82 (23.73 per cent) agreed, 58 (16.76 per cent) disagree, 71 (20.52 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 67 (19.34 per cent) were undecided.

There was loss of sales due to market closure.

Table 4.2

Items	SA	%	A	%	U	%	D	%	SD	%
I found it difficult collecting debt owed me during lockdown in Calabar Metropolis	101	29.19	109	31.51	46	13.29	50	14.45	40	11.56
Lockdown measures has affected my turnover rate in business	83	23.99	88	25.43	60	17.34	64	18.50	51	14.74
Salaries of some workers have been slashed due to Covid-19 pandemic lockdown	91	26.30	86	24.86	69	19.94	57	16.47	43	12.43

Source: Computed by researcher, 2021.

The result in table 4.2 revealed that 101 (29.19 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that collection of debt was difficult during the pandemic, 109 (31.51 per cent) agreed, 50 (14.45 per cent) disagreed, 40 (11.56 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 46 (13.29 per cent) were undecided. 83 (23.99 per cent) of the respondents strongly that lockdown measures affected turnover rate of business, 88 (25.43 per cent) agreed, 64 (18.50 per cent) disagreed, 51 (14.74 per cent) strongly disagree, while 60 (17.34 per cent) were undecided. Moreover, 91 (26.30 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that some salaries of workers were slashed due to covid-19, 86 (24.86 per cent) agreed, 57 (16.47 per cent) disagree, 43 (12.43 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 69 (19.94 per cent) were undecided.

Restrictions on movement affected the performance of SMEs within Calabar Metropolis

Table 4.3

Items	SA	%	A	%	U	%	D	%	SD	%
My businesses cannot cope due to Covid-19 pandemic in Calabar	80	23.12	92	26.59	78	22.54	62	17.92	34	9.83
Movement restriction has slowed down sales this period	67	19.36	27	7.82	96	27.74	75	21.67	81	23.41
There was reduction in customer traffic due to movement restrictions	79	22.83	82	23.70	105	30.34	52	15.03	28	8.09

Source: Computed by researcher, 2021.

The result in table 4.3 revealed that 80 (23.12 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that business cannot cope due to covid-19 pandemic, 92 (26.59 per cent) agreed, 62 (17.92 per cent) disagreed, 34 (9.83 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 78 (22.54 per cent) were undecided. 96 (27.74 per cent) of the respondents strongly that there was a great loss of customers due to movement restrictions in Calabar, 75 (21.67 per cent) agreed, 67 (19.36 per cent) disagreed, 27 (7.82 per cent) strongly disagree, while 81 (23.41 per cent) were undecided. Moreover, 79 (22.83 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that there was

reduction in customer traffic due to movement restrictions, 82 (23.70 per cent) agreed, 52 (15.03 per cent) disagree, 28 (8.03 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 105 (30.34 per cent) were undecided.

Effect of market closure on the performance of SMEs within Calabar metropolis.

Table 4.4

Items	SA	%	A	%	U	%	D	%	SD	%
There was loss of sales due to market closure	98	28.32	78	22.45	73	21.10	52	15.03	45	13.10
The closure of market brought my sales turnover down during the pandemic period in Calabar	72	20.81	82	23.70	68	19.65	59	17.05	65	18.79
Hotels and other businesses complained of low returns in business operations because of market closure	82	23.70	86	24.86	63	18.21	55	15.90	60	17.34

Source: Computed by researcher, 2021.

The result in table 4.4 revealed that 98 (28.32 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that there was loss of sales due to market closure during covid-19 pandemic, 78 (22.45 per cent) agreed, 52 (15.03 per cent) disagreed, 45 (13.10 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 73 (21.10 per cent) were undecided. 72 (20.81 per cent) of the respondents strongly agree that market closure affects the demand for products and services of business in Calabar, 82 (23.70 per cent) agreed, 59 (17.05 per cent) disagreed, 65 (18.79 per cent) strongly disagree, while 68 (19.65 per cent) were undecided. Moreover, 82 (23.70 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that hotels and other businesses complained of low returns in business, 86 (24.86 per cent) agreed, 55 (15.90 per cent) disagree, 60 (17.34 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 63 (18.21 per cent) were undecided

Effect of social distancing on performance of SMESs within Calabar Metropolis

Table 4.5

Items	SA	%	A	%	U	%	D	%	SD	%
Social distancing policies affect business operations	75	21.68	85	24.57	90	26.01	69	19.94	27	7.80
Social distancing dropped the volume of my products	76	24.46	95	27.46	75	21.66	55	15.90	45	13.01
Social distancing has caused low patronage in my business	75	21.68	69	19.99	86	24.86	56	16.18	60	17.34

Source: Computed by researcher, 2021.

The result in table 4.5 revealed that 75 (21.68 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed social distancing policies affected business operations during covid-19 pandemic, 85 (24.57 per cent) agreed, 69 (19.94 per cent) disagreed, 27 (7.80 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 90 (26.01 per cent) were undecided. 76 (24.46 per cent) of the respondents strongly agree that business income has declined as a result of covid-19 in Calabar, 95 (27.46 per cent) agreed, 55 (15.90 per cent) disagreed, 45 (13.01 per cent) strongly disagree, while 75 (21.66 per cent) were undecided. Moreover, 75 (21.68 per cent) of the respondents strongly agreed that social distancing had caused low patronage in business, 69 (19.99 per cent) agreed, 56 (16.18 per cent) disagree, 60 (17.34 per cent) strongly disagreed, while 86 (24.86 per cent) were undecided

Discussion of findings

The goal of the study was to examine the impact of Covid-19 on performance of SMEs in Calabar Metropolis. Coronavirus is a novel disease that has affected nations globally. The disease has affected practically almost all sectors of the economy. The paper highlighted the effects of Coronavirus on financial performance of SMEs in Calabar Metropolis.

Data analysis and test of hypothesis revealed a significant effect of lockdown measures on performance of SMEsduring the pandemic in Calabar Metropolis. This suggests that lock down during the pandemic has significantly affected the profitability of SMEs in Calabar. The businesses of these SMEs are no more booming since the novel disease- Covid - 19 set in Calabar Municipality, as most traders witnessed low sales and stock piles which resulted in very marginal profit. The findings is in line with Bularafa and Adamu (2021). The author noted the damaging economic effect of Covid-19 on inhabitants of Taraba State.

From hypothesis two, it was discovered that there was a significant positive relationship between restrictions on movements as a result of Covid-19 pandemic in Calabar Metropolis. This affected sales of bars and restaurants, hotels and other SMEs within Calabar Metropolis. The sale of most restaurants dropped significantly and affected operational base of these businesses. Some could not pay salaries and other logistics within the period under review while others are still trying to cope with the post Covid-19 challenges.

From hypothesis three, it was discovered that there was significant impact of market closure on SMEs operators in Calabar Metropolis. This has caused many businesses or hotels complain of low returns in their operational business. These findings is in line with Wan (2020) who examined Education and Covid-19 and discovered that school closure has paralyzed the movement of pupils, students and other populace as teaching was made through virtual learning during this period. Many occasions, services and other important duties could not be attended to during this period.

From hypothesis four, it was discovered that there was a significant effect of social distancing on performance of small and medium enterprise within Calabar Metropolis. Social distancing policies affect business operations. Social distancing constrained many SMEs from meeting their organizational target, thereby affecting their performance over time.

From the test of hypothesis five, it was found that there was significant relationship between Covid-19 and financial performance of SMEs in Calabar Metropolis. This implies that the novel disease has significantly affected profitability of SMEs within Calabar Metropolis. Business profit dropped significantly during coronavirus pandemic in Calabar Metropolis. Business growth was difficult during the pandemic period. Businesses worked under restricted hours because of covid-19 pandemic thereby affecting returns. Bularafa and Adamu (2021)who examined the effect of Covid-19 pandemic on SMEs in Nigeria and found out that a positive relationship exist between Covid-19 and the performance of SMs in Nigeria.

The findings of this study does not disprove the theoretical underpinnings of viral modernity theory. The theory clarifies the impact of information on infectious diseases and their consequential effects on socio-cultural and economic activities of people. The theory explains that as the rate of pandemic expands, there is probability that economic and social activities undertaken by businesses will be affected in long and short run. Moreover, the findings is in concurrence with the social ecological theory that support the claim that serious attention should be given to shaping and embracing healthy behavior. These actions are

sanitization, social distancing, movement restriction, ban on worship, testing suspects, isolation, quarantining, and business closures as part of containment of pandemic of any nature.

Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper sets out to examine significantly Covid-19 and performance of SMEs in Calabar Metropolis. The study revealed that there was significant positive effect of coronavirus pandemic (lock down measures, restrictions on movement, market closure, social distancing) on performance of SMEs in Calabar Metropolis. Moreover, all the explanatory variables have positive significant relationship with Covid-19 pandemic. In accordance with the findings, the study inferred that the novel Coronavirus pandemic affected all the explanatory variables used in this study for the period under review. Covid -19 affected major economic activities in Calabar Metropolis rendering businesses difficult to operate as sales, income and most economic activities were truncated.

Based on the findings, the study made the following recommendations:

i. The study recommended that lockdown should be implemented with caution during Covid -19 pandemic to avoid shortage of economic goods and total collapse of SMEs, especially SMEs that engages in production should be encouraged to move their products to customers.

ii. Palliatives in form of survival fund should be given to vulnerable SMEs to boost their business operations within Calabar Metropolis. While there is a consensus that the government needs to do more to protect SMEs from the effects of the pandemic, businesses also need to play their part to ensure their survival. In particular, SMEs should change their business models to become more online-based.

iii. Market Closure is inimical to businesses and should not be full option during pandemic. The study recommends government interventions in creating alternative markets to ensure that businesses are sustained

iv. Since social distancing cannot be discouraged in view of the pandemic, the study recommended that SMEs should adopt online shopping platforms deployment for their customers in order to improve their sales turnover and remain profitable.

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PERSPECTIVES ON THE CHALLENGES TO THE WATCHDOG FUNCTION OF THE MEDIA IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The study sought to find out the challenges to the watchdog function of the media, and the impact of these challenges on democracy and the people. The study is anchored on Agenda Setting Theory of the Press. Library Research Method was employed to generate secondary data for the study. The study has shown that the media as a watchdog of the society cannot achieve desired result in Nigeria, because our institutions are weak, compromised or corrupt and power does not reside in the people. This means that, no matter how the media try to ensure accountability in government it can hardly succeed when our institutions are weak and compromised. The study has also shown that, weak institutions and the fact that power does not reside in the electorates, is gradually paving way for kakistocracy and centralization of power. This means that the Executive arm (President) is becoming too powerful. This is true in that findings revealed that, the Supreme Court in Nigeria will never remove a sitting President, however deeply flawed his election may be, because the judiciary is weak and corrupt. Again it was revealed that, INEC deliberately rigged the 2023 Presidential Elections because Amazon that was engaged to provide technical support said, there was no glitch with the result viewing portals on February 2023. This shows that both INEC and the Judiciary are weak and compromised. Institutions of the state will continue to remain weak and useless until people who work in such institutions do the right thing. Findings revealed that, both public and private media owners have a lot of influence on the media they operate and these owners, have used their media organizations to: influence public opinion, which is also another form of impediment to the watchdog role of the media It was concluded that, the watchdog function of the media cannot bring about the desired

accountability, good governance and dividends of democracy in a country where the institutions are weak and power does not reside in the electorates .It was recommended that heads of the various institutions of the state should not be appointed by the President and our institutions must be allowed to function without fear or favour.

Introduction

In countries where power resides in the electorates and the institutions of the state are independent and active, the media is seen achieving its full potential as the watchdog of the society, and democracy also thrives in such countries. The unofficial title of" the fourth estate of the realm of government" was ascribed to the media because of its function as the watchdog of the society. This position is consented to by, Paranthaman (2015) who notes that, the media share equal important function with the other arms of government in maintaining good governance and healthy environment for business, and is referred to as the watchdog function. The watchdog function of the media centres on investigative journalism that is intended to expose corruption, or expose the malfeasance of our political elites and or illegality that are capable of truncating growth and development in a democratic society. Little wonder, Wikipedia (nd) states that, it is a type of investigative journalism that ensures accountability in democracy interviewing politicians and other public figures and cross checking facts from sure interview for the purpose of accountability.

Hitherto, the media as the watchdog of the society cannot ensure accountability and good governance in countries like Nigeria where the institutions are weak, or compromised. This assertion is echoed in Akinyetun (2022) who opines that, countries with weak institutions are associated with weak laws. The role of the media as a watchdog is to expose ills in the society. After that, it is then left for the institutions or institution concerned to correct the identified ills, by doing the needful. The media do not have the power to sanction corrupt individuals neither do the media have the power to take to trial such individuals. The need for the watchdog function of the media is echoed in Onabajo (2020) who states that, the media serve the people's right to know and also holds the government accountable to the people. However, the power of the media in Nigeria to hold government accountable is challenged by the fact that our institutions are weak, and the fact that, power does not reside in the electorates. The media can only expose corruption but do not have the power or authority to punish offenders. The power to punish is vested in the institutions of the state, that are weak or compromised.

A number of studies have been conducted on the watchdog role of the media. However, these studies did not take into cognizance the impediments to the watchdog role of the media. .Karadimittrious, Von Kogh, Rugiero, Biacalana, Bomba & Lo (2022) in the study," Journalism and the Watchdog Role of News Media: Between Acute Challenges and Exceptional Counter Balances". Sought to find out the extent to which news media perform their watchdog role appropriately..The "gap in this study is that, the researchers did look at the impediments to the watchdog role of the media. In the study, "Assessing the Media's Role in Ensuring the Accountability of the Nigeria Government", the researchers, Amodu, Yartey, Ekanem, Oresanya and Afolabi (2016). Investigated the performance of the watchdog role of the media in relation to accountability. The gap in this study is that, the watchdog role of the media cannot ensure accountability when the institutions of the state are weak and power does not reside in the people. The current study is different from previous studies because it looked at impediments to the functionality of the watchdog role of the media. The watchdog function is to expose ills in government, correcting such ills, is the responsibility of the institutions of the state. However, the institutions appear to be weak and compromised. Weak instructions arrogate such much power to the Executive arm (President) Little wonder a sage of yore once said, power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. The watchdog role of the media is to ensure that leaders do not deviate from the

tenets of democracy in the discharge of their functions. This study investigates challenges to the watchdog function of the media in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on Agenda Setting Theory of the press. The theory is traced to Walter Lippmann. Asemah, Nwammuo,& Nkwa –Uwaoma (2017) state that, "Lippmann argued that, the mass media are the principal connection between events in the world and the images in the mind of the public.. Without using the term agenda setting Lipmann was talking about what we today call agenda setting(p,73-74)".The theory was formerly developed by Maxwell McCombs & Donald Shawn in 1968. Agenda Setting Theory according to Communication Theory (nd) has to do with the media giving utmost importance to a specific issue, so as to give the audience the impression that, certain news is the most important .The selected news report comes as the heading or is covered frequently for some time. Agenda setting theory also refers to how editors, journalists and broadcasters prioritise and filter what to include and what not to include in the news (Chapman 2001).Agenda Setting Theory proposes that, the public agenda or the kind of things people discuss, think and worry about is powerfully shaped and directed by what the media choose to publicize (Wimmer & Dominick in Asemah et al 2017)Little wonder Folarin (1998) opines that, the theory connotes that, the mass media predetermine what issues are considered important at any given time in a society; this does not mean that the media have the power to determine what we actually think about. This means that, the media can only bring issues to our attention but cannot compel us to think about such issue. This position is echoed in Ijwo & Omula (2014) who state that, the media are powerful enough to set agenda but the audiences are free to either work with the agenda or no.

The media according to Folarin (1998,p.66) can set agenda in the following ways

- The quantity or frequency of reporting
- Prominence given to the reports – through headline display, picture and layout of newspapers
- The degree of conflict generated by the report

The cumulative specific media effects over time

The media can set agenda by reporting a particular event again and again, with the specific aim of drawing peoples' attention to such event, so as to make such event public agenda. This what is referred to as quantity or frequency of report

The media can set agenda by allowing that issue they want people to be aware of occupy the front pages of their publication. Sometimes, such issues come as banner headlines, so as to attract readers' attention to it. This means that, such event or news is given prominence over others.

The power of television in setting agenda as encapsulated in the in the words of Ebo in Ijwo & Omula(2014) is that, television offers debates and discussions on agenda and gains credibility of purpose by selecting personalities that really have the expertise to handle the topics, there by not only making the viewers aware of the idea it is perpetuating, but also making the viewers feel they have some sense of importance too, because they now know..

Then media according to Ijwo & Omula can also set agenda in the following ways:

- Framing—this means that the importance and the interpretation people attach to potential items on public agenda are strongly influenced by how the media present news stories
- Priming—priming implies drawing attention to certain issues even in a neutral manner.
- Salience Transfer—refers to the capacity of the media (or other authors) to influence the relative importance individuals attach to issues.

The assumption of agenda setting theory according to Ijwo & Omula(2014) are:

McCombs and Shaw believe that the media have the ability to transfer the salient item on their news agenda to public agenda

Agenda setting theory boasted of two attractive features; it reaffirmed the power of the press while maintaining that, individuals were free to choose,

The press and television can cause audience ego involvement in the issue to rise and fall in response to media emphasis.

The theory predicts a cause and effect relationship between media content and voters' perception.

The relevance of this theory to this study lies in the fact that, Agenda Setting Theory is also known as the agenda setting function of the media. It is through this function that the watchdog role of the media is made visible. This means that, the media can draw audience attention to ills in the society through its agenda setting function by constantly featuring such issue or event in the media. This is true in that, Chenkhinwee (2024) posits that, the media can constantly feature a particular event or issue in the news, thereby creating a sense of urgency about the issue or event. Again, the theory is in align with the topic in that, the theory has shown that the media in trying to ensure accountability can only bring issues of corruption to public notice. This is so because the theory believes that, the media can only set agenda but cannot force people to act on the agenda. It also connotes that with weak institutions and power not residing in the electorates, exposing corruption and ills in government will amount to an exercise in futility

Objectives of the Study

i. To investigate challenges to the watchdog functions of the media in Nigeria.

ii. To ascertain the impacts of these challenges on democracy, and the people.

Literature Review

Challenges to the Watchdog Functions of the Media in Nigeria

The power to sanction offenders is vested in the various institutions of the state. If the media exposes the activities of corrupt officials, the power to arrest, question or convict such officials resides in the various institutions of the state like the police, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the judiciary and not the media. However, these institutions appear to be weak, compromised or loyal to the man at the helm of affairs (President) .So one of the challenges to the watchdog function of the media, is that our institutions are weak and compromised or loyal to the President. Akinyetun (2022) posits that, weak institutions are the bane of democracy in African, .Just recently, Nigerian government under the leadership of President Ahmed Bola Tinubu hiked electricity tariff across the nation from #65/kwh to #225 /kwh, which is over 200% increment. In their separate reactions to the hike, the House of Representative and the Nigerian Labour Congress according to Olawin, Tolu-kolawole & Adaji (2024) asked the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) not to implement the new electricity tariff nationwide. However, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Power, Florence Eke, according to Olawin et al (2024) told the Punch on the 5th of May 2024 that, " the new tariff had come to stay and government would not yield to public pressure".

The point is that for a spokesperson to confidently tell the press that, government would not yield to public pressure, shows that she must be taking orders from somebody she believes is more powerful than the institutions and the people put together. The media has played its part by informing the people about the hike . The people had reacted by saying no to the hike, the House of Representative has made a mere pronouncement urging NERC not to implement the hike. The judiciary has not said anything. The Senate and House of Representative have the power to make NERC discontinue the hike if they really want to. They wouldn't do so because most of them are loyal to the President. The body language of the Senate and the judiciary show that , they are compromised or are not ready to do anything about the hike.. The implication of a compromised legislature is weak and poor legislations. This is true in that Akinyetun (2022) opines that, countries with weak institutions are associated with poor laws. This is so because in most cases the laws made by weak institutions are not always in the interest of the masses. The judiciary, the National Assembly and other institutions of government will continue to remain weak until they do the right thing. This assertion is echoed in Muritala (2023) who posits that, institutions will continue to remain

weak and useless until people who work in such institutions do what is right.. This is so in that those who manage the institutions are more powerful than the institutions.

Another impact of weak institutions is the fact that, it makes those in position of authority particularly the President appears to be more powerful than the institutions of the state. This means that such President or political elite(s) cannot be called to order by the institutions no matter what the media were able to expose about such individual(s). Such political elites are not afraid of what the media may say or expose about them, because they have the institutions that can sanction them, under their control. As such most of such leaders' act without regards to the law. Giving credence to the preceding point Muritala (2023) asserts that, former President Olusegun Obasanjo was known for always disobeying and ignoring orders of court. There is also the case of a former President spending without legislative approval. In 2018 the then President of Nigeria President Muhammad Buhari made advance payment for purchase of planes without Legislative approval. Giving credence to this point, Nwabughiogu (2018) notes that "It will be recalled that the President had made advanced payment on the aircraft from monies not appropriated for by National Assembly (Parag.3)".

Weak institution is further depriving the masses the opportunity to actually participate in the democratic process, of electing those to represent them. This is a challenge to democracy because, few powerful individuals can use the institutions to impose themselves or their opinions on the majority. This is so because after elections the decision to announce the winner(s) is vested in the institutions of the state and not the masses. The decision of a weak or compromised institution will not always reflect the view of the majority. This was the case with the 2023 Presidential Election result in Nigeria, that was believed not to reflect what transpired at the polls. The fact that INEC as institution is weak and compromised is captured in Odimegwu (2023) who observes that,

The failure of INEC result viewing portal (IReV) on election day was a betrayal many Nigerians did not predict or should have expected. It was a massive disappointment for many excited citizens who felt that the country would witness a transparent electoral process for the first time in a long time … In addition, INEC's manual tally of votes has been roundly panned for being riddled with errors.

As some election officers were reportedly corrupt during the process, it is not surprising that many Nigerians are questioning the integrity and authenticity of INEC's operation (P,7 &8)

It is glaring that INEC as an institution is weak and compromised, for the result viewing portal not to have worked on the day of election clearly showed that INEC had a hidden agenda. This is true because INEC had assured Nigerians that the technology would be used to ensure transparent election. INEC in the words of Odimegwu (2023) "assured Nigerians that the result transmission would and must be done using the BVAS (Bimodal voter Accreditation System). These assurances boosted residents' hope … in the possibility of a free and fair election (P,2)" To further buttressed the fact that INEC was compromised and weak Nnochiri(2023) asserts that Amazon a web Service that was engaged by INEC to provide technical support during the general elections, told the Presidential Election Petition Court that there was no technical glitch on February 25 2023. This shows that even the judiciary is also weak and compromised. The testimony of Amazon representative before The Presidential Election Petition Court shows how weak, corrupt and compromised the judiciary and the INEC have become .as institutions of the state.

The media through their watchdog functions were able to show to some extent that, the 2023 Presidential Election was rigged. However, the Judiciary failed in its function to ensure justices for those who sought redress in court. Weak institution and the fact that power does not reside in the electorates, is a huge blow to democracy as electorates are not allowed to actually participate in the democratic process. Democracy in the words of Day (2022) allows participation of citizen in charting the course of their government and their future. Participation can come in form of voting, public debate, town hall meetings and peaceful protest The implication is that with weak institutions the media and the people (electorates) are not allowed to chart the course of their government and their future. An election cannot be democratic until the people (electorates) are fully able to participate and are not prevented from exercising their choice (A C E nd)

A weak and compromised judiciary system further compounds the challenges to the watchdog function of the media . If INEC failed in her duty, the court can overrule INEC's decision so long as there is evidence to prove that INEC was wrong. This is why the court is said to be the last hope of the common man. Take away the powers of the institutions of the state and you render the watchdog function of the media meaningless. The Supreme Court judgment on the 2023 Presidential Election in Nigeria was a travesty of justice, that has tarnished the image of Nigeria before the world. This position is consented to by Fasan (2024) who posits that, it is clear that, Supreme Court cannot remove a sitting President irrespective of how deeply flawed his election may be. In the future any losing presidential candidate continued Fasan, who institutes an election petition will just be wasting his time. In further amplification of the fact that the judicial system of Nigeria is compromised Akanmidu (2018) opines that, is glaring that in Nigeria, there are corrupt judges. .The National Judicial Council in 2013 had to suspend and recommend for retirement two High Court judges for misconduct concerning corruption (Aknmidu 2022). The importance of an independent judiciary to the watchdog function of the media is aptly captured in Ostini (nd) who states that, the watchdog function of the media can result in the resignation of officials who are corrupt, and court proceedings that can create pathways to justice for victims. This shows that strong and viable institutions can guarantee accountability and transparency in governance as those who are found wanting will be sanctioned accordingly by the appropriate institutions.

Security agencies that are expected to protect lives and property of citizens and effect the arrest of corrupt individuals or officials are themselves corrupt and compromised. There is a lot of corruption among the various security agencies in Nigeria, this shows that these agencies are compromised. Such agencies cannot provide adequate security for journalists in the discharge of their primary responsibilities. Go to a police station where it is conspicuously displayed that bail is free, the police man will still demand that you pay money to bail people. Giving credence to the preceding point Titilola (2024) opines that, a Lagos based lawyer Olumide Sonupe went to the Moshalash Police Station in Alimosho Area on 30th December 2023 to bail his clien,. while the lawyer was talking to his client, the investigating police officer (IPO) came to the lawyer and demanded thirty thousand naira for bail, and that the money be transferred to the account of a POS vendor that she (IPO) was going to bring.

Cases abound of the police officers who are expected to protect the people conniving with or hiring their service riffle to armed robbers This is so in that, Obasanjo (2005) laments that Some robbers have been recruited into police. He maintained that, police hire out their guns to armed robbers. This is a very weighty allegation coming from a former military leader and a former President of Nigeria. Based on the assertion of former President Obasanjo it can be argued that some police officers now connive with armed robbers to rob citizens of their hard earned belongings. How then do you expect such police officers to arrest his/their " partners in crime"(armed robber).Such police officers would be the ones to tell the armed robber they are coming to arrest him. The watchdog function of the media cannot make meaningful impact when the security agencies are not doing their jobs the way they should. Democracy cannot thrive because a compromised security agency is bound to trample on the rights of law abiding citizens. A compromised security agency cannot provide adequate security for the media and that masses during elections simply put, a compromised security agency cannot guarantee the safety of citizens at all times.

Besides weak institution another challenge to the watchdog function of the media is the fact that power does reside in the people. Obasanjo according to Ogunnaike (2023) states that western liberal democracy is:

> "government of a few people over all the people or the population and these few people are representatives of only some of the people and not full representatives of all the people. Invariably, the majority of the people are wittingly or unwittingly kept out. (parag.3)".

This means that power does not reside in the Nigerian electorates. That power does not reside in the people shows that we are not actually practicing democracy, in the true sense of the word. This is so because true democracy in the words of Day (2022) allows participation of citizen in charting the course of their government and their future. Participation can come in form of voting, public debate, town hall

meetings and peaceful protest. When power does not reside in the people the people cannot actually participate in democracy, this so because they cannot choose leaders of their choice neither can they recall a leader who is found wanting in the performance of his duty. This is gradually leading us to kakistocracy rather than democracy.

Ownership influence and interest is another challenge that confronts the watchdog function of the media in Nigeria. When a media owner is interested in an issue he wants that interest to reflect in news stories about that thing. For instance, if the owner is interested in a political party or candidate he wouldn't want his media organization to carry "negative" news about such party or candidate, there by suppressing the objective views of journalists in his media organization. This is a huge challenge to the watchdog function of the media. This position is echoed in Project Reserve (nd) which states that, public media (government) are mostly used as instruments of propaganda for the government while private media owners are driven by different motives ranging from profit making, agenda setting to winning influence and political and business gain. Simply put, private media owners are mainly interested in propaganda or profit making. We are all living witnesses to the campaign of calumny by African Independent Television against Muhammad Buhari then Presidential candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC). The documentary clearly depicted ownership influence and interest. The said documentary was aired January 2015, in African Independent Television (AIT). Little wonder Adelabu(2022), conducted a study and found out that, both public and private media owners have a lot of influence on the media they operate . These owners continued Adelabu, have used their media organizations to: influence public opinion, .to suppress the truth, denied opposing views access to the media, peddle false information, character assassination and to settle political scores.

Methodology

The study adopted the Library Research Method. This means, the study is based on secondary data. Library Research according to IGI Global (nd) refers to the act of using a library either in print or online, to find information which satisfies or answers a question. Giving credence to the preceding point Wikipedia (nd) states that, a research library is a library that contains in-depth collection of materials on one or several subjects. Research libraries are mainly established to carter for the research needs of researchers. Such libraries are usually stocked with authentic materials with quality contents (Wikipedia) in research library one is able to find scholarly and non-fiction materials such as: journals, newspapers, periodicals research projects etc. The implication is that the study is based on consultations of theoretically related studies carried out by other scholars. Conclusion and recommendations were made based on consultation of textbooks, journal articles and online materials.

Discuss

The first objective of this study was to investigate the challenges to the watchdog functions of the media in Nigeria. This is so because, previous studies underscored the extent to which the media were able to perform their watchdog functions. Findings have shown that weak institutions, ownership influence, corrupt security agencies and the fact that power does not reside in the people are challenges to the watchdog function of the media in Nigeria. These imply that the watchdog function of the media in ensuring accountability can make little or no impact when our institutions are weak and power does not reside in the people. It was revealed that the 2023 Presidential Election was not a true reflection of what transpired at the polls because INEC is weak compromised and corrupt. This is in line with the submission of Nnochiri (2023) who asserts that, Amazon a web Service that was engaged by INEC to provide technical support during the general elections, told the Presidential Election Petition Court that there was no technical glitch on February 25 2023. Furthermore, Odimegwu (2023) argues that "some election officers were reportedly corrupt during the process, it is not surprising that many Nigerians are questioning the integrity and authenticity of INEC's operation (P,7) "

It is glaring that weak institution is a challenge to the watchdog function of the media. The media for instance came up with plenty of reports on alleged irregularities in the conduct of the Presidential Election in Nigeria in 2023. Little wonder major contenders like Peter Obi and Atiku Abubakar had to respectively seek

redress in court. But the outcome of the court ruling was a travesty of justice. This assertion is echoed in Fasan (2024) who posits that, the Supreme Court in Nigeria cannot remove a sitting President irrespective of how deeply flawed his election may be. In further amplification of the fact that the judicial system of Nigeria is compromised Akanmidu (2018) opines that, there are many corrupt judges in Nigeria. The National Judicial Council in 2013 had to suspend and recommend for retirement two High Court judges for misconduct concerning corruption (Aknmidu 20220). One of the causes of weak institution is that the heads of these institutions are appointed by the President. As such they tend to be loyal to the President to the detriment of the general public. Ojoye (2017) opines that, an INEC Chairman is likely to have sympathy for the President that appointed him and when this happens we are not practicing genuine democracy.

The second objective of this study was to ascertain the impacts of these challenges on democracy, and and the people The implication of weak institutions on democracy is that it allows the abuse of powers by those in position of authority, and also making the opinion of few to supersede those of the majority. Weak institutions encourage corruption and discourage accountability. Weak institutions create room for selection rather than election. Weak institutions discourage foreign investment. Little wonder Akinyetun (2022) posits that, weak institutions are the bane of democracy in African. Again Akinyetun (2022) opines that, countries with weak institutions are associated with poor laws. This is so in that such laws in most cases are not in the interest of the masses but in the interest of money bags or the powers that be. Weak institutions in Nigeria have made the President so powerful that, he appears to have the final say in most matters , this is so because the power that is supposed to reside in the institutions and the electorates now resides in the President., This has accounted for widespread corruption among those within the corridors of power, this is true in that, the inordinate desire for money and the realization that power can deliver untold wealth is believed to be responsible for most corruption cases in Africa, as such the state and the people are sacrificed to greed (Liedong 2017)..

The impact of weak institution on the media is that it is an impediment to the watchdog function of the media. Simply put weak institutions, weaken the power of the media as the fourth estate of the realm of government, Once the media is able to expose corruption the relevant institutions are expected to take it up from there, by ensuring that offenders are punished accordingly. However the reverse is the case, hence the watchdog function of the media can achieve little or no result at all.

Concerns

i. That power does not reside in the people and that our institutions are weak compromised or inactive discourage investigative journalism (watchdog function). These have arrogated so much power to a particular arm of government, the Executive by extension the President.

ii. That power does not reside in the people and that our institutions are weak, compromised or inactive have made the opinions of few powerful individuals to supersede those of the majority. The electorates can hardly have a say in the affairs of government. For instance, the people are saying government should revert to old electricity tariff for those in band A but the government has refused to listen to the people. And the institutions cannot do anything either because they are weak compromised or corrupt. Nigerians are at the mercy of the President a fellow country man.

iii. Corruption will continue to thrive and kakistocracy will become the order of the day because those in position of authority are above the law and more powerful than the institutions of the state and the electorates. As such votes can hardly count during elections.

iv. The Executive (President) is becoming more and more powerful because other institutions of government or institutions of the state cannot call such President to order hence the abuse of power with impunity. This is gradually leading to centralization of power, if we are not already there.

Conclusion

The watchdog function of the media cannot bring about the desired accountability, good governance and dividends of democracy in a country where the institutions are weak and power does not reside in the electorates.

Recommendation

i. Heads of the various institutions of the state should not be appointed by the President and our institutions must be allowed to function without fear or favour.

ii. To achieve accountability and ensure effective watchdog function of the press power must reside in the people and the institutions of the state and not select few.

iii. There is need to put in place mechanisms to check the influence of both public and private media owners.

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THE ENIGMA OF WORKING MOTHERS IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN NSUKKA L.G.A. OF ENUGU STATE: WORK-FAMILY ROLE CONFLICT

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Dual-functionality, Role-conflict, Enigma and Feminization

ABSTRACT
For the past two decades, employment rates of mothers have increased against most traditional practices that stipulate women as home-stay. The increase in mothers' rates of employment creates a basic income matrix of family support that ensures socio-economic wellbeing and triggers stress on working mothers at the same time. Most mothers are employed in institutions of higher learning; which Enugu State is not left out. It is against this background that this study examines the impact of work-family role conflict among working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A. of Enugu State. The study was guided by three research questions that were converted to objectives. The study tested two hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. The study adopted a descriptive statistical method. The population of the study was mothers who were employees of University of Nigeria and College of Education, Nsukka. The total number of mothers from the two higher institutions is 4,343. The sample size for the study was 313 working mothers. Questionnaire was used for the study. Descriptive statistics were used in data analysis. The results showed coping strategies for working mothers, factors that help working mothers in their dual role functionalities. The result iterates psychological effects of role conflict on working mothers. Based on the findings of the study, it recommends there should be a balance between family and work, especially as it relates to working mothers. It recommends that for working mothers to be emotionally and psychologically strong, the support of their husbands is essential.

Introduction

In most societies, the basic role of mothers is outline of; preparing the family meal, taking care of the children, washing the husband's clothes, cleaning the house and other homework that are peculiar to females. This is most common in traditional African societies where the responsibility of taking care of the home is believed to be solely that of the woman. Therefore, women still find it difficult to disassociate themselves from the cultural or

traditional roles imposed on them lest they will be seen as being irresponsible (Elegbede, 2012). Thus, the roles and status of women in the society are well recognized against the new trend of feminization on the labour market (Casale, 2004), that has increased gender neutrality on employment which Nigeria is not exempted from.

Work-family role conflicts are dual functionality of two domains (work and family), which are not always compatible, therefore creating conflicts between work and family life (Frone, Ruseell & Cooper, 1992). Dual career mothers have to attend to two major life roles. That is, doing her prescribed jobs at the workplace and managing the home. This problem is most common in traditional African societies where the responsibility of taking care of the home is believed to be solely that of the woman, while at the same time performing official activities (Eremie & Kennedy, 2015). These roles demand that such a mother wakes up early to perform her domestic roles before going to work and also return home to perform her stipulated duties as culturally bound in the evening. The circling of these roles leads to different conflict situations at home and work place. Such conflicts may include verbal and physical assaults, threat to marriage, incompetence, queries, job dissatisfaction, boredom and low turnover rates, which leads to psychological distress, depression and dissatisfaction both in marriage and job. The consequences of these conflicts are seen in the role effectiveness of such mothers in both organization and domestic life roles. According to Allen, Herst, Bruck & Sutton, (2000), for the employers (workplace) such role conflicts means dissatisfaction, lower standard of work performance, disregard of organizational goals and for the family (husband and children) resentment, depression, lack of trust, misunderstanding and disrespect among others.

The patriarchal nature of African societies makes things more difficult for women to balance work and family roles. For example, most Igbo societies in Nigeria have formidable patriarchal structure such that women are largely described as home-workers. Men are perceived as lords over their families, their wives must take permission from them before doing certain things. This is not the case with men as they are free to engage in any activities of their choice. On this, Asiyanbola (2005) posits that patriarchy has been defined as a system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions. Feminists have argued that in any of the historical forms that patriarchal society takes, whether it is feudal, capitalist or socialist, a sex gender system and a system of economic discrimination operate simultaneously (Makama, 2013).

On the other hand, Azodo and Eke (2007), posits that in traditional African societies, a woman's place is seen to be in the home space, where she is limited to domestic functions, bearing and rearing of children, while the man roams the wild looking for adventure in work and war. That man is seen as the leader and head of the society, while the woman cares for and nurtures the family and the home. These views have overtly and covertly impacted negatively on the women folk and indirectly on men, also on the socio-economic and political advancement of African society in general. According to Dogo (2014), opine that from the time a child is born in most traditional society (Igbo), he or she is cast in the role ascribed for the sexes by society. The children are therefore brought up in the awareness of societal gender roles and grow up to fulfill them. These roles confine the sexes to supposedly appropriate manners of behavior and areas of endeavor based on their biological identification of being either male or female.

Sequel to these arguments, Omadjohwoefe (2011) further exposed: "The male child is allowed to wander farther, get involved in rough and tumble play, while the girl is highly restricted and closely monitored." With such a strong patriarchal structure in Igbo society, women who are employed are confronted with the challenges of coping with work and family role conflict. It is against this background that this study examined work-family role conflict: the enigma of working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State Nigeria.

Statement of problem

In Nigeria, the female labour participation in jobs rose significantly in the past few years largely as a result of improvement in girl child education/enrolment. This implies that, according to Ajiboye, (2008), that the family structure is moving from traditional single-income families to double-income families. The

new operand shift caused by the double-income paradigm in family life instigates role conflicts that result in limited time spouses spend together. Scholars have examined different aspects of work-family roles conflict,(Ajala, 2007, 2009, Aminah, 2008; Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1997 Karatepe & Sokmen, 2006; Netemeyer, Maxham & Pullig 2005; Karatepe & Sokmen 2006) etc. Most of these researches have concentrated on the job performance, satisfaction and organizational wellbeing without much consideration on coping strategies as they constitute part of the organizational wellbeing. It is against this background that this study decided to focus on mothers given the evidence that working mother's hours on work drop significantly more than those of men when family issues, especially having children, are involved (TUC, 2008). Its' an attempt to fill this gap that this study investigates work-family role conflict: the enigma of working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka Local Government Area in Enugu North senatorial zone, Enugu state.

Research questions

1. How do mothers in paid employment cope with work-family roles in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A?

2. What are the factors that help working mothers cope with their work-family roles in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.?

3. What are the effects of work-family roles on working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.?

Objective of the Study

In Nigeria, the female labour participation in paid employment rose significantly in the past few years largely as a result of educational improvement (Ajiboye, 2008), suggesting that family structure is moving from traditional single-income families to double-income families. The new family-work context results in role-conflicts caused by limited time among husband and wife. Scholars (Van Daalen, Willemsen & Sanders, 2006) have examined different aspects of work-family role conflicts among families; it seems that nothing has been done on work-family role conflict among working mothers in institutions of higher learning, especially in the Enugu North Senatorial zone. Therefore, the study is an attempt to fill this gap by investigating work-family role conflict among working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu North senatorial zone, Enugu State.

The Specific Objectives were:

i. Examine how mothers in paid employment cope with their work-family roles in Nsukka L.G.A. Enugu North Senatorial Zone.

ii. Ascertain factors that help mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka cope with their work-family roles.

iii. Find out the effect of dual functions on working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A, Enugu North Senatorial Zone.

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is a significant relationship between age and work-family role conflict among working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

Ho2: There is a significant relationship between staff category (academic and non-academic) and work-family role conflict among working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

Conceptual clarification

An understanding of the concept of work-family conflict is of practical importance for this study. This will buttress the impact of work-family role conflict thereby working towards solving inherent problems to achieve a balance between work demands and family obligations (Burke, Fiksenbaum, El-Kot, Koyuncu & Jing, 2011). Work-family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict that occurs as a result of incompatibility between work and family role demands. This incompatibility in role demands often leads to unhealthy functioning in both work and family roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Debatably, work and family roles are probably the most

important roles in an individual's life (Morris & Madsen, 2007) and each part has high expectations that could bring forth conflict if it is not effectively managed (Elloy & Smith, 2004). The greater the role demands of an individual's employment, the higher the level of conflict that they are likely to experience in the family domain and vice-versa (Cinamon, 2006). However, conflict does not only come from the work domain to the family domain, the reverse can also occur depending on an individual's involvement in both spheres.

Among working mothers, this role conflict occurs when work demands interfere with family needs and family-work conflict occurs when family demands interfere with work requirements. Accordingly, feelings, attitudes, behaviours, and emotions in work and family domains usually transcend the physical boundaries of home and work domains; and these domains affect one another through a permeable boundary in a positive or negative way (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). This implies that spillover tends to occur between family roles and work performance. Usually this would arise when feelings, attitudes, and behaviours in one are affected by role participation in another. For example, happiness at work leads to happiness at home and vice-versa.

This puzzle of dual role functionality characterized the daily routine of working mothers in paid employment. It is on these institutional roles on women that this study examined the enigma of working mothers in institutions of higher learning using Nsukka LGA. as scope of the study.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design which is often preferred when the aim of a study is to describe, explain or explore a phenomenon. The population of the study was about 4,343 working mothers from the University of Nigeria and College of Education, both in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The sample size for the study was 313 working mothers from the above mentioned institutions. This number provides statistical valid data for meeting the study objectives. The study was guided by three research questions that were converted to objectives. Instrument titled Work-Family Role Conflict Questionnaire (WFRCQ) was used for this study. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher after a review of existing literature. The questionnaire was made up of two parts; parts A and B. Part "A" seeks the demographic information of the respondents while part "B" is arranged in clusters. Cluster "A" seeks the extent of women involvement in paid employment in institutions of higher learning. Cluster "B" seeks information on how women in paid employment cope with dual functional roles in family and workplace. Cluster "C" seeks information on the factors that help women cope in their workplace and familial obligations. Cluster "D" seeks information on the effect of dual functions on working women in institutions of higher learning. Cluster "E" sought for information on the remedial measures required to enhance working mothers' dual functionality roles.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was trial tested on 20 working mothers from Bishop Shanahan Hospital which is outside the study area. The Cronbach Alpha values were .89 for cluster A, .78 for cluster B, .81 for cluster C, .78 for cluster D and .77 for cluster E respectively. The overall reliability of the instrument was .81. The results indicated that the various sections are reliable.

Design and Statistics

In the analysis of data for this study, inferential statistics were used. The study tested two hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. The results were presented based on the research questions. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the questions. The benchmark for accepting or rejecting a statement was 2.5. The t-test was used to test the hypotheses raised. Result was presented in tables.

Theoretical framework

Gender construction and Norm theories were adopted for this study. According to Janssen, (2018), the term gender role was first used by John Money and his colleagues in 1954, during the course of his study of intersex individuals to describe the manner in which these individuals expressed their status as a male or female in a situation where no clear biological assignment existed. The gender construction theory posits that by doing disproportionately less or more

domestic work, men and women are respectively reacting to normative conceptions regarding their genders. Women "do gender" by engaging in domestic activities; conversely, women also "do gender" by not regarding their paid employment as breadwinning. Men "do gender" by withholding themselves from housework and treating their paid employment as breadwinning. The gender construction theory illustrates the power of gender norms in shaping behavior, but does not describe the internal psychological processes that lead individuals to feel obliged to conform to those norms (Prottas & Thompson, 2006).

Norm theory was propounded by Kahneman & Miller, (1986). This theory deals with the issue of gender role expectations based on cultural praxis. Although this theory may not overtly focus on work and family issues, understanding the functionality of societal norms is much relevant to role expectations on working mothers' performance at home and work. Norms regarding motherhood are especially powerful because there is so much pressure surrounding the various roles mothers participate in as quoted in Kirchmeyer, (2002). Mothers may be criticized by others because of their career aspirations or for their impatience with childcare. Disapproval may leave mothers feeling pressured by their peers or families to articulate acceptable feelings and goals. Gradually, the suppression of their feelings may become more internally motivated and may ultimately be experienced as reality. Women who are adamant that decisions to compromise their work lives are established on choice may, in fact, feel that way because they have internalized the norms (Prottas & Thompson, 2006). Their failure to blame their husbands for the unequal distribution of domestic work may be a consequence of having suppressed resentment by shifting their attention from a comparison between their spouses and themselves or a comparison between their spouses and other men.

Analyzing the above theories in relation to cultural expectations among working mothers, it suggests that the stipulated rules and roles of a given community pre-determines work-family roles among male and female in a society. From the tenets of these theories, one will deduce that society assigns roles to spouses in familial obligations and these roles assigned became the basic fabrics and fundamentals that stipulate acceptable norms and behavioral attitudes that shape work-family roles in the society.

Result Presentations

The results were presented based on the research questions as shown below:

Research question 1: How do working mothers in paid employment cope in their workplace in Nsukka L.G.A.?

Table 1: How working mothers in paid employment cope in their workplace in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
i.	Keeping track of stressors and developing ways of managing them	2.7	0.81	Accepted
ii.	Develop healthy attitudes on work aspects that cause stress.	2.8	0.77	Accepted
iii.	I make good use of working and non-working hours	3.1	0.66	Accepted
iv.	Learning how to relax when appropriate	2.6	0.78	Accepted
v.	Discussing official issues that cause work stress with supervisors	2.9	0.78	Accepted

vi.	Involvement in physical activities	2.5	0.89	Accepted
vii.	Getting more sleep	2.8	0.9	Accepted
vii.	Using Relaxation as a strategy	3.2	0.6	Accepted

The above table showed the coping strategies working mothers use to cope with role conflicts. It was found that all the items that the researcher presented were accepted as the coping strategies that working mothers use. The mean scores for the items range from 2.5 to 3.2. This means that all the items were within the acceptable benchmark for rejecting and accepting items. That is to say that working mothers use a total of eight strategies to cope with work-family role conflict.

Research question 2: What are the factors that help working mothers cope in their work places in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.?

Table 2: The factors that help working mothers cope in their work place in institutions of higher learning in Enugu North

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD	Decision
i.	Encouragement from spouse	2.9	0.56	Accepted
ii.	Counselling	2.7	0.91	Accepted
iii.	The thought of being paid	2.6	0.85	Accepted
iv.	The thought getting promoted	2.9	0.76	Accepted
v.	Verbal praises from boss	2.6	0.67	Accepted
vi.	The thought of the growing unemployment in Nigeria	3.1	0.67	Accepted

The above table showed the factor that helps working mothers cope in their work place in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A. The result revealed that the mean scores of the items presented range from 2.6 to 3.1. The mean score is above the benchmark set for accepting or rejecting items. Therefore, all the items were accepted as the factors that help women cope in their work place in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

Research question 3: What are the effects of dual functions on working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A, Enugu North Senatorial Zone?

Table 3: The effect of work-family role on working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
i.	Increase in stress level	3.3	0.47	Accepted
ii.	Job dissatisfaction	3.4	0.48	Accepted
iii.	Lack of family happiness	3.6	0.61	Accepted
iv.	Lack of concentration at work	2.9	0.42	Accepted
v.	In ability to meet up with some official and family responsibilities	3.7	0.68	Accepted
vi.	Increased aggression	2.6	0.44	Accepted

The table above showed the effect of dual functions on working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A., Enugu North senatorial zone. The result showed that all the items had mean scores that range from 2.6 to 3.3. Therefore, all the items were accepted as the effect of dual functions on working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

Test of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between age and work-family role conflict among working mothers in higher institutions of learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

Table 4: t-test analysis of younger and older working mothers on work-family role conflict in higher institutions of learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

Grouping	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig.(2tailed)	Decision
Younger (20-35)	189	3.3	0.87				
Older (36 above)	124	2.4	0.66	1.162	651	0.002	Sig

Using the eyeball test, looking at the means reveals a significant difference in the sample means. Levene's test indicates by the p-value whether we should assume equal or unequal variances. If the p value is <0.05 the evidence suggests that the variances are unequal. Here p =0.002. Hence the equal variances assumed is <0.005, we accept the alternate hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant statistical difference on the mean rating of younger and older working mothers on work-family role conflict.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between staff category (academic and non-academic) and work-family role conflict among working mothers in higher institutions of learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

Table 5: t-test analysis of academic and non-academic working mothers on work-family role conflict in higher institutions of learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

Grouping	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig.(2tailed)	Decision
Academic	160	3.5	0.48				
Non-academic	153	3.4	0.42	8.162	653	0.61	NS

Using the eyeball test, looking at the means reveals an insignificant difference in the sample means. Levene's test indicates by the p-value whether we should assume equal or unequal variances. If the p value is <0.05 the evidence suggests that the variances are unequal. Here p =0.61. Hence the equal variances assumed is >0.005, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant statistical difference on the mean rating of academic and non-academic working mothers on family-work role conflict.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of this study was done according to sub-headings guarded by the research objectives and questions:

i. How do women in paid employment cope in their workplace in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.?

The result of the study found that working mothers in the institution of higher learning cope by keeping track of stressors and developing ways of managing them; develop healthy attitudes at work: making good use of working and non-working hours; learning how to relax when appropriate; discussing official issues that cause work stress with supervisors: involvement in physical activities; getting more sleep and using relaxation as a strategy. What this means is that working mothers are fully aware of the challenges faced from their dual functionality roles of work-family conflicts. Therefore, they make efforts to ameliorate such effects on them by making use of the above mentioned coping strategies in exonerating the negative impact of work-family roles on them. This result finding is in consonant with previous studies by these scholars (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Voydanoff, 1988; Gutek, 1992; Frone, Ruseell & Cooper, 1992), which suggests that women takes preventative measure to address the challenges that come with work-family role conflict. The result of the hypothesis testing showed insignificant difference in the sample mean and this suggests that both academic and non-academic staff is significantly affected by work-family role conflict. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted and concludes that there is no significant statistical difference on the mean rating of academic and non-academic working mothers on family-work role conflict.

ii. The factors that help women cope in their workplace in institutions of higsher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

The finding of the study outlined factors that help working mothers cope in the institution of higher learning as: the encouragement they get from spouse and counseling, the thought of being paid, the thought of getting promoted, verbal praises from boss and the thought of the growing unemployment in Nigeria. The result of this study implies that motivation plays an essential role in helping working mothers to continue to push when confronted with work-family role conflict. It also suggests that the degree to which individuals are satisfied at work may be influenced by the existence of factors and conditions that have a motivating effect (Furnham, 2002). Therefore, the findings imply that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors are useful elements for working mothers when faced with the pressures and demands of work-family role conflicts. This finding also is in support of the studies conducted by (Wright, 2003; Mattis, 1994; & Phillips and Imkoff, 1997), which states that a supportive environment helps women's organizational development. That is, the implementation of organizational support policy and developing better understanding of the conditions under which women work are fundamental in managing work-family stress and family-work role conflict.

iii. The effect of work-family role on working mothers in institutions of higher learning in Nsukka L.G.A.

The findings of the study found that working mothers are faced with the following challenges as effects of work-family role conflicts; increased stress level, job dissatisfaction, lack of family happiness, lack of concentration at work, inability to meet up with some official and family responsibilities and increased aggression. The result of this study implies that job satisfaction plays an essential role in helping working mothers to continue to push when confronted with family-role conflict. It also suggests that the degree to which individuals are satisfied at work may also influence their overall wellbeing because career satisfaction always leads to life satisfaction. The finding of the study supports previous study conducted by Turliuc and Buliga, (2014), which revealed that married working women experienced more work-family conflict than unmarried women. The hypothesis test result showed that there is a significant work-family role conflict among younger working mothers than the older ones. This could be because the older ones may have grown up children who will be assisting with some domestic chores unlike their younger counterparts whose children may still be too tender to engage in domestic activities. The result of the hypothesis testing also suggests that both academic and non-academic staff are significantly affected by work-family role conflict. The result of this study confirms the spillover and compensatory models. The spillover theory supports the perception that life and work satisfaction are interconnected, and that satisfaction in one aspect of an individual's life may spillover to satisfaction in another domain (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). This means, therefore, that dissatisfaction with work could spill over to familial obligations and vice-versa.

Conclusion

In general, this article adds to the overall role of conflict literature by exploring the causes and consequences of work-family conflict among Nigerian working mothers in the institution of higher learning, using the two tertiary institutions in Nsukka L.G.A. as the study population and the study adopted gender construction and norm theories as models of analyses. Outlining the findings, this article offers insights that would be useful for academics, government, policymakers and other stakeholders in Nigeria with possible strategies to curtail the negative effects of work-family role conflict on working mothers in the organized labor market. There is a need for a friendly environment as a preventative measure or family friendly policies in the workplace and this will curtail some of the stress working mothers' encounters at work.

More so, the article reveals great importance of work-family life by suggesting a balance between family and work, especially as it relates to working mothers. It reiterates regular counseling services for working mothers, this will enable them to manage conflicts that arise from work and family role experiences.

Finally, the article showed practical implications on the relationship between working mothers and their spouses. And this suggests that for working mothers to be emotionally and psychologically strong to address the challenges that come with work-family role conflict, the support of their husbands, colleagues and their organization is essential.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made:

i. Organizational counselling services in all organized work places; this will help workers to cope in most adverse situations.

ii. Organizations should create an atmosphere of friendliness to working mothers; this will exonerate most of the stress they went through in the course of discharging their dual functionality.

iii. Supportive environment at work and family will ensure satisfaction which will ameliorate stress and serve as a psychological defense mechanism for working mothers in their workplace.

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THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN PEACE BUILDING: FOCUS ON PLATEAU STATE NIGERIA

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Religion, conflict, peace, peace building

ABSTRACT
Religion and peace have been almost mutual companions from time immemorial and in different cultures all over the world. This is simply because the vast majority of adherents and leaders of different religions still hold that true religion is a source and guarantor of individual and societal peace. Religion has the capacity to bring people together based on the increased trust and love it can introduce in the hearts of the people. However, gaps exist between the text and the practice of religion. The gap between peace and conflict in religion of finding common grounds for the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relationships remains a prime commodity. This paper prevents an overview of this gap among world religions and the need to close the gap in order to achieve peaceful coexistence. The research used secondary data. political feud/elite conspiracy theory was adopted.

Introduction

Nigeria has been described as the most populous Afro-cultural grouping in the World, that is, the most populous Black Country. According 2006 population census it has an estimated population of over one hundred and forty (140) million people, and contains about 20% of the entire African population. It tends to be divided along three major ethnic groups; the Igbo, the Hausas and the Yorubas, a mixture of religions amongst animist tradition. Religion is a body of truths, laws and rites by which man is subordinated to the transcendent being. For every religion in the world today preaches peace, but the gap between these religions or it majors today boils down to the conflict, tolerance and misunderstanding we have in our contemporary world today.

For every religion in the world today preaches peace, but the gap between these religions or it majors today boils down to the conflict, tolerance and misunderstanding we have in our contemporary world today Religion has great influence in peace building process in Nigeria. These variety of traditional methods in which the principle of nonviolence is entrenched which include: proactive or preventive mechanisms and the reactive mechanisms such as mediation,

dialogue, communication, jokes, storytelling, drama etc. which should be encourage in our contemporary times so as to reduce or manage conflict from destructive to constructive form.

This study examines deeply the relationship between the religion and peace building in Plateau state and Nigeria in general and the existing gap which has an end result of conflict.

Conceptual clarification

Peace is generally concerned with the creation and maintenance of an ordered and just society. Not less than six definitions of peace have been given by scholars including – peace as the absence of war (absence of direct violence), peace as justice and development (absence of structural violence) as well as peace as respect and tolerance between people (Francis, 2006). Galtung (1990) has identified two kinds of peace to be positive and negative peace.

Conflict is also seen as the existence of non-compatibility or disagreements between two actors (individuals, groups, organizations or nations) in their interaction over the issues of interests, values, beliefs, emotions, goals, space, positions, scarce resources, etc. Fink defines conflict as any "situation or processes in which two or more social entities are linked by at least one form of antagonistic psychological relation or at least one form of antagonistic interaction".

The psychological antagonisms are such things as incompatible goals, mutually exclusive interests, emotional hostility, factual or value dissensions and traditional enmities; while antagonistic interactions range from the most direct, violent and unregulated struggle to the subtlest, indirect and highly regulated forms of mutual interference. Conflict occurs when two or more persons engage in a struggle over values and claims in order to secure status, power and resources; a struggle in which the objectives of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. Thus, conflict is a special kind of social interaction process or interactive relationship between parties who have mutually exclusive or incompatible values, a struggle between opposing forces; a battle, an opposition between ideas, interests, etc. It is an opposition between two simultaneous but incompatible wishes or impulses, sometimes leading to emotional tension. It could also mean to come into opposition, clash or to fight.

Religion is a body of truths, laws and rites by which man is subordinated to the transcendent being Religion as a social institution cannot be exempted from conflict. No major religion is exempt from complicity in violent conflict. Religious convictions certainly were one the motivations for the September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre in the United States of America, as well as other violent actions by Muslims extremist in Pakistan, Afghanistan and even Nigeria. In Northern Ireland the conflict is between Catholics and Protestants while in both Somalia and Afghanistan the source of conflict is which brand of Islam will prevail.

Understanding the Identity of Religion

Identity may be defined as a combination of socio-cultural characteristics which individuals share, or are presumed to share, with others on the basis of which one group may be distinguished from others. Identity is a group concept in the sense that it is based on traits which make individuals members of a group; such traits also provide responses to the question, “Who am I?” Identity has a combination of ethnic, religious, gender, class and other layers all of which refer to the same person either in self-definition or as defined by others. Identity as other defined persists irrespective of whether people so labeled accept the definition(s). Thus, people who might see themselves as different may be seen by others as “one of them” (Alubo, 2009).

According to Castells (2004), identity is a people’s source of meaning and experience. By identity, as it refers to social actors, is understood to mean the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is given priority over other sources of meaning. For a given individual, or for a collective actor, there may be a plurality of identities. Yet, such a plurality is a source of stress and contradiction in both self-representation and social action.

While identity has been at the heart of violent conflicts in Nigeria, sustainable peace depends on the reconfiguring of identities as the basis of conflict resolution models.

Religion provides a context within which identity is formed. This has important implications for the potential resources and methods available for peace building.

Religion is not the only basis for identity or for deriving meaning. There is a complex web of affinities that comprise the unique complex of individual identity, as well as the crosscutting dimensions of communal identity. However, on an almost daily basis, religious identities are the bases of contestations for inclusions in opportunities and rights as they are available to others. As a result of this, many of these contestations lead to violent conflicts. On the other hand, these identities can lead to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relationships between groups *that share common religious identities.

The gap between peace and conflict in religion of finding common grounds for the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relationships remains a prime commodity. Abdu (2010) states that, in Nigeria, against the historical attempt at evolving national consciousness and commonality devoid of primordial attachments, the nation has continued to witness a steady rise in primordial identities such as ethnic, religious and regional identities.

Peace and Conflict in Religion

Every major religion of the world has expressed at some point through its texts and practices, a commitment to the value of peace; on the other hand, throughout the world, also, no major religion is exempt from complicity in violent conflict. David (1998

Religious actors have increasingly played an important role in peace and conflict across the world. The Catholic Church, the Mennonites and Quakers have intervened in conflicts in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Buddhists have intervened in conflicts in Cambodia and Vietnam. Religious conviction certainly was one of the motivations for the September 11 attacks and other violent actions by Muslim extremists in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Some Buddhist monks assert an exclusively Buddhist identity for Sri Lanka, fanning the flames of conflict there. Some Christian and Muslim leaders from former Yugoslavia saw themselves as protecting their faiths when they defended violence against the opposing faith communities in the Balkan wars.

Throughout the long era of human history, religion has been a major contributor to war, bloodshed, hatred and intolerance. Yet religion has also developed laws and ideas that have provided civilizations with a cultural commitment to critical peace-related values. The latter include empathy, an openness to and even love for strangers, the suppression of unbridled ego and acquisitiveness, the articulation of human rights, unilateral gestures of forgiveness and humility, interpersonal repentance and the acceptance of responsibility for past errors as a means of reconciliation, and the drive for social justice (Gopin, 1997).

The role of religion in peace and conflict is a complex phenomenon. While adherents of some faiths creatively integrate their religious traditions towards peacemaking, others engage in some of the most destabilizing violence confronting the global community today.

While religion is an important factor in conflict, often marking identity differences, motivating conflict, and justifying violence, religion is not usually the sole or primary cause of conflict. The reality is that religion becomes intertwined with a range of causal factors—economic, political, and social—that define, propel, and sustain conflict. Certainly, religious disagreements must be addressed alongside these economic, political, and social sources to build lasting reconciliation. Fortunately, many of the avenues to ameliorate religious violence lie within the religious realm itself (Smock, 2008).

Public perception prevails that religion is a principal source of conflict, but the role of religion as a force in peacemaking is usually overlooked. Smock (2008) also extensively examines peace and conflict in religion with various examples, such as when the United States became heavily engaged in trying to bring peace to Sudan because evangelical Christians pressured the Bush administration to deepen its engagement. Evangelical concern was based initially on an oversimplified view of the conflict, that an Islamic fundamentalist government was forcing Christians and animists in southern Sudan to convert to Islam. As evangelicals mobilized, they developed a more nuanced and authentic understanding of the conflict.

Jews have joined Christians and others in bringing public attention to the crisis in Darfur because widespread slaughter there has been viewed as genocide, provoking memories of the Holocaust.

Religious communities have also directly opposed repression and promoted peace and reconciliation. Churches in Eastern Europe mobilized opposition to Soviet occupation. More famously, clergymen Desmond Tutu, Frank Chikane, and Beyers Naude in South Africa worked to break the bonds of apartheid. This effort entailed not only civil disobedience and advocacy for international sanctions against South Africa, but also shaming white South African Christians into recognizing that their effort to justify apartheid contradicted biblical teachings.

More recently, the civil disobedience of Buddhist monks in Burma (Myanmar) dramatically illustrated how religion could motivate the promotion of human rights and peace. In addition to the street demonstrations that garnered so much national and international attention, the monks' refusal to accept alms from members of the military was a particularly poignant declaration that the regime's policies and actions violated Buddhism's fundamental precepts. The regime recognized that the demonstrations generated much greater international attention and domestic pressure than would have been the case if they had been exclusively secular. The monks' moral authority and respect that others have for them, the symbolic resources they drew upon, their chants for compassion, and their nonviolent approach all contributed to a deeply persuasive message and image. The largely religious leadership of the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1960s carried similar moral weight and authority.

The decades-long civil war in Sudan is often described as a religious conflict between Muslims and Christians, with the north being predominantly Muslim and the south predominantly Christian and animist. There is some truth to this characterization, particularly after 1989, when an Islamic fundamentalist government came to power in Khartoum with an agenda to Islamize all of Sudan.

In Nigeria, Christian and Muslims died in riots over a Danish cartoon depicting Mohammed. Others were killed when Christians opposed extending the authority of Sharia courts in several northern states. In the Israeli-Arab conflict, the management of and access to religious sites are sources of disagreement and extremist religious groups both Jewish and Muslims exacerbate the problem.

Religion is a divisive and a major factor in conflict. It is undeniable from examples in history that have been used as examples to demonstrate that religion is a major factor in conflicts. The role of religion as a factor in peacemaking must however also not be over looked. The holy books of all the major religions in the world have passages where its adherents are encouraged to embrace the virtue of peace. Brathon, (1990).

The Holy Quran states clearly that Islam is a religion of peace. (ASALAM ALEKUM) Similarly, the Holy Bible makes it clear in Mathew 5:9 that, peacemakers will be called children of God. (SHALOM) The Catholic Church has also been involved in efforts to bring to an end the protracted conflict between Israel and Palestine which is still ongoing following the october 7th attacked by Hamas. Through the activities of religious and nongovernmental organizations, terms like forgiveness, mercy, reconciliation and restorative justice which were previously the exclusive preserve of theology and religious worship have moved to the center of public discourse. So also COCIN church, JNI and CAN are still doing the same thing in promoting peace on the plateau and Nigeria in general.

In promoting peace and avoiding conflict in religion, religious leaders and organizations must use religious activism to promote peace especially since they offer credibility as trusted institutions; a respected set of values; moral warrants to oppose injustice; unique leverage for promoting reconciliation among conflicting parties; capability to mobilize community, nation, and international support for a peace process.

Gaps between peace and conflict in religion exist within the institutional framework of the different religions. There are usually some ideas, principles, agreements or rules that provide the basis or outline for the establishment of any institution or organization. This will determine to a large extent how that institution develops some scholars; for example, beliefs that the current Islamic fundamentalism that is ravaging the world is as a result of its foundation which is affirmed by military victories. Theologically, it still utterly dependent on the premised material superiority of its adherents. Opposition to this from other religions like Christianity and Hinduism have therefore induced a conflicting stance (Luttwack, 1994). This argument is in

direct contrast to other scholars that believe Islam is a religion of peace.

Gaps also exist as ideological differences. Ideologies are primarily some kinds of ideas or belief system and these belief systems are socially shared by members of a collectivity of social actors. In other words, ideologies consist of social representations that define the social identity of a group, this includes its shared beliefs about its fundamental conditions and ways of existence and reproduction (Dijk, 1991). In society, there are different religions and different kinds of religious organizations each with its own ideology. These differences affect peace or conflict within or outside the organization.

The Boko Haram scourge that is currently ravaging Nigeria is as a result of the jihadist ideology of the group that has pitted it against the state of Nigeria. Also, one way in which dominant ideologies reproduce, reinforce and legitimatize themselves is through the denigration of an "other". This invariably generates conflict.

Peace and conflict gaps exist in religion due to political manipulation. Political leaders manipulate religion to protect their vested interests. Ojomojobi (2013) states that in northern Nigeria, religion is used as a political tool and this has been the cause of religious conflict in the region. Aguwa (1993) also notes that religious identity is used by the leaders in the north of Nigeria to mobilize people in order to acquire and retain political power. Muhammed Buhari is said to have played this religious card during the last election which contributed to the violent reaction to result of that election. When conflict erupts it is the same religion that leaders will resort to for solutions to the conflict.

Lastly, as a result of ignorance, gaps between peace and conflict in religion are also evident. Where there is a high rate of illiteracy among people in a society, there is a greater risk of mobilization of religious identities to cause and perpetuate conflict. The people depend on their leaders to explain to them how to worship or participate effectively in religious activities. Whatever they are told is accept as factual. This is because they cannot read or are not allowed to critically examine the holy books so that they can make informed decisions. Thus not knowing the real truth about their religion, they go about committing all kinds of atrocities in the name of God. If they were literates, they will be to know that they are being manipulated.

The Duality of Religion

Religion and peace have been almost mutual companions from time immemorial and in different cultures all over the world. This is simply because the vast majority of adherents and leaders of different religions still hold that true religion is a source and guarantor of individual and societal peace. Religion has the capacity to bring people together based on the increased trust and love it can introduce in the hearts of the people. Okpanachi, . (2010

Despite its ostensible peaceful aims and potentials as contained in its text and teachings, religion could also become a malady fuelling conflicts and wars in the society. It could be instrumentalised as a convenient tool for belligerents of all faiths. Religion of all hues and shades, and especially the major religions which hold sway over the vast majority of the worlds faithful have variously condoned, incited, financed, sanctioned or encouraged conflicts in the society. Looking at the conflicts in Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Lebanon, Nigeria and Sri Lanka one could rightly assert that religious differences are epicenter of these conflicts (Abu-Nimer, 2000).

The reality is that religion always has social consequences. It can be a disease as is evident in the killings one by *Boko Haram* in Nigeria, but it can also cure. Hate generated by religion has societal consequences, but so does the love it generates. It is also a reality that religion could be used as a badge of identity which is usually to fuel or abate conflict for many reasons (Djikema, 2013).

As a major source of power, it has been used or misused by religious and even governmental organizations to pursue their interest to a greater extent. Its ability to inspire violence is intimately related to its impressive power as a source of peace (Mani, 2013).

Beyond the overt preaching for mercy, forgiveness, goodness and peace in religion lies all the other forms of violence within the society associated with religion (Samson & Cynthia, 1997). There is the violence within the religions, between religions, between the religious and the

secular and between the religious and the heretics. The negative peace, exclusion and discrimination religions birth and breeds has failed to condemn and eliminate structural violence such as; the distinction between believer and non-believer, lush caste and untouchable, saved and heathen souls (Mani, 2013).

According to Mani (2013), religion influences the cultural behavior and perceptions of individuals and groups to varying degrees to the extent that those who get involved in violent conflict often declare that they fight and kill others in defense of their culture and identity, political and religious beliefs.

Religion has the tendency to re-enforce the human psychological construct to be capable of love and creativity as well as hatred and destructiveness (Appleby, 2000).

It could be viewed as a double-edged sword in that it has the capacity to bring about violence and also peace. Nevertheless, it remains a tremendous resource for the creation of a just and egalitarian society that the world seeks (Abu-Nimer, 2000).

Religion and Peace Building Process

According to Ben, peace-building involves comprehensive processes, using various approaches to transform conflict towards more sustainable and peaceful relationships (Ben, 2012). The term thus involves a wide range of activities that both precede and follow formal peace accords.

Peace building is a term describing outside interventions that are designed to prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict within a nation by creating a sustainable peace. Peace-building activities address the root causes or potential causes of violence, create a societal expectation for peaceful conflict resolution and stabilize society politically and socio economically. The exact definition varies depending on the actor, with some definitions specifying what activities fall within the scope of peace building or restricting peace building to post conflict intervention. In 2007, the UN Security-General Policy Committee defined peace building as follows: "peace-building involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peace building strategies must be coherent and tailored to specific 'needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized. Sequenced and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives.

Although many of peace building aims overlap with those of peacemaking, peacekeeping and conflict resolution, it is a distinct idea. Peacemaking involves stopping an ongoing conflict, whereas peace building happens before a conflict starts or once it ends. Peacekeeping prevents the resumption of fighting following a conflict; it does not address the underlying causes of violence or work to create societal change, as peace building does. It also differs from peace building in that it only occurs after conflict ends, not before it begins. Conflict resolution does not include some components of peace building, such as state building and socioeconomic development. Like peacekeeping, conflict resolution can only follow not precede, conflict.

The tasks include in peace building vary depending on the situation and the agent of peace building. Successful peace building activities create an environment supportive of self-sustaining, durable peace, reconcile opponents, prevent conflict from restarting, integrate civil society, create rule of law mechanism, and address underlying structural and societal issues.

Lisa (2004:8), In simple terms, peace building is all activity aimed at improving the quality of life. Peace building prevents, reduces, transforms, and help people to recover from violence in all forms of human needs and rights. Peace building is the responsibility of many different actors: government, religious organizations, civil societies, Traditional Leaders and structures, the Media and the business community. It takes place at all levels of society in the towers of academia and government, in schools and businesses, and in community centers in every ward and town. Peace building is a set of values, relational skills, analytical frameworks, and social processes. Peace building has since expanded to include many different dimensions, such as disarmament, demobilization reintegration and building

governmental, economic and civil society institutions, the concept was popularized in the international community through UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali's 1992 report: An Agenda for Peace.

In the 1970s Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung first created the term peace building through his promotion of systems that would create sustainable peace. Such system needed to address the root causes of conflict and support local capacity for peace management and conflict resolution. Galtung's work emphasized a bottom-top approach that decentralized social economic structures, amounting to a callfor societal shift from structures of coercion and violence to a culture of peace. American sociologist John Paul Lederach Proposed a different concept of peace building as engaging grassroots, Local and International NGOs and other actors to create a sustainable peace process. Sociologically, peace refers to a condition of social harmony in which there are nosocial antagonisms. Peace is a condition in which there are no social conflicts and individuals and groups are able to meet their needs and expectations. Politically, peace entails the institutionalization of political structures. This means that stable structures and secular culture must be in place and political values like tolerance, bargaining and negotiation are made the norm. Abu-Nimer, (2000)

Peace is a process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict. Peace relates to existing social conditions, rather than an ideal state or condition. It is a dynamic process and it is possible to precisely identify and study the factors that drive *it.* It is not a finished condition, but always a 'work-in-progress.' It is never finished because human societies continue to aspire to higher levels of development and less conflict. Peace increases or decreases depending on objective socio-economic and political conditions. It can move from higher levels of peace to lower levels.

Galtung (1990), distinguishes between 'positive' and 'negative' aspects of peace. Positive peace means the absence of unjust structures, unequal relationships, justice and inner peace at all levels while negative peace is the absence of direct violence, war and fear at all levels. There are also different ways in which people in other societies see peace.

i. a society fragmented and polarized by perpetual war and armed conflict will interpret peace as the absence of war;

ii. a political community driven by unjust structures and policies will equate peace with justice and freedom;

iii. People suffering material deprivation and poverty will invariably perceive peace in terms of equality, development and access to essential necessities of life.

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Bliss S. (2010) view peace building as a term within the international development community used to describe the processes and activities involved in resolving violent conflicts and establishing a sustainable peace. It includes **conflict transformation, restorative justice, trauma healing, reconciliation, development and leadership**. She pointed out that it is similar to conflict resolution but goes beyond seeking a

sustainable social and economic development. More importantly, it is about prevention of future wars and violence.

Gaulden P. (2004) refers to peace building as the process of making sure that a country or society creates a condition for sustainable peace. Such conditions can be created when a country is already in a state of being peaceful. In such situation, the conditions are created in order to prevent conflict from erupting and therefore peace is sustained. The conditions can also be created in post conflict situations. This is done after a conflict must have been put to an end through a conflict resolution mechanism. Under such a situation the process of peace building begins with the transition period. The various processes of implementing aspects of peace agreement become the process of peace building. He further states that the process of peace building is a continuous one as it entails taking various measures which include transformation of state organs, socio-economic development, democratization and regional integration.

In his contribution, David (2006) refers to peace building as efforts and interventions aimed at overcoming the root causes of conflicts. According to him, peace building aims at overcoming the structural, relational and cultural contradictions which are at the root of conflict in order to underpin the processes of peacemaking and peacekeeping. Peace building as a concept is quite complex. In spite of its different definitions, the underlying fact remains that peace building is basically targeted towards the realization of atmosphere of positive peace, love and tranquility that is best for human existence which will enable man achieve the best life can bring. Abdu, . (2010)

Theoretical Framework

Understanding the main cause of Conflict / insecurity in Plateau state in North central Nigeria will require a brief reflection on three theoretical perspectives which are the human development theory, and political feud/elite conspiracy theory Okpanachi, (2010). The theory of the human development model is that poverty is the cause of deprivation and frustration and it is linked to violent conflict and insecurity. Contrastingly, Osei-Brown (2012) contends that the nature of violence in northern Nigeria has never been poverty induced but rather fuelled by religious differences, While these views are partly plausible, we cannot discard the fact that the stark poverty, malnutrition, Politics, unemployment, bad governance or un govern spaces. environmental degradation and marginalization in the centralized federation may also in part impel some into conflict.

To have an understanding of the conflict theory, firstly, is to build a theory of religion and conflict. Religion as a meaningful framework for understanding the world. That is, religious frameworks provide the adherents with a basis for understanding reality without which these adherents could not comprehend the real world or function in it.

This point is greatly highlighted by Wentz (1987) as he argues that human beings are more than just biological creatures. They are also open to the possibility of understanding ultimate order and meaning in their existence. For this reason, humans have a need to seek such understanding and meaning and religion is one of the ways in which humans achieve this goal, beliefs and values. Wentz describes them as the walls of religion. People build a psychological wall of religion around themselves and their religious communities in order to deal with reality and are prepared to defend it. The biological theories have given rise to what may be referred to as innate theory of conflict which contends that conflict in all human beings. This theory is being projected by Thomas Hobbes, St. Augustine Malthus and Freud; others who subscribe to the innate theory are the theologians and religious people, who see an inner flow in humankind by way of sin that brings forth bitterness, violence and conflict. The whole purpose of religion is to regulate this sinful nature in the relationship between men and men on the one hand, and men and God on the other hand.

Conclusion

The gap between peace and conflict in religion contaminates social relations and undermines the social harmony and peaceful coexistence of states and societies. The realities of religious conflict in Nigeria are alarming and require very urgent, apt and continued attention. The use of religious identities should unite rather than divide states and societies in order to promote peace, harmonious peaceful

co-existence and unity. Consequences of the gap between peace and conflict among religious groups have been responsible for so many lives and property. The catalogue of religious conflicts has resulted in the loss of millions of lives throughout history and unquantifiable psychological and maternal damages.

Failure to tackle the problem of the gap between peace and conflict in religion through articulate policy actions continues to be the bane of development in many countries. Religious conflicts are usually inevitable in multi-religious societies. There must be a concerted effort by adherents of all religions and tolerance, acceptance and accommodation where the worth and dignity of the individual and human life is accorded respect to all people irrespective of religious inclination.

Recommendations

1. The variety of traditional methods in which the principle of nonviolence is entrenched which include: proactive or preventive mechanisms and the reactive mechanisms such as mediation, dialogue, communication, jokes, storytelling, drama should be encourage so as to promote peace in our society.

2. Let use our religion identity be a source of unity and peace in our state and country at large.

3. Let there be religious tolerance among the citizens so as to promote peace and development.

4. The Teachers of religious groups should preach what will unite the people not what will divide people.

5. 5.Religious organization should encourage peace building by promoting the role of faith based organization to participate in the country.

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RELIGIOUS SYNCRETISM IN THE LENSES OF JEWISH-BUDHHISM: A RELIGIOUS IDEA IN MODERN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT WUKARI JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES

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ABSTRACT
There are modern attempts to consider understanding God from similar perceptions while being accommodated to your deity. It has to do with mixing orblendingof two religious beliefs or bringingmore religions towards similar goals. Syncretism comes from the word synkretismosin Greek to mix orinvolve other things. The study considers modern development as concerned with the desire or goals of the citizens that are economic in nature, in some instances, it represents the well-being of the citizens by social analyses. A Jewish Buddhist is a person with a Jewish background who believes in the tenets or a form of Buddhism. When the individual practices a particular religion, it may be both Judaism and Buddhism.One typical example could that of the people of Crete in ancient days who always fought themselves, but when enemies threatening to attack them, they combined forces and defeated the enemies. By such act, they defended their interest collectively which enhanced their welfare and growth. A good number of Jews in America and Germany who combined their faith with Buddhism added strength in terms of development capacity economically, technologically and politically to the nations.Africans stand to learn for a better community life and our political, economic and social development.

Introduction

Syncretism can be rendered as an amalgamation to consolidate different ideas towards a goal. It has to do with the cultures or school of thought that drives humanity towards pleasing God while accommodating various philosophical elements. Religious syncretism is the blending of religious beliefs systems into a new system, or the incorporation of other beliefs into a religious tradition of beliefs from unrelated traditions. The word syncretism can be defined as aconsolidation or attempt to merge different religions, cultures, or school of thought. Ezenweke and Kanu (2015) say that the English word "syncretism" comes from the Greek word *synkretismos.* In secular opinion, syncretism is the combination of two or more things that are concerned with human life and activities in order to give it a new look and more sophisticated from its initial state. While the paper attempts to look at how Judaism among the Jew is mix with Buddhism, some African cultures have been able to bring Christianity and Islam under the same umbrella to discuss their

similarities as *Chrislam*. Interestingly, Rasta men have always assumed a relationship between Christianity and Rastafarianism.

It is a dualistic kind of religious approach to worship and religious co-existence, collaboration and tolerance that appear as syncretism. Instances of religious syncretism areGnosticism a religious dualistic system that incorporated elements from the oriental mystery religions,This form of syncretism is recognized among the Jews who belief that the adoption of Buddhism as their religion does not in any way affect their belief or their Jewish religion, culture and tradition.Gier (1994) verifies that the most fascinating example of religious syncretism in Korea is the Unification Church where Sun Myung Moon integrates the best aspects of Buddhism and Confucianism into their faith. A close practical reality of this emerging lifestyle is the African Neo-Pentecostal churches have aligned African traditions and Christianity, especially in their prayers, songs and worship pattern. Apart from a few, the Akorino as well as the Watoto churches have successfully contextualized the church to African traditions.

Many beliefs that religious syncretism undermines the basicclaims to purity and uniqueness of a particular religion. An idea that seem to say, it compromises the standard of God as a result on human infiltrating While the idea of modern development sometimes refers to goals that are economic in nature, butsome other times it may represent citizens' social well-being. Just as in the sole idea of syncretism of that of the uniting force of quarreling brothers in the face of common enemies. Among Buddhism's harbingers in the German-speaking world were the Asia experts and scholar of Jewish descent Karl Eugen Neumann (1865-1915) and the mathematician and engineer Friedrich Zimmermann. Factors responsible for syncretism includegeographical, policy of religious tolerance and looking for spiritual satisfaction.

The word syncretism can be defined as the amalgamation or attempt amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or school of thought. Schreiter (1994), defines syncretism as the "mixing of elements of two religious systems to the point where at least one if not both of the system loses basic structure and identity". It also views as practicing different faith or believes at the same time. Ezenweke and Kanu (2015) indicates that *synkretismos"* is from the custom of the people who live in the Island of Crete in the ancient days, who always fought themselves, but when enemies from outside attacked, they combined force with each other to combat their foreign enemy. They called this practice *synkretimos,* which comes from a verb meaning "to combine". The concept is also employed to refer to the uniting of quarrelling brothers in the face of common enemies. Oneness creates power and build strength in terms of hardship.

The association of religious concepts in terms of worship is the core of syncretics. Syncretism is the combination of two or more religious ideas that are concerned with human life and activities in order to give it a new look and more sophisticated from its initial state. The motive behind the *synkretismos* is to bring unity and strength among people who are grossly faced with danger of intimidation and molestation by combining force to fight the common enemies and to defend their right and territory from external force invention. This defends the adage which postulates that "unity is strength". A united force is bold and confidence to defend themselves from external force or power. It can be theologically perceived an art of various interpretation of the same teaching. A situation where one thing is made to mean different things to different people. It is not like pantheism, where everything is God and God is everything. It supports the ideology of polytheism to an extent by amalgamating different gods and their system.

Ideas of Modern Development and SyncreticConcepts

It is important at this moment to note how Elsevier (2020) considers development, as a complex word acting as a descriptor of growth in variety of sectors such as economic, agriculture, and education, etc. Growth (development) however, is a challenging concept in that it is viewed differently among economists and various observers. Sometimes the idea refers to goals that are economic in nature, while in some other times it may represent citizens' social well-being. The Slaughter House (2023) advances that development is a procedure that leads to growth, advancement, positive change, or the extension of physical, economic, environmental, societal, and demographic parts. The goal of development is to raise the public's standard of living and quality of life, as well as to establish or expand local regional income and job possibilities while protecting the environment's resources. Development is observable and beneficial, but not always instantly, and involves an aspect of quality change as well as the

establishment of an environment for that change to continue.

In a related opinion, Fred (2015) says the concept of modernization is understood in three different meanings: First, as the internal development of Western Europe and North America relating to the European New Era. Secondly, as a process by which countries that do not belong to the first group of countries, aim to catch up with them. Thirdly, as processes of revolutionary development of the most modernized societies (Western Europe and North America) i.e. Modernization as a permanent process, carried out through reform and innovation, today means a transition to postindustrial society. Historians link modernization to the process of industrialization and the spread of education.

Modern development is the growth in the aspect of the economic life of a particular society or nation, which includes the growth in agriculture, technology, social services, education etc. This is one aspect that improves the welfare of the people generally irrespective of their social status or standard. Development as the case may be a way of bringing positive change orenlightenment to practicesfor the improvement in quality and services in a society. The gods of the Ancient near east, dictated the way and manner life is conducted among the people of the region in the biblical days. Living well is living for the gods and in Christianity today, living well is living to please God. Life is service to the gods, making them happy.

The improvement in science and technology is another aspect of modernization where there is quality improvement from manual way of activities to digitalization. New innovation is popping in on daily bases as part of modernization, for instance means of transportation ortechnological development are key areas of concern in the era of modern development. For example, China, America, Germany, Australia, England have gone far beyond expectation in this aspect. The Confucius institute is not just a philosophy that guides the daily life of the Chinese but what propel the hard work in their economy, military and social life. Similarly, the Japanese lifestyle is guided by Shinto culture from religious, political, economic life even to their military as well as international relations. Again one can be bold to say Islam also dictate the Arabs style of life and military beliefs. Our development should go beyond religious to economics, social and politics ideas. Africans must outgrow local perennial development of road, light and structures, we need to think now.

A Conception of Religious Syncretism

It is an incorporation of other beliefs into a religious tradition of beliefs. It is the coming together of sacred beliefs into a new system, especially for humanity to worship God as their deity. Furthermore his could synonymously mean mixture, mingling, fusion, marriage, merger, combination, weave etc.Augutym (2019) opines that religious syncretism is also seeing as the fusion of diverse religious beliefs and practices bringing together the belief of other religious followers into another.Instances of religious syncretism as for exampleat times shows Gnosticism as (a religious dualistic system that incorporated elements from the oriental mystery religions), Judaism, Christianity, and Greek religious philosophical concepts were particularly prevalent during the Hellenistic period (300bce -300ce), the successors of Roman Emperor and the Empire tended to bring together a variety of religious syncretism.

In this light, Gier (1994) affirms that no religious revolution is possible without paying the price of syncretism e.g., Judaism codified its theology after the birth of Christianity in such a way that it has been virtually immune from syncretism since. The Principle of Religious Syncretism holds that when any two cultures meet and interact they will exchange religious ideas with the dominant culture prevailing in the exchange. He further stresses that religious syncretism manifests itself in a fascinating way, where the native Bön religion merged with the thoughts of Buddhist missionaries. Chinese Buddhism also developed according to the Principle of Religious Syncretism, even to the point where the Chinese word dao replaced the Sanskrit dharma. Daoism's general effect on Buddhism was to “naturalize” it, bringing it to earth.

According to Gier (1994) the most fascinating example of religious syncretism in Korea is the Unification Church. Sun Myung Moon openly confesses that his special revelation, although primarily Christian, integrates the best aspects of Buddhism and Confucianism. Most religions respond to the charge of religious syncretism very defensively, for they believe that it undermines basic claims to purity and uniqueness. In contrast, the Unification Church openly embraces syncretism in an honest and refreshing way.

In the light of the above, it is obvious that religious syncretism is the act of sharing one’s faith into two or more different beliefs. A borrowing of ideas for doing the same thing that is observed and practiced from

another religion. This is a practice where by people do not actually see the need to align themselveswith one particular religious' belief and practices, they copy ideas and pattern of activities of another religion and include them intotheir own religious practices. This also has to do with cultural life of the people whoinfluence an existingreligion as a result of cultural differences.

ContemporaryConception of Syncretism

The clearest form of syncretism is that of the Catholic feminist movement known as the Women-Church which is fast losing all connection with the church tradition. The underlying concern is that the Women-Church, in its attempt to be inclusive of all women is adapting the religious values, rites and practices into the catholic faith. They are willing to accommodate many different spiritual traditions on an equal level with Christian faith and practice. During the conferences, Green (1994) revealed that readings are selected every day from the sacred texts of Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, and Islam, as well as Christianity on the occasion of ancient festivals of the Celts or Christianity.

It is quiet revealing that syncretism is taking a different look and dimension where people introduce a kind of faith different from the one they practice in the name of religious life style. Instance of Catholic feminist movement or women church reveals that such activities lead to losing all connection with the Catholic faith is as result of not practicing their faith as it should be, they see reason why the other religions should be part of their belief and practices. As they practice their Catholic faith, they are as well attaching value and importance of the other religions like Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, and Islam. They feel that these religions have some spiritual value which leads them to select scripture reading from them during church worship.

Christians have not been left out on the attempting to mix theologies from angels of interpretations. Our churches have recently been infiltrated with the neo-Pentecostal teachings, it adopts various doctrines into differing activities of the church. In other words, they bring and bind all together, their traditions and cultures as well as their personal interpretation of life to what the Bible is intended to mean. African churches like African politics seem not to have a clear center nor philosophy to rely on, no wonder the cross carpeting of parties for personal gains. It is supposed to be of advantage to us, to bind us together instead it splits and depletes human beings from each other, causing peaceful unrest and religious disparity. Politically we are cajoled to believe our oneness in deity but religiously some are considered lesser beings and infidel to the core. We are learning to have than love in our syncretism.

Irreligious and Nonspiritual Ideas of Syncretism

In the early 17th century, English speakers adopted the term in the anglicized form *syncretism* to refer to the union of different religious beliefs. Three centuries later, lexicographers of the 1909 edition of *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* added a new definition of *syncretism* as "the union or fusion into one or two or more originally different inflectional forms, as of two cases", but this specialized sense is rarely encountered outside of the field of linguistics.Usually, syncretism would refer to an attempt to unite together those elements which do not agree, it also seen as "the union of two opposite forces, beliefs, system or tenets so that the united form is a new thing, neither one nor the other" (Gehman, 2001). TheMerriam Webster Dictionary (2023) shows the ancient Greeks mainly used the term *synkrētismos* to describe the joining together of Greeks in opposition to a common enemy. We stand to learn the art of relating with other cultures in other places towards a global citizenship.

According to a document titled Protestant Reformation Movement (1997) "the plan was to have a perfect society, one in which men and women were equal, arts was celebrated, magic was part of reality, syncretism was accepted and homosexuality was seen as perfectly normal". As well as making every aspect of human life distinctive and fair for people to take part. Syncretism in this point of view looks like a source of strength, by nurturing the spirit of mutuality and togetherness among people like the Southern African *Nbuntu* culture (Zumunci in Hausa). Coming from an African idea of Byang Kato and Mbiti, "I am, because we are, if we are then I am" my significance is within the confines of others within the community I live.

Communalism for in Africa is much better than individualistic lifestyle. We tend to promote our togetherness though lacking in the pure spirit of fairness. In the secular aspect of life, when two or more forces gathered or joined together toward achieving a specific goal, it yields a positive outcome. Amos 3:3 says two cannot walk together except they agree, while 1John 4:7-8 adds, "Beloveth, let us love

one another, for love is of God and anyone that loves is born of God and knows God". Doing this will result to bringing different forces, idea, skill, tenets together to achieve one single force out of many for maximum benefit and the development of all in the perspective of which the growth and development is needed. The benefit is quiet a development of all the united forces of targeted achievement from the society through the act of syncretism.

Jewish Buddhistand the Origin of "JuBu"

A Jewish Buddhist is a person with a Jewish background who believes in the tenets or a form of Buddhism. In the words of Drescher (2012) some practice forms of Dhyanam Buddhist meditation, chanting or spirituality. When the individual practices a particular religion, it may be both Judaism and Buddhism. However, in many cases their ethnic designation is Jewish. While the individual's main religious practice is Buddhism. Rodger Kamenetz introduced the term **JewBu** or **JUBU** in his 1994 book "The Jew in the Lotus". Gier (1994) elucidate further that the Buddha claimed to have made a clean break with his Hindu heritage, indicating traditional themes are still preserved in Buddhism.

This form of syncretism is recognized among the Jews who belief that the adoption of Buddhism as their religion does not in any way affect their belief or their Jewish religion, culture and tradition. They practice Buddhism or borrow the mode of practices in the Buddhists religion which at the same time incorporate their Jewish beliefsand culture in their practice. This is where the idea of the nomenclature reveals identity as the JewBu come to play a role since they combined two different faiths together and proclaim it publicly. The ideology is to practice a religion different from Judaism with lot of Jewish flavor.

Where does the term "JuBu" come from? Drescher (2012) says it is common knowledge that it was used by Rodger Kamenetz in his bestseller The Jew and the Lotus, New York 1994. There he traces it back to the Jewish-American Ophthalmologist Marc Liebermann, who referred to himself, in a conversation with Kamenetz, as a "JUBU". Liebermann says of himself that he had "Jewish roots and Buddhist wings, and by this he meant that he had integrated both religions equally into his life, and that both had enriched his spirituality in their own particular way. He is therefore one of those Jews in the USA who practice both religions in different proportions; no one can know how many of these arethere.

It remains true that the Jew made a contribution to the spread of Buddhism in the west which can hardly be overestimated. Who is a "JuBu"? An Article titled Buddhism and Judaism (2005) attempts a definitionthat "a JuBu is someone who, while engaging in Buddhist practices, affirms his Jewish descent and identity". No specific term is necessary for the others, who are simply "Buddhists with a Jewish background".

Faced with the striking numbers of Buddhists of Jewish descent in the USA it is easy to forget that, until the middle of the 1930s, German Jews too had a notable affinity with Buddhist teaching and practices. Their contribution to the spread of Buddhism in Germany was much higher than one would expect, given the fact that they represented less than one percent of the population at the time(Drescher, 2012).There is historical evidence that, at times, about one-third of the Buddhists in Germany were born JewsThis development was brought to a lasting end by the Holocaust in which many German Buddhists of Jewish descent were murdered or forced to emigratefor this reason there was no emergence of a German JuBu phenomenon during the Buddhism wave of 1965-1975.

Again, Drescher (2012) explains that among Buddhism's harbingers in the German-speaking world were the Asia experts and scholar of Jewish descent Karl Eugen Neumann (1865-1915) and the mathematician and engineer Friedrich Zimmermann (1851-1917) who had converted from Judaism to Buddhism and in 1888 published a "Buddhist catechism". Other Jewish converts to Buddhism of German origin are Sigmund Feninger (1901-1994), better known by his Dharma name "Nyanaponikaand the Buddhist nun Ayya Khema (1923-1997). From anonline, wikipedia source (2003) the US American JuBu phenomenon is a child of the late 60s and 70s of the last century. Its vanguard was the "Beat Generation" that was particularly attracted towards Japanese Zen and, influenced by the poet and committed Buddhist Allen Ginsburg (1926-1997), of Jewish descent, Buddhist teachings and practices experienced a boom in western countries. Similarly, Vajrayana and Theravada teachers from Tibet and south-east Asia travelled to the west and Buddhism gradually adopted the role of a politico-religious counter-culture: it was felt to be experience-based, encumbered with no historical baggage, peaceable, tolerant and non-dogmatic. In the perception of many young people, it presented a positive alternative to so-called "Western Christian Civilization" with its history of violence, and so could help to create a new,

positive identity in contradistinction to their parents' generation.

Syncretism of the Christian Faith

A document titled Syncretism and Christianity (2019) shows that Syncretism of the Christian gospel occurs when basic elements of the gospel are replaced by religious elements from the host culture. It often results from a tendency or attempt to undermine the uniqueness of the gospel as found in the Scriptures or the incarnate Son of God.In order words, it happens mostly in situations where African attempt to contextualize Christianity within their cultures. The Britannica of the ancient Rome (1966) concludesthat in the 17th century, a movement led by a German Protestant theologian George Calixtus aimed at reconciling the differences between the Protestants in Germany, though great, but his efforts were disparaged by Orthodox Christian leaders as containing syncretistic motives.

It common to witness yet another form of syncretism of the Christian faith, in a situation where Christianity is planted in a place where there is an existing religion in particular locationwhen both religions are mixed together in beliefs and practices it will showa clear act of syncretism. The people would embrace Christianity and as well refuse to detach themselves from their indigenous form of life and practices. It is can further be considered within denominational lines of doctrinal relationship and mixtures of theologies, where the evangelicals want to act like the Catholicas and Baptists are picking from the neo-Pentecostals. Syncretism in no longer an issue of a particular group nor a missed mark, rather a way gaining knowledge that your people desire. This is very glaring in Africa and even in Asia where by the dominant religion affect the new one within a particular setting. For instance, the missionary came to the Africa and planted Christianity, yet some Christian in Africa still observe their African way of intercession and ritual while at the same time practice their Christianity.

Sources and Reasons for Syncretism

There are many factors responsible for syncretism, it may go beyond a context and count onward but for this work, lets limit to a few among many that could include the following:

i. Geographical, economic and linguistic factors contribute to syncretism. For instance, Cosmopolitancities or business nerve centers could breed syncretism. A case in point is the cityof Alexandria, where many people gathered in interact together for commercial purposes. Confucius has been helpful to Chinese, Shinto has influenced peace and development among the Japanese while the Arabs are still benefiting from Islam. Similarly, Judasim, binds the military, social and economic life of the Jew, Christianity in helpful to development in America. Unfortunately, no so with us in Africa. It seems, our perception of religion differs.

ii. Another cause of syncretism is the policy of religious tolerance. In this case, syncretism becomes an effort to plug all the gaps in a given religion (Chidili, 1997). This is mostly introduced by politicians and religious leaders to establish temporary peace among unruly partners. We are not just to tolerate one another, we must first understand our common humanity as Nigerians and Africans before being religious.

iii. Innovations in Christianity is said not to provide for some of the functions the traditional values perform. The gospel displaces them without replacement. This is one of the reasons why the Africans Independent Church Movement is growing by geometrical proportion. These independent churches provide traditionalneeds for spontaneous prayer, exorcism and faith healing lacking in established churches Luzbetak (1992)

iv. Seeking for traditional assistance for healing and quick divine intervention, looking for spiritual satisfaction, as a result of quick spiritual response of many religions leads to syncretism and this has negative effects when exaggerated. Saxons are remembered, and members dance around a maypole or fire-pit in the fields or forest (Luzbetak, 1992).

Cultural Value and Ethnicity, are factors that breeds syncretism, people don't want to lose their cultural identity hence they see the need to mix their faith with their cultural life. That is why even during church wedding preparation in Africa, there are traces of cultural elements in the preparation exercise in accordance with the tradition of the parties involved.

Influence of Syncretism on other Faith

Orthodox Christianity, although influenced by other religions, generally looked negatively upon these syncretistic movements. Ezenweke and Kanu (2015) account that syncretistic movement element in the orient, such as Manichaeism a dualistic religion founded by the 3rd-century-ce Iranian prophet Mani, who combined elements of Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Sikhism (a religion founded by the 15th-16th century. Indian reformer Guru Nanak, who combined elements of Islam and Hinduism) also met with resistance from the prevailing religions of their respective area.

Current exemplifications of this principle abound. Many Christian sects in Korea are almost unrecognizably Christians because of the profound syncretistic effects of Buddhism and native Korean belief. Ezenweke and Kanu (2015) assert that "The Christian missions in Africa for instance, find themselves oscillating between protecting the redeeming gospel of Christ with its superiority tendency and the astringing African traditions, often in contrast to the other. Thus, African Christianity is characterized by syncretism whereby African and Western theologies mixed to the point that both system seem to lose their basic structures and identities"

One concurs with Ezenweke and Kanu (2015) give other examples that Latin American and Filipino Catholicism are pervaded by indigenous influences. It is also amazing how American Christianity and American individualism have merged into a unique form of religion. Very few American Christians are aware of the fact that the strong collectivism, as seen in the idea of "corporate" personality, of the Bible stands in stark contrast with the American celebration of the individual. American individualism is gradually evading the African space while some Americans are learning from the corporate nature of the Africans. It goes to show how we need each other and stand to learn from others culture in syncretism.

This is a biblical teaching, but the Britannica of the ancient Rome (1966) proclaims that the early Hebrews discovered the transcendence of God: they separated the sacred from the worldly and the natural. This is regarded as "Hebraic" principle. The belief in human immortality not present in early Hebrew literature and the idea of the man- god (the Hebrews never accepted the Incarnation) are definitely pagan intrusions into the Judeo-Christian tradition which embedded themselves by means of religious syncretism.

The Britannica (1966) stress further that "There is Canaanite influence in the Psalm Especially Psalm 29 but perhaps more is a Yahwist adaptation of an older Canaanite hymn to the storm god Baal. Phillips agrees with Dahood and expresses an important element in the Principle of Religious Syncretism: the dominant culture prevails in the exchange. Phillips states: "Undoubtedly on entry into Canaan, Israel did take over much of the indigenous religion and absorb it into their own. This was inevitable when a simpler culture encountered a much wealthier and more sophisticated environment."

Unification Theology and Religious Syncretism

An article titled Syncretism and Christianity (2019) declares that as it is obvious the Principle of Religious Syncretism holds that when any two cultures meet and interact they will exchange religious ideas with the dominant culture prevailing in the exchange. The word "dominant" in this definition does not necessarily mean numerical superiority. For example, a small group of Spanish conquistadors essentially made Catholicism the religion of Latin America. Similarly, but in a less violent way, Buddhism and Confucianism from China became the major religious traditions of Korea. It is interesting to trace the development of the Buddha as he was transformed into a Hellenistic Lord by contact with Greek culture in Northwest India.

According to a document, Syncretism and Christianity (2019) in both Latin America and Korea strong indigenous spiritual traditions remained, subtly influencing and sometimes transforming the dominant religion. Shamanism most certainly played this role in Korea. The impersonal tian of Confucianism was personalized as the Korean Hananim; special Korean sutras were composed with shamanistic flavor and ritual; and chants were done not just for meditation but for administering cures as well. Indeed, many Koreans accepted Buddhism, as many native peoples have embraced Christianity, as simply a superior form of shamanism.

A reference is made to Drescher (2012) that it is more than 120 years now since Buddhism began to get a foothold in western countries and began, slowly and steadily, to become at home here. The first historically-attested convert on the soil of the USA

was Charles T. Strauss who, at the 1893 "World Parliament of Religions" in Chicago, declared his conversion to Buddhism and took his Buddhist vow in a small, solemn ceremony in the present of an Asian master. Strauss came from New York and was the son of Jewish parents.

A glance at the Buddhist centers of the great east and west coast cities of the USA shows that up to 30% of their members are of Jewish descent. The renowned Buddhist master Chogyam Trungpa, from Tibet, once joked that there were so many Jews among his disciples that he would be able to found a special Buddhist school for them, the "Oy Vey School of Buddhism". In these centers, some of the members' assert that they are "passionate Buddhists" and "faithful Jews" at one and the same time. This phenomenon of "Jewish Buddhists" has become so widespread and striking since the boom of eastern wisdom teachings in the 1960s and 1970s that a specific term has established itself in the USA (not without resistance), namely, "JuBus" or "JewBus" as an abbreviation for "Jewish Buddhists" (Drescher, 2012).

At first sight, the enormous attraction that Jews feel towards Buddhism since it came to be practiced as a religion in the west, and especially the syncretistic JuBu phenomenon among the "baby-boomers", seems to be somewhat paradoxical. After all, both Buddhism and Judaism are very old, completely independent religions that have formed civilizations, and in many areas their doctrines and practices not only contradict, but seem clearly to exclude each other.

How can "taking refuge in the Buddha" be reconciled with the first two commandments of the Decalogue? The highly provocative question put by Hannes Stein in an article in the Jüdische Allgemeine in 2008 was, "How can anyone erect an idol and at the same time hold fast to Judaism?" -- "JuBus manage it!" was his succinct comment. The paradox is intensified by the fact that for more than 2000 years it has been the Jewish people who have held fast successfully, more or less, in the face of pressure towards assimilation in the diaspora and in the face of the missionizingambitions (not always free from violence) of their non-Jewish neighbors. Yet, in spite of this, Buddhism manages, in cases, to overcome the primitive Jewish horror of conversion (Drescher, 2012).

It is clear that religious syncretism connects different religions to operate under one unique entity which contribute in one way or the other a driving force of economic, social and technological growth of an entity. The improvement in the science and technology is another aspect of modernization where there will be quality improvement from manual way of activities to digitalization. New innovation will pop in on daily bases as part of modernization. The dynamism of religion adherents when joined together can result to positive outcome of growth and development.

Conclusion

It is obvious that religious syncretism is perceived as the involvement of more than one religious beliefseither to understand human relationship with God or as means for different religions to consider issues in similar light. At times, it could be inter religious syncretic within two or more religion or intra syncretic religious beliefs within a particular group of religion or denomination. It goes to show that just as Jewish Buddhism are two different religions who align their practices, to accommodate the practicing of the two. They allow room for each other to learn from the other and develop further, this is a means for their religious international relationship and socio-economic development to foster. The culture of the recessive religion would not be dominated in any way by the other, but one is meant to project over the other. This is not a form of superiority of religions that have existed over time, over another but an accommodation of the other to interrelate and mingle. Inter-religious relationships in recent times are created for the peaceful co-existence of humanity as well. This is common within a particular church denomination, where they borrow outside of their liturgy in order to modernize and relate with their members that are already exposed to other ways of doing the same thing. In most cases, it is done to keep the laity in the relationship and worship, but it benefits the leaders and politicians who dialogue between the suzerain and the vassal. Relationship of mutuality in most case is a service to power. At times, the few powerful are the beneficiaries of the sync-bond. It is a religious practice where the church relates with the society and create a forum of mingling with believers and unbelievers for the purpose of developing their community.

Survival in a society, requires the contribution of the parties living within it. In Africa, it is believing that we both each have something to give just aswe both can learn from the other in Africa. Earlier on, syncretism was regarded as the combining force of two different religious entities or group of people to

defeat a common enemy in case of external invention. This also adds to the strength and capacity of specific set of individual to contribute to the growth and development of their society. The Jewish Buddhist in America, Germany, Korea, Tibet, Greece other part of the world joined their effort together in developing the nations in terms of modern technology and scientific innovation. Their joined effort caused the development of their world. On the contrary, religion in most African societies, has not led to peaceful life and human dignity, instead people adhere to religion as a mask for doing dirty works. In some cases, killing in the name of God while other kill for riches. Africans need to learn from the co-existence of religion in Asia and how it helped their development for us to make progress religiously.

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HERDSMEN AND FARMERS CLASHES IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA: NATIONAL SECURITY IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT
Conflict between herdsmen and farmers has been on for decades. While both groups enjoy a symbiotic relationship, this relationship is sometime characterized by competition over natural resources such as fresh water and land. In Nigeria, while herdsmen and farmers' clashes are rife in different parts of the country, the north central geopolitical zone has become a theatre of conflict between both groups. Herdsmen and farmers conflict in the zone has been prevalent in Plateau, Kogi, Nasarawa and Benue with negative impacts on the communities and these clashes have been characterized by wanton destruction of farmlands, farm produce, loss of lives and displacement of people. This paper examines the national security implications of herdsmen and farmers conflict on Nigerian national security. It provides the necessary recommendations which include developing mediation and conflict prevention capacities of the communities involved and early warning signal as well as training herdsmen and farmers at the local level and within rural community on the need to live peaceful communal life togrther.

Introduction

Conflicts are rife across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria with the most current and worrisome of these being herdsmen/farmers' conflicts which are disputes associated with competition over control and access to natural resources such as pasture and water, cattle rustling and in recent times exacerbated by political incitements, ethnocentrism, increasing levels of poverty and idleness amongst the youth and proliferation of illicit arms. While the conflict is viewed often to be between herdsmen and farmers, some analysts view as herdsmen onslaught against farmers arguing that the invasion, massacre and sacking of entire communities by herdsmen, is more of an act of aggression by the herdsmen on the people than a battle between the herdsmen and farmers (Channels Televsion, 2018). Benue State Chairman of the National Association of Yam farmers, Processors and Marketers, Dominic Dekera said in Vanguard (2022) that the real herdsmen that they knew in the past lived with them and were not violent, they knew their mode of operation and lived without issues. However, uncontrolled conflicts threaten the

country as many lives and properties worth millions of naira have been lost in the past years. This affects the living standards of citizens in all ramifications. Atobatele1 & Moliki (2022) are of the opinion that these crises not only affect lives and properties but increase the incidence of poverty, reduce children enrolment in schools, commerce, internal security, low level of agricultural production, religious and ethnic intolerance to mention but a few. Some people believed that the onset of herdsmen attacks was primarily due to clashes with farmers over grazing of cattle on their farmlands. Herders or pastoralists who are largely nomadic depend on livestock for their livelihood and rely on access to pasture and water, for the survival of their livestock. Such resources are scarce and under increasing pressure and as a result they move around for greener pastures. Farmers on their part depend on arable land for agriculture. The resultant increase in competition for arable land has often times led to serious manifestation of hostilities and social friction among the two user-groups (herders and farmers) in many parts of Nigeria (Blench, 2004).

While clashes between the two groups have been on for decades, their frequency and scope is becoming worrisome. Since 1999, herdsmen and farmers' clashes have killed thousands of people and displaced tens of thousands more. The resultant insecurity and violence amidst inadequate policing and state security arrangements have led many populations to create self-defence forces and ethnic militias, which have engaged in further violence, thereby worsening the security landscape. According to the Global Terrorism Index (2015), Fulani militants were the fourth deadliest terrorist group in 2014, using machine guns and attacks on villages to assault and intimidate farmers. Between 2010 and 2013 they killed about 80 people and in 2014, 1, 229. Most attacks and deaths occur in Northcentral Nigeria, in particular in the states of Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Plateau and Taraba where there have been over 1, 500 deaths (Channels Television, 2018). In 2016 and 2018, Benue State became the focus of attention with the Agatu killing with recorded over 300 deaths and the recent massacre in Logo and Guma areas of the State with over 70 deaths (Abonu, 2016). These conflicts have adversely affected the security of lives and property of the people with far-reaching consequences on their livelihood and societal well-being.

The North central can be described as the hotbed of crisis owing to the prevalence of communal conflicts and citizenship crises which have their roots in the plurality of the zone. Since 1999, the Zone has witnessed major civil disturbances which have made scholars to argue that nowhere else is civil disturbance and the broader contest for citizenship, identity and politics of inclusion and exclusion more ferocious and persistent than in the Zone (Alubo, 2011). Today, there is no State in the Zone that has not experienced one form of identity conflict or the other. The prevalence of Herdsmen/ Farmers' clashes in North central Nigeria has not only worsened the security landscape of the area but poses both food and national security problem. That was why Familugba and Adedayo (2020) in their study suggested indigenous conflict resolution which has contributed immensely to resolving many ethno-religious and societal conflicts. The then Minister of Agriculture, Dr Mohammed Mahmood Abubakar, while presenting his ministry's scorecard from 2015 to 2023 in Abuja, ascribe the rising cost of food items to inflation and COVID 19 pandemic. This was immediately refuted by farmers in Plateau, Kaduna State and other states, They attributed the food scarcity to frequent invasion of their farm land by Fulani herdsmen (Vanguard 2022). The farmers said they have lost different types of grains, tubers and vegetables among other crops to the unwholesome activities of herdsmen. A farmer in Zamfara state, Shehu Danja said farmers in the state witnessed massive reduction in rice and other farm produce in the 2022 rainy farming season because of the activities of bandits. This explains why farmer could no longer go to farm since they are afraid of being attacked by herdsmen who feel obliged to feed their cattle at the expense of farmer's crops. There is tension everywhere as people no longer feel safe in their communities and in the bid to save their communities, fight ensured then casualties of war. Love ones are lost and wounded, emotional and physical stress sets in polished by hunger and loss of hope not knowing what the future holds. Children are forcefully denied education and they move about unceremoniously without aim. The women are the most confused since they are worried about their lives, that of their families especially the children. As Chinua Achebe puts it that there is anarchy in the land and the center cannot hold. All these and more calls for concern hence the paper herdsmen and farmers clashes in North central Nigeria: National security implications

Understanding Herdsmen/Farmers' Conflicts: Conflict between herdsmen and farmers can be grouped under what conflict scholars have identified as resource-based or environmental conflicts-

conflicts that arise over ownership, use of, access to or competition over natural resources such as water, land, mineral resources and petroleum resources. According to the Environment and Conflicts Project (ENCOP, cited in Onduku, 2001), resource-based conflicts are traditional conflicts induced by an environmental degradation". Environmental conflicts are usually complex in structure and history and impact public interests and goods, including non-represented interests (e.g. future generations) and although rarely the only cause of conflicts, when interwoven with such elements as population growth, poverty and injustice, environmental problems increasingly contribute to existing and future political tensions and their escalation to violent conflicts. This fact is buttressed by a United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP, 1999) report which identified a growing trend in international and intra-national conflict which appears to be linked to the deteriorating environmental conditions and resources. Water flow, diversion, salinization, floods, pollution, resource depletion issues like deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, flooding are revealed as the most common elements around which conflicts can erupt with the vast majority of such conflicts occurring in developing regions. In his attempt to explain the causal relationship between natural resource endowment and the outbreak of violent conflict, Homer-Dixon (1999), developed the eco-violence theory also known as environmental conflict theory. According to him.

> *Decrease in the quality and quantity of renewable resources act singly or in various combinations to increase the scarcity, for certain population groups, of vegetation, farmland, water, forests etc. This scarcity of ecological resources can reduce economic productivity, both for the local groups experiencing the scarcity and for the larger regional and national economies. Consequently, the affected people may migrate or be expelled to new lands. Migrating groups often trigger ethnic conflicts when they move to new areas, while decreases in wealth can cause deprivation conflicts (Homer-Dixon, 1999, p.2).*

The central argument is that declining availability of renewable natural resources which results into competition over scarce resources engender violent conflict (Ajaero et al 2015). This view was expressed by Anan (2006) when he stated that 'environmental degradation in forms such as desertification, resource depletion and demographic pressure exacerbates tensions and instability... as a result of frustration which leads to aggression. John Dollard in his frustration-aggression argues that collective behaviour is an aggressive response to feelings of frustration of more actors' goal achievement. In other words, conflict can be the product of the unfulfilled personal or group goals and the frustration that this brings.

The increase of farmer-herder conflicts has been linked to an expansion of agriculturist population and cultivated land at the expense of pasturelands; deteriorating environmental conditions, desertification and soil degradation; land and water disputes among others (Foreign Affairs, 2015). Frustration resulting from these forces and the inability to gain access to greener pastures in their sojourn, have pitched herdsmen against local crop farmers whom they perceive as blocking their access to these resources critical to their survival.

The conflict is also likened to guerrilla warfare where the Fulani who are regarded as armed non-state actors attack entire communities. This basis of this theory is that cattle rearing business in Nigeria is undertaken by the Fulani as well as political and business elite who arm herdsmen who are sometimes foreigner but are directed by local Fulani herdsmen.

While these theories help our understanding of the factors responsible for the herdsmen/farmers' clashes, they failed to show the fact that political motivations are sometimes at the root of the onslaughts by herdsmen. The question on every lip is what the real agenda of the Fulani is for the various attacks which are characterised by mass killings, butchery and sacking of entire villages. The situation is worsened by a statement credited to the Secretary to the Association of Cattle Rearers, Miytte Allah who was alleged to have said that Benue belonged to the Fulani, which seems to portray the fact that they were on a mission of conquest. It is on this note that many have alleged that there is a conspiracy to annex or colonise Nigeria through a jihad which is currently unfolding in Benue State. This argument is further buttressed by the fact that the Nigerian government seems to favour cattle colonies in all parts of the country, a move which many describe as a subtle

attempt to finish the task first embarked on by Othman Dan Fodio. While others have dismissed this allegation as a mischievous attempt to divide the country through religious sentiments, the fact remains that the killing and sacking of entire communities is akin to genocide. Whatever the argument, herdsmen and farmers' clashes continue to worsen the security landscape of the country with implication for national security.

Herdsmen and Farmers' Conflict: A Historical Analysis

The Fula people also known as Fulani in Hausa language, are a culturally diverse group in Africa but predominant in West Africa and live primarily in arid or semi-arid areas. The Fulani are widely dispersed and speak the Fula language. They are mostly nomadic in nature, herding cattle, goats and sheep across the vast dry grass lands of their environment, making them the world's largest pastoral nomadic group. The Fulani are spread across several countries but found mainly in West Africa and northern parts of Central Africa as well as in Sudan and Egypt. The main Fulani sub-groups in Nigeria are: Fulbe Adamawa, Fulbe Mbororo, Fulbe Sokoto, Fulbe Gombe, and the Fulbe Borgu (Eyekpimi, 2016).

The exact era when Fulbe pastoralists first moved into Nigeria is unknown, but it is generally assumed that they first arrived as nomads in the far north between the 14th and 16th centuries. In the early 20th century, some herders started shifting their migratory routes farther south, pushed by a series of droughts in the far north, but also attracted by heightened security in central and southern Nigeria and by better control of parasitic diseases (such as trypanomiasis or sleeping sickness) in the central and southern zones in addition to wanting to evade the much-hated cattle tax (jangali) imposed by the British colonial government in the northern region (Blench, 2004). During this early period they were confined to a narrow strip along the northern border of what is today Nigeria but with time moved to other parts of the country as a result of political and military expansion and the high altitude grasslands, lower risk of diseases and relative security as threats of armed raids on grazing herds were rare (International Crisis Group, 2017).

Herder/farmer conflict has existed since the beginnings of agriculture, but in Africa the prevalence and frequency of these conflicts was not until the twentieth century. The marked expansion of riverine and valley-bottom (*fadama*) cultivation in Nigeria since the 1980s has meant that pastoralists and farmers now compete very directly for access to wetland areas with a consequent increase in conflict (Blench, 2004).Pastoralists derive their livelihoods mainly from natural resources–pasture, water, natural vegetation and livestock while farmers derive theirs from their farm produce and as an Internally Displaced Person in one of the camps in Benue State observed, the two cannot meet (cohabit) for if they do, there will be a spark. Reduced access to land and water, has increasingly put pastoralists under intense pressure, as a result, they are increasingly finding themselves fighting for their survival as they are forced to often migrate greener lands. However, physical boundaries cutting across traditional migratory routes and wars in neighbouring countries continually bring increased problems in accessing traditional grazing resources. On the other hand, as the pressure on arable land in the semi-arid zone increased, soil fertility inevitably decreased and farmers are obliged to move to regions of uncleared bush or to increase their holding size, often a problematic strategy. This attempt to survive by both sides, often pitch them against each other.

The majority of farmer-herder clashes have occurred between Muslim Fulani herdsmen and Christian peasants, exacerbating ethnoreligious hostilities. Prior to 1999, security was considerably firmer and internal crises were containable easily invariably because of the military apparatus. However, since the onset of civilian rule from 1999 till date there has been a poor and an inadequate response to the security of lives and property. The advent of democratic rule seems to have opened the gate of ethno-religious conflicts which manifested around the Farmer-Herder conflicts while some politicians have cashed on the land use conflicts to feather their nest. For instance, in Mambilla Plateau of Taraba state, herders and farmers have lived peacefully together for centuries until recently in years 2001 and 2002 when clashes broke out between the two groups believed to have been politically motivated (Abdulrahman, 2017). While violent conflict involving pastoralists and farmers is widespread and increasingly severe in Nigeria, it is predominant in the North central with the most affected States being Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau (This Day Live, 2015).

In the early years of return to democratic rule, Plateau State also witnessed ethno religious crisis. Many of the settled and transhumant pastoralists were caught up in the crisis between the urban Hausa-Fulani Muslim and the Christian tribes; which set the stage for subsequent conflicts that lasted many years.

The situation has not been the same in Nasarawa State where there have been persistent clashes between Fulani herdsmen and local crop farmers (Abdulrahman, 2017). In 2018, six communities in Logo and Guma Local Governments Areas of Benue state were attacked by armed herdsmen who gunned down, machete and gruesomely murdered people including women and children. While recent killings in the State has been attributed to the passing of the anti-open grazing law in the State, there have been over 50 to 60 attacks by herdsmen in the area before this time (Channels Television, 2018). The law was the State's response to repeated attacks against residents, including the February 2016 massacre of over 300 villagersinAgatu.

National Security Implications of the Crisis in Northcentral Nigeria

Northcentral Nigeria also known as the Middle Belt comprises six States namely Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Niger, Nasarawa, Plateau States and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The Zone is a plural society spread across over 600 ethnics, sub-ethnic and cultural groups, thoroughly intermingled and overlapping in their geographical locations. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Zone and in particular the Zone is famous for the production of yams among other produce. Apart from agriculture, mining and forestry are also comparatively viable. For instance, Nasarawa State is the location of solid minerals. According to Ayi (2003), there is no Local Government Area of the State without one solid mineral or another which is why it is referred to as 'the Home of Solid Minerals'. The major ethnic groups in the Zone include; Eggon, Tiv, Alago, Hausa, Fulani, Mada, Rindre, Gwandara, Koro, Gbagyi, Ebira, Agatu, Bassa, Idoma, Aho, Ake, Mama, Arum. Beroms, Anaguta, Afizeres, Ganawuri, Irigwe, Jarawa, Rukuba, Pengana, Jarawa, Biyi, Rukuba, the Irigwe and Kanuri.

TheNorthcentral is critical to the National Question and as such crises in the Zone deserve serious attention. Alubo (2011) identified the importance of the Northcentral in terms of its strategic location, composition and as the producer of the bulk of Nigeria's food and the implications of these for the security of the nation.

The strategic location of the Zone provides a vital link between the north and the south and by implication, a buffer for unity and stability of the country. The implication is that insecurity and instability in the area will no doubt affect the security, stability and unity of neighbouring zones as well as the entire. For instance, many states outside the Zone have begun to show sympathy to the Zone in the recent onslaught by herdsmen while supporting the anti-grazing law which has its origin in the Zone. The intensity, scope and frequency of Fulani pastoralists and farmers' conflicts have shown the fragility of unity of ethnic nationalities in Nigeria and the tendency to maintain a 'no retreat and no surrender' stance by all parties in the conflict indicates the porosity of Nigeria's national security (Abass, 2017).

Furthermore, the composition of the Zone is such that conflicts in the area have a spill over effect on other parts of the country. This is because the States in the Zone share boundaries with other Zone such as the Southsouth, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest, and the Northeast. People who have been displaced in the Northcentral often constitute refugees in these other Zone thereby heightening insecurity in such areas.

The Northcentral Zone is centrally located and by virtue of its strategic location, conflicts in the area would impede movement of goods and persons across the country and consequently affect the development of the country. The Zone produces the bulk of Nigeria's food. Agriculture is the means of livelihood of the States in the region. Benue State for instance is referred to as the Food Basket of the Nation because of its rich agricultural endowment. The conflicts have not only heightened the level of insecurity, but have also demonstrated high potential to exacerbate the food crisis in Nigeria and other affected countries due to loss of farmers' lives, animals, crops and valuable properties (Cotula, Toulmin & Hesse, 2004). In a study conducted by Ajodo-Adebanjoko et al (2015) it was found that the production of yams in Lafia had decreased while the cost had increased because of crisis in the area. The same is no doubt applicable to other States in the Zone. At a time when the country is seeking to diversify from dependence on oil to agricultural produce and exporting yams which is the main produce of the Zone, continued crisis can lead to food insecurity. According to Mercy corps (cited in Eyekpimi, 2016), the incessant clashes between by herdsmen and crop farmers have a drastic effect on food security and have caused a loss of $14 billion in three years and in another research carried out between 2013 and 2016 on the causes and effects of the perennial clashes between herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria, it found that ongoing conflict thwarts the country's economic development to an enormous extent with states affected by these conflicts losing an average of 47% of taxes (Internally Generated Revenue) during these attacks and if conflicts were

resolved the average household affected today could see income increase by at least 64 percent, and potentially 210 percent or higher.

Violent conflicts between herdsmen and farmers have had very negative and severe impacts on the communities that are involved in these conflicts. As already noted, several lives and property have been lost to the crisis in addition to disruption of socio-economic activities and livelihoods as whole communities have been sacked. The result is a deepening humanitarian crisis resulting in several Internally Displace Persons (IDPs) and refugees within and outside the Zone. There is an estimated over 175,000 IDPs currently in Benue State alone (Channels TV, 2018). The problem of IDPs and refugees poses a security challenge to a country that is already reeling from humanitarian crisis resulting from terrorist activities in the northeast.

Sacking of entire villages means that academic activities are disrupted since schools are closed indefinitely. Statistics from UNESCO (2015), shows that the number of children of primary age not attending school in Nigeria increased from 8 million in 2007 to 10.5 million in 2015, the highest figure in the world. Some of these children are found in the Northcentral where insecurity is rife. Even when such conflicts have ended the children may never return to school because their parents do not have the wherewithal to train them having lost everything in the conflict. Such children eventually end up on the streets and this results in the emergence of a new group of children who constitute not only a social menace but a security risk.

Another implication is the emergence of various militia groups. Insecurity and violence have led many communities to create self-defence forces and ethnic militias, which have engaged in further violence. The emergence of ethnic militia groups is because of the failure of the government to secure the lives and property of the citizens. Many communities have lost faith in the Federal government and have thus resorted to self-defence. As Abass (2017) puts it, 'when the state pays a lip service to the security of the means of livelihood of its citizens, like farmlands; and there is no sufficient guarantee for safety, fear and suspicions amongst them emerge' and the people resort to self-defence. This accounts for why today, there are different militia groups in several communities. The problem with the militia groups is that they sometimes unleash terror on their communities and innocent citizens in the name of security. The proliferation of militia groups therefore portends evil for the nation's security.

Closely tied to the upsurge of ethnic militia is the proliferation of small arms and ammunition (SALWs), in the State. While scholars do not agree on the fact that SALWs are at the root of conflicts, they agree that they contribute to and sustain conflicts (Ajodo-Adebanjoko, 2018). Out of an estimated 640 million SALWs in circulation world-wide, 100 million are estimated to be in Africa, about 30 million in sub-Saharan Africa and 8 million in West Africa alone and Over 70% of about eight to 10 million illegal weapons in West Africa are in Nigeria and as at 2002, the number of SALWs in Nigeria was estimated by various reports and studies at between 1 and 3 million (Osimen & Akintunde, 2015). According to Enuka (nd) the availability of small arms, ammunition, light weapons and explosives circulating in African states since the end of the Cold War has made easy the escalation of tensions between groups facing disagreement.

Some of the literature reviewed include Gamgum (2018) conducted a study on the herdsmen and farmers conflicts in Nigeria: another dimension of insecurity. He used both primary and secondary sources to collect data. He noted that conflicts created tension and terrorized every community. and profer solutions to make the state a violence-free community.

Familugba and Adedayo (2020) carried out a study on indigenous conflict resolution strategy and sustainable development in Nigeria. The study explained the need for indigenous conflict resolution because it had played important roles in resolving major ethno-religious crises in Nigeria

The Way Forward

The Federal government should as a matter of urgency review her border patrol system and provide more security personnel while deploying new technological facilities that will aid the immigration and other security agents to verify and admit any foreign herder entering the country. In addition, all herds must have the International Transhumance Certificate as provided by the ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance (International Crisis Group, 2017).

Furthermore, the ECOWAS Transhumance Protocol of 1998 and the ECOWAS Protocol of Free Movement of Goods and Persons in West Africa which allow herders access to designated stock routes and

grazing lands/reserves through the West African countries need to be reviewed to ensure efficiency and to identify new routes and away from the routes have already been turned farmlands. Nigeria also needs liaise with neighbouring countries to stem cross-border movement of non-Nigerian armed herders: Nigeria should work with Cameroon, Chad and Niger (the Lake Chad basin countries) to regulate movements across borders, particularly of cattle rustlers, armed herders and others that have been identified as aggravating internal tension and insecurity in Nigeria (International Crisis Group, 2017).

Measures directly aimed at conflict prevention such as developing mediation and conflict prevention capacities of the communities involved and early warning system, training and indigenous peace building processes should be put in place at the local level and within rural communities particularly in areas that have been most affected by conflict (International Crisis Group, 2017).

Proactive policing as against reactionary policing is recommended. The Nigeria Police should be proactive in preventing and not merely reacting each to such crises. Since it is a known fact that these crises are predominant in the dry season, they should put their mechanisms in place to deter such conflicts.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanism which was helpful in resolving herdsmen and farmers conflict in the past should be resorted to. Traditional institutions and religious bodies have a role to play in this regard in ensuring that these persistent conflicts are addressed harmoniously.

There are 19.5 million cattle in Nigeria as against 50 million in Ethiopia, yet the latter has been able to manage pastoralist and farmers crisis very well. Nigeria should learn from this and other countries the acceptable practice.

Government needs to address impunity. It is unfortunate that despite the spate of attacks by herdsmen nobody has been brought to justice. A situation where people commit crime and go unpunished will encourage impunity but where punishment is meted, others are deterred. It is therefore imperative to create special tribunals to investigate, prosecute offenders and compensate victims.

The need for State police is overdue. Although there is fear that State Governors may abuse their power using the State police apparatus, the truth remains that we cannot throw the baby with the bath water. The presence of the State police will discourage the recourse to the use of the militia as well as ensure rapid response in the event of crisis. In this regard the constitution of 'Operation Amotekun' in the southwest is a welcome development.

Finally, security is the responsibility of all members of the society and as such community policing should be encouraged. People should be conscious of what goes on around them and where they notice strange behavior or faces, they should report such. This is line with the maxim; 'if you see something, say something'.

Conclusion

Violent clashes between nomadic herders and farmers have escalated in recent years owing to climate change; population explosion, cattle rustling; political and ethnic strife and proliferation of SALWs among others (International Crisis Group, 2017). As these conflicts increase in frequency, intensity and geographical scope, so does their humanitarian and economic toll. Thousands have been killed while fatalities from the crisis are said to have exceeded the toll from the Boko Haram insurgency. While these crises occur in different parts of the country, in recent times the Northcentral has become the focal point and the nature of the attacks by herdsmen which involves the massacre of entire communities has been faulted by many.

Herdsmen attacks in the Northcentral as in other parts of the country have made life insecure as people now live in fear. Whole communities have had to relocate to other communities where they constitute a humanitarian crisis. The Northcentral crisis therefore constitutes a national emergency and a national security problem.

National security is the pivot of every nation; the entire polity-economy, education, health etc is dependent on a secure environment. It is high time the federal government acknowledged the menace of herdsmen as a major threat to peace and security in the country. To this end, the executive and legislative arms of government should muster the political will to deal with this menace.

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SINO-NIGERIA RELATIONS AND GLOBAL OIL POLITICS, 1999-2023: ASYMMETRICAL OR SYMMETRICAL?

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ABSTRACT
Nigeria's decreasing foreign investment has heightened Europe's and the USA's interest in investing amid this climate of uncertainty. However, China's quest for resources to ensure its energy security has countered this apprehension. China, the world's most populous nation, requires more imported oil to fuel its rapidly growing economy, while Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, needs infrastructure to accelerate its development. This paper examines Sino-Nigerian relations within the context of global politics, focusing on China's primary interest in securing access to Nigeria's natural resources to sustain its expanding economy. Unlike previous studies that predominantly framed Sino-Nigerian relations through a lens of simple economic exchange, this paper delves deeper into the intricacies of political and socio-economic interactions, highlighting how these factors create an interdependent relationship. It scrutinizes the bilateral agreements, investments, and strategic maneuvers that define the asymmetry or symmetry in this relationship, thereby offering a deeper understanding of how both nations negotiate their positions in the broader context of global oil politics. This approach provides a fresh perspective by combining geopolitical and economic analyses, thus moving beyond the traditional narratives and offering a richer exploration of the subject. This paper employs qualitative method using secondary and internet sources. The findings show that, despite China's positive economic reforms and political stability, which have driven its transformation, Nigeria has not experienced similar benefits. Consequently, the paper argues that, as China, an emerging global power with a booming economy, seeks oil, Nigeria should

be recognized as needing significant investment and diversification of its resources.

Introduction

Despite China's and Nigeria's growing significance in the global energy landscape, the study of Sino-Nigeria relations within the framework of global oil politics is still mostly unexplored. The majority of the research that has already been done has addressed China's involvement in Nigeria's oil industry in particular, but it has not gone far enough in analyzing the complex dynamics of their bilateral relationship. By investigating the asymmetrical and symmetrical aspects of Sino-Nigerian relations, especially in the oil sector—where China has emerged as a major actor owing to its growing energy demands and strategic investments in Nigeria—this study seeks to close this gap.

While much research has focused on China's "go out" policy and its effects on African economies, there has not been sufficient exploration of how this strategy specifically influences Nigeria's oil politics and, consequently, its overall economy. Furthermore, the current discourse typically overlooks the importance of a detailed analysis of power relations, failing to consider if the link benefits both sides equally or is skewed toward one. By focusing on our period, this paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the shifting dynamics of Sino-Nigerian relations within the framework of international oil politics. It thus provides fresh perspectives on the political, economic, and geopolitical facets of this bilateral cooperation.

Conceptual Clarification

The dynamics of Sino-Nigeria relations have been characterized by complex interactions that reveal both asymmetrical and symmetrical elements. Asymmetry in this sense is evident through China's economic leverage and strategic investments in Nigeria's oil sector. Since the early 2000s, China has positioned itself as a major player in Nigeria's oil industry, with state-owned enterprises such as the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) securing significant stakes in Nigerian oil fields (Agubamah, 2014). This investment influx has been motivated by China's growing energy needs to fuel its expanding economy, leading to substantial financial flows from China to Nigeria. However, this economic interdependence often skews in favor of China, as it wields greater bargaining power, making the relationship asymmetrical (Ogunnoiki, 2017).

Conversely, elements of symmetry can be identified in the mutual benefits and strategic partnerships formed between the two nations. Nigeria has leveraged its oil resources to attract Chinese investments not only in the energy sector but also in infrastructure development, such as railways, roads, and power projects, which are pivotal for its economic growth (Alao, 2020). Additionally, diplomatic relations have flourished, with both countries supporting each other in various international platforms such as the United Nations and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). This strategic partnership indicates a degree of symmetry, as both nations pursue mutually beneficial outcomes within the international system. Thus, the Sino-Nigeria relations in the realm of global oil politics, in our period, can be seen as a blend of asymmetrical economic dependency and symmetrical diplomatic collaboration (Onuoha, 2018).

Literature Review

Scholarly studies have extensively examined the connection between China and Nigeria and its implications for global oil politics. Nigeria confronts both chances and challenges as a result of recent changes in China-Nigeria relations, claim Ogunkola and Adewiyi (2008). They contend that in order to maximize the beneficial spillover effects of China's advancements in supplying necessary services and inputs, Nigeria's development plan should take use of China's growth, development, and poverty-reduction techniques (Ogunkola & Adewiyi, 2008:76). Although they offer insightful information about the opportunities and difficulties Nigeria faces as a result of the changing Sino-Nigeria relations, the power imbalances that can exist in it were not examined in their work, especially how China's political and economic factors could influence Nigeria's (foreign) policy choices.

Local merchants valued the willingness of several Chinese partners to fund their activities, according to Pat Utomi (2008) in "China and Nigeria". This was

viewed as a chance to participate in joint ventures and learn about Chinese business processes. The possible dependency and power disparities that could result from these financial ties—where Nigerian merchants might become unduly dependent on Chinese finance and markets—were not sufficiently examined by Utomi's analysis, though. The study also failed to take into account the possible harm to regional sectors, such as the overabundance of low-cost Chinese items in Nigerian marketplaces, which can inhibit local innovation and production.

Nigeria's growing oil exports to Asia were quantitatively described by Adeolu et al. (2010), who noted a notable increase from $8,995.77 million in 2006 to $13,973.39 million in 2008. Although the statistics indicated a significant rise in Nigeria's oil trade, the study did not investigate the underlying causes of this growth, such as adjustments in geopolitics, modifications to the demand for oil globally, or particular bilateral agreements between Nigeria and Asian nations, especially China. Furthermore, it did not critically analyse the wider economic and social effects on Nigeria, such as how rising oil exports affect employment, local industries, and the stability of the country's economy.

Gregory (2009) notes that without assuming ownership of their own network management, Chinese telecom companies aggressively entered the Nigerian market. Although this is a useful finding, Gregory's research ignored issues like capacity building, technology transfer, and competition that may have long-term effects for local telecom enterprises. Additionally, the report did not discuss how these activities impact Nigeria's regulatory framework or the country's possible reliance on foreign knowledge and technology.

Lawal (2009) draws attention to a noteworthy institutional advancement in Sino-African ties concerning the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) in 2000. The report did not analyze how FOCAC activities have affected bilateral relations, particularly in the oil industry, or fully examine the specific effects of the organization on particular African nations, such Nigeria. A critical evaluation of the power dynamics within the FOCAC, including whether or not African nations have real agency in the alliance or if they are primarily passive targets of Chinese policy, was also absent from the report.

In particular, Patey's (2014) analysis of China's increasing sway over the oil industry in Africa is insightful, since it highlights the state-owned Chinese corporations' strategic moves to obtain Nigerian oil resources. But Patey's work mostly concentrates on the actions and tactics of these Chinese organizations, paying little attention to the reactions and adjustments of Nigerian players, such as local businesses, communities, and the government. The study did not cover the wider geopolitical ramifications, such as how this relationship affects Nigeria's links with other major oil-importing countries and international oil markets, nor did it investigate the socioeconomic and environmental effects of Chinese oil investments on Nigeria. Furthermore, Patey's research ignores the possibility of reciprocal advantages as well as the dangers of exploitation and dependence in this bilateral relationship.

A thorough summary of the more general facets of Sino-Nigeria collaboration is provided by Garba and Alden (2019), with particular attention to initiatives pertaining to infrastructure and energy. Their study did not sufficiently address the possible socio-economic and environmental effects, such as job creation, ecological damage, or displacement, connected with large-scale energy and infrastructure initiatives, even though their work offered a useful macro-level insight. The power dynamics and potential asymmetries within these initiatives, particularly how they might favor Chinese interests disproportionately compared to Nigerian ones, were also not properly examined by Garba and Alden due to their cooperation-focused approach.

An insightful analysis of China's international energy policies and how they relate to its energy relations with nations such as Nigeria can be found in Andrews-Speed (2010). Although the study emphasized China's strategic goals, it did not adequately analyze the ways in which these goals impact Nigeria's local populations, economic stability, and domestic energy regulations. Furthermore, Andrews-Speed's research did not examine the potential political and economic imbalances resulting from this link, nor did it investigate the ecological and societal ramifications of growing Chinese participation in Nigeria's energy sector.

Insightful analysis of Nigeria's ties with China in the framework of global economic governance and the larger geopolitical ramifications of Sino-Nigeria relations is provided by Mellander and Wekesa (2019). The study, while emphasizing the wider geopolitical ramifications, did not adequately address Nigeria's and China's power and influence asymmetry

or investigate how these dynamics affect bilateral agreement negotiation and implementation, especially in areas like infrastructure and energy. However, although the research that is now available focuses on the diplomatic and economic aspects, a deeper analysis might address power dynamics, dependency on resources, and the mutual benefits or leverage that each party possesses.

Sino-Nigeria Economic Relations: An Overview

Prior to the Open Door Policy announced by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, China had made very few investments in Nigeria. Nigeria's economic structure and dependence on foreign aid and investment made it less appealing to Chinese investors than other African countries (Ubi, 2015). Nevertheless, when Nigeria recognized the People's Republic of China in 1971, it cut diplomatic connections with the Republic of China (Taiwan) (Ubi, 2015:111). Growing Chinese influence in Nigeria in particular has facilitated a collaboration that many view as an alternative to Western-style relationships in recent years (Zheng & Li, 2019). China and Nigeria are anticipated to have the two greatest economies by 2050, though on different scales, according to a Goldman Sachs prediction from 2005, with China likely to have the world's largest economy.

It is noteworthy that in 1993, China made the shift from being a net oil exporter to a net oil importer, mainly due to the inability of the national oil corporations (NOCs) in the country to keep up with the growing demand for oil (Moreira, 2013:141). China overtook the US in 2009 to take the top spot in the world energy consumption rankings (Pham, 2011). As of 2016, China's reliance on foreign oil accounted for 64.4% of its total demand; in a few years, this percentage is expected to rise to 76% (Lelyveld, 2019:19). China-Nigeria bilateral ties flourished and gained impetus during the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) creation in 2000, particularly following the Beijing summit in 2006 (Abiodun, 2008). Their economic relations grew stronger, particularly when the FOCAC meetings were revived in 2018 and both countries underwent a number of reforms (Li & Adewumi, 2019). Remarkably, Nigeria continues to be the most populous country in Africa, with 229 million inhabitants, whilst China has an expected 1.4 billion people (UNPD, 2022).

It is important to note that China and Nigeria have already developed bilateral trade ties, although not as strong as in later years. The World Bank (2007) reported that US$307.3 million worth of four major commodities were exported in 2000. At US$273.7 million, or 90% of total exports, mineral fuel and lubricants was the main product, followed by US$33.3 million worth of crude materials, which did not include food or fuel (Zafar, 2007:110). Nigeria's exports to China increased by more than fifty percent to US$526.9 million in 2005 (Zafar, 2007:112). By 2010, they had reached about $8.4 billion USD (Utomi, 2008:42), and by 2015, they were estimated to be worth roughly $14.9 billion USD (Garba and Alden, 2019). Nigeria's exports to China reached a record high of around $16.9 billion USD by 2018 (Li & Adewumi, 2019), demonstrating the strengthening economic relations. Despite the negative impacts of the pandemic, commerce between China and Nigeria increased to 25.68 billion USD in 2021, a 33.3% year-over-year rise. Nigeria's exports to China reached 3.04 billion USD, a 22.4% year-over-year increase (Okonkwo, 2023). All these increased by over 142% between 2016 and 2021 (Okonkwo, 2023:6).

Sino-Nigeria economic relations have recently improved due to a number of causes. The market potential that fuels their connection is a major factor driving this improvement. As a result, Chinese manufacturing companies are actively looking for Nigerian markets for their intermediate and finished items, while Nigerian customers are eager to acquire reasonably priced Chinese goods (Mohammed, 2009). China has become one of Nigeria's top oil importers, and Chinese investments in Nigeria's oil and gas sector have benefited the country, even as Nigeria frequently asked China for development assistance. But there have been disagreements over the terms of these loans and Nigeria's debt load. Still, China frequently benefits from the trade balance, which has sparked debate about Nigeria's need to diversify its exports in order to reduce its dependency on oil. Nigerian-Chinese trade has grown significantly in the twenty-first century, although it still largely revolves around oil. In actuality, oil products make up over 87% of Nigeria's exports to China (Egbula and Zheng, 2011:6).

Therefore, Nigeria has seen both benefits and drawbacks from the Sino-Nigeria economic ties. Positive, it has promoted the growth of infrastructure, made technology transfer easier, and opened up investment opportunities. It has also raised questions about trade imbalances, debt accumulation, and the damaging consequences of Chinese imports on

domestic sectors. According to Garba and Alden (2019), the dynamics of economic interactions between Nigeria and China are essentially a complex and dynamic story that is influenced by social, political, and economic elements. The oil industry is working together more now than before due to China's increasing energy needs. Nigerian refineries and oil fields have received capital infusions from Chinese state-owned firms. Nigeria has benefited from this partnership by having a consistent flow of income from oil exports, but it has also made the nation more vulnerable to changes in the market and possible financial problems.

Dynamics of Sino-Nigeria Economic Relations and Global Oil Politics

China's meteoric economic rise has been spectacular, making it one of the fastest-growing economies in the contemporary world. China's GDP increased to around 18.2 trillion Yuan ($2.25 trillion) by 2005 (Zafar, 2007). Towards the end of the review period, China's GDP was growing at an astounding 10 percent each year. Furthermore, with a population of more than 1.4 billion, China has added a substantial amount of labor to the world economy by bringing in more than 100 million workers (Zafar, 2007:21). These and other elements have helped to make China's economic potential seem limitless (Edmond, 2006).

China's principal interest in Africa is driven by its rising economy, which is primarily dependent on manufacturing. This interest is aligned with ensuring access to the natural resources of the continent to support its expansion (Ihonvbere, 2002). As a result, China aims to surpass its Western competitors in obtaining infrastructure projects, providing lenient credit terms, and using political clout to strengthen its advantage in obtaining natural resource assets in Africa (Zafar, 2007:105). Crude oil is especially crucial, which makes Africa a major battleground for competition between world powers in what is generally called global oil politics and diplomacy. China became the world's second-largest oil importer, after the United States, due to its growing need for oil to support its booming economy. Between 2001 and 2005, in particular, China accounted for 40% of the global increase in oil consumption. Nigeria in particular accounted for almost 20% of China's oil imports (Edmond, 2006:13–15).

Nigeria is a major player in global production, trade, and investment, but the majority of resource transfers to peripheral regions come in the form of aid, development assistance, and humanitarian aid. These relatively small inflows of services are surpassed by large capital flight to core states from the activities of multinational corporations, disinvestment, and large debt servicing obligations, which result in a decrease in foreign investment and influence. As a result, investors in America and Europe have demonstrated a reluctance to make investments in this uncertain environment (Ihonvbere, 2002:2).China has started to impose its political and economic might in the region, taking advantage of the opportunity created by the United States and Europe's declining influence in Nigeria.

Furthermore, both China and Nigeria's trading operations and economic links have grown significantly in recent years. In 2005, China sealed a significant $500 million crude oil deal with Nigeria, while also contemplating investments worth $7 billion in the country (Edmond, 2006). After much thought, the Chinese National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) was formed. On January 9, 2006, CNOOC agreed to pay $2.3 billion for an interest in an oil and gas field in Nigeria, making it the country's largest-ever foreign acquisition (Edmond, 2006:18). Nigeria's geopolitical landscape is changing as a result of the country's booming oil sector, with China indicating that it is willing to invest in Nigeria to ensure its energy security. However, China's aggressive quest for oil comes with significant hazards as it enters areas from which Western businesses have withdrawn because of threats from terrorists looking to sabotage the activities of the sixth-largest oil exporter in the world (Edmond, 2006:19).

In 2006, Nigeria lost between 70,000 and 300,000 barrels of crude oil per day as a result of the increase in violence in the Niger Delta region, as well as political corruption and the criminal network, among other factors (Salau & Azu, 2016). In addition, it was revealed that by June 2006, the kidnapping and violence carried out by the Movement for the Emancipation of the People of Niger Delta (MEND) had removed an additional 5,000 barrels per day, or almost a fifth of Nigeria's OPEC quota, off the market. Accordingly, Nigeria lost over $21.5 billion as a result of the Niger Delta crisis between 2005 and 2007 (Salau & Azu, 2016:43). The Nigeria-US security pact to jointly patrol the Niger Delta region for security support was born out of this predicament. Nevertheless, there was a delay in implementation due to Washington's misgivings about the Obasanjo presidency's hold on power and its concern for human rights. Consequently, China intervened, leading to Nigeria’s decision to buy patrol boats from China to guard the Niger Delta's oil installations, thereby

helping tomaintain Nigeria's oil production (Ubi, 2015).

It is apposite to note that China's position as the most populous country in the world and its growing need on imported oil to support its quickly growing economy are key factors influencing the dynamics of Sino-Nigeria relations in the oil sector (Fickling, 2017). On the other hand, Nigeria, the most populous nation in Africa, needs significant infrastructure investment to hasten its development. In a fitting statement, Bolaji Akinyemi said, "China is a rising global force with a strong economy. Nigeria needs significant investment and resource diversification, whereas it needs oil" (Ubi, 2015:102). In sum, China could help Nigeria develop and be a driving force for change within the country; on the other hand, Nigeria could improve its current state of development by imitating China's aspirations and determination, which would help the relationship to change from one of unequal partnership to one of more symbiotic or nearly equal association in all aspects.

Sino-Nigeria Relations andImplications on Global Politics

Given that both China and Nigeria are major players in their respective regions, their relationship has a great deal of bearing on world affairs. They have developed a complex relationship that crosses diplomatic, political, and economic spheres over time. One of Nigeria's main trading partners is China, to whom Nigeria exports raw resources and oil in exchange for the importation of manufactured goods and technology. Nigeria's infrastructure, particularly its roads, trains, and energy projects, has benefited greatly from China's large investments, which have advanced the nation's development. China has increased cooperation with resource-rich African countries like Nigeria due to its growing energy needs (Adewuyi, 2010). China's energy sector investments help Nigeria gain from knowledge transfer and investment inflows while also enhancing China's own energy security.

Together with the complex web of international oil politics, the complex Sino-Nigeria interactions highlight a story of economic dependency, infrastructural development, and diplomatic scheming. The entwined energy and economic linkages of both countries present challenges as well as opportunities. This collaboration has a profound effect on both countries' foreign policies and has an impact on the world energy scene. This strategic move also fits with China's overarching objectives of changing the balance of power in the world, undermining Western nations' long-standing domination, and expanding its influence into hitherto underserved areas (Andrews-Speed, 2010).

Global oil politics are significantly impacted by the geopolitical connection between China and Nigeria. First, by reducing Nigeria's reliance on Western markets for oil exports, it has helped diversify the market, with China emerging as a key client. This change has lessened Nigeria's vulnerability to variations in the demand for oil in the West. China's investments in Nigeria have reduced its reliance on Middle Eastern oil and given it a steadier and diverse oil supply, improving energy security (Anyanwu & Anarado, 2019). Furthermore, China's growing clout in Nigeria has given it more sway over African politics, both local and international. Moreover, China's resource diplomacy approach, which aims to secure essential commodities to support its expanding economy, is reflected in its pursuit of natural resources in Nigeria. The Sino-Nigeria relations affect the way traditional alliances are created, how global power dynamics are rearranged, and how Nigeria and other African countries develop (Anyanwu & Anarado, 2019:228).

The Sino-Nigerian relationship has benefits for both parties, but the underlying power dynamics, economic gaps, and China's growing worldwide influence make for an unequal alliance. China has the ability to influence Nigeria's domestic and foreign policies concerning oil and wider economic progress due to its strong economic and geopolitical standing. Thus, in the context of international oil politics, Sino-Nigeria ties reflect a complex interaction between energy security, economic cooperation, geopolitical influence, and environmental factors. This connection is likely to be a crucial part of international affairs and energy dynamics for the foreseeable future, as Nigeria seeks to maximize the benefits of its oil deposits and China's influence in the global energy arena grows.

Sino-Nigeria Relations and Global Oil Politics: Issues and Challenges

Political and economic concerns arise from the government of Nigeria's inconsistent policies. One example is the project led by the late President Olusegun Obasanjo, who offered oil exploration blocks to Chinese National Oil Companies (NOCs) in exchange for Beijing funding and building large-scale infrastructure projects (Ayodele & Adeleke, 2018) in an effort to attract investment. Nevertheless, the majority of these oil-for-infrastructure contracts were

halted by the succeeding administration of the late President Umaru Yar'Adua due to concerns about transparency (Egbula and Zheng, 2011:5). Following that, the late President Yar'Adua changed the strategy to "oil for cash."

The wave of insurgency that swept over Nigeria caused much concern. While Boko Haram continued its attacks in the north of the country, the militant groups operating in southern Nigeria, particularly in the Niger Delta region, certainly put off potential investors in the energy sector. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) threatened Chinese oil companies against expanding into the Niger Delta by detonating a car bomb near the Warri oil refinery during Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit to Nigeria in April 2006, following the agreement to grant four oil-drilling licenses worth USD 4 billion (Kong, 2011). Five Chinese oil workers were abducted by MEND in early 2007 and detained for fourteen days. A number of international oil companies suspended operations, and the number of barrels produced in the Niger Delta region fell as a result of ongoing attacks on several oil fields and the abduction of foreign nationals (Kabassi 2012:92).

Nonetheless, Sino-Nigeria relations as well as global oil politics in the modern age have been significantly impacted by Nigeria's status as a major oil-producing country and China's growing desire for energy resources. As regards Ayodele and Adesokan (2017), these associations have undergone modifications to mirror the evolving patterns of global energy markets, diplomatic connections, and economic collaboration. First, China's rapid economic expansion and urbanization have resulted in a marked increase in the demand for energy. China has made an effort to vary its energy supplies, including oil. Nigeria's significant oil reserves have made it a suitable partner for China to meet its energy needs. Second, Nigeria is now one of China's main oil suppliers. China's state-owned companies, such as CNPC and CNOOC, have invested in Nigeria's oil sector after securing long-term contracts for oil deliveries.

Furthermore, there are important geopolitical ramifications to China's growing involvement in Nigeria's oil sector. It changes the dynamics of global oil politics by posing a challenge to the Western oil firms' and markets' long-standing dominance in the region. Nigeria and other oil-producing countries in Africa have been forced to broaden their alliances as a result of this change. Major oil-importing nations like the United States and Europe are particularly concerned about China's growing influence in Nigeria's oil industry because they believe China's investments and clout could provide them a strategic edge in obtaining oil resources.

Moreover, Chinese investments in Nigeria's oil industry have raised concerns regarding environmental sustainability, particularly in light of past incidents of oil spills and pollution (Bukarambe, 2005). Ensuring responsible and sustainable oil production in Nigeria presents a shared challenge for both nations to tackle. Consequently, the Sino-Nigeria within the framework of global oil politics in the 21st century is defined by several key factors: China's escalating demand for energy resources, its investments in Nigeria's oil sector, and the diplomatic and economic connections between the two countries. These shifts have redefined the dynamics of global oil politics and carry the potential to influence the energy landscape in the foreseeable future.

On the other hand, one could characterizeSino-Nigeria in the framework of contemporary global oil politics as unbalanced. Significant differences in the parties' power, wealth, and influence are indicated by asymmetrical relationships. In this case, the relationship between China and Nigeria was characterized by these disparities. To begin with, China is one of the biggest economies in the world, with substantial financial resources and investment potential. Nigeria, on the other hand, is a developing country whose economy is mostly dependent on oil exports. Second, due to its growing prominence and importance on the world stage, China is able to exert significant diplomatic influence over Nigeria. This was especially apparent in international forums and talks. As a result, the relationship between China and Nigeria in our time was marked by an asymmetrical dynamic, where China had more influence over the terms of interaction due to its economic might and Nigeria's oil wealth (Ayodele & Adeleke, 2018:97).

Meanwhile, Nigeria is a major oil producer and exporter, but its economic life is mostly dependent on oil earnings. China is one of the world's largest economies, boasting a strong industrial base, cutting-edge technology, and a large consumer market. In order to maintain its economic growth, the former thus seeks a consistent and reliable supply of energy supplies. This interaction creates a situation in which Nigeria's oil production and policy are somewhat influenced by China's oil demand (Gong & Iganiga, 2017:51). As such, this dynamic could lead to scenarios in which China obtains advantageous conditions in trade agreements, resource extraction

projects, and investment agreements, so putting Nigeria at a disadvantage.

China's increasing domestic energy consumption was the primary driver of significant investments in Nigerian oil, leading to the country diversifying its imports of natural resources and increasing its upstream footprint. As a result, Nigeria became one of China's main trading partners. Nigeria was producing 1.5 million barrels of oil per day by the end of our period (Okonkwo, 2023). Thus, both nations face problems with sustainability and the environment related to the production and use of oil (Kwanashie, 2007). While China attempts to reduce its carbon emissions and shift to greener energy sources, Nigeria deals with environmental problems in the Niger Delta area caused by oil exploitation.

Conclusion

Although the Sino-Nigeria relations have produced many advantages, there are drawbacks and things to take into account. Particularly, China's growing economic influence could influence Nigerian politics and decision-making, raising questions about sovereignty. The Sino-Nigeria oil agreement reflects the demands of the two large countries, Nigeria desiring infrastructure for faster development and China needing more imported oil to fuel its rapidly expanding economy. China may, however, aid in Nigeria's growth and act as a catalyst for change, transforming the existing unbalanced relationship into one that is sustainable and mutually beneficial. As such, the relationship between China and Nigeria in the context of international oil politics illustrates the complex interaction between geopolitics, economic interests, and energy security. The global oil market's power dynamics are changing, and China and Nigeria's relations will keep influencing how international oil politics develop in the years to come.

Thus far, in the context of international oil politics, the study not only emphasized how uneven Sino-Nigeria relations are, but it also gave a thorough explanation of all the ramifications of this connection. First, China's strategic objectives in obtaining energy resources were frequently benefited by the partnership. Second, Nigeria's economy is still highly reliant on oil earnings, which leaves it open to outside shocks and price fluctuations determined by world oil politics. Furthermore, the conditions of Chinese loans for infrastructure development frequently result in significant debt accumulation, which has an adverse effect on Nigeria's long-term economic stability. Thus, the potential long-term benefits for Nigeria have been diminished since, despite the construction of infrastructure, there has been little technology and skill transfer to the local workforce. Notwithstanding, a few Chinese projects have sparked worries about environmental deterioration and a lack of compliance with regional environmental laws. Social discontent has occasionally resulted from infrastructure projects that force local residents to relocate and receive little compensation.

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IMPLICATION OF COMMUNALISM IN CHILD-TRAINING IN ANCIENT ISRAEL AND TRADITIONAL YORUBA SETTING FOR MORAL EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
It is a known fact, from the available data, that Nigeria as a nation is extremely riddled with corrupt practices, violence, crimes, and lack of peace, mutual faith and trust. Our civilization, ranging from population explosion, rapid technology advancement, knowledge expansion, industrialization, globalization, mobilization and influence of foreign cultures, is unconsciously conflicting with African moral principles that value human dignity, rights and responsibilities. It is never an exaggeration to posit that there is currently continuous erosion of human values and relation which had been deeply ingrained in African culture. It is quite repulsive today that adults are less enthusiastic about moral education inculcation. They are now stimulated by the general alluring economic consideration without any reference to old age human values that separate man from animals. Thus, moral rectitude is now an elusive principle among our youths, with many becoming notoriously gargantuan in the web of shameful fissiparous tendencies. This certainly poses multiple problems of anxiety, stress and worries to humanity. Meanwhile, through careful probing of records, it is evident that communalism, as one of the most ancient unifying cultural mechanisms in Child-Training, had been deliberately preserved in ancient Israelite and Yoruba cultures. Previous studies on Israelite and Yoruba moral education focused largely on human values, child education, wisdom, eldership and respect, with little attention paid to communal effort in Child-Training as preserved in the two cultures. Besides, the similarities between Yoruba understanding of communalism in Child-Training and that of the Israelite moral

tradition have not been adequately explored. Filling this gap, this paper examines the implication of communalism in Child-Training in ancient Israel and traditional Yoruba setting for moral education in contemporary Nigeria. Biblical texts and 30 purposively selected Yoruba proverbs were the primary data. Historical-critical method was utilised in the interpretation of both Biblical texts and the selected Yoruba proverbs. The paper recommends that parenting should be more of a communal enterprise; it should involve the entire community and not be limited to the parents of the children. Biological parents should also appreciate communal efforts in Child-Training.

Introduction

Child-Training, as observed from the existing literatures, is a dominant mandate in every human society, ranging from family to the entire community. This is equally observable in Israel and traditional Yoruba society. However, that child training was primarily made a communal or collective enterprise in traditional Israelite and Yoruba communities has not been adequately explored. In ancient Israel and traditional Yoruba society, communalism, a set of cultural practice that prioritize the role and function of the collective group over individual in a worldwide context, was employed as internal moral compass to mediate cultural traditions to the next generation. The essence of existence is social and normative because the communal structure, as observed in the studying cultures, creates a sense of community that was organized around communal welfare, obligations, responsibilities, interconnectedness, and solidarity (Taye Adesina. 2020). Thus, personal identity can never been separated from socio-cultural environment in which individual is embedded. This is because individual exists as person, as member of a group and as member of a community; and all individuals interact and interpenetrate one another (Olufemi Taiwo. 2016). In ancient Israel and among the Yoruba, inculcating moral values was unanimously considered imperative in order to produce progeny that would later become an indomitable rock of their cultural traditions. Conversely, the aims of inculcating moral values have remained the most neglected ones in contemporary societies. The neglect has been visible now in the present dismal picture of societies, rampant with corrupt practices, flouting of rules, and so on. Youths have lost their moral values to new era of modernity. Therefore, stabilizing social order and conserving socio-cultural heritage in Nigeria today, there is a need to adopt the communal or collective efforts in child training found in traditional Israelite and Yoruba communities. This is the thrust of this paper.

Communalism In Child-Training In Ancient Israel

Israelite System of Eldership and Moral Responsibilities

Indeed, every society, for its own safeguard, prosperity and continuity, needs a well-ordered, recognized leadership and adequate child education. This arrangement is actually seen in every civilized society. In Israel, as among all other ancient peoples, there are groups of men who are known as elders that are representing their people in many areas. These elders are not only persons of advanced age, but also men of distinct social grade, who are capable of influencing others positively in the society (Willis Timothy 1992). The Hebrew word *Zaqen* 'elder' or 'old man' is equivalent to *Sibum* in Akkadian, *Senator* in Latin, *Geron* in Greek and *Sheikh* in Arabic languages (Sneed 200). The elders, in ancient Israel, were the consulting body of the city, nation or king, considered as "the wise" (Ezk. 7:26; Jer. 18:18). There were three different categories of men in ancient Israel, designated in the Old Testament as 'elders'. The first category of elders mentioned in the biblical texts, as *Willis* Timothy observed, is 'the elders of Israel', said to have consisted of seventy men (Exd. 24:1; Num. 11:16), a representative body for the Sanhedrin sometimes after the Babylonian captivity. The second category of elders is a group of administrative advisors in the royal court called 'elders of the king's house' or simply 'the elders' (2Sam. 12:17; Gen. 24:2; 50:7; 1Kings 12:6 - 15). This body faded away after the fall of Jerusalem, but its reference was preserved in some apocalyptic literatures (2 Enoch 4; Rev. 4:4, 10; 19:4). The third category of elders is the elders of city,

an institutional ancestor to the elders which Paul described in Timothy and Titus. This is the most prominent of all the groups of elders.

Elders of the City - In Israel, these elders represented their fellow citizens in the local matters. Their duties are best exemplified by the laws of Deuteronomy. They were involved in various cases which deal with protection of family and local patriarchal interests. The qualifications of a city elder include the following:

i. He is a senior member of a large extended family. The basic family unit is not the nuclear family (husband-wife-children) in this context, but the "extended family" or "minimal lineage". An extended family is made up of the oldest surviving member of a family and all his descendants. A minimal lineage consists of one or more extended family, descended from a common ancestor who lived a few generations prior to the families currently living. Such a group may consist of 20 -200 persons. In spite of this increase size, the minimal lineage often served much as we would expect a nuclear family to do. Members feel common economic, emotional, moral and legal responsibilities. When one member is in need, the whole family helps; suffers, the whole family hurts; sins, the whole family is shamed; is physically threatened, the whole family defends; or is accused of wrong deeds, the whole family equally bears the consequences. So, in Israel, elders arise from the ranks of senior members of the various extended families within these lineages. This qualification (family identity) gives such elders a significant constituency, and also a voice in the entire community.

ii. He is wealthy, generous and hospitable, which shows to his family and the broader community that he has the interest of the community, not just his personal interest, at heart.

iii. His character exemplifies the standards of ethic and morality which the community esteems most highly. A person who was hot-headed or unsociable or that displayed undue favourism would not be selected.

iv. He is well versed in his people's "secret knowledge" (religious practices, customs, and history). His older age, numerous life experiences, and accumulated wisdom enable him to serve effectively.

v. He is known in the community for his oratorical skills, especially, his skill of persuasion. These knowledge and oratorical skills are necessary if truly he is going to represent his group effectively.

Functions of City Elders - There are fifteen clear references in the Old Testament to the responsibilities of Israelites City elders: Deut. 19:12; 21:8; 21:19 – 20; 22:15 – 19; 25: 5- 10; 27:1; Josh. 20: 4 – 5; Judges 8:14 -16; 11:5 – 11; Ruth 4: 1- 12; 1Sam. 11:3; 16:4; 1Kings 21: 8 – 12; Ezra 10: 14; Prov. 32: 23: From these texts, it is evident that the city elders cans serves in the following capacities:

i. redemption of – Deut. 19: 12 12 – 13; Num. 35: 16 – 17; Josh. 20: 1 – 5.

ii. murder by an unknown culprit was expiated– Deut. 21: 1 – 9

iii. punishment of the rebellious or disobedient sons - Deut. 21: 18 – 21

iv. penalty for adultery or defamation of a virgin was inflicted - Deut. 22: 13 – 21

v. non-compliance with the levirate marriage law was addressed - Deut. 25: 5 – 10

vi. involvement in land transactions - Ruth 4: 1 – 12

vii. representing their respective communities - 1Sam. 16: 4 – 5

viii. law enforcement – Deut. 27: 1

In the first responsibility, elders tend to the appeasement of murdered person's family by delivering the slayer into its hand. In the second instance, elders see to it that their town atones for a homicide committed within its borders. In the next two instances, elders protect the family against a rebellious son and against defamation. In the fourth and fifth instances, elders concerned themselves with preventing the extinctions of the family in the town. The last two instances focused on the elders representing their people in the community. In all the cases, no professional judgment is necessary; elders presided over a case whose consequences are clear

before hand. This is applicable to Ruth 4:2ff, where the elders only confirmed the act of levirate. But "the judges" in the law of Deuteronomy have functions that are not the same with those of the elders. The judges act in relation to disputes (Deut. 17:8ff) which cannot be solved by the local patriarchal representatives, but required a higher and more objective judicial authority. Disputes and controversies involve thorough investigation (Deut. 19: 18); which can be made only by qualified and professional people. These judges are nominated (Deut. 16:19) in contradistinction to the elders, whose dignity is as a rule hereditary. In only one case in Deuteronomy do the elders act together with the Judges: the case of unknown murder (Deut. 21: 1ff). The elders of the town nearest the spot where the corpse was found needed to perform the expiation rite on behalf of their town.

There is no much evidence that the structure and duties of Israelites city elders changed over the centuries. The most significant change occurred when they were exiled by the Assyrians and Babylonians, and during the subsequent Diaspora. Then, many Jews were transplanted to non-Jewish "district" or "quarters" leading men of the Jewish community served as elders, with the community's religious life now revolving around the synagogue. Though the form of the societal structures of the cities in which they came to dwell were sometimes quite different from those of their past, the people still maintained old customs and beliefs in their new environment.

Communalism in Child-Training in Ancient Israel

In ancient Israel, communalism and child-education were possible bedmates in the socio-cultural terrain. Wisdom, as people say, is the supreme (prov. 4: 7 NIV) and principal thing (Prov. 4: 7 KJV) which is connected with honour, prestige and social stratification that must be taught in the community. Collective responsibility in Child-Training is explicitly evident in Israelite use of vocative *beni* "My Son" (Sneed 2005). Theologically, children are considered the heritage of God, given to every community for continuity (Psalm 127:3). Axiologically, children are to be taught in order to ensure an ideal and aesthetic society. In Israel, learning about wisdom is set forth in a father-son relationship with the listener frequently addressed as "My son". The appellation "father" and "son" metaphorically reflects the communal relationship in the Jewish community, particularly between teacher (older person) and pupil (younger person). Competent Old Testament scholars saw this as one of the sufficient numbers of biblical allusions to prove the influence of Ancient Near Eastern cultures upon the life of Israel. In ancient Near East, being old or having grey hair was connected with wisdom. As the person aged, in the ancient world, their honour or prestige increased correlatively, and they were valued for their wisdom and knowledge that had accrued over a life time. The younger persons would go to the village or city elders (comprising family heads) for advice and counsel. The teacher addresses the pupil as his son and maintains a parental tone in any context of moral education. Consider these:

My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them (prov. 1:10 NIV)

My Son, if you accept my words and store up my commands with you... (Prov. 2: 1 NIV)

My Son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart (Prov. 3:1 NIV)

Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many (Prov. 4:10 NIV)

My Son, pay attention to my wisdom; listen well to my words of insight (Prov. 5; 1 NIV),

From the above excerpts, it could rightly be deduced that in ancient Israel, every older person was considered as parent to the younger ones. This is also applicable in the traditional Yoruba culture where every adult saw the younger persons in the community as his children, with a view to playing necessary parental roles on them. Being a family-oriented society, parents in Israel were considered the child's earliest instructors in the customs, moral standards, and traditions of the community. They were the quintessential teachers who passed on their life experiences, skills and wisdom to their children so as to ensure they are productive members of the family and citizens in the broader world.

Yoruba Collective Responsibility in Child-Training

Origin of the Yoruba People

The Yoruba people occupy a large area in Southwestern Nigeria like Osun, Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, Kwara, Kogi, Ekitik and Oǹdó (Iyanda 2019). However, pockets of them are found scattered in other parts of

Nigeria and some other West African countries. Besides, Yoruba communities can also be found across the Atlantic, as far as the Caribbean and South-America, particularly in Cuba and Brazil. The Yoruba people are known to be a single near-homogenous and semi-independent people loosely linked by history, geography, language, culture and religion. In Togo, the Yoruba people are known as Anago, Tsha and Ife to the North. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, they are referred to as 'AKU' or 'EKU'. The Yoruba people are one of the three main ethnic groups that make up Nigeria. They constitute approximately twenty-one percent of Nigeria's total population and around forty million individuals. The Yoruba people were predominantly farmers and highly skilled artists with a polytheistic religion centered on pantheon of divinities serving as intermediaries between man and the Supreme God. This Yoruba indigenous religion held an unchallenged sway until about the middle of the 17th Century when Islam was introduced to Yoruba society. Towards the second half of the 19th century, Christianity was also brought to Yoruba land. The effect of these newly introduced religions, especially on the Yoruba belief in divinities, ancestral spirits, magic and medicine and moral order, is quite fundamental. This development brought about religious Syncretism because those who were converted to Islam and Christianity still held on to some of the traditional religious beliefs (Ayantayo. 2010).

The origin of the Yoruba in Nigeria cannot be clearly deciphered; and the time of their migration to their present location is highly debatable and variously speculated. One tradition holds that *Oduduwa,* the primary ancestor of the Yoruba people, came from Egypt. Another story has it that he migrated from Mecca because of his belief in deities, which caused him to be expelled from his abode. He came to settle in Ile-Ife and started a dynasty, which was further expanded by his seven sons. Similarly, there are many variants of the myths on how the Yoruba people came to be. *Od6duwa* is the legendary progenitor of the Yoruba. There are two variants of the story of how he achieved the feat. The first is cosmogonic, while the second political. The cosmogonic version also has two variations. According to the first variant of the cosmogonic myth, *Orisala (Obatala)* was the arch-divinity who was commissioned by *Olodumare*, the Supreme Deity, to create a solid land out of the primordial water that constituted the earth and to populate the land with human beings. *Obatala* descended from *Orun* (heaven) into *aye* (earth) on a chain, carrying a snail shell, full of earth (soil), palm kernels and a five- toed chicken. He was to empty the content of the snail shell on the water after placing some pieces of iron on it, and then to place the chicken on the earth to spread it over the primordial water. According to this version of the story, *Obatala* completed the task to the satisfaction of *Olodumare*. He was then given the task of making the physical body of human beings after which *Olodumare* would give them *Eemi* (the breath of life). He also completed the task and that was the reason why he was given the tittle of *Obarisa;* that is*,* the king of *orisa.* The other variant of the cosmogonic myth does not credit *Obatala* with the completion of the task. While it indicates that *Obatala* was given that task, it avers that *Obatala* got drunk with palm wine even before he got to the earth and fell asleep. Therefore, he was unable to do the job. *Olodumare* got worried when he did not return on time, so he sent *Oduduwa*, *Obatala's* younger brother, to find out what was going on. When *Oduduwa* found *Obatala* drunk, he simply took over the task and completed it. Thus, *Od6duwa* created the land. The spot on which he landed from heaven that turned from water to become land is called Ile–Ife and is now considered the sacred and spiritual home of the Yoruba. The second version of the myth, which is political, holds that there was a pre-existing civilization at Ile–Ife before the invasion by *Oduduwa* and his followers. This group, *Oduduwa* and his people, came from the east where they had been persecuted on the basis of religious differences. They came to Ile–Ife, fought and conquered the pre-existing Igbo (unrelated to the present day Igbo people of Eastern Nigeria) inhabitants led by *Oreluere* (*Obatala*). Upon the death of *Oduduwa*, there was the dispersal of his children from Ile–Ife to found other kingdoms. These original founders of the Yoruba nation include Olówu of Owu, Alaketu of Ketu, Oba of Benin, Orangun of Ila, Onisaabe of Saabe, Olúpópó of Pópó, and Oranmiyan of Oyo. Each of these made a mark in the subsequent urbanization and consolidation of Yoruba confederacy of kingdoms, with each kingdom tracing its origin to Ile–Ife (Iyanda 2019).

The Nature and the Roles of Elders in Yoruba Context

Eldership among the Yoruba People

The Yoruba word *agba*, which is translated as 'elder' is socially and philosophically interpreted from three ends: the ontological-supernatural, the chronological and mental-ethical evaluative (Iyanda 2019). The ontological-supernatural explains the existence of certain people in the Yoruba community who are believed to possess supernatural power and

are supersensible, capable of identifying what happens in the metaphysical realm. Adeboye described them as an assemblage of ancestral forces, witches and wizards and other spiritual agents that ruled the Yoruba universe, and whose powers exceeded those of ordinary mortals (Adeboye Adefunke 2007). These people are referred to as *agba* among the Yoruba, regardless of their chronological age. Because of their extraordinary nature, they could be consulted for solution in times of difficulties. When there is problem, especially the one that defiles all natural solutions, one could be encouraged thus: *To awon agba lo* (go and consult the elders). Besides, in order to live a secured and a successful life, one could be advised thus: *Fi ori moa won agba leyin* (walk closely with the elders). In the Yoruba thought system, offending these kinds of *agba* could greatly be consequential and therefore, people are often warned that: *Ma se te aso agba mole* (don't step on elders garment), meaning that one should not take such *agba* for granted. Being aware of the danger of offending these *agba,* the Yoruba people always say a prayer that: *O ko ni se awon agba* (may you not offend the elders). A young person that is found in this category will be addressed as *agba omo* (an elderly). This means a child that is possessed, having diabolic power. Also, *agba omo* can be used to refer to a young person, with highly mental and ethical abilities. However, this is different from *Omo Odo Agba* (a child of elders).

The second usage of the word *agba* has chronological implication. When the Yoruba people say: Oju agba to jin o ni ohun to ri (the sunken eye of an elder must have seen something), emphasis is on chronological age. Other Yoruba proverbs in reference to chronological age include: *B'omode ba laso bi agba, ko lakisia bi agba* (if a child has am many clothes as the elders, he cannot have as much rags); *Owo omode o to pepe t,'agbalagbao wo keregbe* (the child's hand does not reach up to the shelf while that elder does not enter into the gourd); *Agba to je ajeeweyin ni yoo ru igba re dele* (an elder that fails to leave the left-over (of meal) for the child will himself pact the empty plates), etc. This implies that the Yoruba people use the word *agba* for older people in the society. Similar Yoruba nomenclatures for *agba* are: *agbalagba* (elder), *arugbo* (aged person) and *abewu* (gray-haired).

The third usage of the word *agba* has to do with mental-ethical assessment. This explains the *agba* (elder) who are respected individual, identified by age and other natural qualities, which mark them out of their families, communities, nations, religious and the world. These are the true elders and are given highest status in the community because they are respected because their lives are in the best tradition of the community. These *agba* are considered indispensable in the Yoruba societies in line with this observation, some scholars have made a distinction between the 'elders' and the 'older' person, arguing for the possibility of being an older person but not truly being an elder. This position seems tenable and quite fascinating as it happens even in this contemporary time. However, it should be noted that in the traditional Yoruba understanding of *agba*, every older person was expected to possess the attributive qualities of true elder. To the Yoruba people, wisdom, knowledge, perspective, discernment, insight and intellectual capabilities are the domains of aged people. Failure to display these qualities is considered abnormal, ridiculous and unwelcomed. That is why such a person will not be respected in the community, and can be ridiculously referred to as *Adagba - ma-gbon* (though aged but not wise), *Adagba - ma - danu* (though agedb but matured), *Adagba – ma- kuro - larobo* (though aged but not childish), etc.

The Roles of the Yoruba Elders

The roles of elders among the Yoruba, is taken to be indispensable and the absence of their wisdom can lead to a total moral decay and non-adherence to law and order in the society (Akinola 22016). Hence, it is said that: *Agba ko si Ilu baje, bale ile ku ile daharo* (without an elderly people, communities and villages will collapse). In the Yoruba society, elders are seen as corrective instruments, as it is said among them that: *Agba kii wa loja ki ori omo titun o wo* (the elder in a market place would not allow a baby's neck (at the back of the mother) to be wrongly placed). It is also said that: *Bi owo ba ru omode loju, a si fun agba ka* (if a child is confused in the act of counting money, he will give it to the elder to count). In the Yoruba world-view, the virtues and endowment of strength wisdom and experiences attached to the elders, especially the old person, are meant to help, support, guide or control the youths in a way that their exuberance will be judiciously curtailed and acceptable character be extolled through them in the society. These sapiental roles of elders in traditional Yoruba communities are explicitly established by Olayinka Ajomale. Traditionally, according to him, the elderly persons head the family and the extended clan that dominates the Yoruba communities. They represent their families in any council of Elder's meetings where decisions are taken to regulate and promote the general interest of citizens and to manage the affairs of their communities. The elders in the society carry

out traditional responsibilities of guardians of the ancestral values; they are chief custodians of society's treasures and upholders of history, cultural values, customs, folklores, and wisdom. Alayinka stated further that older person settles disputes and conflicts arising from members of the family, based on their position, knowledge, skill, vision, experience and wisdom. They are considered to be custodians of justice and political institutions through which the society's orderliness and progress is sustained. Besides, the older person, have remained traditional orthodox medical and health service delivery agents, especially in the areas where Primary Health care is non-existent (Olayinka Ajomale 2007).

From the foregoing, it is well observable that, among the Yoruba people, elders are responsible for continually contemplating about the good and the right things in the community. In line with their eldership status, they are not or should not be driven by personal desires, gains or individual rewards. They cannot be seduced, tempted or influenced by appeal to favourism, personal desires or selfish interest. In fact, this eldership status places them above the needs of manipulation. Their singular goal is to guide and guarantee the corporate good and collective advancement (Adeoye Adefunke. 2007). The judgment and decisions of elders are always consistent with the community's cultural integrity and directed towards truth and justice. In fact, just like in the Jewish culture (Prov. 15:9–10), to have elders live with you, and for you to have available their daily guidance, is considered a great blessing and advantage. Being in the presence of an elder is even considered as honour.

Yoruba Communal Effort in Child-Training

The uniqueness of a race or people is found in their cultures, as reflected in their world-view, language and other social elements. The similar nature and forms of expression in Israelite and Yoruba moral education happily provide a wealth of comparative data. As preserved in Jewish culture, there were Philosophical theories that extolled dignity of human value among the traditional Yoruba people. Like the Israelites, Yoruba people were communal in character. They believed and said that: *Ohun ti a ba dijo wo gigun nii gun* (whatever we observe collectively is always accurate). It was also said that: *Agbajo owo la fi n soya* (We often beat chest with hands joined together) and that: *Ajoji owo kan ko gb'eru d'ori* (One hand does not take load to the head). In traditional Yoruba society, individual's existence was understood in the light of the community (Olufemi Taiwo 2016). That is why it was said among the people that: *Igi kan ko le da igbo se* (A tree cannot make a forest). The community was considered supreme above and higher than every individual, unlike the western world which is characterized by individualism. That remained a fundamental factor for sustainable social and ethical order in their society. In the Yoruba setting, all belonged to the community and members were bound together, seeing themselves as of common blood, descended from *Oduduwa*. Honour and shame were shared collectively; thus, it was considered imperative to sanction and enforce moral values. Within this understanding, every child belonged to the community and inculcating moral rectitude was the responsibility of the entire members. One Yoruba proverb says: *Oju merin lo n bi Omo, Igba Oju nii woo* (four eyes brings into existence a child, two hundred raise it). Traditionally among the Yoruba people, older persons were seen as repositories of wisdom, and high premium accorded them (Fayemi 2009). As elders, they were meant to help, support, guild or control the youths in a way that their exuberant would be judiciously curtailed and acceptable character be extolled through them in the community. Elders, in traditional Yoruba society, can not be seduced, tempted or influenced by appeals to favourism, manipulations, personal desires or selfish interest, unlike today's elders many whom are found playing leading roles among the lawless people. The singular goal of elders, in the ancient time, was to guild and guarantees the corporate good and collective advancement. Thus, their views were rarely challenged, and dissenting opinions from the youths were condescendingly treated as impulsive behaviour or as outright affront and disrespect, which sometimes attracted heavy punishment, depending on how "young" the offender. Like ancient Israel, traditional Yoruba community was family oriented; Child-Training started with the family. One Yoruba proverb says: *Ile laa tii k'esoo rode* (charity beginnings at home).

Implication of the Traditional Beliefs for Child-Training in Contemporary Nigeria

Previous sections of this work have afforded us the opportunity to establish the relevance of collective responsibility in child-Training. Culled out of and interpreted from the cultures under study, it is quite evident that parenting is a serious responsibility that carries grave consequences. Besides, it is a responsibility that must not be left to the biological parents. Child-Training requires collective efforts, involving interpersonal skills and makes emotional

demands (Egbetakin 22013). Parenting efforts, in a communal manner, gradually allow the child to imbibe, through enculturation, the fundamental wisdom behind adults' views about life, its challenges, its triumph and failures. The first principle of this parenting style, as Babatunde and Setiloane posited, is making the child understand that he is part of a group that cares and expects respect in return (Babatunde and Setiloane 2014). The second principle, according to the same scholars, is that child gradually becomes aware of the template of socialization, the example of which the Yoruba people refer to as *Omoluabi* (well-behaved). It is unfortunate today that many parents have personalized the responsibility, frown at communal correction and parenting, and limit the training of their children to themselves. This explains the increased anti-social behaviours among the contemporary children. This position may appear as seeking to inspire seemingly contradictory or archaic perspectives, because this present generation has been deeply influenced by the prevalent consumerist nature of contemporary political system. However, functionally involved parents who are dutiful in raising well-behaved children will certainly extract some lessons from it.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

The paper explored communalism in child-Training as preserved in ancient Israel and traditional Yoruba societies, focusing on the relevance of this traditional method in contemporary societies. The work revealed that communalism, as a set of cultural practice that prioritize the role and function of the collective group over individual in a worldwide context, is imperatively inevitable for mutual co-existence. This is because the essence of human existence is social and normative. The communal structure, which is peculiar to humanity, creates a sense of community organised around communal welfare, responsibilities, obligations, interconnection and solidarity. Therefore, Child-Training, which is a dominant mandate in every community, ranging from family to the whole community, requires collective efforts, skills and interpersonal relations in order to preserve the old age cultural traditions that prioritize human values. The paper recommends that parenting should be more of a communal enterprise in contemporary societies; it should involve the entire community and not to be limited to the parents of the children. Biological parents should also appreciate communal efforts in Child-Training.

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HISTORY AND POLITICS OF CURRENCY CHANGES IN NIGERIA UP TO 2008

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ABSTRACT
Whether from the pound sterling to the naira or from lower to higher denominations or even from one colour to another, Nigerian currency has gone through changes at different times in its history. Obviously, a product of the prevailing political situations and socio-economic realities, its social implications on Nigerians are tremendous. This paper examines the history and the politics of currency changes in Nigeria up to 2008. The paper explores different policies and programs formulated at different times to stabilize the naira, and accounts for how the prevailing national and global economic conditions strengthened or weakened the currency. The paper argues that beyond serving as a means of exchange, the naira symbolizes the Nigerian national identity, pride and unity, as well marks the state sovereignty.

Introduction

A national currency like the national flags, national anthems or coat of arms is a cherished symbol of sovereignty. As a symbol of national identity and state sovereignty, each piece of currency reflects national pride, national distinction and even national problems more so that it is representative of people as members of a particular nation. Its limitations notwithstanding, each piece of currency is a historical reminder of who the people are, where they are coming from and where they are heading. Politically, the national currency is a symbol of sovereignty and juridical independence of a state and helps create common ties unifying various groups within the country. Kaelberer (2004:162) and Cooper (2005) have emphasized that on the basis of conventional wisdom, the control of money is associated with the notions of sovereignty and state power at least since the emergence of nation-states in the late nineteenth century. Accordingly, money has not only served economic functions but has also operated as a symbol of place, locality and power. Economically, the features of medium of exchange and store of value make currency an important factor. The Nigerian naira which succeeded the British pound sterling has a long and chequered history. The naira has experienced at different times changes in colors and value; the introduction of new higher denominations as well as the experimentation with lower denomination in coins as well as the use of pictures are important markers of the naira. This paper therefore discusses the historical backgrounds of the Naira, its challenges and the political undercurrents involved in its evolutionary process. In addition, the paper examines different policies and programs formulated or introduced at different times to either strengthen, weaken, or stabilize the naira, and the

prevailing national and global economic situation that affected it. The paper is organized into five sections. The first section provides conceptual meanings of money from different perspectives. The second section discusses brief history of Nigerian currency from the British colonial pound sterling to the postcolonial Naira. The next section highlights various factors both local and global that contributed to the changes effected in the Nigerian currency. The fourth section discusses the politics behind the introduction of higher and lower denominations and the effect on the Nigerian economy. The fifth section of the paper examines the color factor in the Nigerian currency while the next section focuses on the debates on redenomination of Naira. The last section concludes the paper.

Currency, Politics and the Economy: Some Conceptual Menaings

To some Economists, anything approved by the state as money is money (Jhingan (1997) while to the functionalists, money is what money does (Hicks 1997), or money is merely a convenient medium of exchange, avoiding the awkwardness of barter, but nothing more (Ackley, 1961:111). Hence, anything that performs the function of money is money. Viewed largely as a medium of exchange, territorial currencies are instruments that facilitate transactions in the economy and assist governments in macroeconomic management, while also providing revenue at the time of printing. Money is anything that serves as a generally accepted medium of exchange, a standard of value and a means to save or store purchasing power. In the United States, currency (the bulk of which is Federal Reserve notes), coin and funds in checking and similar accounts at depository institutions are examples of money. (Federal Reserve Bank 2005). Currency is then defined as a unit of exchange, facilitating the transfer of goods and service (Manbiot 1994:96). It is also defined as any form of money that is in use as a medium of exchange (Papavasiliou, 2008:32-34).

In his monetary history, Davies (2002:27-28) gives a much more detailed list of money's functions. Specific functions (mostly micro-economic) include serving as (1) Unit of account (2) Common measure of value (3) Medium of exchange (4) Means of payment (5) Standard for deferring payments and (6) Store of value. General functions (mostly macro-economic) include (7) serving as liquid asset and (8) providing framework of the market allocative system (prices), (9) being a causative factor in the economy and (10) serving as a controller of the economy. These definitions and explanations notwithstanding, the meaning of money goes beyond theoretical and empirical considerations. Money also holds social and symbolic value. Beyond facilitating economic interactions, it also affects citizens' identity and, subsequently, the legitimacy of the national government (Cohen 2004, Helleiner 2003). Significantly, every national currency carries with it the national image of a nation. The contention of Isong (1973) is that a national currency is like a national flag, as both are the truest emblems of a nation.

Cooper's view (2004:9) that despite the emphasis on the economic importance of money particularly its functional origins as a means of fulfilling the "double coincidence of wants", it has also been proved that the earliest use of money was not primarily as a medium of exchange. Rather, citing Davies (2002:35-50), Cooper maintains that money was used for bridal dowries, recompense or "blood money", social gifts, religious offerings and ornamentation and that of all these, only ornamentation have an economic component. But then economic functionality was a smaller part of the purpose which meant that despite the changing roles of money the general trend has been to strengthen the links between monies and states. With the growth in states' monopolies of currency, it was increasingly used as a mechanism of state power both economically and politically. Four main roles of currencies have been suggested for states seeking to use it to build a shared national identity on their territories. First, currencies serve as a medium of national communication in a way that we mostly ignored. Prior to the introduction of national monies, countries usually had multiple, perhaps even thousands, circulating currencies in different towns and regions, and different currencies were used by different social classes (Ofonagoro, 1979). Thus, national currencies cut across geographic and social barriers to create a shared experience that did not previously exist.

Second, a national currency creates trust in the nation. According to Helleiner (2003), individuals became more accustomed to conducting monetized economic transactions with state actors (e.g., tax collectors, post offices). This happened mostly through regular interaction with the agents of the faraway central government, which increased their trust in that government. Moreover, once the national money was a central part of individuals' economic lives, they became dependent on the state for the preservation of that money and the

maintenance of its exchange value. Third, according to Helleiner (2003), over time the association between states and territorial currencies jumped national boundaries so that currency issue became the norm for sovereign states. The national currency thus became one of the defining features of statehood, 'expected here because we observe it there'. Finally, states use the imagery and even the names of currencies to help create national communities (Helleiner, 2003). Names given to national monies help create a common language for talking with fellow citizens from far away. Quoting Unwin and Hewitt (2001:1026), Cooper concludes that paper money is therefore not only a way of reinforcing internal cohesion and identity, but it is also a way of depicting that identity to the outside world in a very tangible and often beautiful form.

From Pound Sterling to Naira: Between Patriotism and Economic Development

The history of Nigerian currency began in 1912 when the West African Currency Board authorized by the British Colonial administration, issued currency notes and coins convertible to British pound sterling for Nigeria. Before 1912, Nigeria had utilized various forms of money such as cowries and manilas as units of exchange. It was not until 1st July, 1959 that Nigeria through its Central Bank which became operational that year, issued its first national currency which replaced the West African Currency Board notes and coins (Central Bank 2007). The decision to introduce Nigerian currency otherwise known as the Nigerian pound was perhaps borne out of the desire to have a currency that Nigerians could proudly associate with and more importantly the need to exercise full sovereignty as the country gradually moved towards the attainment of political independence. But the currency changes of 1959 was more of a political exercise, borne out of the desire to be like other newly independent countries as the country's economy was still tied to the umbilical cord of its British and other developed economies in the world (Ofonagoro, 1979). Significantly, the fact that Nigeria named its currency after the British pounds and shillings instead of creating a distinct name is a ready testimony to this[i] Besides, there was no touch of Nigerianness on the new currency. Rather, English and Arabic languages were inscribed on the currency in addition to the numerical impression on the money. Nevertheless, the introduction of the Nigerian pounds and shillings were significant for a number of reasons. First, for the first time, Nigeria issued its own currency. Second, the control of the currency was vested in the Central Bank of Nigeria and not in a foreign body. Third, local transactions were conducted in the new Nigerian currency.

Between July 1962 and April 1984, Nigeria changed its currency not less than five times, four out of which was under military administrations (*The Guardian* April 24 1984). The circumstances that informed these determined changes varied. Whereas the currency changes of 1962 was meant to confer legal tender status on the currency in line with the new status of the country, that of 1968 was a war strategy by the Federal Government against the Biafran regime. Specifically, the move announced on 30 December 1967 according to Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the Finance Commissioner under General Yakubu Gowon was to prevent Biafra from using the Nigerian Currency to finance its war. Biafra had three significant sources of the old notes during the war. These were its reserves, currency held by its population and close to 40 million pounds taken from the Central Bank overrun by the Biafran Forces in the East and the Midwest during the war. The Biafran Government had been converting its money to raise foreign exchange usually at less than one half of the official exchange rate. With the announcement of the new currency, the eastern government was forced to engage in panic selling. Not only was the International Currency market flooded with the old Nigerian notes, currency running into several hundreds of millions were eventually abandoned since they could not meet the exchange deadline fixed for only nineteen days (Uche 2002:29-54; Kirshner 1995:103-105; St. Jorre 1972) This dealt a massive blow to the whole Biafran economy and quickened the end of the war.

On 31st March, 1971, the then Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon announced that Nigeria would change to decimal currency as from 1st January, 1973. The major currency unit would be called Naira which would be equivalent to ten shillings, while the minor unit would be called kobo, 100 of which would make one Naira, equivalent to two old Nigerian pounds. The decision to change to decimal currency followed the recommendations of the Decimal Currency Committee set up in 1962 which submitted its report in 1964 (Central Bank 2006). The official reasons given by the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Dr. Clement Isong included the need for continuing efficient allocation of resources in the economy, to improve the performance of a deteriorating non-oil export sector and to rationalize the demand for imports from her major trading partners (*Nigerian Tribune* 23 February 1973). Significantly, the 1973 currency change exercise was remarkable for a number of reasons. In the first

instance, the exercise was not limited to changing the colour of Nigerian currencies rather it was a total replacement of the old pounds, shillings and pence with naira and kobo. There was also immediate shift from old cumbersome system of counting inherited from the colonial administration to the simpler decimal system of counting in tens and multiple of tens (*Nigerian Tribune* 2 January 1973). Besides, the exercise also afforded the CBN opportunity not only to know the amount of Nigerian currency in circulation but also to reduce the surplus[ii]. In addition, the exercise gave Nigerian currency a distinct feature both in appellation and in form (Isong, 1973).

Despite the apparent advantages of the exercise, there were still some loopholes. The decision of the Federal Military Government to leave the value of Nigerian currency unchanged compared with the US dollar indirectly amounted to the devaluation of naira by ten percent. The United States of America had on February 12 1973 devalued its currency, dollar, which had been the major exchange currency of the world and oil transaction, by ten percent. Before the devaluation exercise, N1 was equal to $1.52. It was envisaged that the devaluation of the US dollar without devaluation of naira would raise the exchange rate of Naira to Dollar in the ratio of N1 to $1.67 and consequently increase the purchasing value of Nigerians (Nigerian Tribune, February 21, 1973).[iii] However as explained by Dibua (2002:261-265) as at 1960 when Nigeria obtained political independence, the value of the Nigerian pound was tied to that of the British pound sterling. The same situation continued when Nigeria joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1961 while the exchange rate between the American dollar and British pound was used to determine the exchange rate between the Nigerian pound and the dollar. This was the situation until 1971 when the dollar-gold convertibility was suspended. Since the dollar now became the principal reserve currency, many countries responded by floating their exchange rates. It was in this process that Nigeria adopted the policy of mainly using the floating rates of the pound sterling and the dollar to determine the value of the Nigerian pound *vis-a-vis* the various currencies. This was the situation until 1974 when Nigeria stopped using the exchange rates of foreign currencies to determine the value of its own currency due to the change of the currency from pound to the naira in January 1973. Thus the 10% devaluation of the Naira on February 14 1973 was to tally with the devaluation of the dollars two days earlier.

From Lower to Higher Denomination: A Measure of Growth or Decline?

Between February 1977 and October 2005, six higher denominations of the Naira were introduced at six different times in February 1977, October 1991, December 1999, November 2000, April 2001 and October 2005. The denominations introduced were N20, N50, N100, N200, N500 and N1000 respectively. According to the Central Bank (2006), the issuance of N20 note was significant for two reasons. The first reason was that the ₦20 banknote was the highest denomination to be introduced then, and its issue became necessary as a result of the growth of incomes in the country, the preference for cash transactions and the need for convenience. The second reason was that the ₦20 banknote became the first currency note in Nigeria bearing the portrait of a Nigerian citizen, the former Head of State, General Murtala Muhammed who was assassinated on 13th February 1976 and subsequently declared a national hero for his leadership qualities. The note was issued on the first anniversary of his assassination in February 1977.

Although no official reason was given for the introduction of the N50 note, it was nonetheless seen as a unifying currency by the Central Bank more so it appeared without any national hero's image on it despite the speculation to that effect. This unifying factor no doubt earned the N50 note the nick-name WAZOBIA (WA-ZO-BIA) which literally means "come" in the three dominant languages of Nigeria- the Yoruba, the Igbo and the Hausa. But for other denominations between N100 and N1000, they were introduced to facilitate a more responsive and efficient payment system leading in response to inflation and devaluation of the naira (Ekanem, 2009). Meanwhile, new notes of three denomination series namely N1, N5 and N10 were introduced on 2nd July 1979. In addition to other features, they also bear the portraits of the three eminent Nigerians, Herbert Macaulay, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Alvan Ikoku, all of whom were declared national heroes on 1st October 1978. The decision of the Federal Military Government to engrave the pictures of these eminent citizens was in recognition of their contributions to the national growth of Nigeria. Hitherto, what existed were the notes and coins issued mainly in 1973. These were Fifty Kobo (50k), One Naira (N1), Five Naira (N5) and Ten Naira (N10) and the coins were Twenty Kobo (20k), Ten Kobo (10k), Five Kobo (5k), One Kobo (1K) and Half (½k) Kobo. The ½ and One Kobo were in bronze and the higher denominations in cupro-nickel. Also in 1991, a complete new coin range was issued as part of a major reform of the nation's currency

structure. The coins were in One Naira (N1), Fifty kobo (50k), Twenty-Five kobo (25k), Ten kobo (10k) and One kobo (1k). The ½ Kobo coin was withdrawn from circulation in 1991, making it the first currency that ceased to exist. (Ekanem 2009).

Also on 28th February 2007, the Central Bank of Nigeria issued redesigned currency notes. Fifty Naira (N50), Twenty Naira (N20), Ten Naira (N10) and Five Naira (N5) were introduced. The One Naira (N1) and Fifty kobo (50k) coins were also redesigned, while a new N2 coin was introduced. A completely new coin range was issued as part of a major reform of the nation's currency structure added to economic and fiscal reforms. The new notes have translation of their values in Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba, the three major Nigerian languages. Unfortunately, Nigerians hardly used these coinages and till date, the CBN could not fathom the reasons for this snub and ultimately the coins were no longer in circulation even though they are still legal tenders (Ekanem 2009). A number of reasons were given for the redesignation. As explained by the Central Bank (2007), countries review their currency structure every 5-8 years in line with international best practices, something which the country did not do since 1984. Besides, and more specifically, the notes were redesigned to make them more secure, last longer in circulation and look cleaner, reduce the cost of replacing dirty notes and also to ensure better management as the notes are smaller and fit easily into wallet. Of particular interest is the N20 note which is printed on polymer and which does not tear easily because of its plastic nature. The N50 note was also made into polymer in October 2009 (Adesuji 2009). As for the coins, the explanation was that coins, the world over, facilitate transactions and unlike the old coins that were big and heavy, the new coins are lighter in weight and smaller in size and are therefore more convenient to carry. Furthermore, it was contented that cost of small items is simplified into small units as change are made available for all transactions while the rounding up of prices to the nearest banknote denomination is no longer necessary (Central Bank 2007).

Meanwhile, underlying the currency changes took place particularly from 1991 was the tremendous stress that the Naira was subjected starting from the early 1980s, occasioned by the economic crisis which eventually culminated in the adoption of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by the General Ibrahim Babangida administration in 1986. An immediate consequence of this as observed by Olukoju (2002:3) was the steady and calamitous devaluation of the Naira which began to yield ground to the US dollar as the exchange rate plunged from a height of N1 to US 65 cents in 1979 to N1 to US$ 35 by the late 1980s. According to Dibua (2002: 261-265), one major issue that accounted for the economic crisis which became manifest from 1982 was the overvaluation of the Naira. The failure of the various economic policies introduced by successive government between 1978 and 1986 as explained by Dibua led to the adoption of SAP characterized by the deregulation of the economy through the ascendancy of market forces and a cardinal aspect of deregulation was the massive devaluation of the Naira through the agency of market forces. Although the claim of overvaluation of the Naira according to Dibua (2002:281) was exaggerated, its devaluation resulted in spiraling inflation and serious distortion of the economy. Given the effect of the devaluation of the Naira, one cannot but agree with the assertion of Soule and Obi that Structural adjustment meant essentially currency adjustment. In another study Adebayo (2007:95) has found that the currency instability and the declining exchange rate were exacerbated by inadequate supply of money and disappearance of lower denominations and coins among others. This was particularly the case with wage earners. Thus, from all indications, it was apparent that the introduction of higher currency denomination beginning from 1991 was mainly the country's response to inflation and devaluation of the naira occasioned by the economic crisis.

Change in Colour or Change in Value?

The economic crisis discussed above and which culminated in the introduction of SAP in 1986 became much obvious during the executive presidency of Alhaji Shehu Shagari between 1979 and 1983. The problem was worsened by the profligacy and high-level corruption and mismanagement that characterized the period. As observed by Olaniyan (1988:247), the implementation of white elephant projects, excessive dependence of the manufacturing sector on imported raw materials coupled with the failure of the Green Revolution programme all combined to compound the problem of foreign exchange and balance of payment. Thus, the immediate response of the duo of Generals Muhammad Buhari and Tunde Idiagbon following the military coup of 31st December 1983 was to change the colour of the naira. This change affected all the naira denominations in circulation then except the 50k note (Nigerian Tribune 24 April 1984). The change announced on 23rd April 1984 was meant to achieve two-pronged objectives. First to rescue the already battered economy and to contain the efforts of

saboteurs whose activities had continuously sabotaged the economy through large scale illegal trafficking of naira notes across borders. Second was to render useless all the money stolen by the sacked politicians. Indeed, it was reported that the exercise rendered almost half of the estimated N6 billion in circulation worthless at the expiration of the change. Hitherto, the naira was reportedly circulating freely and being easily converted in London and other foreign countries. This also explains the covert nature of the policy which was conceived to last for only two weeks as a way of shutting out the naira outside the country and preventing the looted fund within from being changed. It also explained the ceiling of N5000 placed on the amount that could be changed and the requirement of a sworn affidavit in the case of more.

Significantly however, the 1984 naira change exercise merely involved change of colour (N1 to bear the colour of old N20, N5 that of old N10, N10 of N1, N 20 of the old N5) (The Guardian 24 April 1984). Apart from mounting tight security around the ports, limited period was fixed for the exercise, while ceiling was placed on the amount that could be changed in the bank. The effects of the measures were remarkable as it exposed and affected many currency hoarders who had stashed millions of naira either at home or abroad (The Guardian 25 April 1984). Yet, the unresolved controversy over the surreptitious smuggling of 35 to 53 suitcases into the country by Emir Jokolo of Gwandu remained a dent on the exercise, the puritanical claim of the leaders notwithstanding (Nigerian Tribune 27 April, 1984 p.3). On a much wider scale, the change did not restore the much-needed value to the naira. Although the government acting on its strong will rather than prevailing economic dictates and the advice of the International Monetary Fund refused to devalue the naira, it was apparent that there was no strong productive base to support the naira value (Dibua 2002: 265-272). Meanwhile, the socio-economic effects of the operation can not be overemphasized. Besides the closure of Nigerian borders, the currency exchange activities almost grounded domestic commercial activities as traders who would not receive the old Naira closed their shops while others remained on endless queue in the banks (Nigerian Tribune 1 May 1984). The untold agony experienced by millions of Nigerians during the exercise was very shocking. After so many hours to have their old Naira change to new ones, many people took time off to have some sound rest in front of different banks not minding where and how (Nigerian Tribune 3 May 1984). The operation was also a test period for the War Against Indiscipline programme (WAI). The smooth take-off of the operation soon lapsed into disorder and indiscipline as the frustrated people who found it uneasy to change their currency resorted to violent pushing or fighting (Nigerian Tribune 4 May 1984). The salary earners were the worst-hit as the exercise prevented the pre-occupied banks from paying neither their salary nor allowing them to withdraw even their savings (Kareem 1984:4). Commercial banks also experienced some hardships following the dramatic increase in the volume of business transactions (Nigerian Tribune 2 May 1984). Consequently, in addition to the increase in the number of hours each commercial bank opened daily, weekend was no longer a resting period. The Union Bank of Nigeria for instance issued a release ordering all its 56 branches across the federation to open 24 hours (Nigerian Tribune 5 May 1984). The exercise also increased the cost of operation of these banks. To meet the emergency need of their customers, some banks either employed more employees or pay over time allowance to their staffs. The effects of the operation on the currency traffickers both within and outside Nigeria were enormous. Different strategies designed by these illicit businessmen to beat the existing security system were frustrated. This perhaps encouraged the sale of the naira in neighbouring West African countries at give-away prices (Nigerian Tribune 30 April 1984).

Redenominating the Naira: The Debate

In other to further strengthen the naira, the CBN on the 14th of August 2007 announced its “Strategic Agenda for the Naira” This 4-ponts Agenda which was designed to make the Naira a ‘Reference Currency in Africa’ and as part of the ‘Financial System Strategy 2020’ has Currency Re-denomination topping the list (Central Bank 2007). The new agenda among others is designed to better anchor inflation expectations, strengthen public confidence in the Naira, make for easier conversion to other major currencies, reverse tendency for currency substitution and eliminate higher denomination notes with lower purchasing power (Central Bank 2007). Other objectives are to reduce the cost of production, distribution and processing of currency, promote the usage of coins and thus a more efficient pricing and payments system, promote the availability of cleaner notes, deepen the Forex market and ensure more effective liquidity management and monetary policy. It was also meant to enhance the convertibility of the Naira and hence greater confidence in the national economy and lead to greater inflow of foreign investment as it positioned the Naira to become the ‘Reference currency’ in Africa (Central Bank 2007).

Currency redenomination as conceived by the Central Bank is the process where a new unit of money replaces the old unit with a certain ratio and it is achieved by removing zeros (in the case of Nigeria two zeros) from a currency or moving some decimal points to the left, with the aim of correcting perceived misalignment in the currency and pricing structure, and enhancing the credibility of the local currency. Although the name of the national currency was still the Naira, the existing Naira would be referred to as the "Old Naira", and the new one to be called the "New Naira" during the transition but the word "New" might be dropped after the transition. Conceived as being different from revaluation which entails an official adjustment of the exchange value of a country's currency (usually an upward change in value) relative to other currencies by fiat under a fixed exchange rate regime, or currency decimalization which is the process of converting from traditional denominations to a "decimal" system, usually with two units differing by a factor of 100 respectively, the change was proposed to take effect from August 1, 2008 with a transition period of five months (August 1 – December 31, 2008) during which both the 'old Naira' and 'new Naira' would be legal tender (Central Bank 2007). During the period, it was proposed that prices, fees, rents, contracts and salaries, etc could be quoted in both the new and the old Naira, while the 'old Naira' would cease to be legal tender, but could still be exchanged at the commercial bank after December 31st, 2008. As presented by the Central Bank (2007), the specific benefits of re-denomination included that it would make pricing more efficient as it prevented arbitrary price jump, encourage Nigerians to cultivate the habit of using coins and thus reinforced the on-going currency reforms, promoted particularly the use of ATMs as part of payment culture and de-congested banking halls, and made for easy conversion to other currencies.

Others benefits included reducing the risks associated with carrying large physical cash as large denominations were eliminated, discouraging currency substitution and addressing the perception that the domestic currency was weak despite its stability. It was also projected that it would reduce the cost of printing, distribution and processing of currency and discouraged the abuse of the Naira as each Naira note under the 'new Naira' would possess relatively high value, and while coins dominated transactions at the lower end of the market (Central Bank 2007). Significantly, the policy was proposed to effectively restore the value of the Naira (in the short-term) close to what it was in 1985 before the commencement of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986

However, in what appeared like poor policy coordination between the Presidency, Federal Executive Council, the Economic Management Team and the Central Bank, the Federal Government on August 25 2007 announced the suspension of the proposed programme citing non-conviction of the president about its merits, non-compliance with due process and rule of law particularly Governor Soludo's violation of section 19 of the new CBN Act 2007 and non prior approval as reasons (Shirbon 2007). Other reasons given for the scrapping, according to Michael Aondoakaa, the Attorney-General and Justice Minister was lack of consideration for the cost implication of the project particularly that new currency were only recently introduced in June 2007 and its cosmetic nature could affect the value of the Naira (Shirbon 2007). Although the Federal Government was advised by its Economic Team to review the date of its implementation and consider the gradual phasing out of the old currency, it was apparent that the government or some elements within it had reservations about it.

Beyond government circle, the proposed programme was seen as a symbolic reform without guaranteed benefits which only created the impressions that past inflations had been eliminated and which did not necessarily imply that future inflation would be below the current line. In which case, it is possible for a country to report worse inflationary trend after redenomination (Meristem 2008:4). It was contented that the CBN should have been guided by the widely acknowledged view that the strength of a currency is determined by the strength of the economy, its productive capacity, infrastructure, security of lives and property, employment, good governance, and strict adherence to the rule of law which enhance higher local productivity and increased capital inflow through greater foreign investments and exports. (Sokunbi 2008). It was further argued that the proposal might not be economically justified given that the rate of inflation in the economy was within a single-digit value (6-9 per cent), which qualified the Nigerian economy as a moderately stable economy. Also, the high public confidence in the Nigerian economy evidenced by growth in domestic and foreign investments in the country and the fact that foreign currencies are not being used for domestic transactions in the economy, a further indication of much confidence in the Naira were touted as basis for the condemnation of the policy (Meristem 2008:6-8).

However, there appeared to be substantial agreement on the significance of the proposed

programme in strengthening the Naira and making it the reference currency in the West African sub-region more so that a single currency was being envisioned for the region by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Beyond making Nigeria a financial hub for investors across the whole of Africa, it was also reasoned that the policy would allow the Naira to be directly and easily linked and monitored with the U.S. dollars and thus increased external confidence in the Naira (Sokunbi, 2008; Meristem 2008:7-9; Amanze 2009). Viewed on wider political perspective, the implication that the CBN might be compelled to regulate both budgetary and extra-budgetary cash flow issued to the federal and state governments in order to avert the dangers of over-dollarisation of the money market could have struck wrong cords in some circles particularly given the endemic nature of corruption, mismanagement and profligacy that characterised spending at the different tiers of government in the country. This in addition to the usual scare about change and its implications could have informed the opposition to the policy. According to Mosley (2005), the explanations for currency redenomination in developing and transition nations rest in a combination of economic and political factors, including inflation, government's concerns about credibility, and the effect of currencies on national identity. While stressing that redenomination is related to political variables, including governments' time horizons, the governing party's ideology, the fractionalization of the government and legislature, and the degree of social heterogeneity, Mosley (2005) contended that although seen as a largely technical issue, currency redenomination could have a few real effects if done in a way that allowed the public sufficient ability to exchange old cash for new, and if it had little impact on inflationary expectations. He concluded that what determined whether a government would abandon, or attempt to shore up its currency would involve a consideration of the political motivations and technical decisions that of assigning numerical values to national monies.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed both social and political history of Nigerian currency. The paper observes that the Naira is not only a means of economic exchange but also an important symbol of Nigerian sovereignty. As a symbol of national identity and state sovereignty, the Naira reflects national pride, national distinction and even national problems. The paper further notes that the Naira serves as symbolic unifying factor of various ethnic groups and a potent instrument deployed by the ruling class to construct specific political identities, social boundaries and economic hegemony. The paper also notes that coupled with global economic factors, various monetary policies and programs introduced by different military regimes in Nigeria to protect the Naira and stabilize the economy sometimes strengthened it and sometimes weakened it. The paper argues that the introduction of higher denominations as a measure of economic conveniency not only increased the level of inflation but also contributed to the culture of corruption in Nigeria. In all, the naira remains a symbol of national identity though with changing fortunes but also with tremendous potentials to perform the basic functions of any currency anywhere given the right political and economic situation.

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[i] Nigeria currency remained pounds and shillings until February 1973 when Naira was introduced.

[ii] The total currency in circulation as at the end of 1972, according to Dr C. N. Isong, the CBN Governor, was £186.8 million. This was by the first six weeks of exchange reduced to £32 million pounds, some 16% of total currency in circulation.

[iii] "Why Devalue?" *Nigerian Tribune*, Comment, 21 February, 1973. p1. N.B. On this, the CBN governor arued that if the exchange rate of the Naira had been allowed to appreciate 10%, Nigerian imports from other countries particularly the UK and US would not only become cheaper but would also increase at the detriment of local products.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE PAST AND THE 21ST CENTURY AFRICAN SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF*ÌWÒRÌTÚRÚPỌ̀N* IN *IFÁ* DIVINATION

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Women Empowerment, African society, Ifá Divination

ABSTRACT

In the contemporary time, the mission of every country in the entire continent is to provide employment support for women who are in one disadvantaged position or the other. As a result of this, many programmes are designed to help in this capacity. However, looking at women empowerment from the past, can one really say that women are not empowered particularly in Africa and in Yorùbá society in Nigeria to be specific even from the time of the gods to the present time? This question is important because there were notable figures (women) in the history of the Yorùbá society then and now that were/are greatly empowered. Aje, the goddess of wealth in Ìwòrìtúrúpọ̀n, Ẹlẹ́kọdèrè in Ìrósùn Méjì, Ẹfúnṣetán Aníwúrà, the Ìyálóde Ibadan of her time, Ẹfúnroyè Tinúbú, Ayé the powerful rich lady of Adó Èkìtì just to mention a few were women that were greatly empowered. In fact, there were no women in the past who were not one way or the other empowered in various businesses. One may be tempted to ask, what is the missing link between the past and the present that necessitated the shout for the women empowerment today for the sake of future? Have all the programmes so designed been able to cater for women empowerment? These were the questions this paper tries to interrogate by interviewing 30 women, 20 men in the city of Ibadan and their opinions content analysed. The study revealed that empowerment is not new to African and the agitation thus, has foreign hands, and product of intellectual poverty considering the fact that the structure of African society is an organised one based on gender roles. The paper therefore, recommends that we should value where and how the Creator placed us rather than looking for what is not lost.

Introductions

Women empowerment should not be a subject of debate because there was never a time in the history of humanity that women were and are not empowered, most especially, in theYorùbáland, south western Nigeria. In the Yorùbá society, there was never a time a woman was idle without any form of work or the other. Even if it were a matter of helping her husband in his farm work that was prevalent then and in the process of doing that, such women will also make their own small farm beside their husbands own. Such farm would be independent of their husbands and whatever comes out of it, the husband has no power over it **(Ogunsua, Personal Interview)**[1].Physically and spiritually, women are empowered, even in the time of the gods; Ọ̀ṣun was so empowered spiritually by Olódùmarè to the extent that she thwarted all the efforts of other fifteen principal gods that were assigned to carry out some works on earth until they succumbed to her enormous power. Ajé (that later became Ọ̀rúnmìlà's wife) was a rich business woman who had more than two hundred slaves that were transporting her goods to the market each day.

However, the dimension at which humanity is agitating for women empowerment to attain gender equality suggests that something is wrong somewhere. This is because there was no such agitation in the past when men and women in the society knew their duties and limits in all things they do. For instance, in the old African/Yorùbá system of communal living/setting, the oldest woman in every compound was empowered with the duty of early childhood education of all the children produced in that compound while the rest of the women would busy themselves with one business or the other or better still, help their husbands in their farming business. That was the reason why some women were found in some vocations believed were exclusively reserved for men such as farming, hunting and divination system. Ọ̀ṣun is a very good example here. It was Ọ̀rúnmìlà that was traveling to Olokun's place. That time, Ọ̀ṣun was still the wife of Ọ̀rúnmìlà. While Ọ̀rúnmìlà was going, he said he was going for 16 days but ended up staying there for 16 years. However, before he left, Ọ̀ṣun asked him what would be the faith of his clients and the sick while he was away? Ọ̀rúnmìlà then gave Ọ̀ṣun*owóẸ̀ẹ̀rìndínlógún* (16 cowries) for making enquiry (divination) for anyone that comes for that. That was how *owóẸ́ẹ́rìndínlógún* (16 cowries) became a tool of enquiry especially among women and men followers of Ọ̀ṣun the goddess of Ọ̀ṣun river of which (Bascom, 1980, 4)**[2]** associated with Ọbàtálá, Èṣù, Sango, Ọya and many other Yoruba Òrisa. However, *Orógbó síṣọ*-Casting of BitterKola is associated with Sango and Ikin with Esu who was the first apprentice of Orunmila as viewed by **(Salami, 2008, 152)**[3]

Therefore, women empowerment in the 21 century is a total departure from the past. This is the reason why there could be agitation for equal opportunities with men, an opportunity that was not there from the beginning of humanity on earth. Today, women are agitating for women empowerment to alleviate women from poverty, genital mutilations, and early marriages, disproportionate labour in the field and in households**(N/N, 2016,** https://Elvischifwafwawww.siami.se**)**[5].

Thereby bestowed on today's woman agitations intellectual poverty that has reflections on their offspring's because they have neglected their natural duties bestowed upon them by the creation.Upon all these facts, one may then ask, what is the missing link between the past and the present that necessitated the shout for the women

[1] Madam Talabi Ogunsua, *Food Stuff Seller/Farmer*, *Interview Respondent*, Mogaji Owe Village, Ibadan, 12/April 2020

[2]William Bascom, 1980, *Sixteen Cowries: Yoruba Divination from Africa to the New World,* London: Indiana University Press, 4

[3]Ayo Salami, 2008, *Yoruba Theology and Tradition: The Worship,* Lagos: NIDD Publishing Company,152

[4]2016, *Is Gender Inequality in Africa about Culture or is it about Poverty?*https://Elvischifwafwawww.siami.se 6/3/2020

[5]2016, *Is Gender Inequality in Africa about Culture or is it about Poverty?*https://Elvischifwafwawww.siami.se 6/3/2020

empowerment today? Have all the programmes so designed been able to cater for women empowerment?With these questions, it is apt to know how women are viewed in Yoruba society.

Overview of Women in Yorùbá Society

Women in Yorùbá society, like other nations around the globe are seen vastly different from men in so many ways; appearance, character, intellect and behaviour. Again, in the society of the Yorùbá, women are seen in different perspectives. Some perceive women to be lazy types like Ọrọ̀, the wife Ọ̀rúnmìlà in*Ọ̀bàràMéjì* **(Abimbola, 1968, 67)**[6] where *Ifá* pronounces:

Apánlánigiàjẹ́
Apanlanigiaje
Ọ̀ṣèabigi rẹ̀rẹ̀ẹ̀rẹ̀
Ose abigirereere
A dIfáfúnỌ̀rúnmìlà
Ifa divination was performed for Ọ̀rúnmìlà
Ifánlolèé gbé Ọ̀rọ̀
Ifa is about to marry Oro
Tííṣomo Olówuníyàwó.....
The Daughter of Olowu
…Nigbati o di osuketa in the third month
Ti Ọ̀rúnmìlàko When Ọrúnmìlà
Tí kò dé mọ́
Failed to return
Owóàtioúnjẹ́tán lọ́wọ́Ọrọ̀
Money and Food stuff left for Oro were exhausted
Bẹ́ẹ̀ni Ọrọ̀ kòsìfọwọ́kanisẹ́ka nrí…
And Oro has never engaged in any work (before then

While some view them as traitors and deceiverslike Olójòngbòdú*Obìnrin Ikú-* Olójòngbòdúthe wife of death in *Odù Ọ̀yẹ̀kúMéjì* **(Abimbola, 1968, 26)**[7]where *Ifá*says;

Títítíloríogbó
Títítíloríogbó
Bìrìpébìrìpélomiọkọ̀ọ́ dà
Bìrìpébìrìpélomiọkọ̀ọ́ dà
Dídàlomiọkọ̀ọ́ dà
Boat water only spill
Omi ọkọ̀ kìí yí
Boat water doesn't roll
*A dIfá fúnOòduà atẹ̀wọ̀nrọ̀…*Ifa divination was consulted for Oodua who descended with a chain
…Obìnrin lèké
Women are treacherous
Obìnrin lọ̀dàlẹ̀
Women are betrayals
Kéèyàn mọ́ finú hànfóbìnrin
One should not distrust a woman with secrets
*A dIfá fún Olójòngbòdú*Ifa divination was consulted for Olojongbodu
Obìnrin Ikú…
The wife of death…

or as deceitful and crafty as Abẹ́ṣújiyan's wife in *Odù Ọ̀wọ́nrín Ìrẹ̀tẹ̀* **(Salami, 2002, 324)**[8] where *Ifá* declares;

Atọ́párá ní fikú ṣeré
Atọ́párá ní fikú ṣeré
A dIfá fúnAbẹ́ṣùjiyàn
A dIfá fúnAbẹ́ṣùjiyàn
Èyí tí ṣawoỌlọ́fin
Whose Olofin's initiate
Ó dá àṣò mẹ́ta sórí
Created three…
Àṣò mẹ́tẹ̀ẹ̀ta tí sì nbẹ lórí rẹ̀
These … were on his head
Mẹ́tẹ̀ẹ̀ta ló lórúkọ
The three … have names

[6] Wande Abimbola,1968, *Ijinle Ohun Enu Ifa Apa Keji,*U.K: Wm. Collins, Sons and Co. Ltd, 67
[7] Wande Abimbola, 1968, *Ijinle Ohun Enu Ifa Apa Keji,* 26
[8]Ayo Salami, 2002, *Ifa, a Complete Divination,* Lagos: NIDD Publishing and Printing Limited, 324

Àwọnènìyàn a pé ààṣò yí
People will ask that these…
Kí lo nfiwọ́n ṣe? What were they meant for?
Abẹ́ṣùjiyàn a túnyan sọ́tún, a túnyansósì
Abẹ́ṣùjiyàn will walk majestically
A pé ààṣò ìmọ̀nrànni… And say it is ..aduice
…Abẹ́ṣùjiyànsì ní ìyàwó kan,
…and Abe yiyan has a wife
Àwọnìlú bá lọ bá Obìnrin òhún The whole community went fo her
Wọ́n báa mulẹ̀
And had a vow/swore on oath with her
Ààṣò orí ọkọ rẹ yìí
We have tried to know the names
Àwọngbìyànjú àti mọ́ orúkọ wọn
Of the … on your husband's head
Àwọn ò sì mọ́
But we couldn't
Òunsì làwọnnsanwó lé lórí
he /it is the reason why they are praying
Kí làwọn ó ṣetáwọ́n ó fi mọ̀ ọ́? What shoul they do in order to know (the names)
Nígbà ó yá,
Later,
Obìnrin yí bá lọ bá ọkọ ọ rẹ̀ Abẹ́ṣùjiyàn this woman went to Abe yiyan, her husband
Ní bá nfiorí yi lára
And started caressing him
Látijọ́ yìí tóun ti dé ọ̀dọ̀ rẹ
Since you have married me
Òun ò mọrúkọ ààṣò orí rẹ̀ yí…. I never know the names of the … on your head

Some also see them as the most powerful of all creatures like Ọ̀ṣun the goddess of Ọ̀ṣun river in *OdùỌ̀ṣẹ́ Túrá***(Adeoye, 2023, 204)**[9] where *Ifá* speaks;
Konunkoro
Ko unkoro
Awo Ewi Adò
The initiate of Ewi Ado
Òọ̀rùn mu dèdẹ̀dẹ̀ se okun
Oorun mu dedede se okun
Awo Ode Ijesa
The initiate of Ode Ijesa,
Akan nbelodo
The crab resides at the river
Won o ma la k'aye
They will prosper in all facets of life
Pee peepee
Peepeepee
Awo oju Omi
Theinitiare of water
Awon ni won difa fun
They made divination for
EjerindinlogunOrodu,
EjerindinlogunOrodu
Won ntikoleorunbo,
When they are coming from the heavenly realm
Wasikole aye
To earth realm
Won la igbodu sile
They gone past the initiate's forest
Won tun la igboopa
And also go beyond opa's forest
Won ko fi ibajo ti Ọ̀ṣun They never pay homage to Ọ̀ṣun
Won si se ile aye tititi
They lived long on earth
Ile aye ko gun rara…
The world never knows peace
A dífá fúnàgbàágbà mẹ́rìndínlógún
Ifa divination was consulted for the sixteen elders

While some people believed that women are known for good like Mọ́rèmí who liberated Ile-Ife people from Ugbó, their adversary that tried to exterminate them through slavery, others see

[9] Adeoye C.L., 1985, *Igbagbo ati Esin Yoruba,* Nigeria: Evans Brothers (Nigeria Publishers) Limited, 204

them as evil **(Adegbola, 2009, 112)**[10]. They are also seen as gossipers, ingrates like Elekodere**(Abimbola, 1968, 63)**[11], tempters, murderers, heartless, witches, jealous-co-wives and full of shameless characters. Thus, according to **(Ilesanmi, 2013, 7)** [12], the enormous of woes attributed to women are so much that one may not see anything good in them except evil.

Through women, reproduction takes place. They turned their off springs to adulthood. They educate and train their children physically and spiritually. To a large extent, the success of Young ones in the society depends on women because they are always together most of the time. (Therefore, they(women) are the first educators. In fact, the roles of Yorùbá women can be felt in virtually all aspects of the cultural life).

According to (Ilesanmi, 2013, 5)[13], Yorùbá women, past and present, old and young believe it is a honourable thing to be a mother and miserable, wretched and sorrowful to be barren. This is the reason a Yorùbá woman will do everything possible to make sure she has a child. Sometimes, they will even prefer to have a still birth to remove the shame of bareness. Thus, the saying *ojú ló npọ́n àgàn tó ndábá àbíkú, kíl'ọmọ bíbíká nṣe fúnmi*- It is adversity that makes a barren woman contemplate a stillborn, what benefits can stillborn do for one*?* best describe the situation.

As earlier said above, giving birth to children is just the beginning of motherhood, other duties like feeding carrying and educating the child are the primary responsibility of the parents particularly the mother. A Yorùbá woman will prefer to have only one cloth on them than to see her child so hungry or unsuccessful in life. This is one of the values a Yorùbá woman places on child birth that gives rise to cherishing the child and care for the child till maturity. Even at maturity, they still continue with their duty of caring for their children and later extend the caring to their grandchildren that gave rise to the expression *ọmọ kìí dàgbà lójú òbí ẹ*- a child never grows old in the presence of his/her parents.

It is unfortunate that this culture of caring and cherishing is gradually eroding in this modern age. Today, we often seen unwanted babies inside a gutter, toilet, near gates (particularly of rich people), refuse dump and near hospitals. But a close and deep thinking about this kind of an act reveals at the action is still tinted with value placed on child birth. Though they care and have concern for the child, but possibilitythat others who needed them and can take care of them with a better means made them dump the children where they can easily be accessible to those who can care for them. Though this is not the bestor good idea anyway.

Again, we see in our society today that many Yorùbá women are not interested in marriage or giving birth to children. Rather, they will prefer to adopt whichever numbers of children all in the name of modernity and emulation of another people's culture without remembering the saying of the Yorùbá that *Àgbàbọ́ òjọ ọmọ ẹni*. This assertion is supported in the*Ifá* verse sited on page three in *Odù Ọ̀wọ́nrín Ìrẹtẹ̀*. In the *Odù,* when Abesujiyan was to be executed, his adopted child ran to the king shouting and wailing that they should help him remove his cloth he was wearing so that blood will not spill on it. The thought of every one present is, if he were his own child, he would not be concern about the cloth. Rather, about losing his father in the hands of executional.

General Overview of Women Empowerment

The word empowerment is defined or interpreted in many ways. To some, empowerment is an authority, power or order given to someone to do something on one's behalf. In this manner, the person given

[10] Adelegan Adegbola, 2009, *Ile-Ife: The Source of Yoruba Civilisation,* Nigeria: Oduduwa International Communications, 112

[11] Wande Abimbola, 1968*, Ijinle Ohun Enu Ifa Apa Kinni*, U.K: Wm. Collins, Sons and Co. Ltd, 63

[12] Ilesanmi Thomas Makanjuola, 2013, *Obinrin: A Cultural Assessment of Yoruba Women,* Nigeria: astra-J Multimedia Nig. Ltd, 7

[13] Ilesanmi Thomas Makanjuola, 2013, Obinrin: A Cultural Assessment of Yoruba Women,5

authority is still the one acting indirectly because without giving the order for the person to act on his behalf, nothing can be done. This is the kind of authority given to the political office holders to make laws on behalf of the general masses, the king, bishops, governors, president etc. It is also the process of assisting other persons to discover and claim personal power. This often happened during chieftaincy title or kingship in Africa or during election.

Women empowerment therefore, is related to the above but with a special focus on women alone. However, based on the types of empowerment of women, which is social, educational, economics, political and psychological, one may then say women empowerment is the granting of political social, economic, political and psychological power to women collectively or individually to make them strong and make them have confidence in controlling their lives and makes them demand for their right. This is an indication that they don't have these rights initially and now agitating and fighting to get it. According to the bureau for employers' activities**(**https://www.uo.org**,)**[14], they believed that globally, women are under-represented in business and management activities. They observed that only very few women attain top management positions, chairpersons and members of company boards. Therefore, there is a need for gender diversity for economic growth and competitive business performance. If this assertion is right, then women empowerment is nothing more than gender relations in the world at large. According to (Anna-Yao, 2004,https://www.codestria.org)[15], gender is a socially constructed term depicting the system of relations between women and men that has to do with behaviour, attitudes, roles, status and other processes that govern, relationships among sexes in a given socio-cultural socio-economic and socio-political context that vary from social classes and from one unity to another.

Therefore, women empowerment wherever its being advocated for all over this would stem from gender equality, inequality, imbalance in the areas of education, social, religious and politics that the advocates believe is the only effective way to combat poverty, hunger, disease and promote development that is truly sustainable**(**Geo-Jaja, Hallain and Baum, 2009,https://www.researchgate.net)[16]. As a result, real development lies in the empowerment of women and to really empower woman according to (Ravinder and Narayana, 2006,https://www.researchgate.net)[17] is to give women employment that will not only increase their standard of living but will also make them independence on men by giving them independence on men by giving them autonomy and security so that they will be able to take good care of their family, particularly their children. This, today women are found in almost all the professions on earth. In politics, they are playing key roles as ministers, governors, president and even prime ministers. Today, there are successful business women all over the world contributing their quota to the economy of the global world. In religious circle, women are not found wanting and they are adequately playing their roles.

One may then ask at what point does the issue of women empowerment or equality becomes global issue? Was there any part in time that women were not empowered or discriminated against?

Women empowerment in Africa/Yorùbá Society

[14]*Improving the bottom line. Women in Business and Management*, https://www.uo.org, retrieved 10/4/2020

[15]Elizabeth Annan-Yao, 2004, *Analysis of Gender Relations in Family, Formal Education and Health*, https://www.codestria.org retrieved 10/04/2020.

[16]Macleans A. Geo-Jaja, Sara J. Rayne, Pamela R.. Hallain and Donald R. Baum, 2009, *Gender Equality and women empowerment in Africa: The Education and Economic Globalisation Nexus*, https://www.researchgate.net.,

[17]Ravinder Rena and N. Nare Yana, 2006, *Gender Empowerment in Africa: An analysis of women participation in Eritrean Economy*, https://www.researchgate.net, retrieved …

Women in Africa particularly in Yorùbá society are extremely active as economists, educator, political, religious and social influencers from time immemorial till present time. Marcus Cox systems this in part that "women are more active as economic agents in Africa than anywhere in the world. According to him, women in Africa perform the majority of Agricultural activities, own a third of all forms and in some countries, make up some 70% of employees.(Marcus, 2015,)[18] This is a perfect description of African women particularly the Yorùbá women have been empowered are way or the other. Spiritually, they are endowed with power of reproduction by the creator. Olódùmarè God in Yorùbá belief. They give birth and nurtured the child to maturity. Education of the children invested on their shoulder. If from a royal home, the training and education of such children is carried out by the mothers in the palace to take up the mantle of political leadership in the near future. Economically, every Yorùbáwoman engaged in one profession/business or the other. Among the professions that the Yorùbá women engaged in are weaving of traditional clothes, tie and dye of clothes, palm oil production, buying and specialising in the selling of farm produce weave clothes, make local dye,*àdín*- palm kernel oil, coco nut oil for local pomade or cream, kolanut, bitter kola, food stuff of all kinds, production of locust beans in large quantity for those who will retail and sell it etc. they engage in all these to enhance their lives at the same time support their families.. as a result of this, there was never a time a Yorùbá woman was never engaged and empowered. Till today, every Ìjèbú woman is always engaged with one or two professions no matter how educated. Socially, the Yorùbá women belong to one group or the other. They are therefore not found wanting in socializing. On the religions sphere, the Yorùbá woman control almost every religions cult. May it be *Orò, Egúngún*, and some other cults even with those ones that women are forbidden, research show that they women are behind these forbidden laws. Due to certain reasons. In Ifá divination which some priests believed women should not belong, we discovered that before a man can become an *Ifá*priest, there is a role a woman will play without which such a person will not be ordained. Again, *Olókun* and *Ẹ́ẹ́rìnínlógún* which are forms of divination inYorùbáland are dominated by women diviners as and as far as traditional religion in concern there are no cases of inequality. At this junction, one may then ask, what is the view of *Ifá*divination on women empowerment particularly with reference to *Ìwòrì Túrùpọ̀n*?

Women Empowerment in the Context of *Ìwòrìtúrúpọ̀n*in *Ifá* Divination

Before the advent of foreign religions in Yorùbá land, *Ifá*is the path finder of everyone. Whatever we do, *Ifá*dictates the directive. Therefore, whatever *Ifá*says is the final and since *Ifá*had already told us in *Ìrósùn Ẹ̀gà*(Bogunmbe, 2013,69)[19] that;

Iṣẹ́ lódùnúnṣe
To work is profitable

Olèjíjà kò sun àn
Stealing is never an option

Ifání a kìíf'ojoyúmọ́r'ólèjà
Ifa said, we do not see things to steal everyday

Oun tódára ni kájíkáṣiṣẹ́
What si profitable is to work

LódIfáfúnAkápò
Ifa divination was consulted for Akapo

Tíí ṣ'ọmọỌ̀rúnmìlà
The offspring of Ọ̀rúnmìlà

Lọ́jọ́ tíyóódákodíèlágbàlá.
On the day he will cultivate in the palace garden.

[18]Marcus Cox, 2015, *Empowering African Women an Agenda for Action, African Gender Equality,*

[19]Awogbemiga Fasina Bogunmbe, 2013, *Awon Idi abejo inu odu Ifa (The reason why, from ifoduoduifa*, ibadan, Oyeku olododo Traditional publishing Ent., 69.

Since this is and instruction for everyone, it is mandatory therefore, for all to be up and doing regardless of sex. That is the reason why everyone is engaged in one profession or the other in Yorùbá society without any discrimination. As earlier said, there were and there are no cases of inequality in traditional African religion most especially among the Yorùbá. Religious practices and in the socio-economic and political system. In the time of the gods, *Ifá*explained in *Ìwòrì Túrùpọ̀n*(Lijadu, 1998, 122)[20]

Èkìtìbàbààbà
Ekiti babaaba

A dIfáf'Ọ̀rúnmìlà
Ifa divination was consulted for Ọ̀rúnmìlà

Ntuowóẹ́rújọ́láì wífún Èṣù Was saving money to purchase a slave without informing Esu

Níọjọ́kẹ́ta tíỌ̀rúnmìlàraẹ́rú yí The slave died untimely

Ni ófòṣanlẹ́ tó kú
On the third day Ọ̀rúnmìlà bought him

Ọ̀rúnmìlààti gbogbo ilé rẹ̀sìnsọ́kún
Ọ̀rúnmìlà and his household were crying

Èṣùwọlé wábèrè péèéṣe
Esu entered and asked why

Ti Ọ̀rúnmìlà fi nsokun?
Ọ̀rúnmìlà was crying?

Ọ̀rúnmìlàdáhùn,
Ọ̀rúnmìlà answered that

Ó níẹ́rú tí mo rà nîìjẹ́ta
The slave I bought three days ago

Ni ófòṣánlẹ́ tí ó kú…
Died…

Esu asked him, whom did you tell before Ọ̀rúnmìlà went to purchase the slave? He told Ọ̀rúnmìlà to quickly bring a goat for him. Ọ̀rúnmìlà gave Esu the goat. Esu took away the dead of the slave. He dressed her up very beautifully and sat her down at *Oríta* (a place where three-foot paths meet) and placed a chewingstick in her mouth. He placed before her a tray of tobacco and the day happened to be on market day that people were moving to and fro. As people were moving to and fro, they desired to buy tobacco from her but she didn't answer anyone until Aje with her 20 slaves that were assisting her to carry her wears to the market got there. She wanted to buy tobacco from her but did not answer her until she touches her with a stick and the dead body fell down. The point we are trying to make here is, Ajé was so rich that she had well over 200 slaves that were carrying her goods to the market.

Likewise,*Odu OseMéjì* (Agboola, 1989, 236)[21] in *Ifá* Divination spoke about a particular woman called Wáléolú who was very rich with many servantsand other chain of businesses ranging from fabrics, food stuff production and selling, cooked food like *àkàrà*– bean cake and so on. *Ifá* also talked about Elekodere in *Odu Ìrósùn Méjì*where *Ifá*says:

Olowo o wa
The rich came

Aladin o wa
*Aladin*came

Asiereeeyan
The lunatic

Ni mbenidieko
Are in Lagos

Eeyann to o lowo
The person who is rich

O maagbooruulekule
Percieved aroma

[20]Lijadu E.A., 1998, *Ifa Mimo Alabalase, palerokinni, ondo*; J.A. Ife Oluwa Printing Press, 122.

[21]Fasina Agboola, 1989, *Ojulowo Oriki Ifa Apa Kinni*, Lagos: Project Publication Limited, 236.

A dIfáfúnelekoidere
Ifa divination was consulted for elekoIdare

Eyitioloro
Who would be rich

Kalele o toole
Before he/she becomes old

Oju mi n[poelekoidere
ElekoIdere is impoverished and suffering

Oun le lowolowobayi Can he/she be rich

Ni elekoideredIfási
That is the reason why he/she consulted Ifa

Won ni puponireolafún
He/she was told that he/she will be rich

Sugbonebo ni ko wa ru
But he/she should make sacrifice

O rubo, won sefafún un He/she made sacrifice, and the consultation was made.

Ko rowoIfánaa san
He/she was unable to pay

Ti awonawooree
Till the initiates

Fi sawo lo si
Went on Ifa sajourn

Apa OkunIlajiOsa
To the farthest place

Igba ti won o fi de lodunketa
By the time they will return after three years

Elekoidere ti dolowo…
ElekoIdere has become rich

*Ifá*in *Òwọ́nrín Bẹ̀túlà* (Yemitan ati Ogundele, 1970, 77)[22] also mentioned something about empowerment of Atamajubara aya Alágbẹ̀dẹ-Atamajubara the wife of a blacksmith. Here *Ifá* says:

Ọ̀wọ́nrín Bẹ̀túlà
OwonrinBetula

LódÍfáfúnAtamájúbàrà aya alágbẹ̀dẹ Made Ifa divination for Atamajubara alagbede's wife

Tíngbéọ́kọ́ lọ́rèétà
That is going to sell hoe

LọjàÈjìgbòmẹ́kùn
At Ejigbomekun's market

Níbi tí à áná
Where it can be priced

Tí a kìí ófèrè.
That we don't come back on time.

*Ifá*says, the husband a blacksmith will make hoes and his woman will carry them to the market for sale which we can call a division of labour or speciality where women are fully engaged. In fact, there are countless places in *Ifá* that relates with woman empowerment.

Coming to the secular, Aye (Oguntuyi, 1978, 23)[23] was one of the richest women in Ado Ekiti in her time to the extent that she was deified. According to the report gathered, her power as a rich lady was great and her fame as a warrior was also high. During her life, she was engaged in many businesses that was common in her days which included weaving of clothes, making and selling of dye materials, selling of kolanuts and many other minor works. She was a queen of her own quarter just as the king then (Yeyenirewu) was in her palace.Efunsetan Aniwura, the

[22]Oladipo Yemitan ati Olajide Ogundele, 1970, *Oju Osupa, Apa Keji*, Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 77.

[23]Oguntuyi A., 1978, *A Short History of Ado-Ekiti,* Nigeria: Bamgboye & Company Press Limited, 23.

Ìyálóde of Ibadan land (Akinwumi, 2010, 76-77)[24] was another powerful business magnate woman of her time. She had harem of slaves that worked for her and she also engaged in different kinds of businesses. As a result of her wealth, she was made the Ìyálóde of Ibadan land and a patron of the Anglican Church in Ibadan for her involvement in the expansion of Christianity in Ibadan. She wielded both political and economic power in Ibadan during her time. Report had it that her authority within Ibadan and her opposition to the then constituted authority of Aare Latoosa led him to plot her execution. This was revealed in the Yorùbá historical drama of Akinwunmi Isola (Olawale and Ogundipe, 2016,) [25]. Among other successful women that occupied that same post in Ibadan were Ìyálóde Iyaola, (18 74-1893) who occupied the position after Ìyálóde Efunsetan Aniwura. Directly at her back wereÌyálóde Lanlatu Asabi Giwa, 1894-1913, Ìyálóde Isale Òṣun,1914-1917, Ìyálóde Ronilatu Ajisomo,1917-1934, ÌyálódeRukayat Awosola Akande,1935-1948, Ìyálóde Abimbola,1948-1961,Iyalode Adebisi abeo,1961-1974,Ìyálóde WuraolaEsan,1975-1985,Ìyálóde HunmaniAlade,1985-1995,Ìyálóde AminatuAbiodun, 1995-2018 (Olubayo, 2013, https://m.facebook.com)[26] and currently, ÌyálódeTheresa Oyekanmi2018 to date (Akinwale, 2021,https://tribuneonline.com) [27]. Madam Efunroye Tinubu was a royal wife, political advisor, nationalist and economic powerhouse in her life time. She was an ambitious business tycoon not only in Nigeria but across West Africa and wielded economic and political power in Lagos and Abeokuta. She was a successful trader in salt, tobacco, palm oil, coconut oil and cotton (Foster, 2024,https://www.blackpast.org)[28].Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti was a political and feminist advocate. One can say she was the first feminist advocate in Yorùbá land. However, she was only advocating for the illiterate women vendors in Abeokuta 's open-air markets that were exploited by the then colonial authorities (https://www.britanica.com,)[29].

Comparative Analysis of Women Empowerment in the Past and the 21st Century African/YorùbáSocietyand the Implication for Future Development

Women are essential commodity in every given society, most especially in the area of reproduction and procreation. Though not that the writeris underrating the importance of men in this regard. After all it is impossible for any woman to procreate without her man's effort. This was confirmed by *Ifá*in *Ogbèyẹ̀kú*(Lijadu, 1998, 79)[30] that:

Ọkọ́ ni awo ilẹ̀
Hoe supports the ground

Abẹ niíṣeawoìwaorí
The shaving blade reckons with head

Àfi èyin àìmọ̀
Except you the unknown

Àfi èyin ahá tí abẹ́ rẹ̀ kò gba ìka
Except you the uncontrollable……

Ni íwípéakọ kọ́ niíṣeawoìwa abo
That says the male is not the female companion

[24]Akinwumi Isola,2010, *Efunsetan Aniwura, Iyalode Ibadan,* Ibadan: University Press Plc, 76-77

[25] Idowu F. Olawale and Sunday A. Ogunode, 2016, Gender and the Politics of Exclusion in Pre-Colonial Ibadan: The Case of Ìyálóde Efunsetan Aniwura, the Journal of Traditions and Beliefs, https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu, Retrieved on 28/04/2020

[26]Rotr Ajani Olubayo, 2013, the List of Recorded Iyalodes of Ibadan, https://m.facebook.com, Retrieved on 28/04/2020

[27] Akinwale Aboluwade, What I will tell Gov. Makinde when we Meet- New Ìyálóde of Ibadan, https://tribuneonline.com, Retrieved on 28/04/2020

[28] Hannah Foster, 2014, Madam Efunroye Tinubu (CA. 1805-1887), https://www.blackpast.org, Retrieved 12/04/2020

[29] Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, Nigerian Feminist and Political Leader, https://www.britanica.com, Retrieved on 28/04/2020

[30] Lijadu E.A. 1998, *Ifa Mimo Alabalase, palerokinni, ondo*; J.A. Ife Oluwa Printing Press, 79

Àsì fi èyin èké
Except you treacherous

Àfi èyin ọ̀dàlẹ̀
Except you betrayals

Àfi èyin òkóbó
Except you impotent

Nií wípé,
That says

Abo kọ́ ní kóire bò wá báòun The female is never the one bringing good fortune to him

Njẹ́kíni ire tí abo ní ò?
What good fortune does a female has?

Akọ kìí dalẹ̀ abo
Male never betrays female

Àfiẹnu, àfiojú
Save the mouth, save the eyes

Abo kìí dalẹ̀akọ
Female never betrays male

Àfiẹnu.
Except mouth

An indication that both male and female have roles to play in this regard. As a result, every sex is indispensable to the formation of a family (Familusi&Oke,2019, https://www.researchgate.net)[31]. However, the power of procreation is vested in the hand of woman. She takes care of the baby from conception, birth to maturity. In the contemporary society where civilization and education have taken over so many things, a woman will give birth, take care of the kid for three months of her maternity leave and leaves the rest with her house help to take charge while she is away to the office. Whereas in the past, this is the duty of the eldest woman in the family (known as *Ìyá ní káà*) to do this. This is due to herenormous experience as a mother.

In the past, Yorùbá women were preoccupied majorly with housekeeping and other subordinate roles to those of men. There were no agitations for competition. As a result, they were able to train and monitor the behaviour of their children. They direct their paths to the right directions because they believe that these children were their tomorrow and the reason for marriage. In contrast, contemporary women do not see things this way again. Due to western education, civilization and competition with their male counterparts all in the name of empowerment and gender equality, it is now the headache of the house helps to do this. Some women that their jobs are with high demanding and living in cities like Lagos, Abuja and Kano where they would have to leave home very early and come back late may not be able to interact with their children until weekend when they would behome. As a result of this, early child education that such children supposed to have would be lacking.

In the past, it was exclusive duty of every woman to cook for her family. In the process of doing this, all the girls in the family will know how to cook and handle other housechores. However, contemporary women will leave the responsibility to the househelp where service is available, clean the house, the care of the kids and some other housechores if the husband shifted attention to such a house help, the madam in the house would be crying about that her house help has snatched her husband. Again, in a house where there is no house help, 21st century woman would expect her husband to share these responsibilities with her without considering other responsibilities that the man is shouldering in the family like paying the rent, utility bills, feeding allowance for the family members, school fees and so on. All these are believed by the contemporary women as the sole responsibility of man. The question then is, if it is the responsibility of man to take care of those aforementioned, what are the responsibility of women if they cannot cook, take

[31] Familusi O.O. & Oke O.P, 2019, Changing Roles of Yoruba women as an issue in National Development and Family Stability, https://www.researchgate.net retrieved 19/4/2020

care of their children and other household tasks in such a relationship particularly in Africa?

It is a common practice today as against the past for husband and wives to stay apart in other cities, states or even countries due to the nature of their works since women now involved themselves in the profession that were once controlled by men as a result of agitation for women empowerment and gender equality. They have moved away from traditional politics of the past to a full-blown prominence in modern day politics. As rightly observed by Familusi and Oke[32], all major political parties in Nigeria (not in Yorùbá land alone) recognise the role women can play in politics. As a result, there are women leaders at various levels to help mobilized.

This women empowerment is also noticeable in the religious circle too. Except in traditional religious sects where women still abide to play their roles underground where it is possible, in Christianity, women empowerment has created many positions such as office of the wife of the pastor, priest, general overseer. Therefore, we now have such tittles like Mummy G.O., Mother in IsraelMummy in the Lord, Mummy yard etc. even where are many churches today that women are the general overseers in Yorùbá Society (Bp-Relate, 2016,https://beliversportal.com)[33].

In Educational sector that one may say is the brain child behind this agitation for equality and women empowerment, Yorùbá women have achieved a lot. They have moved away from traditional method of education to a conventional one. Today, there are lots of women holders in all the fields of studies available in any diversity in the world. As a teacher in the university, I observed that the population of women in all my courses are far higher than men. This is applicable in nearly all the faculties and departments existing in the university. This is a clear departure from the past.

One may ask, what is the implication of this agitation on individual involved, the family and the community at large? There is no doubt that women have and are still contributing greatly to the wheel of progress of the family and the society economically, socially and religious wise, at large in every continent of the world. However, one may ask, of what benefit is the effect of this contributions to the family and the society at large? Economically, because of the economic down turn in the society today many women are the breadwinners of their family. Thereby taken over the role and duty of men in providing for the upkeep of the family. As a result of this economic power in their lords, many of them do not have regards for their spouse any longer. Many men who cannot bear the insult will quietly park their things out. Sometimes it is even the women that will bow out of the relationship since they know they can handle their lives without the influence of men. This is the reason why there are a lot of single parenting in this generation. The children of such broken relationship will surely bear the brunt of the breakage. Many of such children usually lack basic training they supposed to have particularly during their formative period. Even in some homes that the couple are still able to manage and tolerate one another, in a situation where both parents do not have time to stay with the children at this stage, some things will happen. At the end, the society will have to face the consequences of such children with national behaviours.

Today, there are high and low class economically empowered with good jobs, fine houses, good rides and fat bank accounts that are still single at 40 or 50 years of age. Some are not thinking of marriage while those who are interested could not get one due to the fact that no man in Africa particularly in Yorùbá and is willing to marry a woman that he won't be able to control as the head of the family.

Politically, though the kind of government we run in Nigeria today is not a new one. However, the way we run it is quite amazing. Nigeria today

[32] Familusi O.O. & Oke O.P, 2019, Changing Roles of Yoruba women as an issue in National Development and Family Stability, https://www.researchgate.net retrieved 19/4/2020

[33] Bp-Relate, 2016, Biography of Pastor Mrs. Foluke Adeboye (Mummy G.O.), https://beliversportal.com, retrieved on 27/04/2020

don't have settled home and the effects of their empowerment is not much felt. As earlier said, there is no contention between men and women as far as traditional Yorùbá religion is concerned. But in Christianity as an example, there is this struggle for equality the of which their children bear. They had no time to take care of home. What we should note is that Olódùmarè the Creator deliberately designed men to be the head for him to be responsible. Otherwise, man has nothing at stake in any relationship. It is the woman that will bear the testimony of the sex she had together with man when it results into pregnancy of which the man must have forgotten few minutes or days after the intercourse. It is the woman that will show the whole world the result in terms of baby bump. She goes through the labour pain and nurture the child. Of all these responsibilities, if women are still contending with men in regards to gender equality, then something is wrong somewhere. Besides, looking at the societies where women take priority in every home, the children in most of these societies are often rotten eggs. The children are the ones dictating to their parents with little or no experience. As a result of this freedom, they are often involved in criminal activities drug and other social vices. This is as a result of their compassion love and remembrance pains they went through to raise these children that may not allow them discipline them as required of them particularly at early stage of their character formation.

Conclusion

Whether by God or societal designs, God and the society have designed roles for each sex. What is left is for each sex to abide by the role assigned to him or her either by God or the society. Women empowerment is not an alien tradition to African/Yorùbá. Every Yorùbá woman is empowered in diverse ways that allows them take care of their homes which is the primary assignment as mothers to raise good children for the society. Therefore, agitation for empowerment by the 21st century woman is destroying families, the effect of which the society is contending with now. In traditional Yorùbá religion and society, there were no such agitation. Every woman has her role to play in the society, no mix up, which allows peace to reign in Yorùbá society.

The dimension at which humanity is agitating for women empowerment to attain gender equality suggests that something is wrong somewhere. In the past, there was nothing of that nature because the then women knew that the empowerment that 21st century women are looking for is with them physically and spiritually. What they cannot get physically, spiritually, they get it and that was the reason why there was no agitation then. Contemporary women have lost this power through their indolent. What they lost voluntarily is what they are fighting for today. Through spiritual awakening, they can still regain this status without much agitation if they can go back to their duty designed for them by the Creator and the society, they live in. men and women in the past in all the continent of Africa knew their duties and limits in all things they do.This can still be emulated for a general peace and harmony in each family in Yoruba society and in the entire African continent.Those, whose society can accommodate such agitation, let them continueprovided their countries can accommodate that. This is aptly captured in Yoruba adage says *àpọ́nlé òkú ni bó o dọ́run ko ṣọ̀run un re, tó bá wú kó dọ̀run kó bọ̀run jẹ́, b'árá ọ̀run bá ti gbà ni*-It is when the dead is honoured that he/she is advised to do or behave well in heaven, if he/she likes let him/her cause damage in heaven if those people he/she meets there allows it.

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INFLUENCE OF NON-LIFE INSURANCE SECTOR CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ON THE INCREASE OF TOTAL ASSETS IN NIGERIA'S INSURANCE MARKET (2000 TO 2022)

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KEYWORDS
Claims settlement, Insurance industry development, Insurance market, Non-life insurance, Total assets

ABSTRACT
The study looked at the influence of non-life insurance sector claims settlement on the increase of total assets in Nigeria's insurance market from 2000 to 2022. The data set utilized for this research is secondary data, consisting of 22 years' yearly series of chosen variables from 2000 to 2022, obtained from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the NAICOM statistics bulletin. The study used the Philip-Perron (PP) unit root test and the Ordinary least squares (multiple regressions) method with the E-view package to calculate the coefficient of the independent variable, non-life insurance claims settlement, on the total assets of the insurance industry as dependent variables. The hypothesis demonstrates that if each index for non-life insurance claims settlement is held constant, total insurance assets growth in Nigeria will increase by an intercept value of 0.0000246 basis points. Additionally, it is seen that non-life insurance claims settlement has a regression coefficient of 0.010995, which is a positive coefficient. The Adjusted Co-efficient of Determination, which was 0.050918, shows that in the model used, the independent variable. The p-value of non-life insurance claims settlement impacting total insurance asset growth in Nigeria is 0.8621, which above the level of significance of 0.05. It indicated that there was statistical insignificance. According to the study's results, non-life insurance sector claims settlement has no substantial influence on the insurance industry's overall asset growth rate.

Introduction

General insurance, often known as non-life insurance, covers the mitigation of all loss effects caused by incidents involving numerous entities such as ideas, contracts, events, facilities, and property. Non-life insurance is divided into eight categories: fire insurance, general accident insurance, automobile insurance, marine and aviation insurance, oil and gas insurance, engineering insurance, bonds credit guarantee and ship insurance, and miscellaneous insurance. The non-life insurance business contributes to economic growth on a local and global scale in many nations. Given its links to many economic sectors such as industrial, transportation, agricultural, and trade, its importance to general human activities is growing across all age groups as dangers in all categories rise (Zyka and Tomori, 2014). The potential of the non-life insurance industry to contribute to growth is dependent on its capacity. The National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) predicted that the industry's total assets will be N2.13 trillion by the end of 2021 (Otaru, 2022). Furthermore, it revealed that the sector's gross premium income exceeded N630.36 billion last year, with net claims totaling N238.05 billion. Rasaq Salami, Head of Corporate Communication at NAICOM, recently disclosed these numbers, which show a 16 percent rise in industry assets between June 2020 and September 2021, from N1.8 trillion to N2.09 billion.

In general, "growth" refers to a gain in size, quantity, or degree, indicating a considerable improvement in certain areas of measurement. Thus, the expansion of the insurance sector represents a significant shift in the magnitude of industry-wide characteristics like as premiums, contingency reserves, claims, investment, and assets. A typical indicator is growth rate, which is the percentage change of a certain variable over a specific time and context (Chen, 2019). It measures the yearly change in a variable as a percentage, with individual businesses having different growth rates, such as the insurance industry, which may be evaluated using indicators such as contingency reserves, claims, and assets.

Internal and external variables might impact the possibility of the insurance industry's continued expansion. While empirical studies mostly focus on external variables influencing insurance industry growth, less attention has been paid to internal elements such as the influence of non-life insurance claims settlement. The insurance sector creates premiums and investments from premium revenue, acquiring other economic resources that may be used to generate cash flow, cut expenditures, or increase sales in the future. Simultaneously, it pays claims, demonstrating the importance of entire assets in insurance operations. The non-life insurance industry follows this pattern.

Claims settlement occupies a unique place among other factors in the insurance industry. It is thought that claims settlement can affect public view of the insurance business (Otaru, 2022). In Nigeria, insurance operations include premium generating, investments, reserves, and claims payment. Successfully carrying out these operations can result in significant improvements in the industry's well-being, as evidenced by profits for insurance companies, dividends for shareholders, claims for insured parties, employee compensation, increased economic confidence, financial deepening, and industry innovations. These manifestations act as indications of the insurance industry's expansion.

While studies on the determinants of insurance industry development have primarily focused on external factors such as exchange rates, savings rates, foreign direct investment, and interest rates (Epetimehin and Fatoki (2015), Nyairo (2015), Oba and Onuoha (2018), and Nyamu (2016). There is little empirical data to show how internal variables, such as sector-specific activities, affect overall industry growth. As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate the substantial influence of non-life insurance sector claims settlement on the

increase of total assets in the Nigerian insurance business.

Research Question

How does non-life insurance sector claims settlement affect the growth of the insurance industry's total assets?

Statement of Hypothesis

The settlement of non-life insurance claims has no substantial influence on the growth rate of the insurance industry's overall assets.

Theoretical Framework

The endogenous growth theory

The endogenous growth hypothesis, an economic concept, holds that economic expansion is caused by internal mechanisms inside a system rather than external forces (Kenton, 2018). The idea proposes that increasing a country's human capital will fuel economic growth by enabling the development of new technologies and more efficient means of production. In the mid-1980s, a group of growth theorists were unsatisfied with the conventional explanations for long-term growth caused by external variables. Inspired by Paul Romer's work in 1986, they proposed a model that substituted the external growth component, unexplained technological advancement, with explicit growth factors within the model.

Endogenous growth economists believe that increasing productivity is directly related to quicker innovation and greater human capital investment. As a result, they call for government and private sector organizations to support innovation projects while also offering incentives for individuals and enterprises to embrace creativity (Kenton, 2018). According to this idea, knowledge-based businesses, notably telecommunications, software, and high-tech sectors, play critical roles due to their expanding impact in established and emerging economies. Endogenous growth theory posits that government measures may boost a country's growth rate by encouraging strong market rivalry and boosting product and process innovation. Capital investment generates rising returns to scale, particularly in infrastructure, education, health, and telecommunications (Kenton, 2018).

Private sector investment in research and development is a key driver of technological innovation. Protecting property rights and patents is critical for encouraging firms and entrepreneurs to engage in R&D activities. Investment in human capital is an important component of growth, and government policies should foster entrepreneurship as a method of starting new enterprises and, eventually, producing new employment, investment, and innovation. According to the hypothesis, the insurance industry's subunits or subsectors can stimulate development inside the industry by driving it (Kenton, 2018). As internal units of the industry, their effective operations can have an impact on the growth of the entire industry.

Methodology

Research Design

This study uses the ex-post facto research design. This is regarded as suitable since it deals with data that has previously occurred (Onwumere, 2009), as historical data from 1996 to 2019 was utilized.

Area of Study

The research focuses on Nigeria. It is a nation in Western Africa. The country was founded in 1960 after obtaining independence from its colonial overlords (the British). The country has a presidential system of governance. It contains 36 states and a federal capital territory. The

nation is split into six geopolitical areas.

Sources of Data

Secondary data were employed in the study. Data were gathered from the Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin and the National Insurance Commission's yearly releases ofvarious years.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study was defined as a big collection of persons or items that are the primary subject of a scientific question (Explorable, 2022). The survey included all operators in Nigeria's insurance business. There was no sample size employed in this investigation. Given that data on the variables utilized in the study had already been created and prepared for use, there was no need to create a sample from which to collect new data.

Model Specification

The models for the study are as follows:

GRTASS = f (NLICS) (1)

The model is specified as follows:

$GRTASS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 NLICS + \mu$ (2)

Where GRTASS: = growth rate of total assets of the insurance industry

NLICS = Non-life insurance sector claims settlement

β_0 = constant parameter, β_1 = coefficient of NLICS, μ = the error term

Description of Variables

Dependent variable*:*

Total assets: This refers to the total monetary value of all assets owned by the entire insurance industry in Nigeria

Independent variable:

Non-life insurance sector claims settlement: This refers to the total monetary value of all claims settled by the non-life assurance sector in the Nigerian insurance industry.

Method of Data Analysis

The data was examined using Ordinary Least Squares Regression. Ordinary least squares (OLS), also known as linear least squares, is a method for estimating unknown parameters in a linear regression model. The goal is to minimize the sum of the squares of the differences between the observed responses (values of the variable being predicted) in the given data set and those predicted by a linear function of a set of explanatory variables. However, to avoid incorrect and misleading regression results, the study performed a stationarity test.

Results

Presentation of Data

Data on growth rate ratio of non-life insurance claims settlementand assets.

Table1: Independent and Dependent Variables

Year	NLIFE	ASS
2000	1,804.20	52.63
2001	2,315.90	72.11
2002	2,818.70	142.19
2003	3,040.20	172.29
2006	3,476.20	198.13
2005	3,733.40	226.24
2006	20,735.00	260.07
2007	6,196.10	283.96
2008	9,935.50	271.88
2009	13,040.30	314.95
2010	13,219.00	364.74
2011	13,205.60	418.45
2012	12,350.10	493.45
2013	12,953.80	505.69
2014	12,932.10	547.75
2015	12,860.40	565.54
2016	12,774.10	647.65
2017	12,880.10	683.44
2018	12,827.10	710.63
2019	12,845.10	750.42
2020	14,563.82	789.43
2021	16,563.73	821.16
2022	17,432.56	838.41

Source: *CBN Statistical Bulletin, 2022, NDIC Reports; NAICOM Annual Report 2022.*

Where:

NLIFE = Life Insurance Benefits

CLA = insurance industry total claims settlement growth rate

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

	NLIFE	ASS
Mean	5.99E-05	2.52E-05
Median	1.06E-05	-5.00E-05
Maximum	0.003627	0.000610
Minimum	-0.002923	-0.000570
Std. Dev.	0.001234	0.000325
Skewness	0.425759	0.232718
Kurtosis	5.832409	2.523835

Jarque-Bera	7.654170	0.387944
Probability	0.021773	0.823681
Sum	0.001259	0.000530
Sum Sq. Dev.	3.05E-05	2.11E-06
Observations	22	22

***Source**: Computation from Author's Eview 10 output, 2022*

The mean of the distribution measures the data's aggregating tendency. The means for NLIFE and ASS are 5.99E-05 and 2.52E-05, respectively. The median represents the dispersion of variables in a distribution. The median for NLIFE and ASS is 1.06E-05 and -5.00E-05, respectively. The standard deviations of the variables are compared to their respective means. The standard deviations for NLIFE and ASS are all greater than their respective means. This demonstrates that the volatility of each variable is substantial. Skewness determines the data set's leanness to one side of the distribution, which might be favorably or negatively skewed. The skewness estimates for all variables are positive. This demonstrates that the variables' probability distributions have wider tails to the right of the distribution.

Stationarity Test

A stationarity test was performed to protect against false regression results.

Table 3: Result of Stationarity test at level

Variable	Phillips-Perron test statistic	Critical value @ 5%	Order of Integration	P-value
ASS	-12.99159	-1.958088	1(1)	0.0000
INV	-3.597350	-1.958088	1(1)	0.0010
NLIFE	-8.925868	-3.658446	1(1)	0.0000
PRE	-3.529028	-1.958088	1(1)	0.0012

***Source:** Computation from Author's Eviews 10 output, 2024*

Table 3 shows that the time series that were stationary at the initial difference were LIFE and ASS. This is seen by each Phillips-Perron test statistic at first difference being smaller than its corresponding Critical value at 5%. This is supported by their individual p-values of less than 0.05 (the level of significance), indicating statistical significance.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 4: Regression Result for Test of Hypothesis one

Dependent Variable: ASS

Method: Least Squares

Date: 03/05/24 Time: 04:47

Sample (adjusted): 3 23

Included observations: 22 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	2.46E-05	7.28E-05	0.337501	0.7394
NLIFE	0.010995	0.062464	0.176028	0.8621

R-squared	0.001628	Mean dependent var	2.52E-05
Adjusted R-squared	-0.050918	S.D. dependent var	0.000325
S.E. of regression	0.000333	Akaike info criterion	-13.08562
Sum squared resid	2.11E-06	Schwarz criterion	-12.98614
Log likelihood	139.3990	Hannan-Quinn criter.	-13.06403
F-statistic	0.030986	Durbin-Watson stat	2.319204
Prob(F-statistic)	0.862135		

Source: *Author's Eviews 10 Output, 2024*

Table 4 reveals that the p-value of 0.8621 exceeds the level of significance of 0.05. Thus, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that non-life insurance claims settlement has no major influence on the growth rate of the insurance industry's total assets.

Discussion

The hypothesis one test results suggest that if each non-life insurance claims settlement index is maintained constant, overall insurance asset growth in Nigeria will increase by an intercept value of 0.0000246 basis points. Non-life insurance claims settlement has a regression coefficient of 0.010995. This represents a positive coefficient. It demonstrates that there is a growing relationship between non-life insurance claim settlement and overall insurance asset growth in Nigeria.That is, for every unit increase in non-life insurance claims settlement, overall insurance asset growth in Nigeria will rise by 0.010995 basis points. The Adjusted Co-efficient of Determination of 0.050918 indicates that in the model employed, the independent variable (non-life insurance claims settlement) can only explain 5.0918 percent of the variance seen in total insurance asset growth in Nigeria. The remaining 94.9082 percent can be attributable to factors not included in the model. The p-value of non-life insurance claims settlement impacting total insurance asset growth in Nigeria is 0.8621, which above the level of significance of 0.05. It indicates that there was statistical insignificance. In other words, there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This statistical insignificance in the hypothesis three test indicates that non-life insurance claims settlement had a minor impact on overall insurance asset growth in Nigeria. This conclusion contradicted Djamaluddin, Budiman, and Herawaty (2019), who found that firm size had a substantial beneficial influence on profitability.

Conclusion

Nigeria's insurance business includes life, non-life, reinsurance, and takaful sectors. The non-life sector covers a wide range of economic activities. In such a scenario, the non-life sector may have a big impact on the overall industry because of its broad coverage and ability to produce significantly more assets than other sectors. In keeping with this assumption, the study's findings led to the conclusion that non-life insurance sector claims settlement had no substantial influence on the increase of overall insurance industry assets. This is based on a p-value of 0.8621, which above the criterion of significance of 0.05.

Recommendations

When faced with an unexpected situation, people in our society seek to others with whom they have relationships for support. The non-life insurance business should modify its plans to include incentive elements to persuade more people to get life insurance. This can help the insurance sector expand.

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KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF MODERN CONTRACEPTIVES AMONG MOTHERS OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE IN ENUGU STATE; SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA

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KEYWORDS
Knowledge of modern contraceptives, Use of modern contraceptives, Mothers of reproductive age, Enugu State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT
Evidence from various studies shows that there is a high level of knowledge and awareness of contraceptive methods in Nigeria, yet the rate of use remains low. This study explored broadly the level of knowledge and extent of utilization of modern contraceptives among mothers of reproductive age in Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria. Questionnaires (n=1200), in-depth interviews (n=6), and focus group discussions (n=96) were used to collect data from three local government areas (LGAs). The results showed high levels of knowledge (87.0%). However, only 47.0% used a type of modern contraceptive. The oral contraceptive pill was the highest mentioned (333 mentions) of modern contraceptives. Chi-square values showed that level of education, type of residence, number of living children, and income were significantly related to the use of modern contraceptives and that mothers of reproductive age with higher education (secondary and tertiary) tended to use modern contraceptives more than their counterparts. Urban residents used modern contraceptives more than the ruralites. The number of living children also influenced the use of modern contraceptives, and income also influenced the use of modern contraceptives because the higher the income of a mother of reproductive age in Enugu State, the more likely she may use a modern contraceptive ($p< 0.05$). Qualitative data indicated that the majority of married mothers of reproductive age who used any other modern contraceptive aside from the male condom often do

so without the knowledge or consent of their spouses due to male dominance and some patriarchal values/beliefs. This study highlights the need for males to be actively involved in the reproductive health of females and helps to understand the essence of the use of modern contraceptives; this will invariably increase the utilization of modern contraceptives among mothers of reproductive age in Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria. Finally, this study is different from various related studies because it revealed that male dominance is a major cultural factor that impedes the usage of modern contraceptives, unlike other studies that may focus on the fear of side effects.

Introduction

Contraceptives are essential to maternal, newborn, and child health services (World Health Organization [WHO], 2015). They play a significant role in fertility reduction by facilitating the spacing and limiting of pregnancies in women of reproductive age (Bogale et al., 2011).

Contraceptive use, particularly modern contraceptive use, remains prominent in demographic and health literature because of its numerous health benefits to women and families, such as preventing unintended pregnancies, promoting healthy birth spacing, reducing lifetime risk of maternal deaths, and enhancing the attainment of sustainable development goals (Bongaarts et al., 2016; Ahmed et al., 2012).

Singh and Darroch (2012) reported that the use of modern contraceptives in Sub-Saharan Africa will prevent 12 million unintended pregnancies, which in turn will avert almost seven million unplanned births, almost four million abortions, two million miscarriages, and 35,000 maternal deaths, and prevent an estimated 397,000 infant deaths. Fertility regulation also significantly increases women's access to educational and empowerment opportunities (Akinyemi et al., 2015).

Evidence from various studies shows that there is a high level of knowledge and awareness of contraceptive methods in Nigeria, yet the rate of use remains low (Monjok et al., 2010; Olugbenga et al., 2011). The predominantly high fertility rates in developing countries (Population Reference Bureau [PRB], 2017), especially in sub-Saharan Africa, are connected to low contraceptive use (Fagbamigbe et al., 2011; PRB, 2012; Lawani et al., 2014).

Women's knowledge and ability to use contraceptives and to determine whether and when to have children enhances their education and employment chances. This, in turn, improves their income, family stability, mental health, happiness, and the well-being of their children (Sonfield et al., 2013). Some studies (e.g., Bogale et al., 2011) have revealed a preference for modern contraceptives like hormonal and non-hormonal methods are preferred above traditional methods like periodic abstinence and coitus interruptus because they are more efficacious and are associated with lower failure rates.

In order to promote reproductive rights and gender equality, the need to improve the uptake of modern contraceptive methods has been consistently reiterated in the last few decades (Austin, 2015; Fagbamigbe & Ojebuyi, 2017). Women with an unmet need for modern contraception account for 84% of unintended pregnancies in developing countries (Bamgboye & Ajayi, 2016). The need to ensure universal access to modern contraception is particularly acute in Nigeria, where population control and women empowerment are crucial for

sustainable development (Egede et al., 2015; Feyisetan & Bankole, 2009; Kollehlon, 2003).

Knowledge of contraceptive methods is an essential precondition for its utilization. Morgan and Heather (2010) posit that women may not use any modern contraceptive method to regulate fertility not because they lack knowledge of modern contraceptives but because they experience various barriers posed by some socio-cultural and institutional obstacles to the adoption of fertility control mechanisms. Such barriers may include religious and cultural factors, lack of access, opposition to use by spouses, fear of health risks, and side effects of modern contraceptives (Carr & Khan, 2004). Additionally, women's sexual and reproductive health rights are often deeply engrained in societal values about women's sexuality. Patriarchal concepts of women's roles within the family mean that women are often valued based on their ability to reproduce. Pregnancy or repeated pregnancies spaced too closely together, often as the result of efforts to produce male offspring because of the preference for sons, has a devastating impact on women's health with sometimes fatal consequences (United Nations [UN], 2017).

There are several obstacles to contraceptive use in Nigeria. Studies in Nigeria and elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa have shown that significant obstacles to adopting modern contraceptive (MC) behavior include myths, misinformation, rumors, and unconfirmed information passed within social networks (Ankomah et al., 2011). The primary sources of information on family planning in the country are friends or siblings, media, formal education, and health workers (Ankomah et al., 2011). Additionally, several supply-related factors limit contraceptive use. These include the erratic supply of modern contraceptives, gaps in the logistics supply chain, donor dependence, poor quality services, and a dearth of skilled health personnel to provide family planning services (Federal Government of Nigeria [FGN], 2014). These are in addition to the many socio-cultural and demographic drivers of high fertility.

Examining barriers to contraceptive use among women of reproductive ages in a southeastern state where patriarchal values are dominant is therefore of crucial importance because many studies have found that there is a high level of knowledge of modern contraceptives but low utilization. This study thus seeks to ascertain knowledge and the extent of utilization (use) of modern contraceptives among mothers of reproductive ages in Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria, to either back up the other various studies or bring bare new findings. Although there has been a considerable amount of research on contraceptives, to the best knowledge of the research, very few have directly addressed actual mothers instead of generalizing to women of childbearing age, not considering if they have ever given birth.

The Health Belief Model (HBM) and the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) were adopted for this study and provided the anchorage. The HBM was first developed in the 1950s by Social Psychologists Hochbaum, Rosenstock, and Kegels. On the other hand, Albert Bandura started the SCT as Social Learning Theory (SLT) in the 1960s and developed into the SCT in 1986. These theories best explained the essence of this study on the "knowledge and use of modern contraceptives among mothers of reproductive age (15-49 years). The HBM holds that health behavior is a function of an individual's socio-demographic characteristics (Like –sex, age, residence, occupation, marital status, income, educational status, number of children, etc.), knowledge, and attitudes. On the other hand, the SCT considers a person's past experiences, which factors into whether behavioral action will occur. These past experiences influence reinforcements, expectations, and expectancies, all of which shape whether a person will engage in a specific behavior and why a person engages in that behavior. These two theories best explain the knowledge and attitudes mothers of reproductive age have about modern contraceptives and consequently explain the reasons women of this group (mothers of reproductive age) use or do not use modern contraceptives in Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria.

Methods

Study area and setting

The study area was Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria. The name of the State is derived from its capital city – "Enugwu," – meaning "top of the hill." Enugu State comprises social groups that are patrilineal and patrilocal, which encourages son preference because it is the male child that will remain to extend the family bloodline when girls have been married off. This kinship system might subject women to frequent pregnancies as families attempt to bear their desired number of male children, thereby posing cultural barriers to the use of modern contraceptives. Owing to this backdrop, research on women's reproductive health became essential to ascertain the current trends.

Design and Sampling Techniques

A cross-sectional survey involving a mixed-methods approach was adopted for this study. Ultimately, mixed methods research is about heightened knowledge and validity (Johnson & Christensen, 2017; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). The sample for the questionnaire consisted of 1200 mothers of reproductive age (15 – 49 years who were purposively selected using the study's selection criteria and 200 respondents drawn from each community visited; six communities were studied; 200 respondents multiplied by six communities resulted in 1200 respondents) both single and married women who had at least given birth to a child. This study also accommodated widows who are within reproductive ages because most widows still conceive amidst their spouses' absence. Again, some women are often encouraged or even persuaded to remain in their natal families and conceive without getting married. This is often done in the absence of a male offspring. In addition to this sample, 48 males and 48 females, totaling 96 respondents, participated in focus group discussions (FGDs), and six participated in in-depth interviews (IDIs).

Multistage sampling was employed by using the three senatorial zones in Enugu State and choosing one local government area out of each zone, making the total LGAs selected three. One urban and one rural community were selected from each LGA by separating the urban communities to be studied individually, using the simple random technique (balloting). This totaled the study communities six – Enugu North: Nsukka LGA – Nsukka town (urban community) and Lejja (rural community); Enugu East: Isi-Uzo LGA – Ikem (urban community) and Isu (rural community); Enugu West: Oji-River (urban community) and Ugwunzu (Agbalenyi) (rural community). Two hundred respondents were purposively selected to meet the study criteria. The questionnaire was administered.

The FGD was used to obtain information from those respondents who did not participate in filling out the questionnaire. It was also used to accommodate the views and opinions of males. This was necessary to obtain a more in-depth knowledge of the research issue(s). Sixteen respondents (eight males and eight females) from each community made up the FGD group, and information was obtained from females (15-49 years) and males (30 years and above). The IDI was used to obtain information from health workers. One health worker was selected from each community's health center/family planning center, which amounted to six health workers.

Data collection

The study was conducted between June 2019 and February 2020. A total of 1200 questionnaires were administered among mothers of reproductive age. In addition, IDIs and FGDs were held. Before the actual data collection, the study communities were visited, and information on how and when the research would be conducted was discussed with community heads. During data collection, white chalk was used to mark the houses where the respondents administered questionnaires. The five male and female research assistants marked each house where an eligible respondent was found – E.R. meaning "Eligible Respondent." The trend continued till the number of respondents needed for the study was reached for each community. The questionnaire was administered through an extensive review of some related literature on the knowledge and use of modern contraceptives. The questionnaire was face-validated by three experts in the field of study. The reliability of the

questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's alpha, which obtained a reliability of 0.89, and the instrument was judged reliable.

FGDs and IDIs were conducted by using structured guides. The information obtained was triangulated with the quantitative data. The consent of the participants was sought and obtained, thereby recording FGD and IDI sessions. The recording was audio and hand (note taking) records. A Sony tape recorder was used alongside two smart phones as backups in case of any technical eventualities. The note taker recorded the respondents' verbal and nonverbal (gestures) cues in both FGD and IDI sessions. The lead researcher moderated all the FGD and IDI sessions. Some FGDs were held at community halls, others on church premises, and just a session in the market square on a Sunday afternoon. The study used contact persons responsible for selecting participants for the FGDs and IDIs, following the given criteria, and arranging session dates and venues. These contact persons were well-known persons in the communities, and this strategy enhanced the success of the sessions.

Data processing and analysis

Data editing and validation were done immediately on the field and upon return. This method ensured that specific errors were detected and corrected accordingly. The data was computer-processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Univariate and bivariate analyses were carried out. Logistic regression was also used for prediction.

The qualitative data was analyzed using transcriptions from the audio records. The audios were transcribed verbatim. Those that were recorded in Igbo were translated into English for general understanding. The transcripts were studied, and a codebook was subsequently developed, which reflected various themes. Emerging ideas were then analyzed according to themes. Areas of consensus or divergence were identified. Statements with contextual importance or connotations were extracted as illustrative quotes to complement the qualitative data. ATLAS-ti, computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), was partially used for qualitative analysis.

Results

The study used 1,200 respondents. Married mothers comprised most respondents (66.9%), and single mothers were at the lowest percentage (1.6%).

The majority (50.4%) of the respondents was aged between 15 and 32 and was classified as older mothers of reproductive age. Younger mothers constituted 49.6% of the respondents (595).

The majority of the respondents, 403 (33.6%), had a secondary school education, followed by 366 (30.5%) with a Primary school education and 256 (21.3%) with tertiary education. The lowest frequency (175) and percentage (14.6) of respondents did not acquire formal education.

None of the respondents were Moslems, and most of 1170 (97.5%) were Christians. A minority of 30 (2.5%) were African Traditionalists.

Most of the respondents, 490 (40.8%), were in business/trading. This was followed by Artisans, 319 (26.6%), and farmers, 260 (21.7%). The lowest number of respondents, 131 (10.9%), were public/civil servants.

Most respondents, 581 (48.5%), earned or were given between ₦1000 and ₦50,000 and are classified among the low-income/allowance earners. This was followed by those respondents 400 (33.3%) who earned or were given between ₦51,000 and ₦99,000. The lowest was those respondents 219 (18.2%) who earned or were given between ₦100,000 and above.

Respondents were distributed equally among rural and urban dwellers. Mothers of reproductive age who have ever had between 1 and 5 children were in the majority (8%), while those with six children and above were in the minority (92%).

Mothers of reproductive age whose living children are within number(s) 1-5 were in the majority (95%). In comparison, mothers of

reproductive age whose living children fall within number 6 and above were in the minority (5%).

Only married people were used for the interview. None of the IDI respondents were single, separated, divorced, or widowed. Among the FGD respondents, all the males were married, and only 4 of the females were widowed, compared to 34 who were married. The IDI male respondent was within the age range of 50yrs – 54yrs. Among the female IDI respondents, two were within the age range of 40 yrs – 44 yrs and 45 yrs – 49 yrs, and only one health worker was within the age range of 50 yrs – 54 y Among the FGD male respondents, the highest number (12) of respondents were within the ages of 40yrs – 44yrs and just one male FGD respondent was within the age range of 55yrs – 59yrs. Among the FGD female respondents, the highest number (14) of respondents were within the age range of 25yrs – to 29yrs, and the lowest number (2) were within the age range of 45yrs – to 49yrs. Only those who have acquired tertiary education participated in the IDI. This was possible because only top health workers participated in the IDI. Among the male FGD participants, the majority (16) acquired Primary education, and the minority (6) acquired tertiary education. Among the female FGD respondents, the majority (17) had acquired Secondary education, and the minority (8) had acquired Primary education. This shows that higher educated respondents were found among the FGD female respondents, and the highest educated with tertiary education were the IDI respondents.

A significant number of respondents have heard of modern contraceptives, with a majority of 87%. Respondents who have never heard of modern contraceptives comprised 11% of the population. This is quite encouraging because awareness is the first step in using it.

A majority (982) of the respondents have heard of the male condom as a modern contraceptive. This was followed by 691 respondents who had heard of the female condom, 615 respondents who had heard of oral contraceptive pills, and 435 respondents who had heard of sterilization. The least (1 respondent) heard of the modern contraceptive grouped under emergency contraceptives, maybe because of the term used.

IDI respondents have all heard of the modern contraceptives listed in the study. This is not surprising because they are health workers. On the other hand, among the FGD participants from both urban and rural communities, all the modern contraceptives listed were recorded to have ever been heard of by various participants.

A majority (52.8%) of mothers of reproductive age got their first information on modern contraceptives from medical personnel. This was followed by those respondents (30.8%) who got their first information about modern contraceptives from friends. This result might be because of how medical personnel in Enugu State create and raise awareness among people, especially mothers of reproductive age, who visit health centers on various occasions. Some views from the IDI respondents back up this assertion:

> *We, the health workers, give health talks during antenatal days and immunization. We also go to churches to reach out to mothers in their reproductive stages and to everybody. We also visit mothers during August annual meetings (**IDI respondent, Female, Isu, 46 years**).*

> *Health talks are conducted in this health center because we know the importance of family planning. Talks are scheduled on Mondays, which are immunization days, and Wednesdays, which are antenatal days. We do our best to enlighten them on all family planning issues, including modern contraceptives (**IDI respondents, Male, Nsukka town, 51 years**).*

Amongst the Christian and African traditional religion adherents, the majority of Christians have heard of modern contraceptives compared to adherents of ATR.

Urban residents have heard about modern contraceptives more than rural dwellers. 51.5% of urban dwellers have heard of modern

contraceptives, compared to 48.5% of rural dwellers who have also heard of modern contraceptives.

A majority (53%) of the respondents do not use any form of modern contraceptives. A majority (61.3%) of those respondents who reported having ever used any modern contraceptives belong to the low-income/allowance cadre. This is reinforced by the responses from the various health workers in all the six communities visited. Some of their views are expressed below:

In this health centre, the administration of modern contraceptives, that is, family planning is free. We do not charge for it (IDI respondent, Female, Isu, 46 years).

It was cheap, and most of them were even free. It is available and accessible (IDI respondent, Female, Ugwunzu, 52 years).

A majority (65.8%) of urban residents have used any MC, compared to 34.2% of rural residents who have used any MC. A majority (42.9%) of those who have used any MC clustered around mothers of reproductive age with tertiary education, and the lowest percentage (12.5%) clustered around mothers with no formal education.

A majority (333) of the respondents used oral contraceptive pills, followed by 321 respondents who used the male condom and 184 respondents who used the female condom. The least-used modern contraceptive was the vasectomy, which only one respondent indicated to have used with her partner. This may be probably because vasectomy is done on only the males, and the question was for mothers of reproductive age (females).

The health workers' responses (IDI respondents) do not exactly correspond with the quantitative data because the majority of the health workers opined that the majority of their clients who access modern contraceptives usually go for injectables, followed by male condoms and oral contraceptive pills. Below are their views:

I do not know of any modern contraceptives we lack here at this health center. We have almost all types, depending on which type you prefer. These contraceptives are primarily meant for women, except for the male condom. Most of our clients use injectables because they find them more convenient ***(IDI respondent, Female, Ikem, 42 years).***

Our clients are women of childbearing age, and they usually opt for injections (injectables) ***(IDI respondent, Male, Nsukka Town, 51 years).***

*We have condoms (male condoms) which we label a dual method approach because they prevent STIs/STDs and pregnancy; we have the pills (oral contraceptive pills), which are a 28days cycle tablet to be taken daily, preferably at specific times and we nicknamed "echelon" (this means "do not forget me" because, if you forget to take it even in a day; you risk getting pregnant); we also have the injections (injectables). Our clients prefer the injections but will also ask for male condoms maybe to complement the injections (****IDI respondent, Female, Oji Central, 48 years****).*

A majority of the male FGD respondents who use modern contraceptives patronize only the male condoms and interruptus coitus or withdrawal method (which is considered a traditional method). The quotes below express some of their views:

*A male condom can be bought at any nearby chemist shop, so I prefer using it with my woman anytime my body changes …… (****FGD respondent, Male, Oji Central, 42 years****)*

*I have been using a condom (male condom) with my women and will continue using it with my wife when I finally get married (**FGD respondent, Male, Oji central, 32years**)*

*My partner usually complains of stomach upset anytime I use Gold Circle (male condom) with her, but I use it anyway because of sexually transmitted infections (STIs); then, I use the withdrawal method on my wife. I do not want any mistakes, so when the feeling of ejaculation is coming, "Mmiri mma m tinye n'obo" (this means he will withdraw his penis and zip up) (**FGD respondent, Male, Lejja, 40 years**).*

On the other hand, the FGD female respondents seem not to rely on only the male condom and withdrawal method done by their partners or spouses. This is because a majority of them use injectables, followed by oral contraceptive pills and implants. The expressions below reflect their views:

*I use the injection type (injectables). I decided to use it because my husband is careless and can have sexual intercourse without any protection. I am suffering a lot with raising my six children, and I am still young (**FGD respondent, Female, Ugwunzu, 28 years**).*

*I am a nursing mother, so I was advised at the health center to use the pill. I have been using it. I stay just two weeks after childbirth, and I get the drugs from our community's health center. If I do not do this, my husband will not mind getting me pregnant while nursing a newborn……. (**FGD respondent, Female, Oji Central, 34 years**).*

A majority (344) of mothers of reproductive age mentioned that the reason why they do not use modern contraceptives was that they preferred traditional or alternative ways of contraception. This was followed by those (166) who gave the reason for non-use as fear of modern contraceptives' side effects. The latter may be the reason why they prefer traditional or alternative forms of contraception. Only 1 out of the population of non-users of modern contraceptives gave the reason for non-use as a financial constraint. The IDI respondents thoroughly debunked the idea of financial constraint because they opined that family planning and modern contraceptives are free or, at times, subsidized to a minimal cost of 200 naira (not up to a dollar) due to transportation fare government intermediaries charge them when they supply the contraceptives. The significant reasons given for the non-use of modern contraceptives by both IDI and FGD respondents are spousal/partner refusal (due to ignorance), fear of side effects (due to rumors), and age of the woman (younger women still trying for a child; do not use it; and older women who have reached menopause, do not use it). Some of their views are reflected below:

> *We have seen outright rejection of the use of modern contraceptives because they (women and men) have heard some side effects of modern contraceptives. These people are ill-enlightened and counseled (**IDI respondent, Female, Ugwunzu, 52 years**).*
>
> *Young couples without a child do not need to use modern contraceptives. Again, older couples do not need it because the woman will be in a period known as menopause, so she will not conceive anymore (**IDI respondent. Female, Ikem, 42 years**).*
>
> *My friend went for an IUCD implant and started bleeding non-stop. It has many side effects, so I will not want to use it ……. (**FGD respondent, Female, Oji Central, 38 years**).*

*Some of our women do not even allow their husbands to use condoms (male condoms) with them. They complain that they feel inadequate and unsafe (**IDI respondent, Male, Nsukka Town, 51 years**).*

A majority (84%) of the respondents think married couples should use modern contraceptives, and only 7% of the respondents think married couples should not use modern contraceptives. A majority 570 (64.8) of the respondents think married couples should use modern contraceptives because they help limit the number of children; this was followed by 480 (54.5%) respondents who think modern contraceptives are suitable for spacing children and 475 (54.0%) thinks modern contraceptives should be used by married couples in order to reduce pregnancy risks because frequent pregnancies lead to some reproductive health complications (morbidity) and possibly death (mortality).

In the views of FGD participants, the majority of those who use modern contraceptives gave reasons for use as purely economic. This was sharply followed by those participants who gave reasons for the use of modern contraceptives as a way to limit the number of children. This may even be because of economic reasons if viewed in another way. Some of their views are reflected below:

*I have four children, and paying for their school fees gives me a headache, so I do not want to have a fifth child. This is why I use a condom (male condom) with my wife. She does not like it because she always complains that I may be using it with other women….. (**FGD respondent, Male, Oji Central, 42 years**).*

*I am very fertile. I do not even have safe periods, so after my sixth child, I told my husband to take me for family planning. Things are complicated in our country, so having many children will put one in so much economic difficulty (**FGD respondent, Female, Nsukka Town, 38 years**).*

A majority, 72 (97.3%) of respondents ascribed non-use of modern contraceptives by married couples because they think that its use encourages promiscuity, and this was followed by respondents 51 (68.9%) who ascribed non-use of contraceptives by married couples to faith/beliefs.

Following the different methods used by males and females in the various communities visited, it was recorded that males and females expressed divergent reasons why married couples should not use modern contraceptives. The majority of male respondents thought that modern contraceptives have side effects. On the other hand, the majority of female FGD respondents who gave reasons why married couples should not use modern contraceptives thought that modern contraceptives encourage promiscuity. Their different views are highlighted below:

*Married couples should desist from using artificial things (modern contraceptives) to control childbearing. It is dangerous and might prevent the woman from getting pregnant again when she wants it (**FGD respondent, Male, Lejja, 42 years**).*

*Why should married couples use contraceptives? Why did I marry my wife if not to be having sexual intercourse freely with her and producing children? All these things (modern contraceptives) make some women look like castrated pigs (obese) (**FGD respondent, Male, Ugwunzu, 38 years**).*

A majority (78.3%) of the respondents think singles should also use modern contraceptives, and a majority of 686 (83.9%) of the respondents think that singles should use modern contraceptives because they prevent sexually transmitted diseases, followed by 528 (64.5%) who think that modern contraceptives

prevent unsafe abortion among singles, and 332 (40.6%) that think singles should use modern contraceptives because they help reduce pregnancy risks. The lowest number of respondents, 79 (9.7%), think singles should use modern contraceptives because they allow for sexual exploitation.

A majority (50.2%) indicated that the decision on contraceptives and the type to be used was made jointly, followed by 32.8% of respondents who made the decision solely and 16.5% who indicated that their spouse/partner made the decision.

Health workers that made up the IDI respondents had this to say about decision-making on the use of modern contraceptives (family planning):

> *The decision should be made by the man and woman (jointly), but most women come for family planning alone. In this situation, we inquired about their reasons, and if they were genuine, we proceeded (**IDI respondent, Female, Isu, 46 years**).*

> *Decisions on the use of modern contraceptives for family planning should be made by the man and the woman (jointly). In cases where the man refused any form of family planning, the woman might decide to come to us. We usually administer the injection type (injectables) so that it will not cause any form of misunderstanding. It is done secretly unless the woman wants to open up (**IDI respondent, Female, Ugwunzu, 52 years**).*

> *Of course, the decision should be made between the man and woman (jointly). Before a woman comes for family planning, she must discuss it with her husband or partner. If the husband is against it, the woman should not come (**IDI respondent, Female, Ikem, 42 years**).*

> *The right thing is for both parties (man and woman) to decide on how and when to use modern contraceptives for family planning purposes. A woman should not decide alone because she did not marry (**FGD participant, Male, Oji Central, 52 years**).*

A majority (53%) of the respondents indicated that there are implications of not using modern contraceptives for family planning purposes. (78.2%) of the respondents indicated that the significant implication of not using modern contraceptives for family planning was that it could lead to unwanted pregnancy. This was followed by respondents (13.4%) who indicated that it can lead to diseases (STDs). A minority (0.4%) of the respondents indicated that the implication for non-use of modern contraceptives for family planning was endangering women's health.

The IDI and FGD respondents added two more implications of not using modern contraceptives to the already mentioned implications. These two are that non-use of modern contraceptives hinders women's progress and promiscuity and affects children's well-being. The views of the IDI and FGD respondents include the following:

> *Women should not depend on traditional or alternative methods of contraception. Modern contraceptives are very convenient and efficient. A woman who does not use modern contraceptives of any type might risk an unwanted pregnancy (**IDI respondent, Female, Lejja, 41 years**).*

> *Using a gold circle (male condom) if you do not want a child is very advisable. This will help with the proper spacing of the children and even improve their health; they will not always look or be sickly. Gold circle (male condom) is also used to prevent sexually transmitted diseases (STDs),*

*especially if a married man decides to play outside (have sexual intercourse with someone other than his wife) (**FGD respondent, Male, Lejja, 43 years**).*

A majority, 608 (58.2%) of the respondents, indicated that the government can help improve the use of modern contraceptives through regular public awareness. This was followed by respondents 195 (18.7%) and 131 (12.5%) who indicated that the government should make modern contraceptives available and affordable.

The central idea that IDI and FGD respondents propagated was public awareness on how the government can help improve the use of modern contraceptives in Enugu State. This was followed by providing resident doctors and nurses at the various health centers, which will be possible by providing accommodation. Bad road repairs were also mentioned as one of the help the government should provide so that accessibility will be increased. Some of their views are thus reflected:

*The government should engage in enlightenment programs to educate people on the importance of modern contraceptives and family planning. The perceived side effects of modern contraceptives should be adequately explained so that interested couples or individuals will make the right choices (**IDI respondent, Female, Isu, 46 years**).*

*It seems family planning and modern contraceptive teachings are women-based. The health workers only teach our women about them, leaving us (men) ignorant. The government should organize seminars in order to let men into these teachings ……. (**FGD respondent, Male, Lejja, 42 years**).*

A majority (40.7%) of the respondents suggested that community leaders should help create more awareness of modern contraceptives, while 23.9% indicated that community leaders should encourage their community to use modern contraceptives. This might be done through public awareness programs like workshops, symposia, etc.

Discussion

Knowledge of Modern Contraceptives

Ever heard of modern contraceptives?

The study found that the mothers of reproductive age in Enugu State had a very high knowledge of modern contraceptives in that 87% of them had heard of some sought modern contraceptives. Among the survey respondents, a majority (94.0%) have heard more of the male condom. The IDI respondents were all aware of the types of MC under study (maybe because they are health workers specially attached to family planning units in various communities' health centers). At the same time, among the FGD participants, all of them have heard of at least one form of modern contraceptives.

Numerous studies on the knowledge of modern contraceptives support the above findings. Across the literature, high knowledge of modern contraceptives has been recorded among different sects of females of reproductive age. Concentrating on the earlier reviewed literature in this study, the findings correspond to those of Lwelamira et al. (2010), who studied married women of reproductive age in Mpwapwa District, Central Tanzania, and found an overwhelming majority (98.8%) of respondents aware of MC methods. Another study by Kei et al. (2015) supports this study conducted in Enugu State, Nigeria. Kei et al., who studied women of childbearing age in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya, found that (98.9%) of their respondents knew about modern contraceptives. This study, done in Enugu State, South-eastern Nigeria, also agrees with the study done in a rural community of Osun State, South-western Nigeria, among women of reproductive ages. Their study found that a good number (75.8%) of the respondents had a good knowledge of modern contraceptives.

The most popular MC among the survey respondents was the male condom. This corresponds to various research conducted around the world, specifically in Nigeria. It agrees with the study conducted by Envuladu et al. (2012) among female traders in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, in which it was discovered that (93.4%) of the women were aware of modern contraceptives and the most popular (95.5%) were the male condom. This might be because their spouses/partners used it with/on them.

Source of the first information

Most respondents (52.8%) attributed their first-ever information about MC to the medical personnel. This finding agrees with various studies like Ankomah et al. 2010 study among married young adults in Kano, Katsina, Maiduguri, Gombe, Makurdi and Okene; Lagos, Ondo, Oshogbo, Portharcourt, Calabar, Enugu and Benin; reported that most of the married women (90%) had heard of MC methods during routine sessions about family planning at antenatal clinics. In the current study, medical/health personnel across the six communities visited attested to giving health talks on antenatal and immunization days. Ofonime and Ikobong's (2013) study on knowledge of family planning among women in a rural community in Southern Nigeria also found that among 358 women of childbearing age, 299 had heard of MC methods through the clinic (Health Centre). This shows that health personnel/workers do their best to ensure widespread information on MC, especially among women of reproductive age at the grassroots level, not only in Enugu State but across Nigeria.

Use of modern contraceptives

First, the findings reported that 47% of the respondents have ever used any form of MC, while 53% reported having never used any method of MC. This shows that most respondents have never used any method/type of MC. It has been reported from various research studies that the educational attainment of women plays a vital role in the utilization of MC. This applies to this study because most respondents (33.6%) obtained secondary school education, followed by (30.5%) who obtained primary education. Again, a majority (42.9%) of those respondents who obtained tertiary education reported ever using any MC. It is then pertinent to assert that the study agrees with Hussain's 2011 study on married women of reproductive age in Malda District, West Bengal, India, which identified the level of education as a barrier to the use of MC. Asiimwe et al. (2011), who studied modern contraceptive use among young and older women in Uganda, also associated the use of MC with women's educational attainment. The more schooling a woman has, the more likely she is to report the use of a modern contraceptive method.

Secondly, the findings indicated that a majority (65.8%) of urban residents had never used any MC, against 34.2% of rural residents. This finding agreed with the findings of Mackfallen and Upendo (2014), Teye (2013), Dessalegn et al. (2014), Omedi and Nyauchi (2015), Adebowale and Palamuleni (2014), Igbodekwe et al. (2014), etc. All these studies revealed some conclusions which are also in agreement with the findings of this study – urbanites are more exposed to sources of information on contraception, urban residents are exposed to the small family norms, they are likely to be more educated, they enjoy far better access to family planning services than rural residents, greater exposure to mass media messages, and more knowledge about modern contraceptive issues than their counterparts who dwell in the rural areas.

Finally, on the type of MC used, the majority (68.1%) of the respondents reported having used oral contraceptive pills. Among the female FGD respondents, the majority used the injectables, while the majority of the male FGD respondents used the male condom. From the various FGDs conducted among males, it was found that women (their spouses/partners) do not like using the male condom. The reason was that they (women) felt that it may encourage promiscuity. It was concluded that women felt that men would feel comfortable using the male condom with "other women."

Reasons for non-use of modern contraceptives

A majority (61.9%) of the respondents reported having preferred traditional or alternative ways of contraception, followed by (29.9%) that gave reason for non-use as fear of side effects. Looking inward on a more critical analysis, it might be that the actual reason for their choice of contraception was because of the fear of side effects of MC. On the qualitative hand, the male FGD respondents gave the primary reason for the non-use of MC for family planning purposes as fear of side effects (due to rumors). In contrast, FGD female respondents gave the primary reason for the non-use of MC for family planning as spousal refusal (due to ignorance). Again, this finding, when critically analyzed, reveals that the primary reason for the non-use of MC is fear of side effects. The FGD males who gave the major gave the primary reason for the non-use of MC methods with their spouses/partners as fear of side effects might, in turn, refuse that their spouses/partners go to the health centers for the utilization of MC. In a study conducted by Kabagenyi et al. (2014) in Uganda, they found that a commonly reported disincentive among men to support their partner's use of contraceptive methods was related to perceived side effects, which they perceive reduces the sexual pleasure and increased women's risk of infertility and illness. Men reported being frustrated by several observed side effects like prolonged bleeding, vaginal dryness, and decreased sex drive or libido. On this particular issue of side effects of modern contraceptives, IDI respondents who were health workers at the various health centers visited in the various communities asserted that MCs do not have any side effects. They observed that most women use a particular MC because their friends use it, not bothering to come to the health center for proper counseling on the type(s) suitable for their body type and medical history.

Women's autonomy in decision making

Among the survey respondents, a majority (50.2%) indicated that choosing MC and the type to be used should be made jointly (by both spouses/partners). This was followed by those mothers (32.8%) who reported making decisions using MC alone (sole decision-making). Most of the IDI and FGD respondents followed the same line of thought, giving their views that joint decision is what ought to be and the best. However, some female FGD respondents claim to decide on their own if their husbands or partners refuse their use of MC.

The findings agree with Olugbenga-Bello et al. (2011) among women of reproductive age, and (73.3%) made joint decisions on MC use. It was interesting that some FGD female respondents said they made some decisions on the refusal of their husbands or partners to use MC since their reproductive health is their utmost concern. This finding contradicts Eguavoen et al.'s 2007 study in Ekpoma, Delta State, which asserted that traditional thought patterns still predominate.

Conclusion

High awareness/knowledge of modern contraceptives among mothers of reproductive age in Enugu State did not lead to its high usage. This supports many types of research done in and outside the study area that knowledge of modern contraceptives by women does not necessarily lead to their usage. The study also indicates that the State government should address those factors that pose a barrier to the utilization of modern contraceptives. The findings of the study, therefore, imply that it is not enough to supply modern contraceptives to the various primary health centers in various communities; instead, efforts should also be channeled into enlightening the general public on the benefits of using different types of modern contraceptives; especially for family planning purposes; and more so enlighten the general public on the right modern contraceptive to use at each time and occasion; for example – those for nursing mothers; those for mothers with some health challenges; even those specifically done on males etc. Having done all these, the government should also equip the health centers and provide them with medical personnel, especially those living in the clinical environment. This means that accommodations should be provided in and around the health centers in addition to accessible roads. Again, if traditional methods are accepted, they should be encouraged to use them if they are comfortable using them. The

main goal is to reduce frequent pregnancies that lead to various health challenges, etc.

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EFFECTS OF HERDERS- FARMERS CONFLICTON GIRL CHILD EDUCATION IN NUAMAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ADAMAWA STATE

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KEYWORDS
Girl Child Education; Insurgency; Abduction; herders-farmers

ABSTRACT
This study examined the effects of Herders farmers clashes on Girl Child Education in Numan local government area. the study reveals that as a result of the clashed, many girls' child in numan local government are badly affected because they are being subjected to kidnaping, rape and abduction. The research also reveals that most of the reasons behind the clashes were as a result of scarce space for agricultural and grazing activities in the area and the menace has eating deeply into the fabrics of the local government. The research also highlighted the recent efforts made by Government and Non-governmental organizations in the areas affectted by Herder's farmers clashes to improve access to Girl Child Education. some of the research objectives are: to ascertain the effects of clash on girl child education, to uncover some of the efforts made by various policy makers in tackling insecurity. It was recommended among others that religious/ traditional leaders and Community-Based Organizations should actively encourage girls' Education in their respective communities and government should be proactive in combatting insecurity in the area affected in other to improve girl child education. The methodology used in gathering information is qualitative research design such ascontent analysis from text books, journal, internet material.

Conflict theory was also used a guiding frame work of the research.

Introduction

Education is a potent force that brings about change in the attitude, thought, behaviour, skills, values and interest of individuals (Offor 2019). It is these changes that bring about cognitive, psychomotor and affective orientation required for overall development. These changes could be learnt formally in school and are very crucial to members of a society for growth and development. Education is the process through which individuals are made functional members of their society. It is a process through which the young acquire knowledge and realizes her potentialities and uses them for self actualization, to be useful to herself and others. In every society education connotes acquisition of something good and worthwhile (Offor & Orisa, 2017). Education is very important for every child. It is one of the fundamental human rights that should be availed to all citizens irrespective of age, nationality and sex. But in the process exercising such civic right to education girl child have been encountering obstacles in the form of conflicts ranging from kidnapping, religion, ethnic and farmers harder. The most familiar of all in the case of numan local government is Herders' farmers clashes which have been the problem in numan for a longer period oftime and persistence of such conflict posed a maximum damage to the social life of girl child education in the local government and its surrounding villages. The conflict exposes girls to so many dangers and retrogressively affected their educational level.

Methodology

Research Design: The study used qualitative research such as content analysis from text books and other established material such as journal and newspaper in determining the effects of farmers-herders'conflicts on girl child education within some numan local government.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To ascertain the effects of conflicts on girl child education.
2. To uncover government determination in conflict management.
3. To uncover some of the importance attach to of educating a girl child.

Literature Review

Education

Offorma (2009) defines education as the process of providing information to an inexperienced person to help him/her develop physically, mentally, socially emotionally, spiritually, politically and economically. According to her, the fact that at graduation ceremonies, one hears the vice-chancellors pronounce the words while awarding degrees to their institutions graduates you have been found worthy in character and learning can be attributed to the definition of education as given above. She added that it means that the individual has acquired adequate and appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, known as cognitive, psychomotor and effective behaviours to be able to function optimally as a citizen. These behaviours are the focus of training individuals in institutions of learning. According to Chidebulu (2010), education is a process of cognitive, effective and psycho motive development of an individual with a view to moulding the individual for a total contribution to the development of the community and the promotion of cultural heritage. This means that if one is educated, he tends to develop himself and become productive in the society, thereby promoting his cultural heritage.

Furthermore, according to Whitehead, education is the acquisition of the art of the

utilization of knowledge, that is, education is not just acquiring knowledge but the utilization of knowledge acquired for the benefit of the society (Whitehead Cited in Oladipo, 2007). To Gowon (2007), education is a process and system of providing information, knowledge, skills and training with an aim of changing a condition and situation. The change expected is usually positive in nature, and the education could be formal or informal. This definition is crucial in the case of Nigerian women whose condition needs to be changed for socio-economic transformation.

Girl Child Education

The concept of girl-child education incorporates the necessary attitude, cultural and behavioural training which parents give to their daughters at home to enable them become useful, resourceful and respectful citizens of their countries. It also includes the functional teaching or training in skills acquisition which many girls undertake in the shades of seamstress or in computer training centres, weaving/fashion designing centres as well as catering and interior decoration centres, etc. Most importantly, the concept is over specialized and highly controlled trainings acquired in schools, colleges and other institutions of higher learning, (Chidebelu, 2009).

Ejikeme (2000) captured this fact when he said that denying girlchildren access to early childhood education makes them socially excluded, creating room for them to grow up to become illiterate women in later life and be classified as disadvantaged candidates for adult education, women empowerment programmes and other women rescue remedial or support programmes that smack off underdevelopment. Unfortunately, the right of a girl-child to access quality education has been denied and there are consequences. Though some of the challenges are deeply rooted in our traditional background, they have affected the society at large. Mangvwat, (2005) agree with this when she says that operation and discrimination against women and girls have been so deeply ingrained, for so long in virtually every culture.

Conflict

According to Max Weber (1968)- a social relationship will be referred to as conflict in so far as action within it is oriented intentional to carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of the other party or parties. Thus, the social interaction of conflict is defined by the desire of each participant to impose his will upon the other's resistance.

Gillin and Gillin (1948)- 'Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek their ends by directly challenging the antagonist by violence or threat of violence

Causes of Herdsmen and Farmers Conflicts in Adamawa State

a. destruction of crops by cattle and other property (reservoirs, irrigational facilities and infrastructure) by the herdsmen themselves are the main direct cause for conflicts cited by the farmers.

b. burning of range lands, fadama and blockage of stock routes and water points by crop encroachment are important direct reasons cited by the herdsmen.

c. increasing rate of cattle theft which is often accompanied by violence.

d. antagonistic perception and beliefs among farmers and herdsmen could compound conflict situation, especially due to failing institutions and fierce competition for resources. According to Tukur (2013) the cause of herdsmen and farmers conflicts in Nigeria include destruction of crops, contamination of streams by cattle, zero grazing of land, disregard for local traditional authorities, female harassment, harassment of nomads by host communities' youths, indiscriminate bush burning, defecation of cattle on roads, cattle theft and straying of cattle.

Some Solutions for Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict in Adamawa State

Numan local government is located in Adamawa state and is the most affected local government in the state. In an effort to curtail the continues conflict between farmers and herders in numan local government Adamawa state in general, Adamawa state government have provided some solution these include the following; security and legal actions, creation of grazing reserves, development programmes, cattle colonies and national livestock transformation plan, organized dialogues and negotiations, and comprehensive livestock development plan. Development Programmes To correct the anomaly associated with land tenure and ensure effective utilization of arable land for both farmers and herders in Nigeria, agricultural development agencies like River Basins, Agricultural Development Projects (ADP), Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), National Agricultural Land Development Agencies (NALDA) etc. were introduced as panacea for improved agricultural projects (Marietu& Olarewaju, 2009). It is important to stress the activities of the upper class in the society who have taken advantage of the flaw in the 1976 Land Use Decree to appropriate large parcels of land to themselves. This development created peasants' revolts in the different parts of Nigeria.

Cattle Colonies and National Livestock Transformation Plan As a long-term solution, the government, in January 2018, announced a new plan to establish ''cattle colonies'' across the country. According to Agriculture Minister Audu Innocent Ogbeh, each colony was to cover 5,000 hectares (about 25km by 20km) and would be a cluster of ranches, with resources and facilities including grass, water, veterinary services, mills for converting agro-waste to livestock feed, schools, hospitals and markets, all secured by agro-rangers. States were expected to provide land and the federal government would bear development and maintenance costs – possibly with support from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and others.

Ranchers and herders were to pay "a small fee". The government argued that benefits would include protection from cattle rustlers, fewer farmer-herder disputes, healthier stock, higher meat and dairy production, and more revenue for state governments (International Crisis Group, 2018).

Creation of Grazing Reserves In 1965, the northern regional government of Nigeria initiated one of the first attempts to respond to the crisis of pastoralism that was linked to emerging conflicts between farmers and herders in the country. The Northern Region Grazing Reserves Law of 1965 created corridors for the passage of migrating livestock and 415 grazing reserves throughout the country. The reserves were envisioned to section off large swathes of land to be exclusively used by herders to graze their livestock. While initially considered a legislative solution, population growth, urbanization, and migration encroached on these designated areas, reducing herders' access and usage of the reserves. In addition, herders were often unable to find sufficient pasture and water within the confines of the reserves due to climate changes and poor maintenance. Keeping livestock in one place increases the animals' vulnerability to disease and banditry, which incentivized herders to keep their herds moving outside the boundaries of the reserves. The federal and state governments have been derelict in the upkeep of these reserves to meet these concerns of farmers and herders. Amidst the absence of a concrete response plan to label and enforce the law on cattle routes by governments at all levels, existing reserves are being distorted (Kwaja& Ademola-Adelehen, 2018).

Effects of Conflicts on Girl Child Education

Harder farmer conflict is an international issue that had not been tackle yet, numan local government have been witnessing a series of attacks for the past years in which have a negative impact on the education of girl child and threatening the coexistence of people. During the conflict,people including girl child were deserted some were killed in the process of the clashed. The communities affected in numan and demsa local government are, nzumosun, mpan, dong, lawaru and Fulani dowaya communities all in numan local government and its environ(www.premiumtimesng.com 2017). The activities have negatively affected Girl Child

Education in numan local government, Adamawa State. These negative impacts include the killing, abduction, and kidnapping of primary and secondary schools' girls. Even though,religion leaders, communities leaders, politician, state and federal Governments are making several efforts towards tackling the menace and improving girl child education, among others. These efforts are still ongoing and have achieved the desired objectives. Therefore, this research is desirable; the results will provide Govt/Management, lawmakers and other related agencies with a guide and recommendation that will be a decisive measure to be adopted for prompttacklingof herders' farmers clashes for improved Education of girls and policy making.

In many communities, schools have been destroyed. In others where schools are still standing, the frequent attacks on educational institutions have instilled fears in parents who either relocated or are unwilling to send their children to school.

Dukku, 2015). Thus, the majority of the girl child ends up not in schools but out of school after the clash; or they will end up in overcrowded IDP camps with deplorable educational facilities and at the mercy of development workers and other criminals that could also turn into monsters and abuse the girl child sexually, (Ibrahim, 2019)

Girls' access to Education depends largely on encouragement from families in society and the provision of School infrastructure, instructional materials and safety of girls in schools by the Governmentt. Joda (2015).

Importance of Girls' Education

Napoleon Bonaparte says that "Give me an educated mother I will give you an educated nation.". Education is a basic right and more importantly a catalyst for economic growth and human development. It is a crucial tool for breaking the barrier of poverty. Specifically, primary education is the critical enabler required to improve the economic and social scenario in many pockets of the nation. Therefore, some of the importance of girl education can be discuss bellow;

Decrease Infant Mortality: Children of educated women are less likely to die before their first birthday. Girls who receive an education are less likely to contract HIV & AIDS, and thus, less likely to pass it onto their children. Primary education alone helps reduce infant mortality significantly, and secondary education helps even more. Awareness about diseases leads to healthy population and prevention of diseases.

Decrease Maternal Mortality: Educated women (with greater knowledge of health care and fewer pregnancies) are less likely to die during pregnancy, childbirth, or during the postpartum period. Increased education of girls also leads to more female health care providers to assist with prenatal medical care, labour and delivery, delivery complications and emergencies, and follow-up care.

Decrease Child Marriage: Child marriage – in some cases involving girls as young as 7-8 almost always results in the end of a girl‟s schooling. The result is illiterate or barely literate young mothers without adequate tools to build healthy, educated families. On average, for every year a girl stays in school past fifth grade, her marriage is delayed a year. Educated girls typically marry later, when they are better able to bear and care for their children.

Decrease Population Explosion: Educated women tend to have fewer (and healthier) babies. According to a UNESCO, literate women had an average of 2.5 children while illiterate women had an average of six children.

Increase Involvement In Political Process: Educated women are more likely to participate in political discussions, meetings, and decision-making, which in turn promote a more representative and effective government.

Decrease Domestic & Sexual Violence: Educated girls and women are less likely to be victims of domestic and sexual violence or to tolerate it in their families.

Decrease Support for Militancy: As women become more educated, they are less likely to support militancy and terrorism than similarly educated men.

Improve Socioeconomic Growth: Educated women have a greater chance of escaping poverty, leading healthier and more productive lives, and raising the standard of living for their children, families, and communities. They can share the burden of men in the different walk of life. They can serve the society as teachers, lawyers, doctors and administrators. They can work at banks, hospitals, government offices and large businesses. They can play an important role during war.

Theoretical Framework

The Structural Functionalism

The Structural Functionalism evolves from the idea of Durkheim (1858-1917). It was concerned with how societies maintain internal stability and survives over time. It sought to explain social cohesion and stability through the concept of solidarity. All social and cultural phenomena are therefore seen as being functional in the sense of working together to achieve the state of equilibrium and are perfectly deemed to have a life of their own. Thus, structural functionalist emphasizes the conditions necessary for interdependence of both the cattle herders and crop farmers on the use of common resources as well as specialized areas. There is clear demarcation between different types of conflicts in farmer-herdsmen relations. Farmers increasingly compete with herdsmen for farmland, pastures, water, trees and the use of range land in general (Akpaki; 2002).

Conceptual Clarification

Girl Child education

Girl Child education, refers to the aspect of education that aims at developing the skills and knowledge and girl and women from all caste, race and background. This includes educating at schools, colleges, health education, professional, technical and vocational education.

Insecurity

The concept of insecurity used in this research, as attributed to lack of peace in the area. meaning any activities of kidnaping, abduction, banditry, herders' farmers clashes that affect the peaceful existent of people in an environment, irrespective of religion, tribalism or any form of dichotomy in the environment affected. In the case of girl child insecurity, the research reveals that they are more exposed to danger because of their nature or gender.in numan local government and it environ, have been experiencing the clashes between pastoralist and famers that have become a bane for economy and girl child education.

Abduction

This is an act perpetrated by criminals on innocent citizen by forcing them into captivity and subjecting them into abuse, rape and severe hardship under their captors. The act normal takes by both sides of the parties involves in the clash. In this case, the abduction in numan local government as a result of the clashes affected both harders and famers in the communities. In this context of abduction, girl's child is always affected because they are the soft target, they may not have strength to run during the attack that make them more vulnerable to the evil act and they always fall victim of it.to some extend, the abductors do request for money for their abductees to be free or been kill in the process.

Farmers and Herdsmen Violent

Conflict in this research, farmers-herdsmen, violent conflict is typically used to refer to conflict between farming and herding groups in the society. The phrase separately is misleading because most farmers nowadays turned to herdsmen rear livestock, while many herdsmen are crop farmers on a seasonal basis. Farmers-herdsmen violent conflict is referred to as the physical competition over resources between crops producers and cattle grazers in a given area.

Tabele 1.1. Selected primary schools affected and numbers of school girls

Schools	Before the clash	After the clash
Dowaya Fulani	120	82
Lawaru	130	102
Dong	120	109
Ban	180	142
Nzumosu	280	220

Source: *from school's records 2019*

It was established from above table that there are significant effects of harder's farmers clashes on girl child educationin numan local government. The above data shown that before the clashed number of girls are high while after the clashed there was a declined in the number. As stated in the literature review, this could be as a result of fair of further attacks, forceful migration, or death that affects the number of girls in schools under reviewed.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that farmer herders' conflict in numan local government severely affect the Education of the girl-child as a vulnerable group. Innocent children are made to pay the ultimate price for a war that is not of their making and miss the beauty of childhood. The finding further reveals that both sides especially, Fulani and Bahama people lost their relatives and some up to now couldn't trace their family, because the clashes forces relocation and untimely evacuation.

It has been reveals that scarce resources are one of the fundamental geneses for conflict between farmers and herders in numan local government because, in which had affected the girl child education, because both sides struggle for space for their various economic activities

More to that, finding also reveals that girl child education is verry vital to the development of the society, because educating women is like educating the nation.

In the quest for finding lasting solution, the study revealed that government provided the following majors which includes; security and legal actions, creation of grazing reserves, development programmes, cattle colonies and national livestock transformation plan, organized dialogues and negotiations, and comprehensive livestock development plan.

As shown in table 1.1, before the conflict between harders and farmers in some selected communities in numan local government and it neighboring towns, the study reveals that the number of girls in school was higher than the number of girls in school after the conflict, this can be associated with the following reasons; fear of attacks, forceful migration or death.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, this paper examines the effect ofherder's farmers clashes on Girl Child Education in numan local government, Adamawa state. From finding we can therefore, conclude that the activities of harder farmer clashes in numan local government posed a great danger to girl's lives and the member of the society because, such attacks expose girl child not only to lack of education but also lead to killing, adoption rape and other vises.From the finding of the research, one of fundamental causes of conflict which resulted to lack of girl child education is scarcity of space, in that regard, proper allocation and distribution of space will be of help in curtailing the conflict.

Recommendations

The following could be considered:

1. There is need for relevant authority to creation equal level playing ground to both parties.

2. Security Awareness for all: Staff and students should receive safety and security awareness training. This will help

them recognize threat warning signals and alert vigilantes and formal authorities.

3. Authority should enhance the continuation of teaching even in the IDPs camp.

4. Creation of grazing and farming area- since most of the clashes do occur as a result of battling for space, therefore, relevant authorities are being advice to create enable environment for both parties.

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AVAILABILITY AND ACCEPTABILITY OF COVID-19 VACCINE AMONG NON-TEACHING STAFF OF LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY, OJO, LAGOS

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KEYWORDS

Acceptability, Availability, Covid-19 and Vaccination

ABSTRACT

The main objective was to determine the availability and acceptability of the COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff. The study formulated four research questions and four null hypotheses to direct the research. The descriptive survey research method was used, and a random sampling technique was used to select 300 non-teaching staff. The researchers used a questionnaire called the Accessibility and Acceptability of COVID-19 Vaccine Questionnaire (AACVQ) to collect data. The AACVQ contained two sections: demographic data and hypothesis-related items. The demographic data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, and the hypothesis-related items were assessed using a four-point Likert-type rating scale questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was evaluated using the test-retest method, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to be 0.85. The hypotheses were tested using the chi-square analytical tool with a significance level of 0.05. The study revealed that the level of knowledge about the availability, accessibility, and acceptability of the Covid-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff was influenced by factors such as age, gender, tribe, marital status, and educational qualification. The study also found that the non-teaching staff were aware of the vaccine's availability and were willing to take it. Therefore, the study recommended that the university make the Covid-19 vaccine easily accessible to non-teaching staff.

Introduction

According to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (2021), the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in late 2019 marked the beginning of a global pandemic that has had profound and far-reaching impacts on societies, economies, and health systems worldwide. The virus, caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, rapidly spread from its initial outbreak in Wuhan, China to become a global health crisis, prompting widespread lockdowns, travel restrictions, and the development of vaccines and treatments. The pandemic has reflects the unity in humanity that cuts across that cuts across different countries all over the world and the importance of unity together to fight a common course and restore public health challenges. As the pandemic continues to evolve, it underscores the need for ongoing vigilance, preparedness, and innovation in addressing infectious diseases (WHO, 2020). As Richardson et al. (2020) noted, the disease can manifest in a wide range of symptoms, from asymptomatic to severe or even fatal. To curb the spread of SARS-CoV-2, countries have implemented various control measures, such as social distancing, lockdowns, school and business closures, and the mandatory use of face masks in public. Although such measures have helped reduce the number of cases, there has been a resurgence of COVID-19 cases after reopening economies and societies, as reported by Devi (2020) and Shimizu et al. (2020).

In order to combat COVID-19, there is an urgent need for long-term preventive measures. Achieving herd immunity through natural infection has been deemed unethical and unachievable, making inoculation campaigns critical in the fight against the virus (Orlowski & Goldsmith, 2020). As of 26th October 2021, there were 211,330 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Nigeria, with vaccines playing a crucial role in preventing and controlling infectious diseases (NCDC, 2021; Harrison & Wu, 2020). However, vaccine hesitancy can cause delays, refusals, and contribute to disease outbreaks, as seen in the 2003 boycott of polio vaccination in northern Nigeria (Larson et al., 2013; Ghinai et al., 2013). Despite the success of immunization in reducing the global burden of illness and death, public trust is still a challenge for polio eradication efforts in Nigeria (Larson & Ghinai, 2011). Nevertheless, scientists have raced to develop safe and effective coronavirus vaccines in 2020, some of which have been licensed to handle sudden situation currently being used the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020).

Moreso, Le et al. (2020) have emphasized the varied technology platforms that are being explored for the development of the COVID-19 vaccine, such as “nucleic acid, virus-like particles, peptide, viral vector, recombinant protein, live attenuated virus, and inactivated virus approaches”. Recently, two vaccines utilizing distinct technologies have been authorized for use in several countries. The AstraZeneca vaccine, which utilizes viral vector technology, necessitates two doses separated by a 4-week interval and demonstrates 62% efficacy in preventing symptomatic infection, with 100% efficacy in preventing severe forms of COVID-19 (Le et al., 2020).

According to NCDC (2021), the Moderna vaccine, which utilizes mRNA technology, necessitates two doses given at a 4-week interval and has been proven to be 94% effective in intervention that is capable of preventing occurrence of noticeable signs and symptoms of a disease or infection in an individual and has a 100% success rate in preventing severe diseases. Although the NPHCDA started the vaccination process in Nigeria in March 2021 with priority groups like people working in the hospital, important leaders in the society, and those responsible for the safety of the people. Nigeria Health Watch (2021) reports concerns about people refusing to take vaccine based on unfounded rumour regarding the COVID-19 vaccination exercise, despite the government's goal of ensuring widespread vaccination.

Oku and colleagues (2017) suggest that the effective and continuous promotion of COVID-19 vaccination is crucial for its successful implementation. The key stakeholders in this process are the people working in the hospitals, key leaders in the society, and employees of the government who typically influence healthcare decisions within their respective communities. However, it is often the case that health interventions fail due to the lack of proper engagement with these individuals during

planning and implementation (Majid et al., 2018). Conversely, research has shown that gaining the trust of these stakeholders, understanding their perspectives, and considering their concerns during intervention planning and implementation can significantly contribute to the success of health initiatives (Oku et al., 2017).

According to a recent study by Ilesanmi and Afolabi (2020), a contributing factor to the rise and persistence of COVID-19 cases in Nigeria is the denial of its existence by many individuals who also believe it to be a political strategy. Despite the approval of COVID-19 vaccines for use in Nigeria, the vaccination rates remain low, and the government is implementing measures to encourage its citizens to get vaccinated. The study in question investigates the accessibility, availability, and acceptability of COVID-19 vaccines among non-teaching staff at Lagos State University.

Statement of Problems

Overtime, it has been observed that the covid-19 pandemic seems to have persisted, as new variant cases are being confirmed on daily basis. The quality of education in the country could be worsened if urgent and concerted efforts are not made to eliminate the COVID-19 pandemic. Interestingly, COVID-19 vaccination has proven to boost immune system against the novel corona virus and have been approved for use in Nigeria. Despite the approval of COVID-19 vaccines for use in Nigeria for some months now, not many individuals have been vaccinated and government seems to be forcing citizens to get vaccinated. The likely reason for this could be that Nigerians are unwilling to accept the COVID-19 vaccines. It could also come to light that the vaccines are not available and accessible to all citizens in the country.

The purpose of the study includes the following.

1. Assess the availability of COVID-19 vaccine amongst the non-teaching employees of Lagos State University.
2. Access the acceptability of COVID-19 vaccine amongst the non-teaching employees of Lagos State University.

The study provided answered to the following research questions:

1. What is the availability of COVID-19 vaccine among the non-teaching staff in Lagos State University?
2. What is acceptability of COVID-19 vaccine amongst non-teaching staff in Lagos State University?

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested for the study:

1. There will be no noticeable variance in the availability of COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff in Lagos state University.
2. There is no notable variance in the acceptability of covid-19 vaccine among non-
3. teaching staff of Lagos State University.

Methodology

A descriptive research design was implemented, and the participants were non-teaching staff at Lagos State University. The sample size consisted of 300 non-teaching staff, who were randomly selected. The data was collected through a modified questionnaire named the Availability and Acceptability of COVID-19 Vaccine Questionnaire (AACVQ), which comprised two sections - A and B. Section A captured demographic information, while section B contained opinion questions rated on a four-point Likert scale. The validity of the questionnaire was approved by the researcher's supervisor and other lecturers in the Department of Human Kinetics, Sports, and Health Education. Additionally, the test-retest method of reliability was used, resulting in a Cronbach alpha technique with an r-value of 0.86. Data were collected through personal administration by the researcher and three

trained research assistants, and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, and Chi-Square statistics to test hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05.

Results

Data Presentation

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Age.

Age	Frequency	Percentage %
21-30	24	8.0
31-40	133	44.3
41-50	143	47.7
Total	300	100.0

In the study, it was revealed in Table .1 that around 8.0% of the participants belonged to the age bracket of 21-30 years, while 44.3% fell within the range of 31-40 years, and 47.7% were aged between 41-50 years.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	156	52.0
Female	144	48.0
Total	300	100.0

Table 2 showed that approximately 156 (52.0%) of the respondents were males while approximately 144 (48.0%) of the respondents were females.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status.

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage %
Single	33	11.0
Married	236	78.7
Widow	31	10.3
Total	300	100.0

Table 3 showed that 33 (11.0%) of the respondents are single, while 236 (78.7%) of the respondents were married and 31 (10.3%) of the respondents were widow.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education.

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage %
SSCE	31	10.3
NCE	80	26.7
BSC	189	63.0
Total	300	100.0

Table 4 showed that approximately 31 (10.3%) of the respondents had SSCE, while approximately 80 (26.7%) of the respondents had NCE and approximately 189 (63.0%) of the respondents had BSC.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Religion.

Religion	Frequency	Percentage %
Christianity	143	47.7
Islam	126	42.0
Traditionalist	31	10.3
Total	300	100.0

Table 5: showed that approximately 143 (47.7%) of the respondents belongs to

Christianity, while approximately 126 (42.0%) of the respondents belong to Islam and an approximate 31 (10.3%) were traditionalist.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by Tribe.

Tribe	Frequency	Percentage %
Yoruba	259	86.3
Igbo	41	13.7
Hausa	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	300	100.0

Table 6 showed that approximately 259 (86.3%) of the respondents were Yorubas while appropriately 41 (13.7%) of the respondents were Igbo and 0 (0%) of the respondents were Hausa and Other tribes respectively.

Hypothesis One

According to the first hypothesis, there will be no noticeable variance in the accessibility of the COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching personnel in Lagos State University. To verify this hypothesis, a Chi-square test was performed at a significance level of 0.05, and the outcomes are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Chi-square analysis on the availability of COVID-19 Vaccine among non-teaching staff in Lagos state University.

Responses	FRQ	%	DF	LS	Cal X^2	P value	RMK
SA	234	78.0					
A	33	11.0	1	0.05	269.340	0.000	Sig
D	33	11.0					
SD	0	0					
TOTAL	300	100.0					

According to Table 7, the results obtained from hypothesis one indicated that a majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the items, with 234 (78.0%) of the respondents strongly agreeing. Additionally, 33 (11.0%) of respondents agreed, out of the total respondents, 11.0% disagreed with the given statement, while none of the respondents strongly disagreed, indicating a generally favorable response. Additionally, the researchers calculated a statistically significant $\chi 2$ value of 269.340 at one degree of freedom, with a p-value of 0.000<0.05. These results led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and indicate a noticeable variance in the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff in Lagos State University.

Hypothesis Two

According to hypothesis one, there is no noticeable variance between the level of approval of the COVID-19 vaccine amongst non-teaching personnel at Lagos State University. A Chi-square test was conducted at a significance level of 0.05, and the findings are displayed in the table underneath.

Table 8: Chi-square analysis on the acceptability of COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff in Lagos state University.

Responses	FRQ	%	DF	LS	Cal X^2	P value	RMK
SA	0	0					
A	175	58.3	1	0.05	8.333	0.004	Sig
D	125	41.7					
SD	0	0					
TOTAL	300	100.0					

According to the findings presented in Table 8, which summarizes the responses obtained from the study participants in relation to hypothesis one, it was found that none of the respondents (0%) strongly agreed with the given statements, while the majority of the respondents, comprising 175 (58.3%) individuals, agreed with the statements. Conversely, 125 (41.7%) respondents disagreed with the statements, and none of the participants (0%) strongly disagreed. The calculated X2value was determined to be 8.333, which was found to be statistically significant at p= 0.004<0.05 at one degree of freedom. Therefore, based on these results, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that there was a noticeable variance in the acceptability of the COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff in Lagos State University.

Discussion

According to the hypothesis one stated above, it was proposed that there would be no noticeable variance in the availability of COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff in Lagos State University. However, the chi-square (χ2) analysis revealed a statistically significant value of 269.340 with one degree of freedom, and the rejection of the hypothesis due to a p=0.000<0.05. The Center for Disease Control (2021) found that rural areas have lower COVID-19 vaccination coverage for the primary vaccination series compared to urban areas, with disparities increasing more than twice since April 2021. Sparks et al. (2021) reported that healthcare providers are the main source of vaccination information for 76% of parents in rural areas. The World Health Organization (2021) stresses the importance of COVID-19 vaccines in changing the course of the pandemic, with many vaccine candidates in evaluation. Adebisi et al. (2020) also highlighted the urgency in developing precise diagnostic techniques, efficient therapies, and immunizations due to the virus's rapid spread. Although nearly 40% of rural parents did not receive a COVID-19 vaccine recommendation from their child's pediatrician, healthcare providers' recommendations are still a strong predictor of COVID-19 vaccination. Therefore, it can be inferred that there will be no significant difference in COVID-19 vaccine availability among non-teaching staff at Lagos State University.

According to the stated hypothesis two, there is a noticeable variance in the acceptability of the COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff at Lagos State University (Okoli et al. (2019) and Quinn et al., 2019). However, the chi-square analysis conducted by Buchan and Kwong (2016), Schmid et al. (2017), and Mesch and Schwirian (2015) showed that the non-teaching staff had a high level of vaccine acceptability. Despite this, vaccine hesitancy has been a significant problem in disease prevention, as seen in the seasonal influenza and the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, as reported by Adane et al. (2022).Also, Adane et al. (2022) found that healthcare workers in northeastern Ethiopia had a high level of vaccine acceptability, with 62.5% of them having good knowledge about the COVID-19 vaccine. However, Chiara et al. (2021) reported a decrease in people's trust in science and vaccination between the first and second phase of the pandemic in Italy, with a low proportion of citizens showing willingness to get the vaccine.

Therefore, consistent with the research conducted by Olive et al. (2018) and Hammond (2020), it can be concluded that the level of knowledge, acceptability, and accessibility of the COVID-19 vaccine differs significantly among non-teaching staff at Lagos State University. he reluctance to get vaccinated continues to pose a significant problem for public health professionals. This issue results in lower vaccination rates among various populations, as observed by both Okoli et al. (2019) and Quinn et al. (2019). Moreover, the WHO admitted the existence of rejection of vaccines based on rumour and that one of the ten most pressing global health concerns in 2019. This matter has become even more pertinent during the COVID-19 pandemic since achieving high vaccination levels is essential to combat this disease.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the finding, it was concluded that;

1. There was a noticeable variance in the availability of COVID-19 vaccine among non-teaching staff. To ensure the safety of everyone on campus, it is imperative that the vaccine is made readily available to non-teaching staff as well.

2. There was a noticeable variance in the acceptability of the vaccine among non-teaching staff, with those who were aware of its availability and acceptability showing greater willingness to get vaccinated. Therefore, it is importance to create consciousness and educate staff about the availability and safety of the vaccine to increase its acceptability and uptake.

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Conducting seminars and workshops on the COVID-19 vaccine would be beneficial in updating the knowledge of the non-teaching staff regarding the subject matter.

2. Encouragement of vaccine confidence among the non-teaching staff in the university campus is imperative.

3. The Ministry of Health and Social Development of Lagos State can partner with the millennium goals providers such as UNICEF and WHO to make vaccines available to the university's non-teaching staff.

4. The University should collaborate with COVID-19 vaccine providers to provide vaccinations to the non-teaching staff.

5. The non-teaching staff must be encouraged to take all COVID-19 immunization shots recommended by the healthcare organization, comprising of an additional dose if advised, promptly upon their opportunity.

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AN EXAMINATION OF CONJUGATIONAL SUFFIXES OF PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN FULFULDE

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ABSTRACT
Passive voice is associated with the arrangement of a verb used when the subject is affected by the action of the verb involving a specific construction in different languages (see Tomori (1999), Hornby (2010) and O'Grady, Archibald and Katamba (2011). According to Khumalo, (2007) passivization is generally, the promotion to grammatical subject of an object NP. That is, passivization tropicalizes the patient which becomes the new grammatical subject. This implies that passive construction is obtained by the attaching a verbal extension morpheme (suffixes) which because its effect on the sentence structure is called passive Doke (1943); Guthrie (1967); Meeussen (1967) and Schadeberg (2003) since it turns the patient of the active sentence into a grammatical subject. In Fulfulde, it is described as a grammatical construction in which the subject of a clause or sentence becomes the thing that is acted upon Breeveld, (1995) In other words the verb form changes so that the thing that is acted upon comes first, while the acting agent comes second or doesn't appear at all McIntosh (1984). Based on the descriptions mentioned above, Fulfulde scholars are of the view that all the conjugational suffixes n Fulfulde have different forms when they combine with active voice verbs, with middle voice verbs or with passive voice verbs. The present study aims at describing and analyzing conjugational suffixes of Fulfulde passivized verbs as are obtainable in Magama-Gumau in Toro LGA of Bauchi state. The data for the study are gathered through the ethnographic method where unstructured interviews and observations were used. The objectives of the study are to identify conjugational suffixes used in passivization, their forms and syntactic usage. To achieve this, the study is guided by the transformational generative grammar (TGG) as propounded by Chomsky (1957) and expanded by Tomori (1999); Syal and Jindal (2013); Prasad (2014); and Abgedo (2015). The findings of

the study revealed that conjugational suffixes for passivized verb were identified as belonging to five (5) different groups. Base on this, the study discovered -ake, -aaki/kim, -oto and -ataako for affirmative and negative absolute/thoroughness of passive verbs in this category. The investigation established -aama, -a-noo-ma,-naama, -aa, -a, for completive positive and negative. The research also uncovered -etee-ndi, etee-gol, -ataake, -eteende and suffixes for incompletive positive/negative polarity. Additionally, the investigation exposed -ee, -ataake, -etee-nde, -ataako, and -eego/eeki as suffixes for progressive/continuous. Finally, the study identified -etee-ngu, -eema, and -etee as suffixes for vague and habitual suffixes.

Introduction

Fulfulde scholars are of the view that all the conjugational suffixes in Fulfulde verbs have different forms when they combine with active voice verbs, with middle voice verbs or with passive voice verbs. In other words, Ahmed (2019:28) stated that "voice category in Fulfulde consists of three (3) different series of tenses which are also referred to as voices which are subdivided into Active, Middle and Passive (AMP) voices in Fulfulde."Investigation further established that Fulfulde allows a number of passive constructions which are not possible in many other languages with similar passive formations. Hence, the current study focuses on the passive voice and specifically its conjugational suffixes. Scholars like Baker, (1978:102), described passive using transformational terms as:

> *"… first moving the subject NP to the end of the sentence and inserting **by** before it; secondly, moving the NP following the verbintosubject position;*
> *and third, inserting the appropriate form of **be** before the verb and putting the verb in participial form."*

The term passive has been described severally by different linguists and in different languages. Crystal (2008:353) sees passive as "a term that is used in grammatical analysis of voice referring to a sentence, clause or verb form where grammatical subject is typically the recipient or goal of the action denoted by the verb." Briton and Briton (2010:117) is of the view that "while the active is expressed by the simple forms of the verb, the passive is expressed periphrastically –by be + the past participle."Describing passive in Hausa, Newman (2000:666) is of the opinion that "it is stylistically common to put a Gr7 passive clause after a corresponding active clause in the same sentence to emphasize the thoroughness of an action." This refers that in the Hausa language, one needs to note that the key function of Gr7 is to indicate an agentless passive where the syntactic subject is realized as patient affected by the action of the verb in Gr7 where the final vowel of the verb is realised as /-a/ → /-u/. In another literature, Abdoulaye (1992) asserted that in the Maraɗi variety, *"ga"* phrase functions very much like the "*by*" phrasein English passive to specify the thematic agent in the construction. Bature (1991) also gives Gr7 passive sentences in which the prepositional phrase consisting of the term *wajen* + NP is treated as equivalent to a *"by"* phrase in English. In a brief description of passive sentences, Prasad (2014:101-102) states that passive sentences cannot be generated from active ones maintaining similarity in meaning. However, to maintain structural and semantic accuracy in the generation, Prasad (2014:102) states that "we need a rule that changes the order of the symbols and not one that simply expands one symbol into another or others."

Syal and Jindal (2013:130) affirm that "if a subject of the active sentence is one or someone, it can be deleted after passivization by applying the agent deletion rule." Huddleston (2005) observes that English passive constructions can be derived from the active voice by applying three transformations. These include; firstly, changing the function of the subject NP to become the complement of the by preposition in the active construction. Secondly, the function of the object in the active voice is changed to become the subject of the passive construction. Thirdly, be catenative verb is added and realized as the superordinate to the original verb. In addition, Huddleston (2005:176) is of the view that the distinction between active and passive can be in active voice, the subject normally corresponds to the actor (the active participant), and in passive voice it normally corresponds to the patient or the under-goer (the passive participant).

McIntosh (1984:108) described passive voice as associated with actions performed on subject by an unspecified agent." Additionally, the work revealed that there is no passive voice in imperative conjugational suffixes. In an attempt to describe suffixes of the three (3) voices in Fulfulde, Daudu (2005:104) identified *-ee, aama, ete* and *-ataako* as suffixes for passive voice. In her own contribution in the description of the suffixes of passives, Ahmedlya (2011:22) revealed that passive voice is marked by *-aama,-etee* and *-do…e* in the affirmative past, future and continuative tenses respectively."The present study aims at describing and analyzing conjugational suffixes (completive and in-completive tenses) of Fulfulde passivized verbs as are obtainable in Bauchi South senatorial zone (specifically Magama-Gumau in Toro LGA of Bauchi state and Babale in Jos North LGA of Plateau state). These areas formed the geographical scope of the study. The data for the study are gathered through the ethnographic method where unstructured interviews and observations were used to obtain the data for the study. The objectives of the study are to identify and analysethe various conjugational suffixes used in the completive aspect and in-completive aspect of the passivized verb. It also takes into account of their forms and syntactic usage. To achieve this, the study is guided by the theory of Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) in which "Passive Formation Rules" that relates an active sentence to its passive counterpart of the ST version as propounded by Chomsky (1957) and expanded by Tomori(1999); Huddleston (2005); Syal and Jindal (2013); Prasad (2014); and Abgedo(2015) in analyzing data gathered for the study as they occur in Central Northern Nigerian Dialect (henceforth, CNND).

Passivation Rule

NP1 -AUX – V - NP2 NP_2 – AUX – be – en– V – by – NP_1

DS – Audu likes Weeti**SS** –Weeti is liked by Audu.

(cf. Syal& Jindal 2013:131 and Prasad, 2014:103)

The choice of this approach is because a transformation is concerned with a relationship between two structures "active and passive"and not simply between words in a language, Fulfulde inclusive.

Types of Passive Sentences/Voices

Structurally, passive sentences vary from one language to another considering the components of a structure that can be described as passive sentence. Basically, there are two types of passive sentences. These are:

Agentless passive sentence.

Agentive passive sentence(cf. Crystal, 2015:17)

Agentless passive sentence refers to a passive sentence that the agent of the sentence is unknown. It is also known as short passive voice sentence because it does not require the presence of the *by-phrase agent* is an optional elementin its structure (cf. Huddleston, 2005). Fulfulde and Hausa areamong the languages that exhibit this phenomenon.

The second type of passive sentence which is known as *agentive passive sentence* or *longpassivevoicesentence.* This is when the

subject and the object change places for instance English language.

Uses of Passive Voice in Fulfulde

Native speakers of the Fulfulde language use passive voice for different purposes. They use the constructions when:

- The agent in the construction is unknowable to the speaker.
- To reduce redundancy of the agent in the construction.
- The speaker wants to emphasize the receiver or result of the action.
- When the speaker wants to make a statement sound objective without revealing the source of information.
- The speaker wants to be tactful or evasive by not mentioning the agent.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section of the paper presents and analyses data gathered for the study during field work or pilot study. For easy analysis and clear understanding of the conjugational suffixes of passive voices, the data are analysed base on their forms, functions of their VAP while on the other hand person and number of the object playing the role of subject of the passive constructions. This implies that the paper focuses on the description of their (VAP) form base on aspect (compl./incompl), polarity (positive/negative) and voice which centres on their on their passivity. These forms some of the different subsections of the paper in illustrating the passivation process in the language for clarity and understanding.

Fulfulde Passivation theCompletive Aspect

This subsection of the paper focused on the description of Fulfulde passive constructions in the completive aspect. The data to be analyzed in (1a-d) involve affirmatives, negatives, (singular and plural) as illustrated in the following examples:

Active → Passive

a. Oorinyaam-inyiiri Nyiirinyaam-**aama**

N_1 V VAP N_2N_2 V VAP

"Oori ate food" " Food has been eaten"

Oorinyaam-ii nyiiriNyiirinyaam-a-noo-ma

N_1 V VAP N_2N_2 V VAP

"Oori ate food" "Food was eaten"

Oorinyaam-**aayi**nyiiriNyiirinyaam-**aaka**

N_1 V VAP N_2N_2V VAP

"Ooridid not eat food""Food was not eaten"

Jaa'ennyaam-n-ii kutiiruKutiirundunnyaam-n-aama

N_1 V VAP N_2N_2Art. V VAP

"Jaa'e fed the dog" "The dog has been fed"

In examples (1a-e), we have both active and passive constructions that are in the completive aspects (simple past) which require description to point out the processes that have taken part in their Voice, Aspect and Polarity (henceforth, VAP). Base on this, (1a), which hasits Voice realized as *passive*is marked by the VAP suffix where the aspect is identified as:-*aama,* or what Arnott (1970)termed as general completive. Equally, in (1b) our sample demonstrated that the VAP suffix for the passive sentence is realized as:-*a-noo-ma* which is marking complete aspect with positive polarity. The occurrence of the -*noo*- preterit morpheme in the suffix substituted one of thelong vowels **-aa-** occurring in -***aa****ma*where it is realized as -***a-****noo-ma* with only a single**-a** vowel occurring before the preterit -*noo*- element in Fulfulde.In (1c), the data exhibits

a construction with active verb and its counterpart in the passive voice. Apart from distinguishing the two from their word order, still they can be distinguished from the VAP suffixes attached to the radicals. The active sentence has **-aayi**as its suffix marking negation in the completive aspect while its counterpart in the passive form has –**aaka**its negation marker for in the completive aspect. Additionally, in (1d) the suffixes for both active and passive consists of -n- verbal extension morpheme functioning as marker benefactive in Fulfulde. However, the VAPs of the twostructures can be distinguished whereas active occurs with -ii completive suffix, the passive takes **-n-aama**as its VAP suffix in completive aspect.

Fulfulde Passivation in the Incompletive Aspect

Here, he description of the VAP of the passive constructions centred on the verbsthat are in the incomplete form. The data comprise affirmatives, negatives, and thoroughness as indicated by the VAP suffixes. This process is displayed as in the following examples

Active → **Passive**

1) a. Sukanyaam-a nyiiri
Nyiirinyaam-**ee**
N_1 V VAP N_2N_2 V VAP
"Lad ate food."
"Food was eaten."

b. Suka loot-(a)taajuuɗeJuuɗe loot-**(a)take**
N_1 V VAP N_2N_2 V VAP
"Lad washed hands."
"Hands were washed."

c. Suka loot-(u) ma juuɗeJuuɗe loot-**eema**
N_1 V VAP N_2N_2 V VAP
"Lad may wash hands."
"Hands may be washed."

Our data in (2a-c) demonstrate passivisation involving structures in the incompletive form. In (2a), the on the left side is in the active aspect and its VAP illustrates incomplete identified as: -*a* morpheme attached to the radical. On the right, the structure exhibits a verb in the passive form with the suffix established as: *-ee* demonstrating incompletive aspect of the passivized verb and realized as *nyiiri*side*nyaam-ee*meaning "food has been eaten". Correspondingly, example (2c) on the left indicates active construction denoting: "lad will no washhands". So far, the construction in (2b) on the right exposed a passive sentence with the passiveverb understood as: "hands will not be washed". To mark the passivation, the verb takes *–(a)take* as the suffix attached to the radical. Also, in (2c) the data illustrated that active voice takes the *–(u)ma* as suffix foe active verb in Fulfulde. Observing sentences on the right, it would be comprehended that the sentence in (2c) has *-eema* as the conjugational suffix for *loot-* passive verb in the construction. Furthermore, it worth to note that both the active and passive sentences in (2c) are described as vague considering the form of the VAP.

Progressive or Continuous in Fulfulde Passive Voice

This refers to grammatical description of verb forms in contrast of temporal and durative kind of the verb. It is sometimes handled under tense and sometimes under aspect. Crystal (2008) is of the view that progressive can also be viewed as continuous. Hence, progressive in Fulfulde ca be considered as aspectual referring to time as incompletive or on-going activity. This can be illustrated as in the following samples:

Active Aspect → **Passive Aspect**

2) a. Sukae piy-*a*baggu
Bagguepiy-***ee***
N_1AUXV VAP N_2N_2 AUX V VAP

"A lad is playing drum""A drum is been played"

b. Sukae*n*yaam-*a*nyiiri
Nyiirie*n*aam-***ee***

N_1AUX V VAP N_2N_2 AUX V VAP
"A lad is eating food"
"Food is been eaten"

c. Sukapiy-*ataa*bagguBaggupiy-***(a)take)***

N_1 V VAP N_2N_2 V VAP
"A lad is not playing drum"
"A drum is not being played."

Considering the samples given in (3a-c), our investigation discovered in (3a) the conjugation of the verb -*piy*- in the active form takes -a as the appropriate suffix to be attached to the verb while an auxiliary *e* element denoting "is" in English precedes the verb literary meaning: beating the drum to mean: "is drumming". However, in the passive construction, the verb takes -*ee* as its suffix literary, denoting *beating the drum,* technically meaning drumming at the time of reporting. In (3b), the verb *nyaam*- "to eat" has an auxiliary *e* signifying "is" occurring before the radical and the aspectual marker; -*a* is attached to the verb to indicate continuous aspect of the action meaning "is eating". In the case of its passive form, the auxiliary *e* has no place to occupy while the suffix attached to the verb is realized as -*ee* representing; "-*ing*" morpheme signifying present continuous. Similarly, in (3c), active construction to the left has -*ataa* negating the meaning of the structure. Yet, in the circumstance of the passive structure, the auxiliary that featured in (3a-b) is elided while the conjugation of the verb is recognized as; -*(a)taa* where the first vowel is optional. Literary, the passive sentence is understood as: *drum is not being beaten* and technically realized as; "the drum is not sounding/playing".

Fulfulde Passivation in the Future

From the data collected, it has been observed that different VAP suffixes are employed to mark future aspects in Fulfulde. Hence, the data described in (3a-c) comprise those with positive and negative polarity while in number, they involve both singular and plurals as demonstrated below:

Active →
Passive

3) a. Sukaceek-***ataa***ɗerewolngol
Ɗerewolngolceek-**ataake**
N_1 V VAP N_2Art$_2$ArtV VAP
Lad tear-notpaper the
"The paper will betorn"

b. Maryam ceek-***ay***derewolngolƊerewolngolceek-**etee**ngol
N_1 V VAP N_2N_2Art V VAPEmph
"Maryam will tear the paper." "The paper will be torn"

c. Sukaɓorn-***oto***toggoore
Toggooreɓorn-**etee**-nde
N_1 V VAP N_2N_2V VAPEmph
"Lad will weara shirt." "A shirt will be worn"

d. Maryam nyaam-***ay***nyiiriNyiirinyaam-**etee**ndi
N_1V VAP N_2N_2 V VAPEmph
"Maryam will eat food." "Food will be eaten"

Fulfulde Passivation in Absolute/Thoroughness Constructions

Unlike in Hausa where Newman (2000:666) is of the opinion that "it is stylistically common to put a Gr7 passive clause after a corresponding active clause in the same sentence to emphasize the thoroughness of an action, Fulfulde expresses active sentence in one sentence and its counterpart (passive) in a different sentence.

Scholars are of the view that in the Hausa language, one needs to note that the key function of Gr7 is to indicate an agentless passive where the syntactic subject is realized as patient affected by the action of the verb in Gr7 where the final vowel of the verb is realized as /-a/ → /-u/. Yet, Fulfulde uses the absolute/thoroughness passives for emphasis as demonstrated in the following illustrations:

Active → **Passive**

4) a. Sukaaɓepiy-**ii**gujjo on Gujjo'onpiy- **ake**
N_1V VAP N_2N_2Art VAPVAP
Lads beat the thief "The thief has been thoroughly beaten"

b. Jaa'enyaam-**aa**yinyiirindinNyiirindinnyaam-**aaki**
N_1 V VAP N_2 ArtN_2ArtV VAP
"Jaa'e did not eat the food" "The food is not thoroughly eaten"

c. Weetijonng-**ii**nyiirimbelndiNyiirinyaam-**oto**
N_1 V VAP N_2AdjtN$_2$ V VAP
"Weeti cooked delicious food." "Delicious food will be thoroughly eaten"

d. Aabujonng-**ataa**nyiirimbelndiNyiirindinnyaam-**ataako**
N_1V VAP N_2AdjtN$_2$Art. V VAP
"Aabuwill not cookeddelicious food.""The food willseriously be uneatable."

e. Jaa'ohaɓɓ-**ay**gaarindinboodɗumGaarindinhaɓɓ-**oto**
N_1V VAP N_2Art.djtN$_2$Art. V -VAP
"Jaa'o will tire a bull systematically." "The bull will be tied thoroughly."

Considering our samples in five (5a-e) consists of active sentence and a counterpart in the passive forms. Our investigation established that (5a) illustrated an active construction with **-ii** as suffix for general completive while its counterpart in passive voice has *-ake* for the thoroughness in completive aspect positive polarity. Example (5b) exposed the two sentences can be distinguished for position of N_1 and N_2 and structures of their VAP respectively. For instance, active sentence exhibited negation suffix realized as **-aayi** and the passive has **-aaki** as suffix markers for thoroughness in completive aspect, the sentence on the right is of passive Sample (5d) on the is of the active with its suffix realized as **-ay** marking incomplete aspect. Similarly, the sentence on the right demonstrated passive construction with **-ataako** as its suffix marking negative incomplete aspect. This implies that both active and passive in (5d) are incomplete and in the negative polarity. In (5e), our sample illustrated that while the active voice has **-ay** as its suffix, its counterpart in the passive form takes **-oto**as intensified aspect of the action word in the construction.

Conclusion

This paper investigated varieties of conjugational suffixes as they occur in passive in contrast to those occurring in active voice. Conclusively, the research focused on the description of VAP suffixes as they occur in completive aspect (past tense), incompletive, progressive/continuous tense, completive with preterit or what McIntosh (1984) term anteriority marker. The paper also looked at conjugational suffixes of passive construction in negative polarity and paradigms of absolute/thoroughness in passive aspect. In view of the investigation, the paper showed the following findings indicate that for conjugational suffixes for completive are: *-aama*, a-noo-*ma*,*aaka* and *-n-aama*. For incompletive, the research discovered *-ee*, (*a*)*take* and *-eema*.

The study also revealed that for progressive the conjugational suffixes include -*ee* and (a)*take*. In the case of future, the investigation identified –*ataake* and *etee* as suffixes for future tense. Finally, the study established -*ake*, -*aaki*, -*oto* and -*ataako* as conjugational suffixes for various varieties

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