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ASSESSMENT OF SECURITY OPERATIONS ON TACKLING BANDITRY FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH-WESTERN NIGERIA

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KEYWORDS
Insecurity, Banditry, National Security, Security Operation, North-West

ABSTRACT
The paper assesses the role of the security in tackling insecurity that manifested in the form of banditry in the North-Western region for sustainable national development in Nigeria. The activities of the bandits in the study area also led to so many security challenges in the region which has caused a lot of sets back in all aspect. These security challenges include kidnapping for ransom, displacement of the rural dwellers, closure of schools and other social facilities, increase in abandoned farmland, and loss of lives and properties. Data was sourced from two major sources; secondary and primary sources. The secondary sources were from existing literature on Insecurity, the interview method and questionnaire were adopted as the primary source of data to generate reliable data from the selected key informants within the study area. The paper concludes that military engagement to tackle banditry have yielded positive results in tackling the security situation in the study area. Finally, the paper suggests that certain measures need to be taken in other to reduce the security challenges of the North-Western region and create an avenue for sustainable national security in Nigeria. Some of these are adequate security presence in rural areas, provision of adequate logistics in tackling banditry, the synergy between and among the security agencies, provision of adequate manpower, provisions of sophisticated weapons.

Introduction

Security is the cornerstone of development and progress in a free society, and that security is a guarantee of the well-being of citizens and stability of the state. On the other hand, insecurity connotes different meanings such as: absence of safety; danger; hazard; uncertainty; lack of protection, and lack of safety. Beland (2005) opined that insecurity is the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection. It refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger.

Nigeria published its maiden National Security Strategy in 2014 and since then the security environment has continued to evolve, giving rise to emergent challenges, thus necessitating a review. While significant progress has been made on multiple fronts between 2014 and 2019, the nature of security challenges facing Nigeria is more complex than in the past (NSS, 2019). There has been an intensification of pastoralists-farmers conflicts in many states of the federation. Banditry has escalated and become a major feature of the security environment. Similarly,

there has been a significant upsurge in kidnapping and other crimes.

Nigeria is the region's principal military power and faces numerous security challenges, including from Boko Haram and militants in the Niger-Delta. Reform initiatives have developed, after the challenge from Boko Haram exposed relative military weaknesses. There have been operational changes, including attempts to implement counter-insurgency tactics, forward-operating bases and quick reaction groups. Nigeria is part of the Multi-National Joint Task Force and is a key member of the ECOWAS Standby Force. Military and security assistance is either discussed or under way with Germany, the UK and the US. The UK bases its British Defence Staff West Africa in Nigeria. Efforts have been made to improve training, notably in the air force, with the establishment of Air Training Command and Ground Training Command. Contractors have also been used to improve training levels. Nigeria is able to mount regional operations, though its deployment capacities remain limited. Efforts are under way to refurbish stored aircraft and develop support capacities in advance of the arrival of SuperTucanoaircraft. A number of small coastal-patrol boats have been acquired in light of security requirements in the Niger Delta region. Nigeria is developing its defence-industrial capacity, including local production facilities for small arms and protected patrol vehicles (NSS, 2019).

Nigeria faces a rapidly changing world with a diverse range of threats. The threats are multifaceted and less predictable with blurred boundaries between external and internal risk factors. Threat factors that manifest at the global, regional and domestic levels are usually mutually reinforcing. Therefore, they require an integrative national strategy and cooperation within a framework of regional as well as international organizations and institutions. Several challenges are likely to drive Nigeria's security priorities in the next five years with both short and long-term implications. These challenges can be grouped under the following security threats: terrorism and violent extremism, armed banditry, kidnapping, militancy and separatist agitations, pastoralists-farmers conflicts, transnational organized crime, piracy and sea robbery, porous borders, cybercrimes and technology challenges. The criminal activities of armed bandits and kidnap gangs are the preeminent threats confronting us at present. Their major activities include kidnapping and cattle rustling which are on the increase due to the high economic pay-off in terms of derivable financial benefits. They also thrive on the twin elements of fear and surprise and constitute a grave threat to personal security (NSS, 2019).

Others are socio-political threats, fake news and hate speeches, environmental threats, public health challenges, economic challenges, regional and global security challenges. Trend analysis suggests a correlation between armed banditry, militia groups, kidnapping and cattle rustling, in what appears to be a convergence of various illegal networks. This has led to loss of lives and property and ultimately undermines peace with grave implications for human security.

Several factors have been adduced as the driving forces of banditry in Nigeria and most especially in the northwest region of the country. Drivers of banditry in northwestern Nigeria consist in some socio-existential conditions that characterize the interior as well as the frontiers of the region. Prominent among these conditions are the scarcely governed spaces- the hinterlands, forestlands and borderlines of the region. The northwestern hinterlands are marked by extremely dispersed rural settlements, separated by rangelands and farmlands that are susceptible to violent contestations (Rufai, 2021).

Violent conflicts between pastoralists and farmers are widespread with severe consequences in terms of loss of lives, property and disruption of the normal functioning of society. These conflicts undermine the fabric of our corporate existence as they exacerbate the various fault lines with grave implications. At the heart of these conflicts, are the quest for land, grazing routes, water and other resources. Climate change, population explosion and growth of new settlements are veritable sources and causal factors of most of these conflicts. The significant threat posed by pastoralists-farmers conflict makes it a critical issue that needs to be addressed quickly and comprehensively.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) is a global phenomenon arising from conflicts across the globe. According to a survey conducted by the Geneva based Small Arms Survey, it is estimated that more than 857 million small arms and light weapons (SALWs) are currently in circulation aside from twelve billion rounds of ammunition produced annually. Of these, ten million small arms and light weapons (SALWs) are estimated to be in Africa with one million of these in Nigeria. This is not unconnected with past and on-going conflicts in

West and North African countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and Libya. Proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) aid non-state actors likeBoko Haram Terrorist (BHT) and armed bandits, while undermining state monopoly of instruments of coercion. The threats posed by proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) are of such magnitude that a security strategy which contemplates the monitoring of their flow and use is required.

In this vain, the intent of this paper is to study the roles, strategies, and operations of the security personnel in reducing the activities of bandits in the north-western region of Nigeria for a sustainable national development. It demonstrates, with clear evidence, the efforts displayed by the Nigerian securities in unfolding and reducing the incessant attacks by the armed groups.

Conceptual Clarification

Insecurity

Insecurity is the state of being subject to danger or injury. The anxiety is experienced when one feels vulnerable and insecure. It is a state of being not secure, lack of confidence. Insecurity can constitute a form of attacking individuals or groups causing panic. The concept of insecurity connotes different meanings such as the absence of safety; danger; hazard; uncertainty; lack of protection, and lack of safety. For Onifade, Imhonopi & Urim (2013), in Jubril, & Jimoh (2020), insecurity is conceived as a situation where human and national security of a state is compromised by internal or external forces or interests exacerbated by the former's weak or poor economic, military and/or human resource development conditions.

Security

Security is the state or condition of being free from danger or threat in the daily activities of human beings (Imam, 2014). It is the freedom to move and participate in social, economic, and political activities freely without any threat from any individual or group. Security also entails a peaceful engagement of persons and communities in their daily activities without being subjected to fear of danger, destruction of their properties, injuries. Ensuring the security of lives and properties is the primary responsibility of the state. It is because of this that the government has established several security forces to ensure and maintain security within the country and even to respond to external aggressions and threats.

Bandits

Bandits are outlaws and fugitives in society. An outlaw is someone who failed to stand trial becoming a fugitive from the law (Manderson, 2003). Society may declare such a person wanted, dead or alive; that gives any member of society license to kill the declared bandit with impunity. That creates a state-endorsed radical inversion of the social contract (Manderson, 2003). Those who operate on that platform are regarded as bad people, who have nothing good to offer society. Bandits are simply a community of pastoralists who used to live in hamlet and forest settlements but transformed overnight into bandit's gangs (Rufai, 2021).

Literature Review

With the return of Nigeria to a democratic system in 1999 a lot of expectation was placed on the government with believe that democracy would guarantee freedom, security, liberty, and equity and enhances security of lives and properties, which would indeed repositions development and sustainable national security. Regrettably, insecurity has metamorphosed into violent conflicts that have become a series threat to sustainable national security.

Nonetheless, developed societies are distinct in their strategies to curtail the escalation of insecurity by ensuring that perpetrators hardly get away with them. This level of efficiency could be attributed to their robust security networks and well committed and motivated, properly educated, trained and remunerated personnel that are in charge of security matters. Moreover, the leadership of these societies is very effective and capable, thus unequal allocation of resources and provision of amenities necessary to live a normal life do not have any negative implication to their citizens. Consequently, insecurity in such societies has never been regarded as a serious hindrance to national progress.

In many emerging societies, the reverse is however the case. Perpetrators are hardly caught

due to their poor security network. When persons are caught, the poor ones are usually brought to book, while the elite class is let off the hook due to the prevailing high level of injustice and discrimination (Nyamwamu et al., 2012). Moreover, security personnel are largely ineffective and inefficient because they are poorly educated, trained, motivated, equipped and remunerated (Nyamwamu*et al.*, 2012). Hence, it becomes essentially difficult to maintain peace needed for national development.

For Achumba*et al.* (2013), insecurity is an absence of protection or safety. These scholars argue further that insecurity entails peril; deathtrap; ambiguity; dearth of fortification, and lack of security. They also discuss the problem of insecurity from the following two major perspectives: Firstly, insecurity is the state of being prone or vulnerable to danger or threat of danger. In this situation, the tendency of experiencing hurt based on insufficient measures against danger is very bright. Secondly, insecurity is the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety. The exposure could be as a result of inadequate measures against insecurity by the state or by a group of people etc. This usually happens when the law enforcement agents are poorly educated, trained, remunerated and motivated. It could also occur when peoples‟ basic necessities of life are lacking.

Most of these factors hinged on political, economic, cultural and religious issues surrounding insecurity but with little regards for the social relations arising from interaction among groups with respect to religion, ethnicity, politics, etc. Also, knowledge of insecurity emanating from social interaction between groups- entrepreneurs and employees, the ruler and the ruled, etc. and its implications for human life and national development is yet to be fully explored in Nigerian context (Kuna &Jibrin, 2016). Insecurity continues to manifest in the form of banditry, kidnapping for ransom, rape, illegal toll collection at market roads, political thuggery and mayhem with severe consequences and threat to life. In the north-western region of Nigeria, insecurity is in the form of banditry.

Literature on the nature and incidence of banditry mostly perpetrated by nomads has yielded several thematic perspectives. Foremost among these perspectives is the narrative that situates the phenomenon as a necessary complication of the farmer-herder crisis in a volatile security context, characterized by the declining state's capacity to govern (Shettima& Tar, 2008; Olaniyan&Yahaya, 2016). Armed banditry violence assumed a new dimension as a farmers/herders conflict in 2011 and intensified around 2017 to 2018 to include; cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, sexual violence and killings. However, some analysts have traced its origin to the outcome of the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-1979 (Dialy Trust 24th May, 2021).

Banditry has created a large number of destitute, orphans and widows in the rural areas of Zamfara State due to constant raiding, theft and raping. The village of Badarawa in Shinkafi Local Government Area, is another area hit by the bandits, the village head has compiled a list of 318 widows, orphans and destitute who lost loved ones in the various attacks carried out by the bandits in 2015 alone. The levels of attacks in these areas are less compared to Anka, Maru and Tsafe that witnessed frequent attacks and recorded high casualties. In these areas, so many villages were raided and people killed indiscriminately; women were raped and livestock stolen by the bandits (Rufai, 2021). The pervasive banditry and its associated threats to security, which have enveloped the Northwest region of Nigeria, particularly, Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna, Sokoto and Niger States, have become a worrisome national security issue of public concern (Olaniyan&Yahaya, 2016).

In their study, Kuna &Jibrin observed that the northwestern region of Nigeria encompasses seven states namely Kano, Jigawa, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebbi. Five of these states, which are Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebbi have been mostly affected by the scourge of banditry. Of these five states, Kaduna, Katsina and Zamfara have been the most critical hot spots. It is however, pertinent to note that the incidences of banditry are not limited to northwestern Nigeria. In fact, it is also prevalent in some parts of north-central region, in states like Niger, Nasarawa, Benue and Plateau which are equally regarded as hotbeds (Kuna &Jibrin 2016).

Considering the location of Zamfara State with the escalating banditry activities, it indicate that the incidence of Zamfara spread across the neighbouring States of Katsina, Sokoto and other states across the region. We can arguably agree that free movement of the bandits in the forest zones that link the north-western states transform the security situation into a regional problem. Bandits are sophisticated money launderers, their modus operandi is to rustle cows, sell the rustle cows, buy more robust, well-

fed cows and take them to neighbouring countries for sale. The proceed; they invest in acquiring more arms and ammunition. They use drones, CCTV for surveillance (Rufai, 2021). According to Warto (2011), social banditry is the act of crime committed either by the residents of a village or people in the low economic and social strata to fulfill their basic needs. Such acts are a response to structural pressure, which deprives people of access to the natural resources in their lives. It is an act of taking property by force or the threat of force. The act is often done by a group, usually of men (Slatta, 1994). Banditry is not restricted to rural settings; it has also extended its tentacles to urban settings, incorporating women and children into it. Banditry has equally assumed a level of violence that is no longer constrained to targeting the rich, which has been its main focus in the past. Men, women, and children have become real targets of social bandits.

Role of the Security personnel in Tackling Banditry

In modern states, the security architecture determines the economic stability and development. The irreducible function of the state is to continually secure itself against internal insurrection and external aggression by providing the security of lives and property of citizens. Ideological differences notwithstanding, this is the state's most critical defining function. The "monopoly of the legitimate" use of force by which the state is defined- to defend itself against possible external aggression- and to secure its citizens against competing users of the instrument of force speaks precisely to this point. This is the only way the state harvests in return the loyalty of its citizens, which translates into a high degree of legitimacy and the ready inclination to obey its laws (Sofiri, 2020).

Several threats exist in our domestic environment which undermines the well-being of our citizens. These challenges, such as terrorism driven by violent extremism, banditry and militia activities are perpetrated in the form of kidnapping, armed robbery and cattle rustling. Others include separatism and resource-based conflicts that engender environmental and related agitations. Socio-economic challenges that manifest in poverty also lead to vandalism of critical national infrastructure, crude oil theft, attacks on farmsteads and illegal bunkering that threaten the security of Nigeria.

The aforementioned challenges call for a robust, dynamic and proactive national security framework and infrastructure capable of dealing with these growing threats in real time. The National Security Strategy 2019 aims at ensuring that Nigeria's sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interests, the well-being of the people and the country's institutions are preserved, protected and enhanced. The Strategy provides a comprehensive vision of National Security, premised on the understanding that a responsible society aware of its security is better poised to address today's challenges. Thus, it is essential to encourage the involvement of citizens and collaboration between the public and private sectors (NSS, 2019). This is agreement with the opinion of a security officer (interview, 2021) who opined that:

You see, if you talk of the solution is multifaceted, not only the government, everybody has a responsibility. The government, the security agencies, members of the community, the traditional rulers, the religious leaders, the herders, the farmers, everybody is a stakeholder in this conflict. And if you want to look for solution, you must look for solution from this aspect (interview, 8th November, 2021).

Although the Armed Forces of Nigeria and other security services have remained a bulwark and stabilizing force for internal security, the overall security architecture needs retooling. Nigeria's geostrategic analysis depicts substantial but largely untapped strengths amidst critical vulnerabilities. It is therefore imperative that we devise strategies to enhance our national capacities for growth, security and progress (NSS, 2019). The Federal Government's response had been largely through deployment of state security forces. Consequently, "Operation Safe Haven" was created for the North-Central and stationed in Plateau State with areas of operation extending to Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa and Kwara states to quell ethno-religious conflicts and other criminal activities are cardinal evidence in this regard. Other government's response includes constitution of Commissions of inquiry and humanitarian assistance to persons displaced by the conflict. In addition, some State governments in the zone drawing inspiration from the Niger Delta situation have also initiated amnesty programmes - Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) - as forms of pardon for repentant warlords, yet conflicts and insecurity

continue to impact on inhabitants of the zone (Sofiri, 2020).

For the North-West, "Operation *SharanDaji*/Operation *Harbin Kunama* 11 was established to battle armed bandits, cattle rustlers and robbers operating particularly in Zamfara, Kaduna and fringes of Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina and Kano States, yet the conflicts continue. Government's review of the escalation of insecurity in the zone resulted in the launching of a new operation on Thursday, June 4, 2020 codenamed "Operation Accord" was launched on

Thursday, June 4, 2020, to wipe out banditry, Kidnapping and other criminality from the North-West and North- Central part of Nigeria. The operation was promptly planned by the military high command of the armed forces of Nigeria to tackle banditry and other violent crimes in the area. The troops through land and air offensives successfully neutralized 392 bandits and other criminal elements since the commencement of the operation in the two zones (Killte, 2020, cited in Sofiri, 2020).

Commenting further on the measures adopted in reducing the incidence of banditry, security personnel (interview, 2021) comment that:

Right now operations are ongoing, bandits are being arrested, and some of them are being prosecuted as we speak. With the seizure of network, it has greatly enhanced the security arrangement in the region. In the last two weeks or there about, there is no issue of bandit's related activities in those areas as we speak (Interview, 12th October, 2021)

Considering the opinion on the security operations in tackling insecurity, it can be situated within the concept of security management. Security management encapsulate all business and human organizational activities, as simply as the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives (Magashi, 2021). Similarly, Elaigwu (2005) opined that: *''national security management is a comprehensive method which includes both the proactive and reactive processes. The proactive process of national security management involves the early warning procedures, which includes all stakeholders including the community, as well as other measures adopted towards preventing the eruption of violent conflict and measures ensuring such conflicts are resolve satisfactorily. The reactive process deal with violent conflicts, such as insurgency and terrorism in the North East, as well as other violent situation including; banditry and kidnapping, predominantly in the North-West and North-Central''* (Elaigwu, 2005).

Similarly, the former Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General TurkurYusufuBuratai flagged off Operation Sahel Sanity on the 6 July, 2020 as part of activities of the Nigerian Army Day celebration, 2020 during which the Nigerian Army Super Camp IV Faskari in Katsina State was established. The aim of the operation is to support Operation *HadarinDaji* in stemming the tides of the activities of armed bandits, cattle rustlers, kidnappers, incessant killings in the North-West zone of the country. Also, the Late Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Attahiru, on April 13, 2021, said the Nigerian Army has begun engage some of its retirees to assist in tackling the rising insecurity in the country. Attahiru, who disclosed this while declaring open the First Quarter 2021 Veterans Affairs Directorate Workshop in Port-Harcourt, with the theme, 'Harnessing the skills of retirees for national security', did not reveal the category of people to be engaged from among the veterans (Daily Trust, 2021).

These acts of criminality orchestrated by the bandits had before now, crippled the sustainable national development which directly affect the social-political and economic activities of the people of this zone. Writing on the incidence of banditry, Bagu& Smith (2017, 5) observed that: ''*gangs of criminals, often youth from farming and herding communities and/or local bandits, take advantage of growing insecurity, fear, and cyclical attacks to loot villages, engage in highway robbery, and rustle cattle for personal gain. Both farming and herding communities suffer from this criminality*'' (Bagu& Smith, 2017).

The people of the North-West zone felt the immediate impact of the operation with the tremendous success achieved within the short period of time. Eighty bandits were killed, 33 suspects arrested, 943 cows, 633 sheep/ram recovered and 7 AK47 riffles, one GPMG, 16 Dane guns were captured in the onslaught against bandits in Katsina State by troops of Operation Sahel Sanity. Seventeen (17) kidnapped victims were also rescued, while 14 bandits' informants and collaborators were arrested. In addition, several bandits' camps including the notorious Dangote Triangle and their logistics bases were destroyed within the first month of the anti-bandit operation code named Operation Sahel Sanity (Ndidi, 2020, cited in Sofiri, 2020). Prior to the creation of the above Special Security Forces,

"Operation *Mesa*" had been operating as a nationwide security taskforce. It is called "Operation *Yaki*" in Kaduna State and "Operation *Zenda*" in Benue State. In line with the above narration, there have been a lot of improvement on the side of the military on reducing the security situation in the north-western region, more bandits were killed, informants were arrested, and many kidnapped victims were rescued (NSS, 2019).

Our strategic response rests on three layers of defence crisis management namely constructive engagement, application of soft power and combat engagements. In other words, the first option in the resolution of fledgling national defence threats will be to adopt non-kinetic measures. As a rule, we will explore the opportunities of defence diplomacy, as expedient, to leverage the comparative resource endowments of friendly nations, allies and international partners. When military engagements become inevitable, we will apply domestic and international legal frameworks to promote national defence. We will also mobilise domestic political, economic and social institutions through statutory Civil-Military Relations structures (NSS, 2019). Within these narratives, it is important to acknowledge the fact that security management is all and encompassing. This is because security management is the totality of all government effort in the deployment of all available elements of power articulated in its national security policies as well as operational strategy and tactical plans (NSS, 2019).

Various security networks are involved in strategically reducing the security challenges bedeviling the North-Western region of Nigeria. From the Nigerian Police, also, (interview, 2021) *If you look at Section 4 of the Police Act, it clearly stated the role of the Police which has to do with the protection of life and property among others, and it is our responsibility and our role is to make sure that citizens are not harass, crimes are not committed against good citizens of that area. And the role of the Police in that area is to ensure sanity, peace, tranquility, and there are no crimes committed and even if there are criminals around because you cannot rule out crime because is inevitable., they are arrested and brought to book right from the inception of banditry in the area* (Interview, 8th October 2021).On the same note, he (Security, 2021) further comments that:

You see, if you talk of the solution is multifaceted, not only the government, everybody has a responsibility. The government, the security agencies, members of the community, the traditional rulers, the religious leaders, the herders, the farmers, everybody is a stakeholder in this conflict. And if you want to look for solutions, you must look for solution from this entire angle that I mentioned (Interview 8thOctoberr, 2021).

The people of the North-West zone felt the immediate impact of the operation with the tremendous success achieved within the short period. Eighty bandits were killed, thirty three suspects arrested, 943 cows, 633 sheep/ram recovered and seven AK47 rifles, one GPMG, sixteen Dane guns were captured in the onslaught against bandits in Katsina State by troops of Operation Sahel Sanity. Seventeen kidnap victims were also rescued, while fourteen bandits' informants and collaborators were arrested. In addition, several bandits' camps including the notorious Dangote Triangle and their logistics bases were destroyed within the first month of the anti-bandit operation code-named Operation Sahel Sanity (Sofiri, 2020).

Reasons Why the Security Operations are Failing in Tackling Banditry

It appears that the government's high security "operations" have not achieved the desired results, hence affected states and citizens' decision to take their destiny in "their own hands" by devising measures to confront the insecurity challenge. Some of the reasons why the security operations are failing may contribute to factors such as;

1. Inadequate Manpower

We don't have enough manpower in the police to deal with the situation. Nigeria is one of the most under-police nations. We have about 370,000 police personnel. Some analysts dispute this figure. They opined that it is lower than this. Many are deployed to protect important personalities. So, they have been taken out of operation. The police are now largely used for regime protection. Given the generalised insecurity across the country, not only the police, even the army and other security agencies are overstretched (Siddique, 2021). Nigeria with a population of over 200 million has about 120,000 fighters, in spite of the multiplicity of bandits and terrorist across the country. That is to say, Algeria with a quarter of Nigeria's population has a

standing army that is almost four times the size of Nigeria's.

2. Security Forces are Overstretched and Overwhelmed

This, in part explains why Nigeria's army is overstressed and overwhelmed by bandits and terrorist attacks. Nigeria's military spending is overshadowed by hide-and-seek schemes and corruption. Even the $1 billion approved by governors and the National Assembly a couple of years ago for the purchase of weapons to fight terrorists is yet to be genuinely accounted for. Though Algeria is not fighting any battle today, its military expenditure ($13.9 billion in 2021) is the third highest in Africa, after Egypt and Angola (Abbah, 2021).

3. Lack of Synergy Among the Security Personnel

The various security networks in the country are approaching the situation of banditry from their on perspective, this provide opportunity for the bandits that have adequate information on the movement of security personnel and the mode of operation. Working in synergy among the security personnel will weaken the operations of the bandits and they can be easily neutralize, the problem would be strategically handled. This clearly indicates the weak security architecture of Nigeria and government complacency in tackling the menace of insecurity. Security budget suppose to be given priority, but in the case of Nigeria the case is reverse which brought forward sequential effect on sustainable national security in the country.

4. Inadequate Logistics Supply

Adequate logistics supply is a key in winning any battle. This situation has been a contributing factor to reason why the bandits are getting a upper had against the Nigerian Military personnel. Most of the fund that supposed to be geared toward the purchase of ammunitions and other needed equipments is being diverted by few individuals (Abbah, 2021). This situation has continued to weaken the morale of the military forces on the effort to tackle the situation of banditry in North Western Nigeria.

Conclusions

In conclusion, insecurity which has spread into various dimension in the north-western region of Nigeria incorporating into it banditry that is consistently affecting the sustainable national security in term of socio-political threats and instability, environmental threats, public health challenges, economic challenges, regional and global security challenges. The criminal activities of armed bandits have succeeded in becoming an obstacle to sustainable national security. Their major activities include kidnapping and cattle rustling, killing innocent citizens, rape, displacement of peasants, disruption of farming, and market activities, which are on the increase due to the high economic pay-off in terms of derivable financial benefits. The military Operation *SharanDaji*/Operation *HarbinKunama* 11, Operation Accord which was established to battle armed bandits, cattle rustlers and robbers operating particularly in Zamfara, Kaduna and fringes of Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina and Kano States, have recorded a lot of success in reducing banditry in the north-western region of Nigeria. This have brought normalcy in many communities that were displaced and has improve the sustainable national development.

Recommendations

1. There must be adequate support and intervention of the Federal, State, and Local Government authorities in the fight against rural banditry. Through that, the security can be easily mobilized for quick response to discreet calls. Because presently the security personnel only receive orders from the Federal Government before engaging in field operation, this process left the State Government with less power to tackle the menace of Banditry.

2. Adequate manpower must be provided in the flashpoint areas where the bandits have turned into their den. This will help the security to confront the bandits that are coming in many to attack communities.

3. Adequate logistics must be provided to security personnel such as superior modern sophisticated weapons, drones, and other modern technologies equipment must be provided to the security agencies in other to tackle the incidence of banditry.

4. There must be synergy among various security networks that are saddle with the responsibility of providing the citizens of this area with the protection of lives and properties. Lack of synergy among the security agencies made the fight against banditry a difficult one.

5. There must be seriousness in handling the case of banditry by the security personnel and the judiciary. The law and the penalty onconvicted bandits and their informants must be put to action. This will serve as deterrence to others and also the people exposing bandits and the informants will not be under constant fear of attck if the bandits find out about their identity.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRADITIONAL AFRICAN AND WESTERN PEACE BUILDING

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ABSTRACT
Conflict is a two edge phenomenon that can instigate human creativity toward innovation with the aim of providing stability and peace; on the other side is the distractive role it provides to the society. African traditional methods of conflict resolution have lost its potency in recent times due to Western Methodology in conflict resolution and its interference with African Philosophical approach. However, traditional African conflicts resolution mechanism is still relevant, as the Western concept is not providing the answers to peace. It is however imperative that both the traditional African conflict resolution mechanism and the Western Model are fused together in order to provide a conflict resolution in the African environment. Hence both the traditional African method and the Western style method still live with us and peace is what everyone need. This essay is an attempt to harmonize the Africa traditional conflict resolution and western methods of peace building in conflict management in the African environment with specific touch on the IGBO of the South East Nigeria and the BUEM of Ghana . peace building theory was used. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Introduction

African Conflict Management mechanism have been described by scholars as a necessary reality that is important by bringing African traditional conflict medicine to bear with the present day challenges of resolving Modern conflict that have permeated the African continent.

With the end of the systems of world order that colonialism and the cold war provided, Africa is experiencing a greater degree of conflict than it has seen in a long while. While this conflict is frequently noted to be primarily internal in nature, the fact frequently noted is that domestic political conflict does not remain self-contained, nor is itself generated. The stakes of African conflicts in the post-cold war era are indeed internal, but their origins and ramifications involved the entire region. African Conflict in the 1990's is not only prevalent than in earlier periods; it is more virulent and destructive because its implications lie within both the state and the region. More than ever, Africa needs effective conflict management practices. (Zartman W. 2000).

So if Africa has to put the falling apart together; her original values must be revisited (Bob Manuel, 2000:10) Going back to the basics, African traditional societies have over the centuries, developed mechanism in conflicts or dispute resolution; hence they were able to address contending issues within the community and family that comes to confront them on daily basics. Though analysts have argued that the methods, principles and processes that these traditional dispute resolutions mechanisms applied in disputes were not orthordoxically documented, they were done through oral traditions, which got to a state of distortion from one generation to another. Nevertheless, the practices of invoking the same style or tradition is to arrive at a meaningful result, that implant peace to the community is still the same

African traditional dispute resolutions may differ from one clan, lineage, community or family to another but the overriding characteristics of these dispute resolutions rely on (1) The head of the family, (2) The elders (3) oath taking through African traditional religion beliefs (4) The 3rd Party approach, etc all play crucial role in dispute resolutions in Africa.

Conceptualization

Peace is the absence of war, absence of violence.

Peace building is an activities aim at achieving sustainable peace. It includes peacemaking, peace keeping, DDR etc.

Principles and processes of African Dispute Resolution

In Africa, family ties and community networking are constantly respected, maintained and strengthened. When there is a dispute between different parties, priority is given to restoring the relationships. During the dispute settlement, which would normally involve supporters of the disputing parties and the elders meant to talk the matters through, relationships are given prime attention. The relationships are viewed according to the past, and the tense or current conflict, and then the aim would be to improve future relationships. Indirect relationships are analyzed along with direct ones to see cross-stitching potentials, for example, if each of the disputing parties happen to be musicians, this commonality may be utilized as a converging factor. The fear of sorcery or divine punishment is also used to show what the breach of peace would bring upon the society and the conflicting parties. (Birgit Brock-Utne 2001)

Traditional conflict resolution practices reflect principles of reconciliation based on long-standing relationships and values. They tend to be effective in addressing intra-community and even inter-community conflict, where relationships and shared values are part of the reconciliation process (Joe (1993). Traditional mechanisms are rooted in the culture and history of the African people. They emphasize group unity, reconciliation of individuals or groups, and peaceful reintegration into the community. Traditional techniques place the interest of the group above that of the individual. They assume that all parties are interested in and affected by the conflict. The goal is to reconcile the parties to the conflict so that there is a return to social harmony—the goal of cosmopolitanism.

Chiefs, village mediators, tribal elders, community leaders, clan leaders, mobilized women, and local religious figures are well placed to ameliorate certain aspects of larger conflicts. Elders function as a court with broad and flexible powers to interpret evidence, impose judgments,

and manage reconciliation. Traditional leaders use their position of moral strength to find an acceptable solution. Councils of elders and chiefs usually seek resolution through consensus. The solution often involves forgiveness and compensation. Women and traditional religious figures play a unique role in the reconciliation process in some societies. Their very place in society puts them in a strong position to encourage dialogue between feuding parties.(Meyers L J 2005)

African conflict Resolutions

African continent is saturated with conflicts in all corners, ranging from the Northern part of Africa, to the sub-regional areas. Conflicts in Africa are more prevalent now than ever in history. This unfortunate trend of conflict everywhere has even given room to private agencies to be involved in seeking to bring peace back to Africa. The International Negotiation Network (I.N.N) of the center of Emory University and other NGO's such as International Alert in London, The Liberian Council of Churches and others including some in Nigeria's efforts have all been a herculean task. Despite all these efforts to provide solutions to African's conflict, they have remained impervious to these attentions. Though they involve the activities of seasoned peacemakers using the best of personal skills and recently developed knowledge about ways of managing and resolving conflicts, International efforts at conflict management have not been particularly effective or efficient in overcoming the disasters that have brought them to the continent. Some of these conflicts i.e. the Liberia, Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia etc have indeed been brought under control after lengthy and multiple efforts, but these occurrence and duration and the persistence of the other conflicts show that improvements are needed in conflict management. (Birgit Brock-Utne, 2001)

The weakness is twofold, the outburst and persistence of violent conflict means that the homegrown measures at dampening escalation and preventing violence have failed. Before the conflicts rise to an intensity that justifies International attention, domestic measures would be expected to come to play but they have not, at least not effectively. Governance according to Zartman (1997) is conflict management. If some areas of Africa have kept their conflict under control, many have not and have seen the original attempt at building a National community at independence become chewed into pieces and spat out in sub-national ethnic violence. Traditional African conflict management practices have proven ineffective against contemporary - if not modern challenges.

Contemporary challenges may be of the same type of internal contests of authority or clashes between governed communities that Africa has always known. But modern challenges indicate new types of conflicts that contest states authority along with its commonality of values and its respect of venerable leader and that reject community solidarity destroyed by a combination of globalizing experience and parochial ambitions. Whether it is the specifically different nature of these conflicts as a modern phenomenon, or simply their contemporary occurrence as a broader challenge, today's conflicts elude traditional management method, and it is no use blaming the inadequacies or machination of foreign actors for the fact.

At the same time, the persistence of violent conflicts in Africa indicate that modern International methods are also defective in facing the challenges despite the increased attention and improved knowledge about conflict management in the post-cold war era, African conflicts elude International as well as domestic efforts to bring them under control. The methods are often faulted for their foreignness and non-African nature and for ignoring the wisdom of traditional African conflict management practices but even when examined in their own terms according to Modern concepts of conflict management, they tell more from their shortcoming than from their successes.

The conclusions to be drawn are not clear, since failure is usually over determined. As noted, conflict today may be different in nature and modern therefore impervious to traditional methods, yet Africa and thus resistant to International methods. Both traditional and International practices may be sound but poorly applied. Probably most telling but most difficult to deal with method – but especially traditional methods may be operating effectively in keeping large numbers of conflict under control but also out of reach of the analyst, leaving only the exceptionally difficult cases to escalate their way onto the headlines. The only conclusion that does ring clear is that more work is required on the nature of both conflict and conflict management method in Africa so as to improve the fit between the two.

African traditional practices of disputes Resolution; Some selected cases in Nigeria and Ghana.

These traditional practices in dispute resolution in African societies may differ in one form or the other; but each of these practices are aimed at providing peace and co-existence in every given society. In pre-colonial societies as well as in their continuation under colonial and now independent rule, methods did exist to deal with conflict. This fact is a characteristic of all societies. To recognize it is merely to make an empirical generalization, not necessarily to take an interpretative position on the African anthropological thesis that societal harmonization is either an African characteristics or the broader sociological thesis that equilibrium is a universal societal characteristic. (Parsons, 1937). While it is impossible to enumerate all conflict management methods across the whole continent, some salient and representative accounts would bring the richness of Africa experience to light.

These traditional African practices in dispute resolutions are potent and effective; and have helped in keeping African to its present stage of existence. While these practices are bound within the continent, each present one small part as a macrocosm of the whole, thus asserting what needs to be demonstrated and epitomize what needs to be compared. The first task then is to acquire data. Analysts have equally pointed out that data collections when it comes to traditional disputes resolutions are problematic. Other than, by luck of the random, there is no way of knowing how salient or representative selected cases may be until all the cases have been examined, yet not all the cases may be examined. It is meaningful to a certain degree to talk of African conflict management practices, in the sense that such practices exhibit both similarities and differences that are used as reference by people who are identified by the generalization “Africa”. To some extent, Africa share similar practices, but more importantly are to an increasing extent, they claim as their own and draw inspiration from practices at home and elsewhere on the continent.

On the other hand, such claims and references do not indicate that the practices are either common or exclusive to all African societies. Commonality is a challenge to any analysis. Conflict management practices are considered traditional if they have been practiced for an extended period and have evolved within African societies rather than being the product of external importation. Tradition continues to exist even in the contemporary or modern period, and the traditional practices considered are still practiced today. At the same time, tradition is likely to have been updated, adjusted and opened to new accretions in order to stay alive through changing times.

Some of these traditional practices include:

1. Managing disputes within family
2. Managing disputes between one family and the other
3. Managing disputes within the same clan or community
4. Managing disputes between two clans or communities etc

These are the major and obvious identifiable traditional dispute resolutions mechanism. There are other smaller aspects to this case, which this paper will streamline for a better understanding, with specific interest on three African culture setting namely: The TIV of Central Nigeria, The Igbo of South East Nigeria and the Buem Ghana – Togo Boarder all within the African continent.

The Ibo

The ibo’s are a group of people residing in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. Their political and social structures are more complex and organized , but one basic feature remain, their structure in resolving dispute in their society also rely on elders, chiefs, age grade and the Totem, available literature on this indicates that there are variables such as the nature of relationships, socio-economic, status, the nature of the dispute and the disputants past experiences allow for explanations of the choice of various conflicts management strategies.

Dispute Settlement in the Family

In the Ibo society, whenever there is a family dispute, family members will gather in a hut, female and male groups sits opposite each other. The family head (Onyi’si) welcomed the assembled audience with six white and red kola nuts. After the welcoming remarks, he (the head) admonishes those gathered to reconcile this parties. There is no need to decide guilt or

innocence in spousal cases, only to reconcile the husband and wife because of the sacredness of marriage.

Holding a six by two, one inch-thick wooden object, covered with multi-colored bird feathers, the family head (Onyi'si) beckoned the family ancestors to hover round those who had gathered to resolve the family matter. He ceremoniously seated the family "Ofo" (oath object) in the center of the floor and swore the people to be unbiased and to ensure family unity in their judgment. After a brief proverbial introduction of the case, he asked the wife to stand next to the of and present her complaint.The wife a peasant farmer complained that her marriage, after 18 years and seven children had become too abusive to bear. She told the gathered family members that her husband, neglected to provide food for his immediate family and that he was having an affair with a widow in the village. She further stated that her husband had physically abused her when she confronted him with his infidelity and his neglect. She emphasized that she wanted the physical abuse to stop. In response, the husband was equally invited to stand next to "ofo" and present his own version.

The husband countered the report of the wife, stated that his wife had neglected him either by preparing his food late or by not preparing it at all. He retorted that he had stopped buying goat meat for the house because his wife had complained that it was an insufficient meal for a family of twelve. The husband contended that his wife did not understand that their farm had not produced enough to generate extra cash ingredients. He said he had tried to supplement the family income by climbing palm trees and gathering palm nuts, a primary source of cooking oil for interested customers. His customers were mostly widows who did not have able males to fetch them palm nuts. He further stated that he had come home late on many occasions because he was trying to collect fees from customers who could not pay on time. The best time to collect this money was in the evening when his customers who went to sell these nuts might have return from the market.

After involving the god of thunder (Amadioha and the ancestors to punish any person (Mediator) who might cause the husband and wife to sever their marriage, break up the family, and cause conflict. The totem onyi'si through a mediatorre-phrased the dispute as a case of spousal abuse and neglect. It pointed to the wife beating and wife refusal or reluctance to prepare food. Most of the males in the audience questioned the disputing couple. The women on the other hand urged the men to resolve the case without findings fault. The questions were aim at reconciliation. Both families of the couples in dispute reiterated a commitment of reconciliation and to keeping the family together. The deliberation ended when the family head announced that both the husband and the wife were equally responsible for the quarrel. Fines of a cock and a hen were imposed on the couple. A bird will then be slaughtered to smear the blood on the chi to appease the gods and ancestors. The couple is also expected to cook food for all the members that attended.

The question one will ask is what if this action taken did not end the dispute? The Ibo traditional dispute resolution gives room for further appeals. The next stage will be the age grade where the case will be taken.

The Buem's of Ghana-Togo Border

The Buem or the "BuemKator" as they are generally referred to, are located along the central part of the Ghana –Togo border, it is a cluster of farming communities that constitutes the Eastern portion of the larger Buem traditional Area in the Jasikan District of the volta region of Ghana and marks the Eastern limit of the Bia Akwapin Togo mountain range that run across the middle of the country. The Buem traditional Area as a whole is the largest and politically dominant ethnic group in the northern portion of the Volta region. Kinship, politics and conflict management are inextricably intertwined.

Conflict Management practices

The Buem people because of their organized commitment in conflict intervention process, and based on Antropological structural-functional prospective, to the study of social control their conflict management philosophy is structured into several angles all with the aim of providing peace and stability in their various communities. Letsexamines few of these vital traditional management philosophical practices in Buemkator which are complex yet well organized.

1. **Kanye Ndu Bowi** - this philosophical practice acknowledge the short fall of the community and therefore insist that certain standard of conduct must be maintained ,in order to keep the society moving on equal footing where human dignity and respect is

the ultimate goal, the Buem maintained that coercion and morality are viewed as the mechanism of social control, it is therefore a human or community duty to sustain uphold this philosophy (social harmony).

KanyeNdu- bowi is a broad ideological and philosophical orientation that encompassed all manner of social control and modes of conflicts management in the area. One important means by which this philosophy is translated into practicality is the imposition of intrinsic sanctions, the subtle but pervasive means by which members of the community are molded into complying with the rules of social control, the moral code, the normative order and value system.

Intrinsic sanctions are both positive and negative.

Positives ones - The psychic rewards that people receive when they conform to the approved mode of behavior, while the negative are the feeling of moral discomfort that the people experience when they default.

"Social harmony" in Buem community involved the manipulation of social relationship through the use and strengthening of myths, beliefs, values and motives. (Cohen 1974:81). The inculcation of this "kanyeNdubowi" (Social harmony) in Buem society is an integral part of the society and it is also an on-going process which also propel their socialization process. The culturally approved means by which the people strive to achieve conformity to the rules of conduct and ensure the continuity of the community.

The people in this community are compelled to comply with the rules of conduct settle disputes and abide by the outcome of mediation. Buem hold the view that a failure to comply with the rules of social control undermines the social order and is tantamount to an assault on the community as a whole. Such failures are often met only with the imposition of fines but also with strong condemnation by the public whose duty it is to provide public official with loyalty and support in enforcing community rules. The need to settle disputes and abide by terms of disputes settlement is also motivated by the fact that members of the community are invariably in ongoing social and economic relationships and must necessarily deal with each other in the future.

2. **Benyaogba Ukpikator** (Dispute Handling Forum) - The term in Buem literally translation means "to say no to a case between adversaries". This phrase as analyst would criticise holds sway for the too much power bestowed on this forum. This forum also serves as mediator in any case in Buem community, this forum provide adversaries, the avenue to under play conflict and amicably convince each other that whatever may be the matter between is of no significance.

3. **Bate Kate** (Arbitration or Adjudication) - This philosophical thought is conducted either at a lineage head court or in town chief court, depending upon the gravity of the offence. This philosophy is more elaborate in its conflict resolutions than the former.

   The *Bate Kate* is actually time consuming as its processes involves intensive cross-examination and assembling of witnesses and when necessary exhibits. Bate Kate can be expensive because fines and in some cases cost are imposed on convicted parties. Cases that are submitted for Bate Kate either include those thathas failed to be resolved by the former forum (dispute handling forum) or are constitutionally defined as criminals.

   Deliberation here can be an elaborate process. In line with the usual procedure of Bate Kate, each disputant without interruption presents his or her own version of what actually occurred. After both have heard, adjudicator closely questions each disputant on the bases of what he or she has said. The objective of this process as social Anthropologist pointed out is to reach agreement on a single story be eliminating ambiguous elements in the statement or the adversaries. There is extensive use of evidence witness and cross-examination in Bate Kate. The deliberations are usually open to the public and every one present has the privilege to cross-examine any of the disputants. Orders are strictly enforced

and use of abusive language is discouraged and can lead to contempt.

4. **Adzina** (Trial by Jury) - This aspect of conflict resolution in Buem community believe "trial by jury". Adzina works this way to arrive at a verdict in all manner of cases that come before a town chief or a lineage head, some attendants at the hearing who have been present throughout the case hearing, and have been following proceedings are appointed at the end of the hearing to deliberate and return a verdict. This procedure is advanced to similar western style judicial verdict mechanism. It has helped in providing solution in dispute resolutions in Buem communities.

5. **Witchcraft Sorcery and Ordeal** - Buem commonly resort to the use of what some religious scholars referred to as "witchmasory". This term refers to witchcraft, magic and sorcery and any means of voodoo – witchcraft (kabor) sorcery (kave) are what they use to settle conflict when they did not want to bring their grievances into the open i.e coming before the benyaogba – ukpikator or Bate Kate. The combination of this force in Buem community is believed to have potent powers that operate with the adversary's desire to either harm by evil spiritual destructions or death. This practice has also been in use in the Buem community over time in local dispute resolutions.

6. **Kemuikadiakor** (trail by ordeal) - The Buem community consider this aspect of their conflict resolution practice as also potent hence it is still in practice. This practice involve oath taking, a Buemwill traditionally resort to this use in order to determine guilt or innocence, particularly in theft in which evidence is so conflicting that adjudicators find it difficult to come to a decision by secular means. Witchmasory, witchcraft and sorcery accusations also normally call for this process of "trail by ordeal", because the truth in the accusation is often difficult to determine by secular process of mediation and adjudication.

   Usually the town chief will order the disputing persons to consult a medicine man, a fetish priest or an oracle. The disputing parties will be accompanied by appointees of the chief and heads of their respective lineages. Whoever is found guilty by the metaphysical consultant will immediately have his /her hair shaven to the skin and be made to settle all the cost to the travel and the trial. The idea and the practices of peace building are not new. Due to how ubiquitous the term peacebuilding has become within the vocabulary of the UN, National governments, and even nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), Adekeye (2014) pointed out that there are three frameworks for understanding peace building.

The views contain important nonnative assumptions about the nature of peace and about the identity and motivations of peace builders. According to the liberal framework, peace building is understood to be part of a global project of liberal governance, promoted by international and regional institutions and other actors. An Agenda for Peace reinforced these ideas. It tends to focus on political and economic liberalization as key elements in the transformation of war-torn societies. Unlike the western methods of disputes resolution which involves the use of judiciary that addresses conflict through litigation, adjudication, arbitration that usually result to win and lose situation.

Peace building as stabilization shares the liberal concern with order, but rather than focusing its attention on order within states, it sees peacebuilding as being primarily concerned with maintaining the international status quo. The view has become increasingly important since the 9/11 attack on the United States, and the subsequent global "war on terror".

This view acknowledges the multitude of activities conducted under the peacebuilding umbrella, the rationale for these activities is to maintain global security and stability. The position of peace building as social justice was put forward by people who believe that the previous two views place undue focus on maintaining order and global status quo Structural violence is the problem to be addressed through peacebuilding, and peacebuilding therefore involves programs to encourage inclusive access to resources and institutions, to empower marginalized groups, to end discrimination against women and other disadvantaged groups, and to redistribute income and land ownership. In other words, peacebuilding focus on reaching the condition of "positive peace" Boutros-Ghali in his *An Agenda for Peace* categorized peace building

into two: Pre-conflict and post conflict peacebuilding. According to him, pre-conflict peace buHding includes such measures like '[de] militarisation, the control of small arms, institutional reform, improved police and judicial systems, the monitoring of human rights, electoral reform and social and economic development.' Similarly, Rechler (1997:61) sees pre-conflict peace building as: Preventive measures that aim to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor; to promote and implement human rights and the rights of the minorities, and to promote durable development and the realization of a just and fair social order in which there is no discrimination based on race or sex Monsuru Adegboyega Kasali (2006). (karame 2004: 12) cited by Okoro, K. N. (2013) similarly agreed with previous definition he said that peacebuilding as a major concept in conflict resolution and management can be defined as a means of preventing the outbreak, reoccurrence or continuation of armed conflict as well as emergences in a wide range of political, developmental, humanitarian and human right mechanism.

Conflict transformation theory was used adopted because the whole idea of peace building to bring positive transformation of the quality of lives of the victims of the conflict through humanitarian services, compensation, rehabilitation, restoration, reformation, disarmament, demobilization and re-integration.

Therefore, the process of peace building encompasses all the stages of conflict, from the pre-conflict to the post conflict phase, with aim of laying the basis for sustainable peace in conflict tom society.

Conclusion and Recommendations.

1. African should distinguish clearly those cases that can purely be handled at the traditional method of conflict resolution and those of western methods .

2. The development of modern conflict management system for Africa in particular must begin by looking for avenues through which relevant aspects of the pre-colonial customary laws of the areas could be harmonized with the appropriate aspects of modern judicial and administrative systems into the African world view in conflict resolution.

3. It is only when potential and actual conflicts in Africa are understood in their social contents that they can be solved. Values and beliefs, fears, suspicions, interests and needs, attitudes and actions, relationships and networks have to be taken duly into consideration.

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HOW INTERACTIVE DIGITAL COMMUNITIES IMPACT PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Interactive Media, Public Relations, Digital Community, Media Effect

ABSTRACT
In the ever-changing landscape of communication, this study investigates the impact of interactive digital communities on public relations. By exploring the dynamic relationship between interactive media and PR in the digital age, the paper examines the multifaceted influence of interactive media in transforming contemporary public relations practices within the modern digital realm. Specifically, the paper explores both the opportunities and challenges pose by interactive media outlets and their profound effects and impacts on the practice of public relations. Guided by the framework of Theory of Interactive Media Effects, the paper argues how advancement in interactive media platforms, using Public Relations as communicative tool, drives societal changes. It concludes by advocating for Public Relations professionals to adapt strategies that effectively harness the potential of interactive media, recognizing its dyadic nature viz-a-viz its numerous opportunities and challenges for effective communication. Emphasis is further laid on the crucial role of interactive media in shaping the daily activities and communicative functions of Public Relations practitioners, underscoring the importance of aligning Public Relations strategies with the dynamism of digital interactive platforms.

Introduction

Interactive digital communities encompass online spaces where individuals engage, collaborate, and share information within a virtual environment. These communities are characterized by user-generated content, real-time communication, and shared interests or goals, with examples including social media platforms such a *Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Reddit,* and *LinkedIn* as well as online groups and forums (Ridings &Wasko, 2006).

Public relations play a significant role in the growth, development and the reputation management of businesses. It involves managing and disseminating information from individuals or organizations to the public with the aim of influencing their perception. According to David (2017), public relations (PR) is a communication-

centered applied professional practice that integrates diverse viewpoints and groups to impact reputation building, maintenance, and restoration. PR employs practices such as issues management, effective communication, strategic communication and crisis management and conciliation.

The increasing proliferation of interactive digital communities has transformed the landscape of public relations practice (Brunkhorst& Johansson, 2017; Peters &Hermida, 2014), raising pertinent questions about the nature and extent of their impact across different fields (Coombs & Holladay, 2016; Lumsden& Henderson, 2016).

Ledbetter and Mazer (2013) asserts that the advent of new media technologies provides professionals with diverse communication channels, including websites, apps, YouTube, blogs, podcasts, and social media.
Public relations, as a type of communication, is said to benefit from this innovation in communication channels as PR professionals now have access to a variety of new media communication channels to engage with their target audience, comprising electronic media accessible through platforms like websites, online apps, YouTube, blogs, podcasts, and social media (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn). A defining characteristic of new media is its interactivity, allowing organizations to establish two-way communication with their intended audience. Integrating PR tactics with media websites such as YouTube opens up new avenues for interaction and connection with the target audience.

Public relations (PR) in media discourse, is highlighted as a pivotal factor in the growth and reputation management of businesses, employing communication-centered practices such as issues management and crisis management (Frances, 2015)
Public relations practice has transcended the traditional offline practice to online platforms and forums, embracing and converging the unique features of the conventional as well as the new media for a hybridized effect.

Amidst the advantages offered by new media technologies, it is essential to acknowledge potential drawbacks. As noted by Amodu et al. (2019), online PR, while presenting numerous benefits, is not without its disadvantages. Issues such as a loss of control over the advertising process and challenges in determining its efficacy need careful consideration. Igben and Ilaya (2021) highlight the risk of unsuccessful communication with the target audience due to these drawbacks. In essence, while acknowledging the benefits, potential drawbacks of online PR are explored, emphasizing the need for careful consideration.
The primary goal of interactive PR is to enhance the likelihood of meaningful and favorable media coverage, fostering three-way communication among the public, the organization, and the media. A key advantage, beneficial for both the organization and the media, is information subsidy (Ketelaars and Seevenans, 2021). This approach is also cost-effective in that it reduces the advertising budget of an organization.

However, the utilization of the Internet of Things for information dissemination, provides even greater advantages for the organization (Amodu et al., 2019; Roth and Avidar, 2022), marking the domain of "online PR." The primary challenge in this domain lies in transitioning organizations from complete reliance on traditional media towards fostering direct and two-way communication with their target audience (Roth and Avidar, 2022).

The thrust of this article, thus, is the interactive form of digital communication within the context of public relations – to explore how Managers seeking publicity can engage with data through interactive public relations, which integrates electronic text, graphics, moving images, and sound in a structured digital environment. The digital environment encompasses the Internet, telephony, interactive digital television, and other media. Consequently, the objective of this paper is to elucidate the impact of interactive digital communities on public relations practice.

Problem Statement

Despite the growing prominence of these online communities and forums (Van Dijck&Poort, 2018; Williams, 2012), an all-encompassing study that underscores how interactive digital communities influence public relations practice, remains underexplored (Argenti& Hansen, 2014; Hon &Grunig, 2017).

It is against this backdrop that this study explores how interactive digital communities are transforming modern public relations practice

with a view to adding to the existing knowledge and literature on the phenomena, which is highly relevant in contemporary public relations practice.
The intent is to address this gap by investigating the multifaceted ways in which interactive digital communities shape the dynamics of contemporary public relations, challenges and prospects.

Research Objectives

The ultimate objective is to explicate the impact of interactive digital communities on the landscape of contemporary public relations practice. More specifically, the study:
1. Explores the impacts of digital interactive media on Public Relations practice.
2. Examines the challenges of digital interactive media on contemporary Public relations practice.
3. Ascertains prospective strategies for leveraging digital interactivity for contemporary Public Relations practice.

Conceptual Clarification and Literature Review

Conceptual clarification and literature review focus on Interactive Digital Community, Interactive Public Relations, Public Relations in the Digital Age, the influence of interactive digital communities on Public Relations, Best Practices and Strategies for Leveraging Interactive Digital Communities, challenges of PR in the digital age, future trend and prospects of PR in the digital age.

Interactive Digital Communities

The concept, Interactive Digital Communities, according to Necmiye and Fahri (2017), are online spaces where people can connect, share experiences and build relationships.
Interactive Digital Communities Are Spaces Where Individuals Collaborate, Share Information, And Engage Within A Virtual Environment (Frances, 2015).

In a study, Macik (2017) casts a different light, defining interactive digital communities as "ecosystems where sensor-laden entities autonomously converse, often without user intervention, interweaving with other objects, computers, or mobile devices through an array of networking solutions, especially the dance of wireless connections."

Within this electrified domain, Macik (2017) casts a different light, defining interactive digital communities as "ecosystems where sensor-laden entities autonomously converse, often without user intervention, interweaving with other objects, computers, or mobile devices through an array of networking solutions, especially the dance of wireless connections." It's not just about people connecting; it's the orchestrated ballet of interconnected devices painting the canvas of a new digital ecosystem.

In the intricate dance of these digital societies, businesses are confronted with reimagining public relations (PR) strategies in the online arena. It's not merely about managing relationships; it's about orchestrating a symphony of interactions in the ever-evolving digital symposium.

Within this tapestry, various strains of interactive digital communities exists, including:

***Social Media Platforms*:** Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn serve as massive hubs for diverse communities. They enable broad connectivity and engagement among users.

***Forums and Discussion Boards*:** Websites such as Reddit, Quora, and specialized niche forums facilitate in-depth discussions on specific topics, often attracting highly engaged audiences.

Online Groups and Communities: These include groups on platforms like WhatsApp, Slack, Discord, and Facebook Groups, where users with common interests gather for more intimate and focused interactions.

Interactive digital communities play a vital role in fostering engagement and communication. They provide a space for immediate interaction, enabling real-time conversations, feedback, and the rapid sharing of information (Kozinets, 1999). These communities empower users to actively participate in discussions, offer opinions, and contribute to content creation, establishing a more democratic and inclusive environment for communication and collaboration (Ridings & Gefen, 2004).

The Evolution of Public Relations in the Digital Era

In the traditional realm, public relations relied on unidirectional communication channels like press releases, print media, radio, and television to disseminate information to the public. This one-sided approach, as noted by Grunig & Hunt (1984), constrained the interactivity between organizations and their audiences. PR professionals functioned as information gatekeepers, steering the narrative with limited room for immediate feedback or engagement.

The digital era ushered in a paradigm shift in PR strategies. The ascendancy of the internet, email, and websites introduced novel avenues for communication. These platforms facilitated swifter, wider, and more cost-effective information dissemination, as highlighted by Kent & Taylor (2002). Notably, social media emerged as a game-changer, revolutionizing the landscape by enabling direct and instantaneous interaction between organizations and their audiences, transcending geographical constraints (Wright & Hinson, 2008).

The advent of interactive digital communities marked a pivotal juncture in the evolution of PR, steering the focus from monologue to dialogue. Organizations embraced proactive engagement with their audiences, crafting user-centric content and nurturing communities centered around their brands or causes. Within these digital arenas, real-time discussions, feedback loops, and the exchange of user-generated content became the norm, reshaping the PR landscape into a dynamic two-way conversation (Macnamara, 2014).

Digital Interactivity in Public Relations

Interactivity in public relations involves utilizing internet tools to connect with various audiences such as customers, employees, investors, and the media. This comprises channels like emails, live chats, discussion groups, websites, and blogs, offering a swifter, cost-effective, and more direct means of communication (Grunig& Hunt, 1984).

Creating spaces for discussions, networking, and relationship-building is essential, fostering learning and skill development among like-minded individuals (Goodall, 2022). The surge in popularity of Web 2.0 platforms, exemplified by Reddit, Facebook Groups, and LinkedIn Groups, has simplified real-time communication and expanded avenues for information exchange.

Digital PR, a strategy aimed at enhancing brand awareness through online methods, is comparable to traditional PR but has the added benefit of reaching a broader audience that offline methods alone might miss (Digital Marketing Institute, 2022). Galloway (2005) suggests that the traditional techniques of public relations are being challenged by the mobile nature of new media, prompting practitioners to rethink their approach.

Online news services have moved beyond traditional news wire services, providing limitless possibilities for online promotion. Events have transformed with new media, incorporating technologies like digital projectors and online elements. Practitioners must adapt with technical skills in web publishing, online security, and multimedia content creation (Galloway, 2005).

The media release has evolved to incorporate multimedia elements, reflecting a shift towards interactive content (Nowland, 2006). The impact of user interactivity in public relations extends to diverse marketing possibilities, including online interviews, amplifying online presence, and harnessing social media for continuous growth and enhanced recognition.

Public Relations Practice in the Digital Age

In the pre-new media era, public relations (PR) relied on traditional mass media channels for message dissemination to stakeholders. Tools like press releases, conferences, annual reports, company newspapers, bulletins, occasional publications, and advertising via billboards, flyers, posters, and banners were instrumental in conveying PR messages (Kim and Heo, 2018; Amodu et al., 2019).

The digital age, according to Obayi and Onwude (2018), has revolutionized interaction, enabling the creation, sharing, and exchange of information and ideas within virtual communities and networks. The unparalleled speed of information access in the digital age, facilitated by the Internet of Things (IoT), has made conventional mass media methods appear antiquated (Obayi and Onwude, 2018).

Study by Sengar (2021) emphasizes the internet's pivotal role in shaping PR practices in the 21st century, with an observable surge in both effective Public Relations activities and internet usage over the last two decades. The internet's advent has transformed communication dynamics, allowing direct interactions between producers and consumers. Public Relations practitioners, as noted by Obayi and Onwude (2018), find it easier to establish bilateral communications between producers and end-users.

Relatedly, Igben and Ilaya (2021) highlight a notable advantage of the digital age in PR—the cost-effectiveness and ergonomic nature of bilateral communications. In this digital landscape, organizations can communicate directly with their target audience, bypassing the need for traditional mass media tools. This shift allows organizations to take full responsibility for maintaining a positive public image without hefty expenditures on mass media outlets (Ketelaars and Seevenans, 2021).

Similarly, Kent and Li (2020) suggest that assessing the impact of the digital era on PR in this century necessitates a discussion of the internet, with a focal point on social media. Social media, defined by the Oxford Dictionary as websites and software programs used in social networking, emerges as an indispensable tool shaping PR activities and practices over the past two decades.

The significance of social media lies in its role as a stage for 21st-century PR, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter playing major roles (Kent and Li, 2020; Sengar, 2021). Its benefits are diverse, notably in facilitating stronger communication between organizations and the public through real-time messaging. Roth and Avidar (2022) emphasize its merit in communicating with a broader audience, making information readily accessible to anyone with internet access. Social media has spawned "relationship marketing," enhancing the perceived friendliness and approachability of organizations (Najib, 2020).

In Nigeria, social media aids practitioners by engaging a company’s target audience daily, especially through feedback mechanisms like 'likes' and 'dislikes' on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, 'hashtags' on Twitter, and 'comments' on YouTube (Ogbette et al., 2019; Apuke and Tunca, 2018). This constant interaction transforms PR from a one-sided ideology to a more engaging and interactive two-sided bilateral approach (Ngondo, 2019; Sommerfeldt and Yang, 2018). Importantly, social media has revolutionized the measurement of PR impact, providing quantifiable metrics for investments made (Bakir et al., 2019).

However, Apuke and Tunca (2018) caution that while the advantages of social media for PR are compelling, its drawbacks should not be underestimated.

The Impact of Interactive Digital Communities on Public Relations

The influence of the interactive digital communities on public relations, in the context of this study, is addressed from the lens of each social media platform, based on unique features and peculiarities:

Facebook stands as a significant platform for PR practitioners due to its free social networking features, enabling users to create profiles, share content, chat, and engage with their audience swiftly. Stránská and Stříteský (2015) note its efficiency in making issues public quickly and receiving prompt replies compared to hotlines.

Public Relations professionals utilize Facebook by acting as conversational brands, establishing organizational pages, and building a robust audience base. Users can easily follow and receive updates, interact by liking, sharing, and commenting without the limitations of time and place. Monitoring user attitudes on Facebook allows PR workers to identify inaccurate reviews and address concerns promptly (Wigley& Zhang, 2011).

The massive user base on Facebook provides a substantial advantage, allowing PR workers to reach a broad audience and assess the feasibility of their actions. It serves as a tool for gauging stakeholder alignment with PR objectives. Komodromos (2014) highlights its role in crisis management, where comments and reactions aid in detecting misunderstandings, reducing crisis occurrences, and averting a negative company image.

While Facebook primarily connects users with people they know offline, PR practitioners find value in its versatility in posting, speed in sharing, and the essential feedback received through comments. Despite potential limitations

in reaching diverse audience groups, Facebook remains a robust platform for PR professionals in practice.

X is another valuable option for PR presentations. X, designed as a microblogging platform, allows users to share short messages, or tweets, up to 140 characters in length. Known for its brevity, tweets offer rapid and concise updates, comments, or opinions. The ability of X to provide instant updates to stakeholders is recognized as a primary reason for its use by PR professionals (Willmott &Wastom, 2012).

Given the fast-paced nature of information transmission and the dynamic shifts in audience attitudes, instant messaging on X is crucial for staying updated on current events and understanding audience sentiments. X, acknowledged by Evans and Talan (2011), amplifies diverse voices on an international scale, making it a powerful tool for listening to the audience.

X provides PR professionals with a platform for quick conversations with the media, fostering better understanding on an individual level. The openness in retweeting and the absence of restrictions on viewing information by following specific users contribute to the objectivity and accuracy of PR practices.

Interactive digital communities, as highlighted by Kent & Taylor (2002) and Macnamara (2014), have revolutionized PR communication by offering dynamic channels that enable direct communication between organizations and their audiences. These channels facilitate not only one-way information dissemination but also two-way communication, fostering intimate relationships between brands and stakeholders.

Real-time conversations are a notable feature of interactive digital communities, allowing brands to engage directly with their audience, address concerns promptly, and receive immediate feedback. This real-time interaction strengthens relationships and provides valuable insights into public sentiment and preferences (Wright & Hinson, 2008).

According to Achor, Nwachukwu and Nkwocha (2015), the influence of Interactive Digital Communities on Public Relations Include:

Increased Transparency and Accountability: Interactive communities provide platforms for open dialogue and feedback, demanding greater transparency and accountability from organizations.

Two-way Communication: Interactive communities enable direct engagement with audiences, allowing for real-time conversations and immediate feedback.

Building Relationships: Interactive communities facilitate the formation of deeper, more meaningful relationships between organizations and their stakeholders

Practical Ways of Incorporating Social Media in Public Relations Plan

These impacts are achieved by incorporating Social Media into Public Relations practice.

Each social media platform offers unique opportunities for enhancing PR strategies. Here's an exploration of the top social media platforms and examples of how they can add value to your PR plan:

Facebook: Facebook is where you can have those meaningful conversations. Use groups, mentions, and those handy call-to-action buttons for things like donations. Also, check out Facebook Professional Services for some tailored PR tools.

Twitter: With Twitter's character limit, it's perfect for quick updates and announcements. Throw in some hashtags to broaden your reach and keep an eye on what people are saying about your brand. Plus, explore Periscope for live streaming and connecting in real-time.

LinkedIn**:** LinkedIn is your go-to for building connections, especially with influencers. It's also a great spot to share your insights and use it as a blogging platform to showcase your expertise.

Instagram: Visuals speak volumes on Instagram. Use images and videos to shine a light on your causes and events. It's the perfect platform to keep your audience engaged, especially during events.

Oyemike and Onuoha (2016) provide insights on the practical ways of incorporating social media in public relations plan. They include:Facebook Engagement: Public Relations

professionals should proactively initiate and engage in substantive conversations on Facebook. It is efficient in making issues public quickly and receiving prompt replies Stránská and Stříteský (2015). Also, Monitoring user attitudes on Facebook allows PR workers to identify inaccurate reviews and address concerns promptly (Wigley& Zhang, 2011).
Also, Komodromos (2014) highlights its role in crisis management, where comments and reactions aid in detecting misunderstandings, reducing crisis occurrences, and averting a negative company image.

Twitter Updates and Monitoring: Public Relations teams must manage Twitter accounts efficiently, utilizing the platform's character limit for concise updates and announcements.
LinkedIn Networking and Thought Leadership: Building professional connections on LinkedIn and establishing thought leadership are key responsibilities for Public Relations professionals.

Instagram Visual Storytelling: Leveraging visual elements like images and videos, PR professionals can craft compelling narratives around causes and events on Instagram.
Strategic Content Creation: Prioritize shareable content for brand consistency (Prowly, 2019).

Effective Engagement: Actively engage, respond promptly, and appreciate user-generated content for community Trust (Mustapha, 2017).

Adaptability in Digital Landscape: Stay updated on emerging trends, embrace new platforms, and adapt PR strategies for relevance (Prowly, 2019).

Best Practices and Strategies for Leveraging Interactive Digital Communities

Crafting a resilient online presence demands a thoughtful and consistent approach to content creation. Brands must prioritize the development of content that is not only valuable and relevant but also shareable, aiming to captivate and resonate with their audience (Kelleher, 2009). This involves maintaining an active presence across a spectrum of platforms, ensuring unwavering brand consistency, and aligning with the diverse interests of the community (Scott, 2015).

Achieving effective engagement goes beyond mere visibility; it necessitates active participation in conversations, responsiveness to queries, and a genuine appreciation for user-generated content. Brands that lend an attentive ear to their audience, address concerns promptly, and involve users in decision-making processes foster a sense of community (Men, Tsai, & Cheung, 2015). Authentic engagement not only builds trust but also cultivates loyalty among the audience.

In the ever-evolving digital landscape, adaptability emerges as a cornerstone of success. Staying abreast of emerging trends and technologies is imperative for brands (Flew, 2008). Public relations strategies must mirror these dynamic changes, embracing new platforms and communication methods to ensure relevance and effectiveness in reaching and engaging with their audience (Baltar& Brunet, 2012). By remaining adaptable, brands can navigate the digital terrain with agility and maintain a cutting-edge presence.

Potential Impact of Digital Interactivity on the Public Relations Landscape

The evolving landscape of increasingly specialized digital communities presents a promising horizon for PR professionals to engage in more personalized communication strategies. The trend toward micro-targeting specific audiences within these communities creates opportunities for tailoring PR efforts with precision and effectiveness (McNair, 2016). PR professionals can capitalize on the distinct characteristics and interests of these specialized digital spaces to craft messages that resonate with specific audience segments, fostering a deeper and more meaningful connection.

However, with the proliferation of diverse digital communities, PR professionals are simultaneously confronted with the challenge of managing multiple platforms effectively. The need for strategies that seamlessly unify messaging across various platforms while adeptly adapting to the unique nature of each community becomes paramount (Berger, 2014). Striking the right balance between consistency and customization will be essential for PR professionals navigating the complex terrain of diverse digital communities. This demands a strategic approach that acknowledges the nuances of each platform while ensuring a

cohesive and harmonized brand presence across the digital spectrum.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations Surrounding Interactive Digital Communities in Public Relations

Engaging with interactive digital communities introduces pressing concerns regarding privacy and data security. As PR professionals increasingly collect and utilize user data for targeting and personalization, there is a potential risk of encroaching on user privacy (Wolfe & Jack, 2019).

The ethical implications of data breaches, mishandling personal information, and the potential misuse of data for targeted advertising or manipulation necessitate careful consideration by PR practitioners (Bakir&McStay, 2018).

The proliferation of misinformation and fake news within digital communities presents a formidable challenge. In the realm of PR, the swift dissemination of false information can have far-reaching consequences, adversely affecting brand reputation and eroding trust.

Effectively managing the flow of accurate information and countering falsehoods within these dynamic platforms becomes imperative for PR professionals (Chadwick, 2017).

Building and maintaining authenticity is crucial for meaningful engagement within these communities. Trust, a cornerstone of successful digital PR, hinges on transparent communication and ethical practices.

Brands must prioritize honesty, sincerity, and consistency in their communications to establish and nurture trust within the diverse and interactive landscape of digital communities (Bowen & Heath, 2016).

Prospects of Interactive Digital Communities on the PR Landscape

- Need for specialized Digital Communities to allow for personalized communication by Public Relations Professionals (Hunt & Grunig, 2017).
- Managing Diverse digital communities is a challenge for professionals, strategic approach should be adopted (Coombs & Holladay, 2016). A Strategic Approach Is Necessary For Public Relations Professionals to Maintain A Cohesive Brand Presence Across Various Digital Communities (Peters &Hermida, 2014).
- Integration of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) into digital communities is on the horizon. The incorporation of AR and VR not only presents exciting opportunities for brands to elevate their narratives but also opens doors to more interactive and captivating interactions within these digital spaces (De Gruyter&Whitbred, 2016). The incorporation of AR and VR not only presents exciting opportunities for brands to elevate their narratives but also opens doors to more interactive and captivating interactions within these digital spaces. As these technologies become more prevalent, brands embracing them stand to create memorable and distinctive connections with their audiences.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts the theory of Interactive Media Effects. The Theory of Interactive Media Effects is a relatively new communication theory published in the year 2015 by ShyamSundar, Haiyan Jia, T. Franklin Waddell, and Yan Huang, in *The Handbook of the Psychology of Communication Technology*. The theory provides a helpful framework for comprehending the effects of interactive media. It proposes that the degree of interaction present in a media platform, like video games, television, or the internet, dictates the nature and intensity of the media's influence on people and the community. It further asserts that because interactive media encourages active participation and engagement, it has a greater effect on people and society than traditional, non-interactive media. The theory's ability to recognize the variations in the impacts of different media and the audience's influence on those effects is one of its strong points. It also highlights how crucial it is to take the medium's design and context into account when analyzing its effects.

The theory, which emphasizes a medium's degree of interactivity determines its effects, is especially pertinent to the study at hand. It's

critical to comprehend how digital media's interactive elements affect communication strategies in the context of public relations. Instantaneous feedback, two-way communication, and user participation are all possible in interactive digital communities. A framework for evaluating how these interactive components affect the dynamics of public relations practice is provided by this theory.

Furthermore, the theory recognizes that the effects of various media types vary. Understanding how the increased interactivity of digital media might present particular difficulties for PR practitioners is helpful when examining challenges. This could involve problems with controlling messaging, responding to unfavorable comments, or managing interactions in real time. Your investigation of these difficulties in the context of digital interaction can be guided by the Theory of Interactive Media Effects.

The media effects theory provides a framework for assessing the benefits of digital interactivity in public relations, even as the study seeks to determine the potential of this approach. Interactive digital communities offer potential avenues for strengthening brand image, cultivating a sense of community, and strengthening audience relationships through active participation and engagement. The theory's emphasis on the magnitude of media effects is in line with your goal of comprehending the possible advantages of digital PR interactivity.

However, studies by Lee (2019) and Wang (2020) criticized TIME for oversimplifying user interactions, lacking consideration for contextual factors and individual differences.
These critiques highlight the need for a more nuanced understanding and empirical validation of TIME's applicability, especially in assessing the efficacy of contemporary public relations.

Methodology

According to Creswell (2018), Research Methodology is ”the overall approach to conducting a study." This research embraces Exploratory and Descriptive Methodologies to investigate the intricacies of Digital Interactivity in contemporary Public Relations. It utilizes Qualitative data from secondary sources such as texts, journals, and online resources.
The Rationale For Employing This Methodology Is Grounded In Utilizing Existing Qualitative Data To Explore Digital Interactivity In Public Relations, Aiming To Build On Previous Research And Provide Valuable Insights For Practitioners And For Further Research, Considering That The Area Has Not Been Fully Explored.

Findings

Research objective one, which assesses the impact of interactive digital communities on Public Relations practice, found that the domain has been impacted through:
-Increased Transparency and Accountability,
-Two-way Communication and
-Building relationships.

Research Objective two, which investigates the challenges of incorporating digital interactive Communities in Public Relations suggests:
Engaging with interactive digital communities introduces pressing concerns regarding privacy and data security.
The proliferation of misinformation and fake news within digital communities presents a formidable challenge to the realm of PR, and dissemination of false information can have far-reaching consequences,
Building and maintaining authenticity is crucial within these communities. Brands must prioritize honesty, sincerity, and consistency in their communications to establish and nurture trust.

Research Objective three, which ascertains potentials of leveraging digital interactive communities in contemporary PR Practice, emphasizes:

- The need for specialized Digital Communities to allow for personalized communication by Public Relations Professionals.

- Managing Diverse digital communities is a challenge for professionals, strategic approach should be adopted to maintain a Cohesive Brand Presence Across Various Digital Communities.

These are achieved through:

- Facebook Engagement, Twitter updates and monitoring.

- LinkedIn Networking and Thought Leadership.

- Instagram Visual Storytelling, Effective engagement.

- Strategic Content Creation, Adaptability in Digital Landscape

Reflection and Conclusion

Upon reflection, this study traces the progression of traditional communication channels to the dynamic world of online platforms, examining the transformative impact of interactive digital communities on public relations. The Theory of Interactive Media Effects—especially its temporal dimensions—is a useful tool for comprehending how advances in interactive media lead to changes in society, which is in line with the goals of the study.

Contextualizing the development of digital technology highlights the transition from static, one-way communication to dynamic, two-way interactions, highlighting the critical role of social media. Within the framework of the Theory of Interactive Media Effects, PR practitioners can find strategic guidance in these useful insights, which are specifically designed for social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

The difficulties and ethical issues surrounding interactive digital communities are carefully discussed, considering issues like privacy and the value of authenticity. The comprehension of the temporal intricacies involved in navigating digital worlds is deepened by this detailed approach.

The study provides a view into the future terrain of PR practices through the prism of the Theory of Interactive Media Effects, projecting trends such as the emergence of niche-oriented digital communities and the integration of AR and VR.

In conclusion, the research underscores the profound impact of interactive digital communities on the landscape of public relations. It sheds light on how these virtual spaces are reshaping communication paradigms, providing a platform for direct engagement, instantaneous feedback, and community formation. Moreover, it brings attention to the intricate challenges and ethical dilemmas that emerge within these dynamic environments.

Interactive digital communities emerge as central players in contemporary PR methodologies, redefining the approach to communication. They facilitate two-way engagement, personalized interactions, and more nuanced brand management. These communities empower brands to not only foster trust but also adeptly navigate reputational challenges and crises, thereby influencing the trajectory of PR practices.

In response to the insights derived from this study, it becomes imperative for PR professionals to remain agile and tap into the full potential of interactive digital communities. Effectively leveraging these platforms necessitates a strategic focus on authenticity, transparency, and active engagement. Furthermore, there is an ongoing requirement for vigilant monitoring and adaptation to emerging trends within these digital spaces. Striking a balance between personalized communication and ethical considerations, particularly in the realm of user data and combating misinformation, emerges as a fundamental prerequisite for sustained success in the ever-evolving digital PR landscape.

In conclusion, Interactive digital communities in public relations enhance transparency and accountability through open dialogue and feedback.
They also foster two-way communication, enabling real-time engagement and contribute to building meaningful relationships between organizations and stakeholders.

Recommendations

Navigating the shift from traditional PR tools to the digital age, particularly with the advent of the internet and social media, has brought about a fundamental transformation in PR practices. It has ushered in an era of direct communication channels, rendering communication bilateral, cost-effective, and measurable, with the introduction of metrics to assess PR activities.

Therefore, Based on the findings, the study recommends among others that:
Organizations should actively leverage interactive digital communities to enhance their public relations practice.
Be mindful of the challenges that come with the adoption of digital interactivity into Public Relations Practice, while being

- Be open to the possibilities of the emergence of micro and niche societies and the opportunities

as well as threats of Artificial Intelligence to public relations practice.

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NIGERIAN CHRISTIANITY AND POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: A BALANCE OF ACTIVITY IN POLITICAL TERRAIN

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ABSTRACT
Leadership is essential to see to the running of the affairs of men especially as far as an organisation, body, or country is concerned. Much more specifically, the act of leadership in a democratic society like Nigeria is one that is actively deducted from the political participation and involvement of people, since politicians eventually emerges as leaders of the people in the country just like it is obtainable in other countries. The long-time persuasion for Christians to steer clear of political involvement in the political activities of Nigeria therefore becomes a call for concern since pitching tents with such practice has led to limitation for many Christians in the Nigerian society. Many scholars and concerned individuals have raised concern about te approach of Christians and have encouraged involvement, but this paper encourages participation and intentionality in order to create the desired difference that is being clamoured. Therefore, using the investigative method, this study observed the withdrawn involvement of Christians in the political terrain in Nigeria and as such, encourages the active involvement of Christians in the field of politics, in order to have significant quota in the active running of the country's leadership activities.

Introduction

Throughout Christian history, there have been many disagreements on the historically difficult topic of the link between politics and Christianity. This is a result of many people failing to see that Christians are inhabitants of both the earth and heaven. Even among believers, a conversation on politics has the potential to incite an unplanned dispute, if not an outright argument, among people.

One term used to describe man is "social and political animal" (Brown, 2004) That is to say, without politics, humans cannot operate. With the realization that man cannot do without politics, it therefore behooves and calls for attention why Christians have over the years chosen to opt for being passive or silent in the

political involvement, an affair that is essential for all men to be involved in over the years, politics is seen to hold and determine many things which involves the basic condition of living within a jurisdiction. As social beings, humans have to interrelate with other beings and creatures and this makes the distinctiveness of man, as such, politics being a part of the socialisation of humans is an institution worthy of giving attention rather than being trivialised.

The saying "religion and politics don't mix" is frequently used, but is it really true? Is it possible to have political opinions without taking Christianity into account? However, a lot of individuals claim that God has no interest in politics at all; if this were the case, he would have created Adam a president or a governor (Gen. 2:25). Meanwhile, according to Genesis 1:26, God created man in his image and likeness with the primary intention that he "rules" over all other creatures. The Genesis narrative reiterated this goal in Genesis 2:19–20.

Governance and stewardship, which imply leadership and followership, are important to politics. Today's churches are dealing with a variety of political challenges that have arisen across denominations, some of which have caused internal division and even rupture. In light of the established thought, this study explores the definition of a Christian, the idea of politics, and its implications in relation to the influence of Christians in politics and the expectations placed on them, especially in the modern era even as the paper establishes the essentiality of the involvement of Christians as agents of distinctive tools in the societal politics being practiced in Nigeria.

Who a Christian Is

When asked "if they are Christians?" many have a tendency to display expressions that indicate they are not in for such. In the meantime, a lot of people should be asking themselves this question because it has been found that a lot of so-called Christians are ignorant of the fundamentals and what it actually means to be a Christian. Thus, a reexamination is required. Furthermore, contrary to popular belief, being a Christian involves more than only participating in church activities and services and following church ceremonies and procedures (such as baptism and holy communion). Despite the ignorance of many, many have chosen to ignore this fact.

A Christian is "a person professing belief in Jesus as the Christ or in the religion based on the teachings of Jesus," according to a dictionary definition. Like many dictionary definitions, this one is a wonderful place to start, but it doesn't fully capture the biblical meaning of what it means to be a Christian (Smith, 1981). The significance of the belief system in Christ by an individual indicates that the fellow is a Christian. As traceable about three times in the New Testament, the word "Christian" is derived from the name "Christ" (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). It was in Antioch that followers of Jesus Christ were first referred to as "Christians" (Acts 11:26) because of the way they behaved, spoke, and lived like Christ. Literally speaking, the term "Christian" denotes "follower of Christ" or "belonging to the party of Christ." This is further corroborated and supported by the position of Douglas(1963) where he expressed that, the scriptural definition of a "Christian" is "adherent of Christ," according to the New International Dictionary of the Bible.

Furthermore, the first Christians were more concerned with the name of Jesus Christ than they were with their own names. Sadly, the term "Christian" has lost a lot of its meaning throughout time and is now frequently used to refer to people who are morally upright or devout but who may or may not be genuine followers of Jesus Christ. Simply because they attend church or reside in a country that is considered to be “Christian,” many individuals who do not trust or believe in Jesus Christ nevertheless identify as Christians.

A Christian is a person who has been reconciled to God via Jesus Christ. Realizing that being a Christian entails having a relationship with God and that this relationship is only possible through Jesus are the two most crucial aspects. As the creator of the universe, God has created a relationship with humanity since it is a natural need that we have and one that brings us fulfillment. In such a connection, God bestows upon us his benefits and provides for all of our needs. However, in pursuing our independence, we have abandoned God (this is the central theme of sin). Some of us deliberately undermine his existence or his authority to claim our loyalty in order to do this. But a lot of us just ignore him in a passive way to do this. God gets upset with us as a result, and our connection with him is damaged. It is strikingly comparable to how a husband walking out on his wife (or vice versa) shattering a marriage. Even if God is furious with us, his love for us forces him to take

action. He therefore makes us right with himself by means of his Son, Jesus Christ, mending the relationship and providing us with a way to turn around.

God tells humanity that He "was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them" in 2 Corinthians 6:11–21. As expressed by Ben (2005), God now assures anybody who turns back to him and places their trust (faith) in his Son Jesus that they will get forgiveness and a renewed relationship with him. This expression of Ben is the hallmark for Christians as it distinguishes and assures them of their position in the person of Chrst. To put it another way, being a Christian is having a solid, sincere, and reliable relationship with God via Jesus Christ.

The Bible declares that a person cannot gain God's favor by good deeds. According to Titus 3:5, "He saved us because of his mercy, not because of any good deeds we had done." Through the Holy Spirit's cleansing of rebirth and renewal, he saved us. Accordingly, a Christian is a person who has placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ and has been born again by God (John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23). "...by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God," according to Ephesians 2:8. A person who has complete faith and confidence in Jesus Christ—in His person and deeds, especially His crucifixion and resurrection—is considered a true Christian (Gardiner, 2008). "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God," according to John 1:12.Stated another, a Christian is a child of God. Indeed, a Christian is a member of God's actual family, a child of God, and someone who has received new life via faith in Jesus Christ. This goes further to established that, the biblical injunctions are to be practiced which does not exclude any portion and one of the injunction is the need for involvement in political affairs of the jurisdiction that a Christian occupies as implicitly expressed in the scripture.

Features of a Christian

Since it is evident that Jesus Christ serves as the role model and example for all Christians, Christian virtues and moral standards must resemble those of Christ. Pet. 2:11. The disciples followed the master's footprint, which was observed by others around. This led the men to declare that "these men are Christ-like,""they are Christ-men," and "and they are Christians." Their conduct and nature do not contradict the teachings of Christ. "Imitate me as I imitate Christ," even said Paul. This indicates that Christ, not Paul, should be the role model for all Christians, as the phrase "as I..." implies that if I (Paul) cease to emulate Christ, then cease to emulate me. Instead, the characteristic of Christians is found only in Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, nothing significant remains when the word "Christ" is taken out of the term "Christian" (ian). If an individual is in Christ and Christ is in him, then that individual is a Christian. They can only bear excellent fruit in him. John 15:5 says, "By this fruit, you will know them" (Matt. 7:20). Many things (talents, gifts, serving God, etc.) have blindfolded some people into believing they are like Christ, when in reality they are not. As a result, this paper will list and elaborate on the characteristics of Christians.

Conviction from Sin

Sin is a glitch in the relationship of Christian to God which could be through disobeying the injunction(s) of God. Although it appears impossible not to sin, but the ability of a Christian to feel guilty when he or she sins is one of the traits that signifies he is a Christian, this is supported by the view of Bright (2004) , who clearly presents in his expression that, when a Christian sins, he ought to experience guilt. There ought to be a strong feeling that something went wrong with him. Someone who consistently commits sins without feeling guilty might not even be a Christian. Of fact, a believer's heart hardens and gradually slides into more and more sin the more they sin and the longer they refuse to admit their fault. "If we walk in the darkness and claim to have fellowship with him, we lie and do not live out the truth," says 1 John 1:6. As 1 John 1:8, 10 states, "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us," even Christians sin after conversion (since the power of sin has been overcome and not its presence for now). We portray him as a liar and deny that we have sinned if we assert that we have not. Paul underlined that a Christian ought to abstain from sin and never live consistently in the act of sinning.

Jesus declared that when believers sin, the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, will enter their life and convict them. "The Advocate will not come to you unless I go; but if I go, I will send him to you," declared Jesus. When he returns, he will demonstrate—that is, prove—that the world is

mistaken about sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-8). As stated in 1 John 1:8–10, every believer will still sin, but when we do, the Holy Spirit will convict us and we will want to confess our sins to God (1 John 1:9). A Christian may question whether the Holy Spirit resides in them if they never feel any conviction over sin. It goes without saying that a person is unregenerate and still committed sins if the Holy Spirit is not within them.

A Christian must therefore live away from sin and this was further established and buttressed by Bright (2004) in detailing the content which was issued in the first epistle of John where a grave caution was given to anyone who believe they are saved but lack conviction to abstain from sin, as that is not indicative of a born-again believer. 1 John 3:1–10(Bright, 2004). "Why does this man call himself a Christian and later became an unbeliever" is a question that many have asked. This indicates that he wasn't regenerated and that all he did was act fake. Conviction over transgressions is a sign of regeneration. A believer does not partake in sinful food or drink, nor does he feel at ease after committing an infraction. Therefore, regeneration—being dead to sin and alive to righteousness—is the primary characteristic of a Christian.

Love for others

A Christian cannot genuinely profess to be saved and still harbor animosity toward their siblings. Once more, the Apostle John provides proof that a believer can recognize the fact that they have been born again. First John 2:9-11 says, *"Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them."*

Nobody who hates their Christian brother or sister can call themselves a believer. This, according to Jesus, is a clear sign among believers that they care about one another. In John 13:34-35, He says, *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* Jesus' statement in these words that "by this" means that people would recognize you as His disciples based on your love for one another is a crucial text. What? "If both of you are in love." According to John 6:37 and John 10:28–29, this is how both believers and unbelievers will recognize that we are a part of Christ and that everyone who is His is safe and secure in the knowledge that they have been born again.

Now, it's critical to understand that the biblical definition of love involves doing good by one another and keeping their best interests in mind. Stated differently, it is love devoid of self-interest. The above-mentioned Greek term for love appears 216 times in the New Testament. These qualities are significant because they serve as a synopsis of the commandments that Jesus fulfilled in Matthew 12:28–31. In light of this, Jesus exemplifies both the vertical and horizontal aspects of love. The love that exists between God and his children is vertical, while the love that exists between humans is horizontal. Consequently, if the vertical is firm and upright, it will have an impact on the horizontal; if the horizontal comes first, it will not have any effect on the vertical. "And they know we are Christians by our love," the hymn declares. According to Mohler (2010:76), one cannot love one's neighbors without also "participating in the political and cultural process."

Christians' unwavering devotion to God will inspire them to respond to his call to make amends with others. God's great desire is for all people to be rescued, male and female, and for no one to perish apart from Christ. You do not have the same type of yearning that God has for those who will perish without Christ if you have no interest or desire to communicate the gospel with the lost. Put another way, a person who is scared to share the gospel, whether in public or privately, does not love God, and a person who does not love God will also be scared to share the gospel. Therefore, the love that one has for God is what motivates one to love other people.

Praying and Reading of God's Word

The majority of Christians spend less time in prayer or studying God's Word (the Bible) and more time on the internet, watching TV, or engaging in personal hobbies. These activities in and of themselves are not sinful, but when we engage in them for extended periods of time, we are communicating to God that they are our top priority. The time spent reveals our true intentions. Reading the Bible and praying every

day are the obligations of a Christian. According to Janvier (2014), a Christian ought to have an open mind, an open Bible, and an open dictionary. The majority of Christians have a great need to read the Bible and like learning new things. A believer's hungering and thirsting for this is a powerful sign that the Holy Spirit is at work in them.

Concept of Politics

Government and law-making organizations engage in politics. All facets of human existence are influenced by politics and governance. Ignoring that fact means continuing to be obstinately uninformed, irritated, and alone. Politics is essential to fostering harmony and cooperation both inside and between countries because it sets norms for acceptable behavior and establishes laws and regulations.

Citizens from all financial situations, races, and ethnic origins are impacted by politics on a daily basis, regardless of their country of origin. Politics reduces violence by promoting cooperation, acceptance, and communication among the populace. Globally, political systems exist for the same fundamental reasons, but they take many diverse forms. According to Magaret (1976), political engagement is necessary for the existence of government, both actively and passively. "Many Nigerian took no part in politics at any level," the author continues. Leaders and occasionally the general public collaborate through political systems to enact sensible laws and regulations controlling the distribution of resources and goods among the populace. Politics affects many facets of society, such as employment prospects and the availability of essential resources like healthcare, education, and other resources. By developing techniques for choosing political leaders, they also establish long-term practices and policies.

Politics, according to many, is a filthy game. In the meanwhile, players are the ones who make the game appear dirty. The definition of governance is set by politics. Politics, at all levels of governance, has a significant influence on how the human world is run.Politics is the endeavor to interpret the chaos of existence. Politics is vital because, in some way, we must rule ourselves as humans. However, politics should be viewed as a tool for leading God's people rather than as a means of gaining notoriety and fortune.

Political Nature of God

God is political, but not in the sense that He is immoral or corrupt; He rules and engages in political activity. He administers a vast army of angels, creates rules and covenants, has celestial courts and libraries, and administers justice. Being unbiased, he elevates certain people while demeaning others. God also takes action to guarantee His hegemony and the fall of the dominion of darkness. As Psalm 18 shows, he rules in ways that are subtle and smart.

Thus, one of God's primary functions and one that is highly appropriate for humans to perform is the ability to recognize individuals and circumstances and respond to them with justice and good governance. An alternative perspective is that the divine will ought to be carried out on earth, just as it is in heaven. (Thesis 6:10) His standards need to be codified into laws and profoundly ingrained in all of the world's civilizations in order for this to occur. This entails Christian participation in politics, law, and culture. The reformer John Calvin actually believed that serving in government was the ultimate calling for a Christian. Evangelism can even be impacted by politics. Generally speaking, few people are saved in "closed" nations with anti-gospel regimes, whereas many are rescued in "open" nations. Therefore, according to 1 Timothy 2:1–4, a nation's governments have a significant influence on its eternal destiny. As such, Christians should pray for their governments and, when appropriate, take part in them.

Political Survey in the Scripture

The Bible makes it quite clear that God's people are meant to rule both in their own country and over foreign, heathen countries. with the tacit understanding that there are appropriate times for the people of God to cooperate and rebel when it comes to political action. We see how integrity and identity are linked through the lives of Joseph, Daniel, Esther, and many others. We also learn how crucial the prophetic role is to the maintenance of governmental power. The Bible is filled with numerous examples of men and women participating in politics, making it a very political text. Not persuaded? The investigator will examine several biblical books and their teachings regarding politics and political participation.All kingdoms, all empires, and the entire planet are under God's control, and in the

end, all kingdoms will merge into God's own kingdom of righteousness and love (Ellul, 2003).This position of Ellul indicates that, the unanimity that will be experienced in the later time as discovered in the teaching of eschatology will first be established in the contemporary time and as such, there will be a need for actively dissecting the political establishment as deduced from the scriptural texts.

Genesis uses the creation story to create a cultural mandate for the establishment of institutions on Earth. Relational priorities in this endeavor are determined by the equal worth and dignity bestowed upon everyone of us. The book demonstrates how God has authority over human circumstances. Genesis 41:37–41 demonstrates how God uses Joseph as a ruler in a foreign place to provide the safety, well-being, and prosperity of his people. Moses is shown in **Exodus** to be a highly political person who gets the rules that represent God's desire for just governance. **Leviticus** demonstrates how the law is intended to address every aspect of Israel's relationships with God, with one another, and with the environment. It places a heavy focus on moral behavior, both individually and collectively, as well as on helping the underprivileged. It is crucial to understand that a government cannot exist without laws, and laws cannot exist without governments.

Numbers suggests a democratic system of government headed by representatives chosen by God. **Joshua** demonstrates the importance of morality as a defining characteristic for God's people and the need for honest leadership and a strong sense of national identity. The book of **Judges** demonstrates how the Lord raises up and gives people the ability to guide the country away from sin, error, and judgment. It also demonstrates the necessity of women taking on leadership roles at the federal level. The good, the bad, and the ugly of government are laid out in the books of **1 and 2 Kings**. These works demonstrate how leaders have a higher responsibility for their deeds. The response to Solomon's plea for wisdom in ruling, seen in the books of **1 and 2 Chronicles**, demonstrates the Lord's desire for governing and places the onus of bringing about a national renewal on God's people. **Nehemiah** instructs us on how to understand the restoration of power (Kelvin, 2007).

Pilgrim (1999) further explained that, in being raised to persuade the authorities to save their people, **Esther** and Mordecai. Similarly, Christ's governing supremacy is mentioned in the New Testament books of **Matthew**, **Mark**, **Luke**, and **John**. This is demonstrated by his declaration in Matthew 28:18 that "all authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me," and in John 9:11 when he told Pilate that "you would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above."

The baseline for this rest on the fact that, the Bible in its entirety portrays the involvement in politics and it is seen through the pages of the scriptures that people rejoice when the righteous are in the places and corridors of power and authority but the people experience the irony of rejoicing when the places of power and authority are occupied by the wicked men.

Christian and the Practice of Politics

In this section of the study, the paper holds the opinion that Christians should have overtly positive attitudes toward politics and political figures. As posited by Goddard (2009), Christians view politics as a responsibility, and part of that responsibility is casting a ballot in an election. This indicates that, as respectable citizens and as individuals who are obedient to the scriptural texts, getting involved in the electoral process is essential in order to aid the major decision taking for the country under which one is a citizen. The choice of neglecting the responsibility of having to choose leaders in a democratic country like Nigeria is a choice of neglecting one's civil responsibilities which kicks against the biblical position. The nation's mess is primarily the result of followers who fail to carry out their civic duties in addition to the nation's leader.

By using their available right to vote, Nigerians can express their ideas. If every Christian cast a conscience-based ballot and prayed for God's direction, what kind of country would Nigeria be? It would yield a favorable outcome. In addition to offering prayers for our nation's leaders and government officials, Alan (2012) posted that, voting is another method Christians may impact the political landscape of the country.

Should Christians be involved in Politics?

Having established earlier the characteristic traits of who Christians are, and the discussion about the concept of politics, it is expedient to bring in a meeting point between Christians and political involvement. This section

therefore focuses on emphasizing the need for Christians to be actively involved in politics and to bring about positive transformation to the practical understanding of politics in the county.

The prerogative towards political involvement as encouraged by this paper is not a mad rush or quest for power but rather a moderate and godly means of getting involved in partisan politics and exercising franchise when it is time to exercise civic rights. This is further buttressed by Connolly (1981), "the church as a body should not pursue political power, but the positive inclination of Christians toward politics matter a lot." It is hampered by history. Prior to Constantine's conversion, the church was politically neutral for the first 300 years.

History teaches that society is what leavens the church, not the church as a political force trying to impose its Christian will on society. Humanity has a propensity to attempt institutionalizing Christianity, yet radical trust in Jesus is incapable of institutionalization. We would have to soften our message—that is, teach a gospel of nominal adherence—if society is to accept the church as a political entity. True Christianity is incompatible with global values and politically inappropriate. The church cannot get involved in politics without losing its purpose and direction (Connolly, 1981). Therefore, the church as a body cannot literally posit a political stance owing to the fact that there will be individuals of differing political views and opinions, but the church can emphatically emphasis the need for the members of the church to individually get involved in political practices in the system.

Regarding the participation of Christians in politics, there are essentially three schools of thought. Sectarianism, the first, exhorts believers to fully disassociate themselves from the procedure. The second, Christendom, holds that the church ought to use its political clout to try and sway society in favor of Christ. According to the third viewpoint, which is a balanced one, Christians should not get involved in politics as a group but rather as individuals. The three points of view are crucial for us to understand, and each supporter has a valid reason for supporting it. However, the researcher is most interested in the third point of view, which advocates for individual Christian participation, since it suggests that if everyone participated as the second position suggests, and then everyone would benefit. The church might thus lose focus and lose sight of its main mission, which is to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. However, the church would greatly benefit by individual involvement in politics.

As such, involvement in political activities as posited by this paper is a call to the church to prompt individuals to be encouraged to get involved directly with politics which will lead to bring a desired positive change to political system which is already filled with decadence. This is essential because, transformation cannot be caused by staying away from political involvement instead, influencing the world will be possible when Christians as individuals, who realizes biblical injunctions and live by them get involved in the process of political activities in the country.

Like all other citizens, Christians are obligated to serve on juries, pay taxes, cast ballots, and support politicians they believe to be the most qualified. Consequently, a Christian who abstains from politics is leaving his or her country's destiny in the hands of unbelievers. However, a Christian who is involved in politics has a voice in parliamentary decisions and can prevent or curtail excesses that could be detrimental to Christianity. Regarding a Christian's obligation to the government, Romans 13:1–7 states that since God is ultimately in charge and has bestowed authority over them, believers must submit to and respect the ruling authorities, even when they act dishonestly. Christians have a duty to obey the government and be good citizens, which includes paying taxes and abiding by the law. This requirement comes from God. But obeying God comes first and foremost on our list of duties. Being patriotic is harder in nations where Christians have no influence over the choices made by their leaders (Alan, 2012).

The historical records means through which Christians get involved in political, leadership and social activities; it aided progressiveness for the government of the land. Thousands of missions, including orphanages, schools, hospitals, and clinics, were founded by Christians all over the world. Millions of people worldwide have benefited from contemporary sanitation and literacy thanks to the pioneering efforts of Christians. The social work of godly men brought about all these transformations. Church schools and missionaries provided the foundational education for a large number of African leaders. The following actions are expected of Christians:

1. Pray for the government.

2. Register to vote: Christians should vote on every Election Day whether municipal or national.

3. Christians need to be informed regarding where the various parties stand on moral/Biblical issues.

4. Christians should select, elect and actively support godly men and women, who are prepared to stand for public office.

Christians should get involved in politics as individuals. Proverbs makes frequent mention of both good and bad kings. Of fact, rather than referring to an individual's right standing with God by faith in Jesus Christ, Proverbs defines righteousness in terms of societal justice and equity. Therefore, under the definition of Proverbs, it is quite conceivable for non-Christians to reign in a righteous manner. There is worry that Christians' freedom to evangelize will be taken for granted if they stay out of politics. Because of this, believers' incapacity will irritate the church. Pastors should use tremendous caution when it comes to the orientation and political lessons they impart to their congregation.

Conclusion

The biblical position in multiple expression shows that Christians live in a world where they are to make impact and to influence situations positively. Adjectives like “light of the world”, salt of the world” among others express the importance and significance of Christians in the world. But for the salt and the light to really be well utilised, it has to be put into use and to mingle with the field of influence, as such, Christians can serve in influencing political decisions when they are well involved in the system of practice.

Christian engagement in politics and attitudes toward them have long been hotly contested topics at the heart of Christian discourse. Over the years, a lot of believers have been taught that Christians shouldn't try to get involved in politics. So should Christians just look and fold their arms? The fate of future generations (as well as the current generation) is being recklessly left in the hands of the wicked and immoral when God's moral and upright people—Christians—choose not to vote or run for office. Since Christians are citizens as well, the church will be in disarray as a result of Christians' neglect of their responsibilities. Selecting the men and women to govern his people has always been God's business (this is genuine politics). Given that God is the universe's ruler, it makes perfect sense for his offspring to participate in governance as well. Given God's political interest, it is not a bad thing for his offspring to get involved in politics. God granted Israel their request for a monarch, thereby implicitly endorsing childish political behavior.

By stating, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's," Jesus never undermined the foundation set by the Old Testament; rather, he established a principle that complemented the ways in which God functioned at the time. Numerous people have misconstrued this phrase and, in the process, turned become dishonest public servants. However, Jesus intended to convey that allegiance has two domains: one is certainly more devoted to God than the other, but one also cannot neglect one's duty to Caesar (the government).

It's not that it's improper for a Christian to be involved in politics, according to John MacArthur, in his article about Christians' attitudes toward politics. Voting is available to Christians in democratic nations, and God has selected a few of devout Christians worldwide to pursue careers in politics. However, it is improper for pastors and churches to wander from the full-time task of producing disciples and lose sight of Christ's commission in Matthew 28:18–20.

Christians who want to or have participated in politics should understand that they are representing Christ. Church leaders should educate these people that they are government officials for God's purpose, rather than using their position to extort, mislead, or criticize them. Like Daniel did among the heathens, they are to up the banner of righteousness. There will be difficulties along the way, which is why talking to God can help you to survive the enemy's scorching darts. The saying "if you can't beat them, join them" needs to be abandoned since it will actually do more harm than good to Christians and the general populace.

Christians like Lord Shaftsbury and William Wilberforce played a key role in ending child labor abuses and outlawing slavery, respectively. These are men deserving of praise. A Christian (taking into consideration the characteristics of a Christian as stated in the preceding part) can

serve in a political capacity to bring about changes in the governmental domain that will make the nation better and great. Politics needs justice and sincerity. Christians who are called to political positions must give it their all, regardless of the opposition or the dirty techniques used. They must also never give up and must never forget that loyalty, not success, is the ultimate standard. Meanwhile, loyalty isn't dependent on a person but on God.

Recommendations

Having examined the need for involvement and participation of Christians in the political activities of the country, the following are the recommendations proposed by this paper;

1. Christians should be fully active in the process of political leadership and participation as both electorates and as patrician politicians.

2. Church leaders and figures of Christianity are to encourage believers on the positive aspect of getting involved in the church

3. Orientation should be organised from time to time in order to redefine the existing wrong notions and definitions about political involvements.

4. Politics should be approached with all sense of responsibility and should not unnecessarily generate tussles among people especially among believers.

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LEADERSHIP, GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The success or failure of governance in any regime in power is basically determined by the quality of leadership of such administration. The study of the connection between leadership and good governance for national development has become essential with the restoration of democratic governance in Nigeria. In the first ten years of Nigeria Fourth Republic, leadership and good governance has faced a number of problems. Political leadership has been severely hampered by corruption, electoral fraud, resource mismanagement, and underdeveloped infrastructure. This paper examines the failure of governance and the challenges of leadership for national development in Nigeria. It also x-rayed the concepts of leadership, good governance and development. The method of data collection for this work is secondary data. The paper recommended the use of electronic voting systems and the demonstration of material and human security as solutions to problems. Others include removing the immunity provision for those holding political office and reorienting the country. The paper concluded that transparent, committed and transformational leadership is highly required for good governance and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Introduction

The quest for quality leadership and good governance is the aspiration of citizens in most countries of the world. This is because the task of harnessing scarce resources in pursuit of human and national development is related to the quality and output of leadership (Richardson, 2018). The history of the development of great nations suggests that versatile leaders played a vital role in the transformation of their societies through good governance. According to the history of how great nations come to be, adaptable leaders were essential in transforming their communities through effective government. As a result, a country's governance may be seen in the standard of life for its people and its overall progress.

Abraham Lincoln, for instance, stands out in the United States of America (USA) because of the valiant leadership he demonstrated throughout the 1861-1865 American Civil War. As a result, the union was preserved, democracy was upheld, and slavery was abolished. Determination in the quest for a more equitable and perfect union led to the accomplishment of these great feast. In the end, Lincoln left a legacy that is still revered in the United States of America (USA) today as a successful example of democratic government.

Otto Von Bismarck, one of the most important political personalities in German history, is responsible for the unification of East and West Germany. Helmut Kohl, who oversaw the unification of Germany in 1990 and guaranteed the enthronement of a federal system of government, expedited his efforts. This was seen as crucial to the nations stable constitutional democracy and effective leadership.

African Nations have also produced visionary leaders who have helped their nations progress in beneficial ways. With his history of fighting against apartheid, South African Nelson Mandela is viewed as one of the greatest figure of black freedom. Eventually, he was honored as the first democratically elected president of South Africa in 1994. His outstanding leadership serves as a metaphor for the fight of oppressed people all across the world. Through a seamless political transition, he was able to guide South Africa towards the goals of sustainable development and good governance.

Despite Nigeria's rich resource endowment, she has consistently ranked low in various international assessments on human development and good governance. The United Nations Programme, Human Development Index (UNDP-HDI) in its 2007/2008 report ranked Nigeria 158 out of 177 countries (NEPAD, 2008). Nigeria was also ranked 11 out of 16 in West Africa in 2009 Ibrahim index of African Governance (IIAG). It is estimated that about 70 percent of 150 million Nigerians live below poverty level of less than one US Dollar per day. These low economic and development indices have been attributed to poor leadership and absence of good governance in Nigeria.

Nigeria has seen a number of ineffective governments with various leaders disappointing the people. The people have no say over how they are governed and/how accountable their government is to them. For instance, the military rule relegated democratic institutions, culture of accountability and transparency and was characterized by the absence of citizen's participation. Unfortunately, under the democratic government, the imperative of good governance has been scuttled; the imperative of politics and administration of representation, using the ballot box, is being compromised. Onogu (2013), maintained that the former chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Prof. AttahiruJega went apologetic over the stalemated governorship election in Anambra State on the 16th November, 2013. He further maintained that Jega regretted that the commission ended up shattering the expectations of Nigerians in its conduct of the poll and failed to meet the expectation of Nigerians in its performance. Hence, peoples wish and desires with regard to electing their representatives and consequently revealing their preferences for the character of government, was denied.

Literature Review

The concept of leadership

Leadership is the process of directing, coordinating and influencing the actions of organized groups towards goal-setting, goal-attainment, and problem solving. It entails taking the initiative or starting new structures and procedures, and it is invariably a function of the leader and the situational variable.

According to Eneh (2011), some developing countries have surpassed Nigeria in terms of development, and Nigeria now is significantly more advanced than it was in 1960. This is due to the fact that there are many unfinished projects and policy missteps in the country, which can be attributed to the leadership crisis the country is currently experiencing. Mimiko (2011) opined that many years of political perambulation and poor leadership have hampered Nigeria's progress, accentuate weak governance, and fostered the people's alienation from the political process.

According to Teller (2012), leadership plays a critical role in economic development, but the leadership that should engineer progress should enhance the average living standard of the population by carefully developing both human and non-human resources for useful purposes.

Dike (2009) distinguished between institutional and societal leadership. Since its independence, Nigeria has been led by institutional leaders who utilize their position of authority and influence to advance their own personal agendas.

Achebe (1998) reiterates that, none of these can be remedied without competent leadership in place. Tribalism, corruption, indiscipline, social injustice, and preference for mediocrity over greatness are only a few examples. Achebe sees that leadership is a sacred trust, no one gets into

it highly because it demands qualities of mind and discipline of the body and far beyond the needs of ordinary citizens (Achebe, 2010).

Leadership is the capacity to inspire people to work effectively and enthusiastically towards predetermined goals. The act of leading is done by someone who has been appointed to or elected to do so. Because the masses cannot lead, leadership evolved as a result of every nation and society being organized or attempting to be organized. Influencing a group of individuals to achieve their shared goals is what leadership is all about. Optionally, that group may even be the entire world or a Nation (Ojo,2012).

Good Governance

Good governance is the process and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. The process by which governments are selected, held accountable, monitored and replaced; the capacity of governments to manage resources efficiently, and to formulate, implement and enforce sound policies and regulations; and the respect for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them (Onigbide,2007). According to UNDP (1997), Good governance refers to the exercise of authority in the management of a country's affairs, comprising the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and mediate their differences. It encompasses the political, economic, legal, judicial, social and administrative authority and therefore includes government, the private sector and the civil society. It also includes both a broad strategy and a particular set of initiatives to strengthen the institutions of civil society with the objective of making government more accountable, open, transparent and more democratic (Abe,2010).

Good governance can be linked to the extent to which a government is perceived and accepted as legitimate, committed to improving the public welfare and responsive to the needs of its citizens, competent to assure law and order, deliver public services, able to create an enabling public environment for productive activities and equitable in its conduct. Adamolekun (2002) views governance as the exercise of political power to manage nation affairs. He listed the main elements of governance as rule of law, freedom of expression and association, electoral legitimacy, accountability, transparency and development oriented leadership. Governance means making and managing public policy, organizing people, controlling subordinates to exercise skills and commitment to achieve excellence in a given set of assignments. It is concerned with ensuring that constituents follow established process while instruments of governance provide means to maintain accountability. In the realm of public affairs, governance refers to the range of policies public officials enact and the actions they take to manage the affairs of society (Ukaegbu, 2010). The need for good governance has been emphasized as a precondition for development because it can yield positive incremental changes.

Development

Development is a process of societal advancement in which improvements in peoples wellbeing are produced by solid alliances between all sectors, cooperative bodies, and other social groups.

Gboyega (2003) see development as an idea that encompasses all efforts to enhance the circumstances of human existence. It contributes to a sustainable improvement in the material well-being of all citizens, not just the most influential and wealthy, so that present spending does not jeopardize the future. It also demands the eradication or significantly lessening of poverty and access disparities to life's pleasant goods. It seeks to improve personal physical security and livelihood and expansion of life chances. Development is typically understood to include not only economic growth but also some idea of equitable distribution, provision of healthcare, education, housing, and other essential services, all with the goal of improving the quality of life for both the individual and the community. Development is defined as social, cultural, economic, and political change that must actually be accompanied by the ability of the people to control their destiny and relate to the outside world on an equal footing with their ability to conquer and control their environment without the aid of external assistance.

According to Rodney (1976), all cultures experience development as a natural phenomenon. Development refers to growth, adjustments, or deliberate change. Development is the process of introducing a certain kind of social change into a system in order to develop a better production method

and a better social structure. It might entail structural changes to a nations politics, society, economics and culture. Development in human society is not a one side process rather a multi-sided issue. It is an increase in skill and ability. However, sustainable development does not only involve capital accumulation and economic growth only but the conditions in which people in a country have adequate food, job and income inequality. It is a process of bringing fundamental and sustainable changes in the society.

As an example, Todaro (1980) defines development as a multi- dimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes, and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the decrease of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty. The ability to meet basic requirements, or the capacity to obtain appropriate food, shelter, health care, and protection, is one of the three key principles of development. Along with freedom in the sense that individuals and society as a whole have a say in how values are distributed in society, this also includes the perception of an individuals or groups self-worth and regard as a respected part of society.

Theoretical Framework

The theory adopted for this paper is the Social Contract Theory. The essential kernel of this theory is that governance is a contract between the citizens and the state. It is however, important to highlight that the various intellectual precursors of the theory held divergent perceptions on the nature of the contract between the citizens and the state. The relevance of this theory to this work cannot be overemphasized. This is because it captures the interplay between leadership and good governance which is the hallmark of the social contract between the citizens and the state. It is on this basis that it is adopted for this work.

Thomas Hobbes Social Contract Theory appeared for the first time in Leviathan published in the year 1651 during the Civil War in Britain. Thomas Hobbes legal theory is based on social contract. According to him, prior to social contract, man lived in the state of nature. Man's life in the state of nature was one of fear and selfishness. Man lived in chaotic condition of constant fear. Life in the state of nature was solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. Man has a natural desire for security and order. In order to secure self-protection and self-preservation, and to avoid misery and pain, man entered into a contract. This idea of self-preservation and protection are inherent in man's nature and in order to achieve this, they voluntarily surrendered all their rights and freedoms to some authority by this contract who must command obedience. As a result of this contract, the mightiest authority is to protect and preserve their lives and property. This led to the emergence of the institution of the ruler or monarch, who shall be the absolute head. Subjects had no rights against the absolute authority or the sovereign and he is to be obeyed in all situations however bad or unworthy he might be. However, Hobbes placed moral obligations on the sovereign who shall be bound by natural law. Hence, it can be deduced that, Hobbes was a supporter of absolutism. In the opinion of Hobbes, law is dependent upon the sanction of the sovereign and the government without sword are but words and of no strength to secure a man at all.

John Locke's social contract theory is different from that of Thomas Hobbes. According to him, man lived in the state of nature, but his concept of the state of nature is different as contemplated by Hobbesian theory. Locke's view about the state of nature is not as miserable as that of Hobbes. It was reasonably good and enjoyable, but the property was not secure. He considered state of nature as a golden age. It was a state of peace, goodwill, mutual assistance, and preservation. In that state of nature, men had all the rights which nature could give them. Locke justifies this by saying that in the state of nature, the natural condition of mankind was a state of perfect and complete liberty to conduct one's life as one best see fit. It was free from the interference of others. In the state of nature, all were equal and independent. This does not mean, however, that it was a state of license. It was one not free to do anything at all that one pleases, or even anything that one judges to be in one's interest.

Challenges posed by Leadership on Good Governance for National Development in Nigeria

Nigeria, a nation endowed with abundant national and human resources has good democratic institutions, plural society, vibrant civil society organizations and critical mass media among others. These ingredients have the structure and capacity to make leadership and good governance thrive well in Nigeria.

However, it is important to note that, Nigeria's leadership and governance have remained incapable in the improvement of the socio-economic and political development of the country since independence in 1960, particularly after the first republic. The political terrain has been unstable with lots of challenges militating against the genuine realization of the system. These challenges are:

1. **Ethno-Religious Factor:** This is one of the forces that have contributed greatly to socio-political instability in Nigeria. The latest sectarian turbulence in the country and the clamour for the presidency by the varied ethnic groups indicate that the society is still balkanized by tribal and religious sentiments (Victor, 2013). For instance, one of the powerful politicians in the North was quoted as saying that the Northern States will make the polity very ungovernable for Jonathan if he did not relinquish power to the North. Each ethnic nationality in Nigeria has its own faith, interest, culture, language and level of aspiration and these forces seem to affect the economic fate of each group. In addition, they make the creation of a common identity difficult thereby exacerbating the difficulty in attaining a true democracy in the society. Indeed, this is a serious challenge to the leadership of this society.

2. **Absence of True Federalism or Defined Governmental System:** Lack of true federal structure in Nigeria is a stumbling block to the nation's socio-economic and political development. The federal government is overbearing as it controls about 80% of the country's resources leaving state and local government at its mercy. Where states have the power to control their resources and to have access to the necessary funds for development programs, development is achieved. In fact, it is only true federation that can guarantee fairness and justice in the society. More importantly, it enables each locality to progress according to the aspirations of the people. A durable and enforceable people's constitution protects the people and determines socio-political activities in the society.

3. **Abject Poverty:** Continued poverty through mass unemployment is a barrier to Nigeria's economic development. A society of beggars, prostitutes, parasites and bandits cannot develop. A hungry man can never rational. He cannot know peace or stability (Ake, 1996). This shows that any individual deprived of the basic necessities of life cannot participate effectively in the democratic process. A poor person is therefore not full-fledged social individual as he or she lacks the basic freedom to engage in the life activities. One can safely argue that poverty is a hindrance to development. In order to eradicate poverty, the leadership of this country has formulated one policy or another such as National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), is aimed at poverty alleviation.

4. **Negative Approach to Leadership:** Nigeria's fundamental approach to leadership is troublesome. According to Adeyemi (2012), in Nigeria the primary goal of assuming leadership position is self-enrichment. Whereas Nigerian leaders have the power to educate, inspire and provide the people with the resources to advocate for the causes they believe in, they have failed in their responsibilities to lead by good examples. According to Achebe (1998) in his work the problem with Nigeria, concludes that Nigeria's problem is bad leadership and evidence on ground has consistently shown that he is correct. Certainly, it is leaders and not the poor rural dwellers that are responsible for Nigeria's underdevelopment. In every country, it is the responsibility of the leadership to protect the political, social and economic interest of the citizens.

5. **Lack of Vision and Mission:** Leading a country involves making policies and finding solutions to problems, ensuring stability of the polity, and guiding the society to prosperity. But a large number of the political leaders of Nigeria lack the vision, mission, the passion and the character to effectively govern the state and deal with the crumbling economy. They do not have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, as some of them are insensitive to the people's sufferings. Nigerians are tired of complaining to those who are leading without listing to them. As Bell and Smith, (2002), opined "leaders can point to many reasons why they are not good listeners, but none of these reasons excuses them from the obligation to listen". Leaders who listen are however, known to respond well to criticisms and crisis, build more loyalty, and increase the morale of the followers.

Listening is a way of showing that a leader cares about others. Due to the fact that "power belongs to the people", no political leader in the advanced countries would function effectively without the support of the people. Thus they constantly have their ears on ground for information that often guides them in policy formulations and implementations. The world's leading democracies are what they are today because their leaders are innovative and always searching for solutions to their social, political and economic problems. This is not the case with Nigeria, where evidence of bad leadership is all over the landscape as the leaders have not gone beyond a promise for change. They are only good at drumming the country's problems without finding the solutions. The institutions and infrastructure that are the bed rock of the economy are allowed to rot away leading to weak economy, rising unemployment, inflation, poverty and crimes.

6. **Electoral Malpractice:** This problem has become a popular phenomenon in Nigerian politics. As a matter of fact, an average Nigerian believes that election cannot be won except it is rigged. Yes, this is the extent to which our electoral system has deteriorated. The Anambra November 16, 2013 Gubernatorial election is a fresh case where the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)'s chairman AttahiruJega publicly regrets shoddy conduct of the election as stated earlier. Electoral malpractice is not a recent phenomenon. In fact, it has existed for long. Our leaders are the archects of electoral fraud. For instance, in the first republic, the leadership of various political parties were accused of election rigging. The same happened in the second republic. The fourth republic was also, not different. If by now, our leaders, the so called politicians are not ready to face free and fair election, it is doubtful if good governance can be entrenched by these same set of people who are so desperate in their bid to clinch to power by all means.

7. **Corruption:** According to John Campbell, U.S.A. Ambassador to Nigeria, corruption is a clog in the wheel of any nation struggling for the enthronement and consolidation of democracy and good governance (Punch July 7th 2005). This shows that development in Nigeria cannot be predicted on a fragile and unstable political base. Corruption is a devastator that has greatly eroded the fundamental values of democracy and its essential principles.

In his view, he maintained that corruption is a practical problem involving the outright theft, embezzlement of funds or other appropriation of state property, nepotism and granting of favours to personal acquaintance. It has been argued that corruption involves behavior's which deviate from the morale and constitutional requirements.

Corruption in its popular concept is defined as the exploitation of public position, resources and power for private or selfish gain. For instance, Muhammad (2013) defined corruption as "the betrayal of public trust for individual or group gain". In the same vein, Obayelu (2007) identifies it as "efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private gain at public expense or a misuse of public power for private benefits".

According to Ogundiya (2010), events in Nigeria since 1999 have shown that the waves of reversal have been contending with Nigeria's democratic project. Consequently, democracy remains grossly unstable and the future seems to be very bleak because of rampant bureaucratic and political difficulties. Corruption has reached a level such that an average Nigerian now possibly associates democracy with it. The consequences of political corruption are potently manifest: cyclical crisis of legitimacy, fragile party structure, institutional decay, chronic economic problem and unemployment, and above all general democratic volatility.

Corruption in this country is generally characterized by looting of funds and wealth which are kept secretly, i.e capital flight, misappropriation and mismanagement of public funds. Others are money laundering, drug and child trafficking, illegal arms deal; gratification which involves monetary, material or physical favor as a condition or reward for performing official duty. It further includes official abuse of office in which an official suppresses and violates an oath of office and nepotism which is granting underserved favors to one's relations. The corruption scandal in the oil sector totaling ₦1.7 trillion from 1999-2011, police pension

fund of N18 billion as well as the James Ibori₦450 billion case of money laundering in London and most recently the ₦255 million two BMW bullet proof cars are some of the celebrated corruption cases in Nigeria.

8. **Security Question:** From 1999-date, the country has been home to lots of ethnoreligious crises, sectarian Mayhem, electoral violence etc. questioning and shaking the survival of our democracy. Notable among them are, the Yoruba and Hausa/Fulani disturbance in Shagamu, Lagos State (1999-2000), the Urhobo/Itsekiri, Ife/Modakeke crisis (2000-2001) the Jukun/TIV conflict (2000), incessant turbulence in Jos, the erstwhile home of peace and tourism, the post-election violence in the Northern parts of Nigeria (2011) and constant sectarian turmoil exemplified by the activities of Boko Haram. The high level of kidnapping in the Niger Delta zone, particularly in Aba, the commercial Centre of the East. The x-ray of the above upheavals will indicate that, our country is surely under great challenge making Dauda and Avidime (2007) to argue that the security situation in the country is a major obstacle to our socio-economic and political development. According to them, "the tense security situation in all parts of the country makes nonsense of whatever effort that has been made to justify the sustenance of human and economic development.

   Other areas of challenge to the leadership and good governance of this country include, the incumbency factor, the politics of god fatherism, disjointed information, lack of rule of law and absence of accountability and transparency, (Muhammad, 2013).

9. **Absence of development-oriented leadership:** Poor leadership was widely acknowledged as a significant contributor to Nigeria's development and governance crisis since independence. The majority of Nigerians were not dedicated to the advancement of their country. The development literatures research on transformational leaders who have dramatically decreased poverty in their individual nations over the past 25 yearsdoes not consistently come to any conclusions about the causes of the successes. The successful leaders in Chile, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan all had a strong commitment to growth as well as a clear vision and set of objectives (Adamolekun, 2002).

10. **Absence of Accountability and Transparency:** A government is responsible when its officials (both elected and appointed) are responsive to the requests of the governed. This is to a large extent missing in Nigeria. Key measures for implementing accountability include adherence to the rule of law and independent judiciary.

However, Nigeria has not performed well in this region; corruption is uncontrolled at all levels, counting Municipal, State, and Federal. Also, there's a solid relationship between corruption and a generalized lack of accountability and openness. The authorities misuse their positions of control for individual benefit. Despite the reality that corruption is a worldwide plague, Nigeria seems to endure the foremost from it. Everybody appears to think that this nation encompasses a culture of corruption.

Conclusion

In all honesty, overcoming the difficulties of leadership and governance in Nigeria today is possible and attainable, but it depends on the leader's readiness to apply the values of equity, justice, and fairness to theirpublic conduct as well as the prudent use of public funds, while putting the needs of the average person and the necessity of creating a society that accommodates all at the center of our development goals. The followers must play a significant part in ensuring that the required excellent governance through effective leadership is accomplished by displaying morality and courage rather than sycophancy and praise singing, all of which calls for commitment.

Recommendation

Corruption leads to poor governance and low growth and hampers development. The government should therefore improve on their efforts toward tackling corruption by straightening the anti-crime agencies it has established. The war against corruption should be made clear. Such rules must not be personalized and selectively applied against

opposition, but rather should be applicable to all and sundry, irrespective of position, ethnic nationalities or religious affiliation.

The two anti-corruption commissions set up i.e Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), must be totally independent of the executive and must be given the necessary powers devoid of any external influence.

Poverty and hunger are national problems. The government should focus on providing good economic environment and invest in human development, including health care, education, skill training and acquisition of advanced technology. Skills acquisition would enable the poor to learn both various skills with which to find employment and improve their lives. An effective government is therefore the root of achieving economic growth and development in any society.

There is need for nation-building. Nigeria could become an economic powerhouse and command the attention of the international community only if it can give proper attention to education and technology.

Again, the government at all levels should evolve policies of inclusion rather than exclusion, that is, policies that will carry everybody along rather than policies that will protect the interest of a few. These will enable people to have a sense of belonging and by extension, enable them to participate actively in the political process.

Moreso, a true federalism should be entrenched and sustained in our constitution. This is to give the federating units and the minority groups equal opportunities in the sharing of the nation's resources. More importantly, the government should downsize their control and allow the private sector to come into play as to industrialize the country and create employment for our teaming population. The security apparatus of the state should be intensified. The security agencies of the state should be well equipped and their welfare should as well be improved.

Finally, our leaders should be good listeners and be able to re-orientate our moral values for the better participation of the citizenry.

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TAPPING THE OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (AGOA) FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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AGOA, Economic Development, United States, Interdependence, Nigeria

ABSTRACT
This study called on Nigerian government to explore the chances in the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) to improve the current economic woes, which have affected her development and global ranking. It derived its data from the secondary sources such as textbooks, articles, journals, etc., and adopted the theory of interdependence as a framework of analysis. From the qualitative analysis of the data stated above, the paper argued that AGOA, which has been in existence since 2000 has a lot of prospects for Nigeria. These opportunities are in the areas of trade and investment, job creation and poverty alleviation, textile industry, where women can own their companies, capacity building and technical assistance, as well the oil sector. Nigeria, even though has continued to remain a beneficiary of AGOA by meeting the yearly eligibility criteria for beneficiary, has not fully utilised these opportunities as it should. It is on this basis that the paper made some recommendations as follows: Nigeria should fully utilise the opportunities in AGOA to develop its economy by exporting more goods to US market; Enabling environment should be created for female citizens to own their business within the textile zone of Kaduna and other places to alleviate their sufferings thereby contributing to the economic development of the country; Nigeria should therefore take advantage of this opportunity to engage with the US to train Nigerian more businessmen and women in export processing among others.

Introduction

The economic sector of any society is the bedrock for its transformation. This explains why Marx refers to it as the foundation upon which the superstructure of the society is built upon (Majuk, 2001). Building a virile economy requires adequate time, energy and resources. While some countries, especially the advanced ones have attained high level of economic developments others are yet to reach such status. In 2012, Goldman Sachs "predicted that Nigeria could surpass Britain and several other European countries to become the 12th largest economy in the world by 2050" (Momah,

2015:187) thereby raising hope of Nigeria attaining the great power status. However, evidence has pointed to the contrary as the country's economy has been on decline in recent times due to the combined factors of: insecurity, which has led to the reduction of crude oil production in the Niger Delta region as well as the displacement of people in the northern region, the cash swap policy of President Buhari's administration, corruption, poor electricity supply, the implementation of the fuel subsidy removal by the President Tinubu-led government, the global effect of covid-19 pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the tightening of monetary policy to control high inflation rate (World Bank, June, 2023).

The effects of the decline are reflected in its global ranking to the extent that Nigeria ranked 163rd in the UN Human Development Index in 2022 (Bailey, Sep 8, 2022). The recent report by the Work Bank (June, 2023:viii) also indicates that, "real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth fell from 3.3 percent in 2022 to 2.4 percent year-on-year (y-o-y) in Q1 2023", due to constraints in oil production and demonetisation of the naira. And that "about 40 percent of Nigerians -82.9 million people-live on less than the national poverty line in 2018/2019" (which is N137.430 per person per year) (World Bank, June 2023:36).

A part from the fact that Nigeria is now a place where more poor people live (Momah, 2015), the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the economy has dropped from $2.2billon in 2014 to $0.47billion in 2022, while budget deficit has increased by 370.54% from 2016 to 2023 just as the cost of servicing debt has grown more than public revenues as public debt skyrocketed from N7.93trillion in 2013 to 77 trillion in 2023 (Tayo, 2023).

The Tinubu-led government, having realised the enormity of these economic challenges, promised, during his inaugural speech, to fix them by expanding the economy by at least 6% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) yearly, lift barriers to investments, create jobs and unify the exchange rate, as well combat insecurity (Onuah, and Dzirutwe, May 29, 2023). So far, the government has taken some decisive actions towards the transformation of the economy. These include, the floating of exchange rate unification of Naira, the constitution of the economic council, fuel subsidy removal, suspensions of the Governor of the Central Bank and Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), travelling outside Nigeria to woo foreign investors, etc (Ukpe, 2023; Work Bank, 2023; Onuah and Dzirutwe, May 29, 2023).

While some of these steps are commendable, one other important way to achieve the planned economic transformation in Nigeria is to take advantage of the opportunities that are embedded in the AGOA initiative- a platform, which "represents the main plank of the United States initiatives towards the continent of Africa...to improve the economic policy making in Africa, enabling countries to embrace globalisation, and securing durable political and economic stability" (Matto, Roy and Subramanian, 2002:3). The initiative which was established in 2000 has undoubtedly remained the core US "trade and investment policy with Sub-Saharan Africa [SSA] as it provides eligible sub-Saharan African countries with duty free access to the $25 trillion U.S. economy for over 1,800 products, in addition to the more than 5,100 products that are eligible under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program[mes]" (United States Trade Representative, June, 2022:10).

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the theory of interdependence for the purpose of analysis. According to Keohane and Nye (2012:7), "interdependence…means mutual dependence." They contend that "in world politics", interdependence "refers to situations characterised by reciprocal effects among countries or among actors in different countries. These effects often result from international transactions—flows of money, goods, people, and messages across international boundaries. Such transactions have." To Alker, Bloomfield and Choucri (1974:58) "interdependence refers more generally and purposively to a system of relationships or to policies designed to realize, change, maintain, or prevent value outcomes in particular situations". The theory is said to have been "popularised by two eminent scholars namely; Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye through their various publications" (Ibrahim, Adie and Nwokedi, 2018:24). It "speaks of the nature of the society we are living in where no single actor can survive alone. Every state no matter its levels of advancement; technologically, militarily, economically, etc. depends on another to achieve what it really wants (Ibrahim, Adie and Nwokedi, 2018:24)

Interdependence in international relations takes different forms. These include political interference, geographical interference, socio-economic interdependence, cultural interdependence, technological interdependence and economic interdependence (Stojanovic, 1978). In all these, economic interdependence is considered more fundamental (Alker, Bloomfield and Choucri, 1974; Stojanovic, 1978). For instance, Stojanovic (1978:249) argued that:

Economic interdependence is basic; it exhibits the dependence of material production processes on links with foreign economies…The interests most frequently consolidated in this kind of interdependence are those which can be vital to the survival of the nations concerned, or to their advancement. As an indicator of the degree and form of interdependence in international relations in general, the degree of economic interdependence is the most common and most significant. It may be said, therefore, that in economic interdependence we have a basis for international relations on which various other forms and kinds of interdependence can be built, and that all these are in the final analysis linked and attributable to economic interdependence.

According to a publication by the Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs https://www.nofa.go.pj/policy/other/bluebook/1975-1-1.htm) "in a world where interdependence has increased and the interests of various countries are so thoroughly intertwined, even a great power is limited in its ability to handle various problem on its own." In a world characterised by globalisation today, no single country can solve its own domestic challenges without the assistance from others. This is the most reason this framework of analysis has been considered as the most appropriate for the study. Thus, the current economic challenges that Nigeria is confronted with can be tackled if it can fully utilise the opportunities in AGOA, which it is an initiative by US to promote trade and other economic activities in sub-Saharan Africa for their mutual benefits.

Explaining the Concept of Economic Development

Development, generally, is a concept that has different interpretations. For instance, Omotola (2006), cited by Mato, Jacob and Akintola (2011:3) defines it as a "multidimensional process [that involves] major changes in social structures, political attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of absolute poverty." This definition aligns itself with that of Seers (1969), which conceives development as an indication of improvements in poverty, unemployment and inequality. In another dimension, Nwangwu (2001:33) argues that "development is man's ability to think and make conscious decisions about himself and his environment. Development is the process of reasoning out and charting a course for oneself, the community or group to follow, and determining concrete actions to take on the course taken."

At the level of individual, development "implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material wellbeing" (Rodney (1972) cited by Adie and Nwokedi (2018:89). It is also "about meeting the needs of life of people like health, education, food, water, sanitation and housing" (Mato, Jacob and Akintola, 2011:3). Thomas (2010:33) contends that, "development implies the capacity to secure and sustain a better life for humankind in society. The striving to elevate human life and comfort from a given level considered to unsatisfactory to a better and perhaps more comfortable level." Nwangwu (2001:334) believes "development is an active process, which…contains two necessary ingredients, namely: visioning and action". Visioning entails imaging one's environment and seeing possible futures for it while action is the step taken to back up the visions. Development could be a process and an end or arrival. As a process, development involves progression in human society from one stage to another. It is an end or arrival when a society attains the level of development so desired.

However, Nwangwu (2001) is of the opinion that development is more basically a process rather than an end. This is because development as a concept is relative. For Todaro and Smith (2004) cited by Thomas (2010:32), development in all societies must at least have three objectives. These include: increasing "availability and widen the distribution of basic life sustaining goods such as foods, shelter, health and protection;" raising levels of living, including "higher incomes, provision of more jobs, better education, and greater attention to cultural and human values; and expanding "the range of economic and social choices available to

individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence" in relation to other peoples and nation states as well as "forces of ignorance and human misery." Thomas (2010) notes how the need for development led the United Nations to convene the Millennium Summit in 2000, which produced the Millennium Development Gals (MDGs) with focus on Eight targets such as poverty reduction and hunger, educating all children, gender equality, preventing child mortality and maternal mortality, disease prevention, proper use of resource to keep environment; and promotion of global partnership. It is import to note that the MDGs have been replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) since 2015. Be that as it may, as rightly stressed by Jacob and Izu (2011:23) "the development of nations does not just happen by accident, magic or mere wishful thinking but by determined, conscious and deliberate action of those piloting the affairs of the state."

Economic development, on the other hand, is the process by which emerging economies become advanced economies. That's the process by which countries with low living standards become nations with high living standards. Economic development also refers to the process by which the overall health, well-being, and academic level of the general population improves (Market Business News (MBN, 2023). Kamdari (2016:3) defines economic development as "the increase in the standard of living in a nation's population with sustained growth from a simple, low-income economy to a modern, high-income economy." The author goes on identify Labor force, technology, Capital, Natural resource, Land, Education and knowledgeable skill as source of economic development," stressing that "political stability, human development, diversification of economy and impact of regional economy can influence the level of economic development in any given society (Kamdari, 2016:4).

To Britannica (2011, May 5), economic development is a process whereby simple, low-income national economies are transformed into modern industrial economies. Panth (2020:1) "broadly, economic development is taken to be the structural transformation of an economy by introducing more mechanised and updated technologies to increase labour productivity, employment, incomes and standard of living of the people."

Economic growth and economic development are not necessarily the same, but the former can serve as a means of achieving the latter. Thus, Adebowale (2016:627) noted "economic growth is an integrated concept which includes increasing income and productivity, generation of employment, and economic diversification. These types of policies that drive economic growth include policies on employment, poverty, agricultural production and security. Growth generates resources which are potentially available for development in all ramifications, including economic development."

Economic development takes into account the following information: Average life expectancy, i.e. how long people's lifespan are; Education standards; Literacy rates, i.e., what percentage of the population can read; Environmental standards; Availability of housing, plus the quality of housing; Access to healthcare. This takes into account the number of doctors per thousand people, access to affordable medicine, etc.; Income per capita (Market Business News (MBN, 2023). According to Britannica (2011, May 5) Economic development orientated projects involved large capital investments in infrastructure such as roads, irrigation networks, etc., industry, education, and financial institutions.

Furthermore, it has argued that, "the economic development as we know it today began only since the 19th century following the British Industrial Revolution" (Jwa, 2017:51). The above source adds that before this period, human societies experienced poor economic conditions under the "Malthusian traps". However, economic transformation came about due to changes in demographic structure and economic institution; legalisation of limited liability joint-stock company system; role of government as economic discriminator and economic motivator; emergence of the corporate economy from the agrarian economy by the power of corporation (Jwa, 2017).

An Overview of the African Growth and Opportunity Act

The African Growth and Opportunity Act was originally established under pub. L No106-200, May 18, 2000 by the US Congress (GAO, 2014) to provide "duty-free access to a range of commodities, including agriculture, textile and apparel, and petroleum" (GAO, 2014:3) from

sub-Saharan African countries to the US markets (Akinboye, 2013). The original policy statement of AGOA in 2000 principally includes, "'encouraging increased trade and investment between the United States and sub-Saharan Africa; reducing tariff and nontariff barriers and other obstacles to sub-Saharan African and United States trade,' and 'expanding United States assistance to sub-Saharan Africa's regional integration efforts'" (United States International Trade Commission, March 2023:31).

AGOA programme covers both textile and non-textile goods which have been re-authorised recently through September 30, 2025 (US Customs and Border protection, 2021). Some of these items include: Uranium, Aluminium, Zink, Oil, Agricultural Products, Meta Products, Textile, Footwear components, plastic articles of wood, paper products etc (Sunday, 2019). The initiative "has encouraged American companies to both do business with and invest in sub-Saharan Africa. It has spurred economic growth and created tens of thousands of jobs across the continent. The program[me] also has provided incentives to African governments to undertake key political and economic reforms" (United States Trade Representative, June, 2022:8). In addition,

> AGOA has helped create a more conducive environment for American investment and business interests as African markets continue to expand. The legislation has also enabled many American companies to get a foothold into key African markets and diversify their global sourcing chains. Many African countries have taken advantage of the benefits related to AGOA's tariff preferences and liberal rules of origin for apparel. Utilization of these benefits has led to significant increases in exports of apparel to the United States from countries such as Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Eswatini (United States Trade Representative, June, 2022:10).

Eligibility Criteria for Beneficiaries

For a Sub-Saharan African country to benefit from AGOA initiative, there are certain criteria it must meet. These conditions as contained in Section 104 of AGOA include some requirements that the country in question has already established or is making continual progress toward establishing. They include:

i. A market-based economy

ii. The rule of law

iii. Political pluralism

iv. The right to due process

v. The elimination of barriers to U.S. trade and investment

vi. Economic policies to reduce poverty

vii. A system to combat corruption and bribery

viii. Protection of internationally recognized worker rights.

Also, a country desirous of benefiting from the initiative must not pursue activities that tend to undermine the United States national security or foreign policy interests or commit gross violation of internationally recognised human rights (Curtice, 2019). Consequently, any country that fails to meet these cannot benefit from the initiative. Also, those which are already benefiting could be terminated from benefitting if they failed to adhere to the conditions.

In 2022, the US President designated the following 36 countries as beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo (re-instated in 2021), Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Eswatini, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda (AGOA apparel benefits suspended effective July 31, 2018), Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia. Whereas the following sub-Saharan countries were not designated as beneficiaries: Burundi, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea (graduated from GSP), Eritrea, Ethiopia (terminated in 2022), Guinea (terminated in 2022), Mali (terminated in 2022), Mauritania, Seychelles (graduated from GSP), Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Zimbabwe (Federal Register, 2022; Wong, 2013).

The US terminated the eligibility status of 16 countries since 2001 of the initiative including Eritrea, Mauritania, Guinea, Madagascar, South Sudan as a result of political unrest and coup d'états. Also, in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Gambia, Swaziland and Burundi were denied benefit on account of human right abuse (Sunday, 2019). Albeit, according to United States International Trade Commission (March 2023:16) "the most common reason for a loss of eligibility relates to concerns over the rule of law and political pluralism."

To ensure the sustenance of the initiative, AGOA provides for the United States-Sub-Saharan African Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum –AGOA Forum, which takes place yearly and alternately in US and Africa. Accordingly, the forum provides them the opportunity to "discuss expanding trade and investment relations between the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa and the implementation of [AGOA] including encouraging joint ventures between small and large businesses" (Williams, 2015:6).

Nigeria has continued to be a member of AGOA following its satisfactory performance in meeting AGOA conditions from the yearly review report (Onyekwere, May 30, 2023). However, "critics have observed that Nigeria has not benefitted much from AGOA because Nigeria's products are not economically competitive in the US. Coupled with the problem of infrastructure such as power, transport and delay in ports combined to increase the cost of production of some of the goods to be exported to the US markets" (Akinboye, 2013:36).

Nigerian Economy and the Imperative for AGOA

Nigeria, basically, operates a mono economy that revolves around the sale of crude oil production. Unfortunately, this crude oil business hardly meets the needs of Nigerians today. This is further complicated by the report that, "oil production is consistently declining thereby preventing Nigeria from benefitting fully from higher global oil prices. In 2021, the output in Nigeria declined by 8.3 percent and was further declined by 19.2 percent in 2022 and a 4.2 percent y-o-y [year-in-year-out] decline in first quarters of 2023" (World Bank, 2023:2). Furthermore, report on Nigeria by AGOA itself shows that:

> Economic diversification and strong growth have not translated into a significant decline in poverty levels; over 62% of Nigeria's over 180 million people still live in extreme poverty. Despite its strong fundamentals, oil-rich Nigeria has been hobbled by inadequate power supply, lack of infrastructure, delays in the passage of legislative reforms, an inefficient property registration system, restrictive trade policies, an inconsistent regulatory environment, a slow and ineffective judicial system, unreliable dispute resolution mechanisms, insecurity, and pervasive corruption. Regulatory constraints and security risks have limited new investment in oil and natural gas, and Nigeria's oil production had been contracting every year since 2012 (https://agoa.info/profiles/Nigeria.html).

According to the 2023 Index of Economic Freedom published by Heritage Foundation (2023), out of the 46 Sub-Saharan countries surveyed, Nigeria ranks 22nd and its total score is below the global average. The report states further that, "the structural changes that are needed to develop a more vibrant private sector or achieve more broad-based growth have not emerged. Oil continues to dominate the economy, and institutional problems negatively affect other economic activity. The judicial system is susceptible to political interference, corruption is prevalent, and the rule of law is weak" (Heritage Foundation (2023:272). Aside from the fact that Nigeria ranks 150 out of 157 in the Work Bank's 2020 Human Capital Index, "the country continues to face massive development challenges, including the need to reduce the dependence on oil for exports and revenues, diversify its foreign exchange sources, close the infrastructure gap, build strong and effective institutions, as well as address governance issues and strengthen public financial management systems" (https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/overview).

Ukeje (1999:110) has confirms that "cash crops are no longer exporter and food crops are no longer grown in the quantity capable of satisfying domestic needs," stressing that even "the cotton and groundnut pyramids of Northern Nigeria have collapsed."

The above reports are not ones that should gladden the heart of any patriotic citizen of this great country. This is why Nigeria must explore the opportunities in AGOA to transform her economy. Doing so will bring Nigeria to trade directly with the largest economy in the world being the US. In fact, "with a GDP of 23.32 trillion dollars", the USA, according the 2021 global ranking, is by far the world's largest economy seconded only by China with 17.73 trillion. (https://www.worlddata.info/largest-economies.php). Again, as rightly observed by Lores (17 March, 2022), the economy of the United States is 33.9% larger than the European Union; 15% larger than the combined economies of China and India; 8.5%times larger than the rapidly developing continent; its population is 332 million 3.7 SQKM approximately. So, this is an opportunity Nigeria cannot afford to miss at this critical point.

Tapping the Opportunities in AGOA for Economic Development in Nigeria

The opportunities Nigeria can explore in AGOA initiatives include: trade and investment, job creation, poverty alleviation, the non-oil sector like textile, women affairs and technical assistance. Let's now discuss them further.

Trade and Investment

> A positive sign of the reemergence of strong trade and investment ties between the United States and sub-Saharan Africa is that in 2021, non-oil imports under AGOA (a major source of AGOA's job-creating value) were approximately $4.8 billion. This represented a sizeable increase from $3.4 billion and $3.8 billion in 2020 and 2019 respectively, and was the largest annual figure since 2013 (office of the United States Trade Representative, June, 2022:8).

Trade is an important instrument for socio-economic re-engineering. The US recognises this as it maintains: "trade keeps our economy open, dynamic and competitive, and helps ensure that America continues to be the best place in the world to do business." (https://ustr.gov/about-us/benefits-trade). Also, "trade is critical to America's prosperity-fuelling economic growth, supporting goods jobs at home, raising living standard and helping Americans provide for their families with affordable goods and services" (https://ustr.gov/about-us/benefits-trade).

Today, the United States is the world's largest economy and the largest exporter and importer of goods and services. Nigeria is the second largest trading partner of the US in Africa, however, the trade is "characterised by relevance on a few export commodities for foreign exchange earnings especially oil" (Ola cited by Sunday, 2019:88), which they import 40 roughly 40% representing about 8% of US overall imports (Sunday, 2019). Nigeria can do more by becoming the first trading partner in areas where it has comparative advantage.

In terms of investment opportunity, AGOA has made it possible for benefitting countries to receive Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from the US vice versa. The importance of FDI to any economy cannot be overrated. Thus, as posited by Imoughele and Ismaila (2014:201), "most countries strive to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) because of its acknowledged advantage as a tool of economic development."

Unfortunately, evidence has shown that Nigeria ($6.8 billion) came third behind South Africa ($10 billion) and Mauritius ($8.3 billion) in the report of the "largest destinations for cumulative outward U.S. FDI stock in sub-Saharan African countries in 2020 (Office of the United States Trade Representative, June, 2022:9). As the largest economy in Africa, this position is unacceptable. Since some US companies have invested substantively in the food and industries such as coca-cola, Pepsi, 7up, etc (Sunday, 2019), Nigeria can explore more on these to expand the scope for the betterment of her economy.

Job Creation and Poverty Alleviation

Job creation is another area Nigeria can explore in the AGOA initiative because the platform has "continues to provide beneficiary countries with an important comparative advantage in exporting in the U.S. and can be leveraged to regain pre-COVID-19 economic growth levels. By providing such market access, the legislation has helped millions of people, supported increased investment across the continent, created hundreds of thousands of new jobs in eligible countries and sectors, and

helped to alleviate poverty on the continent" (United States Trade Representative, June, 2022:10).

Moreover, it has been shown that "AGOA has had an impact on economic development and poverty reduction vis-à-vis job growth. This outcome is noted especially in the apparel industry, as the eight largest AGOA beneficiary apparel sectors directly employed an estimated 240,000–290,000 workers in 2021" (United States International Trade Commission, March 2023:20). Harnessing the full potential in AGOA will go a long way towards reducing the high poverty rate and other economic quagmires in the country as reported by World Bank (2023) below:

> High oil prices since 2021 did not boost the performance of the Nigerian economy as has been the case in the past. Rather, macroeconomic stability weakened, amidst declining oil production … exchange rate distortions, monetization of the fiscal deficit, and high inflation. The deteriorating economic environment is leaving millions of Nigerians in poverty. On current trends, with Nigeria's population growth continuing to outpace poverty reduction, the number of Nigerians living below the national poverty line will rise by 13 million between 2019 and 2025 (https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/overview)

Oil and other Non-oil Sector

Based on available reports, Nigeria is lagging behind in terms of export in the non-oil sector to the US. For instance in 2013 "90 percent of the Petroleum products were imported from three countries- Nigeria (51percent), Angola (28 percent), and Chad (11 percent); all machinery and transportation equipment products were imported from one country-South-Africa; and 91 percent of the textile and apparel products were from three countries- Lesotho (36percent) Kenya (34 percent) and Mauritius (21 percent)" (GAO, 2014:2). Also, among the top five country exporters under AGOA in 2019, Nigeria's export to the US valued at $3.1 billion was mostly crude oil, whereas South Africa's exported goods ($2.0 billion; mostly vehicles and parts, nuts, wine), Angola ($605 million; mostly crude oil), Kenya ($518 million; mostly apparel, nuts, cut flowers), and Ghana ($441 11 million; mostly crude oil, cassava, cocoa powder/paste)" (Office of the United States Trade Representative June, 2020:10-11). South African is now the largest non-oil AGOA beneficiary that has "exported the widest array of products under AGOA, ranging from passenger vehicles to citrus products, yachts, and frozen sorbet" (Office of the United States Trade Representative, June, 2022:10).

Textile: Apparel

It has been observed that the most "important incremental benefits provided by AGOA relate to the two non-petroleum categories; first, it was the export of Apparel products while the second is composed of different non-apparel products such as foot wears, agricultural products watches among others" (Matto, Roy and Subramanian, 2002:6). "AGOA places heavy emphasis on Africa's emerging textile and apparel industry as a primary sector for trade benefits. This sector is considered to hold the highest potential of fostering Africa's export competitiveness and export led pro-poor growth by generality greater employment due to its relative labour" Páez, karingi, Kimenyi, and Paulos (2010:1). Lucky enough, in August, 2009, Nigeria was among the 19 African countries that were approved under the hand-loomed and the hand-made provision of category 9. Under this category, "AGOA provides duty and quota-free benefits for hand-loomed, hand-made, folklore article, or either printed fabrics, made in beneficiary Sub-Saharan African countries" (https://legacy.trade.gov/agoa/eleigibility/apparel-eligibility.asp**).** Nigeria can revive its moribund textile industry in Kaduna so as to key into this opportunity. It is sad to note that cotton production which used to contribute 25 percent to Nigeria's GDP in 1980 has dropped significantly to only five percent at present. Also, 51 ginneries, which were in operation across the country in the '80s, are now down to only 10, operating at low capacity (Momah, 2015).

Opportunity for Women Owned Companies

Another opportunity Nigeria can tap into is for her female citizens to benefit from export of

goods to the US market like their counterparts in other African countries. As report has it:

> U.S. imports of several non-oil AGOA products experienced sizable increases since AGOA was passed, including vehicles and parts, sunglasses, footwear, home goods, jewelry, cut flowers, cocoa powder and cocoa paste, cassava, and macadamia nuts. In many cases, it is women owned businesses in Africa that are supplying these products to the United States and women owned companies in the United States that are sourcing (United States Trade Representative, June, 2022:10).

Note that the emphasis is on women. African Growth And Opportunity Act (July, 2013:2) corroborates the above by identifying Lesotho as a shining example of AGOA opportunity for women. Thus, "in Lesotho, AGOA has spurred a vibrant textile and apparel industry that is the nation's largest private sector employer. The sector has generated more than 36,000 jobs, mainly for women. Lesotho is now sub-Saharan Africa's largest exporter of garments to the United States, with more than $300 million in clothing exports to the U.S. in 2012 under AGOA." Williams (2015:13) reports that "Lesotho estimates that employment in manufacturing rose from 19,000 in 1999 to 45,700 in June 2011" as a result of the opportunity to export under AGOA. Nigeria has more women who can do this and improve the economic fortunes of the country. All that is needed is to create enabling environment and the women will do the needful.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

The importance of technical assistance and capacity building cannot be overstressed in any sectors of the economy because both of them can enhance productivity. AGOA has graciously provides for this as it requires the US government to target its technical assistance and trade capacity building (TCB) in AGOA member states (Williams, 2015). Between 2001 and 2013, TCB assistance has been provided primarily through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC, 58%) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID, 31%), with 53% of funds obligated for trade-related infrastructure, 15% for trade-related agriculture projects, 11% for trade facilitation, and 21% for other TCB categories" (Williams, 2015:7). The above author maintains that the essence of TCB is to promote liberalisation of trade policy; harmonisation of laws and regulations with WTO membership commitments; engagement of financial and fiscal restructuring; and facilitation of greater agribusiness linkages. Nigeria can benefit from this by having its citizen access this assistance from the US.

Conclusion

The African Growth and Opportunity Act is a partnership between the US and the Sub-Saharan African countries to promote economic growth and development. The initiative, which started in 2000, has assisted many sub-Saharan African countries achieve some milestones in their development drives both in the oil and non-oil sectors. For instance, it has enabled the African countries exported goods to the US while the US in turn has brought investments to them. Nigeria, having met the yearly eligibility criteria has remained a beneficiary. However, as Onyekwere (May 30, 2023) has argued, Nigeria is yet to take full advantage in the AGOA preferences to drive non-oil exports to American markets, compared to other beneficiary countries. Given the economic challenges that currently confront Nigeria, and the fact that AGOA has proven records of economic advancement in the SSA, especially in the areas of trade and investment, job creation in textile industries etc, Nigeria can tap into these opportunities to address its economy that is nose-diving. A country with a huge population, high economic potentials and other critical indices for development like Nigeria cannot continue to occupy back seat in AGOA initiative.

Recommendations

On the basis of the above findings**,** the paper makes the following recommendations:

1. Nigeria should fully utilise the opportunities in AGOA to develop its economy by exporting more goods to US market.

2. Nigeria, being the most populous country with the largest crude oil production (only (overtaken recently by

Angola) should be the first largest exporter of crude oil to US and not the second as shown in the study.

3. The non-oil sector such as the ailing textile industry should be revived to create jobs and produce more goods for export to America as seen in Lesotho documented in this study.

4. Enabling environment should be created for female citizens to own their business within the textile zone of Kaduna and other places to alleviate their sufferings thereby contributing to the economic development of the country.

5. The need for technical support and capacity building for Nigerian businessmen and women cannot be overstressed. Nigeria, should therefore take advantage of this opportunity to engage with the US to train Nigerians in processing of export commodities.

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POLITICAL BEHAVIOR AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA: ANALYSIS OF THE 2011 AND 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS

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KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

A prosperous democracy is only possible when a free and fair election is achieved. If resources and potentials of the nation will be properly maximized, it will begin with an election without intimidation or harassment. The voters should be allowed to freely vote for the candidate and political parties of their choice. Searching through history, it has been discovered that there has been no general election in Nigeria since independence in 1960 that has not been characterized by election violence, which has also led to a serious crisis, violence, disputations, and even bloodshed despite the law governing the electoral process in Nigeria. It is therefore pertinent to investigate the reasons why it has been impossible for Nigeria as a nation to achieve a credible election since inception. Therefore, this paper outlines the common challenges of election and why the political actors prefer electoral violence instead of a free and fair election. Using both primary and secondary data, that is, the historical analysis of data, from different scholarly works, this paper found out that it is germane to analyze the reasons why elections in Nigeria can never be credible and possible solutions, with specific focus on the 2011 and 2015 general elections from the comparative analysis perspectives. The credibility of election has always been on paper, but obviously the actions of the people involved is the direct opposite of what the law says. No doubt, there is need for government to place priority on non-inference in electoral matters, the role of judiciary and re-orientation of politicians, also systems and institutions should work in Nigeria like other advanced countries.

Introduction

One of the prerequisites of a healthy democracy is a free and fair election. But it is a reality and nothing but the truth that in established democracies, election and violence can go hand in hand causing threat to the credibility of the process of election. Electoral violence is not a new concept in many countries around the world. Nigeria inclusive and different forms of electoral violence are common in practice, along with loss of life and properties before, during and after the elections. Kean (2004) asserts that violence is the greatest enemy of democracy, and of course this assertion resonates with what this study stands for, when the greatest enemy of democracy is

actually what the politicians prefer, then there is a problem with the entire structure. also. Itodo (2019) opines that many have lost confidence in the genuineness and integrity of elections because the entire process has not been able to engender confidence in the electorates as well as contestants, this assertion is relatively genuine. so many people have lost interest in anything called election because the process doesn't regard the citizens, if not for the fact that the citizens are not regarded and considered. a true and credible system would have been put in place. Anyways, most of these works didn't truthfully point out reasons why elections can never be achieved in Nigeria, except these reasons can be put into consideration, then, we are all still joking as a nation. and obviously, we are not ready for a true democracy. In any nation where election violence continues for several days or weeks. this can literarily affect nation-building effort and possibly the ongoing peace-building. In 1999, when the military finally left the politics scene by handing-over the reins of political power to civilians after 37years of authoritarian rule, since then almost all the general elections conducted in Nigeria have been characterized with election violence.

Elections are courtesy for any democracy. Election entails a set of pursuits/activities leading to a careful choosing of one more person out of many to serve in positions of authority in a society. In any sincere political categorization all over the world, election through the ballot is strongly acknowledged as the dependable barometer of the power balance. Abraham Lincoln said that "The ballot is strong than the bullet" The biggest of the opposition facing Nigeria today is how to select leaders at the different levels of government via a free and fair elections. The peremptory of free and fair elections is better encapsulate by the former President of Nigeria Yar'Adua when he opines that "Electoral reform is predicated on the belief that elections are the very bedrock of democracy hence they must not only be fair but they must be seen to be so by our people and the rest of the world.'' Free and fair election must be characterized by the presence of a wide range of fundamental human rights and the absence of intimidation, such as the rights to free expression, association, information, assembly, opinion, and the production from violence and all forms of discrimination. Free and fair elections are the keystone of any democracy, it is also efficient for peaceful transfer of power. Apparently, there are electoral laws guiding the true process of democracy, actions and decisions other than this is an abuse of what the law indicates, if a credible election can't be actualized in Nigeria then the whole structure will be labeled faulty, therefore what goes on in such structure can never be credible, the major reason for the coldness from electorates/citizen towards the electoral process, the statement now is it is their affairs, let the run it, and as they run it to achieve their selfish desires the masses are terribly affected, therefore, democracy is not again the government of the people, by the people and for the people according Abraham Lincoln, the father of democracy but rather government of the selfish set of people, by them and for these selfish set of people that are supposed to be selfless and compassionate, this is because they can go any length to manipulated the whole process to achievement of their personal desires, since most times we get the political candidates we didn't order for, but imposed on us, regrettably, the citizens suffer for the irregularities and malpractices.

Conceptual Framework

Political Behavior

The subset of human behavior that involves politics and power which is political behavior is very germane to understand the concept of electoral violence in Nigeria. Political behavior is the study of the way people act, feel and think regarding politics.The term refers to any form of involvement in the political process, or any activity which has political aftermaths in conjunction to government and policy. It includes the subset of human behavior that involves power and politics. Karl Deutsch and Theodor Adorno are the theorists who have had impact on the concept of Political behavior. This broad definition symbolizes both legitimate forms of political participation (such as voting in elections, activism in interest groups, or social movements) and illegitimate political activities. While formal involvement connotes at containing social disagreement within the extant political system, so that the political order remains stable, objection which cannot be channeled through existing political structures is likely, not only to pursue changes in policy, but also to dare the political order itself. The study of political behavior also embraces the study of inactivity and apathy, as well as the interpretation of political ideologies, values, and attitudes as the basis of involvement and non-involvement in the political sphere.

Political behavior in a democracy has both problems and prospects that differs from those of private and voluntary activity. Political action can force all citizens to act in accordance with decisions made by their chosen representatives. Because these political decisions are supposed to be for the good of all, the support of all is commanded. But because no single citizen's ballot is decisive, electorates are not very productive at monitoring the intent and the efficient of political action. Voter turnout is often not encouraging and even very intelligent electorates are badly uninformed on policy issues.

Election

An election is a formal and a well organized choice of voting for a person for a political position or a process by which a population select an individual or multiple individuals to occupy public office. It is a formal process of accepting or rejecting a political proposition by exercising franchise. Most countries hold elections in a formal sense, but in many countries of course elections are not competitive. Election can occupy positions in the legislation, but, sometimes in the judiciary and executive and the local and regional government. It is the process of electing or being elected. Albert (2007) opines that election plays an important role in the life of a nation. It is an important way by which citizens choose their leaders, and by so doing, contribute meaningfully to the identification of the kind of development they would like to see. Election in the parlance of Oxford Advance Learner's dictionary (2010) sees it as the process of selecting a person or a group of people for a position, especially a political office, by exercising the franchise. It is clear that voting is an important element of election as explain that the democratic system is the extent to which the most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes, and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote. Similarly, Akzin (1960) notifies us that elections have technical and social significance. In the technical sense, they are the process through which an office or post is assigned to a person by an act of volition that requires the simultaneous expression of many people's opinions.

Election is the line of action that allows members of an organization to select representatives who will hold positions of authority within it. Election is the process of elite selection by the mass of the population in any given system. Hence, elections determine the proper way of ensuring that responsible leaders to take over the mantle of the people concerning who govern at these levels serves as an avenue for the public to make choices about the policies, programs, and future directions of government action. Election is a key instrument for the recruitment of political leadership in democratic societies; the core to participation in democracy; and the way of giving consent to government; and allowing the governed to select and pass judgment on office holders who theoretically represent the governed.

Electoral Violence

Election violence connotes the use of power and force to attain political aims. This can apparently include violence which can be used by state against other states and it can be in form of war, a violence which is used by State against non-state actors or civilians. As Elections are very strong tool for national change can also not be effective if violence is involved or if there is an interference in the process of election. No single definition or a generally acceptable definition on the electoral violence, it may symbolize intimidation, threats of coercion and physical harm instigated to interfere in an electoral process or that emerge from electoral competition. No doubt, violence prevents people's involvement in the electoral process, and of course there will be imposition of candidates, rules which in turn hinders or retards the development of such a state. Some scholars perceive violence in the light of the use of coercion or force against people and objects. (Hook, 1934) defines violence as an illegal employment of method of physical coercion for personal or group ends. Corsini (1999) defines violence as the manifestation of hostility and rage through physical force directed against persons or property. Wolff (1969) asserts "that violence is the illegitimate or unauthorized use of force to effect decisions against the will or desire of others".

Electoral violence is instigated by political leaders to intentionally influence the process and aftermath of elections, and it involves coercive acts against people, resources, and infrastructure. This usually occur in all the process of the electoral activities, which include, the notification of elections, the conduct of party primaries, and voter registration, and this act can

be encouraged by both state and non-state actors Violence is the physical or emotional force and energy. It is caused by physical force that is intended to hurt or kill somebody, electoral violence is seen as all forms of violence (physical, psychological, administrative, legal and structural) at different stages engaged in by participants, their supporters and sympathizer (including security and election management body staff) in the electoral process.

Why do Elections become violent?

Elections are battleground for resource control, which raises the stakes and likelihood of clashed. According to World Health Organization (2022), election violence is a deliberate use of power and force to achieve political goals, therefore, for political actors to achieve their political goals, election must be violent. Indeed, It is a violence which is perpetrated in order to achieve political goals. The use of electoral violence is usually to fulfil a revolutionary objective, and in times of civil strife it is used to challenge the status quo. Another possible reason why elections become violent is the fact that at the basic level, electoral is employed to either coercively maintain or achieve power, including to enforce patriarchal control of democratic institutions. Violence against women is also an important issue to be considered, this is often motivated by the desire to punish women for their participation in the electoral process, as their involvement threatens the dominance of male power structure, this issue should require a special attention, as it is expected that there should be an equal participation of men and women in politics and electoral process.

Violence as a response to initial violent is also a likely reason why so elections become violent, even the most righteous protests may involve violent episodes as the victims of violence also respond with violence. Others include: Prevention of election manipulations, seeking electoral advantages and finally, disrupting elections. Electoral violence as a strategy deployed by the political actors, this strategic perspective dominates existing literature on electoral violence, with scholars seeking to uncover the incentives and strategic settings that make violence an attractive tactic for political leaders.

Evolution of Electoral Violence in Nigeria

The different Electoral violence Nigeria witnessed had its various impact, vividly electoral violence was not new during or introduced in Nigeria during the 2011 and 2015 general elections, of course this concept can be traced back to 1922 when the Clifford constitution was introduced. Of course the Clifford constitution came with the opinion of electoral principle which created the avenue for voting in Lagos and Calabar and also paving way for politicking in the Nigerian polity. According to Nwolise (2007) he was of the opinion that from the 1959 general elections that ushered in the independence of 1960, the state began to experience a high level of electoral violence varying from all spheres including physical, structural, and psychological violence. Also, Ugoh (2004), most of the political parties at that time lacked an ideological base and thus party membership, affiliations, and formations were all based on ethnic or regional sentiments. Electoral violence during the 1959 elections was on a low scale and this was a result of the presence of the colonial masters who were as at that time present to monitor the electoral event. (US) In 1964, another round of general elections was first conducted by the elite of the Nigerian state after the independence. Before the elections, the contested results of the national census and intense political campaigns by the political parties had increased the tempo of the political stake and this affected the outcome of the elections which was severely marred by unethical practices. There was a high level of violence such as maiming, kidnapping, arson, and murder. The electoral violence reached a climax by 1965-1966 during the Western Regional Elections which emanated from the tense electoral battle between the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) and the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) for the control of the government of the Western Region. There was a very high level of rigging and physical violence associated with that election and this was what made the Eastern part of the state boycott the elections. On the 11th of October, 1965, the Western House of Assembly ended in chaos, extreme violence, and disorder due to widespread and high levels of rigging.

The 2011 elections were described as a do-or-die affair. Violence erupted in the northern states of Nigeria such as Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, Bauchi, etc. there was a high degree of rigging in the north because to win the presidential polls in Nigeria the 19 northern states and the states of

the southwest must be captured. This led to the imposition of a dusk-to-dawn curfew in most northern states. At the 2015 general elections, violence was recorded though it was mostly exhibited in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria in states like Rivers and Akwa Ibom. The ruling party the PDP and its agents were accused of deploying all means necessary including barbaric methods to clinch victory at the polls. In Akwa Ibom state before the elections, candidates were even murdered by unknown gunmen and in some cases maimed. There has been a barrage of accusations and counter-accusations by the All Progressives Congress claiming that the People's Democratic Party (PDP) used its hoodlums, security agencies, and its thugs to truncate the elections in their favor. The opposition parties in the state claimed that there was no election held in that state and that the PDP rigged the elections.

Causes of Electoral Violence

The fact that political actors or politicians do not accept defeat makes them selfish and this will in turn affect their behavior towards electoral process (political behavior) lack of love for the nation, godfatherism, lack of stiff punishment for offenders before doing and after election are all causes of electoral malpractice by so doing, interference in the electoral process will be inevitable. Other causes of electoral violence include, bribery and corruption, influence of party in power, late arrival of materials at voting centers, crave for power, poverty and lack of political education. Election should not be a do or die or kill affairs, it should be void of violence or malpractice at all cost.

Analysis of the 2011 and 2015 General Elections

Democratic governance is a desire for many as it is proclaimed globally to be the form of governance that encourages freedom. Past elections in Nigeria, with the exception of 2015 based on local and international observer reports, have not been credible due to series of electoral rigging and manipulations, ballot box stuffing and snatching, violence and so on. The exception, that is 2015 elections, according to credible local and international observers, was said to have experienced moderately small violence or voter fraud as against the previous elections that have been conducted. Nigeria's 2011 elections were the most violent yet claiming 800 lives in three days. Breaking the cycle of violence includes ending impunity for political violence, cultivating local peace building initiatives, and strengthening local democratic institutions. The exception, that is 2015 elections, according to credible local and international observers, was said to have experienced moderately small violence or voter fraud as against the previous elections that have been conducted. Also, 2015 election was an exercise that demonstrated that elections must not and does not have to be a do-or-die issue between and among individuals and political parties. The 2019 election, on the other hand, was filled with high rate of tension, intense campaign, violence, threats and it demonstrated that elections must be a do-or-die issue as there was the desire to win at all cost. Since the establishment of the Commission, six (6), the 2015 elections were an exercise that demonstrated that elections must not and does not have to be a do-or-die issue. It was said to have showed the dominance of the significance of the people above a section in the country. Furthermore, regardless of the intensity of contest between the two main political parties in 2015 (PDP and APC), there was a spirit of collaboration that existed in their activities before and after the election.

2011 Nigerian General Elections

Nigeria's 2011 elections were the most violent yet claiming 800 lives in three days. Breaking the cycle of violence includes ending impunity for political violence, cultivating local peace building initiatives, and strengthening local democratic institutions. The deadly election-related and communal violence in northern Nigeria following the April 2011 presidential voting left more than 800 people dead, Human Rights Watch said today. The victims were killed in three days of rioting in 12 northern states. The violence began with widespread protests by supporters of the main opposition candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, a northern Muslim from the Congress for Progressive Change, following the re-election of incumbent Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian from the Niger Delta in the south, who was the candidate for the ruling People's Democratic Party. The protests degenerated into violent riots or sectarian killings in the northern states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto and Zamfara. Relief officials estimate that more than 65,000 people were been displaced.

"The April elections were heralded as among the fairest in Nigeria's history, but they also were among the bloodiest," said Corinne Dufka, senior West Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. The presidential election divided the country along ethnic and religious lines. As election results trickled in on April 17, and it became clear that Buhari had lost, his supporters took to the streets of northern towns and cities to protest what they alleged to be the rigging of the results.

The protesters started burning tires, and the protests soon turned into riots. The rioting quickly degenerated into sectarian and ethnic bloodletting across the northern states. Muslim rioters targeted and killed Christians and members of ethnic groups from southern Nigeria, who were perceived to have supported the ruling party, burning their churches, shops, and homes. The rioters also attacked police stations and ruling party and electoral commission offices. In predominately Christian communities in Kaduna State, mobs of Christians retaliated by killing Muslims and burning their mosques and properties.

In the predominately Christian towns and villages of southern Kaduna State, including Zonkwa, Matsirga, and Kafanchan, sectarian clashes left more than 500 dead, according to Muslim and Christian leaders interviewed by Human Rights Watch. The vast majority of the victims in these areas were Muslim. Human Rights Watch estimates that in northern Kaduna State, at least 180 people, and possibly more, were killed in the cities of Kaduna and Zaria and their surrounding suburbs. According to media reports and journalists interviewed by Human Rights Watch, dozens of people were also killed during riots in the other northern states. Also, a lecturer at a college on the outskirts of Zaria also described an attack experienced on the college. Following the violence, a Human Rights Watch researcher drove through smoldering towns in the southern part of Katsina State, interviewed witnesses in the cities of Kaduna and Zaria in northern Kaduna State, and visited burned-out villages in southern Kaduna State, including Zonkwa, Matsirga, and Kafanchan, that resembled war zones with entire neighborhoods razed to the ground.

In many of the northern towns and cities, Christians found refuge in police stations and military barracks. In southern Kaduna State, Muslim women and children flocked to police stations for safety. The police successfully protected people in many cases, but they were largely ineffective at controlling the rioting and violence in other places, Human Rights Watch found. In several cases, witnesses told Human Rights Watch that it was often not until soldiers were deployed to affected areas that the violence was halted.

Human Rights Watch received credible reports that the police and soldiers in Kaduna, Gombe, and Bauchi states systematically beat people rounded up during or after the riots. Many of the detainees charged at the Chief Magistrate's Court in Kaduna city had fresh scars on their backs, journalists who attended the hearing told Human Rights Watch. In the town of Azare, in northern Bauchi State, witnesses told Human Rights Watch that detainees were severely beaten by soldiers and police. One of the detainees' hands was reportedly broken, while another detainee was hospitalized as a result of the beatings.

Because of the effect of the riot, Dufka was of the opinion that "The Nigerian authorities should promptly investigate these credible reports of unlawful killings and other abuses by members of the security forces," "The use of violence by rioters, mobs, and state actors alike needs to be stopped." On May 11, President Jonathan appointed a new 22-member panel to investigate the causes and extent of the election violence. The police spokesperson in Kaduna State told Human Rights Watch that more than 500 people have been arrested and charged following the recent post-election violence. But police and state prosecutors in the past have rarely followed through with criminal investigations and effective prosecutions.

In the town of Kafanchan, one of the Christian leaders lamented to Human Rights Watch that past commissions of inquiry have failed to bring the culprits to book.

2015 Nigerian General Election

General elections were held in Nigeria on 28 and 29 March 2015, the fifth quadrennial election to be held since the end of military rule in 1999. Voters elected the President of Nigeria and members to the House of Representatives and the Senate. The incumbent president Goodluck Jonathan sought his second and final term. The elections were first scheduled to be held on 14 February 2015. Thus, the electoral commission postponed it by six weeks to 28 March, mainly due to the poor distribution of Permanent Voter Cards, and also

to curb ongoing Boko Haram insurgency in certain north-eastern states. The government closed its land and sea borders from midnight on 25 March until the end of the polling date. The election was extended to 29 March due to delays and technical problems with the biometric card readers.

It was the most expensive election ever to be held on the African continent. Nigeria is the continent's most populous country, has the largest economy and is its leading oil producer. Opposition candidate Muhammadu Buhari won the presidential election by more than 2.5 million votes. Incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan conceded defeat on 31 March, before the results from all 36 states had been announced. The election marked the first time an incumbent president had lost re-election in Nigeria. The President-elect was sworn-in on 29 May 2015, marking the first time since Nigeria gained independence in 1960 that a sitting government peacefully transferred power to an elected member of the opposition. Buhari flipped many states that had voted PDP in the previous election.

Reason why elections in Nigeria can never be credible

1. No systems and institutions in place in Nigeria
2. The interest of the political class
3. Personality behavior
4. The fact that some leaders do not accept defeat
5. Dimension of poverty
6. Education/ Illiteracy
7. Insecurity

Elections in Nigerian can never be credible because of the points highlighted above, firstly, the fact that there are no working systems and institutions to regulate the electoral process in Nigeria, elections in Nigeria can never be credible, if systems and institutions can be efficient in other countries all over the world, therefore, Nigeria should not be an exception. Until systems and institutions are installed in Nigeria, there can't be a credible election in Nigeria. Secondly, the interest of the political class in Nigeria is another major reason why elections can never be free and fair, a very good example of this political class and how they control the political affairs of the state, for example, in Lagos State, the PDP candidate during the last two elections before the recent one was coming out every four years to contest with the ruling party in Lagos State, his coming was a political agenda not to allow another strong party to emerge to snatch power from the ruling party APC. In theory he was coming every four years but the PDP candidate was working for the ruling party in Lagos in disguise, he gets more contracts from the Lagos State Government than any other contractor, before he stopped coming, he was coming out every four years to deceive his followers, he was coming out as an opposing party against the ruling party in Lagos State. Recently and towards the last election, they also brought another PDP candidate which was not also a credible candidate for PDP, he too was working for the ruling party, as matter of fact he was a commissioner under Fashola's administration, he was never a credible candidate to wrestle power from the ruling class in Lagos State. Finally on this point is the Soludo's assessment of Peter Obi, the Governor of Anambra State, his diatribe against Peter Obi, the Anambra Governor who appeared to sympathize for PDP's candidate, Mr Atiku, he is apparently hoped that the PDP could reward the region's support with an "Igbo ticket" in subsequent election, he raised a dust in the political space by when he issued a lengthy statement in response to verbal attacks by supporters of the Labour Party (LP) candidate. Peter Obi. This was a political class thing.

Personality Behavior is another major reason why elections in Nigeria can never be credible, some political leaders have the tendency to initiate violent acts, a typical example was the 2011 elections, before the election during the primaries, when they were still counting the votes Buhari made this statement and he stood by it with different violent acts from his supporters, he said and I quote "I will make the country ungovernable if I didn't emerge the winner" of course that was a threat to the nation, this is one of the issues of personality behavior. Jonathan didn't loose the election to Buhari but because he knew what happened in 2011, Jonathan said while Orubebe was trying to make drama with Jega that they rigged the election, if not, why did they delay the votes in Kastina, Kano and Port Harcourt. Then Jonathan said and I quote, " the position doesn't worth the blood of Nigerians" this was because he had the

information about how the Nigerian Copers were killed as caused by Buhari, Jonathan wasn't afraid but he considered the Nigerians as a patriotic leader.

In addition, the fact that some leaders do not accept defeat, they are not ready to accept defeat, a very good example is the political leaders in Nigeria, to them politics to the is a do-or -die affair. Also, the dimension of poverty is another impediment to credible election, this is because some electorates or voters usually see election season as a money making season for them. Some of the ad-hoc staff, apart from the money they paid them for their services, some of them still have perpetual ad-hoc agenda by paying voters five thousand to vote for the candidates they are supporting, also, in the northern part of Nigeria where five thousand is given free for people to vote, of course people who couldn't afford good food will fall for the offer to get money to survive.

Education is another reason why elections can never be credible in Nigeria, John F. Kennedy said "The ignorance of one voter in a democracy impairs the security of all". Therefore. As long as we have people who cannot interrogate the manifestoes or agenda of political parties so there can never be a credible election in Nigeria.

On a final note, insecurity is another reason why elections can't be credible in Nigeria, people are afraid of intimidation so also the researcher, for example if people get to the polling unit to vote, you will see the supporters of political candidates telling electorates to vote for their candidates with proof, it is either by snapping or by other means with the show of cutlass by their side, of course that act will guarantee their security in that environment. Of course, the above reasons why elections in Nigeria cannot be credible discussed above can be put into consideration by the right authorities in order to prevent future occurrence.

Consequences of Electoral Violence in Nigeria

Basically, election violence or malpractice cannot in anyway help any country because of its negative impact. Malpractice in the electoral process will allow wrong people to be in government, apparently bad leadership is the point emphasizing here, these people may be inexperienced, corrupt and visionless. Electoral violence paints the country bad internationally, such nation is seen as a corrupt nation. Loss of lives and properties, during this act, people lost their lives, building, cars and even parts of their body to protests and riots over the outcome of the election. In addition, where election results are always being manipulated, voters may develop apathy towards voting in subsequent elections. The researcher is a very good example of someone who had developed apathy towards voting in Nigeria, except if things can be done accordingly and in order, then the researcher's interest can be revived. Political participation is very germane, the concept of political participation, which includes electoral participation, this also consist of "legal activities by private and citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and the decisions they take" (Verba et al., 1978, p. 46) In Nigeria, we can actually do better and hold value in high esteem, valueless acts should be discouraged and not celebrated, if not, we are all doing more harm to ourselves and to Nigeria as a nation. Electoral violence can lead to riots, fighting, burning of houses and destruction of properties, Nigeria has experienced all these in almost all elections conducted so far, including the general elections conducted recently in Nigeria. Another point is military intervention, a situation where electoral violence becomes the order of the day or when a country start to experience civil unrest, bad leadership and political challenges, the military may see the need to come back on the scene of Nigerian politics. Apparently, this will bring serious setback to the growth of democracy in Nigeria. It is pertinent to note that, Nigeria, under military will connote that all democratic institutions will be scrapped and military will rule by decree and not by the wish of the people.

Recommendations

Electoral violence is indeed an enemy of true democracy, any society that allows political violence to eat up the progress of it nation has done nothing but an harm to the entire development of that society, apparently, this act has the potential to paralyze the development of such society. This might be slow but the paralysis will be inform of economical, political, psychological and social manifestations. The following are the recommended to the government and all the legit bodies involved in the electoral process.

The role of the judiciary, judiciary should be independent to play the role of defender of democracy before, during and after elections. Electoral violence cases shouldn't be swept under the carpet also, people with financial power or resources should not negatively influence the process, offenders should be brought to book. Cases should be treated with urgency, impartiality and seriousness. Sacred cow shouldn't exist when judgement is to be passed.

Re-orientation of the politicians in Nigeria is very paramount, this is because politicians attitudes need to be transformed. The love for the nation should be pertinent in their hearts rather than their selfish desires for positions they could use loot the treasury. If the Nigerian politicians can exhibit a good attitude, election will not be a do-or-die affair and interference in the electoral process would be reduced.

There is also the need for proper planning, the body in charge of election (Electoral Commission) should do a proper planning of the election so that there will not be loopholes for politicians or their agents to hijack the election.

The government must ensure that the various security agents of the country are properly oriented, and they should be properly equipped and strategically positioned.

Educating the youths is very germane, courses or subjects to build in our youths positive attitude towards elections as future party leaders, electorates and candidates should be introduced.

Conclusion

Men are not inexperienced when it comes to political violence but rather an effect of his tendency of falling, his actions and decisions against the grains of his nature. Electoral violence is an enemy to a true democracy.This paper has significantly discussed evolution and reasons why election can never be credible in Nigeria, except if the points discussed above can be put into consideration, which is seen in the light of the fact that some leaders do not accept defeat, personality behavior, interest of the political class and lastly, no efficient systems and institutions in place in Nigeria. The effect electoral violence can be traced from the bad leadership, bad image internationally, loss of lives and properties and development of apathy. Electoral violence is contagious virus whose genetic transcription is difficult to comprehend. The standpoint taken in this work shows the unavoidable of violence during the 2011 and 2015 general elections in Nigeria. Electoral violence should not be a political option because of the destruction the nation tend to experience.

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2023 GENERAL ELECTIONS, POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF LAGOS STATE EXPERIENCE

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KEYWORDS
Election, General elections, Lagos state, National integration, Political violence

ABSTRACT
This paper investigated nexus between the 2023 general elections, political violence and national integration in Nigeria, focusing on Lagos State's experience. The study specifically examined the factors that promoted political violence during the 2023 general elections and its implication on national integration in Lagos State Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was adopted while self-structured questionnaire was utilised to elicit data from 215 respondents. The data were analysed with mean and standard deviation. The study discovered that several composite factors such as politics of sentiment and entitlement (Emilokan - it is my turn - mantra), excessive monetised politics, religiosity, ethnicised politics and power shift syndrome, among others, promoted the political violence witnessed during the general elections in Lagos State. Equally, the study revealed that political violence witnessed in Lagos State during the 2023 general elections further wrecked havoc on the already cracked and disunity relationship among the ethnic groupings residing in Lagos State as the elections breed sentiment, disunity, distrust and threatens friendliness, tolerance, economic activities and democracy in the state. The study concluded that political violence witnessed during the 2023 general elections distorts peaceful co-existence of the major ethnic constituents in Lagos State and further widen gap of promoting national integration in the State and Nigeria at large. It was recommended among others, that the stakes of the elections should be made less attractive so as to give room for patriotic citizens to participate in the political process and curb do-or-die elections.

Introduction

Nigeria was made up of different societies, empires, and kingdoms that were independent at the time of colonial conquest. Due to the inclusion of various ethnic groups, ethnicities, and religions as a single unit, the country became more diversified. The divide and rule colonial strategy further solidified the diversity of the ethnic nationalities and groupings that comprise the nation. Ethnic, religious, and local/geographical consciousnesses were therefore developed (Abdullahi & Usman, 2021). In order to reduce the negative effects of these distinctions in these countries and the risk of disintegration they indicate, national integration is crucial (Imhonopi & Onifade, 2013). Instead of seeing themselves as naturally belonging to an ethnic group or religion, integration encourages people to regard themselves as citizens of a nation first. These integrating measures may be social, political, economic, or cultural (Faluyi, 2022).

As a result, Nigeria's successive administrations have implemented several national integration efforts to maintain a sense of national community. These include, among other things, the adoption of the federal system of government, constitutional conferences, the creation of states, formulas for allocating tax revenues, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), the federal character principle, the quota system, the requirement that political parties have a national outlook, and the rotating presidency. These actions have not significantly improved federal stability because racial and religious tensions still exist in the nation (Falade & Falade, 2013). This is because Nigeria's federalism is highly centralised, with the presidency holding a disproportionate amount of power. As a result of political parties, ethnic groups, and religious organisations concentrating their emphasis on this office, Nigerian politics is severely polarised. Ethnic and religious groups believe that having a president who belongs to their community will help them (Faluyi, 2022).

Political violence has become entrenched in Nigerian politics ever since the country's independence as a result of this polarisation. But in Nigeria, both among the electorate and at the level of the leadership, political violence has killed the spirit of true national unity and political involvement (Okafor & Okafor, 2018). The concerns surrounding the political and electoral processes, which span from the party primaries' conduct through electioneering campaigns to the actual conduct of the elections and the announcement of election results, may be related to violence and the infringement of people's rights (Abah & Nwokwu, 2015). Political processes in Nigeria have, thus, since independence turned out to be a severe political liability, producing serious political unrest and endangering the sustainability of corporate life in Nigeria rather than serving as a means and a process of exercising legal political rights (Olowojolu et al., 2019). Therefore, in view of the foregoing background, this study examines the 2023 general elections, political violence, and national integration in Nigeria with a concise study of the Lagos State experience.

Statement of the Problem

Like other numerous nations, Nigeria has a diversified population that includes a variety of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious groupings. Whether this plurality will ultimately disintegrate through conflict or in another way depends on how it is managed. In keeping with the aforementioned, the attempt to manage state power and resource distribution has resulted in conditions of polarisation, exclusion, and winner-take-all. Some of them have led to minority agitations, civil wars, secessions, and other types of conflict like political violence in an effort to seize control of state power (Faluyi, 2022; Osaghae & Suberu, 2005).

Politicians have used paid youngsters to compel and threaten rivals before, during, or just after election periods as a result of the polarisation of Nigerian politics (Isah, 2019). This has led to political and electoral violence becoming an increasingly common party strategy. Due to political violence, voters are scared and intimidated out of choosing candidates and platforms, and men with good intentions, knowledge, and character are scared out of participating in democratic processes (Mbaveren, 2013). This, together with ethnicised political processes, increases the divide between the various ethnic groups that make up the nation. This was the case during the general elections of 2023 in Lagos State and other regions of the nation, where ethnically charged, overly commercialised, and sentimental politics orchestrated political violence in various parts of the state and threatened the nation's national integration issue. Thus, this study examines the 2023 general elections, political violence, and national integration in Nigeria, with a focus on the Lagos State experience.

Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the 2023 general elections, political violence and national integration in Nigeria, focusing on the experience of Lagos State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

i. to examine the factors that promotes political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State, Nigeria.

ii. to analyse the implication of political violence during the 2023 general elections on national integration in Lagos State Nigeria.

Research Questions

i. What are the factors that promote political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State, Nigeria?

ii. What is the effect of political violence during the 2023 general elections on national integration in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Literature Review

Concept of Election

Many scholars of all orientations have conducted extensive research on elections as a crucial component of the democratic process (Yagboyaju, 2011). Elections are the way by which the populace exercises their sovereign right to decide who will represent them in government and what the country's political, social, and other goals should be. This essentially means that democratic elections are a chance for the populace to express their sovereignty through the ballot in order to give their government legitimacy, renew it if required, or revoke the power to rule (INEC, 2011). In contemporary political systems, voting for one's favored politicians or parties in a competitive way is expressed as a popular strategy of obtaining governmental power (Uduma & Emerole, 2015).

Elections are the official procedure of choosing a candidate for public office or by voting for or against a political proposition. Making a distinction between the form and the content of elections is crucial. When voters do not have a true choice between at least two options, the election's substance is absent even while the electoral forms are present (Eulau, 2022). Elections are often described as the procedure by which the adult citizens select the person who will represent them in government (Afolabi, 2018). By voting for a candidate or political party whose platform and platform best reflect these objectives, the people can express their political and socioeconomic aspirations and choose their representatives (Ukachikara & Elechi, 2019).

The concept of election can thus be expressed by the aforementioned viewpoints on it as the method by which representatives of the people are chosen for the legislative and executive branches of government at all levels of government in the nation. Elections enable people to pick their leaders and hold them accountable for their deeds while in office.

Understanding Political Violence

Scholars from several fields of study have examined violence of various types, such as political violence, from various angles. Therefore, any threat, intimidation, or attack perpetrated with the goal to taint the electoral process is considered political violence (Nuka et al., 2015). It was also considered to include all organised actions of physical, psychological, and structural threats that were intended to intimidate, hurt, or blackmail a political stakeholder before, during, or after an election in order to decide, delay, or otherwise influence the outcome (Nwolise, 2007).

Political violence has been described as electoral-related violence, such as coercive acts, threats of physical damage, and coercive threats with the intent to disrupt or impede an electoral process. When these actions are taken, they have an impact on the electoral process either directly or indirectly. For example, they may cause voting to be disrupted or the results of the elections to be delayed or overturned (Onimisi & Omolegbe, 2019). Furthermore, political violence was conceptualised by Ekstein (cited in Omale & Meshach, 2020) as:

> The use of threat or physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system with the intent to cause injury or death to persons and damage to property and whose objectives, choice of targets, victims, surrounding circumstances,

> implementation and effects have political significance that tends to modify the behaviour of others in existing arrangement of power structure that has some consequences for the political system (p. 5).

For the purposes of this study, political violence is defined as any form of violence that is displayed before, during, or after an election. Examples of political violence include politically motivated ballot box snatching, murder, kidnapping, and armed attacks against opponents, election participants, and election officials, as well as the setting on fire of polling places, collation centers, and offices in an effort to sway the results of the election (Akinyetun et al., 2021).

Conceptualising National Integration

Different scholars and perspectives have assigned different meanings to the idea of national integration. The national question, also known as nation-building, national unity, cohesiveness, or national loyalty, entails agreement on the boundaries of the political community and the character of the political regime (Liddle, 1970, cited in Otite, 2000). Simply put, this refers to the formation of consensus among a state's constituents over the degree of unity and political system and institutions they aspire to. It is also a method of bringing a society together that tends to transform it into a peaceful metropolis, based on a hierarchy that its citizens perceive as equally peaceful (Duverger, 1976). This suggests that integration fosters oneness, which facilitates easy interaction between the participants in the given society based on some established standards of fairness (Aliyu et al., 2023).

National integration is the development of a cohesive and clear national identity and awareness in a mixed society where all citizens are given an equal opportunity to realise their full potential and members are given a sense of belonging, regardless of where they come from, which increases the likelihood of creating firmer loyalties that displace parochial loyalties to ethnic cleavages (Onyibor, 2016). People become connected via national integration, both dominant and subordinate groups developing a sense of belonging that allow them to live in peace with their basic human rights equally respected (Taylor, 2017).

National integration, which is self-imposed, enhances national unity and solidarity while minimising socio-cultural disparities or inequities. People bond emotionally and intellectually. A national identity is supreme when there is a sense of unity within variety. In Nigeria, national integration refers to the free, equitable, and balanced association of the various ethnic, racial, religious, economic, social, and political groupings on matters of national concern (Akinyetun, 2020).

In keeping with what has been said thus far and for the purposes of this study, national integration simply refers to the peaceful coexistence or cohabitation of individuals of many ethnicities within a sovereign body. It is the process of bringing together the various ethnic groups within a nation in order to foster a strong feeling of shared identity, understanding, nationalism, and patriotism for the welfare of their country.

Theoretical Framework

The Cultural Pluralism Theory (CPT) serves as the framework for the study. Cultural pluralism was first used in 1915 by Horace M. Kallen, who envisioned a nation of European multi-ethnic nations living within an American civilisation and using English as a common language with the goal of establishing a democratic federal republic that is made up of various nationalities that cooperate voluntarily under common institutions. Gunnar Myrdal, Tamotse Shibutani, Milton M. Gordon, and Robert Blanner are a few of the proponents of this approach (Pantoja et al., 1976).

Beyond socio-economic justice, cultural pluralism also addresses how various nations can live side by side in a state of mutual respect inside the same country (Pantoja et al., 1976). The fundamental tenet of the cultural pluralism hypothesis is that several nations may coexist in a multiethnic country. The cooperation between various nations would improve and bolster the sense of oneness within the country. As a result, every ethnic group has the right to take part in governing the nation without fear of intimidation, injustice, or exclusion (Abdullahi & Usman, 2021).

This theory is pertinent to this study because it describes how cultural diversity has coexisted in Nigeria despite fierce political and economic struggle, animosity, and the exclusion of some

ethnic groups by other ethnic groups. The need for access to state wealth, which provides a means for resource accumulation at the expense of the majority, is what drives the strong political struggle within the setting of Nigerian political economy (Abdullahi & Usman, 2021). Therefore, many strategies are employed to mobilise support during the process of the struggle for power. These include, among others, political/electoral violence, excessive monetalisation of politics, coupled with ethnic, religious, and regional or geopolitical considerations. However, this situation worsens ethnic tension and impedes the process of cooperation among the diverse ethnic nationalities in the country.

Nature of 2023 General Elections in Nigeria

General elections in 2023 were unlike any other elections held in Nigeria since the founding of her fourth republic. First, unlike previous presidential elections, which were primarily contested by two parties, the 2023 election was largely a three-way contest between the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), its longtime rival the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which presided over the country from 1999 to 2015, and the Labour Party, which until recently was not a significant player. Having served the maximum of two terms permitted by the constitution, President Muhammadu Buhari is ineligible to run. Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the APC, a former governor of Lagos state (1999–2007), Atiku Abubakar of the PDP, a former vice president (1999–2007), and Peter Obi of the Labour Party, a former governor of Anambra state, are the three front-runners (2006-2014). The New Nigeria People's Party's (NNPP) former Kano state governor Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, a fourth candidate, is also running but doesn't appear to represent a major national threat. However, there is a remote chance that none of the three candidates will garner the 25% of votes needed in two thirds of the states for an outright victory, which might result in the nation's first-ever run-off election (International Crisis Group, 2023).

Second, the polls included improvements in accordance with the provisions of the new election law, the Electoral Act of 2022. These include the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System, which transmits election results electronically from polling places to the INEC Result Viewing Portal and verifies voters' identities using both fingerprint and face biometrics. In theory, these instruments should assist prevent unregistered voters from casting ballots and prevent data manipulation, which was a major cause of vote rigging in previous elections, from being transferred to state collation centers and INEC headquarters in Abuja. And because of this, INEC Chairman Mahmood Yakubu declared that the 2023 elections would be the “best ever” for the nation (Omolaoye, 2022).

Young people participated more in this election than in previous ones, many of whom were first-time voters. INEC reported that 7.28 million, or 76% of the new registrants, are between the ages of 18 and 34, up from 51% in 2019. Numerous causes have contributed to the increase in youthful voters. For instance, many young people got involved in politics in October 2020, protesting against police brutality and feeling empowered to demand better government (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, 2020). Many young people (particularly in southern states) are motivated to vote against the two major parties because they believe they are mostly to blame for the nation's problems. Labour’s Obi is vowing to do just that (International Crisis Group, 2023).

Overview, Causes and Effects of Political Violence in Nigeria

In Nigeria, political violence is frequently seen. It is the intentional use of force to further particular political goals after independence and even after 1999 up till the most recent general elections in 2023; Nigeria's political and electoral experiences have been marred by political violence, leaving behind tragic memories. In actuality, the country's political climate is rife with violence. Examples include the 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019 and 2023 general elections, which were characterised by unprecedented political violence and extensive fraud. The political climate in Nigeria was severely harmed by the political unrest in 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019, and 2023, which resulted in the deaths of many people and the destruction of property worth billions of Naira (Aliyu *et al.*, 2023; Abah & Nwokwu, 2015).

Undoubtedly, the political system of the country has both internal and external contradictions that fuel political violence. A number of political crises are sparked by the political divisions within the ruling class. The

inclinations and drives for political violence become an unavoidable reality in social engineering since politics is connected to the acquisition of power and the distribution of resources, even though violence in Nigerian politics occasionally appears to be gratuitous and to have a redeeming quality (Kolade, 2007). Political violence typically has multiple causes, but the fundamental ones are largely rooted in strained historical ties and other types of divisions within the Nigerian population, which frequently translate into violence through a variety of catalysts (Omitola, 2011; Anifowose, 1982).

A culture of political violence is promoted in Nigeria by variables such as perceived political and economic marginalisation, religious divisions, boundary conflicts, marginalisation of minorities, high rates of corruption, poverty, and illiteracy, among others (Ogboji et al., 2022; Raji, 2016). Additionally, societal unrest, dispute resolution, and dissatisfaction are all risk factors for political violence in the nation. Theism's influence on Nigerian politics contributed to a further escalation of the political environment's violent culture (Omale & Meshach, 2020).

The Nigerian federation's complexity and the difficulties brought on by its operational diversities are among the reasons of political violence. The severe centralisation and concentration of much power at the federal level, which has resulted in reciprocal hostilities amongst many ethnic nations to control such power, is not unrelated to the negative tendencies of the Nigerian federation and its activities. The initial issue of structural inequalities and unequal competitive abilities for the control of national resources among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria has continued to be exacerbated by the mutual suspicions. As a result, Nigeria's federal structure has gradually been reduced to a tool for redistributing resources to satisfy the claims of various parties. However, anytime there is an election contest, the ensuing political rivalry for access to these riches frequently escalates into bloodshed, as any region that wins the election controls and has the power to transfer the pool of resources to anyone it pleases (Ogboji *et al.*, 2022; Raji, 2016).

Political violence in Nigeria is orchestrated by a lack of realistic natural identity. The nation is made up of tribal and ethnic groupings that speak 700 different languages and have populations ranging from a few thousand to millions. There are about 389 ethnic groups in Nigeria, and if one digs deeper into the country's history, they will find that the country is made up of sub-national groups with no overarching desire for integration or unification. As a result, the relationships between the various ethnic groups in the nation are hostile and filled with hatred (Otite, 2002). However, they were made clear by the sheer volume of violent clashes that were documented between 2015 and 2019 during the political process (Chukwuma et al., 2018).

Additionally, political unrest in Nigeria is sparked by high unemployment rates. In the early years of the Fourth Republic, as state firms are privatised, unemployment among displaced workers and young people without a college degree or with a full set of skills rises. Nigeria had 61 million people in the labor force in March 2003, and the country's overall unemployment rate was 10.8% (Nwokoma, 2005). Politicians benefit from the persistent lack of economic opportunities by being able to mobilise unemployed youngsters for ostentatious and selfish goals. The information at hand points to the possibility that unemployed teenagers are converted into trained militant cults and hired to intimidate, harass, and kill political opponents (Omale & Meshach, 2020).

Political violence is also sparked by the anger of the majority of exploited Nigerians who have been excluded from the power struggle due to the way political appointments are made in favor of those who are already in a position of power, leaving the vast majority in poverty (Madu, 2002). Because they believed that violence was the only option to draw attention to such economic and political marginalisation, people have used political violence as a manner of resolving disputes and expressing their anger with the administration (Raji, 2016).

Unfortunately, political violence is known to have diminished the vital unity in the strategic operational organisation and the extremely essential positive defensive group sprit (Esprit de corps) among the rank and file of the security agencies that were sent to combat electoral crimes. As many peacekeepers sent to maintain peace during political processes frequently tactically back their kits and kin in the crisis, boosting tribe allegiance far above their formal devotion to the military authorities, there are typically incidents of divided loyalty to the military authority. The sophistication and quantity of weapons and ammunition used by political thugs also indicate a plausible level of

the proliferation of light and sophisticated weapons in Nigeria, and this unsettling development raises concerns about the nation's national security. Security forces struggle to isolate and stop political violence because of the widespread and careless use of weapons, especially when that violence is committed in the name of an ethnic group (Anweting & Ogar, 2018).

Political violence instills a sickening fear in the minds of the populace and generates the sense that elections are akin to war. This casts a very negative light on Nigerian politics and the electoral process. Additionally, it contributes to the voters' growing disdain for democratic administration due to allegedly rigged elections. This could impede the emergence of a democratic culture and a sense of national identity among the populace, both of which are essential for the country's democracy and national integration to last (Njoku, 2010).

Additionally, political violence creates a climate of social unrest. This could lead to intergroup disputes that could destabilise the nation and consequently stifle democracy. Indeed, it poses a serious threat to Nigeria's democratic values and national cohesion. Political violence is encouraged by the inborn motivations of those vying for public office to profit themselves, further tearing the fabric of Nigerian unity apart (Omale & Meshach, 2020). Political unrest runs the possibility of escalating into violent and deadly inter-communal clashes, further dividing the nation and accelerating its collapse. Even while ethnic militias and misguided individuals frequently hijack such disputed elections to forward their covert purpose of planned annihilation and elimination of their perceived political rivals, political differences occasionally serve as the catalyst for such bloodshed (Ogar et al., 2018).

Methodology

This study is quantitative and evaluative. Data for the study were obtained from primary and secondary sources. Extant literature and data gathered through close-ended questionnaire were relied upon. Lagos State of Nigeria constituted the study area and the study population comprised all residents of Lagos State. The study population comprised males and females of eighteen years and above who have are constitutionally qualified to take part in the political process in the country. Survey methods were employed for data collection. Questionnaire titled Political Violence and National Integration Questionnaire (PVNIQ) designed by the researcher was the instrument used for data collection in this study. A total of 215 responses were gathered through Google survey. Quantitative method of data analysis was adopted. The quantitative data collected through PVNIQ were analysed using descriptive means and standard deviation.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data are presented using mean and standard deviation and the decision rule is that any mean score of 2.0 and above was regarded as agreed while any one below 2.0 regarded as disagreed.

Research Question I: What are the factors that promoted political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Factors that promoted Political Violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State, Nigeria

S/N	Issue Raised	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Politics of sentiment promotes political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria	215	3.31	1.005
2	Politics of entitlement (*Emilokan* - it is my turn - mantra) instigates political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria	215	3.33	0.890
3	Excessive monetised politics, religiosity and ethnicised politics enhances political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria	215	3.29	0.968

4	Power shift syndrome/rotational presidency gives rise to political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria	215	3.32	0.923
5	Landlord versus tenancy citizens' issues and entitlement (Lagos is no man's land sentiment) encourages political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria	215	3.27	0.957

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 1 presents the responses gathered on the factors that promoted political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State, Nigeria. The first item in the table has the mean of 3.31 which signifies the respondents' agreement that politics of sentiment promotes political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria. Second item in the table has the mean of 3.33 which implies the respondents' agreement that politics of entitlement (*Emilokan* - it is my turn - mantra) instigates political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria. Third item in the table has the mean of 3.29 which denotes the respondents' agreement that excessive monetised politics, religiosity and ethnicised politics enhances political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria.

Fourth item in the table has the mean of 3.32 which denotes the respondents' agreement that power shift syndrome/rotational presidency gives rise to political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria. The fifth item in the table has the mean of 3.27 which signifies the respondents' agreement that landlord versus tenancy citizens' issues and entitlement (Lagos is no man's land sentiment) encourages political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria. The higher level of closeness of the standard deviations of the five items in the table connotes that all issues raised above constituted the factors which promoted political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Research Question II: What is the effect of political violence during the 2023 general elections on national integration in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Effect of Political Violence during the 2023 General Elections on National Integration in Lagos State, Nigeria

S/N	Issues Raised	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
6	Political violence negatively affects and deteriorates the peaceful co-habitation of different tribes during the 2023 general election in Lagos State Nigeria	215	3.41	0.932
7	2023 general elections breed sentiment, disunity and violence among different tribes resident in Lagos state Nigeria	215	3.30	0.960
8	Political violence witnessed during 2023 general elections promote distrust and intolerance among ethnic groupings resident in Lagos State Nigeria	215	3.28	0.965
9	Political violence during the 2023 general elections threaten unity, friendliness, tolerance, economic activities and democracy in Lagos State Nigeria	215	3.46	0.879
10	2023 general elections promotes political violence that distorts peaceful co-existence of the major constituents of the Lagos State, thereby drifting the state into anarchy and disintegration	215	3.38	0.822

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 2 presents the responses gathered on the effect of political violence during the 2023 general elections on national integration in Lagos State, Nigeria. The first item in the table

has the mean of 3.41 which signifies the respondents' agreement that political violence negatively affects and deteriorates the peaceful co-habitation of different tribes during the 2023 general election in Lagos State Nigeria. Second item in the table has the mean of 3.30 which implies the respondents' agreement that 2023 general elections breed sentiment, disunity and violence among different tribes resident in Lagos state Nigeria. Third item in the table has the mean of 3.28 which denotes the respondents' agreement that political violence witnessed during 2023 general elections promote distrust and intolerance among ethnic groupings resident in Lagos State Nigeria.

Fourth item in the table has the mean of 3.46 which denotes the respondents' agreement that political violence during the 2023 general elections threaten unity, friendliness, tolerance, economic activities and democracy in Lagos State Nigeria. The fifth item in the table has the mean of 3.38 which signifies the respondents' agreement that 2023 general elections promotes political violence that distorts peaceful co-existence of the major constituents of Lagos State, thereby drifting the state into anarchy and disintegration. The higher level of closeness of the standard deviations of the five items in the table showcases that political violence witnessed during the 2023 general elections has negative effects on national integration in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The data obtained on the first objective of this study, which focused on the factors that promoted political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State, Nigeria revealed that several composite factors such as politics of sentiment and entitlement (*Emilokan* - it is my turn - mantra), excessive monetised politics, religiosity, ethnicised politics, power shift syndrome/ rotational presidency coupled with landlord versus tenancy citizens' issues and entitlement (Lagos is no man's land sentiment) promoted political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State Nigeria. This finding is in complement the assertions of Omale and Meshach, (2020) in their study where they asserted that high rates of corruption, poverty, illiteracy, high unemployment rates and lack of realistic natural identity trigger political violence in Nigeria.

The data obtained on the second objective of this study, which centered on the effect of political violence during the 2023 general elections on national integration in Lagos State, Nigeria revealed that series of serious magnitude of political violence witnessed in Lagos State during the 2023 general elections further wrecked havoc on the already cracked and disunity relationship among the ethnic groupings residing in Lagos State. Therefore, this further natively affected the quest national integration in country. This finding complements the assertions of Aliyu et al. (2023), Anweting and Ogar (2018) and Njoku (2010) on the effects of political violence to Nigeria's development, democracy and unity in their respective studies on political violence in the country.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper examined the 2023 general election, political violence, and national integration in Nigeria with a concise study of the Lagos State experience. It discovered that the political violence witnessed during the general elections in Lagos State was a product of several composite factors such as politics of sentiment and entitlement (*Emilokan* - it is my turn - mantra), excessive monetised politics, religiosity, ethnicised politics, power shift syndrome/ rotational presidency coupled with landlord versus tenancy citizens' issues and entitlement (Lagos is no man's land sentiment), among others. Equally, the study revealed that high magnitude of political violence witnessed in Lagos State during the 2023 general elections further wrecked havoc on the already cracked and disunity relationship among the ethnic groupings residing in Lagos State. This is due to the fact that 2023 general elections breed sentiment, disunity, violence, distrust and also threatens friendliness, tolerance, economic activities and democracy in the state. Therefore, this study concluded that the 2023 general elections witnessed high dimension of political violence that distorts peaceful co-existence of the major ethnic constituents of the Lagos State, thereby drifting the state into anarchy and further widen gap of promoting national integration in the State and Nigeria at large.

However, based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were offered:

i. The political offices through salaries and other benefits, which encourage unhealthy competition and political violence, should be reduced drastically. Also, the stakes of the elections should be made less attractive so as to give room for patriotic citizens to

participate in the political process and curb do-or-die elections.

ii. Government should give adequate attention to the contending issues surrounding the citizenship problem, indigene and settler syndrome, and federal character principle, among others, so that Nigerians will have a sense of belonging in their country.

iii. Politicians should develop an attitude that will promote national integration and patriotism before, during and after political process rather than employing divisive mechanisms to promote their interests.

iv. Government should ensure the adequate implementation of several laws like the Public Order Act, Nigeria Police Act and the Electoral Act of 2022 which contains penal sanctions for such malfeasance of political violence and also curb the impunity that emboldens perpetrators of political violence.

v. Security agencies should be well trained, professional, not sentimental or bias in their duty and adequately equipped to tackle security issues during elections in different parts of the country. This will make it easier for Nigerians to live, work or be posted to any part of the country.

vi. The Nigerian government should embark on more enlightenment programmes on unity. This should be done at all levels. The curriculum of schools should be reviewed to educate students at all levels on patriotism and inter-cultural relations.

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INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON NEWS CONSUMPTION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN ILORIN

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Social Media, Media, News Consumption, Media Literacy, Students

ABSTRACT
This study exploresthe influence of social media on news consumption patterns among undergraduates in Kwara State University, Malete, and the University of Ilorin. Employing a descriptive survey methodology, the study addressed issues regarding the extent of social media usage for news consumption, motivations for using social media for news, and factors influencing news consumption through these platforms. Existing studies have focused mainly on social media usage and its impact on political participation, socialization, and academic performance. Consequently, a gap is observed in the existing literature concerning the magnitude of social media utilization and its impact on the news consumption patterns of undergraduates in Ilorin. This research is framed within the foundational principles of the Uses and Gratifications Theory. The results elucidate the noteworthy influence of social media on the news consumption behaviors of undergraduates in the designated universities. WhatsApp and Instagram emerged as the most frequently used platforms for news consumption. Motives for using social media for news ranged from seeking relevant information to social interaction and staying updated on news. Students displayed a considerable dedication of time, with over half of respondents spending five hours or more on social media for news consumption. Factors influencing news consumption on social media encompassed digital literacy, demographics, and news credibility. This study underscores the need for media literacy programmes within educational institutions to empower students to critically evaluate news content on social media. It also suggests the importance of raising awareness about responsible social media usage. Diversification of news sources and promotion of credible news outlets can contribute to a well-rounded news consumption experience for students.

Introduction

Before the advent of social media, individuals, organizations, households, etc., depended on traditional media for news updates, breaking news, follow-up stories, etc. Hence, news consumption was basically via the traditional media (radio, television, magazine, and newspaper). According to Tayo, Adebola,&Yahya (2019), social media has also facilitated communication and connection among people in various social and educational contexts. It has created an open and global platform for interaction and collaboration. Social media has influenced undergraduates, instructors, and other academic stakeholders to engage in knowledge creation and sharing in higher education.

However, since the saturation of the world with modern technologies of communication, the channels of news dissemination and consequently, consumption have become diversified. It became more diversified with the evolution of myriads of social media platforms incorporated into those technologies. Therefore, news consumption habits of individuals, corporate organizations, and society at large drifted drastically toward the accessibility and feasibility of social media. In recent times, almost, if not all, traditional news outlets, broadcast and print inclusive, have integrated news dissemination via social media into their daily reportage. This affirms that social media influences news generation, dissemination, and consumption of both the source and receiver.

The landscape of news and information consumption has undergone a significant metamorphosis due to the influence of social media. It provides a diverse range of news sources, enables real-time updates and perspectives, and fosters social interactions and participation. Social media has become a vital part of news consumption, especially for young people who are avid users of these platforms. To this end, Urban and Bodoky (2013) submit that social media, particularly Facebook, has reshaped media consumption habits.

Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the impact of social media on the news consumption patterns and preferences of users, with a particular focus on young adults who predominantly depend on these platforms for accessing news content. Hence, the study explored how social media usage influences news consumption habits, such as the frequency, duration, sources, topics, and formats of news they consume. It also investigated their attitudes and perceptions towards news consumption on social media platforms, such as their trust, satisfaction, engagement, and critical thinking.

Statement of problem

Social media has become a ubiquitous aspect of modern communication, with profound implications for news consumption among young adults. This is very applicable to undergraduates of higher institutions in Ilorin. Nevertheless, there is a lack of comprehensive investigation into the impact of social media usage on news consumption among undergraduates in Ilorin. Previous research has predominantly focused on exploring the effects of social media usage on political participation, socialization, and academic performance. Consequently, there exists an unexplored gap in scholarly literature regarding the extent of social media utilization for news consumption and its subsequent implications among undergraduate students in Ilorin.

The focal issue investigated in this research pertains to comprehending the impact of social media utilization on the news consumption habits of undergraduates in Ilorin. This problem gains significance as underscored by Rithika and Sara (2013), given that news consumption significantly contributes to shaping public opinion and influencing decision-making, particularly among young adults. Consequently, it is crucial to scrutinize the influence of social media usage on news consumption among undergraduates in Ilorin. This examination becomes imperative for the development of strategies aimed at enhancing media literacy education and ensuring the dissemination of credible news. The core objective of this study is to delve deeper into the patterns of news consumption among undergraduates in Nigerian universities on the internet, with a predominant focus on students from Kwara State University, Malete, and the University of Ilorin

Objectives of the study

This study is grounded in the pursuit of the following research

i. To determine the degree of social media engagement among undergraduates at

KWASU and UNILORIN for news consumption.

ii. To investigate undergraduates' reasons for using social media to consume news

iii. To determine the factors influencing news consumption habits among undergraduates

iv. To examine the connection between news consumption among undergraduatesand social media.

Literature review

Conceptualizing social media

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2013), social media is a collection of web-based tools that enable the production and sharing of user-generated content while building on the theoretical and technological underpinnings of Web 2.0. This demonstrates how social media is interactive and participatory, allowing users to create and consume content simultaneously. It highlights even more how social media is user-centric and has revolutionized how people interact with one another and with information.

In a similar vein, social media was described by Boyd and Ellison (2007) as a networked communication platform where users share and access user-generated content. This emphasizes the networked communication structure of social media, which enables participants to create, share, and consume content that is generated by users. Kaplan and Haenlein's definition highlights the participatory and collaborative nature of social media platforms, where users play an active role in shaping the available content. Additionally, the definition suggests that social media platforms facilitate real-time connections and communication among users, creating a sense of community that is often absent in traditional media formats.

Moreover, social media was defined by Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre (2011) as a collection of web-based tools that facilitate the production and sharing of user-generated content. In this instance, Kietzmann et al. emphasize the value of the Internet as a tool for information sharing and the development of online communities. Qualman (2013) defines social media as a collection of online tools and platforms that people use to share media, viewpoints, experiences, insights, and other types of content. Mobile devices and software enable this exchange.

Thus, it appears from all these definitions that social media are web-based services that let people work together, connect, engage, and create communities by letting them easily access, create, co-create, modify, share, and interact with user-generated content. Furthermore, social media is a platform that depends on internet usage to generate, consume, and distribute various types of content among its users.

Conceptualizing news consumption

News consumption is conceptualized as the process by which individuals actively seek out and receive news and information through various channels. According to McCombs and Shaw (2013), it is the process by which people choose which news items to view and understand depending on their needs, interests, and preexisting beliefs. Adding credence to their submission, Lippmann (2005) suggests that news consumption is a means by which individuals construct their understanding of the world around them. In their study, Flanagin and Metzger (2000) further conceptualized news consumption as the process by which individuals acquire, attend to, and comprehend news content. Similarly, Delli & Keeter (1996) describe news consumption as a complex process that involves not only exposure to news content but also attention, comprehension, and retention.

According to Verstraete, Derek & Jane (2017), the act of disseminating news on social media has become a standard practice, embraced not only by users and readers but also by various journalistic organizations aiming to drive traffic to their websites through content sharing on platforms such as Facebook or Twitter. In sum, news consumption could be said to mean listening, reading, or watching the news or attending to news media.

To this end, Urban and Bodoky (2013) submit that social media, particularly Facebook, has reshaped media consumption habits.

Classification of social media news platforms

Categorization of news on social media platforms refers to categorizing different social

media platforms based on their features, functionality, and content. Scholars, such as McCombs, Lewis, and Molyneux (2018). Nielsen and Ganter (2018). Shahbaznez, Dolan &Rashidirad (2021), andDijck&Poell (2013) have developed various classification schemes to understand the different types of social media platforms that provide news content.

For instance, Nielsen &Ganter (2018) proposed a typology of four types of news distribution on social media; vis-à-vis: *direct*, where users access news content directly on the platform; *side-door*, where users access news content through links or referrals from other users or sources; *bridge*, where users access news content through third-party aggregators or curators; and *incidental*, where users encounter news content unintentionally or without seeking it.

Similarly, Lewis &Molyneux (2018) suggested a classification of three types of social media platforms based on their primary functions: Social Networking Sites (SNSs), such as Facebook and Twitter, that facilitate social interactions and information sharing among users; content communities, such as YouTube and Instagram, that enable users to upload and view multimedia content; and collaborative projects, such as Wikipedia and Reddit, that allow users to create and edit collective knowledge.

Additionally, Dijck & Poell (2013) developed a framework of five types of social media platforms based on their main mechanisms: connectivity platforms, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, which foster online social networks and relationships; curation platforms, like Twitter and Pinterest, let users choose and arrange content; creation platforms, such as YouTube and Flickr, that enable users to produce and distribute content; collaboration platforms, such as Wikipedia and Quora, that support collective knowledge production and problem-solving; and circulation platforms, such as Reddit and Digg, that facilitate the distribution and ranking of content.

Hence, these classifications are important for researchers, journalists, and media organizations to understand the unique characteristics and potential uses of each platform for news dissemination. Some common classifications of social media news platforms comprise social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter, and other microblogging platforms; also include social networking sites like Facebook. Each platform has its strengths and weaknesses in terms of user engagement, reach, and content types, which makes it important for media organizations to tailor their social media strategies accordingly (Kümpel et al., 2015).

More specifically, there are several scholarly classifications of social media news platforms, some of which are:

i. **Traditional social networks** (Facebook, Twitter, etc.): According to Tandoc, Lim, and Ling (2018), traditional social networks are Internet-based platforms that enable users to connect with other users and share content. These platforms have been used by news organizations to distribute news and engage with audiences.

ii. **News aggregators** (Google News, Yahoo News, etc.): According to Johnson and Kaye (2014), news aggregators are web-based services that compile and present news content from a variety of sources. These platforms allow users to access news from multiple sources in one place.

iii. **Microblogs** (Twitter, Tumblr, etc.): According to Gruzd, Jacobson & Dubois (2017, p. 29), microblogs are social media platforms that enable users to post short messages, often with links or multimedia content, these platforms have been used by journalists to report breaking news and provide real-time updates.

iv. **Online communities** (Reddit, Digg, etc.): According to Tandoc et al. (2018), online communities are web-based platforms where users can discuss and share content on specific topics. These platforms have been used by news organizations to source stories and engage with niche audiences. Live Streaming Platforms (Periscope, Facebook Live, etc.): According to Hermida et al. (2017, p. 388), live streaming platforms are social media platforms that allow users to broadcast live video content. These platforms have been used by news organizations to provide live coverage of events and engage with audiences in real time.

Theoretical framework

This study's theoretical foundation is the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT). According to the UGT, people actively select and use media to satisfy their needs and desires. The theory holds that people actively choose and use media to fulfill particular needs rather than being passive recipients of media messages (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006).It was in their 1974 book "Uses and Gratifications Research" that Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch first put forth this theory. According to the authors, audiences actively seek out media to fulfill particular needs and desires and are goal-directed in their media consumption.A communication theory called the Uses and Gratifications Theory describes how audiences actively select and use media to satisfy their needs and desires. The UGT shows that people use media to satisfy their psychological, social, and cultural needs, according to Katz et al. (1974, p. 20). Information seeking, entertainment, social interaction, personal identity, and surveillance are a few examples of these needs.

To investigate why undergraduates in Ilorin use social media to obtain news and information, this study used the UGT. In particular, the study looked into the satisfaction undergraduates sought from using social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to get news. According to Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), these gratifications could include surveillance, social interaction, entertainment, and information seeking.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory suggests that undergraduates in Ilorin are using social media as a source of news because it satisfies their information needs, which is relevant to the impact of social media on news consumption among students. Undergraduates can quickly and easily access news and information on social media, which helps them stay informed about current events. Undergraduates can interact with news content in a way that fulfills their needs for social interaction and personal identity because social media offers a degree of interactivity and social connection that traditional news sources might not be able to match.

Empirical review

i. Social media usage

The study "The Effects of News Consumption ViaSocial Media and News Information Overload on Perceptions of Journalistic Norms and Practices" by Nardis, Patsiaouras&Terzis (2020), investigated how people's perceptions of journalistic norms and practices are affected by social media consumption of news and news information overload. 404 Greek citizens between the ages of 18 and 60 were given an online survey as part of the research's quantitative research design, which collected data.

The study's conclusions showed that consuming news on social media has a negative impact on individuals' perceptions of journalistic norms and practices. Specifically, social media users were found to be less likely to trust journalists and to perceive their reporting as accurate and unbiased, compared to non-social media users. Additionally, the study found that news information overload, which is the excessive exposure to news content, further exacerbates negative perceptions of journalistic norms and practices among social media news consumers.

Another study by Nannim, Njoku, Onuoha, Orji, &Njoku on"Undergraduates' use of social media in school: A need for regulatory policies in Nigerian universities" sought to explore the usage of social media by undergraduate students in Nigerian universities, to draw attention to the necessity of regulatory guidelines governing social media use in these establishments. 400 undergraduate students from three Nigerian universities each received a self-administered questionnaire as part of the study, which used a quantitative research design. The study's conclusions demonstrated the popularity of social media among college students, with Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp being the most widely used platforms. Given that most respondents admitted to spending more time on social media than on their studies, the study also discovered a significant negative correlation between social media usage and academic performance. The study also showed that rather than using social media for academic purposes, the majority of undergraduates used it for socializing and non-academic activities.

News consumption

Olasinde& Emmanuel (2014) examined the effects of social media use on undergraduate students in Nigeria. Through focus groups and surveys, the study used both quantitative and

qualitative methods. The findings of the study revealed that young individuals in Nigeria often gravitate towards widely accessed social media platforms, akin to their global counterparts, utilizing these platforms for the dissemination of news, sharing opinions, fostering business growth, and contributing to cultural production.The research findings indicated that Nigerian youths' choice of social media platforms aligns with global trends, revealing no notable distinctions. These platforms play pivotal roles as conduits for sharing information, expressing opinions, entertainment, fostering business growth, and contributing to cultural productions

Similar to this, Adekannbi&Agbolabori (2018) carried out a study to look at how undergraduate students in Nigerian public universities consume news. They focused on the frequency and pattern of news consumption on the Internet, as well as the role of the Internet in news consumption. The study adopted a survey research design, obtaining data from a sample of 500 undergraduates across four public universities in Nigeria. Findings indicated that 85.6% of the participants utilized the Internet for news consumption, with social media platforms emerging as the leading sources (63.4%), followed by news websites (57.4%) and blogs (52.8%). The study further revealed that factors such as ease of access, timeliness, and relevance of news content influenced the choice of news sources among the respondents, and the majority of them (58.6%) preferred to consume local news.

ii. Influence of social media usage

The objective of the study "Undergraduates' use of social media in school: A need for regulatory policies in Nigerian universities" by Nannim, Njoku, Onuoha, Orji, and Njoku (2023) was to examine how undergraduates in Nigerian universities use social media and to draw attention to the need for regulations to govern this use. The research employed a quantitative research design, utilizing a self-administered questionnaire distributed to 400 undergraduates across three universities in Nigeria to collect data. The results indicated the widespread popularity of social media platforms among the participants, with Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram emerging as the most frequently utilized platforms. The study also found that social media use had a significant negative impact on academic performance, as a majority of the respondents reported spending more time on social media than on their studies. The study also showed that rather than using social media for academic purposes, the majority of undergraduates used it for socializing and non-academic activities.

From the foregoing, it is hypothesized that a correlation exists between the use of social media and news consumption among undergraduate students

Research methodology

The descriptive survey method was used to conduct the research. Glasgow (2005) states that the survey method is used to describe what exists, in its quantity and context, as well as to find answers to questions, solve problems that have been noticed, evaluate needs and set goals, ascertain whether or not specific objectives have been met, set precedent for future comparisons, and analyze trends. Undergraduates are the study's primary focus because they represent a distinct demographic with particular traits and habits regarding the use of social media and news consumption. Therefore, the population of this study was undergraduates at Kwara State University and the University of Ilorin, regardless of their gender, age, department, or faculty. The study gathered information from a representative sample of the population to make inferences about the larger population of undergraduates in Ilorin.

The study focused on students at Kwara State University with over 25,000 population comprising 20,000 undergraduates and 2,500 postgraduates (www.KWASU.edu.ng), while the University of Ilorin has over 53,000 students, comprising 48,000 undergraduates and 5,000 postgraduates across 15 faculties (www.timeshighereducation.com).

A research project's sample size must be determined to guarantee that the study is representative of the broader population. As a result, 382 participants were selected through purposive sampling from the total population using the sample size determination calculations provided by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). For example, UNILORIN has 48,000 undergraduates spread across 15 faculties, whereas KWASU has eight faculties and 20,000 undergraduates. The sample size determination suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was used for this investigation. Because of this, the sample size was 382 and consisted of 270 respondents from the University of Ilorin and 112 respondents from KWASU. However, the sample size was

increased to 400 (275 respondents from the University of Ilorin and 125 respondents from KWASU) to obtain trustworthy data.

A structured questionnaire was the data collection tool utilized in this investigation. The purpose of the survey was to learn more about how Ilorin undergraduates' news consumption habits are influenced by their usage of social media. There were two sections on the questionnaire. While section B concentrated on the research questions to comprehend the impact of social media on news consumption among undergraduates at KWASU and UNILORIN, section A collected demographic data from the respondents.

To determine the validity and reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was pretested on a sample of 40 (10% of the entire population) students from the KwaraState Polytechnic, Ilorin, who are not part of the main study population. In light of the pretest findings, modifications were implemented to the questionnaire to enhance its clarity and validity.

Data Presentation, Analysis, And Discussion

The statistical package for social sciences, or SPSS, was used for the analysis, and the results are shown below.

Table 1: Demographic distribution of respondents

		F	%
Gender	Male	211	52.75
	Female	188	47
	Total	**399**	**99.75**
Age range	16-20	72	18.0
	21-25	72	18.0
	26-30	164	41
	31 – above	91	22.75
	Total	**399**	**99.75**
Institution	KWASU	124	31
	UNILORIN	275	68.75
	Total	**399**	**99.75**

Fieldwork, 2023

Table 1 insight into the respondents' demographic distribution. Notably, 52.75% of respondents were men and 47% were women. Males made up the majority of respondents. In terms of age, the data reveals that a significant proportion, 41%, falls within the age range of 26-30. Additionally, 68.75% of respondents were from the University of Ilorin, with the remaining 31% from Kwara State University.

Table 2: Responses on the motive for using social media for news consumption

Motives	Level of Agreement							
	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	Overall %
Relevant information	6.0	0	10.0	32.0	51.9	4.00	.88	80
Social interaction	1.0	2.0	10.0	40.1	46.9	4.08	.69	81.6
News on politics	3.0	7.0	34.0	28.0	27.8	3.73	1.09	74.6
Education	3.0	3.0	13.0	38.1	42.9	3.85	.74	77
Entertainment	3.0	1.0	19.0	37.1	39.8	4.40	.74	88
TOTAL						**4.00**	**.83**	**80**

*Scale:strongly disagree (1-20%), 2 disagree (21-40%), 3 is neutral (41-60%), 4 is agree (61-80%), and 5 is strongly agree (81-100%).

From Table 2, the respondents strongly agreed (80.0%) that they use social media for different reasons. Specifically, the respondents agreed to use social media to seek relevant information (80%), they strongly agreed to use social media for social interaction (81.6%), and for entertainment (88%). However, 74.6% of the respondents said they use social media for political news, and 77% said they use it for education.

Results from Table 2 imply that social media is a veritable tool for seeking relevant information among undergraduates. This explains the gratifications sought by students according to the Use and Gratification Theory. These gratifications, according to Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) may include entertainment, social interaction, information seeking, and surveillance.

Table 3: Responses for time spent on social media for news consumption

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	less than an hour	16	4.0
	1-2hrs	32	8.0
	3-4hrs	145	36.25
	5 and above	206	51.5
	Total	**399**	**99.75**

Fieldwork, 2023

Table 3 illustrates that the majority of respondents (51.5%) spent five hours or more on social media for news consumption, emphasizing a considerable interest in obtaining news through these platforms. This aligns with the conclusions drawn by Nannim, Njoku, Onuoha & Njoku (2023), indicating that undergraduates allocate a greater amount of time to social media activities compared to their academic studies.

Table 4: Factors affecting social media usage for news consumption

Factors affecting social media usage for news	Level of Agreement							
	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	Overall %
Demography (age, gender, education, and income)	1.0	4.0	14.0	44.1	36.8	3.90	.98	78
Digital literacy	0	2.0	12.0	39.8	46.1	3.83	.75	76.6
News credibility	3.0	4.0	16.8	42.1	32.0	4.00	.72	80
Localization of news	32.0	37.0	19.7	11.0	0	4.03	73	80.6
TOTAL						**3.15**	**3.18**	**63**

*Scale:strongly disagree (1-20%), 2 disagree (21-40%), 3 is neutral (41-60%), 4 is agree (61-80%), and 5 is strongly agree (81-100%).

Generally, inTable 4, the respondents strongly agreed (80.0%) that different factors influence social media usage for news consumption among undergraduates. Particularly, the respondents agreed that both demography (age, gender, education, and income) (78%) and digital literacy (76.6%) affect social media usage for news consumption. They likewise agreed that both news credibility (80%), and localization of news (80.6%) are also factors influencing news consumption on social media.

This synchronizes with the findings of a study by Adekannbi&Agbolabori (2018)which highlight the need for news organizations to prioritize the relevance, timeliness, credibility, and ease of access of their online news content to attract

and retain the attention of undergraduates as a key audience demographic.

Table 5: Hypothesis (social media * news consumption crosstabulation)

			News consumption		Total	Df.	Cal. X^2 Value	Cal. Sig. (two-sided)	Remark
			AVERAGE	HIGH					
Social media	LOW	Count	9	30	39	1	.298	.585	Accepted
		Expected	8.8	30.2	39.0				
	HIGH	Count	0	1	1				
		Expected	.2	.8	1.0				
Total		**Count**	**9**	**31**	**40**				
		Expected	9.0	31.0	40.0				

Critical level of sig. = 0.05

Table 5 revealed that the calculated X^2- value is .298 with a calculated significance of .585 calculated at a critical alpha significance level at 0.05 level. Given that the computed significance (.585) exceeds the critical alpha threshold of significance (0.05), the hypothesis is deemed to be accepted, indicating a noteworthy correlation between social media usage and news consumption.

Discussion of findings

Findings from this study offer valuable insights into the news consumption habits of undergraduates at Kwara State University, Malete, and the University of Ilorin. It is guided by the objectives of the study. The high response rate demonstrates the willingness of students to engage with the survey, underscoring the relevance of the study's subject matter.

In response to the first objective, it is clear that the respondents exhibit a moderate preference for social media as a platform for consuming news.WhatsApp emerged as the most popular platform for news consumption, suggesting that it is the primary choice for undergraduates when seeking news. The implication of this is that undergraduates often consume news items on social media and this aligns with the findings of Fadip et al (2013) which showed that social media platforms are popular among undergraduates, with Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram being the most commonly used platforms. Their study further revealed that most undergraduates used social media to socialize and engage in non-academic activities, rather than for educational purposes. Similarly, the findings of this study corroborate those of Hadi et al (2019) which showed that WhatsApp and Facebook, were widely used by undergraduates in seeking and sharing information.

The motives behind using social media for news consumption varied, with "Relevant information" and "Social interaction" being the most significant factors. This indicates that students value the relevancy of information and the social aspect of news consumption on these platforms. Also, the ability to interact with news items on social media platforms (like, share, comment, and tag), makes it a veritable channel for news consumption among undergraduates. Once more, Hadi et al. (2019) contend that the undergraduates' use of social media significantly influenced their information-seeking behavior because it allowed them to communicate with their peers and obtain information quickly. However, their study's conclusions showed that undergraduates' use of social media had some unfavorable effects on their information-seeking behavior, such as the spread of false information and an excessive reliance on it.

In addition, answers to the second objective showed that a significant proportion of participants used social media for news consumption for at least five hours a day, underscoring the importance of these platforms in their daily lives. Similar findings were made by

Fadip et al. (2013), who discovered that social media use significantly harmed academic performance because most respondents said they spent more time on social media than on their studies. This is because most undergraduates use social media for non-academic activities and socializing, not for academic purposes, the study claims.

Regarding the third goal, it is noted that undergraduate students' use of social media and their news consumption are related.It is clear that the respondents frequently use a variety of social media platforms to consume news, and they do so for a variety of purposes. In the same vein, Mofoluke and Eunice's (2018) research revealed that a sizable segment of Nigerian youth—67.2%—thought of social media as a reliable source of news. The study also discovered that social media credibility was significantly predicted by the frequency of social media use, platform trust, and content relevance. Additionally, the study found that a significant percentage of participants (73.2%) primarily sourced their news from social media.

The last objectiveestablished the various factors influencing news consumption on social media including digital literacy and news credibility. These findings emphasize the importance of media literacy programmes and credible news sources in ensuring that students make informed and responsible choices in their news consumption. This finding is in tandem with the findings of Adekannbi&Agbolabori (2018) which showed that factors such as ease of access, timeliness, and relevance of news content influence the choice of news sources among the majority of the respondents.

In conclusion, the results provide important insights into how much undergraduates use social media for news consumption, why they do so, how much time they spend doing it, and what influences their news consumption habits. These results advance our knowledge of how social media affects undergraduate news consumption in the research field. By using these findings, policymakers and educational institutions can create interventions that promote responsible and knowledgeable news consumption on social media platforms.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide insight into how undergraduate students at Kwara State University, Malete, and the University of Ilorin consume news about their use of social media. The goal of the study was to address several important research questions, and the conclusions from the data analysis offer insightful information about the preferences and habits of these undergraduates when it comes to news consumption.

First of all, undergraduates at the chosen universities' news consumption habits are greatly influenced by social media. The vast majority of participants stated that they obtain news content via social media platforms. The most popular apps for consuming news were found to be Instagram and WhatsApp, highlighting the significance of these platforms as information sources.

The motivations driving undergraduates to use social media for news consumption are diverse. Respondents cited reasons such as seeking relevant information, social interaction, staying updated on news, and engagement with news content. These motives demonstrate the diversity of social media news consumption and the platform's capacity to meet a range of information needs.

Additionally, the study found that students use social media extensively for news consumption, with a notable percentage devoting five hours or more to this activity. This research emphasizes how important social media is to undergraduates' daily lives as a source of news and information.

Factors influencing news consumption on social media include digital literacy, demographics (including age, gender, education, and income), and news credibility. These factors shape the way students engage with news content on social media and impact their information-seeking behaviours.

Although this study offers insightful information about how undergraduates at Kwara State University and the University of Ilorin consume news, it is important to take these findings' wider implications into account. Politicians, educators, and media companies can all benefit from knowing how social media affects this demographic's news consumption as it provides information about the changing media landscape and the function of digital platforms in news distribution. They must therefore make use of these social media channels.

This study also underscores the need for media literacy education to empower undergraduates to critically evaluate news content on social media. Also, the findings emphasize the importance of tailored news content and credible sources in enhancing the news consumption experience for this demographic.

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CHALLENGES OF LOCALIZATION OF THE POLICY FRAMEWORK AND NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

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Violence, Violent Extremism, Policy Framework, Action Plan

ABSTRACT
The study examines the challenges of localization of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state. The paper noted that violent extremism is fundamentally, repudiations of democratic values of tolerance, respect, inclusion and diversity. In Nigeria, threats from violent extremism are targeted against individuals, groups and the state. These threats have gravely undermined economic development, social progress, political stability, national and human security, and peaceful coexistence in the country. The theoretical framework for this study is the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) Evaluation Model. Questionnaires and in-depth interview were used to collect the data for this study. Simple descriptive statistics presented in tables using frequency and percentages were used to analyse the quantitative data collected in the study. While, in-depth interview summaries were used to analyse the qualitative data. The Findings show that: the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism is a product that went through several processes and stakeholders. But essentially, it contains a strategic vision Nigeria holds for preventing violent extremism, which is a product of research, global practices and knowledge of the root causes of violent extremism. There is low awareness of the level of localization and implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state. The challenges of the localizing and implementing the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state are largely due to lack of coordination, lack of awareness, lack of effectiveness, trust gap between government and citizens. The paper recommended that: effective national coordination is urgently needed to localize the policy at the grassroots. While, different civil society organizations should not work at cross-purposes but be coordinated in their activities toward preventing violent extremism in Plateau State.

Introduction

Violent extremism is fundamentally, repudiations of democratic values of tolerance, respect, inclusion and diversity in any nation (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), 2019). In this twenty first century, Nigeria is currently facing serious threats from violent extremism targeted against individuals, groups and the state. These threats have gravely undermined economic development, social progress, political stability, national and human security, and peaceful coexistence in the country. The activities of violent extremist individuals and groups have claimed thousands of innocent lives, destroyed private properties and public facilities worth billions of Naira, and forced millions of citizens to flee their homes and communities, thereby created a huge population of internally displaced persons and refugees (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2017). Following the threats posed by violent extremism and the continuous ranking of Nigeria as number 3 after Afghanistan and Iraq in the Global Terrorism Index (Olalekan, 2021). The United Nations, therefore, directed countries to develop "Plan of Action" in 2015 and, the government of Nigeria introduced the national framework and national action plan in 2017 and embarked on its adaptation to cater for the needs of its people to prevent and counter violent extremism as well as build safer and more resilient communities in Nigeria.

Plateau state, like many other states in Nigeria, has experienced activities of violent extremists that have become alarmingly widespread, often in partnership with organized crime. According to Alexandre et al (2022) that organized crime have been identified as among a number of factors contributing to Nigeria's increasing instability, the nature of the role played by crime in shaping Nigeria's security situation is often oversimplified. These organized crimes include rural banditry and cattle-rustling, herders-farmers clashes, kidnapping for ransom, and ethno-religious violent clashes. To Olalekan (2021) the most serious threat of violent extremism has come from the insurgency of the proscribed Boko Haram terrorists, Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Ansaru which have ravaged so many communities in the north-eastern parts of Nigeria, and north central as well and in particular Plateau state.

Higazi (2011) narrated that Plateau state is the main site of ethnic and religious violence in northern Nigeria. The past decade has seen recurrent crises across the state, in urban and rural areas. Thousands of lives have been lost in these violent conflicts, there has been extensive damage to property, and the development prospects of the state have been set back. The violence has mainly been along religious lines, between Muslims and Christians, but ethnicity also has a central role in the conflicts and there are considerable political interests at stake. Episodes of mass killing and destruction have occurred in Jos in 2001, 2002, 2008 and 2010. The violence has also affected other parts of the high Plateau, in rural areas outside of Jos – particularly in 2001-2002 and 2010, when hundreds of people were killed in Yelwa-Shendam, in villages, in their fields, or while tending cattle. There have been massacres in the old mining settlements on the Plateau, notably in 2001 and 2010. In rural areas there has also been widespread violence between Berom farmers and Fulani pastoralists (Higazi, 2011). Today, the violence has shifted to Mangu, Bokkos and Barkin Ladi local government areas where citizens are been killed, communities destroyed and created a huge number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The dynamic nature of this violence has seen traditional rulers, high profile politicians and citizens being kidnapped and ransom paid before they are being released and in some cases killed.

The activities of violent extremists' groups in Plateau state has been in the increase in recent times and the kinetic efforts by the military-security operatives has not been able to quell the crises. Communities are being razed down as a result of the activities of these violent extremists and people are continually been displaced. Farming activities are affected as well because farmers cannot access their farms. However, contrary to expectation, the nation is still grappling with the menace six years after the policy localization. Instead of declining, violent extremism influence and emerged forms have extended to almost all parts of the country (Olalekan, 2021).

Against this backdrop, the concern of this research is to examine the challenges of the localization of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state.

Statement of the Problem

Undermining the common humanity, violent extremism is inherently global. It is driven by a

mixture of personal, societal and ideational factors whose manifestations vary from one individual to the next. Violent extremism has affected different societies during different eras and in different regions of the world. Violent extremism and activities of violent extremists in Plateau state has been on the increase over the years. Since the return to civilian rule in 1999, the intensity and virulence of the conflict within the Nigerian landscape has regularly punctuated attempts to engender democracy and the rule of law. Plateau state and particularly the capital Jos represent one of the most volatile of these violent theatres of conflict. Since September 2001, Jos and its environs have witnessed incessant episodes of sectarian violence. In November 2008, there was renewed violence in Jos during local government elections in which at least 800 people were killed. The conflict was not resolved and more violence broke out in January 2010, the worst affected areas are in the rural areas on the edge of Jos (Jimam, 2015). Today, most of the local government areas in the state are experiencing serious threats from activities of violent extremists especially Mangu, Bokkos and Barkin Ladi local government areas at this time.

The severity of the violence in 2010 in the rural hinterland of Jos, in places like Kuru and Dogo Nahawa where people were killed and the gory pictures shown on the pages of newspapers left many thinking whether the perpetrators don't fear God. This act requires serious investigations in which those responsible are held to account, but very little has been achieved. According to Plateau State Peace Building Agency (PPBA) (2018) that between 2001 and 2015 the number of people killed in ethno-religious crisis and other forms of armed attacks in Plateau state is estimated to be slightly over 7,000. Many people lost their homes and livelihoods and several communities were uprooted as a result of violent attacks in different communities across the state. Although, there have been military-security operatives operations in Plateau state like Operation Safe Haven to address the incessant activities of violent extremists, but these operations have yet to have significant effect on preventing violent extremism in communities.

However, the negative effect of this violent extremism has made Nigerian government to seek for solution on how to combat the menace through the policy framework and national action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism. The plan of action calls for a comprehensive approach encompassing not only essential security-based counter-terrorism measures but also systematic preventive steps to address the underlying conditions that drive individuals to radicalize and join violent extremist groups (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2017).

Research Objective

The central objective of this paper was to discuss the challenges of the localization of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state. In order to achieve this objective, the following specific objectives would be pursued. They are:

i. To determine the localization and implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state.

ii. To determine the challenges of the localization and implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state.

Conceptual Clarification

Policy Framework and Action Plan

The policy framework and national action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism in Nigeria was designed to close the gap of peace, security and development in Nigeria. The Policy Framework is a complementary, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach for addressing threats posed by violent extremist groups. Through existing and new platforms, the framework seeks to build capacity, improve coordination, strengthen the justice system and by integrating strategic communication, provide alternative narratives to violent extremism (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2017).

According to Khalid (2022) national action plans provide a good basis for policy interventions and the UN Secretary-General's 2016 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism recommends that each Member State should consider developing a national plan of action to prevent violent extremism which sets national priorities for addressing the local drivers of violent extremism. He further stated

that by the end of 2019, more than a dozen governments had published national action plans including Albania, Burkina Faso, Denmark, Finland, France, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali, Montenegro, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Somalia and Switzerland.

The National Security Adviser Babagana Mungonu as cited in Federal Government of Nigeria (2017) stated that the policy framework will strengthen ongoing efforts in the handling of persons associated with violent extremism, collaborate with Civil Society in community engagement and resilience building, strategic communication activities and effective prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremist offenders. It will also ensure that preventing and countering violent extremism is institutionalized and mainstreamed into mandates of Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Governments, including at States and Local levels. The main goal is to partner for safer and resilient communities that are less vulnerable to violent extremism and that can recover from the consequence of violence.

Violence

The term "violence" according to Theophilus, Adesoji and Andrew (2021) is defined as political, ethnic or religious expression by organized groups or radicalized individuals against targets of interest. Violent groups or initiatives can be local, nationalistic, or transnational in nature.

Violence is a way of expressing disaffection with what political systems and institutions have failed to address. This could include lack of space for equal and representative participation, lack of social services, government repression, parallel external interests, economic marginalization, and other unmet needs. Most individuals or groups involved in violence lack a platform in society or have been suppressed over time and decide to do something abnormal to get attention. The actions of violent groups and individuals always go beyond acceptable legal and societal laws and norms. Violent groups and individuals use indiscriminate and disproportionate force against targets which creates insecurity and fear. Furthermore, in considering the role of external interests in beginning and sustaining violence, violence is defined as the invasion of territories by foreigners and all forms of mistreatment of their people: physical violence, rape, forced labor, deportations, denial of medical care, torture and killing as a warning to captives who refuse to comply. In many cases, violence becomes business instead of a security challenge as it creates markets for arms through cash payments and exchange for commodities such as oil, gas, gold and diamonds (Theophilus, Adesoji & Andrew, 2021).

Violent Extremism

The term violent extremism is a matter of perception. An individual's perception of injustice leads them down the path towards violence and in Plateau state that perception is often relative deprivation the belief that you are not getting what you deserve and it is also a generational event. Its drivers are in many ways unique to youth of a particular age, suffering from a crisis of identity but maintaining a powerful desire to reshape the world. While structural changes to the economy and local governance may make it more inclusive, radicalization will likely not cease until individual motivations are addressed (Nizar, Roland & Nabil, 2019). Violent extremism continues to pose fundamental threats to national security and violent extremism presents a critical threat (Sabastien & David, 2019).

The term "violent extremism" is rarely defined but generally refers to acts of violence that are justified by or associated with an extremist religious, social, or political ideology. The concept of violent extremism is broader and more expansive than terrorism, because it accommodates any kind of violence, as long as its motivation is deemed extremist (OSCE, 2021). According to William, Stijn and Hans (2021) the concept of "violent extremism" tends toward a more behavioral than idealistic definition, in that it places focus on violence as a means, rather than the holding of extreme views themselves in other words, it would be possible to hold "extreme views" in that they are in opposition to societal values, but not to be a "violent extremist". Is an individual's or group's violent tendency because of sticking to an unconventional world view or radical ideology. Elibiary (2015) provides four (4) different manifestations of violent extremism: (1) violent extremism is marked by a considerable departure from the usual or traditional; (2) it involves tending or disposed to make extreme changes in existing views, habits, conditions, or

institutions; (3) of, relating to, or constituting a political group associated with views, practices, and policies of extreme change; and (4) advocating extreme measures to retain or restore an apolitical state of affairs (the radical right).

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopted the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) Evaluation Model. This model was designed by Stufflebeam (2003). The Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) Evaluation Model is a framework for guiding evaluations of programmes (policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism), projects, personnel, products, institutions, and evaluation systems. It is designed to assist administrators in making informed decisions. CIPP is a popular evaluation approach in educational settings. The approach was developed in the late 1960s which it seeks to improve and achieve accountability in programmes through a "learning-by-doing" approach. Its core concepts are context, input, process, and product evaluation, with the intention of not to prove, but rather improve, the programme itself. An evaluation following the CIPP model may include a context, input, process, or product evaluation, or a combination of these elements. In the model, very useful approach to educational evaluation is the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) approach. Stufflebeam recognized the shortcomings of available evaluation approaches and so worked to expand and systemize thinking about administrative polices of the decision making (Stufflebeam, 2003).

CIPP appears as if the approach was only directed by 'experts' who may be regarded as 'outsiders' for a particular programme to be evaluated, but Stufflebeam had insisted that the CIPP Model is a comprehensive framework for guiding formative and summative evaluations of projects, programmes, personnel, products, institutions, and systems, the model has been configured for use both for internal evaluations conducted by organizations' evaluators as well as for self-evaluations conducted by project teams or individual service providers, and for contracted or mandate external evaluations.

CIPP model is particularly important for the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism evaluation in which the outcome is reported to decision makers. In the context of the CIPP approach, programme evaluation implies the systematic collection of information (data) about the activities, characteristics and outcome of policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism for use by specific people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness, and make decisions with regard to what those programmes are doing and affecting. Stufflebeam (2003) sees evaluation's purposes as establishing and providing useful information for fudging decision alternatives, assisting audience to judge and improve the worth of some educational programme or object, and assisting the improvement of policies and programmes with regard to goals, plans, outcomes and actions.

Research Methodology

The data used for this study were from secondary sources, questionnaires and in-depth interview. Simple descriptive statistics presented in tables using frequency and percentages were used to analyse the quantitative data collected in the study. While, in-depth interview summaries were used to analyse the qualitative data. The data obtained provided for the analysis related to the challenges of localization and implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state.

Findings

The Localization of the Policy Framework and National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism

The policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism is not wholly different from any other policy framework in terms of focus and the need to bridge a gap in peace, security and development (Olalekan, 2021). But according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2017) that the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism is a product that went through several processes and stakeholders. But essentially, it contains a strategic vision Nigeria holds for preventing violent extremism, which is a product of research, global practices and knowledge of the root causes of violent extremism. Nigeria has come to understand that violent extremism is a constant phenomenon that requires being

wholly addressed not only through kinetic but also non-kinetic approaches. Different forms of the threat that might emerge were anticipated to be addressed by appropriate measures through the policy framework.

The National Security Adviser Babagana Mungonu as cited in Federal Government Nigeria (2017) stated that the policy framework will strengthen ongoing efforts in the handling of persons associated with violent extremism, collaborate with Civil Society in community engagement and resilience building, strategic communication activities and effective prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremist offenders. He further stated that the main goal is to partner for safer and resilient communities that are less vulnerable to violent extremism and that can recover from the consequence of violence.

The Federal Government of Nigeria (2017) stated that the two factors that lead to participation in, or support for violent extremism in Nigeria are the push and pull factors. They further stated that the push factors are the structural conditions that make an environment more conducive to the growth of violent extremism, such as unemployment, poverty, inequality, social exclusion, health, other socio-economic factors (although not in isolation) and the role of governance. While, the pull factors are factors that facilitate mobilization of individuals and groups to extreme positions/ideologies. The document further stated that these factors relate to the existence of grievance (a vulnerability that has to be mobilized), a fact of belonging to a group or having an ego or status, emergence of a charismatic leader (online or offline who mobilizes) and tendency for simplified answers to complex issues (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2017).

The core objectives of the policy framework and national action plan are to:

i. Institutionalize, mainstream and coordinate PCVE programmes at national, state and local levels;

ii. Strengthen accessible justice system and respect for human rights and rule of law;

iii. Enhance capacity of individuals/communities to prevent and counter violent extremism; and recover from violent occurrences;

iv. Institutionalize, mainstream and integrate strategic communication in PCVE programmes at all levels.

The policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism envisages that the realization of the core objectives will be pursued in ways that are consistent with the provisions of the Constitution, and the relevant policy and legal instruments, as well as international norms and good practices which are built on the paradigm shift in Nigeria's conception of its national security from a state-centred to a people-centred approach. This policy framework anticipates that all tiers of government in Nigeria will play significant roles in preventing and countering violent extremism (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2017). Therefore, this study seeks to examine the role Plateau state played in preventing violent extremism as stipulated in the policy framework and national action plan.

Table 1 Level of Community Awareness of the localization and Implementation of the Policy Framework and National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism in Plateau State

Respondents Level of Awareness	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	54	24
No	111	48
Do Not Know	64	28

***Source**: Field Survey, 2023*

Table 1 above shows that 24% of the respondents said yes the awareness of the implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state is high while 48% of the respondents said no which constitute the majority and 28% said they do not know about the level of awareness of the localization and implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state. This has shown that majority of the respondents said they were not aware of the level of localization and of the

policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state.

The programme officer of Plateau Peace Building Agency was asked about the level of community awareness of the localization and implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state. His response was that:

> Even though as an expert, I am aware of the policy framework for preventing and countering violent extremism in Nigeria. However, the level of awareness of the localization and implementation in the communities is low (interview, 2022).

This affirms the position of the Localize Direct (2020) that some state's security officials were not aware of the existence of the policy implementation framework and national action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism. Also, Olalekan (2021) stated that there was a trust gap between government and the citizens which were as a result of poor linkages between different levels of government and communities at the local levels. Such is the evidence associated with the localization of the implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism. He further stressed that it was made to look as if it is a top-down approach policy instead of bottom-up. Therefore, the policy framework and national action plan has not in any way reduced violent extremism in Plateau state.

Challenges of the Localized and implementation of the Policy Framework and National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism

According to Olelakan (2021) that one would have thought that a nation that has been reeling from a violent extremism crisis for more than a decade now would have learned significant lessons to effectively localize the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism to the grassroots. Instead, its localization proved so challenging in the manner in which it is being implemented. There is no definitive framework as a baseline to analyze the effectiveness of policy implementation (Pradham, Su, Fu, Zhang & Yang, 2017).

Table 2 Challenges of Localizing and Implementing the Policy Framework and National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism in Plateau State

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	91	41
No	44	20
Do Not Know	87	39
Total	**222**	**100**

***Source**: Field Survey, 2023*

The result as presented on table 2 above shows that 41% of the respondents said the document is facing some challenges. While, 20% said the document is not facing any challenge and 39% said they did not know whether the document is facing any challenges in its localization and implementation. Therefore, result has shown that the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism is facing some challenges ranging from corruption, followed by the challenge of intelligent sharing, lack of co-ordination, community rejection and lack of awareness in localizing and implementing the document. This is also evident in what Olalekan (2021) stated that lack of awareness has affected some interventions on preventing violent extremism such as integration programmes for the ex-combatants in their communities. Some communities are expressing resistance to the programme by their rejection of repentant militants. The community leader sometimes doublespeak, they tell you what you want to hear and when it comes to reintegration, they acted as if they did not want the ex-militants to come back. This is because they see no reason why they should open their arms to the perpetrators and killers of their kith and kin while the victims or relations are not cared for or compensated by the government (Olalekan, 2021).

The research found that the policy framework and national action plan was not known to many in plateau state because it has not been stepped down at the state and local government levels and the awareness gap is real and it manifestation is evident in different forms. The Partnership Against Violence Extremism (PAVE) which was set-up and one of the civil society component of preventing and countering violent extremism in Nigeria that comprises of about 70 civil society organizations has faced the challenge of coordinating these groups and even Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) was difficult due to differences and multiplicity of purposes. Likewise, Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) did not intervene in the coordination of rescued victims of the violent extremism like the Chibok and Dapchi school girls (Olalekan, 2021). In Plateau state, the challenges encountered on the implementation of the policy framework and action plan on preventing violent extremism were lack of community awareness, intelligent sharing, lack of co-ordination, and community rejection in implementing the document.

Also, there is a challenge of lack of symbiotic relationship between critical agencies fighting violent extremism according to security personnel who was interviewed. His response was that:

> The coordination challenges emanates from institutionalizing the document with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), legislature, judiciary and others that are taken into consideration because of their critical roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the policy framework are not active in the mainstream of the policy implementation (Interview, 2022).

Another challenge is the inadequate legal framework to support preventing violent extremism efforts at the state and local government levels which is against what was spelt out in the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism that the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) is the coordinating office and is expected to get in touch with relevant parties that will ensure the success of localizing and implementing the policy (Olalekan, 2021).

Furthermore, an interview held with one of the senior security personnel in Jos, Plateau state and explained that the challenge of localizing the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism has to do with:

> The inadequate legal framework to support preventing violent extremism efforts at the state and local government levels which is against what was spelt out in the policy document that the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) is the coordinating office and is expected to get in touch with relevant parties that will ensure the success of localizing and implementing the policy (Interview, 2022).

According to the Comprehensive Report (2021) that, traditional, community and religious leaders were not being carried along in both programming and implementation of the policy. They further states that citizens are likely to support a policy if they are part of its development process. Therefore, localizing policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism could begin with the custodian of culture and representatives of the people. It is at the grassroots that traces of indoctrination and violent extremism originates.

Conclusion

This study has observed that after six years of its localization and implementation, the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state has a long way to prevent violent extremism and to build a safer and resilient communities. The challenges of the localizing and implementing the policy framework and national action plan

for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state are largely due to lack of coordination, lack of awareness, lack of effectiveness, trust gap between government and citizens. The increasing violent extremism in Plateau state has shown that the good idea to address the rising violent extremism through the policy framework and national action plan has not been taken seriously.

Consequently, there is still hope and a chance that the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism in Plateau state can be deliver on its expected goal. The policy framework, its strategic context and the presidential directive are clear and its national action plan is explicit and effective localization and implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism is worth embarking on. Essentially, Office of the National Security Adviser should scale up its localization strategy by cascading its roadmap for sustainability of preventing violent extremism initiatives and interventions (Olalekan, 2021). The study concludes that the localization of policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism can be effectively fulfilled if there is greater community participation to mitigate violent extremism in Plateau state.

Recommendations

i. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proffered:

ii. It is highly recommended that all encompassing interventions to bring everyone on board to combat violent extremism should be emphasized.

iii. Also, effective national coordination is urgently needed to localize the policy at the grassroots. While, different civil society organizations should not work at cross-purposes but be coordinated in their activities toward preventing violent extremism in Plateau State.

iv. All stakeholders should adhere to sincerity and commitment to preventing violent extremism programmes and projects. This should be done by extending sensitization and advocacy programmes on policy framework and national action plan for preventing violent extremism to the grassroots.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN QUASI-FEDERALISM: THE PLACE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA

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Intergovernmental Relations, Quasi-federalism, Local Government Administration, Service Delivery, Development

ABSTRACT
Intergovernmental relation is so essential for the smooth operation of a state. Thus, the constitution of Nigeria provides for three tiers of government which include: federal, state and local government with the nature of the relationships that exist within their interaction with one another. The essence is to effectively provide services for the masses especially, the grassroots. This paper identified the impact of intergovernmental relations on grassroots service delivery in Nigeria, using some selected local government areas in Anambra State as a study focus. The research adopted Systems Theory as framework of analysis and a survey study method as its methodology. It reveals the constitutional lacuna and quagmire in intergovernmental relations which has affected the quality of services delivered by the three arms of governments especially, the local government. The paper points out that provision of effective services especially by local government requires cordial relationships among the three tiers of government as well as good legal framework to guide this relationship. To achieve this, the constitutional status of local government in Nigeria must be clearly spelt out, and the issue of joint-state-local government account must be discarded. Again, election rather than appointment should be the means of choosing leaders at the local level, while the eradication of state ministry for local government is important.

Introduction

The 1999 constitution of Nigeria as amended stipulates the functions and powers of all the tiers of government, making service delivery, a primary function at all level and encompassing in such a way that no one level of government can single handedly perform the functions of service delivery to the people. As such, cooperation becomes a nitty-gritty and prerequisite for governance (Fatile and Ejalonibu, 2015). The same constitution, further galvanized intergovernmental relations by its provisions in

section 7 and 8 which recognized local government as a third tier of government.

Intergovernmental relation in Nigeria's federalism is so essential hence, the constitution provides for three tiers of government which include; federal, state and local government. The constitution further recognizes local government as a third tier within the tripartite federal arrangement which established a relationship (interaction) between each tier and autonomy that existed within the interaction. The essence of this interaction is to effectively provide services for the masses. However, effective service delivery cannot be achieved if there is no cordial relationship among the tiers of government. In other words, intergovernmental relation is an essential ingredient for grassroots development. Notwithstanding, the constitutional recognition of local government system in Nigeria as a third tier of government and the provisions for intergovernmental relations in sections 7 and 8, governments at the higher level especially the state has continued to undermine and interfere in the affairs of this grassroots government, using the same mechanism of intergovernmental relations and the lapses orchestrated by the constitution to siphon the allocations of this grassroots government, subjecting them to appendage status of the state through the State House of Assemblies.

In view of the above, this paper seeks to identify and proffer solutions to lingering problems of Intergovernmental relations in Nigeria; and also highlight the important role of the local government in ensuring service delivery in the grassroots.

Review of Extant Literature

Intergovernmental Relations

The term "intergovernmental relations' ' is commonly used to refer to relations between federal, state and local governments, as well as governments between any one sphere (level) that facilitate the attainment of common goals through cooperation (Adewale, 2010/2011). In his own view, Obi (2010) sees intergovernmental relations to mean the complex patterns of interactions, co-operations and inter-dependence between two or more levels of government. It is further described as a plethora of formal and informal relationships and transactions that develop among levels of government within a nation-state. In Nigeria for instance, it refers to the interactions that exist among the federal (Central or National) states and local governments, state and state interactions, state and local interactions or local and local interactions. All these put together refer to the pattern of intergovernmental relations. An intergovernmental relations system therefore, consists of facilitative systems and relationships that enable the units of government to participate effectively and carry out mandate so that governmental goals are achieved. This includes executive mechanisms, coordinating mechanisms, cooperative agreements, judicial and legislative mechanisms that all facilitate delivery by government machinery. Intergovernmental relations can thus be defined as the 'glue' that holds them together. In other words, it is the interactions, relationships and the conduct of officials between governmental activities. It seeks the achievement of common goals through mutual relationships between and across vertical and horizontal governmental arrangements, alignment and cohesion across all spheres of government. The aim of governmental relations therefore, is to enable governmental activities (primarily service delivery), through synergy, effectiveness and efficiency in delivering services, to sustain democracy and strengthen delivery capacity across all spheres of government for the common good (Aibieyi, 2011).

Service Delivery

Service Delivery is a concept that is traceable to the Social Contract of Hobbes (1651) where the pact between the people and the government was created. The government at that point assumed the duty of ensuring the protection of lives, property and liberty of the people and ensuring their welfare is taken care of while the people have to obey the government. Today, the public service which represents the wheel of government implementing the policies of government and ensuring that the intentions of government are translated into action, has therefore become a bridge linking the government and the general public (citizens) through policy implementation and service delivery. Thus, Ogunna (2004) avers that government's desire to implement public policies, enforce laws, and realize public welfare in order to satisfy its citizens amounts to effective service delivery. Public service delivery then becomes an important instrument for nation-building, and a bond between the state and citizens (Walle and Scott 2009).

Furthermore, Al-Ghazali (2008) has put together a checklist for measuring service delivery by the public service in a political system. These include:

- Effective delivery of services and goods at a low cost and timely manner.
- Equitable, fair and transparent distribution of goods and services to the people.
- Citizens' convictions that public service and state institutions respect the rights of the citizens and laws of the land.
- Use of legitimate power to command submission by the public service.
- Conducive environment for citizens to carry out their daily activities without fear or hindrance.
- Equal treatment and dispensation of justice for all citizens devoid of any bias.

Quasi-Federalism

Quasi-Federalism refers simply to a type of federalism that also adopts some features of the unitary system of government. Generally, Federalism describes a government system where the government powers and responsibilities in a state are shared between the national (central government) and the states (sub-national governments). Wheare (1963) conceptualizes federalism as a constitutional division of power between two levels of government which are independent and coordinating in their respective spheres of influence. In this form of power sharing, each level of government is guaranteed some level of autonomy in a way that none interferes with the powers of the other and each level of government sovereign in its sphere of jurisdiction (Bradat, 2006). The federal or central government takes care of all those things that unite the whole country while the other levels of government (sub-national) have jurisdiction over those things that are local concern (Belanga, 2000).

However, there exists another version of federalism where there are two or more levels of government in a country but the national government exercises most of the powers in the state thereby usurping the powers of other levels of the government. This form of government system reflects some form of federalism and some form of unitary system of government. This is referred to as quasi-federalism. Nigeria is a good example of a country that practices this system of government in the contemporary periods. There exist the federal, state and local governments in Nigeria. However, the federal government exercises most of the powers in the country through the legislative list and the state governments also do not allow the local governments to exercise the powers in the residual list. Even the powers in the concurrent list are mostly being exercised by the federal or central government. In the end, the local government which is the government closest to the people suffers most.

Empirical Review

Intergovernmental Relations and Service Delivery

The essentials of intergovernmental relations in the Nigerian system of government cannot be over emphasized. The constitution provides for three tiers of government which include; federal, state and local government. It (constitution) also recognized local government as a third tier within our tripartite federal arrangement which established the relationship (interaction) between each tier and autonomy that existed within the interaction. The essence of this interaction is to effectively provide services for the masses. In doing this, the role of local government cannot be undermined hence, local government is primarily established for efficient and effective services delivery and also to bring government closer to the people. In other words, these tiers of government must relate effectively for service delivery and welfare of the people which is the fundamental business of every government. However, care must be taken not to interfere with the constitutional jurisdiction of each tier of government hence it undermines service delivery. The constitutional relationships of these tiers of government can be traced to the first republican constitution that allowed for superior-subordinate relationships among the regional or state and their local authorities. Federal government was excluded in the affairs of local government because it fell within the constitutional jurisdiction of the regional government. The federal constitution provides and deals with federal matters in relation to that of the regional government which has its own constitution. The underlying factors and powers

allowed the regional/state government for establishment, composition, functions, personnel and finance of the local government (Agbani et'al, 2014). Attempts were made to democratize local government and make it more responsive to the country's economic and social development. In the North (Hausas/Fulani) due to the monarchical system of government already in practice before the colonial administration, it was difficult to achieve the democratic result. In the south, the process was accepted though with little difficulties as it required subjugating the influence of the traditional institutions.

Local government however, should be seen as the system of government established for effective service delivery and to bring governance nearer to the people. Orewa and Adewumi (1983) in Edoyugbo (2012), argued that local government "is to entrust political responsibility to where it is most crucial and beneficial, that is to the people". In view of this, local government can be seen as a legal entity, a system of government established by law which attracts the influence of the higher tier of government for grassroots development. The influence of the higher tiers of government should not be regarded as interference by central or state government hence, it undermines the autonomy of this tier of government and determines its functions including the quality and level of services delivered to the grassroots. If this tier of government is recognized as a separate tier, it means the people will be involved in electing the principal actors among themselves. If as an appendage of the higher tier of government, it means, the people would not be part of decision making. On this note, its effectiveness is determined by the level of autonomy granted to it as an essential tool for service delivery at the grassroots. However, effective service delivery cannot be achieved if there is no cordial relationship with the higher tiers of government. In other words, intergovernmental relation is an essential ingredient for grassroots development hence, local government remain an integral part of the entire political system

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted in the discussion of Intergovernmental Relations and Service Delivery is the Systems Theory. Scholars of wide repute, attempted discussing what a system is, some of whom are Easton (1965); Adamolekun (1983) in Offiong (1996). These scholars affirmed that a system is a "phenomenon of whatever type, including physical, biological, social, political, etc., which is an organized whole with identifiable, interrelated structures delineating it from the environment (supra system) in which it is located and with which it interacts, processing the inputs from it into outputs for it." In furtherance, systems theorists seek to postulate that "every system, including political system, has subsystems which make up the entire system." Both systems have some constitutionally assigned responsibilities with empowerment or resources to enable them discharge the said responsibilities optimally. In a political system where the constitutionally assigned responsibilities and empowerment or resources are practicable and respected, the system is said to be stable (homeostasis). On the other hand, instability reigns in the political system where the reverse is the case and the subsystems and entire system are also unable to perform effectively. In line with Easton (1965), the input and output of a political system is very essential. A political system obtains its inputs such as demands, support, criticisms, resources, information from the environment and a subsystem anchors on the said inputs to discharge its responsibilities, which in turn enables the political system to send its outputs into the environment and obtain further inputs for its functions.

Relevance of the Theory

Systems approach is a management tool that allows individuals to examine all aspects of the organization, to inter relate the effects of one set of decisions to another and to optimally use all the resources at hand to solve the problem. ... This modification places stress on the entire system. It emphasizes the constructive power of the observer, who controls/constructs models of the systems with which the observer interacts.

The major relevance of systems theory are the followings

- It concentrates on end results rather than the means.
- It provides an orderly and efficient plan of action. advertisements:
- It develops coordination of the specialized activities.
- It provides a good basis of control.

- It frees management from many daily details of operations management.
- To develop unifying principles by the integration of intergovernmental relations of local government with higher tier of government and service delivery.

The fact that systems theory recognizes the relativity of perception, may in itself, serve to expand our understanding of our role in the intergovernmental relations of local government in service delivery. It provides a framework for us to examine and understand our environment. A systems approach provides a common method for the study of societal and organizational patterns.

Application of the Theory

The application of "systems theory" in intergovernmental relations and service delivery enables us see local government as a sub system, which must be judiciously and essentially handled with adequate inputs, so that they can contribute appropriately to the efficient and effective services to the locality. If local governments fail in the required inputs, the tendency for instability and discontent amongst the citizenry are certain. It is therefore very essential to realize the crucial nature of the systems theory in intergovernmental relations of local government with higher tier of government and service delivery. Local government which is considered as a subsystem is an integral part of the overall political system. It has constitutional assigned responsibilities that will enable the betterment and wellbeing of the grassroots, if given its pride of place as a third of government, not as appendages of the state governments. Failure to recognize local government as a third tier government and its constitutional position could undermine its efficiency and thereby send frustration, disenchantment, dissatisfaction and discontentment amongst the grassroots.

Research Methodology

This research adopted a case-study method as its methodology, involving both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The qualitative technique involved the use of documents like textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, government publications, NGO publications, internet materials and other documents. The quantitative technique involved visiting the selected local governments of study, collecting data using questionnaires and interviews analyzing such data using quantitative tools and methods.

Research Design

A research design is a conceptual structure within which the research would be conducted. The research design demonstrates the practical procedure for implementation of the methodology chosen in any research. In this research, the survey research design was adopted in order to establish, using the data that was extracted from the local government employees, to unearth the challenges facing local governments in Anambra state in their efforts to deliver services effectively to the citizens and how these challenges can be overcome.

Area of the Study

The study is on Intergovernmental relations: A study of Anambra state local government system. The researcher selected six local governments from the three senatorial zones in Anambra state, one urban and one rural to accommodate the interest of both rural and urban people within the state. These local governments include; Aguata (urban), Orumba south (rural), Awka south (urban), Awka north (rural), Onitsha south (urban) and Anambra east (rural) local government areas.

Aguata and Orumba south were selected from the south senatorial zone, Awka south and Awka north from the central while Onitsha south and Anambra East were selected from the North senatorial zone.

Population of the Study

The population was the entire employees of Aguata and Orumba south, Awka south, Awka north, Onitsha south and Anambra East local government areas. The six local governments have staff strength of one thousand seven hundred and forty-five personnel (1745).

The aforementioned local governments and their staff strength were presented on the table below

Table 1:

Population table of selected local governments

Aguata	302
Orumba south	300
Awka south	293
Awka north	287
Onitsha south	285
Anambra East	278
Total	1745

***Source**: Field Research by the Authors (2023)*

However, each of the local governments comprises the following departments: Personnel management, Finance, Supplies, Planning, Research and Statistics, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Department of Works, Housing, Land and Survey and Department of Medical and Primary Health.

The researchers further presented the departments with staff attached to each, per local government in the table below.

Table 2:
Population Distribution table per department

S/No	**Departments**	**Aguata**	**Orumba south**	**Awka south**	**Awka north**	**Onitsha south**	**Anambra East**
1.	**Personnel**	27	25	26	26	26	25
2.	**Finance**	25	26	24	25	25	23
3.	**Supplies**	24	25	26	27	27	25
4.	**Planning**	28	24	26	25	25	26
5.	**Research & statistics**	27	25	27	24	24	25
6.	**Education**	32	32	28	29	27	26
7.	**Agriculture & natural resources**	34	34	29	30	30	28
8.	**Works**	28	27	26	25	25	24
9.	**Housing**	24	25	28	26	26	25
10.	**Land & survey**	26	30	27	24	24	26
11.	**Medical & health**	27	27	26	26	26	25
	Total	302	300	293	287	285	278

***Source**: Field Research by the Authors (2023)*

We further divided this population into two categories, the senior staff and the junior staff. Face to face interviews were conducted with the senior staff while structured questionnaires were distributed among the junior staff of the local governments.

Sample Size

A population of one thousand seven hundred and forty-five (1745) staff of the six local governments, were randomly selected two hundred each from the six local governments, making a total number of one thousand two (1200) staff. Among the one thousand two hundred (1200), one hundred and eighty seven (187) members of the executive staff were engaged in unstructured interviews. These one hundred and eighty seven executive staffs were selected thirty one (31) per a local government except in Aguata local government in which the researchers selected thirty two (32) in order to balance the number. The remaining one thousand and thirteen (1013) staff members were issued with structured questionnaires. The one thousand two hundred (1200) respondents represent 75% of the total population of workers in the six local governments. It is believed by the researchers that this number was a good representation of the total population of the workers in the six local governments.

Sampling Method/Procedure

The sampling method involves taking a representative selection of the population and using the data that were collected as research information. A sample is a "subgroup of a population" (Frey et al., 2000). The sample should be "representative in the sense that each sampled unit will represent the characteristics of a known number of units in the population" (Lohr, 1999).

In order to effectively capture the diversity in the population of our study area and produce the desired result, a probability sampling method was adopted. Under the random sampling method, the stratified random sampling technique was further adopted in order to enable us to divide the total population of our study into two strata: the upper strata and the lower strata. The upper strata represent the higher or executive staff of the six local governments while the lower strata represent the lower or non-executive staff of the six local governments.

Having divided the population into strata, we adopted the random sampling technique in selecting both the interview population and the population on which the questionnaires were administered. In this method, every member of the population has the chance of being selected and this allows for reduction of bias in the selection process. This technique was also adopted on the assumption that every member of the population has the ability to offer the needed information as all the staff members of the six local governments are in one way or the other involved in service delivery. In the overall, the researcher has ensured that at least 70% of each of the population strata is captured in the sample.

Hence, a uniform department existed in all the six local governments, the researcher decided to present the staff strength per department, number of senior staff per department, sample taken from the senior staff, number of junior staff per department and sample taken from junior staff. Don't forget, that these samples were drawn from the various local governments and presented here as total.

Table 3:

Staff strength per department, population and sample size

S/No	Departments	Number of staff	Number of Senior staff	Sample taken	Number of Junior staff	Sample t aken
1.	**Personnel**	155	30	20	125	92
2.	**Finance**	148	25	14	123	90
3.	**Supplies**	154	24	17	130	88
4.	**Planning**	154	28	18	126	92
5.	**Education**	174	26	16	148	94
6.	**Agriculture and Natural resource**	185	30	20	155	96
7.	**Works**	155	27	17	128	92
8.	**Housing**	154	28	18	126	92
9.	**Land and Survey**	157	27	17	130	90
10.	**Medical and primary health**	157	26	16	131	94
11	**Research and statistics**	152	24	14	128	93

	Total	1745	295	187	1450	1013

***Source**: Field Research by the Authors (2023)*

In view of the above, one thousand and thirteen (1013) questionnaires were distributed while eight hundred (800) of the distributed questionnaires were retrieved back for analysis. Hence, we adopted the random sampling technique in selecting both the interview population and the population on which the questionnaires were administered. The other two hundred and thirteen (213) questionnaires were not retrieved due to the fact that some of the respondents could not be reached at the point of retrieval and some questionnaires were lost by the respondents.

Reliability of the Instruments

The researcher made use of a test reset method and also conducted a pilot test of the questionnaire before administering, just to confirm the reliability of the instruments. The process was carried out by giving out similar questionnaires to a similar group of people. This enables determination and appropriateness of the questionnaire.

Validity of the Instruments

The principal instrument used for this research work was a questionnaire administered to the staff of the said six selected local governments (Aguata, Orumba south, Awka South, Awka north, Onitsha south and Anambra East) of Anambra state. Validation of the instruments (questionnaire) was carried out by the some senior staff of the University in Anambra state, who took a perusal of the questionnaire before administration to ensure that the questionnaires were in line with the objectives of the study. Secondly, the opinions of experts were also sort, to enable effective validation of the instruments.

Distribution and Retrieval of the Questionnaire

Direct delivery technique was employed by the researcher in the distribution of the instrument (questionnaire). This implies that the researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents. A total number of one thousand and thirteen (1013) questionnaires were distributed while eight hundred (800) of the distributed questionnaires were retrieved back for analysis. Hence, we adopted the random sampling technique in selecting both the interview population and the population on which the questionnaires were administered. The other two hundred and thirteen (213) questionnaires were not retrieved due to the fact that some of the respondents could not be reached at the point of retrieval and some questionnaires were lost by the respondents.

Methods of Data Analysis

We adopted the content analysis method in analyzing the secondary data and inductive reasoning method to analyze the result of the interview. For the data collected with the questionnaire tool, we adopted simple statistical tools like tables, percentages and charts in analyzing them. The frequency of each response was obtained and divided by the total number of responses. It was multiplied by hundred, i.e:

$$\frac{\text{Frequency of each response}}{\text{Total number of responses}} X\ 100$$

Presentation of data, analysis and discussion of findings

This chapter deals with the analysis of data collected during the course of the study. Hence the frequency of each response varied, the total number of responses is constant.

Table 4:

Categorization of the respondents

DATA	OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Sex	Male	340	41.2
	Female	460	58.8
Marital status	Married	580	72.5
	Single	220	27.5
Age	18-55	540	67.6

	56 & above	260	32.4
Academic Qualification	O' level	380	47.1
	ND	280	27.5
	Degree	140	25.4
Total		**800**	**100**

***Source**: Field Research by the Authors (2023)*

From the above table, it can be deduced that 340 of the respondents were male represented by 41.2% while 460 were female represented by 58.8%. On the issue of marital status, 580 respondents representing72.5% were married while 220 respondents representing 27.5% were single. It can easily be ascertained that the bulk number of the respondents were within the age bracket of 18-55 years which has 540 respondents with 67.6% while the ages of 56 and above has 260 respondents represented 32.4%. On the issue of qualification, 380 respondents with the percentage level of 47.1 had O' level certificate, 280 of the respondents with another percentage level of 27.5 possessed ND Certificate while 140 of respondents with the percentage level of 25.4 were degree or its equivalent holders.

Analysis of the research questions

The presentation and analysis of the findings regarding to the research question were treated below.

Research Question 1

Question 1: Do you think that cordial intergovernmental relations of local government with Anambra state government can lead to effective service delivery?

Table 5: Respondent's opinion on whether harmonious intergovernmental relations of local government with Anambra state government can lead to effective service delivery

Responses	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	640	80
No	160	20
Total	800	100

Source: field survey, 2023

The table 1 above shows that 640 of the respondents representing (80%) of the respondents answered yes, they agreed that cordial intergovernmental relations of local government with Anambra state government can lead to effective service delivery while, 160 respondents representing (20%) of the respondents disagreed with the idea and according to them, whether cordial intergovernmental relations of local government with Anambra state government or not local government ought to effectively render services to the grassroots. Seventeen (17) members of the executive staff which were engaged in unstructured interview aligned with the ideas of the 160 respondents while, the remaining one hundred and seventy (170) members of the executive staff were of the view that cordial intergovernmental relations of local government with Anambra state government can lead to effective service delivery.

In view of the above, the researcher concludes that cordial intergovernmental relations of local government with Anambra state government can lead to effective service delivery.

Research Question 2

Question 2: Does local government's inability to exercise her constitutional freedom in intergovernmental relations with Anambra state government constitute an impediment on service delivery?

Table 5: Respondent's opinion on whether local government inability to exercise her constitutional freedom in intergovernmental relations with Anambra state government constitute an impediment on service delivery.

Responses	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	560	70
No	200	25
No opinion	40	5
Total	800	100

***Source**: field survey, 2023*

The aforementioned Table 4 shows that 560 respondents representing (70%) of the respondents answered yes, they were of the view that local government inability to exercise her constitutional freedom in intergovernmental relations with Anambra state government constitute an impediment on service delivery while, 200 respondents representing (25%) of the respondents answered 'No'. Their ideas contradicted that of the above respondents. Forty (40) of the respondents (5%) said that they have no idea on the question. However, one hundred and fifty-two members of the executive staff (upper strata) which were engaged in unstructured interview support the idea that local government inability to exercise her constitutional freedom in intergovernmental relations with Anambra state government constitute an impediment on service delivery. The remaining thirty-five members of the executive staff (upper strata) aligned themselves with those respondents that contradict the assertion of those one hundred and fifty-two members of the executive staff.

Based on the foregoing the researcher states that local government inability to exercise her constitutional freedom in intergovernmental relations with Anambra state government constitute an impediment on service delivery.

Summary of Findings

This research work identifies that intergovernmental relation of local governments with Anambra state government is uncordial and as such affect effective service delivery at the grassroots. This uncordial relationship was orchestrated by complexity, lapses, inadequacies, and confusion that exist in our constitution. The 1999 constitution under section 7 (1) stated that, "the system of local government by democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution guaranteed and accordingly the government of every state shall ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structures, composition, finance and factors of such councils". In the fourth schedule of the constitution, the functions of local government were also stated. The constitution empowers the state to scrutinize and approve local government budgets and expenditure through the state house of assembly. The state government was also allowed to create the state ministry for local government therefore, making local government appendages of the state government whereas, this same constitution recognized local government as a third tier of government.

Secondly, allocation of resources is a major factor militating against intergovernmental relations in Nigeria. Nigeria needs to diversify her economy and allow individual states to develop their locality with the resources available at their disposal. The over-concentration of the Nigerian economy on oil alone poses a problem to intergovernmental relations too hence, the three tiers of government depend on one source for their revenue, the struggle for sharing formula cannot cease.

Thirdly, this paper identifies the interventions of the military in Nigerian politics as a strong militating factor that constrain the success of intergovernmental relations. The military administrations moved from the constitution that provide and established the rights of the three tiers of government to edicts that allowed them the freedom of doing their wish. For instance, Adewumi (1980), argued that, the process of appointing the local government chairman during the military administration has ill-feelings because, in a number of councils, people with highest votes were not appointed

Conclusion

Intergovernmental relations have been proven as a vital tool for grass root development. The constitution provides for three tiers of government which include; federal, state and local government. It (constitution) also recognized local government as a third tier within our tripartite federal arrangement which established relationship (interaction) between each tier and autonomy that existed within the interaction. The essence of this interaction is to

effectively provide services for the masses. In doing this, the role of local government cannot be undermined hence, local government is primarily established for efficient and effective services delivery and also to bring government closer to the people. In other words, these tiers of government must relate effectively for service delivery and welfare of the people which is the major business of the government. However, care must be taken not to interfere with the constitutional jurisdiction of each tier of government hence it undermines service delivery.

Recommendations

The essential of local government is to bring services and development effectively and nearer to the grassroots. To achieve this aim, this study recommends as follows:

1. There should be cordial relationship between Anambra state government and the local governments in the state, giving local government a pride of place, without any form of interference and as such facilitate the developmental processes which it set to achieve. The state cum federal government should not misconstrue intergovernmental relation as interference in the affairs of the third tier of government as that undermines service delivery. Thus, it should hands off and stop interfering in the affairs of local governments especially as it concerns elections hence, the objectives of local government include political participation. The grassroots should be allowed to elect who represents them politically at the local level.

2. The state/local government joint account system should be abolished hence the 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria recognizes local government as a third tier of government. It should be allowed to access its allocation directly from the federation account for effective financing of developmental projects at its locality.

3. It is imperative to call for amendment of the 1999 constitution to guarantee local government its freedom from the state kingship and facilitate the activities as mass mobilization agent and increase political participation, developmental projects and so on.

4. The ministry of local government created by the state government should be abolished. As this will enable local government with the freedom necessary for the performance of their duties and be free from domineering tendencies of the state government, thereby increase its efficiency in service delivery.

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AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF ONITSHA RESIDENTS ON 'JAPA' SYNDROME AMONG NIGERIANS

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Awareness, perception, Japa, Onitsha, syndrome

ABSTRACT
This study examined the awareness and perception of Onitsha residents on 'japa' syndrome in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. A questionnaire was used to generate data from the respondents. Findings showed that 40% ofOnitsha residents are aware of Japa syndrome to a great extent. Further findings showed that most (39%) of the respondents obtained information about 'Japa' issues through the Internet medium, followed by friends and television medium. They also perceived the 'Japa' issues as a positive development. The researchers affirmed that Onitsha residents are aware of japa syndrome. The researchers recommended that Nigerian media should keep informing its citizens of the latest trends or developments in the country and beyond.

Introduction

Nigerians are known for inventing uniquewords or slangto catch 'cruise' and make themselves self-happy. One such word that has become popular recently is "Japa". The word 'japa' has become a household name, especially among young Nigerians at home and abroad. Japa is slang derived from the Yoruba language (spoken in South-West Nigeria), which means to run swiftly out of a difficult situation. Interestingly, this word is now popularly used when referring to one migrating from Nigeria to another part of the world. According to the International Organisation for Migration (UN Migration Report, 2020), international migration is shaped by economic, geographic, demographic, and other factors.

Nigeria is an oil-rich country with a thriving technology scene and entertainment industry that continues to contribute to the nation's

Gross Domestic Product. However, many Nigerians, especially the middle class, are heading abroad in the hope and pursuit of a brighter future due to various significant reasons.*The Guardian* of September 10, 2022, reported that 'the mass exit from Nigeria, tagged 'japa', caused by a high level of insecurity, unemployment, infrastructure deficit, hunger and failure of the various levels of government to provide opportunities for the youths to live their desired life and achieve their dreams, is becoming a social epidemic.

A statistic in May 2022 showed that the number of Nigerians granted study visas to the United Kingdom increased by over 500 percent in two years. The UK government said as of March 2020, a total of 9,355 sponsored study visas were granted, but by March 2022, the figure had increased to 58,887 as of September, about 70,000 Nigerians were granted study visas to the United Kingdom alone. Furthermore, out of 722,962 non-immigrant visas issued by the United States as of June 2022, Nigerians got 6,915 with the B1/B2 category recording the highest at 5,061. Other categories of visas issued include G2, J1, C1,/D, A1, K2, H3, and P4 (Ojoko, 2022).

The first wave of 'Japa' (Nigerian slang for emigration) in Nigeria was in the '70/80s. Confronted with an uncertain future owing to military interregnums and a volatile economy, the Nigerian young journeyed to the West; the US, and the UK. Over the years more Nigerians have departed the country in pursuit of their dreams abroad. Some of these Diaspora Nigerians have shown themselves in different human enterprises. And they constitute a financial bulwark for the country, reportedly remitting about $25 billion annually (Nwabufo, 2021).

The Japa syndrome among the Nigerian populace especially the youths, represents the mass exodus of Nigerians abroad. The trend has evolved to represent a way of escape for Nigerians to secure a better life for themselves and their families. The skilled workers most involved in the mass emigration are doctors/nurses, tech workers, and most recently teachers. The *Punch* reported on November 29, 2022, that the Nigerian Association of Resident Doctors revealed that only about 10,000 resident doctors were left in the country, adding that about 100 resident doctors leave the country monthly to seek greener pastures.Moreso, the Registrar and Chief Executive Officer of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, Prof. Josiah Ajiboye, said over 260 Nigerian teachers have migrated to Canada alone within the year 2022. He also said the United Nations had hintedat its intention to embark on mass recruitment of teachers from Nigeria (Osaji, 2022).

Meanwhile, several studies have been carried out in the area of media, communication, and migration, for instance, Aniyi (2019) investigated media portrayal and perception of Nigerian migrants as threats to Ghana's National interest. The researcher adopted mixed research methods (survey and content analysis). Their study focused on media portrayal and perception. The researchers did not look at the issue of japa which is the major literature gap the present study aims to fill. Oyokunyi&Adomi (2019) examined coverage of migration stories by selectNigerian National Dailies. The researchers were interested on media coverage of migration stories, not inawareness and perception of Onitsha residents on 'Japa' syndrome among Nigerians.Ezegwu&Onuama (2018) investigated audience reaction to media campaigns on illegal immigration in south-south Nigeria. The researchers adopted a survey design. Although, not much has been done especially in the area of japa. It is against this backdrop that this study was carried out to find outthe awareness and perception of Onitsha residents on 'Japa' syndrome among Nigerians.

Statement of the Problem

Since finding its way into the Nigerian lexicon and being perceived as the latest biggest movement after Afrobeats, Nigerians are emigrating from Africa's biggest economyin droves. Japa, a Yoruba slang which means 'to run, flee or escape', has taken root in the minds of young Nigerians and become something they aspire to, in hopes of a better future in a more structured system. Illegal immigration of Nigerians to foreign countries is a social phenomenon that has affected the reputation of Nigeria amongst the comity of nations. The Sahara Desertthe and Mediterranean Sea have become cemeteries for Nigerian immigrants who are risking their lives in the deadliest voyage to cross into Europe in search of greener pastures. Many Nigerians are helplessly trapped in the desert where they can neither continue with the journey nor return to the country. Many equally die in the desert as a result of exhaustion due to harsh weather or due to the activities of armed

bandits along the desert routes (Ezegwu&Onuama, 2018).

However, although many researchers such as Chukwu, Uduma, Nwoga, & Aja, (2020), Ezegwu&Onuama, 2018, Aniyi (2019),and Adeniyi (2016) have worked on migration and mediareportage, and communication among other things. There is a dearth of literature, especially in the area of 'japa', thetrendingissue in Nigeria in recent times. This study is, therefore, an attempt to cover the gaps in the literature byexaminingthe awareness and perception of Onitsha residents on 'japa' syndrome in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. To what extent are Onitsha residents aware of the 'japa' syndrome in Nigerians?
2. What is the mass media channel through which Onitsha residents obtain information about 'japa' issues in Nigeria?
3. What is the Onitsha residents' perception of 'japa' syndrome among Nigerians?

Reasons for the Japa Syndrome in Nigeria

Japa is a Yoruba word that means to leave a place quickly. In recent times, young, middle-aged, and old Nigerians have Japa in their numbers. The following may have contributed to the high rate of Japa in Nigeria:

i. Nigeria is becoming more dangerous for the youths

The EndSars saga reflects the extent to which Nigeria is no longer a haven for the youths. This is coupled with police brutality towards youths who are seen possessing electrical gadgets such as laptops. In turn, the lack of security for personal property and life increased the number of youths applying to travel out of the country.This is also compounded by the constant activities of kidnappers, bandits, terrorists, and other forms of criminality. According to data sourced from the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and National Security Tracker (NST), 4,545 people were killed by non-state actors, while 4,611 others were kidnapped in 2022 (Uthman & Oluwafemi, 2023).

ii. Poor human capital development

Despite being one of the developing countries with prospects in Africa, Nigeria has a very poor structure for human development. This has seen the death of many talents and the migration of many talented people out of the country. People employed are either underpaid or managing their jobs by planning to leave the country. With no necessary institutions to provide jobs, the unemployment rate in the country continues to increase. The rise in inflation further makes it unbearable for many people.According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), poor human development has also affected the educational system. In the ranking, Nigeria was ranked 169 in 2019 for human development. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) also reported that the country had the world's highest number of out-of-school children (Olabisi, 2022).

iii. Frustration, ASUU strike, and hardship associated with the Nigerian education system:

The Nigerian education system keeps frustrating the ambitions and aspirations of students with the frequent culture of disruptions to the process of acquiring knowledge. Like almost every other thing in the country, Nigerian education comes with persistent hardship and frustration ranging from the purchase of forms to taking courses, paying tuition fees, and others. The learning process could be difficult if facilities are not available, and this has driven millions to pursue education abroad.

Also, the frequent strike embarkedon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has affected many students in Nigeria's public schools. The youth have to bear the brunt and are at the receiving end. Being unable to go to school to learn and make a meaningful life is frustrating. This action of the government and academic staff union has addedto the pains of the young people and encouraged people with the guts to seek alternative routes for a better tomorrow; hence the Japa mindset takes control. In every part of the world you visit, you

see Nigerians "Japa"to continue their education. Nigerians are hardworking and intelligent people who need a conducive environment to strife.

In July 2022, the Association of Nigerian Students in Europe revealed that Europe alone has more than three million Nigerians enrolled in different higher institutions of learning. A survey also indicates that 89.87 percent of Nigerian youths prefer to study in a university outside the country. Seventy-three percent of Nigerians, 60 percent of doctors, and 89.87 percent of students want to leave the country. They want to flee the country (Oludotun, 2023).

iv. Unemployment:

First, Nigerian youths are frustrated with socio-economic challenges fueled by unfulfilled government promises and bad leadership marked by the absence of transparency and accountability. The situation brought about cold development, siphoning scarce resources that could improve infrastructure and hinder education growth, and public health and stacking the deck against the poor masses. Nigeria's unemployment rate stood at 5.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2022 and 4.1 percent in the first quarter of 2023, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Chronological data show that the unemployment rate in Nigeria has risen constantly in the past years. Nigeria's youth population eligible to work is about 40 million out of which only 14.7 million are fully employed and another 11.2 million are unemployed (NBS, 2023).

The Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) projected the unemployment rate in Nigeria to rise to 37 percent by the end of 2023 while in the same positive vein, the United Kingdom is offering to pay an annual salary of over N15 million to Nigerians who are willing to migrate there and work as teachers.Also, it would be recalled that sometimein 2022, the Nigerian Association of Resident Doctors revealed that about 50 percent of Nigerian doctors had already found their way out of the country. The University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan, also corroborated the fact that more than 600 of its clinical workers have resigned their appointments. At the same time, in early February 2022, the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) also revealed that more than 150 nurses resigned from their appointments with the tertiary hospital (Ibeh, 2023).

v. Better career opportunities

The propelling factor motivating people to travel out of the country is the need for a better standard of living. The flexibility of work, pay, and immense opportunities have seen people with skills such as IT, Engineering, and Medicine migrate out of the country. This is the most significant movement of young talented people out of the country. This includes talents such as doctors, nurses, IT engineers, University lecturers, and technicians. It also covers individuals who have completed their studies with no intentions of returning to the country.

vi. As a means to escape from poverty

With the depreciation of the Naira, everyone is looking for how to earn in dollars. This is with the hope of improving the standard of living.According to the World Bank, in 2018, about 82.9 million Nigerians were impoverished. Data obtained from World Bank in its December 2022 Nigeria Development Update, the World Bank said inflation pushed five million Nigerians into poverty between January and October 2022. In June 2023, Nigeria Development Update, the World Bank said that the accelerating inflation pushed an additional four million Nigerians into poverty in the first five months of 2023 (Jaiyeola, Olatunji, &Ikpoto, 2023) This showed that between 2022 and 2023, not less than nine million Nigerians have been pushed into poverty as a result of inflation. Thus, most Nigerians see traveling abroad (japa) as a means to escape from poverty and earn good wages. Most advanced countries pay their workers in foreign currency and when such money is sent home and exchangedfor Naira. It will be huge, which can be used to improve one's living standard.

Review of Empirical Studies

Ezegwu&Onuama (2018) investigated audience reaction to media campaigns on illegalimmigration in south-south Nigeria. The researchers adopted a survey design. The researchers found theaudience in South-south Nigeria is fully aware of illegal migration campaigning. It was also discovered that respondents perceived the campaign to be beneficial to society. The respondents' sources of exposure to information on illegal immigration campaign messages were through the television medium. The researchers recommended that since the awareness level of the camp, the sign is low, the government should

work with private media organizations to facilitate the spread of the campaign. Television stations should also pass the campaign messages through their news bars. Drama, talk shows,and phone-inprogrammes should be used to educate Nigerians on the dangers of illegal migration.

Ezegwu&Onuama (2018) study is different from the present study in terms of the place of study and the subject matter. They studied south-south Nigeria, which comprised six states, while the present study examined Onitsha residents in Anambra State, Nigeria. Also, Ezegwu&Onuama (2018) were interested in audience reaction to media campaigns on illegal immigration in south-south Nigeria whereas the present study is on awarenessand perception of Onitsha residents on 'Japa' syndrome among Nigerians. Both studies are similar in terms of methodological approach, as both of them utilisedsurvey research design.

Chukwu, Uduma, Nwoga, & Aja, (2020), in a study, migration and media reportage in Nigerian 21stCentury: Issues and Challenges" The researchers relied on secondary data. The researchers argued that media reportage of migrationin Nigeria is still at its nascent stage and also fraught with challenges. The researchers argue that thereseems to be anunholy alliance between the media and politicians to slant the newsagainst migrants and incite the people against them for the benefit of securingvotes. Hate speechthatcontravenes international conventions is employed. Press coverage that promoted hate speech and hostility towards migrants and refugees was systematic and persistent in a proportion of the press.

The researchers recommended thataggressive enlightenment and education of the public on the need to acceptandintegrate migrants, especially refugees into our communities and there should be proper and adequate training and equipping of journalists on migrationreporting. Chukwu, Uduma, Nwoga, & Aja, (2020), used a qualitative research design in their study whereas the present study used a survey method. Chukwu, et al (2020),the study focused onmigration and media reportage in Nigerian 21st Century: Issues and Challenges whereas the current study is on awarenessand perception of Onitsha residents on 'Japa' syndrome among Nigerians. The present study used a theory to support the work whereas Chukwu et al (2020) did not use any theory in their work.

Adeniyi (2016) investigates the communication practices of Nigerian Diaspora members in Britain. The researcher used mixed methods (survey and in-depth interview). The researcher examined how they mitigate longing and negotiateto belong in the distance. It studies their choices of media in communicating and examines the factors that shape those choices over space and time. The paper notes that the decision on the media to use is shifty, as it is largely dependent on personal needs, ever-changing technologies of communication, and the disparity in development between homeland and hostland, amongst other factors. Emerging in the circumstance is the fact of mitigation of distance through the use of different media, both old and new, either in their indications or from their point. Adeniyi's (2016) study was carried out among Nigerian Diaspora members in Britain and the researcher used a mixed research method while the present study was carried out in Onitsha in Anambra State and the researchers used a survey research method.

Oyokunyi & Adomi (2019) examined the coverage of migration stories by select Nigerian national daily newspapers. The selected dailies were: *The Sun, Guardian,* and *Punch*. The content analysis method was adopted by the researchers to examine the major migration stories mostly reported in the media, as well asthe direction and prominence level accorded the stories. The study spanned 12 months (January-December 2017). The researchers discovered that the Nigerian newspapers did not give adequate or in-depth coverage of migration as only 21 stories were reported in this category. Further findings showed that migrants are also often depicted as victims in the framing analysis of mostmigration stories amongst other results. The researchers recommended that the Nigerian press must step up her reportage of migration stories by ensuring that such stories are given adequate attention and in-depth analysis through media genres like editorials, opinion articles, and even special pullouts with details.

Oyokunyi & Adomi (2019) study is different from the present study. The researchers carried out a content analysis research design and they studied: *The Sun, Guardian,* and *Punch* newspapers while the present study carried out a survey research method. Oyokunyi &Adomi's study was carried out in 2019, while their period of studywas between January and December 2017. The present study period is 2023.

Aniyi (2019) investigated media portrayal and perception of Nigerian migrants as threats to Ghana's National interest. The researcher adopted mixed research methods (survey and content analysis). The researcher discovered that media coverage of Nigerians and Nigeria in the Ghanaian media was generally negative. The researcher notes that like their Western counterparts, Ghanaian media focused on stories of chaos, crime, violence, or crisis, and the sentiment or tone of depiction was negative. The researcher recommended that African media educators should emphasize mutual understanding in their training while Nigerian embassies should engage with media firms in their area of jurisdiction to create a more positive outlook.

Aniyi (2019) investigated media portrayal and perception of Nigerian migrants as threats to Ghana's National interest and used mixed research methods whereas the present study is about awareness and perception of Onitsha residents on 'japa' syndrome among Nigerians and the researchers used survey research methods. The reviews showed that there is a dearth of literature in the area of 'japa' syndrome, even though there are studies in areas of immigration. This study will fill the literature gap.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on social responsibility theory. This theory is an extension of libertarian theory, in that the press recognizes that it has a responsibility to society to carry out itsessential functions (Hassan, 2014). The social responsibility theory posits that the power and near monopoly position of the mediaimposes on them an obligation to be socially responsible in discharging their duties. The theory explains that the media owe society a duty to be socially responsible in discharging their duties or obligations. McQuail (1987), citing Ezegwu, &Onuama (2018) while highlighting the main principles of the social responsibilities theory, asserts among others, that the media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to society. These obligations amongst others involve adequately informing, educating, and mobilizing the masses against the practice and promotion of 'japa'. By way of fulfilling the social responsibility function, the mass media owe the public a duty to provide adequate information that will ultimately dissuade people from embarking on 'Japa'.

Methodology

The survey research method was adopted for this study due to the nature of the study. A survey as a research instrument focuses on a representative sample derived from the entire population of a study. This method is appropriate and suitable because it involves awareness, attitude, and perception of Onitsha residents on 'japa' syndrome among Nigerians. The population of this study comprises Onitsha residents estimated at one million and four hundred and eighty-three thousand (1,483,000) people based on the National Population Census projected figure for 2021. Onitsha is the commercial nerve center of Anambra State. Residents of the city are made up of people from different ethnic groups and other countries, thus, it provided the researchers opportunity to elicit data from diverse audiences. The sample size was determined by using the Krejcie and Morgan online calculator method. The method says when the population of study falls between 1000000 and above. The sample size is therefore 384.

Sampling Technique

The multi-stage sampling procedure was used in this study. Multi-stage sampling is a sampling technique that involves two or more stages of selection. Inthe first stage, the population was categorized into 8 clusters comprising major streets and their surrounding feeder roads in Onitsha. The reason is that it ensured easy access and removed any cluster errors. In the second stage, forty-eight (48) respondents were purposively selected from each of the clusters to make a total of 384 respondents. The reason for using the purposive sampling technique at this stage is to ensure that the researchers focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which generates answers to research questions. In the third stage, an available sampling technique was used to distribute copies of research questions to available adults (between 18 years and above). This is because of the mobile nature of the respondents. Therefore, those that were available and accessible during the time of the study were given copies of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Distribution of the sampling frame in Onitsha

Cluster	Sample Size
Awka Road	48
Nkisi Road	48
Ezeiweka Road	48
Venn Road	48
Upper Iweka Road Cluster	48
Oguta Road Cluster	48
Onitsha/Owerri Road Cluster	48
Limca Road	48
Total	**384**

Data Presentation and Analysis

The percentage method was used in data analysis and presentation. Out of 384 copies of the questionnaire administered to respondents in Onitsha, in Anambra State, only 361 (94%) were returned and found useable, thus giving the questionnaire a mortality rate of 23 (6%). Therefore, only 361 copies of the questionnaires were used for data analysis. The demographic data of the respondents indicate that 193 (53%) are females, while 168 (47%) are males. The age brackets of the respondents indicate that 18 and 27 (36%) accounted for most, while the age bracket of 48 and above (15%) was the smallest number of the respondents sampled. Further analysis revealed that unemployed respondents were 109 (31%). The analysis showed that 245 (68%) respondents were married while 116 (32%) were single.

Table 2: Extent of awareness of 'Japa' syndrome among respondents in Onitsha

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Very great extent	119	33
Great extent	143	40
Very low extent	45	12
Low extent	31	9
Can't say	23	6
Total	**361**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 reveals the extent of respondents' awareness of the 'Japa' syndrome among respondents in Onitsha. The majority (40%) of the respondents said they were aware. The implication is that many of the respondents are aware ofthe 'Japa' syndrome in Nigeria.

Table 3: Mass media channels through which Onitsha residents obtain information about 'Japa' issues in Nigeria

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Radio	51	14
TV	62	10
Internet	142	39
Newspapers & Magazines	34	9
From a Friend	72	20
Total	**361**	**100**

Field Survey: 2023

The data above indicate the mass media channels through which the respondents obtain information about 'japa' issues in Nigeria. From the analysis above most (39%) of the respondents obtain information about 'japa' issues through the internet medium.

Table 4: Respondents'Perception of 'japa' syndrome among Nigerians

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	241	67
Negative	77	21
Can't say	43	12
Total	**361**	**100**

Field Survey: 2023

The significance of the data above indicates that the majority (67%) of respondents

perceived the 'japa' syndrome among Nigerians as a positive development.

Discussion of Findings

The aim of research question one was to find out the extent to which respondents are aware of the 'japa' syndrome among Nigerians. The findings showed that the respondents (40%) are aware of Japa syndrome to a great extent. The finding further points to the fact that many Nigerians are aware of the 'japa' syndrome. This showed that the media are updating Nigerians on the mass exodus of its citizens to other countries. The social responsibility functions of media to the society, according to McQuail (1987) as cited in Ezegwu, &Onuama (2018) while highlighting the main principles of the social responsibilities theory, asserts among others, that the media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to the society. These obligations amongst others involve adequately informing, educating, and mobilizing the masses, especially in this case against the practice and promotion of 'Japa'.

The aim of research question two was to identify the mass media channels through which Onitsha residents obtain information about 'japa' issues in Nigeria. The data obtained showed that the majority (39%) of the respondents obtained information about 'japa' issues through the Internet medium, followed by friends and television medium. As a communication medium, the utility of the Internet is multi-dimensional. The introduction of the internet has changed the way we communicate. With internet technology, a series of computers are linked and pass information from one server to another. Kayode-Adedeji & Agwu (2015) observe that the use of the internet has grown in Nigeria. Similarly, Aririguzoh, Sobowale, Usaini & Amoka (2020), state that the internet has made it possible for users to pass across different types of messages, text, voice, pictures, and videos; at the click of the mouse. People can send messages to others in diverse places, countries, and continents. Research question three showed that the majority (67%) of respondents perceived the 'japa' syndrome among Nigerians as a positive development.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In line with the findings, the study concludes that the majority of Onitsha residents are aware of Japasyndrome e to a great extent. The finding further points to the fact that the media are updating Nigerians on the mass exodus of its citizens to other countries. The researchers also concluded thatmost respondents obtained information about 'japa' issues through the internet, followed by friends and television. They also perceived the 'japa' issues as a positive development. Given this, the study made the following recommendations:

i. Nigerian media should keep informing its citizens of the latest trends or developments in the country and beyond.

ii. Nigerians should continue to utilize the benefit of the internet for numerous purposes and relyon authentic sources on the internet for news and other important things.

iii. Since most respondents perceive the 'japa' thing as a positive development, Nigerians moving abroad should do genuine things and be good ambassadors of the country abroad.

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THE IMPOVERISHED AND THEIR ENTITLEMENT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING: A SYNTHETIC ANALYSIS

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The Impoverished, Poverty, Housing, Shelter and Inequality

ABSTRACT
Poverty is a worldwide issue that affects people from all walks of life, regardless of their race, gender, religion, or continent. It is a significant challenge that hinders and destroys the beauty of human existence. Governments and countries worldwide are taking various actions to tackle this endemic malaise; however, the more significant the efforts to alleviate poverty's impact, the harder it becomes. The most exacerbated blows of poverty's consequences are deprivation to adequate housing. This paper aims to explore the relationship between poverty and the challenge the poor face to secure adequate shelter in Nigeria. Shelter is a crucial key among the basic necessities of life, and it is one of the fundamental rights recognized by many constitutions worldwide. Content analysis of relevant legal instruments and literature was employed as a research methodology. Using the Structural Inequality Theory which examines how social, economic, and political structures contribute to unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, and power among different groups in society the study found that although access to adequate shelter is a fundamental human right, the poor in Nigeria are far from enjoying this inalienable right. The paper therefore, recommended among others that the government in partnership with the private sector should evolve a pragmatic approach, including policies to promote affordable housing, combat discrimination, and ensure legal protections for the poor.

Introduction

From the report of World Bank, (2021) poverty is a universal problem that affects people across the world, regardless of their race, culture, religion, or gender. Since independence in 1960 up to the present, poverty has become a pressing issue in Nigeria, where economic productivity has not translated into improved living standards for the population. It is unfortunate to remark that poverty has persisted in Nigeria despite the vast resources committed to poverty alleviation by successive administrations. The situation is critical and has worsened in the last decade, with real disposable incomes dwindling and malnutrition rates on the rise.

Nigeria is a paradox, as described by the World Bank, with immense wealth and resources but high poverty levels. The poverty level in Nigeria is astronomically high and politically embarrassing considering the country's vast human and mineral resources. Despite the huge resources committed to alleviate poverty, no significant progress has been achieved. Poverty is one of the forces militating against social and economic development in Nigeria (World Bank, 2018). Its Development Report estimated that over 50 million people in Nigeria live in poverty, and this figure is expected to double by 2023. Poverty presents a significant risk to social harmony, and the primary task of economic development should include eliminating poverty.

Oluwatayo, (2018) submitted that the Nigerian Government has applied various poverty alleviation and eradication strategies over the years, including the provision of basic infrastructure such as health, education, and nutrition services for the poor. In the 1980s, the focus shifted to promoting the productive use of labor and harnessing market incentives, social and political institutions, infrastructure, and technology. Despite these efforts, poverty remains entrenched in the fabric of Nigerian society.

Overall, poverty in Nigeria is a pervasive and chronic issue that necessitates urgent attention and sustained efforts from the government and international community. Poverty alleviation strategies is expected to focus on addressing the root causes of poverty, such as lack of education, access to healthcare, and employment opportunities. Only with sustained and coordinated efforts can poverty be effectively eradicated in Nigeria.

From the work of Aluko, (2023), it is evident that poverty can deprive individuals of various essential aspects of life, including: basic necessities such as access to food, clean water, and sanitation; healthcare such as adequate medical care and health insurance; education such as quality education and opportunities for personal development; housing such affordable, safe and stable shelter; employment opportunities such as reliable, decent job prospects and fair wages; nutrition such as sufficient and nutritious food; security such as protection from crime and social safety nets; quality of Life such as access to cultural, recreational, and social activities; dignity such as a sense of self-worth and belonging in society; future opportunities such as investment in one's future and that of their children; empowerment such as the ability to make choices and have a voice in one's community; social inclusion such as being part of a supportive community and having a social network and the list is endless.

These deprivations can have far-reaching impacts on an individual's well-being and opportunities in life. Poverty is a complex and multifaceted issue that affects individuals and societies across the globe. In the World Development Report 2017/2018, the World Bank, (2018) identifies three dimensions of poverty: a lack of opportunity, a lack of empowerment, and a lack of security. The lack of opportunity means that individuals living in poverty are unable to access or take advantage of the opportunities and resources available in society. This results in their exclusion and marginalization, making them practically inactive in the social, economic, and political spheres. They are often unable to improve their living conditions or escape the cycle of poverty.

The lack of empowerment further perpetuates poverty by limiting the choices and agency of individuals. People living in poverty often have limited control over their own lives and are unable to make decisions that would allow them to improve their situation. This includes decisions about choice of housing, education, employment, healthcare, and other essential aspects of life.

Additionally, the lack of security makes individuals living in poverty vulnerable to various risks and threats. These can include economic uncertainties, social instability, violence, and health issues. Lack of access to basic services such as healthcare, clean water, sanitation, and nutritious food further exacerbates the vulnerability of the poor.

In Nigeria as at today, severe and widespread poverty is a harsh reality. Many Nigerians lack access to basic necessities such as food, clothing, and education. The conditions they live in are unimaginable to those who have never experienced such extreme poverty. It is astounding to see how the severely poor manage to survive with the bare minimum. The effects of poverty in Nigeria are far-reaching and have a significant impact on the health and well-being of its population. This is why Chimobi, (2020) agrees that the country suffers from high infant mortality rates and low life expectancies, which are clear indicators of the poor health

conditions faced by the impoverished. Limited access to basic healthcare facilities and a lack of competent medical practitioners contribute to the poor health outcomes for those living in poverty.

There is also a lack of immunization for many children in Nigeria, leading to physical defects and long-term health issues. The poor face numerous health challenges, but they have little to no options or choices in seeking proper healthcare. They must accept whatever limited healthcare is available, regardless of its quality or suitability (Ford, 2017).

Overall, poverty in Nigeria is a complex issue with severe consequences that extend beyond material deprivation. The lack of opportunity, empowerment, and security creates a vicious cycle that perpetuates poverty and prevents individuals from breaking free from its grip. Addressing these multidimensional aspects of poverty is crucial to improving the lives of the poor and creating a more equitable society in Nigeria.

The Poor as a Concept

The concept of poverty or the poor is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that has been a subject to numerous debates and discussions. Different individuals, institutions, and countries have defined poverty in diverse ways, but it generally refers to a state of deprivation, insufficiency, and inadequacy in terms of material, economic, social, and human needs.

Material poverty according to Aderomu, (2021) refers to a lack of basic necessities such as shelter, food, clothing, and other essential items. He further explained that economic poverty reflects the inability of individuals or households to earn enough income to lead a decent life. Social poverty entails exclusion, marginalization, and unequal access to essential services, such as healthcare, education, and social protection. Finally, human poverty represents the inability of people to enjoy basic human rights, dignity, and freedom.

Poverty affects millions of people worldwide and is often caused by various factors such as inadequate education and skills, low-paying jobs, ill health, social discrimination, economic inequality, and political instability. Poverty tends to disproportionately affect vulnerable groups such as women, children, elderly, minorities, and people living in rural areas.

Therefore, poverty alleviation is a significant challenge that requires holistic and integrated approaches. One approach is to promote economic growth and development by creating jobs, enhancing productivity, and promoting entrepreneurship. Additionally, strengthening social protection schemes, improving access to basic services, providing education and healthcare can reduce poverty levels.

Indeed, poverty or the poor are complex and multi-dimensional concepts that require a multidimensional approach to address effectively. Tackling poverty requires a range of measures to improve economic, social, cultural, and political aspects of people's lives. Governments, civil societies, and international organizations must collaborate to ensure that poverty reduction targets are met.

Collier, (2017) infer that the word “poor” refers to individuals or groups who live below a certain economic or social threshold, generally in terms of income, education, and access to basic resources such as food, housing, and healthcare. Thus, poverty is often associated with various related issues such as social exclusion, unemployment, limited access to education, and limited opportunities for economic advancement.

Effects of Poverty:

Health Issues: As poverty often restricts access to basic healthcare services, people living in poverty often suffer from health problems such as malnutrition, infectious diseases, and chronic illnesses. They are also more vulnerable to mental health disorders due to the constant stress of living in financial instability.

Education: Children living in poverty often face a lack of access to education. This limits their potential and opportunities in life and perpetuates the cycle of poverty.

Housing and Sanitation Issues: Poor people tend to live in substandard housing and often lack safe drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities. This leads to the spread of diseases and health complications.

High Mortality Rate: Poverty causes high mortality rates due to hunger, starvation, and lack of access to medical care.

Crime and Violence: Economic hardship often leads to an increase in crime rates and violent activities. People who are poor struggle to make ends meet, leading to an increase in illegal and unethical activities.

Social problems: Poverty increases the social problems such as substance abuse, domestic violence, and child labor.

In conclusion, poverty is a complex issue that affects many aspects of an individual's life, including health, education, housing, and opportunities for advancement. To tackle poverty, it is essential to create policies and initiatives that address not just the symptoms but also the root causes of poverty. This will help in creating a more equitable society that provides everyone with the means to live a healthy and dignified life.

The Concept of Housing

Housing is a fundamental concept that encompasses various aspects related to the provision of shelter and living arrangements for individuals and communities. It plays a crucial role in people's lives and is intertwined with social, economic, and cultural factors. Housing refers to the physical structures and accommodations that provide shelter and living space for individuals or families. It includes a wide range of residential buildings such as houses, apartments, condominiums, and various types of shelters (Abraham, 2019).

In fact, housing is considered one of the basic human needs, along with food, water, and clothing. It offers protection from environmental elements and privacy, which are essential for well-being. It provides shelter from adverse weather conditions, natural disasters, and external threats. It offers a sense of security and safety, both physically and psychologically.

The affordability of housing is a critical aspect. People should have access to safe and suitable housing without it causing financial hardship. Affordable housing is a major concern in many parts of the world, Africa generally and Nigeria in particular. Abimaje, Akingbohungbe and Baba, (2019) posits that housing comes in various forms, including:

i. Single-family homes: Detached houses designed for a single family.

ii. Multi-family housing: Buildings with multiple units, like apartments and condominiums.

iii. Temporary shelters: Such as tents or emergency housing for displaced populations.

iv. Social housing: Government-subsidized housing for low-income individuals or families.

To them, quality housing involves factors like adequate space, ventilation, sanitation, and access to utilities (water, electricity, heating). Ensuring good housing quality is crucial for public health. Governments often formulate housing policies and regulations to ensure that housing is safe, affordable, and accessible to their citizens. These policies can cover zoning, building codes, rent control, and more.

Housing can be attained through homeownership or renting. Homeownership involves purchasing a property, while renting offers flexibility but does not provide long-term asset accumulation. Urban planning and development play a significant role in shaping housing options within cities. Well-planned urban areas have a mix of housing types and provide amenities and infrastructure.

What is more, in the view of Lopez, (2016) housing is closely connected to social issues, including segregation, homelessness, and the housing needs of vulnerable populations. He says that ensuring equitable housing opportunities is a societal challenge. Thus, sustainable housing practices aim to reduce the environmental impact of buildings. This includes energy-efficient design, use of eco-friendly materials, and waste reduction. The housing sector has economic implications, influencing property values, construction industries, and related businesses. It can also be a source of wealth and investment.

Disparities in housing, Lopez, (2016) insist that it exist on a global scale. Some regions face housing shortages and inadequate conditions, while others experience housing oversupply and un-affordability. Housing often carries cultural and symbolic significance. Different cultures have diverse housing traditions and architectural styles that reflect their values and lifestyles.

Challenges in housing include addressing affordability, sustainable design, and accommodating growing urban populations. Future trends may involve smart homes, co-living spaces, and increased use of technology in housing management. It is on this wise that (Abraham, 2019) submitted that housing is a multifaceted concept that goes beyond the mere provision of shelter. It encompasses issues of affordability, quality, policy, and social significance. Addressing housing needs and challenges is critical for improving the quality of life and well-being for individuals and communities.

Fundamental Human Rights in Relation to the Poor and Housing

The fundamental human rights related to housing are enshrined in various international agreements and conventions. These rights aim to ensure that all individuals have access to adequate housing, which is an essential component of a dignified and secure life. Here are few of these rights declarations:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): Article 25 of the UDHR states that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care." This declaration sets the foundation for the right to housing. (UNO, 2020)

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): Article 11 of the ICESCR recognizes the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing. It specifies that housing should be safe, habitable, affordable, and in a location that allows access to employment opportunities, healthcare, and education. (UNESCO, 2023)

The Right to Adequate Housing: The right to adequate housing is a distinct human right. It encompasses not only a physical structure but also the right to live in peace, security, and dignity. Adequate housing should be culturally appropriate and provide access to essential services. (Boezaart, 2022)

Non-Discrimination: A fundamental aspect of the right to housing is the principle of non-discrimination. States are obligated to ensure that housing rights are enjoyed without discrimination on grounds such as race, color, sex, religion, national or social origin, disability, or economic status. (Boezaart, 2022)

Security of Tenure: The right to housing includes the security of tenure. Individuals should be protected from forced evictions and arbitrary dispossession of their homes or land.

Participation and Consultation: States are encouraged to engage with communities and individuals in housing-related decision-making processes. This participatory approach ensures that housing policies and projects reflect the needs and preferences of those affected.

Progressive Realization: The right to housing acknowledges that achieving adequate housing for all may be a gradual process due to resource constraints. States are obligated to take deliberate, concrete steps to progressively realize this right, even in difficult economic conditions.

Housing for Vulnerable Groups: Special attention is given to housing for vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities, refugees, and the homeless. States are expected to make efforts to address their unique housing needs.

Availability, Accessibility, Affordability, and Quality: Adequate housing should be available in sufficient quantity, physically accessible, affordable, and of a quality that meets basic living standards. This includes access to clean water, sanitation, and basic infrastructure.

Monitoring and Accountability: States are responsible for establishing effective monitoring mechanisms to assess the realization of the right to housing. Individuals should have avenues for legal recourse if their housing rights are violated.

International and Regional Mechanisms: International and regional human rights bodies, such as the UN Human Rights Council, regional courts, and commissions, play a role in interpreting and upholding the right to housing.

Effectually, the fundamental human rights related to housing are grounded in international agreements and aim to ensure that every individual enjoys the right to adequate, safe, and secure housing without discrimination. These rights encompass a broad range of principles, including non-discrimination, security of tenure, participation, and progressive realization, with

the ultimate goal of improving living conditions and reducing poverty and inequality.

Theoretical Framework: The Structural Inequality Theory

The **Structural Inequality Theory** is a sociological and economic framework that helps us to understand how larger social structures and systems create and perpetuate inequalities within society. It posits that inequalities are not just the result of individual choices or behaviors but are deeply rooted in the structural arrangements of a society. The theory, also known as structural functionalism or structuralism, examines how social, economic, and political structures contribute to unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, and power among different groups in society. It emphasizes that inequalities are deeply embedded in the structure of society. It looks at institutions, such as the economy, education, healthcare, and the legal system, and how they contribute to disparities in income, wealth, education, and access to basic needs like housing. The theory highlights how societal institutions can perpetuate discrimination and prejudice against certain groups based on factors like race, gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic status.

For example, housing policies and lending practices may discriminate against the poor and minority groups thereby limiting their access to quality housing.

Furthermore, economic structures, including income and wealth distribution, are a key focus. The theory explains how economic systems can favor the wealthy and disadvantage the poor. Factors like regressive taxation, wage gaps, and access to capital can contribute to economic disparities. Suffice to add that, Structural Inequality Theory considers social mobility, or the ability for individuals to move up or down the socioeconomic ladder. It highlights how structural barriers can hinder mobility, making it difficult for the poor to improve their circumstances. For example, limited access to quality education can hinder upward mobility.

Again, the theory explores how race and ethnicity intersect with structural inequalities. It examines how racial discrimination and historical disadvantages can affect access to housing, employment, and educational opportunities. Residential segregation, for instance, is often rooted in historical racial discrimination, economic status and continues to affect housing opportunities for minority groups and the poor.

Gender disparities are also a key concern. The theory looks at how structural factors, such as the gender wage gap and gender roles, contribute to women's economic and social disadvantages. In terms of housing, this can mean that women, particularly single mothers, are more likely to face housing insecurity. On education, Structural Inequality Theory examines how educational systems can perpetuate or alleviate social inequalities. Differences in school funding, curriculum, and access to quality teachers can limit educational opportunities for the poor. Educational disparities, in turn, impact future economic prospects, including access to suitable housing.

The policy implications of the discussion above are significant. Policies and interventions should address structural factors to reduce inequalities. For housing, this could involve affordable housing initiatives, anti-discrimination measures, and equitable urban planning to address structural housing disparities.

Critiques: While structural inequality theory provides insights into how societal systems function, it has been critiqued for not always addressing the lived experiences of those facing inequality and for potentially justifying the status quo. Critics argue that this theory may oversimplify complex issues, and there's room for individual agency in improving one's circumstances. It may also be criticized for not offering clear solutions to address structural inequalities.

In summary, the Structural Inequality Theory is a foundational framework in sociology and economics that helps us comprehend the deep-rooted and systemic nature of social inequalities. It underscores the importance of addressing structural factors through policy changes and societal reforms to reduce disparities in various aspects of life, including housing.

The Position of Law on the Poor and Right to Housing

The position of the law regarding the rights to housing for the poor varies from country to country, but there are some general principles

and international guidelines that can be applied to understand this complex issue. These general principles and international guidelines are expected to be domesticated by each country that strives to uphold the dignity of man. Gleaning from the report of United Nations (UNO, 2020) the following are but a few on the legal position of housing rights for the poor:

International Framework: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) recognize the right to adequate housing as a fundamental human right. To this end, the United Nations (UNO, 2020) has established a Special Rapporteur on adequate housing to monitor and promote this right globally.

Right to Adequate Housing: The right to housing does not merely mean shelter but refers to housing that is habitable, safe, and secure. Adequate housing should be affordable and accessible, without discrimination, and should offer privacy and basic amenities.

Progressive Realization: The ICESCR acknowledges that the right to housing may not be immediately realizable in all countries. It's a progressive realization, requiring states to take steps towards full realization within their means. This is where the government is required to muster its political will to this realization of ensuring that there is adequate housing provision.

Discrimination: The law prohibits discrimination in housing based on factors such as race, gender, religion, or socio-economic status. Anti-discrimination laws aim to ensure equal access to housing for all, regardless of economic status. In reality however, this is like a mirage in most developing country such as Nigeria. Even low-cost housing units supposedly built for the low income earners never gets to the would-be beneficiaries.

Social and Economic Rights: Housing rights are often considered as part of a broader spectrum of social and economic rights, including the right to work, education, and health. These rights are interconnected, and ensuring housing rights contributes to the overall well-being of the poor.

Affordable Housing: Laws and policies can address the affordability of housing for low-income individuals or families. This can involve rent control, housing subsidies, or public housing programs. The workability of this is largely dependent on the political will of the government.

Homelessness: Laws may require governments to provide emergency shelters and support services for homeless individuals especially during emergencies such as natural disaster like flood, fire outbreak or breach of internal security like communal clashes. Some countries have "housing first" policies, which prioritize providing stable housing to the homeless as a first step in addressing other issues.

Human Rights Institutions: Some countries have human rights commissions or ombudsmen responsible for monitoring and enforcing housing rights. These institutions can provide recourse for individuals facing housing-related violations.

International Pressure and Advocacy: International organizations, NGOs, and civil society groups play a role in advocating for the housing rights of the poor. They can put pressure on governments to comply with international standards.

Challenges and Enforcement: Enforcement of housing rights for the poor can be challenging due to budget constraints, political will, and legal barriers. Litigation and advocacy are often used to push for change.

From the foregoing, the legal position on the housing rights of the poor is based on international human rights principles and is enshrined in various domestic laws and policies. However, as Agbola, (2018) insists that the specifics of these rights, their enforcement, and their realization vary widely from one country to another, but they all aim to ensure that everyone, regardless of their economic status, has access to safe and adequate housing. Accordingly, advocacy and continued efforts are necessary to address housing disparities and promote housing as a fundamental human right.

The United Nation's Position on Housing

The United Nations recognizes that housing is a fundamental human right. The UN's position on housing provision for the poor is guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes the right to adequate housing.

The UN's efforts in advocating for adequate housing for the poor are focused on three main pillars: promotion, protection, and provision (UNO, 2020).

Promotion: The UN promotes the right to adequate housing through various international agreements and conventions, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which recognizes the right to adequate housing as part of the right to a decent standard of living. The UN also encourages governments to adopt policies and strategies that promote affordable housing options for low-income communities.

Protection: The UN seeks to protect vulnerable groups, such as low-income communities or people affected by natural disasters, from inadequate housing practices. The UN recognizes the importance of secure land tenure and property rights, which can help prevent eviction or forced displacement. The organization also advocates for the protection of informal settlements and slums, ensuring that basic services such as water and sanitation are available to these communities.

Provision: The UN recognizes that access to affordable housing is a significant challenge for many poor communities and emphasizes the need for sustainable and affordable housing solutions. The UN supports initiatives that promote the development of low-cost housing options, including public housing and microfinance programs. The organization also advocates for the integration of housing policies into broader poverty reduction strategies.

Accordingly, the UN's position on housing provision for the poor is focused on promoting adequate housing as a fundamental human right, protecting vulnerable groups from injustices related to housing provision, and providing sustainable and affordable housing solutions. The organization's efforts in this area are guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and supported by various international agreements and conventions.

It is however pertinent to note that the United Nations (UN) recognizes that adequate housing is a fundamental human right for all and essential for achieving sustainable development. Therefore, it has taken the following measures to promote and ensure the right to housing globally.

The UN position on housing provision is outlined in various international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, including housing. The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has further specified that the right to housing includes access to adequate shelter, security of tenure, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location and cultural adequacy.

Likewise, the SDGs have set a target of ensuring access to affordable, adequate, and safe housing for all by 2030. According to the SDGs, housing and urban development should address issues such as affordability, resilience, sustainability, and inclusion.

The UN supports a range of initiatives to promote adequate housing globally, including the provision of technical assistance, capacity-building, and funding support for housing projects. It also advocates for policies that ensure access to housing for vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities, and those living in informal settlements.

Furthermore, the UN has established various mechanisms to monitor and report on the implementation of the right to housing, including through the Universal Periodic Review, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Human Rights Council.

Thus, the UN recognizes the right to adequate housing as a fundamental human right and has taken various measures to promote and ensure access to housing for all, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Challenges of the Poor to Housing Provision

The provision of adequate housing for the poor is a complex and multifaceted issue that involves various challenges. These challenges vary by region and country but are often interconnected. Beegley, (2021) gave some highlights on the challenges the poor face in accessing housing:

Affordability: One of the most significant challenges is the affordability of housing. Poor individuals and families often struggle to afford safe and decent housing due to low incomes and rising housing costs. Market forces, speculation, and gentrification can drive up housing prices, pushing housing further out of reach for the poor.

Inadequate Income: Many poor individuals earn incomes that are insufficient to cover their basic needs, including housing. Low-paying jobs, underemployment, or unemployment can make it nearly impossible for the poor to afford suitable housing.

Housing Discrimination: Discrimination in housing is a pervasive problem. Poor individuals may face discrimination based on their race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic status. Discriminatory practices can limit housing options and perpetuate housing inequality. This discrimination as posited by World Bank, (2023) may lead to homelessness: Homelessness is a severe challenge for the poor. Those without a stable place to live face numerous hardships, including exposure to the elements, violence, and health risks. Lack of affordable housing and social support contribute to homelessness.

Overcrowding: Poor households often face overcrowded living conditions, with multiple generations or families sharing small living spaces. Overcrowding can lead to health issues, reduced privacy, and strained family relationships. A consequence of this according to Akeju, (2017) is unsafe and unhealthy Housing: Poor individuals may live in substandard, unsafe, or unhealthy housing conditions. This can include dilapidated buildings, inadequate sanitation, and exposure to environmental hazards. Such conditions pose health and safety risks.

Lack of Access to Services: Poor neighborhoods may lack access to essential services like healthcare, education, and public transportation. This can isolate residents and limit their opportunities for economic advancement. This is the case of most villages in Nigeria.

Inadequate Legal Protections: Boezaart, (2022) submitted that a great majority of poor individuals lack legal protections against eviction, especially in informal settlements or slums. Evictions without due process can result in homelessness and housing insecurity. This is prevalent where the populace is majorly illiterate and cannot afford legal services as prevalent in Nigeria. Akin to it he says ia absence of Land Tenure and Property Rights: Poor individuals often lack secure land tenure and property rights, making them vulnerable to land grabs and forced evictions. Legal recognition and protection of land rights are essential.

Urbanization and Rural-Urban Migration: Abimaje et al, (2019) says that rapid urbanization and rural-urban migration can lead to an increased demand for housing in urban areas, often outpacing the supply of affordable housing. Informal settlements and slums often emerge as a result thereby leading to acute lack of Infrastructure. Poor neighborhoods may lack essential infrastructure such as water, electricity, and sewage systems, contributing to poor living conditions. The absence of infrastructure affects the overall quality of life.

Natural Disasters and Climate Change: Poor communities are often more vulnerable to the impacts of natural disasters and climate change due to their housing conditions and limited resources. Floods, hurricanes, and other disasters can lead to displacement and loss of housing.

Political and Economic Instability: According to Oluwatayo, (2018) political instability, corruption, and economic downturns can affect housing provision and exacerbate housing challenges for the poor. Investment in housing and infrastructure has largely been inadequate.

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including policies to promote affordable housing, combat discrimination, and ensure legal protections for the poor. It also involves efforts to improve economic opportunities, education, and access to basic services in impoverished communities. Collaboration among governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector is crucial to make progress in addressing these housing challenges

Conclusion

Poverty in Nigeria is a complex issue with various dimensions, effects and causes. While it can be challenging to separate the different dimensions of poverty from its causes, the effects on housing which is a basic necessity of life is disheartening. The determinants, such as

unemployment, corruption, the lack of economic diversification, inequality, and a poor education system, are interconnected and mutually reinforce each other.

Overall, poverty in Nigeria is a multi-dimensional issue influenced by several interconnected factors. Tackling unemployment, corruption, inadequate education, and inequality requires a comprehensive strategy. Moreover, economic diversification away from oil dependency and improvements in housing and healthcare are vital components of poverty reduction efforts. Addressing these challenges holistically will be necessary to bring about lasting change and improve the lives of Nigerians.

Recommendations

Policy Reforms: We advocate for policy changes that prioritize affordable housing initiatives and address the specific needs of the impoverished population. There should be policy to support the development and implementation of housing policies that ensure equitable access to adequate housing.

Public-Private Partnerships: A call to Foster collaboration between government agencies, private businesses, and non-profit organizations is inevitable to create innovative and sustainable housing solutions. There should be more pragmatic approach to encourage private sector investment in affordable housing projects through incentives and partnerships.

Legal Protections: Indeed, we strongly advocate for stronger legal frameworks that protect the housing rights of the impoverished, including anti-discrimination laws and regulations ensuring fair housing practices. Government and private initiative should Support legal aid services to help those facing housing-related legal challenges.

Education and Awareness: Finally, we recommend for avenues to promote awareness campaigns to educate the public about the importance of adequate housing and the impact on overall well-being. This will Foster a broader understanding of the systemic issues contributing to housing disparities.

These recommendations aim to create a comprehensive approach to addressing the housing entitlements of the impoverished, combining policy changes, community engagement, legal protections and education.

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IMPERATIVES OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT BOLA AHMED TINUBU

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ABSTRACT
This paper explores the critical elements of Nigeria's foreign policy under the current leadership of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. It delves into the strategic decisions, policy changes, and diplomatic initiatives so far undertaken during the last six months of his administration. Using documentary sources, the paper further examines the impact of these policies on Nigeria's international relations, economic growth, and regional stability. It also provides an analysis of the challenges encountered and the strategies employed to overcome them. The study concludes with an assessment of the effectiveness of President Tinubu's foreign policy and its implications for Nigeria's future diplomatic engagements. This paper aims to contribute to the understanding of Nigeria's foreign policy dynamics and offer insights for policy formulation and implementation.

Introduction

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) states that since independence, the central plank of Nigeria's foreign policy has been a focus on Africa and on some basic principles that include the continent's unity, independence, peaceful settlement of disputes and regional economic cooperation and development'. Since independence in 1960, Africa has continued to be at the hub of Nigeria's foreign policy and international relations. Nigeria's foreign policy is informed by several factors amongst which are molded by the lessons of history, psychological and image perception by its leaders which is expressed in a perceived "historic mission" and "manifest destiny" because of the geographical, economic, and demographic factors which are to the nation's advantage. Thus, Olusanya and Akindele posit that "there has been no doubt that the national consensus which has emerged in support of these broad objective reflects and underscores impact the objective national cognitive self-perception by the Nigeria Foreign Policy elite on the position of Nigeria as the most populous black state in the world and of her role as the most powerful and influential state in black Africa. However, successive Nigerian leaders have been very careful to draw a distinction between "domination" and "leadership" preferring to play a leadership but not imperial role (Olusanya and Akindele, 1990).

It is therefore instructive to point the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) S.19 in which impetus is given in the couched principles and objectives of the Nigeria's Foreign Policy. According to Jega and Farris (2010) successive Nigerian governments, especially under military rule, have striven to assume or claim a leadership position through Foreign Policy deliberations and actions and other modes of international

engagements. This commenced with Yakubu Gowon's drive for regional integration and key role in the formation of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Under general Murtala and Obasanjo (1975 – 1979), Nigeria was a leader on African issues with an enthusiastic, some say radical foreign policy thrust. Under Generals Murtala and Obasanjo, Nigeria's foreign policy objectives were more coherently defined than was hitherto the case. Africa was made the centerpiece or cornerstone of Nigeria's foreign policy (NEEDS Assessment, 2005).

However, by 1979 to 1983, Nigeria's economy had been badly managed that our overall national power and indeed our national will had become greatly diminished, some of our neighboring countries had scant respect, if not outright contempt for us and they ventured to attack our soldiers and our citizen populations inside our borders with impunity. Gambari concludes that:

> *Nigeria's foreign policy was perceived as vague, poorly articulated and lacking vigor and direction. Thus, the old concept of Africa being the centerpiece of our foreign policy was given new expression… he quotes General Buhari, thus, 'a pattern of concentric circles may be discernible in our attitude and response to foreign policy issues within the African continent and in the world at large. At the epicenter of these circles are the national economic and security intents of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which are inextricably tied with the security, stability and economic and social well-being of our immediate neighbors. One of our priorities is to put a more constructive look into relations with our neighbours with whom we share identical goals of regional stability and peace(Gambari, 1986).*

By 1985, Gen. Buhari was unavoidably ousted from power and the new military government of General Ibrahim Babangida opted for a new approach towards attaining Nigeria's foreign policy goals. This was muted via Gen. Ike Nwachukwu, his then Minister for Foreign Affairs which was expressed in economic diplomacy. Jega avers that, 'the pursuit of economic diplomacy as an additional plank of Nigeria foreign policy was aimed at cushioning the damaging impact of the economic crises that engulfed Nigeria in the 1980s and at assuaging the consequences of the Structural Adjustment measures which had been introduced to contain the crisis. Foreign policy was redirected from a predominantly political focus to an economic one, in which foreign policy instruments were used to advance domestic economic development objectives'(Jega and Farris, 2010).

Consequent upon the transition to democratic rule 1999 that saw to the assumption to power of President Olusegun Obasanjo, his National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) strategy was envisioned as one in which Nigeria fulfils its potential to become Africa's largest economy and a major player in the global economy. The Kuru Declaration of 2001 which was a blueprint that embodied the vision and mission of the new administration intended to blind a truly great African democratic country, politically united, integrated and stable, economically prosperous, socially organized, with equal opportunity for all and responsibility from all to become the catalyst of (African) renaissance and making adequately all-embracing contributions, sub-regionally, regionally and globally. It was an attempt at regaining lost glory and reinvent Nigeria's image which had suffered immensely under the protracted military leaderships.

It is on this note that President Obasanjo utilized the Shuttle Diplomatic approach travelling extensively to major capitals of the world, establishing ties with viable diplomatic capitals and Multinational Corporations in order to achieve participation in international organizations and the world economy, politically and economically respectively. Indeed, he has been credited to be the most travelled President, hence, the approach Shuttle Diplomacy.

Late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua was reputed to have introduced the concept of "citizen diplomacy" as the thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy. It was argued that the concept was construed to mean a focus on Nigeria's citizens, home and abroad. Yet, even after the death of President Yar'Adua, his successor, President Goodluck Jonathan's administration was perceived as an administration that continued the Yar'Adua approach to foreign policy issues. Similarly, President MuhammaduBuhari's administration and approach to foreign policy was a re-enactment of his erstwhile concentric circles approach which gave primacy to the citizens, its neighbors,

Africa and then the world at large. However, the eventual closure of Nigeria's borders to ensure the growth of the domestic economy drew ire from its neighbors. Amidst the dissatisfaction, it is observed that the administration went ahead to execute some projects that appeared to favor the neighboring Niger Republic such as the Nigeria-funded rail line from Nigeria to Niger and also thedonation of vehicles worth over a billion naira to Niger (Okafor, 2022). This gesture also drew backlash from the citizenry as the country was facing an economic meltdown, crass corrupt practices and the resurgence of insecurity.

Theoretical Approach: The Rational Actor Model

National interest has been used by statesmen and scholars since the founding of nation-states to describe the aspirations and goals of sovereign entities in the international arena- National interest is the perceived needs and desires of one sovereign state in relation to other sovereign states comprising the external environment (Nuechterlein, 1976). These sovereign entities are nation-states whom are presumed to be rational actors capable of taking decisions in the conduct of their affairs on the international scene in the pursuit of their national interests.According to Alli (2007) 'the interests of states are called national interests, and the methods and actions they employto attempt to achieve these interests are called national policies (Alli, 2007)', particularly, in the milieu of foreign relations, this is called Foreign Policy. Indeed, foreign policy is the apparatus states utilize to engage other actors in the international system. It spells out the guidelines for engagement.

States are treated as unitary actors which is likened to individuals capable of taking decisions. Hence, in the pursuit of its national objectives and interests, a state can be seen as the Rational Decision maker capable of making decisions. Citing Glaser, Schmidt and Wight (2023) observe that, "The state is assumed to be rational- it makes purposive decisions that take reasonable account of its interests, and the international constraints and opportunities that it faces.

International relations is a sphere for pursuit of power and states require some modus operandi for engagement which is saddled on the foreign policy orientation. Such orientation takes cognizance of the domestic and external environments of foreign policy. Thus, with the amount of information and awareness at the disposal of states, it weighs its priorities and makes decisions that will be favorable to its national interests.

It is the position of Cohen and Harris that "foreign policy is a set of goals, directives or intentions formulated by persons in official or authoritative positions directed at some actor or conditions in the environment beyond the sovereign nation-state for the purpose of affecting the target in a manner desired by the policy maker. Traditionally, the motives of policymakers have been treated as stemming primarily from a concern with preserving or enhancing the security of the state (i.e power) and the mechanism of choice has been assumed to be rational calculation (Cohen and Harris, 1976)". This position takes cognizance of the yardstick for analysis in international relations which is the level of analysis. There is the individual level, the state level and the global level. Rational calculations and options taken after weighing the alternatives amongst available options is an exercise of the individual leader (and expressed in the state), as such his values and idiosyncrasies affects his decision making. In any case, it is deemed that the rational actor takes decisions purposely as they represent the State. Other variables that come into play are the internal dynamics and the distribution of power and access to resources in the international system.

Also, Slantchev (2005) opines that "the rational actor model treats foreign policy choices as products of the following idealized sequences; given some problem, a rational decision maker takes into account the foreign policy goals of the nation and determines which one takes priority over others, then identifies and analyzes the various options available. The actor traces the costs and benefits associated with each option, estimate the like consequences and choose the option that is ranked highest amongst the alternatives (Slantchev, 2005)". This explains the rationale in the ordering of Nigeria's foreign policy objectives vis a vis the different policy thrusts of different leaders in the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy.

Nigeria's foreign policy objectives have remained basically consistent despite changes in leadership, variation in style and general vicissitudes in its national life. Dr. JajaNwachukwu placed a lot of emphasis on *"Africa being the Centrepiece"* of Nigeria's

foreign policy, Prof. BolajiAkinyemi, mooted the idea of "Medium power" seeking Nigeria to reap more grains beyond the mill of being touted as a regional power. Prof. Ibrahim Gambari propagated the principles of *"Concentric Circles"* in the implementation of Nigeria's foreign policy. Gen. Ike Nwachukwu promoted *"Environmental and Economic diplomacy"* while Chief OjoMadueke promoted *"Citizen diplomacy"*. However, these approaches confer responsibility on African affairs (Chibundu 2009:11). Despite the variations in approach, the State as the Rational actor will adopt decisions consistent to its needs and germane to its National Interests. As such, the current President Bola Ahmed administration is saddled with the responsibility of directing Nigeria's foreign policy orientation of the new dispensation which will be reflective of the state as the Rational Actor responding to the internal and external environments of its foreign policy engagement. All these will be predicated on Nigeria's national interest.

THE IMPERATIVES OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY UNDER PRESIDENT BOLA AHMED TINUBU

Africa has always found expression in Nigeria's foreign policy. Gambari (1986) noted that, as early as August 1960, Tafawa Balewa had informed his parliament that his government's policy will be clear and practical towards Africa-the Continent of our birth. Also, good neighborliness would also be the hallmark of our external relations in Africa… he further explains that, the Africa Center-piece concept was concretized by the Murtala-Obasanjo regime. It was under the regime that the Adedeji Report on Foreign Relations coined the "African center-piece concept"' (Gambari, 1986:75). The concept may have diminished over subsequent regimes, but Nigeria has always considered Africa within the orbit of its Foreign policy.

The 1999 Constitution as amended delineates Nigeria's Foreign Policy objectives as follows:

i. Promotion and protection of the national interest;

ii. Promotion of African integration and support for African unity;

iii. Promotion of international cooperation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of discrimination in all its manifestations;

iv. Respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication; and

v. Promotion of a just world economic order (CFRN 1999).

Even though Africa still finds a place in the above objectives, Nigeria is prioritized. the promotion and protection of the national interest. National interest would imply the corporate existence of the country and the prevention of its indivisibility by strengthening security and sustaining economic prosperity. Yet, in recent times the country has been faced with dire and debilitating economic adversities, including an exacerbated food insecurity, an unstable currency and a wave of internal security challenges. It has become necessary to re-evaluate the Nigeria's stance on Africa and good neighborliness in the current administration vis-a-vis the exigencies of the times.

At his inaugural address, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu cited the situation in Sudan and stated thus;

> my primary foreign policy objective must be the peace and stability of the West African sub-region and the African continent. We shall work with ECOWAS, the AU and willing partners in the international community to end extant conflicts and to resolve new ones.
>
> As we contain threats to peace, we shall also retool our foreign policy to more actively lead the regional and continental quest for collective prosperity.

Indeed, conflicts and coups could affect the stability of the sub-region, but juxtaposed to the internal security threats assailing the Nigerian state, while not remaining aloof to African problems, we observe that the country requires an overhaul in itself. Political theory attests to the fact that 'the state is an end in itself'. It hence has to subsist before engaging in high politics. Thus, we borrow and subscribe to the prescription of Chime (1987) that, *given the level*

of ambition of Nigerian foreign policy, a good defense policy is a prerequisite. This will touch on the preservation of Nigeria's sovereignty and the resuscitation of the seemingly challenged economy.

Barely two months in his tenure,President Tinubu emerged Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In addressing the community, the President stated warned that the threat to peace in the West African sub-region had reached alarming proportions, with terrorism and an emerging pattern of military takeover as major contributors. He further observed that these are threats to democracy. Elumove (2023) reported that the President decried the emerging pattern of coup d'etat in West Africa, where soldiers toppled the popular mandate of the people through the barrel of the gun. Tinubu stated that;

> *we must stand firm on democracy. There is no governance, freedom and rule of law without democracy. We will not accept coup after coup in West Africa again. Democracy is very difficult to manage but it is the best form of government.*

On the contrary, Nigerian foreign policy makers must be wary of the wanton abuse of democratic tenets in the country. Nigeria must be seen to practice what it preaches.Despite an uninterrupted run of democracy since 1999, democratic institutions have been abused, especially the judiciary. Elsewhere, are reports of human rights abuses and entrenched corruption at the upper echelon of government. As such, the promotion of democracy elsewhere must be concomitant to the internal democratic needs of Nigeria.

In an article, 'Resist new scramble for Africa', the President was pointed to have told the African Union to resist any new scramblers who intend to plunder the resources of Africa. Rather, African leaders would no longer remain passive as they worked to harness their vast resources to better their respective countries (Angbolu 2023). The posture is laudable but the reality seems to be double-speak. African countries, including Nigeria, have taking their heels to neo-colonialist institutions owned by imperialist nations for loans that keep them indebted and subservient. In fact, this impinges on the politico-economic sovereignty of African states and their ability to negotiate favorable terms of trade. Therefore, it becomes imperative for the administration to look inwards and seek means of enhancing the production industry of the country in order to delink from an import reliant economy which is contingent on the fluctuations of the dollar. The President must stay true to his resolve as he stated to the executives of the AFREXIM Bank that 'that the federal government would continue to stimulate the economy with policies that support investments in areas of Nigeria's competitive advantage, particularly agriculture'. Nigeria is blessed with arable land with a huge industrial capacity for food production. Yet,climate change, banditry on farmers and kidnapping in the most productive states has led to an astronomical rise in food prices. Mechanisms to tackle this state of affairs must be engineered.

It may seem nascent for analysts to begin to eviscerate the foreign policy intention of President Tinubu, but it is timely. The several statements the President has made grants insights on the direction we anticipate his policy thrust. Despite buttressing the importance of democracy, legitimacy of governments and intolerability of coups in Africa, a military junta took over the reins of government in Niger Republic via a coup de' tat less than a month after. This bodes ill for a Nigeria which is continually pressured and plagued by separatists and ethnic nationalists.

It becomes particularly imperative that the domestic demands on which Nigeria's foreign policy would stand for its foundation must be made concrete. From the foregoing, issues of reconciling competing and antagonizing interests in the aftermath of the 2023 general elections has to take center stage. This fact impinges on the problems of Nigeria's federalism which fails to adequately integrate the various ethnicities and religions found in the State. It becomes imperative that the conduct of foreign policy in the ensuing dispensation must as a policy enhance national integration. Nweke(1986) opined that;

> *in the African context, state security should be conceived as involving national integration, maintenance of congenial domestic ethnic and class order as well as protection of territorial integrity and against external intervention. this being the case, security policy becomes a conscious strategy design to create*

> *and strengthen a particular political order which sustains both ethnic/class and state security (Nweke, 1986:11). Essentially, observance of justice and fairness with respect to federal character and quota system should me upheld.*

To further buttress the imperative of integration being germane to the conduct of foreign policy, we recall that Nigeria adopted federalism as a means to attain compromise in a heterogeneoussociety. This compromise, Elaigwu observes *is to form a balance between the opposing centrifugal and centripetal forces*. We reckon that a federal imbalance can bring about instability and affect a smooth conduct of foreign policy. Thus, he further stresses that:

> *…the extent to which a federal system survives very much depends on the ability of the political elites in a country to maintain a delicate balance between centrifugalism and centripetalism. Excessive pulls in favor of centrifugalism may herald disintegration. Yet, excessive pulls to the centre may challenge the very existence of federalism and the cocoon of security it provides for members of the society. It could also lead to disintegration (Elaigwu, 1984: 4).*

As such, the current administration must address the lingering clamors of segregation, marginalization and the calls for secession by addressing the imbalances occasioned by unfairness and injustice. It must be desirous for the nation to work towards nationhood and national consciousness.

Also, the economy is in dire straits which needs a systemic revamping. Nigeria hasn't the luxury of extending handouts. Like the President, retorted that *we are not Father Christmas* when the subsidy on oil products was lifted. The policy affected the country deeply as well as its surrounding African neighbors. The Nigerian populace still anticipates the government to make alternative palliatives to cushion the effects on their livelihoods. Nigeria boasts of over 200 million in population which is a potential for commerce. However, the cost of living could impact negatively on its populace. It can be weaponized into a ready army for revolt.

It is commendable that the borders are opened to enhance trade and revenue, however, illicit trafficking of weapons, drugs and traversing bandits must be controlled. This reverts us back to the importance of border security.

Furthermore, there is an umbilical cord linking internal and external security. Hence, there must be a reinvigoration of stamina into the country's defense policy. The security architecture must effectively be poised to manage the perennial security problems of armed robbery, banditry, terrorism, oil theft, cyber-crime, drug related crimes and the trafficking in small arms and light weapons. Concomitant to the aforementioned is the external threats involving trans-border crimes, international conflicts and the resurgence of *coup-detats* in Africa. In the spate of three years, seven governments have been toppled in Africa. In the case of Niger, Nigeria cut ties with Niger and instructed a border closure. And despite a threat by ECOWAS to utilize a standby force for intervention, another coup was orchestrated in Gabon on August 30th. Burkina Faso has expressed solidary to its counterpart *coupists* in Niger promising to provide strategic support amidst the call for the ECOWAS Standby force intervention. It therefore becomes imperative thatNigeria must weigh the pros and cons of antagonizing its neighbor (Niger) vis-à-vis its vested interests in that country and the region at large.

Both Nigeria and Niger being members of ECOWAS are also members of the Multi National Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The MNJTF's mandate is 'to create safe and secure environment in the area affected by the activities of Boko Haram and other terrorist groups'. It is profitable to be cautious that this strategic relationship be sustained. Indeed, Mali being contiguous to Niger is also a haven for terrorist elements and a route for weapons trafficking. Also, they share similar coup motivations with Niger (expelling French influence and dominance) and therefore may begin to view Nigeria as an imperialist tool for advancing western ideologies. Nigeria must be diplomatic on all fours in dealing with its neighbors to avoid an insecurity fallout in the Sahel region that will in turn become detrimental to its security interests.

More so, the trans Saharan gas pipeline project which Nigeria has also invested in is a critical area of interest. The project is worth 13 Billion USDs (with Nigeria reportedly to have

contributed 1 Billion USD) and is to transit through Niger to Algeria for onward distribution in Europe. But at period where Nigeria has cut ties with Niger, the project could be jeopardized. Thus, Akintayo observed that;

> *first, the security situation in Niger and neighboring regions poses a substantial risk to the project's stability prior to construction and post-construction… the inability of West African countries to quickly resolve the Niger Republic coup is threatening the delivery of the $13bn Trans-Sahara gas pipeline, as the project faces funding challenge… the success of the pipeline construction is contingent if Niger's junta decides to "play ball" ... also, the coup had become a threat to other gas infrastructural projects such as the $25bn Nigeria-Morocco gas pipeline and the 614 km Ajaokuta-Kaduna-Kano gas pipeline (2023).*

Therefore, Nigeria while being weary of the situationin Niger, it should hesitate on embarking any military action which will further strain relations between both countries with the capacity of engendering insecurity via our borders. Moreover, Nigeria's nationals resident and conducting businesses in Niger cannot be overlooked, thus, their security and welfare must be taken into account before they become targets for venting out hate and vengeance. It is insightful to draw from the words of Chime (1987), whom stated that;

> *it must not be thought that Nigeria's first line of defense is located at our borders. Ideally, our first line of defense must be perceived to lie within the territories of contiguous states thus affording us a viable buffer zone. And the more we commit our trade and industrial resources, **even human** in the surrounding states the more this principle of defense becomes imperative (1987: 28).*

Another important imperative for Nigeria's foreign policy is that of leadership. If Nigeria seeks to provide leadership to its immediate neighbors and Africa, the malaise of bad leadership must be dealt with. The current administration has been able to form its cabinet without tarrying and the business of governance has commenced within the first hundred days of the administration. However, the ills of corruption must be nipped in the bud. The institutions and agencies of government be strengthened to bring confidence. The arms of government must be complimentary not dependent upon the Executive. Agencies such as the Independent National Electoral Commision (INEC), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and such other important agencies must be held accountable to be transparent and truly independent.

Consequently, in addressing the elephant in the room for the current administration in conducting Nigeria's foreign policy, a systematic and multi-faceted approach must be adopted which touches on hard and soft defense, economic policies, integrating the populace, recognizing the security, welfare and potential of citizens in diaspora and using tact in our relations with our immediate neighbors. Most importantly, a strong and resolute leadership which possesses empathy and compassion is highly desired.

Conclusion

This article is an invitation to the current administration to place primacy on the exigencies of the times in the conduct of its foreign policy. Nigeria's foreign policy objectives is captured in the Grundnorm, yet, all must be predicated and found on how the national interest is defined. The foreign policy makers are implored not to be overzealous and overambitious in defining the direction in which the foreign policy is to take. The article provides certain imperatives which could be a blueprint for the current administration at a time where the economy is in dire straits and poverty is rife. Therefore, Nigeria's national sovereignty and integrity must be preserved in a manner that takes into account its internal security and stability, national cohesion and integrity, the country's relationship with its neighbors and the importance of leadership. The article also suggests that Nigeria must be very diplomatic in managing interventionist tendencies in the affairs of its neighbors considering the nation's porous borders and a possibility of insecurity therefrom should there be a fallout in relations with Niger in particular.

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THE CONCEPT OF 'ALA BỤ ALA': A SIGNAL FOR IGBO EXTINCTION

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KEYWORDS
Igbo People, Alabuala, language and culture

ABSTRACT
Igbo people has been known as the ethnic group that is most travelled. They do not only travel but also prosper in foreign lands, build houses, feel at home and relax in another man's land. Some marry from other ethnic groups, bear children and imbibe the culture of other people they meet in the host community. Some do not care to reach their native land or build any house in their state or village in spite of the prosperity they have gotten. This behaviour has been popularly tagged as Alabụala meaning, land is land. Many have written on the Igbo language endangerment especially since the prediction of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization(UNESCO) that Igbo language may be heading to extinction in fifty years if nothing is done by the speakers. None has emphasized the Igbo belief in travelling live and not just travelling but relaxing in foreign land and neglecting of their heritage community. This attitude has been described as Alabụala meaning land is land. The aim of this paper is to expose the danger of this type of attitude demonstrated by some Igbo indigenes to the continuity of Igbo language and culture. It also suggests ways to prevent the extinction of the language and culture. In doing this, the researchers made use of participatory observation in data collection. Participatory in that, he lives in Diaspora. Some Igbo youths were also interviewed to investigate their familiarity with their heritage land and their ability to speak Igbo language.

Introduction

Igbo refers to the language of the Igbo people of the South Eastern Nigeria. Igbo is the language and Igbo also refers to the people that hail from Anambra, Imo, Enugu, Abia, Ebonyi states and some parts of Delta state, Edo state, River state. One major characteristic of these people is that they speak the same language although with different dialects which are mutually intelligible to one another. We say, *Igbo na-asụn'olumanaakwaụkwara ọ bụrụotu'* (Igbo people speak in different voice but when they cough it is the same) meaning Igbo people understand themselves. Igbo people are rich in culture and are highly industrious. They distinguish themselves anywhere they are found. Igbo people travel far and near and believe that *'Onyeijekaonyeisiawoakụkọ'*

meaning a traveller is richer in knowledge than the elderly. For this believe, Igbo people believe so much in travelling.

Igbo is also good in imitation. They copy the new language and culture they meet in any land they find themselves in attempt to adapt to the new land.

All the above characteristics of the Igbo pose a serious danger to the extinction of the language and culture. According to Ogbonna (2015:32), language endangerment is real and it is a phenomenon which is continuing through space and time as many languages continue to fall out of use and are being replaced by other languages that may be more widely used for economic or socio-political reasons within the region.

Language endangerment begins gradually. When a language is being replaced in a community that language is heading into extinction. A language goes into extinction when no one speaks it. A language that no speaker is death. When the young ones do not cherish their language and culture but prefer another language rather than their mother tongue, within a space of time, their parents will die off and the mother-tongue will go into extinction.

Igbo language, literature and culture are dying as a result of the abuse of the travelling live by many Igbo people referred to as *Alabụala'*. The travelling live of the Igbo people which is presently abused by many is a serious challenge to the continuity of Igbo language and culture.

The aim of this paper is to expose the threat Igbo culture of '*Alabụala'* poses to continual existence of the Igbo language and culture and suggest solution to the problem.

Review of Related Literature

Here, we will review the related literatures on the topic of discussion.

According to Ogbonna (2015: 32)

> *It seems illogical to assume that Igbo, a language spoken as one of the major languages in Nigeria by a population of about 17 million indigenous native speakers is an endangered language considering its status as one of the major indigenous languages and one of the major languages of literature, education and commerce.*

Language endangerment is a very dangerous it penetrates into a language gradually. Ikwubuzo (2023:5) states that when a language is no longer used, it must die; while Madubuike (2011) states that when a language dies, its culture is rendered useless. In other word, language does not exist without the speakers. A particular generation may decide to kill or promote their language and culture depending on the value they placed on the language and culture.

Ikwubuzo (2023:17) noted that Igbo children in Diaspora face challenges resulting from alienation from their Igbo cultural environment. They are easily acculturated to the language and culture of the land where they were born and brought up.

Nwadike (2008:20) referred to the Igbo people's code switching from the Igbo to English as an instance of language endangerment. He likened the practice to leprosy bacillus, which may affect part of the body, but with time it quickly makes inroads into the entire human system. This trend endangers the Igbo language. Code switching has become a popular communication pattern of the Igbo native speakers.

Ikwubuzo (2023:17) divided Diaspora residence of the Igbo people into two. They are national and transnational. The national being those residing within Nigeria but in other states outside Nigeria while transnational are those living in foreign countries. He noted that Igbo children in Diaspora face challenges resulting from alienation from their Igbo cultural environment.

Ohiri-Aniche (2010:26) stated thus:

> *Issue of language endangerment has occupied the front burner in the world of sociolinguistic and education circles in the past three decades. In general, the misgiving is that many languages are dying and that up to 90% of the world's 6000 – 6500 existing languages are not likely to survive into the next century.*

From the above statement, one can understand that language endangerment is not restricted to only Igbo language. However, with

the dispersal attitude of the Igbo native speakers, it appears they are more affected than other languages in Nigeria. Madubuike (2011:419), addressing Igbo language endangerment stated, it is a tragedy when a people fail to realise the magnitude of the danger before them and refuse to do something serious in response in order to avert the danger. He further stated that when a language dies, its culture is also rendered useless.

Toni-Durualu (2004:98) noted that it a people throws away what they can be easily identified, which brings and binds them together as one, they lose their identity and generations after generations of their peoples will float in their ignorance, swim in their lose of identity. Other languages and culture especially English has eaten deep into the fabric of the Igbo people. Nwadike (2008:20) state, 'How many of our children living in the urban areas know the names of our local birds, plants, animals, fishes, insects, etc? Do we still sit under the moonlight to tell our children the folklore of our land? This shows how not only our language is endangered but our ways of life in general.

Ogbonna (2015:33) observed that Igbo is endangered but not yet endangered to the point of extinction as predicted by UNESCO Advisory Committee on Languages. Based on the vocabulary test he conducted, he concluded that Igbo is gradually losing some of its vocabulary items used in day to day communication.

UNESCO (2012) as cited in Ogbonna (2015:36) warned that about the number of indigenous languages that is dwindling but eh day, overwhelmed by the influence of foreign languages especially English and French. Ogbonna (2015:36) citing UNESCO's latest prediction states, "most Nigerian languages including Igbo are under the dangling axe of extinction.

Since this prediction by the UNESCO, many have written on the Igbo extinction threat but none has mentioned the Igbo way of live and belief that ignites this threat especially the '*alabụala* Concept'. For this, paper looks into the concept of *alabụala,* the danger it poses to the existence of Igbo language and culture and suggests ways to control it.

In this paper, we will examine things that placed Igbo language and culture in the danger of extinction.

Methodology

The methods adopted for this research are observation and questionnaire. Observation is based on what the researchers have seen living in Lagos. Again the questionnaire was used to ascertain how often the young Igbo Lagos dwellers visit Igbo land and their ability to speak to speak Igbo.

Extinction Threat to Igbo Language

Here, we will mention certain things in the life of the Igbo people that poses threat to the continuity of their language and culture. The Igbo people say, *"Abụsịna-eghena-okụsịyanaashammanụ"* (A cricket is frying in the fire and boasts that it is shining). Real meaning is nothing but that one is dying yet feels that he is enjoying.

Many of the Igbo people are lost yet unaware of it. The worst that can happen to a people is when they have a live threatening problem yet unaware of the problem. Some of these problems will be discussed below.

1. **The *AlaBụAla* Concept and Igbo Endangerment:** We have earlier explained the meaning of the term '*AlabụAla'* as relaxation of the Igbo native speaker Diaspora. We list some of the observed things that enhances Igbo endangerment and a signal to extinction. The greater percentage are connected to the *'Alabụala'* syndrome. They are:

    i. The travelling culture of the Igbo

    ii. Imitation culture of the Igbo

    iii. Adaptation culture of the Igbo

    iv. Acquisition culture of the Igbo

We shall take them one by one.

i. Travelling Culture of the Igbo

As we mentioned earlier, Igbo people have been known as travellers. There is a popular saying that any community one finds himself and could not find an Igbo man living, the person should escape for his/her life. It shows that the place is not habitable. Igbo people has been described also as developers who fail their own

land. A serious attention to major cities in Nigeria are developed by the Igbo people yet their land is nothing to talk about. Many other countries outside Nigeria are not left out. Igbo people are scattered all over the world.

As the Igbo people relax and feel at home, they believe so much in 'When you go to Rome, behave like the Romans'. This attitude bring about the concept of *'Alabụala* – home is home'.

ii. Imitation Culture of the Igbo

Imitation is no other thing except copying other being. The Igbo people are good in learning from others through the repetition of observed behaviours and patterns. Due to this imitation way of life, they also copy other people's language and culture. Having found himself in the midst of other ethnic group, copy their language and culture. He does this to enable him succeed in whatever business he finds himself in the land.

No one is born with language. Language is learnt formally or informally. For this, anything learnt or acquired and not practiced will die gradually. This brings to the adaptation culture of the Igbo.

Igbo people get adapted easily to any environment they find themselves. It is a saying also that if you put an Igbo man in a bottle and lock it, he will not only survive but prosper there. They adapt to any environment they find themselves, improve their lives there and prosper to the surprise of their enemies. They marry the daughters of the other ethnic groups they find themselves, give their children to marriage to the same people, bear children there and teach the new language and culture they have learnt.

The Igbo people are harmless and prosper without stepping on the toes of another person. They believe in *'Egbebereugobere*' – live and let live. As nice as all these characters sound, they are at the same rekindling fire to Igbo language and culture extinction.

iii. Acquisition Culture of the Igbo People

The Igbo people believe in acquiring property anywhere they go. We all talk of our father's land. An Igbo child born in Lagos or any other place where his parents have lands and houses believes he is in his father's land. This child may not have visited Igbo land as an adult before the death of his parents. For this, no one is to show him his father's village nor does he understand Igbo language at all. This child although may have Igbo names but may not have understood the meaning of his Igbo name. Worst still, the child may not have any Igbo name at all. Examine the following names given to some Igbo children mostly in Diaspora:

Emmanuel Joseph

Michael Esther

John Joseph

Joseph Julius, and so on

In a situation where the mother is from another ethnic group, you may hear names like:

Joseph Bolaji

John Kayode

John KayodeToochukwu

Joseph, FunmilayoNgozi etc.

As time goes on, those with Igbo names as third name will begin to put only the abbreviation of it and the above becomes:

John, Kayode T.

Joseph, Funmilayo, N.

All these behaviours of the Igbo people are now popularly tagged "Alabụala". The lineage of the father that bears these type of children mentioned is a great loss to the Igbo land. This reduces the population of the Igbo speakers. Gradually, Igbo language is endangered and moves towards extinction.

Ikwubuzo (2013:14 – 20) mentioned the challenges facing our mother tongue and literary tradition as follows:

Western contact with Igbo culture. He described this as where the rain started to beat us. He stated that the impact of western culture/modernity on the use of Igbo language is heightened among others by:

1. Igbo migration with its concomitant acculturation of the Igbo children in their host communities.

2. The lethargic attitude of the Igbo towards their language both in the homeland and diaspora.

Although Ikwubuzo (2013:24) recognised the negative impact of westernization and modernity on Igbo language, he agrees that the problem is on the Igbo family. He stated that nobody dictates to us what we do to our family. In addition to this, nobody forces any language or culture to any Igbo family or person in our families.

The motion to adopt Igbo language in the national assembly in the former Anambra state having Enugu as the capital was after much argument was rejected. According to Ikwubuzo (2023:24), this motion generated hostile reaction from members of the house.

Ejiofor (1984) as cited in Nnabuihe (2003: 210) stated that one of the house members said, "Let us throw it overboard and take something serious. This is not time for Igbo language or no Igbo language".

Some Other Implications of '*AlaBụAla*'

'Alabụala' (land is land) concept of many Igbo people encompasses other concepts all of which discourages the identity of the Igbo as a people. The believe in the 'alabụala' results to other concepts such as the following:

MmadụBụMmadụ: Human Being is Human Being

This stand makes those who abandon his or her kinsmen never have any feeling concerning them. Just as they do not care about the land of their nativity believing that *'alabụala'*, they replace their new relationship with other ethnic groups to their kinsman. Their children have no much interaction with their kinsmen. Even in diaspora, they neither attend nor introduce their children to the community meetings.

This '*mmadụbụmmadụ*' encourages cross ethnic group marriage. In the past, Igbo men in disapora travel to their villages in search of a wife. Matured ladies born in diaspora are taken home in every festival to be seen by the people from their community. This helps young men of their land to see them and desire to marry them. In recent time, the search for more wealth coupled with the insecurity problem all over the nation have made many remain for many years without visiting home.

It is unfortunate that some children born in diaspora grow to adult age without visiting their native land. Such a child in some cases bury their parents in diaspora. The child does not understand or speak Igbo language. Igbo culture is alien to him. Children in this group may bear Igbo names and claim to be Igbo which they are but have no connection in their kinsmen. Some whom their mother came from another ethnic group are being fed with negative information that their fathers' kinsmen are devilish and murderers. In this type of situation, this family becomes a great loss to Igbo language and culture extinction.

NdụBụNdụỌnwubụỌnwu (life is life death is death)

With this belief, no matter the type of threat some Igbo people receive in diaspora, they will not consider going back to their native land as an option. This attitude is also a great danger to Igbo language and culture.

ỤlọBụỤlọ (Home is home)

Igbo in diaspora are over relaxed to the extent that they build houses in diaspora, plant trees and do not care much about their native land. Language of the diaspora environment becomes the family means of communication. The question is how many houses in Igbo land belong to the people of other ethnic groups. In spite that the Igbo people are not harmful and show love to the people of other ethnic groups, they hardly invest in Igbo land. A story was told that on the opening ceremony of the trade fair mega market built by the Igbo traders in Lagos Nigeria, where a prominent Igbo man was invited.

On seeing what the Igbo people built in Lagos, he was not pleased. In addressing the Igbo traders, he said "*Igbo ndịnzuzukwenu!!*" meaning, Igbo the foolish people *kwenu.*

It is disheartening that it is not only our language that is endangered but also our belief.

Endangered Belief of the Igbo

Some of the Igbo belief are also endangered just as the overall culture is dying. The following popular statements among the Igbo are no longer popular. They are:

(i) *Akụruoụlọ o nweeugwu* (wealth reach home it gets respect) meaning wealth is more valued at home.

(ii) *A na-esin'ụlọmarammapụọama* (Good behaviour begins at home)

(iii) *Ofekeamaghịamannayagafereaman naya.* (useless person does not know his village and passed it.)

(iv) *Isi nwadikeanaghịatọnamba* (A man's head does not remain in a foreign land)

The above and many other popular sayings are dying because many do not believe in them again as a result of disapora life.

Result of the Questionnaire Conducted to Igbo Children in Lagos.

The aim of the questionnaire was to find out how often some Igbo youth in Lagos state visit their village. They are to choose agree and disagree. The ages range from 18 to 25 years. Fifty youths were asked to fill the questionnaire.

S/N	Statement	Agree	%	Disagree	%	Total
1.	I have visited my village since I was born.	20	40	30	60	50
2.	I visit my village at least once a year.	5	10	45	90	50
3.	I only visited when I was in primary school.	15	30	35	70	50
4.	I can locate my village in my state.	5	10	45	90	50
5.	I speak Igbo language fluently.	10	20	40	80	50

From the above interview result, 50 Igbo youths in Lagos state of Nigeria ranging from ages 18 to 25 were interviewed, only 20 accepted that they have ever visited their native land which is Igbo land. That is to say, out of the 50 young ones ranging from 18 years to 25 years only 40% has ever visited the Igbo land. The remaining 60% have never gone to their native land. Out of the 20 people which is just 40% accepted only 5 people which is 10% accepted that they travel to their village at least once every year. The remaining 15 people which is 30% indicated that they only visited when they were in primary school. From the interview, only 5 people out of the 20 accepted that they can locate their village form their state of origin. At the same time, only 10 people which is 20% can speak Igbo language fluently. Without being told, it is a serious danger to the growth and even the sustenance of Igbo language and culture.

Solution to the Igbo Endangerment

Whether Igbo language and culture continuous existence is endangered is confirmed already from numerous researchers carried out. The most important thing now is how to revive the language and culture. The following suggestions are ways to revive the language.

1. Parents in both diaspora and home based should not teach their children in English but Igbo.
2. Parents in diaspora should endeavour to visit their native land with their children at least once a year.
3. Igbo people in both diaspora and at home should communicate among themselves in Igbo language.
4. Let there be promotion of Igbo language and culture anywhere the Igbo people are found.
5. Schools should promote the study of Igbo language and culture.
6. Government and non-government organisations including some wealthy

individuals should sponsor scholarship for students willing to study Igbo language and culture.

7. Igbo people should try to invest in Igbo land. This will help to draw the attention of their children to Igbo land.

The above if implemented will reduce the downward movement of Igbo language and culture.

Conclusion

We have been able to expose the concept of '*Alabụala'* – 'land is land' among the Igbo in diaspora. We have also analysed the implication of this concept. We conclude that this belief has done a lot of damage to Igbo language and culture. This live of*Alabụala* among the Igbo has done more harm than good to the existence of the Igbo language and culture. Ways to remedy the problem have been suggested. If all the suggestions put above are implemented, the situation of the Igbo language and culture will definitely improve.We also recommend that further researches should be done on this topic especially deeper investigation on the role of the family and government on the prevention of Igbo extinction threat.

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GLOBAL DILEMMA OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION: THE CASE OF IRAN

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ABSTRACT
The need for the international community to get her engagement right is crucial for the sustenance of Peace and security. The quest for self-preservation through the acquisition of nuclear weapons is often seen by other states as threat to their own existence. To balance the equation, supposed threatened states, irrespective of the cost implication, whether financially buoyant (as Iran) or not (as North Korea), joined the arms race. This of course has put a strain on global peace and security. The questions that this paper seeks to investigate are: If Iran has the intention of nuclear armament, why did she accede to all known conventions and treaties meant to rid the world of WMDs? Why do the US and the global community fear nuclear Iran? And what implication does nuclear Iran has for global peace and stability particularly in the Middle East region? The study adopts national interest as its theoretical framework. It finds that nuclear Iran poses a grave danger in the Middle East region and therefore recommended that there should be restrain in handling Iran and other middle level nuclear states.

Introduction

The immediate background to Iran nuclear arms program began on March 5, 1957through the atom of peace agreement under the auspices of Eisenhower' Program for atom of peace. The role of European governments, particularly from the West and Washington in nuclear program of Tehran went on till the Shah of Iran was removed through a revolution in the 1979 (Roe, 2007: Bruno, 2010). With support of Washington, the desire to build about 23 nuclear power plants by the year 2000 had earlier been given the nod by the Shah. The Shah had in March 1974 dreamt of a period when there would be an end to global oil supply as he observed that petroleum being a noble product is much too valuable to burn as Tehran (NTI 2006: Farhang,2006). This position of the US and other great powers exposes us to the reality of those responsible for the nuclearization of Iran.

The Iran-Iraq war and the revolution stalled the nuclear program due to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini insistence that nuclear weapon are forbidden under Muslim ethics and jurisprudence. Iran started pursuing local nuclear fuel circle during the 1990s when she developed an infrastructure capable of mining uranium including experimentation of uranium enrichment and conversion. Iran nuclear activity consists of research reactor including facilities that can produce uranium, and two uranium mines. As Tehran continue to deny the presence of nuclear facilities in the country, a Paris-based opposition group by the nomenclature National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) had in 2002 and2003 announced to the world the presence of nuclear facilities at Natanz and Arak. Iran later accepted she experimented with enrichment though on a Small scale and then suspended it in 2003 and restarted conversion of uranium and enrichment in 2005and 2006 respectively and increase same to 20 percent in the year 2010

(NTI. 2015). Moscow agency (ROSTOM) assisted Tehran with the completion of its first nuclear power plant which on the 12th of September 201 1 was officially commissioned (Ria, 2011).

Tehran told the international community about an ongoing 360mw nuclear power plant program which she said would be cited in Darkhovin with the intention of acquiring in no distant time, uranium mines and nuclear power plant of a medium size. This is despite the fact that she had signed and ratified the NPT in 1968 and 1970respectively; BWC in August 22, 1973 and CWC on January 13, 1993 which it ratified in November 1997, it test-fire a modern type of Shabab-3 distant range missile in 2008 which she says is capable of hitting Israel (BBC. 2015). It was expected that with the disintegration of USSR and the setting up of NPT, the appetite for states to acquire nuclear weapons will diminish. In the case of USSR, the thinking was, after the disintegration, the United States will be the sole global hegemon, the rallying point for the assurance of peace and security in the international system. This expectation did not materialize. It was as if the union kept all other members from seeking individual member nuclear weapon as the disintegration became the rationale for states to seek their own 'supposed' security in an anarchious global system.

National Interest: Theoretical and Conceptual Discourse

The question of what constitutes the interest of a nation and the problem of how to identify it have commanded the attention and energies of policy makers and theorists for several decades. Though the concept is not easily amenable to precise definition, yet it cannot be jettisoned as a basis for political analysis and action (Asobie, 2007). In the International Relations literature, there are basically three strands of national interest. They include the realist, Behaviouralists and political economy conceptions. This paper adopts the realist perspective as enunciated by Hans Morgenthau. According to him, national interest of a state must be the main objective of its foreign policy with power as the ultimate. Further, this interest can only be explained in relation to security of a nation which in turn be explained as the integrity of nations institutions and territory. He argued that a statesman would be acting against the national interest that is, behaving irrationally if he fails to pursue those concrete (and selfish) objectives dictated by national power. Furthermore, it considers the core interest of the nation as relatively permanent; it has to do with the protection of the cultural, physical and political environment of the nation from encroachment by other states; all other interest is peripheral, their pursuit depends upon the power of the nation (Morgenthau, 1948). The philosophical base of this Morgenthau theorizing is Hobbes theory of state. Hobbes was an apostle of state absolutism and a great philosopher of discipline, law and order obtained through conformity and unquestionable obedience. The raison d'etre of state is its own survival. Thus in the Hobbesian sense, national security is an end in itself (Asobie,2007).

The realist conception of national interest is based on the protection of the survival and security of a nation. For a state to survive in the face of threat or in hostile environment (as in the case Iran), its security and survival must be its primary interest. In sum, this school contends that Security becomes the foreign policy thrust of a state because of the anarchy in the international System. Security in this sense means discreet management of power which is tied to military capability. It is only through this way that national interest can be preserved (Grifhtns and O'Callaghan, 2001). Thus for Iran, if it must survive in a hostile and dangerous environment, and from hostile and aggressive neighbors in the most dangerous region of the world. Then it must be able to protect its national institutions, boundaries security and heritage. So Iran cannot be expected to dismantle fully in a region which is hostile to it. Iran' nuclear Program as study has shown, is not necessarily for prestige and influence as in DPRK but principally for deterrence against aggression, hostility and the unknown. Thus for Iran, national security and survival is not negotiable. This is not an attempt to justify nuclear Iran but to appreciate its equal right to nuclear arms (whether for military or civilian purposes) in the face of threat within its borders. For Gasimov (2012), this argument is not based on the fact that, because nation's relative power can be valued and judged, makes it become an important objective reality. National Interest must be explained in economic and strategic terms because the struggle of power among nations is what global politics is all about.

Iran Nuclear Weapons Program: Myth or Reality

The Iranian authority has continued both and abroad and at different fora denied the possession of nuclear weapons for deterrence or retaliation. For instance, Atomic Energy Organization of INS Iran (AEOI), through its head, said that if Tehran has nuclear weapons, she won't use them because they (Iran) didn't use chemical weapon against Iraq. This is so because there is no threat from the country's neighbors, whether in the Persian Gulf, Islamabad or Kabul, nor the northern neighbor Moscow, a powerful nuclear state which Tehran cannot match its nuclear might (Smyth, 2004). Similarly, Zarif (2005) argued that though Tehran is in midst of neighbors in possession of huge nuclear weapons, she is unlikely to go in that nuclear direction. Instead regional and global engagement and inclusion will be the only option through which Tehran can attain sustainable security. There has not been any great power nation whose capabilities have prevented from falling or failing in war. Hence former president Ahmadinejad of Iran, in an interview in 2008, was quoted as saying that nuclear weapons could not prevent USSR from separating nor going down neither could it aid Washington in prevailing inside of Kabul or Baghdad. He concluded by adding that nobody should see nuclear energy as nuclear bomb because this is a new century in which nuclear bomb is seen as belonging to last century. He had earlier announced in 2007 that his country has produced nuclear fuel threatening not to bow to pressure from any quarter. Again in 2011, Ahmadinejad reiterated his earlier stance on nuclear weapon that those seeking nuclear weapons are mentally retarded simply because nuclear bomb are no longer in vogue.

In a meeting with Directors and officials of the AEOI in 2012 in Iran, its Spiritual Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khameini reiterated his country's stance on nuclear weapon by saying that Tehran has never and will never pursue nuclear arms program. He viewed nuclear globalization whether in theory, religious or logic, a great sin because of its dangerous and destructive power (Press TV, 2012). This stance of Ali Akbar Salehi, Ahmadinejad and its Supreme Leader appeared convincing. The question remains: if this position of Iran is true, why would there be any form of negotiation with the 'big 5' and Berlin? Does Iran have nuclear weapons or the technology to build nuclear weapon? The investigation carried out by IAEA investigators in 2003-2004 for instance, opened a can of worms when it established that the country had over the last 20 years hidden its nuclear activities which include the separation of plutonium and uranium enrichment. Though Iran denied, evidential reports proved otherwise (Bowen, 2004). Iran, though admitted in 2009 that at Qom, she is constructing for peaceful use, an enrichment plant for uranium but however tested several missiles, long and medium range that could strike if the need arise, Washington's bases around the Gulf and Tel Aviv. Iran's head of AEOI declared in 2011 that the country now has the necessary technology to produce fuel rods and plates (BBC, 2015). According to Dorell(2014), Tehran has continuously researched and developed its Natanz pilot fuel enrichment plant which Ali Akbar confirmed has power that is 15 times that of IR-1 centrifuge. On April 9, 2007, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad who had denied nuclear Iran, declared rather proudly that Tehran is now among those that have the capacity to produce nuclear fuel and that the country will not blink in its determination for nuclear enrichment despite criticisms and persuasion around the world (Dafna, 2007).

In its report of 2003 and 2004, the IAEA revealed some tests conducted from materials on centrifuge components, report which indicted Tehran of uraniumenrichment (IAEA, 2003 and 2004). In 2005, Iran Foreign Ministry Spokesman,Hamid Reza argued that whatever plan the international community has, must give recognition to Tehran's right for uranium enrichment, 'we had already announced that any plan has to recognize Iran's right to enrich uranium' In similar fashion, Akbar Salehi (2011: 58) exaggerated and declared proudly, that at the nuclear site at Ishfahan, his country has constructed high-level production unit for fuel plates. There is an impressive change in fuel rods production. As it stands, Tehran is among those few with the technology to produce fuel rods and fuel plates. Interestingly, the development of Shahab-4 ofTehran with payload of about a thousand kilogram and a distance of two thousand kilometer is said to be ongoing. According to Tehran, while Shabab-3 could be the last of its war weapons, Shabab-4 is to help Tehran launch satellites, both for communication and surveillance and Shabab-5 with a distance of 10,000km is allegedly being developed (NTI, 2010). Tehranpossesses 12X-55 long range cruise missiles purchased without nuclear warheads in 2001 from Kiev, with a distance of 2,500-3000km. Tehran's fajr-3, a radar evading missile which can strike targets same time utilizing multiple warheads, has a distance of 2500km. Tehran launched unarmed weapons on 2 November, 2006, to start a-10 day

military war games. These came following some US-controlled- military training in the Persian Gulf on 29 October, 2006 for the purpose of blocking transportation of WMDs (Pike, 2006).

On the 12 th of November 2008, Tehran test launched a surface to surface missile (SSM) known as SEJIL a two stage solid propellant with a distance of 1,930 km. (BBC, 2008). The first stage (sejil-1) is of more concern to Tehran's rivals because solid fuel missiles can be deployed with less notice than liquid-fuelled missiles, this explains the reason they are difficult to strike before deployment. The second stage (Sejil-2), an upgraded form, is a two-staged solid fuel missile with distance of 2,000 km initially launched on 20thof May, 2009 (CNN, 2009). The second-stage Surface-to- Surface Medium-Range Ballistic Missile was initially tested few months before its actual deployment (Press TV, 2009). Its improvement are: better navigation system, better targeting system, more payload, longer range, faster lift-off, longer storage time, quicker launch and lower detection possibility.

Why the World is Jittery over Iran Nuclear Arms Program

Iran, in its obligation to global peace and regional stability and security, has no right whether legal or not to build nuclear weapons for whatever reason because as a signatory to major anti-WMDs treaties such as the NPT, CWC and BWC. Its decision to go nuclear is seen as betrayal by all standards of its obligations to these treaties. However, what has happened to the principle of equality of states and persons? If India, Israel and Pakistan, three states outside of the UNSC approved nuclear powerscan go nuclear, what stops Iran from going same way if it has the means? As earlierstated, the Isfahan Nuclear site in Iran can produce fuel rods and plates. It must be noted that it is designed in such a way enriched uranium which are contained in fuel rods are domiciled in a nuclear reactor. The implication of this is that nuclear Iran can create a situation in the Middle East region which can force Egypt, Turkey and Syria to pursue nuclear program within a short period given their technological capabilities. This explained why President Barack Obama in 2012 asserted that, nuclear development by Iran is counter to Israel and U.S. security. Other countries may want to go nuclear and this will lead to a situation in which countries in the world's most dangerous region will aggressively pursue WMDs so as to outdo one another. Washington and Tel Aviv believe Iran is not matured enough for nuclear weapons. The defense for their nuclear option would always remain: our nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. This was exactly what Iran told the world in the early stage of its nuclear program. For instance, Akbar (2011) argued, we have said the truth. We have no hidden agenda a or pride in what we are doing.

The international community does not believe the fact that Tehran's only nuclear option is the acquisition of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Today, the statement has proven to be false. Rather than for peaceful means, Iran nuclear option has become a source of threat and danger to the Middle East region and the world at large. Accordingly, Obama commented again that, Israel will not allow Iran who denied the holocaust, sponsors terrorists and threatened to wipe out Israel from the world map to go nuclear. It is on record that former president Ahmedinejad has continuously argued about the reality of the holocaust and repeatedly asked the rationale behind the failure of the west to allow investigation into its existence, explaining that holocaust fairytale deployed to legalize the existence of Tel Aviv and oppression of the people of Palestine, and thus asked that Israel be dismantled (BBC, 2006).

Thus on December 2006, Iran hosted a scientific conference on holocaust to access the historical reality of the holocaust with the aim, of giving opportunity to those thinkers who had difficulty in Europe to express their views on the issue of the holocaust without threat. The conference was attended by 67 researchers from 30 nations including the UK. The comments that that emanated from the conference were thought provoking, chaos threatened and reminiscent of drum-beats of war. Israeli Prime Minister at that time, Ehud Olmert described the gathering as a show of the deep-rooted hatred extremist regime in Iran (BBC, 2006). This added to the call for sanctions if Tehran refuse to end its nuclear activities. The fear of deploying it against Israel or passing it to terrorist organization with deep hatred for U.S. and Israel became the major concern. Furthermore, Iran has consistently been accused by the U.S. and other Western allies of sponsoring terrorism. In his state of the union address of 29 January 2002, President Bush branded Tehran including all its allies as part of what he referred to as 'axis of evil' with the aim of arming themselves so as to threaten global peace. By desiring WMDs, they represent a serious and increasing danger because they can give arms to insurgent groups

with the aim of matching their hatred, attack US allies or blackmail Washington (Quoted in, Fuller, 2014).

Apparently referring Iraq, Iran and North Korea, President Bush thus described them as states with alliance to terrorist organizations. Similarly, in an interview with an Arab newspaper, Asharg, President Obama explained that, Tehran is a state sponsor of insurgency and the emergent Assad regime in Damascus, lend support to Hezbollah and Hamas (Gaza Strip) and Houthi rebels (Yemen. Thus it is legitimate for states within the region to be wary about Tehran's activities especially when it comes to its backing of violent groups within the enclaves of other states (Engel, 2015; Shear, 2015). The Middle East region is under threat, especially Israel and the global community is jittery over Iran's nuclear program. The fears are understood. Thefear of movement ofnuclear weapon into terrorist enclave.Hence the need for Iran, a 'terrorist sponsor',to denuclearize. In addition, Iran has never recognized nor respected Israel's sovereign right of existence. For instance, in his interview with Financial Times, Akbar Salehideclared enthusiastically that, Tel Aviv which happened to be our next door neighbor is not seen as a state itself but a sphere of Washington's influence. Since Tehran cannot rival Washington, it cannot also contend with Tel Aviv. Strategically, there is no difference between us, Ankara and all our neighbors(Gareth, 2004).

To justify this assertion, the global community, in a state of disbelief and bewilderment, heard the announcement by then Iran President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in a reassuring manner that it will wipe out Israel from the world map. He threatened that Tehran's fire will destroy whoever gives recognition to Tel Aviv while any leader from the Islamic world that lend support to the Zionists implies acceptance of the defeat and surrendering of Islam. There is no doubt that the recent Palestinian attacks mayultimately lead to the extinction of Israel (MacAskill and McGreal, 2005). Immediately after the announcement, Britain, France, Germany and the U.S. condemned the speech, while Britain and the Washington headed the push for the referral of Tehran to the United Nations Security Council due to the fact that Tehran is secretly involved in acquiring nuclear weapons capabilities with the intention of restarting its program on uranium conversion which is an initial step of such ability. Thus, these scenarios- fear of build-up of arms in the region, emergence of other nuclear state, Iran denial of the holocaust, Iran alleged terrorist sponsor and fear of nuclear terrorism and Tehran's threat to exterminate Israel, explained the rationale for concern in the global community. The question there is, should the global community use coercive means to compel Iran to denuclearize? Because according to Bush (2002), the fundamental objectives of Washington are to stop terror sponsor nations so that they will not threaten Washington, its allies or friends with WMDs. America will not allow wicked government to threaten her with the most deadliest weapons (Baer, 2008).

In the same vein, President Obama once declared in 2012 that on the desire to stop Tehran from going nuclear, there is no option off the table. This he said involves all the elements of Washington's power noting that he will defend Washington and its interest with the instrumentality of force if necessary. Though it was contemplated by the US and Israel that force be deployed against Tehran, but any decision based on this must meet these requirements: the ability to destroy Tehran's nuclear capabilities and render same incapacitated and its ability to rebuild its nuclear program; the possibility that Israel and Iran might face each other in terms of war should Israel lead a coalition against Tehran; and increased tension in the region (Uzi, 2005). Is the U.S., its allies and friends ready for this? The answer is simply, NO. Though Israel favorsa military response, in reality, it is not practicable. That is, if Tehran decides on going fully nuclear, Israel need to deeply consider the opportunity-cost presented by a nuclear Tehran against strategic fallout from an attack (Lee, 2009).

International Reaction to Iran Nuclear Program

As Iran maintained its stand on nuclear development in defiance to the stand of the global community, some countries and institutions imposed sanctions on Iran, all in a bid to stop nuclear Iran. The sanctions and assassination of Iran nuclear scientists were executed side by side. Between 2006 and 2015, the UNSC passed several resolutions calling on Iran to halt its nuclear program, some of which include.

Table 1: UN Resolutions and Sanctions on Tehran's Nuclear Program

Resolutions	Date	Decisions
1696	July 31, 2006	Required Tehran to halt its action on enrichment of uranium
1737	December 23, 2006	Sanctioned Tehran for refusal to halt enrichment of uranium
1747	March 24, 2007	Widened the sanctions against Tehran's entities
1803	March 3, 2008	Sanctions were extended to other Iranians and their concerns
1835	September 27, 2008	Committed to the earlier four resolutions
1929	July 9, 2010	Expelled Tehran from partaking in ballistic-missile-related activities; tightened travel ban on persons connected to the programme including embargo on arms and Tehran shipping agency
1984	September 6, 2011	Gave additional one year to the expert panel that was set-up on the9th of July 2010 that approves Tehran's sanctions committee
2049	July 7, 2012	Gave additional one year to Tehran's Iran sanctions committee
2105	May 6, 2013	Gave additional one year to expert panel of Tehran's sanctions committee
2159	September 7, 2014	Gave additional one year to expert panel of Tehran's sanctions committee
2231	July 20, 2015	Endorses joint comprehensive agreements on Iran's nuclear program

Source: UN, 2007, 2009; Haidar, 2015.

The sanctions against Tehran by Washington are in the areas of military, scientific, trade and economy. It suspended all dealings between Washington and Tehran whichin turn stopped the M sale of aircraft or any of its parts to aviation companies of Tehran (Haidar, 2015). These sanctions became part of the earlier ones imposed on Tehran by Washington over the hostage crisis (1979-81) and the bombing of Washington's marine base in Beirut, etc. On the 14h of November 1979, Jimmy Carterthrough Executive Order 12170, freeze all assets belonging to Tehran which arewithin Washington's jurisdiction. In view of this, Tehran was designated a statesponsor of terrorism by 1984 (Moin, 2000; Zachary, 2015). Other areas of U.S.sanctions according to Zachary (2015) include Banking and finance in whichWashington desired to ostracize Tehran from global financial system. Towards theclose of 2011,Washington pressured Tehran's oil exporters, preventing them frompaying through central bank of Tehran.

On the issue of oil export, president Obama's main focus has been how to curtailrevenues from oil accruable to Tehran in his bid to prevent nuclear proliferation.Before 2012, 50 percent of Tehran's revenue came from oil which was made up ofone-fifth of its GDP. Relating to trade, Washington has since 1995 prevented most ofits investors from investing or trading in Tehran through an embargo with exception inareas of trade relating to consumers telecommunication software and equipment. Allassets belonging to individuals, entities and institutions in Tehran including the Revolutionary Guard Corps which are considered supportive of global terrorism werefrozen by President G.W. Bush immediately after the 11th September 2001 attack onWashington. These sanctions also included travel bans. Outside Washington, UN and EU, other countries such as Tokyo, Seoul,

Ottawa,Canberra, Australia, Oslo and Geneva, at different times and forms, sanctionedTehran. While these sanctions were ongoing, the assassination of its nuclear Scientistswas being executed simultaneously BBC, 2012; Marcus, 2012).

Table 2: List of Iran Scientists assassinated

Name	Profession	Date of Death	Manner of Death
ArdeshirHosseinpour	Nuclear Scientist	January 2007	Gas Poisoning
ShahramAmiri	Nuclear Scientist	October 2009	Disappeared
ShahriariMajid	Specialist in Nuclear Physics	November 2010	Killed by bomb strapped to his car
AlimohammodiMasoud	Specialist in Particle Physics	January 2010	Killed by explosive attached to a motorbike
DaryoushRezaeiNejad	Expert in triggering nuclear warheads.	July 2011	Shot five times
MostafaAhmadiRoshan	Nuclear Scientist	January 2012	Killed by a bomb affixed to a motorcycle
MojtabaAhmadi	Cyber Warfare	September 2013	Shot in the Head

Source: Lynfield, 2013

Calming Global Tension: Tehran's Nuclear Agreement

Attempt by world powers to restrict Tehran's nuclear program so as to calm globaltension and relax economic sanctions was reached on the 14thof July 2015 afterseveral years of discussion (BBC, 2015). The deal according to William and Sergio (2015) was not specifically targeted at total shut down of Tehran'snuclearambition but to restrict its nuclear activities. For instance, its Fordo plant is to beconverted to research in science while the one at Natanz will be reduced and thecentrifuges of about 5000 for uranium enrichment will remain at Natanz. Tehran alsoagreed to reduce to 3.7 percent of its enrichment and its stockpile of Low EnrichmentUranium (LEU) at 300kg which is deemed not sufficient to hastily make a bomb. Iranwill also need to rebuild and redesign its reactor in Arak to prevent the production ofweapons grade plutonium. Though the reactor will be non-operable, it will still remainin Tehran. As part of the agreement, all spent fuel from the reactor which can also beused for bomb production, will be taken out of the country and there will be no furtherreconstruction for the next 15 years, of heavy water reactor in Tehran.

To prevent Tehran from cheating, she agreed to ensure unlimited access andinformation with respect to its nuclear program while it will also allow IAEA tomonitor all sites that are deemed suspicious and investigates all hidden facilities whichare related to the enrichment of uranium. All supply chains that contributes toTehran's nuclear ambition will be subjected to inspection by IAEA inspectors. In linewith the agreement, Tehran is expected to lessen its LEU stockpile to around 98percent and reduce its research, development and capacity for enrichment for the next15 years. For the next 25 years, measures aimed at inspection and transparency for thedeal will be put in place. For sanctions to be lifted on Tehran, it must complete keynuclear steps after which arms sanction may be lifted in five years while it will takeeight additional years on ballistic missiles (William and Sergio, 2015).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Iran has continuously reiterated that as a matter of right, it has the ability for nuclearfuel enrichment but she will not produce nuclear weapons. The doubt howeverremains whether Tehran will stop weaponization so as to retain a virtual capacity ofnuclear. Any lesson Tehran might have gotten from Pyongyang nuclear activities,needed to be checked in line with the various strategic domains either in North-eastAsia, Middle East or the issue of Tel Aviv (Lee, 2009). Irrespective of the differentstrategic importance and political development of Tehran's nuclear weapons program,it has

benefitted from nuclear nationalism. Whatever the faction, from religiousconservatism of the left, there is general agreement that Tehran reserve the right toactivate nuclear fuel cycle including the development of nuclear weapons, fi she sodesires. Public opinion in Iran favorsTehran nuclear stance (LaFranchi, 2004).

Iran as a sovereign state has a right to go nuclear if she chooses but the question hasbeen and still remains: Is she matured enough to possess nuclear weapons? In the faceof aggression and threat, can she be able to hold itself not to deploy it and does shehave the necessary security to secure its nuclear facilities? What this means is that,allowing nuclear Iran may lead to the 19 emergence of other nuclear states. This is notproper for international peace, security and stability which the world so much desire.If the effect of nuclear proliferation will be curbed, an effective strategy to reducenuclear dangers, according to (Perry et al, 2009), must be situated around five pillars:reviving strategic dialogue with nuclear powers like Moscow and Beijing, increasedpower for IAEA; reconfirm the security of Washington nuclear canopy over its allies;Washington credibility on nuclear deterrent must be maintained; and unquestionablesecurity exercise for nuclear weapons and other weapons materials globally. Similarly,nuclear weapon countries like Iran and DPRK should not be coerced into stoppingtheir nuclear programs as such may add to the already tensed situation. Instead, thereshould be a diplomatic solution through negotiation which should not be unilaterallyexecuted by the United States.

In accordance with this recommendation, of 16th January 2016, Washington and theEU relaxed oil and financial sanctions on Tehran including the release of its assetworth around $100 billion following reports by global inspectors that Tehran honoredits promise to collapse a major sections of its nuclear activities (NYT, 2016). If therewill ever be reduction in arms build-up by states, or denuclearization, especially fromcountry like DPRK, force nor threat should not be applied, except there is possibilityof total or near demoralization of the supposed nuclear armed country, or else,diplomacy, dialogue and negotiation as it is done in the Iranian case, should beapplied.

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TERRORISM AND POLITICS IN NIGERIA: A Search for Sustainable Peace and Security

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ABSTRACT
Terrorism in Nigeria has cast a long and dark shadow over the nation's quest for political stability, social harmony, and economic development. This abstract offers a comprehensive overview of the intricate and complex relationship between terrorism and politics in Nigeria, emphasizing the pressing need to establish a state of sustainable peace and security. The historical backdrop reveals the emergence of groups like Boko Haram and militant factions in the Niger Delta, underscoring the importance of understanding the roots of this enduring crisis. While Nigeria has employed various counterterrorism strategies, their effectiveness and broader political ramifications demand careful analysis to guide the pursuit of sustainable peace. These dynamics require a holistic approach to addressing the menace. The impact of terrorism on Nigerian politics, from influencing electoral processes to shaping governance and policy decisions, is a central concern, the theoretical frame work that anchored the study is the Greed and Grievances theory. The findings of the study highlight the intricate relationship between terrorism and politics in Nigeria, underlining the complex interplay between these two forces. Lastly, the research investigates the cultural and socioeconomic factors that contribute to the persistence of terrorism, going beyond religious or ideological motivations. It concludes by highlighting the imperative for a multidimensional approach to address these complexities and collaboratively work towards a more secure and peaceful Nigeria.

Introduction

Terrorism has plagued Nigeria for decades, posing a grave threat to its political stability, societal harmony, and economic progress. This concise article delves into the intricate relationship between terrorism and politics in Nigeria, emphasizing the need for sustainable peace and security. Terrorism in Nigeria has roots deeply entwined with political, religious, and socioeconomic factors. To achieve sustainable peace and security, it is crucial to comprehend this complex nexus. Going by the overview, it is evident that terrorism has cast a long shadow over Nigeria, posing a significant threat to the nation's political stability, social harmony, and economic growth. This article explores the complex interplay between terrorism and politics in Nigeria and underscores the urgent need for lasting peace and security. Terrorism and politics in Nigeria are intricately intertwined, posing significant challenges to the country's quest for sustainable peace. Nigeria, the most populous nation in Africa, grapples with

a complex web of socio-economic disparities, ethnopolitical tensions, and the presence of extremist groups such as Boko Haram. Addressing these issues is crucial for achieving long-lasting peace in the country. While there is substantial literature on terrorism in Nigeria, there is a gap in understanding the nexus between terrorism and politics in Nigeria. The study aims to fill this gap in literature, by further expanding on this intersection in order to develop effective strategies for achieving lasting peace in the country.

Statement of the Problem

The problem at hand is the entwined nexus between terrorism and politics in Nigeria, where the activities of extremist groups, such as Boko Haram, Niger Delta Militants, Indigenous People of Biafra and herdsmen, impact negatively on the nation's political landscape, governance, and the security of its citizens. This intertwining poses a formidable challenge, and understanding its complexities is crucial for devising effective counterterrorism and political stability strategies in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

Terrorism

While the official definition of terrorism adopted by many countries today limits the term's application to non-state actors, terrorism is not strictly a phenomenon committed by individuals or groups. Terrorism is a political term derived from state terror. In his study, Combs (2017) viewed terrorism as a phenomenon that is becoming a pervasive, often dominant, influence in our lives. It affects how governments conduct foreign policy and the way corporations transact business. It causes alterations in the role and even the structure of our security forces. It forces us to spend vast amounts of time and money to protect public figures, vital installations, citizens, and even government systems. It influences the way we travel and the places we travel to see. It even affects how we live our daily lives. According to the most often used definition of the term in modern times, terrorism is essentially political. It is also, of course, inevitably, about power—pursuing, obtaining, and using power to effect political change. Terrorism is defined as the use of violence, or more significantly, the threat of violence, for the purpose of achieving a political goal.

The French Revolution is credited with popularizing the term "terrorism" throughout history. At the time, terrorism was associated with something beneficial, in contrast to how it is used now. In order to maintain order during the brief anarchic era of unrest and instability that followed the revolutions of 1793–1794, the regime de la terreur, from which the English word originated. As such, it differs from modern definitions of terrorism, which associate it with revolutionary or anti-government actions carried out by non-state or sub-national organizations. The freshly formed revolutionary state employed the régime de la terreur as one of its tools of governing. By scaring counterrevolutionaries, subversives, and other dissidents who the dictatorship viewed as "enemies of the people," it was intended to solidify the power of the new administration (Hoffman, 2006:3). The precise meaning of terrorism is up for debate. Many people view terrorism as a type of political violence that resembles insurrection and revolt that results in chaos and political protest (Ukaogo, 2004:96).

Others see terrorism as nothing more than a multi-phase process and plan. It may be interpreted as a revolution as well (Lodge, 1988:1). The difficulty of defining and classifying terrorism is more intricate and multifaceted than one man's terrorism when seen as a moral dilemma. The challenge here is the disparate intellectual and ideological foundations from which the idea is evaluated. A country may see a terrorist attack as "legal" or "an end justifying a means," whereas another country may view the same activity as illegal (Ukaogo, 2004:97). This adds to the complexity of the problem overall. The dispute between the Israelis and the Arabs, which gets more intense every day, is a stark illustration of the problem with the terrorist argument. No matter how justified the deed may be, every suicide bomber is considered a terrorist by the Israelis. Thus, those who support Palestine, such as Hezbollah and Hamas, which specialize in grenade lobbing and bomb hurling, are terrorists. Conversely, the Arabs consider the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the ongoing denial of the Palestinians a separate state to be acts of terrorism. Indeed, they believe that the invasion of 1982 is still the worst act of terrorism in the Middle East and that it has to be avenged (Oricha, 2003:12). Therefore, all of these opposing viewpoints and points of view thwart any attempt at a shared understanding and appreciation of terrorism. Thus, terrorism can be said to be the intentional and organized killing, maiming, and threatening of innocent

people in order to sow fear for political purposes is known as terrorism. The phenomena gained popularity as one of the characteristics of global politics and conflict in the latter half of the 20th century. Until now, terrorism has been used by individuals, small, ideologically focused groups, state operatives, and large insurgent movements to pursue military and political objectives that may have seemed hard or impossible to accomplish in the traditional political arena or in a combat zone against an army (Harmon, 2000:32). Terrorism is not limited to unusual situations or foreign regimes. It has the ability to occur in both common and uncommon settings, including regular institutions. It has been called a criminal and a holy thing, a technique and a plan, among other things. If reigns of terror are only thought of as transient states of crisis brought on by daring events or as foreign forms of rule, then they are not fully comprehended. Under specific stress situations, "normal" political processes might give rise to terror networks that are often classified as "abnormal" according to Western social and political thought standards (Ojukwu, 2011:16). There is a distinct character to terrorism in Nigeria as opposed to other regions of the world. This is the case because to the fact that Nigerian terrorists typically lack recognizable and charismatic leaders but instead have goals they feel can only be attained via clandestine and covert guerrilla war on the Nigerian state.

Where by attacks are carried out on churches and other places of worship, buildings belonging to foreign organizations like the UN office in Abuja, state institutions like the Police Headquarters in Abuja, certain schools, and rest areas, among other targets, in order to wage a clandestine guerrilla war against the Nigerian State. Actually, it appears that acts of religious terrorism represent the peak of terrorist activity in the nation. These acts can take many different forms, such as suicide bombing, hostage-taking, bomb-throwing, assassinations, and periodic shootings into public gatherings that result in many casualties. The most prominent is the Boko Haram group, which has severely damaged Nigerians' mental health as well as the state's security system in the wake of attempts to crack down on them. Their actions are anti-democratic, hostile to the nation's general progress, and have a significant impact on the nation's foreign policy (Onuoha, 2010:36).

Political Violence in Nigeria

Nigeria's business survival has faced significant hurdles due to the twin threats of terrorism and political violence. Election-related violence and political violence are causally related because one causes the other. The nation's political class, which is manifested in its "rent-seeking" and "rent-collecting" behaviors, is the only plausible explanation for the high degree of violence before and after elections. The political elites have actually transformed Nigeria into a quick source of primitive wealth accumulation, which is why they are in a desperate attempt to gain political power. According to policy documents and decision-makers, Nigeria, like the majority of other African states, has been characterized as "weak," "fragile," and/or "failing" in recent scholarship. Disparate political violence, such as that of Boko Haram, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), which has its roots in the state's history, has also come to be understood as "terrorism" (Agbiboa 2009; 2011; Solomon 2015). According Adebayo et al. (2012) religion" and "ethnic" cleavages have become so politicized that violent groups like Boko Haram were organized for political ends like winning elections because of the political elites' pervasive corruption, which has existed since the country's independence and stands in stark contrast to the spirit of democracy. "Nigeria typifies a good example of a failing or weak state that is fast gravitating towards a failed or collapsed state like Somalia and others," claim Onapajo and Uzodike (2012:31). They argue that the "four waves" of terrorism identified by David Rapport help to explain how the organization came to be. Similar to a lot of other academics from this school of thinking, the question of why the rhetoric around failed/fragile regimes and terrorism is now seen helpful in comprehending the Nigerian state is never posed, despite the fact that political violence has been a persistent issue since the nation's inception. Furthermore, the concept of Islamic revivalism, as put out by David Rapoport, fails to recognize that Islam, like many other major global faiths, is not a monolithic faith and is open to many different interpretations. Finding the underlying reasons of the atrocities committed by Boko Haram and other organizations has taken precedence above any attempt to comprehend the framework that permitted such behaviors as "corruption," "weakness," and/or "terrorism.

Political Greed

Politics and politicians sometimes responsible for inciting acts of terrorism in the Nation. For instance, certain politicians do adopt a covert religious persona, aligning themselves with terrorist organizations as Islamists and asserting that they are fighting with these groups. They wind up funding terrorist actions in Nigeria because they want to topple the opposition government. Also, during elections, politicians arm political thugs with guns so they can tamper with the voting process. The majority of the time, these criminals keep the guns because they use them to terrorize the public once elections are over. The majority of these criminals who possess such weapons ultimately turn themselves in to terrorist groups in order to support acts of terror in northeastern Nigeria.

Another contributing cause is that Nigerian politicians, while in positions of authority, neglect to provide the necessities of life for their constituents, which would improve their standard of living and ensure a high standard of living. When people are unemployed and idle, their only choice is to simply succumb to the terror group's demands that they fight as their own. Wisdom (2018) stated that "Most analyses of Nigerian politics as the cause of insurgency have focused on how corrupt politicians have exacerbated economic inequality and poverty, which has led to grievances in Northern Nigeria."

Proliferation of small arms and Light Weapons

Another factor contributing to terrorism in Nigeria is the rise in the manufacture and distribution of weapons, it is important to note that without the ability to get and use weapons, no terrorist act could be readily supported. It is well known that Boko Haram in Nigeria uses weapons such as bombs, A.K.47 riffles, knives, cutlasses, rocket-propelled grenades (RPG), submachine guns (SMG), and heavy firearms like General purpose machine guns (GPMG), and armored tanks. The Easy access and availability of all these weapons make terror attacks simple and easy to carry out.

The number of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria has dramatically increased due to the country's uncontrolled borders and the availability of illegal routes for the importation of illegal weapons. These weapons are ultimately used by the Islamic sect Boko Haram to carry out their unjust course of action and to terrorize the populace. According to the 2017 Punch newspaper, there are just 84 authorized border control posts in Nigeria, while 1,400 unmanned and illegal routes are used by terrorists, traffickers, and arms dealers. In an atmosphere where there is neither arms proliferation nor arms control, the terrorist fails. These groups receive weaponry support from allies abroad, and the weapons are transported into Nigeria through dubious means including unmanned, unauthorized conduits in the bush of particular concern are the increasingly sophisticated weapons and weapons used by Boko Haram militants in recent attacks in Northern Nigeria, as well as evidence in seizures made by security forces in Northern Nigeria (Freedom, 2013). One of the reasons for terrorism in Nigeria is, in fact, the widespread usage of light and small weaponry.

Theoretical Frame Work

Greed and Grievances theory

This paper adopted the Greed and Grievances theory by Collier Paul and Hoeffler Anke, (2000). The theory was developed to prove the causes and motivation of the outbreak of violent rebellion, which led to the upspring of civil wars.

They argued that ‘’their statistical data pointed towards economic incentives as being the main causes of the outbreak of violent rebellion. Collier and Hoeffler contended that the main driver of violent uprisings and civil wars is an economic motivation. This fact is never minimized when discussing Nigeria, where the main causes of terrorism are the government's inability to provide for the basic needs of its people and the political class's greed in accumulating wealth for themselves at the expense of the impoverished and the privileged. The impoverisher’s incapacity to survive has now made them ideal targets for the terrorist group's incentives, as they are being bought over at a low cost to serve as fighters for the lethal gangs operating in Nigeria.

The fundamental features of governments that are prone to civil wars are their significant reliance on the export of primary commodities, a high proportion of young men who lack education and are unemployed, and their abrupt and sharp economic downfall. This is precisely the situation in Nigeria, which has a high unemployment rate and a significant percentage

of young people without formal education who become tools for the terrorist organizations like Boko Haram.

Greed as a Driver of Terrorism:

Resource-Driven Terrorism:

The "Greed" component of the theory suggests that the pursuit of economic gain can motivate individuals or groups to engage in violence. In the context of Nigeria, this is exemplified by the Niger Delta militants who have resorted to acts of terrorism to secure a greater share of the country's oil wealth. Their attacks on oil facilities and kidnappings are driven by a desire for economic concessions and control over lucrative resources.

The "greed and grievance theory" is a framework commonly used to analyze the causes of conflicts, including terrorist activities like Boko Haram in Nigeria. This theory suggests that conflicts, including acts of terrorism, can be fueled by a combination of factors related to "greed" (economic or resource-related motivations) and "grievance" (perceived injustices or grievances). In the case of Boko Haram in Nigeria, we can apply this theory as follows:

Grievance:

Historical Marginalization: Many regions in Nigeria, particularly the northern states, have experienced historical socio-economic and political marginalization, leading to widespread grievances among the population.

Religious and Ethnic Tensions: Nigeria is ethnically and religiously diverse, and inter-communal tensions, particularly between Muslims in the north and Christians in the south, have exacerbated grievances.

Corruption and Injustice: Rampant corruption, perceived electoral fraud, and lack of social justice have fueled the sense of grievance among the population.

Criminal Networks and Profit: Terrorism in Nigeria is not limited to ideological or political objectives. Criminal networks often exploit the security vacuum created by terrorism for financial gain. Kidnappings for ransom and illicit trade in arms and drugs provide substantial profits, thereby incentivizing acts of terrorism driven by greed.

Economic Reforms and Development: Implement economic reforms that promote equitable resource distribution, reduce corruption, and provide economic opportunities to marginalized regions. By addressing economic greed, the government can reduce the incentives for resource-driven terrorism.

Political Inclusivity and Reconciliation: Promote political inclusivity, address ethnic and religious tensions, and engage in reconciliation efforts. These steps can help address political and ideological grievances that fuel terrorism and contribute to a sustainable peace process.

Greed and Grievances" theory by Collier and Hoeffler provides a valuable

framework for understanding the multifaceted dynamics of terrorism in Nigeria. By addressing both the economic and political motivations and grievances, Nigeria can work toward sustainable peace and security.

Methodology

The research used a qualitative methodology. Secondary sources provided the data that was gathered for the research. The study made use of carefully selected, pertinent publications that were found on the Internet. The study's analysis utilized data that was meticulously taken from logical chains of evidence found in edited books, conference proceedings, journal articles, periodicals, and documentary sources.

The Nexus Between Terrorism and Politics in Nigeria

In their attempt to secure political supremacy over other ethnic groups, the political elites have effectively fostered terrorism by inciting hatred, dividing people along ethnic lines, and creating divisions. We may now pose the question: What drives people to commit acts of terrorism against their fellow citizens, including the government? Examining the drives and incentives that give rise to terrorism may will help us better understand the connections between terrorism and Politics:

1. Political Agitation.

This is one of the major causes of terrorism mostly in developing countries like Nigeria. It is evident that terrorists frequently call for political change when not satisfied with the style of government in power, since there is no silver bullet for political change, terrorists turn to armed resistance against established power in an attempt to subvert the current quo. Furthermore, the political elites are unable to dissolve the monster gang of terrorists because they are using them to further their own political agenda at the expense of their rivals. Boko Haram's situation is really relevant. It is thought to have originated from to have originated from the political elites in Borno State at the time, who were initially using them to gain political victory at the time.

2. Ideological Differences from that of the Government

Robert Merton (1968) asserted that people in society adapt in different ways to accomplish goals and means. Nonetheless, some people in the community could object to both the means and the goals that are sanctioned by the community. This group might be classified as "militants" or "rebels." This group of people calls for drastic and revolutionary change in the socio-political and economic system because they reject both the institutionalized ways of gaining success in society and the aims of success itself. You may refer to them as terrorists or rebels since they have their own ideas and frequently try to force them on others in order to further their own objectives. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) group fall in this category, whereby their fight for an independent state is through various means of violence and violation of government laws. This can be seen in their most recent seat at home orders which almost crippled economic activities of the south east. Believing they have been marginalized and therefore see their actions as justifiable.

3. Regional and National Demands

This desire for self-determination is shared by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB). In actuality, MASSOB printed its own flag, money, and other identities in an attempt to secede before the government cracked down on them, despite having just engaged in violent acts of terrorism. Boko Haram's primary goal in killing innocent civilians has not been stated since, as far as is known, the group has made a number of demands.

4. Religious Beliefs

Like Boko Haram, al-Qaida, Hamas, and Islamic fundamentalists, the Taliban conceals its political motivations behind religious presence's in order to achieve their objectives. Their goals are to eradicate people they view as "unbelievers" or "infidels," as demonstrated by Boko Haram's ideology that "western education is sin" and the establishment of a Sharia state.

5. Shift in Original Goals

Control over resources was MEND and the militants in the Niger Delta's first goal. However, when criminals grew ingrained in the organization, they found great success in kidnapping and holding hostages for ransom. Put another way, terrorists may change their original motivation to pursue financial or material gain. The root cause of terrorism may be found within these many drives and incentives. But the intentions are not mutually exclusive. The basic causes of terrorism are the reasons and motives. Terrorism's latent motivations are rooted in political, economic, religious, and psychological factors, these form the fundamental underlying causes of terrorism in Nigeria.

A Search for Sustainable Peace and Security

The most essential and fundamental way to stop the nation's security crisis is for our leaders to adopt the values of practical democracy, which are ingrained in the

concepts of good governance, by ensuring citizens are provided with basic shelter, job opportunities readily available for the hordes of unemployed youth in Nigeria who make up the majority of those who are readily recruited for terrorist activities and other acts of violence good governance will enable the provision of the real and unimagined dividends of democracy. This is required since it is known that the "idle mind is a devil's workshop" and that when young people are involved in creative and worthwhile endeavor's, there is less chance that they will be recruited as thugs and suicide bombers will be

drastically reduced. The provision of good governance will also address the alarmingly high rate of poverty in the nation, which is indicated by the rising number of youths without jobs, the dearth of high-quality educational and healthcare facilities, the low quality of life, and the absence of fundamental social infrastructures that give life meaning.

These problems have all been implicated as some of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria. There would have been a potential of reducing political violence and terrorism in the nation if there had been hospitals and other health facilities, power, good roads, affordable housing schemes, and security in addition to schools for the people's basic education. The provision of good governance will also address the alarmingly high rate of poverty in the nation, which is indicated by the rising number of youths without jobs, the dearth of high-quality educational and healthcare facilities, the low quality of life, and the absence of fundamental social infrastructures that give life meaning. These problems have all been implicated as some of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria.

There would have been a potential of reducing political violence and terrorism in the nation if there had been hospitals and other health facilities, power, good roads, affordable housing schemes, and security in addition to schools for the people's basic education. Religious intolerance, a lack of patriotism, and violent agitations have all been linked to terrorism in Nigeria. Nigeria must take more action to repair the damage to its reputation; the government must fight terrorism with the greatest sincerity and determination. It is necessary to confront the politics of exclusion, which have plagued political interaction since independence, in order to prevent minority groups from being marginalized. Numerous analysts of Nigeria's previous terrorist situation have contended that in order to make progress in the war against terrorism and chat a course of sustainable peace. The government of Nigeria must address the fundamental problems of poverty, marginalization, underdevelopment, neglect, and youth unemployment in order to lessen the suffering of Nigerians. In a same vein, religious leaders must demonstrate a greater dedication to instilling religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence in their followers. Security needs to be everyone's concern, and this message of tolerance shouldn't be placed in the hands of religious authorities alone. This is where Nigerians can expect the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to fulfil its duty to spread the message of religious tolerance throughout the nation. They may even work in tandem with the Ministry of Education to incorporate this message into the social studies curriculum in our secondary schools. It is worth nothing that terrorism being an international issue, it is instructive that governments take a global approach to combating the threat. The need to effective cooperation in the battle against terrorism between Nigeria and other more developed nations who have managed to contain the threat of terrorism, as well as coopting nearby nations that many Nigerians see to be safe havens for terrorists cannot be over emphasized.

In order to combat the insurgency threat, Nigeria must have a strong foreign policy framework. This can be achieved by military collaboration with developed nations that possess greater technological capacity. The idea that terrorism and other violent crimes are exclusively the domestic problems of particular nations has been shown to be illogical, and as such, there should be no space for it. In other to achieve sustainable peace in the country, the government must be honest in its battle against terrorism, the leadership must learn to respect the rule of law, be open to constructive criticism, and tolerate opposing viewpoints in other to achieve sustainable peace in the nation.

Conclusion

It is established in this study that terrorist activities in Nigeria have wreaked much

havoc on the social and economic activities of the country. Affecting the developmental changes meant to bring about sustainable Peace. Nigeria's significant causes of violence and death are mainly political, economic, and social

grievances. Development cannot take place in an atmosphere of insecurity.

The country's inflation rate of goods and services has skyrocketed, occasioning

hardship for the citizens. The gap between the rich and the poor has widened

because most of those in positions of authority engaged themselves in the amassing of

public funds. Some people experiencing poverty who do not have legitimate means of livelihood engage in nefarious activities to survive.

It is also clear from the discussions in the research paper that political violence and terrorism are bad for a nation's growth. The impact of terrorism and political violence on Nigeria's foreign policy has been effectively captured in this research, along with the different peculiarities connected to the nexus between terrorism and politics in Nigeria. It also covered the different causes of the current wave of violence and insurgency in the nation. Given these factors, which include poverty, a high rate of unemployment, particularly for young people, a lack of good governance, issues of neglect, ad some factors that need to be adequately addressed in order for the country to attain sustainable peace and development. It is expected that the government, in particular, will rise to the occasion and fulfil its constitutional obligations by evaluating the recommendations made in this study critically.

Recommendations

1) The Nigerian government must find job opportunities for the unemployed youth in the nation.

2) The government ought to develop initiatives that offer real women's empowerment along with infrastructure.

3) Corrupt politicians ought to face consequences in order to deter future robbers of the country's riches.

4) Corruption must be shunned by all tiers of government in the struggle against crime, terrorism, and instability.

5) The democratic system in place has to start providing the social goods that are required in order to raise the standard of living for Nigerians and lift a large number of people from the extreme poverty to which they have been condemned for an extended period of time in the South of the country.

In order to chart a course of sustainable peace and development the government must have the political resolve to fight terrorism of all kinds devoid of ethnic sentiments. This means that everyone should be treated equally under the law, regardless of their political, religious, or ethnic affiliation, and that there shouldn't be any holy cows or goats.

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UNCHARTED WATERS: ANALYZING PRESIDENT BUHARI'S DIPLOMATIC ADAPTATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL SECURITY THREATS, 2015-2023

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KEYWORDS
Foreign Policy Adaptation, International Security Threats, Global Economic Disruptions, Regional Stability, Covid-19 Pandemic Response

ABSTRACT
This study examines how Nigeria's foreign policy under President MuhammaduBuhari adapted to the global challenges that emerged from 2015 to 2023, filling a gap in the literature on adaptive foreign policy theory in the African context. The study is rooted in the theoretical framework of adaptive foreign policy theory, which asserts the need for nations to flexibly adjust their foreign policy objectives and approaches in response to evolving international conditions. The study utilizes a literature-based approach, integrating academic and non-academic sources, to provide a comprehensive analysis of President Buhari's diplomatic adaptations during this critical period. Three overarching themes emerge from the thematic analysis: strategic responses to the US-China Trade War and resultant global economic disruptions, concerted efforts in stabilizing regions affected by coups and political instability in Africa, and a balanced approach towards the Covid-19 pandemic encompassing global health security and national well-being.The findings reveal Nigeria's adeptness in managing the economic impact of the US-China Trade War by diversifying economic partnerships, thereby bolstering economic stability. Additionally, the study underscores Nigeria's diplomatic dexterity in tackling regional instability through a complex foreign policy, which includes diplomatic negotiation with coup leaders, judicious use of sanctions, and strategic deployment of troops. Moreover, Nigeria's response to the Covid-19 pandemic reflects a multifaceted approach that prioritizes both global health security and national welfare. While the study sheds crucial light on Nigeria's global strategy and its adaptability in safeguarding its interests, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The examination is delimited to a specific period and context of Nigeria's foreign policy, potentially limiting its generalizability. Furthermore, reliance on secondary data sources may introduce

bias or inaccuracies. To enhance the robustness of these findings, future research should explore different periods, contexts, data sources, and methodological approaches, while considering diverse theoretical frameworks or perspectives.

Introduction

The period from 2015 to 2023 marked an era of uncharted waters for Nigeria's foreign policy. It was a timewhereby President MuhammaduBuhari made diplomaticchoices on wordaffairs that jeopardized international security. These includethe signing of the Paris Agreement, the geopolitical decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, US-China trade war, the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, the emergence of regional coups in Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso and Guinea-Bissau, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.Not only do these incidents put collective international security at risk, they created complex issues that were interconnected, compelling the Nigerian government under President Buhari to adopt an adaptive foreign policy. For example, trade tensions between the US and China as well asuncertainties surrounding Brexitworsened the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Nigeria(Chidume et al., 2021).Similar to this,regional coups in Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso, and Guinea-Bissau escalatedregional conflicts in the Sahel, which placed pressure on Nigeria's role in the region(Elischer & Lawrance, 2022).According to Anaele and Clark (2023), there has been a noticeable effect of Russia's incursion into Ukraine on the global energy markets, leading to an increase in oil prices and thus in Nigeria's inflation rates.The primarypremise of this study is that the period between 2015 and 2023 was a time of uncharted waters for Nigeria's foreign policy, as the country encountereda number of unprecedented global events that presented significant threats toglobal security.

Since 1960, Nigeria's foreign policy has seen several leadership changes, but its core tenets of non-alignment, afrocentricity, a just global economic system, and world peace have remained constant (Akindele& Ate, 1986). The nation has taken the lead in advancing African unification and has provided backing for the establishment of regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU).On the continent, Nigeria led anti-colonial and anti-apartheid initiatives, such as movements for the independence of Southern Africa (Abdul & Ibrahim, 2013). There is no shortage of literature about Nigeria's peacekeeping efforts in Sierra Leone and Liberia (McGregor, 1999; Vines, 2018). Nigeria too bases its foreign policy on fostering cooperation and economic expansion. Enhancing trade and investment ties with other African countries and major world powers such as the US, UK, and China has been a priority for the administration (Ajaebili, 2011).

The research problem centres on the unbelievable global obstacles encountered by Nigeria's foreign policy under former President MuhammaduBuhari's administrationbetween 2015 and 2023. The US-China Trade War, Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, African coups, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 created new security challenges for Nigeria. The inquiry pertains to the manner in which the government of President Buhari deliberately modified Nigeria's foreign policy in reaction to a sequence of unparalleled global occurrences, including the signing of US-China trade war, the Covid-19 epidemic, and regional coups.

Conceptual Clarification

It is important to comprehend the context in which key terminologies (e.g uncharted waters, diplomatic adaptations and international security threats) are utilizedso as to offer conceptual explanation of their application within the larger literature. The term "Uncharted Waters" is utilized metaphorically to suggest a situation or time with the absence of precedence (Kokores, 2023). It has nothing to do with a body of water or actual sailing on open waters. In contrast, "Uncharted Waters" depicts how the geopolitical landscape is shifting globally as seen in the works of Hepburn (2020) on Brexit; Wong & Jie (2019) on trade war;and(Rosenau, 1970), Kokores (2023) on international finance. According to the study, between 2015 and 2023, Nigeria's diplomatic initiatives and foreign policy encountered unprecedented obstacles from the global scene. Rosenau (1970) defined diplomatic

adaptation as the ability of a country to adjust its policies and practices in response to the ever-changing character of international relations. According to Petersen (1977), diplomatic adaptation is the intentional and calculated adjustment of a country's foreign policy to take into account shifting international circumstances. The term "adaptive foreign policy" goes beyond the definition of "diplomatic adaptations" to refer to a state actor's responsive actions in response to new opportunities and problems (Smith, 1981). Foreign policy adaptation may be impacted by the kind and intensity of external threats and opportunities, the cost and accessibility of resources and skills, the political and social climate at home, the norms and values of the state and society, and the expectations and input of other players (Rosenau, 1970). Another important phrase in the research is "international security threats," which describes situations, things that happen, or forces that endanger global peace, stability, and well-being (Moses, 2018). The definition of international security threats, according to the study includes military conflicts, cyberwarfare, terrorism, transnational crime, natural disasters, pandemics, and economic downturns.

Methodology

This qualitative study examines how the administration of President Buhari strategically modified Nigeria's foreign policy in response to challenges to international security using a literature-based methodology. A literature-based approach often referred to as desk-based research or a literature review is a research methodology that entails combining data from peer-reviewed publications in order to provide a response to the research question (Al-Ababneh, 2020). The primary sources of articles were JSTOR and SCOPUS, two research databases. The study searches the literature from 2000 to 2023 using specific search phrases, boolean operators, and keywords generated from the research topic. The Boolean operators AND, OR, and NOT were utilized to further filter the search results. Based on the study topic, themes were created and then examined utilizing a thematic analytical method. Thematic analysis makes it easier to arrange and combine data in a purposeful manner that addresses the research question(Aramo-Immonen, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

The foundation of the theoretical framework is Adaptive Foreign Policy, which maintains that nations use foreign policy to pursue both transformation and maintenance (Smith, 1981). According to this idea, governments want to better their security and interests by changing the international system or their place within it, but they also seek to preserve the status quo in order to avert instability and conflict (Rosenau, 1970). The idea holds that governments trade off these two commodities, and that their choices, capacities, and expectations influence how they behave in foreign policy (Roo et al., 2020).The theory also implies that depending on the nature and extent of external threats and opportunities, nations may respond by hedging, bandwagoning, buck-passing, or appeasing. Yet, the hypothesis has a number of serious flaws. Foreign policy ignores the influence of civil unrest, interest groups, political opposition, and public opinion. The subtleties of Nigeria's foreign policy, where domestic concerns directly affect foreign policy decision making, are obscured by this absence (Adefuye, 2004). Although the Adaptive Foreign Policy theory offers a fundamental explanation, the fact that it does not take into consideration domestic repercussions indicates the necessity for a more thorough approach that acknowledges the interplay between domestic and international concerns when defining foreign policy.

Three themes of adaptation are identified by the study: economic, diplomatic, and health. The doctrine of adaptive foreign policy is utilized to elucidate how the administration of President Buhari tactically modified Nigeria's foreign policy in response to a series of unanticipated international developments. According to Central Bank of Nigeria (2022), the rationale for Nigeria's entry in 2019 into the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is that it served as a buffer against the negative effects of Brexit and the US-China trade war on the country's economy.The concept also elucidates Nigeria's choice to participate in the COVAX project in 2020 (William, 2020), a concerted international endeavour to get Covid-19 vaccinations and mitigate the pandemic's detrimental impacts on health and humanitarian circumstances. The theory can also explain why Nigeria responded to regional coups in Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso, and Guinea-Bissau with military intervention and mediation as a strategy to find a compromise between maintaining regional stability and safeguarding Nigeria's

security and interests (Akinola&Uzodike, 2022). Nigeria's foreign policy at the time of uncharted waters may be broadly explained by the idea of adaptive foreign policy. Nevertheless, the theory has flaws, such as dismissing civil unrest, interest groups, political opposition, civil society, and the media, all of which might have an impact on foreign policy decisions (Beach & Pedersen, 2020). This limitation has led scholars to propose that theories that fail to take into account the impact of domestic factors on the creation of foreign policy be enhanced by liberal constructivism, which highlights the role of ideas, norms, and values in determining foreign policy (Bayraktar& Wang, 2004; Bisceglia, 1982).This study looks at Nigeria's adaptive behaviour under President Buhari, emphasizing important diplomatic decisions made, the factors that influenced those decisions, and the consequences those decisions had for Nigeria's interests and security.

Thematic Analysis

The study identifies three broad topics that correspond with the research question. The topics revolvearoundthe strategic response to (1) US-China Trade War and global economic disruption; (2) Regional coups and political instability in Africa (3) Covid-19 pandemic and global health security. These topicsfocused on critical examination of strategic adaptations to the aforementioned events.

US-China Trade War and Global Economic Disruption

Boylan, McBeath, and Wang (2021) define the trade war as the direct economic confrontation between the United States and China in 2018 and 2019. The Trump administration imposed $350 billion tariffs on Chinese goods in response to allegations of unfair trade practices and intellectual property theft (Bown, 2019). China responded by taxing US exports by $100 billion (Ciuriak, 2019), which set off a chain reaction of increasing tariffs and trade barriers between the two biggest economies in the world. The battle highlighted the rising strategic rivalry between the two superpowers in the context of geopolitical worries. This competition affected the national security of several nations where vital technologies such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and 5G were in jeopardy (Cali, 2018). The trade war caused a disruption in the global supply chain, which had an immediate impact on developing economies like Nigeria. Table 1 provides an overview of Nigeria's trading connections with the US, China, India, and Sub-Saharan Africa in order to assist in comprehending the situation.

Table 1: Nigeria's Trade Relations: Pre-Trade War, During Trade War, and After Trade War

Period	US Imports	US Exports	China Imports	China Exports	India Import	India Export	Africa Imports	Africa Exports
Pre-Trade War (2017)	$2,494,134	$5,672,187	$5,847,733	$721,261	$1,528,779	$7,938,340	878,738	5,048.181
During Trade War (2019)	$4,678,026	$2,822,001	$1,665,029	$12,060,017	$5,702,665	$8,263,326	$10,945,604	$14,608,095
After Trade War(2021)	$3,176,683	$2,002,265	$12,879,007	$1,846,031	$4,598,984	$7,733,674	$6,002,189	$1,081,917

Source: Adapted from WITS World Bank (2023)

Nigeria's commercial relations, particularly with the US and China, were impacted by the US-China trade war, as seen by the figures in Table 1. Nigeria experienced a $1,856 million trade deficit between 2017 and 2019 as a result of a 50.3% decline in exports to the US to $2,822 million and an 87.6% increase in imports to $4,678 million (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). This demonstrates how Nigeria was badly impacted by trade tensions between the two biggest economies in the world. The decline in exports and increase in imports show how vulnerable Nigeria's trade balance is to changes in international commerce. Nigeria's trade with China was impacted by the trade war, nevertheless. Nigeria's trade imbalance was 10,395 million in 2019 due to a rise in exports to China of 1,573.9% to $12,060 million and a decrease in imports of 71.5% to $1,665 million (CEIC Data, 2023). Nigeria's trade deficit increased to $11,033 million in 2022 due to a 673.9% rise in imports from China ($12,879 million) and an 84.7% decrease in exports to China ($1,846 million) (WITS World Bank, 2023). In order to lessen the consequences of the trade war, President Buhari developed new initiatives in response to the changing dynamics of the conflict. One of these initiatives was broadening commercial relations, particularly with Africa and India.

In order to take advantage of regional markets, Buhari's answer includes Nigeria's admission to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Nigeria's imports increased by 1,146.3% to $10,946 million, while its exports to Africa increased by 189.3% to $14,608 million. This rise in trade volumes suggests that Nigeria's diversification strategy toward Africa was influenced by Buhari's emphasis on the AfCFTA. Trade statistics also demonstrate President Buhari's diplomatic attempts to strengthen relations with important nations, including India. Despite a decline in trade between the two nations, Nigeria's trade surplus with India increased from 22.5% to $3,135 million in 2022 (WITS World Bank, 2023). It's possible that Buhari's diplomatic efforts to establish a solid and mutually advantageous economic relationship with India contributed to Nigeria's trade resilience in the face of global issues. Suratu (2023) claims that President Buhari also created the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM), indicating that he acknowledged the diaspora as a possible source of investments, markets, and remittances. NIDCOM is a conscious way of leveraging diaspora contributions for national development, even if the immediate impact on trade figures may not be evident. President Buhari took decisive action to create a thriving and sustainable economy when he signed a nine-point development agenda in December 2020 (TheCable, 2020b). Although it is uncertain from the data how the agenda will affect trade diversification, Nigeria is better able to withstand external economic challenges because of its emphasis on infrastructure development and economic sustainability.

Regional Coups and Political Instability in Africa

Between 2015 and 2023, there was an increase in regional coups in Africa, endangering the stability of governments. Military coups occurred in Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Chad, and Burkina Faso (Musavengane& Zhou, 2021). Colonel AssimiGoita ousted Mali's President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and acting President Bah Ndaw in August 2020 and May 2021, respectively..Colonel MamadyDoumbouya ousted President Alpha Conde in Guinea, who had secured a disputed third term in 2020(Moses & Ige, 2023). There were also coups in Gabon, Chad, Burkina Faso, and Niger which Nigeria considers to be a risk to regional stability(Amoateng, 2022). Nigeria responded to these coups through adaptive foreign policy stancewhich included that of non-interventionism, a focus on regional cooperation, and the use of conditional sanctions.In contrast to earlier periods, especially from 1990 to 2000, when Nigeria adopted a more assertive foreign policy in Africa, the years 2015 to 2023 witnessed a change in the degree of direct involvement, with Nigeria shifting its foreign policy to more of condemning coup leaders instead of removing them (Mojeed, 2017).An exception to this was Nigeria's response to the coup in The Gambia in 2017, when the country sent troops under the codename ECOMOG NIBATT 1, which included 200 soldiers from the Navy and Air Force to the 7,000-strong joint force under the command of Senegalese Commander General Francois Ndiaye, with its headquarters located in Dakar (Jeremiah, 2018). Through ECOWAS, Nigeria took action against persons in Mali and Guinea-Bissau and other West African nations that had experienced coups.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Global Health Security

Following its outbreak in Wuhan, China, the coronavirus disease was declared a global public health emergency by the leadership of the World Health Organization (Cucinotta&Vanelli, 2020). It posed a serious danger to Nigeria's and other nations' international security. The virus infected over 771,549,718 and 6.9 million fatalities worldwide(World Health Organization, 2023).President Buhari adopted a proactive and flexible stance in his reaction to the COVID-19 outbreak. This included actively engaging with outside partners, diversifying the medical supply chain, and advocating for funding to minimize the economic harm caused by the pandemic. (2020, Adetayo). Buhari's approach placed a strong emphasis on global collaboration and engagement. Nigeria actively participated in international initiatives such as the COVAX facility to ensure equitable access to Covid-19 vaccinations. The Buhari administration made an effort to diversify its medical aid sources. This strategy was successful, as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund announced that by September 2021, COVAX had given Nigeria almost 4 million vaccine doses, highlighting the significance of international cooperation in vaccination campaigns. Securing a consistent supply of medical supplies was the aim.

To prevent over-reliance, the Buhari administration spread out its supply of medical supplies. As a result of this strategy, Nigeria simultaneously received donations and supplies from other nations. For example, China provided protective suits, ventilators, test kits, face masks, and protective gear in exchange for medical experts sharing their knowledge of pandemic management (TheCable, 2020a). Likewise, India provided Nigeria with 100,000 Covishield COVID-19 vaccinations (BusinessDay, n.d.). AstraZeneca vaccination doses totaling 859,600, solar-powered refrigerators, oxygen concentrators, ambulances, cold chain equipment, and infection control supplies were provided by Japan (Premium Times Nigeria, 2022). Nigeria received €50 million, or 21 billion naira, in humanitarian relief from the EU, a major ally (European Union, 2020). The United States allocated $505 million as humanitarian aid to Nigeria in fiscal years 2020 and 2021 to support the COVID-19 response in that country (United States Agency for International Development, 2023). Additionally, the UK gave Nigeria £105 million in humanitarian aid to help in its fight against the Omicron Covid-19 variant (BusinessDay, 2021). Undoubtedly, diversifying medical supply chains was President Buhari's administration's calculated approach to the COVID-19 outbreak. On the other side, this strategy made it easier for the country to meet the urgent requirements of the pandemic and laid the groundwork for a more resilient and flexible healthcare system. However, Nigeria's dependence on foreign aid for health-related issues may not be sustainable in the long-term, further emphasizing the necessity of regional industrial capacity and self-sufficiency.

Conclusion

This study evaluates Nigeria's foreign policy under President MuhammaduBuhari from 2015 to 2023 and how it responded to global security threats using a qualitative research technique, with a bias for literature-based studies. According to the analysis, Nigeria successfully handled the economic fallout from the US-China Trade War between 2015 and 2023 by broadening its commercial ties to lessen the impact of disruptions on the country's economic stability. The research also discovered that Nigeria used military deployment, sanctions, and diplomatic negotiation with coup leaders to modify its non-interference foreign policy and control the unrest in the sub-region. The investigation also revealed that Nigeria used a multifaceted and aggressive approach in addressing the COVID-19 outbreak. It changed its foreign policy to put national welfare and global health security over multilateralism. The results corroborate the notion of adaptive foreign policy, which holds that countries should modify their foreign policy objectives and strategies in response to shifting global circumstances. The results reflect Nigeria's international policy to safeguard its interests. The ability of the government to handle economic fluctuations, resolve local conflicts, and give priority to global health security demonstrates the significance of flexible foreign policy in contemporary international relations. The study did, however, have major shortcomings. First, the study looks at a particular time period and context for Nigeria's foreign policy, therefore it might not be representative of other periods. Second, secondary data—which might be skewed or inaccurate are used in the study. Third, a qualitative case study was adopted in the research, which can have an impact on generalizability. Therefore, to validate and generalize the results of this study, further empirical research employing other times or settings for Nigeria's foreign policy, various data sources or methodologies, and various

theoretical frameworks or viewpoints is required.

Recommendations

According to the study, President Buhari's flexible foreign policy—which favored diversification, multilateralism, and non-interventionism—was not enough to protect the administration from the consequences of the US-China trade war and from security threats brought on by the pandemic and regional coups. Nigeria must make diplomatic attempts to resolve trade conflicts top priority in light of these weaknesses, particularly when dealing with major economies such as the US and China. Strategic market targeting is required in light of Nigeria's involvement in the AfCFTA (Amodu, 2020). Additionally, economic sustainability and infrastructure development must be given top priority in foreign policy for Nigeria in order for it to endure external economic crises, putting the nine-point approach into practice when carrying out strategic development initiatives. Keeping a flexible foreign policy centered on cooperation and non-intervention in the face of regional unrest will benefit neighboring nations as well. In order to preserve regional peace, Nigeria should thus become more involved with ECOWAS (Omo-Ogbebor, 2017). Finally, Nigeria has to make investments in its industrial and healthcare sectors if it hopes to maintain its independence during pandemic-related problems. Nigeria should put a renewed emphasis on sustainable development, global health security, and economic resilience in its foreign policy.

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THE CHALLENGES FACED BY NIGERIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES: STUDY OF FORON WOMEN, 2010- 2023

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to appreciate the contribution of women in agricultural activities in Foron, thereby unleashing the full potential of women in agriculture which is not only a matter of gender equality but also a critical step towards achieving sustainable development goals, by recognizing and amplifying their roles in the agricultural sector. The paper also discusses challenges faced by women in agriculture and suggests ways through which these can be resolved in order to foster food security and self reliance. The appraisal of these challenges constitutes the main thrust.

Introduction

Agriculture is the main stay of many African economies especially in sub-saharan Africa. It provides a relatively large portion of the gross domestic product (GDP) in Africa and also the main source of foreign currency. [1] Agriculture is important to the economic growth of every nation. It is also the principal source of food and livelihood in rural areas. In Nigeria, agriculture was the main sector of the economy from the standpoint of rural employment, sufficiency in food and fiber, and export earning prior to the discovery of oil. Agricultural sector is still leading in Nigeria's economy. It contributes in various ways; provision of food for the growing population, supply of raw materials, supply of raw materials, source of employment, generation of foreign exchange earnings, provision of market for the products from the industrial sector, it provides direct employment to about 75% of Nigeria's population.[2]

The Nigerian woman has over the years proved to be more than a mere" bench-warming" spectator, even in the midst of the male-dominated profession. According to the UN survey report on the role of women in development, it can be deduced that if given opportunity, women can effectively participate in policy-making and governance. The role of women in Nigerian economic sector cannot be overemphasizes, they are making great contribution to Nigeria's economic development; hence they are crucial to the sustainable development of the country. Women, who form majority of the population of rural dwellers, play a significant role in the agricultural sector. [3]Rural women contribute

significantly to the agricultural labour force in many African countries, Foron women inclusive.

The General Outlook of Foron Women in Agriculture

In Foron district of Plateau state, Nigeria, local farmers engage in various activities that are mostly influenced by the region "agro-ecological condition- cultural condition and available land". The crops cultivated in Foron district are numerous, however the women who are active participants in the farming activities cultivating crops such as; cabbage, green pepper, hungry rice, guinea corn, millet, maize, green beans, groundnuts, cocoyam, soya beans, tomatoes, potatoes and yam amongst others. Other forms of agricultural activities being practiced by some of the women in Foron include poultry farming (birds) and pig farming (piggery). This does not mean that most households do not keep chicken and pigs, most especially for family consumption, although some have turned it into a means of business for their family. [4]The role of women in small-scale livestock production is well recognized and not much has been documented about women's engagement in an intensive production and the market chain associated with large commercial enterprises. An informant said she started her poultry farm in the year 2002 with about a hundred birds, but with the demand for pigs, she expanded her farm to include not just chicken but also pigs. Therefore, by the year 2011, she had over 50 pigs in her piggery. [5]Another informant also disclosed further that most Foron women are livestock farmers of different categories especially goats and chicken. While some are in the cattle, some of the cows were inherited while some of them were bought especially by those who come from rich families. In the course of the research, it was discovered that women in Foron district play equal role as men when it comes to farming. In fact, some women attest to being major farmers because their men are often involved in other jobs other than farming. [6]Mary stated that when she married her husband 25 years ago, they farmed together, but after 5 years he left for the city. Since then, she has been the only person farming. [7] For Many of these women their daily activities revolves around the farm and this is only natural since agriculture is the first culture that man learnt to practice as a means of living and way of life. It is also the backbone of any rural economy whether developed or developing and has become a means of surviving and employment for rural women as it is the case of Foron women.

Findings from United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 2005 revealed that women make up to 60-80 percent of agricultural labour force in Nigeria. [8]This finding is not far from that of Foron women in agriculture. These women utilize both raining and dry season to cultivate their crops to ensure optimal food production all year round. Fortunately, agricultural activities thrive in Plateau state no matter the season of the year. The farmers have to plant different crops at different season of the year and still manage to have a good harvest. Rifkatu postulated that "when dry season begins, they do not stop farming because that season is when they plant crops like; green beans, tomatoes, and green pepper. They usually get water for their farms from wells belonging to neighbors". [9]These women have found a way to adapt no matter the season of the year. They buy water hose, watering cans and other farm implements which they use to irrigate their crops during the dry season. According to them farming in dry season is also important just as farming during the raining season. In an interview with Kaneng, she stated that "during raining season, they plant maize, cocoyam, millet, groundnut e.t.c to sustain their families. But in the dry season, they plant tomatoes, cabbage, green beans and other vegetables which they sale to make money. [10]Although it was gathered that planting during dry season is more difficult than during raining season, the profit margin varies from season to season. Sarah was of the view that she could harvest 15 bags of potatoes in dry season compared to the raining season when she could harvest about 25 to 30 bags.[11]

Challenges Faced by Foron Women in Agriculture

Challenges of life they say is part of humanphenomenon, and that of Foron women is not an exception. Agricultural production continues to play a leading role in the structure of their economy. The women I Foron, have proven through their agricultural activities that they can also help boost agricultural production in their community and beyond. Farming for them is no longer a means of ensuring food stability but also a means of making money to sustain the family and other necessities of life, while also impacting positively on their community. This paper examines some of the

challenges the Foron women encounter in their farming activities such as; poor access to funds, high cost of fertilizer, high cost of transportation, lack of man power and so on.

Poor Access to Funds

Access to funds is a major set-back to most farmers in Nigeria. In the course of this research it was gathered that even though some of the women have tried to access funding for their framing activities but so difficult to. In an interview with a business woman, she narrated her experience that since in 2010 she has been trying to access loan to expand her piggery and poultry farm but it has not been possible. She added that sometimes in 2018 they attended a 3 day training of a Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), with the assurance of getting loan and certificate that will be given, yet they could not still get the loan.[12] This was a similar case that was shared by most women in Foron who when asked about, source of funding to expand their farm, they out rightly showed their bitterness about it, that no matter how hard they try it they couldn't get lucky.[13] Most of them said they have resigned to managing their poultry, piggery and other small farming activities. The struggles some of these women had to endure just to secure loan is evident in their productivity as access to funds would have grown their farming activities and therefore increase food production in their community.

High Cost of Fertilizer

Most agricultural products need fertilizer in order to yield properly. The use of fertilizer and manure can help farmers achieve high yield. This is the same case with women in Foron whose crops depends largely on fertilizer to grow well. A farmer shared her experience that she spent a lot for fertilizer and the prices kept increasing, for the past10 years the prices were better. But currently, the prices of fertilizer are very high. For example, Dangote brand of fertilizer is as high as ₦28, 000 while NPK 201010 is also as high as ₦15,000.[14]Even though, some of the women's opinion are right on point, it is also important to emphasize that the prices of fertilizer depend on the market and brand which shows the variation from ₦28,000 to ₦35,000 and ₦15,000 to ₦20,000 respectively, that makes it difficult and expensive for women to buy. [15]A business man shared his experience on the high cost of fertilizer over the years, that in the year 2010, fertilizer was sold at ₦800 to ₦900 but by the year 2016 to 2018 it cost ₦5,000 while supplies can go up to ₦6,500. By 2019, it was between ₦17,000 to ₦20,000 and by 2023 farming season, the price was between ₦25,000 to ₦35,000. It is also important to know that the prices of fertilizer always fluctuate depending on the place of purchase and the brand. [16]

Pests Destruction of Crops

Pests and animals damage agricultural products by feeding on them. Damages caused by pests can be enormous and distressful for a farmer. The women also experience pests destroying their crops and so, have taken steps to control it, though very expensive. A woman attest to this that "there are pests that are attracted by the rains and would always come out as soon as it starts raining, so we have to apply pesticides every week to the crops which cost about ₦12,000 and the price kept increasing year in year out". 17Apparently, when it rains there are insects flying around farms eating crops, and if nothing is done to control or manage this, the damages caused may be irreparable.

Access to Water

Water is very important to farmers for their crops, lack of it, especially during dry season can lead to their crops being damaged. Similar problems are faced by the farmers in Foron who had to go through some rigorous length to water their crops during dry season farming. [18]Fortunately, for some of these women in Foron, their farms are located near water and one of such was abandoned government project that was supposed to make water available to the community, but now has become an artificial river where some of these women have access to, or other sources of water. The buy watering cans, water hose and so on to water their crops. But for bigger farms like that of Margret who says she used to hire a water tank in most cases to water her crops, which is very expensive. [19] For crops like potatoes, watering is done twice a week as it grows, the watering drops to once a week thereby making it much easier compared to other crops such as; green beans, green pepper, cabbage e.t.c.

High Cost of Transportation

Farmers all over the world, always require some forms of transportation from their

farms to the market which in most cases proves to be a difficult one for them. Foron women experience same problem when it comes to moving their farm produce to the market. It is either the road is bad or the cost of transportation is usually very high thereby, depleting their profit margin. [20]Rifkatu express her dissatisfaction over the high cost, she spends a lot to move her farm produce stating that "she is not always happy paying the amount she pays to take her crops to the market because it affects the price she sells in the market. That she hardly market enough profit".

In the same vein, before the year 2010, transportation from Foron to Mararaban Jama'a market was ₦50 per passenger together with her goods she pays ₦150 to ₦200 only. But it has gone high, transportation from same Foron to Mararaban Jama'a is ₦200 to ₦300 when added with her goods, she pays as high as ₦1,500 to ₦2,000 only to get to the market. [21]Due to the high cost of transportation, for some of the women their farm products end up getting spoilt before reaching the market, because they are sometimes hesitant to pay this huge sum for their far produce.

Inadequate Manpower

Before the invention of farm machines, the power provided by human beings was the most common source of power in farm operation. Rural areas like Foron depend heavily on manpower in their agricultural activities like; clearing, ploughing, ridging, planting, and harvesting e.t.c. Another informant said that "she is old to do farming activities by herself but left with the option of hiring other younger women to work for her, paying for their services can be expensive. Sometimes even with the money, it is difficult to get farm workers because lots of young men these days do not want to farm".[22]Another woman attest to this, that she has being working in different farms since the age of 13 years, so that she can be able to support her mother after the death of her father. Some of her friends always ask her why not look for other jobs apart from farming. [23]In most cases, even when these women have the resources to pay workers, they are not easy to come by and hiring a tractor is expensive. In the year 2012, a woman said she recorded a major set-back in her farm due to the inability to get enough manpower, she maintained that almost half hectare of her land was not cultivated because she could not get farm workers to help her. [24]Rifkatu equally shared her experience that usually she plants soya beans, guinea corn and potatoes, but she ended up planting only potatoes because of the challenges they undergo in getting manpower. [25]In such case, income that could have been generated from planting same or different cops on the remaining farmland is lost due to inadequate manpower.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were raised in order to reduce the challenges faced by Foron women in agricultural activities as follows:

1. Agricultural extension officers should encourage women to use more of cow dung and other forms of manure, because this would assist in lowering cost as well as improving soil fertility.

2. In terms of water supply, government should reach out to Foron community to put in place various water systems that can aid the women to achieve more productivity.

3. Adequate and free training on modern farming methods and techniques should be given to the women for effective production.

4. Government should seek ways of lowering the cost of ploughing services by providing tractors to the women at affordable rates.

5. Easy access to loans would help them to even do better thereby leading to high crop production.

6. Women in agriculture should be given marketing skills to identifying which kind of market need their farm produce before making decisions as to the type of crops to grow.

Conclusion

The paper has discussed the challenges faced by Nigerian women in agricultural activities with particular reference to Foron women. An attempt was made to identify some of the challenges faced by the women from 2010 to 2023. The paper examines the following as the major set-backs for the women in agriculture as; poor access to funds, high cost of fertilizer, pests

destruction of crops, access to source of water, high cost of transportation and inadequate manpower. It there concludes that with the support of government, NGO's, spirited individuals and donor agencies these challenges can be reduced thereby boosting food production and sufficiency.

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PULLED`UP BY THEIR BOOT STRAPS: A HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF HOW MUSLIMSI N SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA FARED IN COLONIAL NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
Islam and Christianity, though not indigenous to Nigeria, are the two major religions in the country. Their paths crossed in the colonial period. The study examines what happened in South West Nigeria when the paths of the two religions crossed in the colonial period. The ambivalence of the British colonial officers, which made them promote Islam in the North and stifle it in the South-West, aroused the curiosity of the writer. Using historical and descriptive methods and relying on primary and secondary sources, it was found that if not for the measures taken by South-West Muslims, Islam could have been eclipsed by Christianity in the area. The paper concludes that Islam was deep-rooted in the South-west region. As a result, it produced dyed-in-the-wool Muslim faithfuls, which is why they did not lose focus despite all that the Christian missionaries and British colonial officials did.

Introduction

British colonial enterprise in Nigeria was not without impact on the Nigerian polity. The impact, it needs to be stated, affected different groups and/or regions in different degrees and ways. One of the areas this impact was felt is on the religion of Islam. It is noteworthy that Islam is one of the two major religions in Nigeria, and the bulk of the adherents are found in the defunct Northern and Western Regions. The interesting thing about the impact it has on Islam is that the impact was not the same for the defunct Northern and Western Regions. It was so because the attitude of the colonialists was favorable to Muslims in the North and hostile to their counter parts in the West. The reasons for this are highlighted in the paper.

It may be necessary to observe here that though the policies of the colonialists were not favorable to the defunct Western Region, some works have shown that something beneficial came out of it. One such work is that of Saad. According to him, colonial rule made it possible for Sharia to be implemented in the area as a whole. This contrasts with the situation before the advent of British colonialism when it was applied in only some of the towns. He further stated that that happened because it aided the smooth implementation of indirect rule in the area (148). Another work worth mentioning is that of Stefan Reichmuth. This work noted that there was a significant growth in Arabic literary works in the area of study during this period (553). The above notwithstanding, Abdur-Raheem's position is that British colonial policies frustrated Islamic education in the area of study (15-20). On its part, this paper focuses on how and why British colonial rule endangered Islam in the defunct Western Region and how the adherents responded to the situation. It may be necessary at this point to mention that the defunct Western Region is now known as the South-West geopolitical zone. It is made up of six states, namely, Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, and Lagos States. The paper is divided into four sections viz. introduction, pre-colonial South-

West Nigeria and Islam, colonial rule and Islam in South-west Nigeria, and conclusion.

Pre-Colonial South-West Nigeria and Islam:

It has been deposed that the way and manner Islam was introduced into the South-West geopolitical zone made it difficult to know the precise date the religion was introduced into the region (Abdur-Raheem 13, Saad 147). That notwithstanding, available evidence suggests that it could not have been later than the 17th century (Balogun 219). The aforementioned evidence also indicates that by the 18th century, the religion had spread to many towns in the area of study. Some of the towns are Kisi, Saki, Iseyin, Igboho, Ikoyi, Ogbomoso, Owu, and Badagry (Balogun 219). Others include Osogbo, Ede, Ikirun, Iwo, Ikire, Ejigbo, Ila, and Orile-Owu (Isola 25). The spread of Islam seen above should not be seen as an indication that it was smooth sailing from the outset for the religion in the area of study. As a matter of fact, the adherents did not find it easy as not many people embraced the faith. As a result, they practiced it privately as they were few and uninfluential (Clarke 171-2, Abdur-Raheem 14, and Gbadamosi and Ajayi 347). The difficulty the Muslims faced continued in some places even in the 19th century, as could be seen in the reprisal attack on the adherents when the Fulani jihadists waged war on Old Oyo Empire (Balogun 219, Gbadamosi and Ajayi 347, and Clarke 167). At any rate, the aforementioned resistance to, and rejection of Islam by the people did not deter the Muslim faithfuls. Rather, they held on so much that later the religion became popular among the people, and by the end of the 18th century, the religion could spread from there to neighboring communities in present-day Benin Republic (Balogun 219).

A community of factors were at work in making Islam that was at a time rejected popular among the people. One such factor was the identification of the religion with royalty. The point being made is that in many towns, Kings and Chiefs and their households embraced the faith. Muslims, as a result, were adequately protected and had a conducive environment to carry out their proselytization activities (Balogun 221). One of the things that attracted the Kings and their Chiefs to the religion was the literacy that came with it. It is noteworthy that the literate status of the Muslim scholars enabled them to work in the courts and hold important positions in the governments of those communities (Abdur-Raheem 13). Another reason for which kings and chiefs were attracted to Islam was that the early Muslim scholars were people with mystic powers. They were said to be "not only Imams and teachers but also spiritualists and healers" (Abdur-Raheem 14). Among the leaders of their communities who benefited from the prayers of the Muslim scholars were Ataoja Matanmi I (1854-1864) of Osogbo (Isola 27) and Aare Latosisa of Ibadan (Abdur-Raheem 14). In both cases, the issue bordered on fruit of the womb. For the former, the wife who was barren gave birth to a child, while for the latter, the wife was able to give the king what he greatly desired, a son. They are also credited with helping kings and their towns in many other ways with their prayers. This includes helping them achieve victory in war, dislodging the evil spell cast on them through witchcraft, and bringing drought to an end by causing rain to fall (Balogun 221). The point being made is that the ability of the Muslim scholars to bring succour to the people by effectively tackling the challenges that confronted them drew people to their religion.

Apart from kings and chiefs, another group of highly respected people the religion was associated with were warriors and long-distance traders. In the 19th-century society of the area of study, members of the two groups were revered. Thus, when members of the two groups embraced Islam, the people could not but revise their opinions about the faith and embrace it (Ghadamosi and Ajayi 349). Mention must also be made of the role played by the Muslim festivals of Idal-Fitri and Idal-Adha. These festivals usually offered Muslims the opportunity of exhibiting their gorgeous dresses. Some of them rode on horses to and from the praying ground. Added to all the above was the act of charity, which is an integral part of the festivals. All these greatly aided in drawing the people to Islam because they were pleasant and exciting to them. When one considers the fact that the people's indigenous festivals instilled much fear in the people because they were occasions for exhibiting dangerous charms and other negative attitudes, one cannot but reason with them (Abdur-Raheem 14).

Another issue worthy of being mentioned is that the contact Muslims had with the wider world earned them respect from the people. As at then, the indigenes hardly went beyond their immediate environments and as a result hardly interacted with people beyond the aforementioned vicinities. Thus, they were limited in knowledge about other areas and their peoples, especially when they are far-flung

places. This was not so with those who embraced Islam. This is because of their interaction with Muslim scholars, and these came from far and wide, even up to North Africa and the Middle East. Added to that is that some of the indigenes who were Muslims might have gone on pilgrimage to Mecca, which would expose them to many places in the world beyond their environments. Some others travelled to other outside places in the course of proselytization assignment. The point being made is that contact with the outside world enhanced the image of the Muslims among the non-Muslim indigenes. Thus, they (non-Muslim indigenes) saw the faith as something worthwhile (Abdur-Raheem 14).

Equally important in making the people see embracing Islam as a good idea is the uniformity of the mode of worship in the religion. This uniformity made it possible for the adherents to understand each other when worshipping together, notwithstanding that they came from different ethnic groups. This was fascinating to the indigenes because they were aware that the Muslim scholars in their towns were from different ethnic groups, and in their indigenous religion, it was not possible for someone who was not Yoruba-speaking to be part of it because of the incantations and invocations involved (Abdur-Raheem 14). Another issue was that as Islam was being introduced into the different towns, steps were taken to deepen it. This could be seen in the establishment of Qur'anic schools. It may be necessary to observe that in the history of Islam, the establishment of Qur'anic school always followed on the heels of the introduction of the religion. The situation was not different concerning the South-west region. In the Qur'anic school, pupils (young and adults) are taught the history of the Prophet and Islam and other basics that help to make an adherent strong in faith (Makinde 56). This probably explains why thoroughness was upheld in their practice of the faith from virtually the beginning. For instance, in the 17th century, the Muslim community in Oyo sought guidance from Katsina on the issue of Ramadan Fast (Balogun 219).

So far, it has been shown why and how Islam that suffered rejection and persecution along the line later became popular among the people to the point of being preponderant in the area. It was also shown that as Islam was being introduced in the various towns, measures were put in place to deepen the faith in the adherents. This explains why dyed-in-the-wool Muslim faithfuls were produced in the area. Thus, despite the challenges that confronted the Muslim faithful from the beginning, they did not give up. This attribute came in handy, as we shall see later when Christianity threatened the existence of Islam in the colonial period.

Colonial Rule and Islam in South-West Nigeria:

One important feature of British Colonial enterprise in Nigeria was its ambivalence. The ambivalence, it is important to note, stemmed from the pragmatic approach adopted by the colonialists. The point being made here is that what determined the position taken by the British on any issue was whether the matter would advance British colonial interests. This explains why on some issues; the colonialists took contradictory positions. An instance of this is seen in their disposition to Islam. In the South-West region, the policy adopted by the British colonial officers tended to stifle Islam while in the defunct Northern region, it was the opposite. Here, the colonialists not only shielded Islam from competition with Christianity but also aided its spread (Gbadamosi and Ajayi 352, Clarke 191-193). As a result, the high hope of success in the region entertained by the Christian missionaries was not met with commensurate success (Gbadamosi and Ajayi 350-352).

It is noteworthy that the new challenger, Christianity, came into the country in the last decade of the first half of the 19th century. It came so as to help in bringing the trans-Atlantic slave trade to a complete cessation. This was to be achieved through getting the indigenes converted to Christianity (Crowder 140 and 148). This Christianization mission, thus, pitched Christianity against Islam, which got established earlier. What really set the stage for a tough battle between the two religions was the mindset of the Christian missionaries. To them, there was an urgent need to redeem the indigenes from Islam and their traditional religions (Kukah 3). However, they met with limited success in the North. This was due to a number of factors.

One such factor was that the northerners saw the Christian missionaries as one and the same group with the British colonial officers whom they saw as a threat to the existence of the Sokoto Caliphate. Another dimension of the threat to the existence of the Caliphate was that the Christian missionaries, as a strategy of gaining a foothold in the area, presented

themselves as people who desired to liberate the Hausa and other groups from the hegemony of the Fulani. This, the leadership of the Caliphate (Emirates inclusive), was not ready to tolerate (Gbadamosi and Ajayi 352). In addition, the people did not see anything enticing about Christianity. As far as they were concerned, Islam provided all they needed to function effectively in the society and, by so doing, move the same forward (Gbadamosi and Ajayi 352). As a result of the above, both the rulers and other members of the Caliphate were united in opposition to the activities of the Christian missionaries in the area.

Another reason was the opposition of the British colonial authorities to the Christianization of the North. It is worthy to note that this factor was what enabled the opposition of the Caliphate to succeed. This is because if the colonialists had sided with the Christian missionaries, they could have recorded far more success than they did. One of the factors that prompted the opposition of the colonial officers to the activities of the Christian missionaries in the area was the respect they had for Islam. This respect derived from their belief that a society that practices monotheism has got to a high level of human development. Put in another way, the colonialists saw people of the Caliphate, who as Muslims, were monotheists, as superior to their neighbors who practiced polytheism (Clarke 190-191, Gbadamosi and Ajayi 352).

Mention must also be made of the desire of the British colonialists not to disrupt the operation of the indirect rule system of government in the area. The colonialists realized that they needed the cooperation of the Emirs and other Caliphate officials if they were to succeed in the North. It could not have been otherwise given the vast territory with its large population they were to administer and the inadequate (British) personnel and financial resources at their disposal. The colonialists knew that anything to the contrary would provoke a Muslim uprising which they detested (Gbadamosi and Ajayi 352). With all the above, it is not a surprise that Christian missionaries did not make much headway in the North. It is also necessary to state here that though what the British colonialists did helped to preserve the Caliphate for their indigenous leaders, it was an ill wind that blew on the Caliphate. In a nutshell, it left the Caliphate and the entire North educationally backward. This situation piqued some of their indigenes (Clarke 221-223).

The situation seen above about the defunct Northern Region contrasted sharply with what obtained in the South-West region. It could not have been otherwise because outside "northern Nigeria..., British policies did nothing to promote Islam" (Clarke 193). The corollary of the above is that Christian missionaries had an unfettered access in the South-West region. The missionaries, who probably, saw that as an opportunity to make up for what they lost in the North, threw in everything at their disposal. Thus, they came up with a four-point programme of action. These are intensification of their evangelization, training their missionaries to be versed in Arabic, production of pamphlets, tracts, and other literature in local languages with the aim of undermining Islam, and the utilization of Western education as a tool for Christianization (Abdr-Raheem 14). The above-mentioned strategies had a two-fold aim, namely, making Muslims see the need to abandon Islam for Christianity and making the non-Muslims prefer Christianity to Islam. It is noteworthy that of the four strategies, the most potent was the utilization of Western education as a tool of evangelization (Abdur-Raheem 15, Gbadamosi and Ajayi 354-355). The other three had little or no effect on the standing of Islam in the area of study. Rather, they not only ended up making the people see the missionaries as making a mockery of themselves but also provoked an intense disdain for the missionaries (Gbadamosi and Ajayi 353).

What made the use of Western education as a tool of evangelization a potent weapon was that British colonialism introduced a new socio-economic order that was driven by Western education. Thus, being equipped with Western education translated to possessing the password for success in the then emerging society (Oyeweso n.p, Gbadamosi and Ajayi 355, Reichmuth 366 and 368). What this means is that if, in an attempt to protect their faith, the Muslims rejected Western education, they would be relegated to the background in the scheme of things. This they did not want as it would translate to a reversal of fortunes for them. It could not have been otherwise given the fact that prior to the advent of the Christian missionaries, the Muslims were an envied class in their communities (Nwachukwu and Azeez 218). Their situation was made pathetic by the failure of the colonial government to protect them as was the case in the North. The above situation made it abundantly clear to the Muslims that they needed to pull themselves up by their bootstraps if Islam was to be saved. To

appreciate what those Muslims did, one needs to understand that a Muslim does not see Islam as a mere religion but as a way of life (Saad 145). Accordingly, necessary steps were taken by them. One such step was getting traditional authorities to fight for them. Earlier, we saw that when traditional authorities got converted to Islam, they created a conducive environment for the religion to thrive and spread. This is logical because they accepted the faith because they found it beneficial. That being the case, one would not expect them to allow a strange faith to displace what they had tasted and found good. This was why it was not difficult to get them to assist in checkmating the activities of the Christian missionaries as it happened in many towns in the South-West region (Gbadamosi and Ajayi 353).

Another method adopted by the Muslims bothered on working on their children. This took different forms. Some refused to send their children to school while those already in school were withdrawn. Another dimension of this method is that their children were forbidden from mingling with children who were Christians, and in rare cases where they were allowed to interact, discussions about religion were barred. In addition, was the issue of corporal punishment which was used when necessary to extract obedience from their children (Abdur-Raheem 16). Yet another dimension of this method was that some parents allowed their children to go to school, but the activities of those children were closely monitored by them. This, probably, was employed by those who were fascinated by the socio-economic upliftment Western education conferred on the beneficiaries yet they were not ready to compromise their faith. Thus, such parents made it a duty to strengthen the faith of their children by studying the Quran with them regularly (Clarke 171).

Mention must also be made of the strategy of using Islamic societies and organizations. This was why many of the societies sprung up in the area in the colonial period. Their focus, it may be necessary to point out, was more on enabling Muslim faithfuls acquire Western education without comprising their faith (Adekilekun 107 - 108 -, 120 - 121, 141 -143,151, 162, Clarke 225 - 226, NwachukwuandAzeez218). The societies are Egbe Kila founded in Lagos in the 1890s, the Ahmadiyya Movement which began in India and entered Lagos in1911(Clarke225 and Reichmuth 370-371), the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society founded in Lagos in1923, The Ijebu Muslim Friendly Society established in 1927 and the Isabatudeen (Band of Religious Enthusiasts) founded in Ibadan in the 1950s (Clarke 225). There were also Jamaat-ul Islamiya of Nigeria founded in Lagos in 1924, Zumratul Islamiyya Society of Nigeria founded in Lagos in 1927, Nawairud-Deen Society founded in Abeokuta in 1939, Ansarul Islam Society of Nigeria founded in 1942 and the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria founded in Lagos in 1954 (Adekilekun106 - 177). Muslims in the South-West leveraged Islamic societies because of the role they play in faith building and the societies did not fail them. This is attested to by some examples space constraints could allow here: Ansar-Ud-Deen Society in Osogbo (Nwachukwu and Azeez 222-3), Nawair-Ud-Deen Society in Ikirun (Akinjobi 3) and Isabatudeen and Ijebu Muslim Friendly Society in Ibadan and Ijebu-Ode respectively (Clarke 225). These examples mirror the situation in the other towns in the area of study. That the societies lived up to expectations should not come as a surprise because they are, basically, meant to help in strengthening the failthfuls and make them see the need to remain steadfast (Nwachukwu and Azeez 222). This is usually facilitated by the social contacts, interaction and cooperation the societies promote among the Muslim faithfuls (Akinjobi2).

The above does not suggest that the Christian missionaries failed. It could not have been so especially when compared with what they achieved in the North. Nevertheless, their success was not to the level of overshadowing Islam. This was so because of the tenacity and resourcefulness of the Muslims who dug deep to make Islam remain preponderant in the area. Rather, they recorded some reasonable level of success. Personal communications with some people from the area of study attest to that. The individuals are Professor Johnson Aremu (Dept. of History and Intl Studies, Ekiti State University (EKSU) Ado-Ekiti,15/10/21),Sullyat Azeez and Grace Agboola (former students of History and Int'l Studies, EKSU15/10/21),Ustaz Murtada Badmus (Lecturer,Dept. of Religious Studies (RES),EKSU15/10/21), Alhaji (Dr.) Morufu Isola (who recently bagged a Ph.D in Islamic Studies, from Dept. of RES,EKSU12/10/21),and Alhaji Musa Bello (Secretary Ansar-Ud-DeenSociety,Osogbo,12/10/21).

Conclusion

In conclusion, it has been shown that British colonialism posed a serious challenge to Islam in the South West region and that out of the

hostility of the colonialists came some positive things that happened to the faith in the area of study.It has also been shown that prior to this, the religion was confronted by issues of rejection and later rpersecution of the adherents by the indigenes.These not withstanding, we also saw that Islam was not suppressed.The reason for this, as has been shown, was the commitment of the adherents which made it difficult for anything to cow them into submission. This played out much during the colonial period when, against all odds, they effectively tackled the threat which the Christian missionaries represented. As a result, the preponderance of Islam in the area of study, which predates British colonial rule, has remained till date.

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CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY, POLITICAL DISTRUST AND AFRO-PESSIMISM IN NIGERIA POLITICS; THE FOURTH REPUBLIC IN FOCUS

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ABSTRACT
Democracy is highly celebrated as the best system for governance. The introduction of democracy into African society which in time replaced the old African political system, however even after political independence majority of African society continued with this same western political system which was seem as been more advance in providing equal opportunity, collective responsibility, human rights advancement, state development etc. However, there have been a repression, backsliding and crisis in the democracy of some states. Crisis of democracy are the threats to democratic principles. Huntington (1975) sees it as the excesses of government rule and citizenry repressions. Poor governance and "bad" politics in African countries as the personalized nature of rule, the failure of the state to advance and protect human rights, the tendency of individuals to withdraw from politics, and the extreme centralization of power in the hands of few people are the basis of the crisis of politics. The crisis in democracy has therefore expounded distrust, pessimism and skeptical relationship between the political elite and the citizenry. The research applies the quantitative research methodology. Further, the constructive theory of idea was employed to show the relationship between the crisis of democracy, distrust and afro-pessimism. More, the research found out that the historical trend of corruption, political repression, maladministration, political and ethnic crisis etc. are the factors mitigating against democracy. The research thereforerecommends that succinct and apt application of democratic principles and the end to political and administrative corruption is the major way out for solving Nigeria's crisis of democracy.

1. Introduction

The coming together of individuals to end the state of nature and give rise to the social contract that happened in Europe can also be likened to the divine rule system that was practiced in the African society. The idea of law and order in Nigeria, can be traced to the pre-colonial era traditional rulers. The rulers were

seen as high in wisdom, and divine mandate to rule the kingdom. However, with the coming of the Europeans into Africa society with the various marriages of inconveniences and society merger to enhance the easy colonization of the African society, the African political system was replaced with the European system. The journey of the democratization from the traditional rulership system to a modern democratic state has experienced various hiccups. The major notions for democratization is for economic and political development.

In international development, good governance is a way of measuring how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in a preferred way. Governance is "the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)". Governance in this context can apply to corporate, international, national, or local governance as well as the interactions between other sectors of society. (Wikipedia 2022)

The European democracy was introduced as the best form of government which in time replaced the old African political system, however even after independence majority of African society continued with this same western political system which was seem as been more advance in providing equal opportunity, collective responsibility, human rights advancement, state development etc. Democracy is the rule of the majority either directly or indirectly. Democracy is the system of government that allows for citizens' participation in the government either directly or indirectly by representatives. Here state power is vested on the state through the people's representatives and mandates. Democracy can be traced back to the city state Greek society.

According to the Webster dictionary, democracy as the government in which supreme power is invested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through representatives. Abraham Lincoln the 16th president of the USA defined democracy as the government of the people by the people and for the people. Democracy was described as the best system as it describes the system of government with four key elements which are; a system for electing and choosing representatives with periodic replacement through a free, fair and just means, active participation of the people in the governance, the entrenchment and promotion of the fundamental human rights of all accompanied with an established constitutional rule of law.

However, the democratic principles of democracy which includes good governance, rule of law, participation, political tolerance, transparency, multi-party system, control over the abuse of power, human rights, free and fair elections, etc. has not been worthwhile in Africa. Quite the opposite has been seen to be the characteristics of the day in most African countries. Democracy was painted and celebrated by the democratic peace theorist and western powers in the northern hemisphere has the best system for governance and developments. The various principles of democracy were seen by the modernization theorists has the best path way for development in which the adaptation of the western practices will also lead to development in the new world countries of Africa.

Crisis of democracy are the threats to democratic principles. Huntington (1975) sees it as the excesses of government rule. The Huntington reports outlines that the Western Europe government are overloaded with participants and demands" which the highly bureaucratic political systems are unable to handle, thus rendering the society ungovernable. However, in the USA crisis of democracy is seen from the paradox of "impulse of democracy" to make government pro-active to increase its function but less powerful and decreasing its authority. However, the African crisis of democracy has been more of political distrust and skeptiscm. The state government are seen as the elite class who in practices represents the selfish interest of self's and the elite. Therefore, the democratization of Nigeria and other society has not been able to complete ensue development as resources curse in which societies with vast presence of resources such as minerals, oils, etc. fails to develop because the elite class live off the profits of the resources. Therefore, economic and social development remains an abstract thinking, as meaningful development are seen as illusion or elite based.

1.2 Problem statement

The skeptism and distrust of the political hierarchyin Africa has been characterized with Legalization of illegality, Atrocities in government, embezzlement of funds, social injustice, syphoning of funds, gross malpractices and misconducts, the tales of corruptions,

incompetence, and untold hardships that have been imbibed on the citizens by the ruling elite has overtime, builta pessimistic relationship between the citizens and the ruling elite whom distrust over corruption and ill motives have been seen as the continuous events of the day.

Moreover, reasons for poor governance and "bad" politics in African countries as the personalized nature of rule, the failure of the state to advance and protect human rights, the tendency of individuals to withdraw from politics, and the extreme centralization of power in the hands of few people. More, it was noted that democracy in Africa has been badly hindered by the state's control of the economy; this has meant that the only way to get rich has been through political office, intensifying the problem of corruption, and inducing leaders to cling to political power. This has been disastrous for the economies in African countries. Thus, economic liberalization, empowering ordinary producers, may well be an aid to political democracy.Furthermore, in most African countries, the small number of individuals with power have managed to erode any semblance of accountability, legitimacy, democracy, and justice, which has been a basis of considerable disappointment to the planners, economists and policy makers who want African governments to introduce a reasonable and collective attack on poverty, disease, illiteracy, and other challenges to development. In the deliberations, certain desperately needed elements of good governance were identified, including popular participation in governance, accountability and transparency, the elimination of corruption, the protection of freedom of information and human rights, and the decentralization and devolution of power. (National research council 1992)

1.3 Research question

This therefore raises the questions of what are the reasons for the crisis of democracy in Nigeria and the socio political pessimism impact on government policy.

2. Research Methodology

The research applies the primary and qualitative descriptive methods. Here, primary data are sourced from the use of questionnaire while the secondary data are being used to thematically analyze the objectives of the research.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Constructivism

Constructivism argues "that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature". Constructivism is ‘an approach to learning that holds that people actively construct or make their own knowledge and that reality is determined by the experiences of the learner. Constructivism is the claim that significant aspects of relations are historically and socially constructed, rather than inevitable consequences of human nature or other essential characteristics of world politics. To these theorists, relations are based on shared ideas which becomes a theory.

Relevance of the Theory

The arguments that Nigeria has been useless or stagnant since independence is a flawed idea that have passed immemorial from generation to generation and society to society. There has been the flowing notion that nothing good can be achieved from Nigeria, and this a flawed idea that has taken footnote in some social and political relations thereby breeding pessimisms and distrust in politics.

3.2 Conceptual Clarification

3.2.1 Concept of democracy:

Democracy is the system of government that ensues popular participations, accountability and representations.

To Abraham Lincoln, democracy is simply the government of the people, by the people and for the people. The system of democracy cuts across the participation and involvance of the people in the socio-political, economic issues of the state.

Principles of democracy

i. Transparency

ii. Rule of law

iii. Accountability

iv. Periodic elections

v. Fundamental human rights

vi. Economic freedoms

vii. Representation

viii. Good governance

ix. Responsive

x. Equality

3.2.2 Concept of development

Development can be defined as the social cultural, political, economic and individual advancement in a society. Development is a broad spectrum that cuts across various sectorial advancement in the society. The increase in the social being of the citizens, in standard of living and purchasing power, the economical increment of Purchasing power parity, GDP and GNP and also the peaceful coexistence of various religious and ethnic groups in the society.

Development envisages individual micro level and national macro level. The individual level focuses on the standard of living, capacity building and purchasing power of individual. The relevance of capacity building in Nigeria could be situated vis-à-vis economic development. This is because capacity building captures the actual meaning of development in that it is people centered (World Bank 2005)

3.2.3 Concept of Good Governance

Etymologically speaking, the term ''governance'' is believed to have originated from the ancient Greek. Semantically, it is being used as a verb kybernein (infinitive) or kybernao (first person) which literally means 'steering', 'guiding', or 'maneuvering a ship or a vehicle'. Governance is referred to as the political administration of policies for effective and meaningful development.

Governance to the World Bank (1993) is a system through which 'power is exercised in the management of a country's political, economic and social resources for development'. The emphasis here, according to the World Bank, is 'the use of power to control political and economic resources of the nation'. Thus, governance is about securing political power in order to control economic power for the purpose of nation's development. Put differently, it is about using nation's wealth for the benefit of the nation only. Governance has to do with the totality of governmental actions and activities that are geared or directed toward making and realizing effective economic policies. IMF (2016)

However, in Nigeria and other third world society governance has been laden with some emphatic issues which therefore reduces its efficiency. Governance in cases have been able to lead to meaningful development and in some cases not being able to infer any meaningfulness. Good governance refers to the proper application of policies for societal development. (Lambe 2023) good governance envisages leadership, actions, rule of law, accountability and strategy for public policy. The former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan sees 'good governance' as 'the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development' (Annan, cited in UN 1998). He asserts that lack of good governance will continue to promote hunger and underdevelopment. It is through good governance that impact of governmental activities can be felt, particularly in the area of economic growth and development.



Sources: *The United nation*

3.3 Indicators of Crisis of Democracy

Political Repression

In the act of democratic declining which involves the weakening of democratic institution by forcefully controlling citizens for political reasons. In the act of restricting citizens' ability to partake, call for policy accountability and citizenry opposition government therefore restrict citizens by politically repressing their stands amongst their fellow citizens. Political repression targets actives, knowledgeable, influential citizens who are likely to challenge the political and elite ideology in the state. Direct political repression when sponsored by state might include witch-hunting of challengers and oppositions, state sponsored terrorism, genocide and politicized. In Nigeria, cases of political repression has been a characteristics actions of the state against those whom challenges its actions or policy. Those who fight against corruption or oppose the government are been targeted by law enforcement agency, extra judicial activities or by political thugs. This repression affects democracy and citizens drive to partake in the society.

Democratic backsliding

The decline in democratic practices is a standing attribute on the crisis of democracy in states. Democratic principles expounding the ideas of transparency, accountability, free and fair elections, rule of law. However, in states where this becomes an illusion it causes crisis of democracy. The Polity in Nigeria has overtime revolved around the elite and wealthy. The electoral processes since independence have been laden with allegations of malpractices, corruption and embezzlement of funds, administrative malpractices and lack of following of due processes etc. has played an elementary role in the crisis of democracy. More, the backward movement of democratic practices to autocratic processes that makes political policy and actions more arbitrary and repressive. Autocratization of leadership and lack of political democratic practices is an impediment and a yeast to crisis of democracy.

Ignorance and lack of understanding: The truth versus ignorance battle has been a war that has beclouded policy relationship between the government and the citizens. The combination of a crisis atmosphere and wide ignorance threatens democracy. The complex relationship between the government and citizens is exemplified by low knowledge, ignorance, high expectations without complementary actions etc. The new order of the netizens and social media has changed the phase of communication, feedback and displeasure between the government and the citizens. A total number of over million Nigeria was recorded to have access to mobile phones and social media. With this easy access of spread of information and freedom of speech pessimism about the government and its policies. Most informations online are usually uncensored, biased and lopsided with ignorance and low understanding, this therefore creates a skeptic and distrust environment in the society. President Buhari reiterated in 24th of March speech "crisis affecting Nigeria has its origin in ignorance" (SaharaReporters 2019)**.**

Interest and value system: the personal interest of individuals in society differs in society. This led Jeremy Bentham to write on Utiitarianism in which majority interest should be the pursuit of government policy. The values democracy embodies in freedom to elect by choice majority gives room for some being displeased by while some pleased. Every interest cannot be satisfied, and this often than not leads to negative criticisms, unruly portray of political leadership etc. The decision system in Nigeria has become too porous giving room for too many actors to stifle interest. The government do not trust the citizens and the citizens also do not trust the government. The conflict of interest and value here also constitutes a problem

Administrative abuse of political offices:abuse of power or authority is the malpractice of political and constitutional roles, it includes actions which are illegal, violate constitutional procedures, or the misappropriation of public good for personal or private good.Administrative abuse in Nigeria more, takes the form of political office holders misappropriate and misuse power for illegitimate purposes to promote or protect selfish or elite needs, the Historical trends of corruption; corruptions in civil service, public services, political office holders has reduced the minds of the people into pessimism of Nigeria development. Corruption causes crisis of democracy has it reduces the minds of the people into negativism from the government policy. The major impediments to development has been so far linked to corruption and administration, therefore some thinkers perceive democracy in Africa to impede

development. This abuse is present both in the executives, legislative and also judiciary. This abuse could be in form of electoral malpractices, social/political injustices, nepotism, misappropriation of funds, illicit use of government offices etc.

Political instability: the phenomenon of replacing old shackles with new ones, the change of policy and no policy continuity, change of government equaling to change of policy. These and more creates a vacuum for political instability and lack of trust on the government. The rapid change in government policy impedes long term development therefore increasing the likelihood of subsequent instability. Leadership administration sets the tone for development however macro development usually takes more effect in long terms and stable growth. However, the government of Nigeria has been more noted with the presence of more of change in policy from government to government wthereby resulting in wasting, non-incremental policy, investors distrust, and short term benefits etc.

Political and ethnic violence: ethnic violence and crisis is a form a political violence. The ethnic volatility in African states has continued to raise tensions which affects its political democracy. Ethnic hegemony is an impediment to democratic development. Marginalization and suppression of a minority and ethnic group could transcend into political withdrawal, sometimes violent reactions. Nigeria beinga multi ethnic society with diverse interest and ideas has a more tendency in violence. This a major issue affecting the crisis of democracy in Nigeria has over time certain depressed marginalized groups have taken up arms and have cost the state immeasurable loss in lives and cash. Political and ethnic crisis have deep seated structural impact on democracy consolidation in a state. A state envisaged with crisis will negate development.

3.4 Concept of "Failed State":

Nation state fails due to internal and external events that beclouds the state. After the drive of independence and the end to colonialism, states where given ample mandate to govern themselves. However, countries in the third world and beyond has been faced with inherent challenges which has constituted blockages and impediments to the development of the country. The end of the Soviet Union created notions that Africa and other new world countries will take an epicenter in the development of the state, however it has been an illusion. Countries where the government are no longer in control becomesa failed state.

A failed state status indicates the lowest possible conditions a state can fall into. A failed state is a repressioning state characterized with low or no constitutional orders, rule of law, gangs/ethnic or violent groups, low standard of living, reduced state authority/power etc. It is a state that has lost its essence and ability to effectively administer the citizenry. A failed state is a gradual declination process a sovereign state faces. Other concepts that takes similarities to the failed states includes; weak state, fragile state etc. a state doesn't become a failed state overnight it takes time for it to end there.

Characteristics of a failed state

i. Inability of government to effectively tax the citizenry

ii. When there are sufficient challenges to its sovereignty

iii. When government shares power and authority with violent actors within its territory

iv. Presence of multi laws and constitutions

v. Violence, crisis and pandemic laden in the society

vi. Economic recession

vii. Social disorderliness and lawlessness etc.

5. Results and Discussion

Below are the figures gotten from the analysis of the questionnaire.

Figure 1: Academic Qualification

Academic qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Primary education	3	2%

Secondary education	**32**	**37%**
Tertiary education	**47**	**53%**
Others	**7**	**8%**
Total	**89**	**100%**

Source: researcher's survey

Figure 2: Occupation of Respondent

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
civil servant	14	16%
self employed	23	28%
Student	36	39%
Others	16	18%
Total	89	100%

Source: researcher's survey

Figure 3

The government serves the interest of the elite political class over state interest					
		Frequency	**Percent%**	**Valid Percent%**	**Cumulative Percent%**
Valid	**strongly agree**	**25**	**28.1**	**28.1**	**28.1**
	Agree	**37**	**41.6**	**41.6**	**69.7**
	Undefined	**18**	**20.2**	**20.2**	**89.9**
	Disagree	**5**	**5.6**	**5.6**	**95.5**
	strongly disagree	**4**	**4.5**	**4.5**	**100.0**
	Total	**89**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: researcher's survey

Figure 4

Elite profiteering rather utilitarianism clouds government policy					
		Frequency	**Percent %**	**Valid Percent%**	**Cumulative Percent%**
Valid	**strongly agree**	**21**	**23.6**	**23.6**	**23.6**
	Agree	**41**	**46.1**	**46.1**	**69.7**
	Undecided	**20**	**22.5**	**22.5**	**92.1**
	Disagree	**6**	**6.7**	**6.7**	**98.9**
	strongly disagree	**1**	**1.1**	**1.1**	**100.0**

	Total	**89**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: researcher's survey

Figure 5

Political distrust is as a result of historical trend of corruptions					
		Frequency	**Percent %**	**Valid Percent%**	**Cumulative Percent%**
Valid	**strongly agree**	**19**	**21.3**	**21.3**	**21.3**
	Agree	**34**	**38.2**	**38.2**	**59.6**
	Undecided	**35**	**39.3**	**39.3**	**98.9**
	Disagree	**1**	**1.1**	**1.1**	**100.0**
	Total	**89**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: researcher's survey

Figure 6

Accountability and transparency are important for bridging political and citizens trust					
		Frequency	**Percent%**	**Valid Percent%**	**Cumulative Percent%**
Valid	**strongly agree**	**25**	**28.1**	**28.1**	**28.1**
	Agree	**37**	**41.6**	**41.6**	**69.7**
	Undefined	**18**	**20.2**	**20.2**	**89.9**
	Disagree	**5**	**5.6**	**5.6**	**95.5**
	strongly disagree	**4**	**4.5**	**4.5**	**100.0**
	Total	**89**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: researcher's survey

Figure 7

Political skeptism and pessimism is as a result of ignorance of the populace					
		Frequency	Percent %	Valid Percent%	Cumulative Percent%
Valid	strongly agree	19	21.3	21.3	21.3
	Agree	4	4.2	4.2	68.5
	undecided	24	27.0	27.0	95.5
	Disagree	42	47.5	49.5	100.0
	Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Source: researcher's survey

Figure 8

The economic and social condition of the country is as a result of political leadership					
		Frequency	Percent %	Valid Percent%	Cumulative Percent%
Valid	strongly agree	22	24.7	24.7	24.7
	Agree	37	41.6	41.6	66.3
	undecided	25	28.1	28.1	94.4
	disagree	5	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Source: researcher's survey

5.2 Discussion

The first questions of the government serving the interest of the people enshewed that citizens perceptions of the government towards serving their interest is low. Majority of citizens believes that the policy of government are not in the populace best interest. Corruption, distrust and syphoning of funds being the agenda. The second questions which showed that majority of the respondents agrees that elite profiteering is the agenda of the government rather than the principles of utilitarianism. The questionnaire went further by asking if ignorance is the reasons for political distrust and pessimism and the respondents responded both ways showing that some citizens are clouded with ignorance and lack of understanding of governmental ways and some arguing against that the government are the major causes of the pessimism. A trend of corruption, embezzlements, racketeering etc. has made the citizens pessimistic towards the government. Lastly, majority of the respondents agreed that the economic and social condition of the country is as a result of political leadership. Political leaders are the drivers of the state. The performances, developmental paradigm depends on leadership, governance and administration.

5.3 Conclusions

Development of a state relies on mutual development amongst the various sectors of the society. However, the leadership class plays a pivotal role in the development of a state. The development of the country from independence to present day though have not brought upon equal development rate with the western world or Europe and America however it has brought upon development in its own pace. The political distrust and crisis of democracy can be traced to the historical trends of corruption and lack of good governance moreover looking at various republics, administration and regimes it is worthwhile to know that there has been growth in the various sectors of the state, only not a match to the development stage of the western world. With the eradication of corruption, good leadership characterized with accountability and transparency the collapsed bridge of trust in the political leadership can be reconstructed. African leaders have more often than not droven on the bus of corruption, so ermassing public goods and funds for private profiteering is a common characteristic. The political administration structure in Nigeria and Africa is opened to easy manipulation from those at the leadership positions due to lack of accountability and transparency. The distrust and pessimism as therefore grown as a cancer in the society negating political leadership and policy, impeding the relationship between the upper and the lower class. Lastly, the objective of the upper class, political class, administrative class and lower class in Nigeria seems to be tilting towards opposing ends.

Nigeria is not a failed state. Studying the works of Robert Rothberg chapter on failed state, Nigeria do not fall under the criteria's to be a failed state. However, the constructivism ideas and individual disdain towards the polity of the state as beclouded society thinking. Insecurity, corruption, crimes, vices, ethnic and gang violence are global phenomenon not secluded to Africa or Third world countries alone. Editorials, publications and official statements that considers one side of the development and progress (often the dark side) is dangerous to the manifestation of a nation to greatness. Considering only the negative side of a nation on its pilgrimage to glory is neglect of the positive contributions and labour of love of the well-meaning citizens of the country. A one-sided story of darkness diminishes and demoralises the rich and worthy contributions of the citizens. Surely, there are positive successes Nigeria has recorded over its 63 years of nationhood. If we do our part individually and trust and hope in remembering the national anthems that pledges love for state and remembering the labors of our hero's past, Then Nigeria will be great.

5.4 Recommendations

Corruption constitutes the major antithesis to the development paradigm of a state. Therefore, the first recommendation is tilted towards the eradication of administrative and political corruption. An establishment of a bureaucratic administrative structure which is accountability and transparency driven is a major reconstruction that needs to be done on the political administration of the country. Proper documentation, accounting checks and public awareness is a tool which could be mandated on the political, administrative sector of the country.

Development is a tangible and intangible societal paradigm which encompasses both social economic and infrastructural growth. Therefore, citizens trust is built on good governanceandleaderships that builds societal transformation in infrastructural development, social amenities, economy development etc. SO, the state government need to embark on visible developments.

Reorientation of the masses to build on trust and reduce the knowledge gap. Ignorance as over time beclouded the citizens. The Citizens perceptions of the government as over time been beclouded with ignorance and lack of understanding of government policies and actions. Therefore, the government need to invest in enlightening of the citizens

Communication gap should be bridged by truthfulness and accountability to the citizens, the policy cycle as over time not inculcated the people's feedback and opinion on policy impact due to the top-bottom approach. So, investment in bridging the gap between the government and the people should be embarked by the government.

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BORDER SECURITY AND TRANSNATIONAL THREATS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF NIGERIA-NIGER BORDER DYNAMICS

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ABSTRACT
Border security is of utmost importance when it comes to safeguarding a nation's security and sovereignty against any possible threats. Its primary objective is to manage and regulate the movement of individuals across borders, thereby mitigating the illicit transport of goods and persons. The boundary that divides Nigeria and Niger, known for its expansive nature and lack of strict control, has become a central point for numerous cross-border threats, thus necessitating a thorough examination of its dynamics. This paper aims at making a comparative analysis of the security issues that both Nigeria and Niger share at the border, delving into the intricate network of transnational challenges and their implications for the well-being and safety of individuals in the region.The border that separates Nigeria and Niger has experienced a convergence of diverse issues, including terrorism, insurgent activities, drug and weapons smuggling, human trafficking, and criminal enterprises that operate across the border. This analysis also aims to clarify the complex and multidimensional nature of these challenges, by exploring the underlying factors and evaluating their significant impact on the lives and livelihoods of the communities residing in the borderlands.In doing this, the similarities and distinctions in the security dynamics of both nations, taking into account the geopolitical, cultural, and economic factors that exert influence upon these dynamics will be explored.

Introduction

Border security is of utmost importance when it comes to safeguarding a nation's security and sovereignty against any possible threats. Its primary objective is to manage and regulate the movement of individuals across borders, thereby mitigating the illicit transport of goods and persons. Spencer, cited in Uzoma and Eudora (2016:214) expressed that the border represents the initial barrier against acts of terrorism and serves as the ultimate safeguard for a nation's territorial sovereignty. The ability of a nation to define and consolidate its borders determines to

a larger extent its capability in building stable and peaceful societies within its territories. Nation states are recognized under international law based on their capability to secure their borders and protect the citizenry (Okumu, 2011). Nigeria, an expansive nation comprising 923,768 square kilometers, possesses 36,450 kilometers of both land and maritime borders (Uzoma and Eudora, 2016). Its location in the Gulf of Guinea results in borders shared with Benin Republic to the West, Niger and Chad to the North, and Cameroon in the North-east and South-south. Additionally, Nigeria shares lake borders with Chad and Niger, as well as maritime borders with the Gulf of Guinea and Atlantic Ocean (Okumu, 2011). The enormity of Nigeria's borders highlights the imperative need for efficacious management and control in order to ensure national security.

Furthermore, the trans-border security relations between Nigeria and Niger are emblematic of a critical facet of regional cooperation intended to tackle shared security challenges. Given their geographical proximity and the movement of people, goods, and ideas across their borders, Nigeria and Niger Republic have a longstanding history of interconnectivity. This relationship has resulted in both prospects and predicaments, particularly in the realm of security. The vast and penetrable border between Nigeria and Niger Republic has engendered a conducive atmosphere for various trans-border security apprehensions. These apprehensions encompass, but are not restricted to, cross-border criminal undertakings such as smuggling, human trafficking, arms trafficking, drug trade, and the movement of extremist groups. Consequently, both countries have acknowledged the necessity for collaborative endeavors to effectively counter these threats and promote stability in the region.

Therefore, by placing the experiences of Nigeria and Niger side by side, this paper endeavors to highlight potential lessons, exemplary practices, and collaborative measures that may prove instrumental in addressing shared security concerns. Transnational threats surpass borders and necessitate cooperation, rendering this analysis a timely and relevant undertaking. While acknowledging the inherent intricacies and tensions in border management, the paper strives to contribute to a more comprehensive comprehension of the ever-changing security landscape in this particular region. Through the examination of the dynamics at the Nigeria-Niger border, the paper seeks to establish a basis for evidence-based policy recommendations that can augment border security, safeguard human security, and foster collaboration between these two adjacent nations and the wider international community.

Theoretical Framework

As a framework of analysis, Critical Human Security Theory is employed. It is one of the theories proposed by scholars in their efforts to explicate the concept of human security. This theory represents a fusion of critical studies on security and the specific clarification of human security put forth by Newman (2010). The critical theory of human security embodies the essence of critical security theory and the idea of human security. The contribution of critical security studies is rooted in its critical examination of the assumptions that underlie the prevailing understanding of security, particularly during the Cold War era. In accordance with this, critical security poses three fundamental questions that necessitate careful consideration, as articulated by Sheehan (1999:3). These inquiries are:

1. What is security?
2. Who is being secured by the prevailing order and who or what are they being secured against?
3. With whose security should we be concerning ourselves and through whichstrategies should this security be attained?

The aforementioned inquiries aim to highlight the limitations of traditional security, which primarily focuses on the state. In this regard, the state was even identified as a source of insecurity as opposed to security. Other aspects of security, including environmental security, economic security, and societal security, were also acknowledged as important areas of focus in discussions on security (Dahajar and Alheri, 2018). Furthermore, the aim of security was examined at the individual, state, and global levels.

Furthermore, within the domain of critical security studies, there has been the emergence of two distinct schools of thought. The first school, known as the Copenhagen school, is led by Barry Buzan. The second school, referred to as the Welsh or Aberystwyth School, draws inspiration from the Frankfurt School and is

advocated by Ken Booth and others (Nunes, 2007). The Copenhagen school challenges the militaristic conception of security upheld by realists and broadens its scope to encompass various dimensions, including environmental, economic, political, and societal aspects of security. However, in the realist framework, the state continues to play a significant role in addressing security concerns. For instance, Buzan argues that the state bears the responsibility of addressing all security challenges (Sheehan, 1999). Moreover, Buzan asserts that since the state is the central actor in global politics and the primary agent for resolving insecurity, it is crucial for the state, rather than individuals, to remain the focal point of security discourse.

On the other hand, the Welsh school argues that the individual human being should be considered as the ultimate point of reference for security, and that security policies should aim for human emancipation. This school places particular emphasis on the struggles faced by disadvantaged individuals who should be liberated from the physical and societal obstacles that hinder their ability to freely make choices (Booth in Alberth and Carlsson, 2009:9). These obstacles include, but are not limited to, war and the threat of war, poverty, illiteracy, and political oppression.

Booth's proposition regarding security as liberation can be distinguished by an all-encompassing and non-statist approach to security, rejecting the realist emphasis on the utilization or threat of force. This proposition closely aligns with the notion of human security introduced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1994, which advocates for a shift in focus from the state to the individual human being. According to Gaan (2010), this perspective challenges the predominant role of the state in security matters. However, Newton (2010) asserts that this perspective also recognizes the reality of state power and aims to collaborate with the state in addressing security issues. Unquestionably, the study of human security illustrates a fundamentally open-minded and liberal outlook toward the state. The theory argues that, if properly established, the state will act in the best interests of individual human beings. In fact, Newman further contends that critical human security cannot be reduced to a simple rejection of the state, as such reduction would be both intellectually and politically unproductive.

The theory of security revolves around placing the individual human being at the core of security concerns. This contrasts with the state-centric approach, but it acknowledges the significance of a strong state in ensuring individual security. Newman describes human security as primarily consequentialist and structurally less revisionist in comparison to critical security studies. Human security challenges the conventional neorealist understanding of transnational security and proposes an alternative perspective. While human security recognizes the challenges faced by people in different regions of the world, it also acknowledges that the most significant threat to their security may originate from their own state rather than an external adversary. The solution lies in addressing attitudes and institutions that prioritize high-level politics over the individual experiences of deprivation and insecurity. In this way, decision-makers within the state can assume the responsibility of effectively addressing these challenges.

Given that the primary focus of human security studies revolves around redefining individual human beings as the central concern of security, it emphasizes the need to develop policies that will bring about this desired change as anticipated. Human security encompasses a wide array of issues, including the environment, migration, development, health, and medical epidemics, among others, that have an impact on the well-being of individuals. This is done with the expectation that governments will allocate greater resources to address security matters.

Similarly, after a thorough examination of major theories in security studies, including realism, liberalism, securitization theory, critical security theory, and environmental theory, Omeje (2010) concludes that none of these theories specifically align with the African context. Consequently, scholars and policy makers of African origin must develop more appropriate and context-specific alternative theories that accurately depict security concerns on the continent and offer solutions.

It is essential to recognize that human security, despite its focus on individuals, cannot be achieved without the involvement of the state. Tanaka (2015) argues that the state plays a significant role in ensuring human security and advocates for collaboration with international organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and other nations to effectively eliminate threats to human security.

Conceptual Exploration

Human Security

The notion of Human security acknowledges the security of human lives as the primary objective of national and international security policy. This concept emerged as a result of dissatisfaction with the state-centered notion of security and its ability to comprehend the vulnerabilities faced by humans in the modern world, as well as the appropriateness of military interventions as responses to these vulnerabilities (Sekiko and Messineo, 2012). Human security, as a concept, also encompasses the security of individuals and communities, manifesting as both the absence of fear and the absence of deprivation (Kaldor, Martin and Sabine 2007). Severe threats to human security encompass a wide range of issues, from acts of genocide and slavery to natural disasters like hurricanes or floods, to widespread violations of the rights to food, health, and housing. Kaldor (2007) provides additional elucidation that human vulnerability is all-encompassing, facing peril from 'new wars' in which the participants are no longer nation-states, disregarding the customary code of conduct observed in 'old wars', and incapable of being conquered through conventional warfare. Additionally, these novel conflicts are intertwined with other global menaces such as illness, environmental calamities, impoverishment, and deprivation. "Yet our security conceptions, drawn from the dominant experience of the Second World War, do not reduce that insecurity; rather they make it worse.' (Kaldor 2007:10). Correspondingly, Mahbub ul Haq suggests human security as a new paradigm of security. He opined that: "the world is entering a new era in which the very concept of security will change-and change dramatically. Security will be interpreted as: security of people, not just territory. Security of individuals, not just nations. Security through development, not through arms. Security of all the people everywhere - in their homes, in their jobs, in their streets, in their communities, in their environment." (Haq 1995:115).

Conversely, scholarly works on international relations and development issues described the concept 'human security' using several terms: as a new theory or concept, as a preparatory point for analysis, a world view, a political agenda, or as a policy framework (Shahrbanou 2005). While the definition of human security remains an open question, there is no dispute among its advocates that there should be a shift of focus from a state centered to a people-centered approach to security, that concern with the security of state borders be replaced with the security of the people who live within those borders (Shahrbanou 2005). Since security could be simply described as "absence of insecurity and threats", to be secure then, is to be free from both fear (of physical, sexual or psychological abuse, violence, persecution, or death) and from want (of gainful employment, food, and health). Impliedly therefore, Human security is concerned with the capacity to identify threats, avoid them when possible, and alleviate their effects when they arise. Human security entails aiding victims cope with the repercussions of the widespread insecurity resulting from armed conflict, human rights violations and massive underdevelopment (Shahrbanou 2005). As it appears therefore, the word "security" encompasses two ideas: one is the conception of "safety" that goes beyond the concept of mere physical security in the traditional sense, and the other the idea that people's livelihoods be guaranteed through "social security" against sudden disruptions (Shahrbanou 2005).

Border Security

Just like many other concepts within the parlance of social and management sciences, border security is also prone to a number of interpretations. It could be described as the control of trans-border movement of people with a view to reducing the illegal flows without necessarily limiting the flows (Uzoma and Eudora, 2016). Border security is indeed a complex idea. It encompasses aspects of the military, economy, politics, environment, geography etc. According to Fauzan, Abdallah and Ahmad (2019), border security could generally be understood as the safety of life support systems and the absence of threats to the lives of the people and their activities in the borderlands. Nelson (2010), opined that border security included in a larger category than the term could often be referred to as homeland security. Basically speaking, border security is viewed by Fauzan, Abdallah and Ahmad as:

> *…includes safeguarding a state's land, water, and water domains; deterring threats along these borders; and securing all points of*

entry, which are locations such as seaports, airports, and border crossings, where officials are stationed to oversee the legal entry and exit of persons and merchandise (Fauzan, Abdallah and Ahmad, 2019:3).

Additionally, Nelson (2010), identified three main functions of border security. These are: detection, interdiction and deterrence. Detection involves the identification trans-border movement of goods and humans and categorizing potential threats. Interdiction on the other hand has to do with the consolidation of border security control. This is usually done by engaging border security agencies or employing modern electronic technologies that could aid the improvement of efficiency in border control. Deterrence is implemented when a number of obstacles are created along the border regions to prevent illegal trans-border movement. For instance, constructing walls along the border, placing barbed wire or installing other modern technological gadgets that could provide preventive measures. Border security has to do with managing the movement of people, goods and other tangible items that cross the boundaries of a country (Nelson, 2010). In broader sense, Okumu (2011:5), generally views border security to entail:

1. Geophysical control of a boundary through patrol by the military or special border protection force.
2. Immigration by internally enforcing laws.
3. Migration by controlling the transnational movement of people.
4. Enhancing enforcement of the immigration and migration laws by asking questions that assist in screening people using the border.
5. Enhancing inspections through searches to ensure that harmful products or individuals do not enter into a country.
6. Enhancing management of institutions and systems that contribute to border security.
7. Detecting and preventing criminals, and illegal persons, goods, drugs, and weapons, as well as other prohibited items, from entering a country.

To sum it up therefore, border security is about asserting "territorial sovereignty by enforcing the boundary" and by protecting it through permanent surveillance. It is the state of protecting the country from illicit trans-border flows of goods and people which could be inimical to human security.

Closely related to the concept of border security is the concept of border control which is also frequently used in border security studies. Andreas (2003) asserted that the central aim of border control is to prevent the entry of covert transnational actors which is defined as non-state actors operating beyond national borders in matters considered to be deviant to laws of the state.

Trans-Border Security Relations

Trans-border security relations encompass the engagements, pacts, and synergies between nations or territories aimed at resolving security predicaments that traverse international borders (Ferril et al, 2021). Such predicaments may encompass challenges such as terrorism, organized crime, human trafficking, drug trafficking, cyber incursions, and sundry others. Given that several security threats are not restricted by geopolitical frontiers, intergovernmental collaboration is pivotal in efficiently handling and curtailing these hazards. The following are some pivotal components of trans-border security relations as outlined by Nelson, (2010)

i. **Information Exchange**: Nations frequently engage in the exchange of intelligence and information regarding potential threats, criminal activities, and developing security concerns. This process aids in the establishment of a collective comprehension of the issues and permits for coordinated reactions.

ii. **Joint Military and Law Enforcement Operations**: Transnational law

enforcement operations and joint efforts can be conducted to detain criminals, disrupt illegal activities, and recover stolen assets. Examples include joint patrols, task forces, and extradition agreements.

iii. **Reciprocal Legal Assistance**: Countries may establish agreements to provide legal assistance, including the sharing of evidence and facilitating the enforcement of judicial decisions such as arrests and searches.

iv. **Border Oversight and Customs Collaboration**: Collaborative measures can enhance border security, impeding the movement of illicit items and individuals across borders. This necessitates the exchange of best practices, technology, and training.

v. **Regional Organizations:** Regional organizations and alliances frequently play a role in encouraging transborder security cooperation. For instance, the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) encourage security collaboration among their member countries.

vi. **Efforts to counterterrorism**: The threat of transborder terrorism necessitates international cooperation for tracking, disrupting, and preventing terrorist activities. Countries can engage in intelligence sharing, coordinate efforts to combat radicalization, and work together to dismantle terrorist networks.

vii. **Cybersecurity**: Given the rise of cyber threats, nations collaborate to combat cybercrime and secure critical infrastructure. Sharing information on cyber threats and vulnerabilities is crucial for enhancing cybersecurity measures.

viii. **Disaster Response and Humanitarian Assistance**: Natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and humanitarian crises can have transborder impacts. Nations work together to provide prompt assistance, share resources, and coordinate relief efforts.

ix. **Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention**: Addressing the underlying political and economic factors that contribute to transborder security challenges often requires diplomatic efforts and conflict prevention strategies.

x. **International Agreements and Treaties**: Multilateral agreements, treaties, and conventions provide a framework for cooperation in areas such as extradition, mutual legal assistance, and counterterrorism measures.

In a nut shell, transborder security relations underscore the interconnectedness of security challenges and the necessity of international collaboration to effectively address them. Nevertheless, such cooperation can encounter challenges due to differing national interests, legal systems, and cultural contexts. Successful transborder security relations necessitate a balance between sovereignty and shared responsibility for regional and global security.

Nigeria-Niger Border Dynamics and Transnational Threats

The Nigeria-Niger border dynamics are characterized by a range of complex factors and transnational threats that have significant implications for both countries and the broader West African region. Here are key aspects of the Nigeria-Niger border dynamics and the transnational threats they face:

Border Length and Complexity: The Nigeria-Niger border is approximately 1,500 kilometers long, making it one of the longest borders in Africa. It traverses diverse geographical terrain, including arid zones, rivers, and densely populated areas. The vastness and porosity of the border pose challenges for effective border management.

Transnational Threats:

1. Terrorism: The border region has witnessed the activities of Boko Haram and its offshoot, the Islamic

State's West Africa Province (ISWAP). These groups have exploited the porous border to conduct cross-border attacks and establish safe havens.

2. Arms and Drug Smuggling: The border is a conduit for the illicit trafficking of arms, drugs, and contraband. Criminal networks operate in the region, exacerbating insecurity and undermining state authority.

3. Human Trafficking: Human trafficking networks take advantage of the porous border to engage in the illegal movement of people, leading to issues related to modern slavery, forced labor, and sexual exploitation.

4. Nomadic Conflicts: The borderlands are home to pastoralist communities who frequently engage in conflicts over resources and grazing land. These conflicts have the potential to escalate into more significant security challenges.

5. Cross-Border Banditry: Criminal gangs involved in cattle rustling and banditry frequently operate across the border, exploiting the vast and sparsely populated areas.

6. Border Communities: The borderlands are inhabited by diverse communities with complex socio-cultural ties that span the border. Local communities often rely on cross-border trade and social interactions, making the border an integral part of their lives.

Challenges:

1. **Lack of Infrastructure:** There is inadequate border infrastructure, including border posts and roads, which hampers effective border control.

2. **Corruption and Weak Governance:** Corruption within border security agencies and weak governance in some border areas can facilitate illegal activities.

3. **Limited Resources:** Border security agencies often lack the necessary resources, equipment, and training to effectively police the border.

Bilateral Cooperation: Both Nigeria and Niger recognize the importance of bilateral cooperation in addressing transnational threats. They have engaged in joint military operations and information-sharing mechanisms to combat terrorism and criminal activities.

International Involvement: International organizations and partners, including the United Nations and regional bodies like ECOWAS, have been involved in supporting efforts to enhance border security and counter transnational threats in the region.

The Nigeria-Niger border dynamics and transnational threats highlight the need for comprehensive border management strategies that address security challenges while also recognizing the economic and social ties that exist in border communities. Effective border governance, cooperation, and international support are essential to mitigating the security risks associated with this expansive and porous border.

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EVALUATING THREATS OF ARMED BANDITRY ON HUMAN AND FOOD SECURITY IN SHIRORO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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KEYWORDS
Banditry; Armed Banditry; Human Security; and Food security

ABSTRACT
Growing apprehension has emerged in the northern regions of Nigeria regarding the escalating activities of bandits. Consequently, this investigation was conducted to assess the impact of banditry on both human and food security in the Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State. The study adopted the Routine Activity Theory as its theoretical framework, emphasizing the prevalence of motivated offenders, the presence of suitable targets, and the absence of guards as key tenets. According to the theory, these factors played pivotal roles in the surge of brigandage activities in the study area. Conducted as a descriptive survey, the research employed a triangulation approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods. The focus was on Shiroro Local Government Area, situated near the border of Niger and Kaduna State, which has witnessed a notable increase in bandit criminalities. The study revealed a distressing percentage of human casualties, accompanied by a significant rise in hospitalizations and trauma resulting from frequent attacks in the region. These incidents have had severe repercussions on human security. Additional findings highlighted the loss of farmlands, livestock, and other animals, along with the closure of markets and businesses, substantially impacting food security in the area. As a recommendation, the study suggests that the government deploy its security forces robustly to curb various forms of armed insurgencies. This involves providing advanced detection equipment in the forested lands of the study area to effectively address the prevailing challenges.

Introduction

Beyond the conflicting and contending definitions, dimensions and perspectives, rural armed banditry in Nigeria is not a new phenomenon. Ja'afar (2018) opines that, there are scholarly discourse which contends that rural banditry in Nigeria predates the country's emergence as a politically sovereign nation. In this direction, Ja'afar (2018) is of the view that there were records of instances of rural banditry in colonial Nigeria, as far back as the 1930's. According to him, in those days, wayfarers and merchants travelling on the local shallow feeder roads were sometimes faced with ambush by criminal bandits who were basically targeting goods carried on donkeys, camels and ox carts. Such bandits at that time forcefully took away goods and disappeared into the bush, or at some other times, the bandits raided villages and carted away valuable properties and produce. So this criminality according to him has existed in pre-colonial times.

The Humanitarian (2018), also reported stated that the first case of banditry was documented around 1901, and the incidence was said to have occurred somewhere between Western Hausaland and the border of the Republic of Niger. In the said incident, it was recorded that over 12,000 strong camels, laden with assorted grains were attacked and 210 merchants were killed. But the disturbing development is captured more by Egwu (2016), when he stated that rural banditry has moved from its rudimentary phase to a more complex and complicated pattern of criminality. Little wonder Bagu and Smith (2017) submitted that "gangs of criminals, often youth from farming and herding communities have taken advantage of the growing insecurity in the country to launch their attacks on villages and communities to loot, engage in highway robberies, cattle rustling and killings for personal gains".

Niger State with the largest landmass distribution in the country is one of the states affected by rural banditry with an overstretched forest hinterland mass of 76,363 square-kilometers, as against the populous Lagos state with only 4,000 square kilometers of land mass, followed by Kaduna and Zamfara states with 46,053 and 39,762 square-kilometres respectively. Adeniyi (2018) believes that their stretched large landmarks and forest zones are enough and comfortable to become hideouts and effective camp training grounds for bandit activists.

Statement of Research Problem

Certain socio-existential conditions have been opined to be sufficient reasons why armed banditry has successfully strived in Nigeria and Niger State in particular. Some of these characteristic conditions have been identified to be both the interiors and borderline ecological challenges. Gaye (2018) maintained that prominent among these conditions are the scarcely governed hinterlands and forestlands. According to him, the North West and North Central regions of the Nigerian hinterlands are marked by extremely dispersed normal settlements, which have been separated by rangelands and farmlands with extreme gaps for settlements; these have served as hideouts which are rarely discovered. Accordingly, Gaye (2018) further stressed that these areas are interspersed by diverse forestlands, some of which are dotted with wetlands, rocks, hills, mountains and caves, and separated from each other, they are equally far separated from the centers of governance at the local and state levels, hence guaranteeing easy penetration by preying criminal bandits into the open spaces in the forests, where they successfully take cover and continue to build up camps to effectively pursue nefarious criminal activities.

According to Okoh&Ugwu (2019), these forestlands are vast, rugged and hazardous, and are highly under-policed to the point that it makes them conducive for to all forms of jungle criminality. The above scholars were also of the view that the rugged open stretched forests provide sufficient avenues for all manners of violent crimes like cattle rustling, kidnappings, arsons, maiming and killings.

The FATF-GIABA-GABAC (2016), report maintained that most attacks are becoming successful because of their closeness to the forest regions with little or no security presence. Bandit activities become profitable to the criminally minded who find it very easy to always terrorize the local population and deprive them of their food and livelihoods. On his own part, Adeniyi (2018), posits that, in addition to the under-governed rural territorial spheres highlighted above, banditry also strive because of the material incentive of the poorly regulated mining, trans-human and illicit arms and artisanal activities taking place in these forests, as bandits occasionally attack mining sites in order to steal gold and cash. The financial proceeds of these illicit gold mining have therefore been fingered as one of the reasons

for proliferation of arms used for kidnappings, maiming and outright elimination of non-cooperating villages, he concluded.

Unfortunately, the government's position on this heinous crime of banditry has left citizens wondering whether government exists for the purpose of protection of lives and properties. (Okoli&Ochim, 2016; Azad, Crawford & Kaila, 2018) explained that the near-non-action of the state's functionaries in relation to security and territorial governance has grossly demonstrated a pathological ground for its incapacity to govern its citizens. This is so because governments at all levels have exhibited a woeful lethargy in dealing with national security emergences. They maintained that government has persistently failed to muster requisite political will and commitment to tackle the situation.

Jaafar (2019) puts it better, when he submitted that; "what we are seeing today is not something that is historically unprecedented. What is new, however, is the incapacity, indifference or unwillingness of the Nigerian state to put the insurgence of rural banditry under its effective control". Consequently, these widespread forests that are still ungoverned and to which the state shows it is incapable of stamping its authority over, has become the camps of the bandits, from these camps, bandits come into the closest villages and towns in a typically three-up on a motorbike, unchecked, unhindered, freely and ruthless, under the "authority" and instructions of the kingpin-bandits in a commando style, plunder rural communities at nights, raid them, kidnap and rustle their cattle, rape their women and burn their houses and agricultural produce before demanding for huge sums as ransom payments for kidnapped victims.

Okoli (2017) further elucidated on the above, he pointed out that, sometimes the lethality of the attacks are merely reprisals, designed to show down communities, which have hitherto challenged or resisted the bandits' onslaught through vigilantism. Shiroro local government area which is the subject matter of this research has a very large landmass with the highest number of wards and the same ecological structures in the forest regions as those mentioned earlier.

Consequently, bandits move in and out from the Birnin-Gwari forests into the stretch of the Sarkin-Pawa extended landmass up to the Allawa forest of the local government to the Erena, Galkogo and Gurmana axis towards Manta-Kushaka-Kurebe axis, lay ambush, capture and kill innocent farmers and abduct same without control. These researchers wonder why social control agencies which have both air and land capabilities and equipment are not able to effectively tackle the menace of the bandits. The impact of banditry has become devastating, apart from the psychological depression of the victims, other losses include material valuables, sources of livelihoods, physical injuries and deaths, others also include social intimidations, restrictions of freedom of movements, stoppage of farming activities with resultant non-supply of cash and food crops, interruption of public and commercial transportations to other local markets and forceful abandonment of large scale harvested from products on farmlands, these above, apart from decline in investor confidence and foreign investments.

The justification for the scope and location of study is based on the reality of massive killings, maiming, kidnappings, rapes, and destruction of farmlands. Others include beheadings, burning down of houses of innocent Nigerians leaving in and around the local government area and shooting of security personnel deployed to the area to maintain peaceful coexistence and obedience to law. All the above mentioned atrocities are executed daily by bandits and co-conspirators in the local government identified for this study.

More disturbing is the fact that for any ceremony to take place in the interiors of the local government, permissions with financial inducements must be made to the leadership of the bandits, and while going to harvest any crop for local consumption or commercial purposes, proper negotiations and appropriate approvals must be received from the bandits. More disturbing is the fact that the native's allegiance for protection is beginning to be in the hands of the bandits and fast turning away from government.

Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following research objectives, to

i. Examine the effects of armed banditry on human security in Shiroro Local Government Area

ii. Investigate the effects of the phenomenon on food security in Shiroro Local Government Area

iii. Suggest strategies to combating the growing challenges of armed banditary in Shiroro Local Government Area.

Literature review

There has been growing concern in parts of Nigeria over insecurity caused by bandits. The frequency with which they attack communities has become very worrisome developments to every Nigerian, particularly those living in the northern parts of the country. Onah (2010) subscribes to the view that the frequency of attacks may be attributed to the ease with which these bandit groups move in and out of rural communities without any form of resistance.

Arising from the strategic neglect of rural communities in terms of socioeconomic developments, Asiwaju (2004), held that many rural communities have been turned into areas of concentration for bad roads, absence of health facilities and educational institutions, and have also become sites for poorly managed forest reserve that are now providing cover as hideouts for rural criminal bandits.

Bagu& Smith (2017) noted that organized research on banditry is still at its nascent stage, however, there have been some scholarly works on the subject matter all contended that rural banditry has become reasonably most prevalent in some parts of the North-Central region, with states like Niger, Nasarawa, Plateau and Benue becoming more affected by the phenomenon for sometimes now (Kunn&Jibrin, 2016; CDD, 2015).

What then is armed banditry and how has it affected human and food security the Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State? This research is geared towards providing answers to these questions.

Human security encompasses two ideas, according to (Gadzama, Oduebe and Dariya, 2018) one of the ideas of human security is the notion of safety that goes beyond the concept of mere physical security in the traditional sense, and the other idea is that people's livelihood should be guaranteed through 'social security'' against sudden disruptions.

Ewans (2007) was however of a different view, he saw modern concept of human security as that which tries to identify the inherent weaknesses of the traditional security pattern which fundamentally focuses on the security of the state instead of the protection of the individuals and communities. Therefore, Ewans (2007) believed that security in modern times should be more redirected towards the protection of lives and properties of individuals and communities rather than concentrating more on state functionaries, their families and allies, and by extension what they define as critical infrastructures.

Tadjbakksh&Chenoy, (2007) and Johns, (2014) all defined human security as the absence of insecurity and threats. To be secured and free from both fear of physical, psychological abuses, violence, persecution or death from want of food, good health and job. They concluded that human security should therefore deal with the capacity to identify threats, to avoid them when possible, and to mitigate their effects when they occur.

Food security on the other hand is simply the access to basic nutrition and food supply at all times needed for man's survival needs. The United Nations (2014) defined food security as the opportunity for all people, at all times, to have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needed for an active and healthy life.

Furthermore, Okpaleke (2014) attempt to conceptualised armed banditry, he maintains that banditry has to do with armed violence perpetrated by criminal opportunists and syndicates along the country's border lines and rural interiors. The above writer believes that acts of criminality by armed bandits are targeted at human lives or property; armed robbery, kidnapping, cattle rustling and allied violence. But McGregor (2014), added to the list of criminalities of armed banditry. According to him, armed banditry activities also include village market raids, rape of women, arson and outright killings, these actions have also always involved the use of force, threats and intimidation. Okpaleke (2014) however further maintained that there are different perspectives of rural banditry, according to him; some are motivated by the imperative of material accumulation while others are motivated only by the quest to rob, assault or even liquidate a

person or a group of persons based on political, ideological or religious considerations.

In any case, these researchers have continued to observe that the phenomenon is beginning to be alarming and taking frightening dimensions in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State, It's penchant for destruction of lives, farmlands and properties have continued daily in more communities located in the local government area, particularly the hinterlands of the local government and its borders. Markets are closed for fear of attacks, schools are closed for fear of abductions, farmlands are no go areas for fear of attacks and ceremonies are put off and transferred to the State capital while for security reasons all communication networks in the local government have been disconnected in order to make it difficult for bandit communications.

The Northern region in Nigeria is said to have a long history of banditry. According to the humanitarian (Formerly IRIN News, 2018), the Northern region had its first documented case of rural banditry between 'Western Hausaland' and the Republic of Niger border in 1901, when it was recorded that a 12,000 strong group of camel trade merchants were killed. Rural banditry therefore is not new to Nigeria, but over the years, it has successfully transformed from its rudimentary level to one of sophistication, using modern weapons of destruction and complications in their approaches, Egwu (2016) submitted.

Smith &Bagu (2017) seems to be more concerned with this new development in banditry when they maintained that, most of the bandits are gangs of criminal, often youth from farming and herding communities who have left their domains and have internalized new values and habits of robbing people on the highways and rustling cattle for personal gains, and both the farming and herdsmen communities are also victims of this criminality. The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD, 2015) supports the above assertion, when it reported that the bandits have increased their penchant for criminality from highway robbery and rustling to include looting, laying seize on local markets and killing unarmed innocent Nigerians.

As a follow-up to the above, Gaye (2018) tries to locate reasons why banditry strives in the North, in his view, the northern region, particularly the North Western and north Central hinterlands are marked by extremely dispersed rural communities separated from each other which makes it susceptible to violent attacks, apart from these, he maintained that the regions are vast, rugged, hazardous and are grossly under-policed. He sees this as one reason why jungle criminality strives without checks. Gaye (2018) concluded that the porosity of the borderlines are total, ill-delineated and ungoverned, which has created very conducive environment for the facilitation of illicit activities such as smuggling of both human and substance (including drugs) and all manners of trafficking unhindered.

The Humanitarian (2018) opines that some bandits have gone to the extent of kidnapping foreign miners and demand payments of appropriate ransoms before their releases. Viewing the dangers associated with the above, Olaniyan and Yahaya (2016); Okoli and Lenshie (2018), averred that the Federal Government of Nigeria in a bid to curtail illegal mining and banditry directed the suspension of all forms of mining activities in Zamfara State in the early weeks of April, 2019. But Okoli (2017) however added to his earlier statement when he stated that, "some of the cattle rustling gangs are also affiliated to local and transnational syndicate groups and mercenaries like the Boko Haram".

Trying to find suitable solution to the menace of rural banditry, Ewans (2007) advocated that there should be concerted efforts to shift attention from the normal State centered approach to security and surveillance to people-oriented approach to security, he was of the view that the rural people best know the routes used by the bandits into their communities, in other words, they should be allowed to play pivotal roles in actualizing their own security, necessary state laws should therefore be put in place to allow them access effective security equipment needed to safeguard their lives and properties.

The above considerations have become very necessary because rural banditry has caused untold hardships on individuals and communities. (Tadjbakhish&Chenoy, 2007) and Johns (2014), maintained that since human security is 'safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, repression and protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily lives, it is imperative for government and its agencies to stand up through the protection of people's lives and properties which they have been trained to undertake. Because as Krauye (2004); Axworthy (2004); Fukuda-pan and Messineo (2012), put it, sovereignty and security

of life are the direct responsibility of government, to which its civil populace depends on to protect their populations against insecurity.

A document from, the West Africa Network of Peace Building (WANEP, 2019) reported that 1,000 civilian deaths were recorded from January to December, 2019, all from the North West region through the activities of bandits in the region. With this alarming development, the same source maintained that a committee was set up headed by Mohammed Abubakar, a former Inspector General of Police to negotiate with bandits in Zamfara State between June 2011 and May 2019, the committee discovered that 4,983 women were widowed; 25,000 children were orphaned; and more than 190,000 people were displaced as a result of armed banditry in the State.

However, John Campbell in his blog recorded in a broadcast on July 23rd, 2020 on the programme, Africa in Transition and Nigeria on the brink", suggested that though the army introduced several military operations in the country to quash banditry, operations like the "Operation Puff Adder", "DiranMikya", SharanDaji", "HudarinDaji", "Thunder Strike", "Exercise Harbin Kunama III", they have only created mixed feelings in the minds of Nigerians. The operations only succeeded in pushing back the bandits and destroyed some of their hideouts while some were killed, but Campbell maintained that however according to Campbell, attacks have continued without any sign of stoppage.

Campbell further submits that, it was in the light of these challenges that the Governors of Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara, agreed on a peace deal with the armed bandits in 2019. But accordingly, the agreements did not last. This is because only recently, on the 24th of August, 2020, the Nigerian Tribune Newspaper published a document written by LanreAdewole, a journalist, suggesting that 1,126 persons were killed, 380 were abducted in the seven northern states as declared by Amnesty International, through its Country Director in Nigeria, Mr. OsaiOjigho. On August 16, 2020, another journalist Adebayo Oladeji reported in Thursday Newspapers that the umbrella Christian body of Nigeria, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) observed that crime and banditry were becoming worrisome, the body subsequently directed its members to resort to self-help as the precarious security situation in the country was becoming dangerous.

CAN was of the view that there is an urgent need to do the needful, if we want to end the killings in the country. The organization indicted the presidency for non-action when it was quoted by the same Newspaper to have said the following: "Tell me why the president of Nigeria has refused to sack his service chiefs after every available evidence indicate that they have failed" CAN conclude.

As regards food security, Muggah&Batchelor (2002) stated that the impact of armed banditry has caused devastating, psychological depression on victims, who have had physical injuries and also lost material valuables, sources of livelihood have also been affected while there is a chain cut in and cut in the farming and supply of cash and food crops, there is also the interruption of public and commercial transportation to other local markets and forceful abandonment of large scale already harvested farm products, agricultural extension workers also find it difficult to locate farmers on their farms for further assistance and necessary inputs, since many of them have already fled to neighbouring communities and city centers for protection. All these have also affected general food chain development and supply and have hitherto affected food security of the victims as well as residents of Shiroro local government area of Niger State where the carnage has been on-going.

Muggah& Batcher (2002) concluded. Little wonder Amnesty International, (2018) maintained that the Birnin-Gwari axis of Kaduna State linking through its borders with Niger State has contributed in guaranteeing criminal bandits the desired hiding places in the forest of Alawa village located in Shiroro local government area of the State. The precarious security situation in Shiroro local government area reached an alarming rate when one SaxoneAkhaine, a journalist with the Guuardian Newspapers reported on August 1st, p,14, (2020) that one Azumi (mrs) of Gurmana village in Shiroro local government stated in an interview that the following, "life is beginning to be meaningless and cruel for members of my community, I never knew that I would one daywake up to be chased away from this my community where I was born and my ancestral home by Fulani people whom we have lived with for decades.

Mallam Musa of Alawa village who was separately interviewed by the same reporter also made the following statements, "the attackers invaded our village and started shooting and burning down our houses at exactly 11.20pm, unknown to me, my wife, my brother's wife, my step mother and three siblings were burnt by the attackers, they also burnt down my cousin's house and slaughtered my cousins' wife and baby. Life has become miserable for me" Apparently reacting to the continued bandit attacks on Shiroro and Rafi local government areas of Niger State.

Distinguished Senator Mohammed Sani Musa, and the law maker representing Niger East Senatorial District in the National Assembly had during an interview with Daily post newspapers on October 23rd, (2021), said the following "I plead with all the security agencies in state to collaborate and quickly mount serious manhunt for those behind the abductions of 30 travelers who were abducted in their separate vehicles by suspected bandits atGarin-Gabas near Zungeru on Wednesday". The Senator further made the following statements "Unless and until we tag these criminals as terrorists, our security agencies will not have unfettered power to treat them the way they should be treated".

Addo (2006) notes that the increasing sophistication and complex modes of operation of the bandits have made the security agencies complacent as bandits have been able to evade detection and enforcement measures. Consequently, Ginifer and Ismael (2005) noted that the threats by bandits have led communities relocating and retreating into city-centers and adding to the already volatile security challenges. Hence, the growing stimulation for the increased services of private security guards and vigilante at the cities, while NGOs and agricultural extension workers are finding it more difficult to reach farmers who have since fled their original communities.

As if these were not enough, Saturday Tribune of 15th August, (2020) reported by one AdelowoOladipo, a journalist, that "no fewer than fifteen (15) people were feared dead, killed by gunmen suspected to be armed bandits in Gurmana Community of Shiroro local government area of Niger State, the Chairman of the vigilante group in the community, Mallam Musa Galadima who was interviewed confirmed that the gunmen invaded their community on no fewer than 52 motorcycles, carrying sophisticated weapons killing, kidnapping and burning down houses and seems to be getting worse daily and is continuing unabated.

Theoretical Framework

The paper adopted, reviewed and applied Routine Activity Theory to the phenomenon under study. This theory which is rather a recent approach to the explanation of crime falls within the social-structural perspective. The main exponents of the theory are Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson in (1979); the theory arose in an attempt to explain predatory criminal activities. Its three main postulations are (i) crime is likely to occur where there is a motivated potential offender, (ii) where there are suitable or attractive targets and (iii) where there is the absence of capable guards or persons who can prevent crime from taking place. Therefore, the theory is more concerned with the opportunities for occurrence. Crime therefore can be perpetrated in terms of capability and availability of suitable and unprotected targets by a motivated offender.

Adopting this theory to armed banditry in Shiroro local government of Niger State, the presence of agriculturally and herding based communities located with the prevalence of large, stretched forestlands, borderlands and unregulated hinterlands which are mostly under-policed or unprotected by the various social control agencies provides sufficient opportunity for banditry to strive. Furthermore, these communities are viably rich rural communities, mostly engaged in animal husbandry, crop production and unofficial mining activities with daily exchange of money and mercantile, trading in cattle, providing suitable targets for armed bandit activities to continue in the communities virtually left with non-existing governmental security agencies to monitor and enforce obedience to law.

The Humanitarian (2018) supports this assertion when it opines that ecology of such communities brings about not only motivation but temptation alike for criminal indulgence. Consequently, bandits who are predators in these communities are likely to have sustained field day engaging in all manners of criminal escapades including lootings, robberies, maiming, rapping, kidnappings and outright killings without any form of resistance.

Methodology

Shiroro Local Government Area is the study location; the research design adopted for this study is survey and a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods which were used to describe the effects of banditry in Shiroro local government area. The open and closed ended questionnaires were used as instruments for collection of primary data from respondents, while secondary data was sourced from journals, books, newspapers and online-peer reviewed works. Respondents for the primary data were made up of people who have had either direct contact with the bandits as victims, or whose relations actually participated in the negotiations for payments of ransoms. Others are people whose relations were killed by the bandits and those whose life savings, properties, businesses and houses have been destroyed by the ravaging armed bandits. In-depth interviews were also conducted by the researchers to elicit deeper information where the questionnaires were not able to explore in details. The SPSS package was used in analyzing the collated data. The local government is made up of fifteen (15) delineated wards for administrative and political convenience. One major Federal Government presence is the Shiroro hydro-electricity dam which is located in Gusoro-zumba ward, predominantly farming and fishing community.

The Local Governments stable food production for local consumption and commercial purposes are items like yams, fish, groundnuts, rice, millet, pepper and vegetables. Shiroro local government according to 2006 census has a population of 286,000,548 people geographically located in fifteen (15) wards. The wards are Bangajiya ward, Ubandoma, Egwa-Gwada, Pina, She, Kato, Gusoro-Zumba, Erena, Galkogo, Kwaki-Chukuba, Kushaka-Kurebe, Allawa, Gurmana, Manta and Bassa-Kukoki ward. All the local governments mentioned above have in one way or the other affected and ravaged by the activities of banditry. It is worth mentioning here that the language spoken by majority of natives of the local government is known as Gwari (Gbagyi) with a handful of Hausa and Fulani settlers.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Effects of armed banditry on human security

Effects of Attack	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Horror due to shock	16	17.8
Hospitalization due to shock	9	10.0
Death	65	72.2
Total	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 1 shows the devastating effects of banditry on human security with majority of the respondents 65 (72.2%) maintaining that it brought about deaths, 16 (17.8%) stated that it brought horror due to shock, while 9 (10%) of them asserted that it brought hospitalization due to shock.

Table 2: Effects of the phenomenon on food security

Effects on Food Security	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Loss of farm land	38	42.2
Loss of cattle	17	18.9
Loss of other animal	19	21.1
Closure of market	11	12.2
Closure of businesses	5	5.6
Total	90	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2022.*

On table 2 above, respondents indicate that the effect of banditry attack on food security led to the closure of businesses with 5 (5.6%) respondents, loss of cattle 17

(18.9%)respondents, loss of other animal 19 (21.1%) respondents, closure of market 11 (12.2%), and finally, loss of farm land claimed the highest number of killings with 38 (42.2%) respondents.

Table 3: Solutions to the growing challenge of bandit criminalities in Shiroro local government

Solutions to the growing challenge of bandit criminalities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Activities of informal to be curtail	26	28.9
Increased Government sensitivity to the plight of Shiroro citizens	13	14.4
Increased presence of security agencies	32	35.6
Total elimination of informants	19	21.1
Total	90	100

Table 3 above shows the solutions to the growing challenge of bandit criminalities in Shiroro local government with 26 (28.9%) of the respondents stating the activities of informal to be curtailed, 13 respondents on the other hand suggested increased government sensitivity to the plight of Shirorocitizens. However, the majority of the respondent stated they should be increased presence of security agencies, while 19 (21.1%) respondents supported total elimination of informants.

In-depth Interview Analysis

In a bid to elicit further information, on banditry from the above respondents, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with some respondents. The following were some of the responses received and transcribed from the respondents.

As to further elicit more information on the effects of armed banditry on food security, Respondent 1s from Gurmana village in Shiroro local government area had this to say:

> *I am still at a shock as to the devastating nature of the attacks by these rascal bandits without commensurate confrontation by the security agencies. Do you know that we cannot go to our farms to harvest any crops? We even have to depend on our relations at Kuta and Minna to send us food to eat, you can be killed when seen on the farm without getting any official permission from them. They have become another government of their own. We are just in trouble, there will be serious food disaster this year.*

Respondents 2 and 3 were from the Zumba and Gusorovillages in the same Shiroro local government,their views on the devastating effect on food security are as follows:

> *Our market days are now determined by the safety of the opportunities to sell our products. Our farm lands can only be attended to when escorted by sourced vigilantee operatives who are known to be fearless, ruthless and dedicated hunters. Yet, we must pay them in groups for their services. The prices of food items will definitely go up accordingly.*

Respondents 4 and 5are from Kal-kogo (Galadima-kogo) and Alawavillages, they described their pitiable food security matter in the following manner:

> *In our villages, which have been known over the years for sales of cattle, the bandits have rustled over 1200 cattle heads and headed to their Allawa settlement in the forests. We now have shortages in our meat production and sales. Our major source of livelihood has been drastically affected.*

When further prompted to elicit more information on the effects on banditry on human security, Respondents 6, 7 and 8 from Yewuri, Chukuba and Erena villages submitted the following:

> *We have now become lazy people living secretly in our villages waiting for relations from Kuta to supply us food which is sometimes supplied to them at the IDPs camps by Christian and voluntary organizations and sometimes, the government, National Assembly, State and Local Government Officers and Members respectively. It is terrible because we can no longer go*

to our farms. Our farms have become bandit's camps and some of our wives who normally assist us with the farm work are now held captives by these rascal bandits. Do you know that we live constantly in fear? The shock of the alarming numbers of our children forcefully taken away from us into bandit camps is giving us sleepless nights. We cannot explain the sorrowful situation of daily burials of our loved ones in our villages. So far, over sixty heads of families have been killed without any feeling of guilt or remorse.

Respondent 9 however, dwelt on the position of informants and had this to say:

I hope you know that we now have spies and informants living with us and we are afraid to confront them because they work for the bandits. Sometimes, we go to them with money to inform the bandits that we are hungry and need to go our farms to harvest food and cash crops? This is how serious the situation has become.

Respondent 10 is however more concerned with government's intervention and made the following observations:

Which government are you talking about? They will only take you to the camps located in Kuta town and be feeding you and your family with bread. Please informed them to be more dedicated and decisive on eliminating informants in our communities and totally stop banditry activities by increasing the presence of security personnel in our communities. We shall co-operate with them to identify these informants if they give us sufficient protection.

Discussing on Findings

Findings have suggested that the phenomenon has created devastating effects on human security, these effects range from loss of lives with the highest percentage, to hospitalization and horror due to shocks. The study has been able to suggest that banditry also has a devastating effect on food security. The loss of cattle and other animals with higher percentages indicate that animal husbandry which has often been the source of livelihood for the respondents has been seriously affected. Others include the closure of business and markets.

In all, these incidences are capable of reducing the production of crops for both local production and exports. The losses of lives, hospitalizations and horrific fears expressed by the respondents have added to the general challenges of banditry on human security. Thus, if people are killed on daily basis and those alive cannot freely go to the markets, how do they sell their farm produce if they cannot go to their farms? How do they harvest, consume or even process the products for export or guaranteeing market value for their cash crops and those meant for domestic consumption?

Definitely, the crisis of survival will arise, giving way for food scarcity and by implication, food security challenge as the case may be. It is also pertinent to note here that, the fact that people constantly live in perpetual fear of attacks to outright killings amongst many others, may have the tendency of affecting human security.

The findings on the effects of banditry on human security has answered objective (1) of the study which sought to find out the threats of human security, while the finding on food security above has also answered objective two (2) of the study which sought to find out the threats of banditry on food security. The above findings have been supported by Okoli (2017) when he pointed out that; sometimes the lethality of the attacks are reprisals designed to show down communities which have hitherto challenged or resisted the bandits' onslaught through vigilantism.

All the above findings are also in tandem with the adopted theory for this research, which is the routine activity theory. This is so, because the activities of bandits who are the motivated potential offenders find suitable targets in under-policed forest farming and herding communities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Finding from this study have considered the effects of bandit's activities on human and food security. In all, it has been able to establish that

some respondents have been killed, while others have faced hospitalization due to shock and living in horrific fears. Other are: loss of lives, destruction of farm lands, loss of animals, amongst other experiences of the respondents in this study.

Something very drastic needs to be done in order to curb the excesses of bandits. It is therefore recommended that government takes immediate steps to stop the wanton killings of innocent Nigerians through the provision of very sophisticated detection equipment in the forestlands to detest incursion into the communities by bandits.

It is also recommended that all the security agencies be provided with more sophisticated arms and ammunition, sufficient enough to confront the bandits in order to enable people go to their farms without intimidation, this will enhance the production of food security can be better addressed.

It is recommended that government becomes more proactive in arresting and prosecuting criminal bandits in order to reaffirm its position as principal provider of security to the people. This will improve the level of human security and create more confidence by the people.

It is further recommended that the communities organize themselves as community vigilantes with the necessary ammunition in order to protect themselves.

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centra-africa.html> (accessed 19 July 2017).

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MUSINGS IN THE GARDEN: SCULPTURE PARK AND THE AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT
The culture of sculpture parks is as old as art itself and exists in almost all communities across the globe. Such parks, their grandeur, serene outlook, artistic presence, and representations of a plethora of socio-political and economic issues mean a lot, especially to the people associating with them. Using an art historical analysis, primary and secondary data in the form of oral interviews, and extant literature, this paper studies the historical development of the Sculpture Garden of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria focusing mainly on its features, and functions, particularly within the University community. Although the Garden emerged from the necessity of providing space for the reservation and preservation of the outdoor sculptures produced by students ofthe Fine Art Department of the University, this paper argues that it now blossoms to provide a conducive atmosphere for the exhalation of emotion, empathy, love, and peaceful contemplation. This is absent in the few previous studies conducted on the Garden. This paper concludes that the Garden also serves many purposes different from art and aesthetics, including the proliferation of businesses while providing a serene environment for meetings, lectures, and shelter for lovers.

Introduction

The lead author of this paper having hailed from Kano, a state that practices and maintains an orthodox form of Islam, which frowns at all forms of figurative art, even his knowledge of at least, the semblance of a sculpture park was at its lowest ebb[1]. His visit to the Sculpture Garden

[1]For details on the nature of iconoclasm and aniconism in Kano see; Nasidi Nadir Abdulhadi. 'A Contextual Analysis of *Sufi* Saint Paintings in Kano, Nigeria'. PhD Thesis, Department of Fine Art, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria,Nasidi, Nadir Abdulhadi. 'A Contextual Analysis of Sacred Qādiriyyah *Sufi* Paintings in Kano, Nigeria'. *Vestiges: Traces of Record*, Vol. 6, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford, (2020): 48-

(as it is commonly known) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 2006, marked an important milestone in his understanding and conception of an art park, as well as its nuanced socio-economic and political roles, which inspired his academic journey to becoming an art historian a few years later[2]. During that moment, he did not only fall in love with the aesthetics of its sculptural collections but also, began to ponder on its functions and relevance to society, which became the foundation of this present study.

It is obvious that in many countries, sculpture parks play an important role in societies, one of which is cultural enrichment. This is because such parks provide an exceptional, artistic, and cultural experience for people to engage directly with artworks, an opportunity that is almost none existent in typical traditional museum settings[3]. The fact that park sculptures are located ina natural setting, often in a large outdoor space, they give visitors the latitude to appreciate art from different perspectives and within their contexts.

At their best, sculpture parks can also attract tourists from different parts of the world. This is possible, especially when such parks feature unique and historic sculptures of different sizes, forms, and contents. They may also have large-scale installations that are highly artistic and memorable on display.

Regarding education, sculpture parks also provide educational opportunities for visitors by offering guided tours, workshops, and educational programmes to understand the historical and cultural significance of the sculptures on display[4]. This no doubt paves the way for art appreciation and cultural orientation apart from inspiring future generations of artists and art lovers.

Sculpture parks also serve as meeting points for people within their communities. Some of the events that are often hosted in the parks range from concerts, festivals, worship, buying, and selling, to outdoor performances[5]. Apart from the fact that these events may foster a sense of belonging and togetherness, the spaces

63.http://www.vestiges-journal.info/, Nasidi, Nadir Abdulhadi and Muhammad, Aliyu. 'Iconoclasm and the Historical Evolution of *Sufi* Painting'. *Egghead*, Vol. 4, No. 2, Department of Fine Art, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (2019): 71-81, Nasidi, Nadir Abdulhadi. 'Sheikh Ibrahim Niass and the Making of Sacred *Sufi* Paintings in Kano (1946-1975)'. *Zaria Archaeology Papers*, Vol. 12, Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (2019): 177-195.

[2] Since that time, I became highly inquisitive about art, its meaning(s), aniconism and iconoclasm, an inspiration that encouraged me to get a PhD in Art History from Ahmadu Bello University, Department of Fine Art in 2021.

[3]Warren, Saskia. 'Audiencing artscapes: Encounters between art and audience at Yorkshire Sculpture Park'. Ph.D. diss., University of Sheffield, 2011, and Warren, Saskia. 'Audiencing James Turrell's Skyspace: encounters between Art and Audience at Yorkshire Sculpture Park'. *CulturalGeographies* 20, no. 1 (2013): 83-102, James, Patrick. 'Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield'. *Gardens & Landscapes in historic building conservation* (2014): 385-391.

[4]Aptekar, Sofya. 'Looking forward, looking back: Collective memory and neighborhood identity in two urban parks'. *Symbolic Interaction* 40, no. 1 (2017): 101-121, Eyres, Patrick, and Fiona Russell, eds. *Sculpture and the Garden*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2006, Belcheva, Ina, Dominique Poulot, and Isidora Stanković. "'Sculptural graveyards': Park-museums of socialist monuments as a search for consensus." *Discussing Heritage and Museums: Crossing Paths of France and Serbia* (2017): 100-118.

[5]MacLeod, Suzanne. 'This magical place: The making of Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the politics of landscape, art and narrative'. In *Museum Making*, pp. 48-62. Routledge, 2012, Colfer, Colette. 'Creating Religious Place in Ireland: Hindu public places of Worship and the Indian sculpture park'. *Journal of the Irish Society for the Academic Study of Religions* 2, no. 1 (2015): 24-46, Skillingstad, Torhild Larsen. 'Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. Iconoclasm, memory and the importance of space'. Master's thesis, UiT Norges arktiske universitet, 2016.

also serve as places for peaceful contemplation, cultural orientation, and art appreciation.

Like any other sculpture park, for many decades, the Ahmadu Bello University Sculpture Garden (henceforth; A.B.U. Sculpture Garden) also serves cultural, educational, social, and economic purposes. Despite its innumerable contributions, however, it has not received serious scholarly attention. Although Ogboto, Caleb, and Jari wrote interesting pieces on certain aspects of the Garden, most of the available literature tends to focus mainly on the art historical analysis of the sculptures and their functions, rather than the role of the Garden in the socio-economic and cultural development of the university community and beyond[6]. Besides, no effort was made to contextualise the Garden within the global discourses of the use, or abuse of park sculptures, andopen spaces, especially in relation to the notion of collective memory, identity, and social cohesion.

Apart from documenting the history of the A.B.U. Sculpture Garden, the paper argues that beyond its artistic representations, the Garden also serves a number of socio-economic and cultural purposes, which created a unique platform where people engage with artworks in situ, socialise, relax, and trade. Meanwhile, it also plays a significant role in biodiversity and conservation, especially by attracting different animals, ranging from birds, lizards, and other mammals, due to the Garden'sserene and geographically appealing environment, as a result of its green areas.

The empirical findings in this paper are largely drawn from fieldwork undertaken at the A.B.U. Sculpture Garden from September 2022 to July 2023. Amongst the informants were artists, students, the Fine Art Department staff, under whose custody the Garden was entrusted, and local tourists coming from Zaria and its environs. The data obtained was, therefore, corroborated with contemporary literature on the history, functions, challenges, and prospects of sculpture parks.

This paper is divided into five important, but related sections. While the first section serves as the introduction, the second section provides a detailed historical analysis of the evolution of the A.B.U Sculpture Garden. The third section examines the major socio-economic and cultural roles the Garden plays within the university community, while the fourth section brings out the major challenges confronting the Garden, especially issues related to uncoordinated human activities that temper with both the sculptures and the natural environment, weathering, absence of restoration, as well as lack of funding. The final section is the conclusion.

Department of Fine Art and the Emergence of the A.B.U Sculpture Garden

The Department of Fine Art at Ahmadu Bello University (A.B.U) in Zaria, Nigeria, was established in 1963. It is the oldest department of Fine Art in Nigeria and one of the first in West Africa. The department was founded by a renowned British art historian and painter, Kenneth Murray, who was the first Head of the Department. Most of the artists and teachers Murray worked with were artists who had previously studied at the then Nigerian College of Arts, Science, and Technology in Zaria, which was established in 1955 before it metamorphosed into the Department of Fine Art a year after the establishment of A.B.U in 1962[7].

The major reason that necessitated the establishment of the Department of Fine Art at A.B.U was to provide a solid foundation in the visual arts for students who wished to pursue careers as artists, art educators, art historians, and curators. Besides, the curriculum at the department was interdisciplinary, covering a

[6]Ogboto, H.A. The Fine Arts Sculpture Garden of the Department of Fine Arts of Ahmadu Bello University in Samaru Zaria. Unpublished B.A Project, Department of Fine Art, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (1983), Caleb, Samuel. History of the Sculpture Garden, Department of Fine Art, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, a paper presented at the Zaria at 50 Conference, Department of Fine Art, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 22-26 November (2006), 2-14 and Jari, Jacob. Pathos in the Garden. *The Studio: A Journal of Contemporary Art Practice and Theory* (2009).

[7] Babalola, Daniel. Zaria Art School: A Brief History. In: Buhari, J., Simon, O. I., Caleb, S. and Lamidi, L., *Zaria Art School 50th Anniversary Exhibition*, Abuja: National Gallery of Art (2009), 125-126.

wide range of visual arts such as painting, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, and textiles[8].

The Department of Fine Art at A.B.U has produced many notable artists who made significant contributions to the Nigerian and African art practice. Some of these notable alumni of the department include Yusuf Grillo, Uche Okeke, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Ben Enwonwu, Dele Jegede, and Kolawale Oshinowo, among others[9].

In the 21st century, the Department of Fine Art at A.B.U remains one of Nigeria's leading schools of art. It also continues to produce talented artists and scholars who contribute to the development of various aspects of the visual arts in Africa and beyond[10].An attempt to provide a safe and enough space for sculptures produced by the Department of Fine Art students paved the way for the emergence of the Sculpture Garden, which is the paper's central focus.

The A.B.USculpture Garden as it is commonly known is an outdoor 'museum'[11] located within the campus of A.B.U. It was established in 1975 to provide a space for the display and preservation of sculptures created by students and faculty members of the Department of Fine Art (Fig. 1)[12].Ogboto states that the two chief objectives for the establishment of the Sculpture Garden were the preservation and exhibition of the sculptures produced by students[13]. The first work to be mounted in the Garden was a male model sculpted by A.O. Shodeinde[14]. While some of the works were produced in the Garden, many were created in the studio and later moved there.

[8]Ogbechie, Sylvester Okwunodu. Ben Enwonwu, Zarianist Aesthetics and the Post-Colonial Criticism of Modern Nigerian Art. In: *The Triumph of a Vision: An Anthology on Uche Okeke and Modern Art in Nigeria*, London: Pendulum Art Gallery (2002), 247.

[9]Okeke-Agulu, Chika, and John Picton. 'Nationalism and the Rhetoric of Modernism in Nigeria: The Art of Uche Okeke and Demas Nwoko, 1960-1968: [With Commentary]'. *African arts* (2006): 26-93.

[10]Some of these artists and scholars include; Tonie Okpe, Jacob Jat Jari, Jerry Buhari, Kefas Danjuma, Duniya Giles Gambo, Lasisi Lamidi, Kenneth Okoli, to mention, but just a few.

[11]Though it is not a museum in the truest sense of the term, but it has been serving in the same capacity.

[12] Please, for more information, see; Ogboto, H.A. The Fine Arts Sculpture Garden of the Department of Fine Arts of Ahmadu Bello University in Samaru Zaria.

[13]Ogboto, H.A. The Fine Arts Sculpture Garden of the Department of Fine Arts of Ahmadu Bello University in Samaru Zaria, 10.

[14]Unfortunately, the work is no longer available in the Garden.



Figure 1: The Frontal View of the A.B.U Sculpture Garden (Source: The Authors, 2023).

The Sculpture Garden features a collection of 369 sculptures in a variety of styles and media, including metal, and concrete (Table 1)[15]. Many of the sculptures were created by prominent Nigerian artists who studied at A.B.U such as Bruce Onobrakpeya, Yusuf Grillo, and Ben Enwonwu, among others.

Table 1: Categorisation of Sculptures in the A.B.U Sculpture Garden

S/N	Type of Sculpture	Media	Number
1.	Metal sculptures	Metal	29
2.	Female representations	Metal, concrete and mixed-media	51
3.	Male representations	Metal, concrete and mixed-media	97
4.	Reliefs	Concrete	3
5.	Abstracted	Metal, concrete and mixed-media	103
6.	Works to be restored	Metal, concrete and mixed-media	43
7.	Nude Sculptures	Concrete and metal	11

[15]Please, see table 1. For more details on the images see figures 1 and 2.

8.	Child representation	Concrete	14
9.	Animal representations	Metal and concrete	18
		Total	369

The Sculpture Garden, which occupies a space of about 80 sqm is open to the public and serves as an interesting destination for tourists, art lovers, as well as students of art. The sculptures are stylistically arranged to create a visually engaging experience for visitors. Some pieces of sculptures are placed on pedestals, while others are placed on the ground, allowing direct interaction between the artworks, the audience, and the surrounding environment. The A.B.U sculpture garden is an important cultural institution that projects Nigerian artists' artistic talent and creativity and serves as a testament to the region's rich artistic heritage.

The sculptures cut across different themes and sub-themes. Apart from promoting Afrocentric perspectives in both media and content, which originated from the struggles of the Zaria 'Rebels' in the 1950s, the sculptures are classified into five categories namely; social, political, economic, military and natural (Table 2)[16].



Fig. 3: Jimoh A. Umar, *A Child Beggar*, 2017, Concrete (Source: The Authors, 2023)

[16]See; table 2.

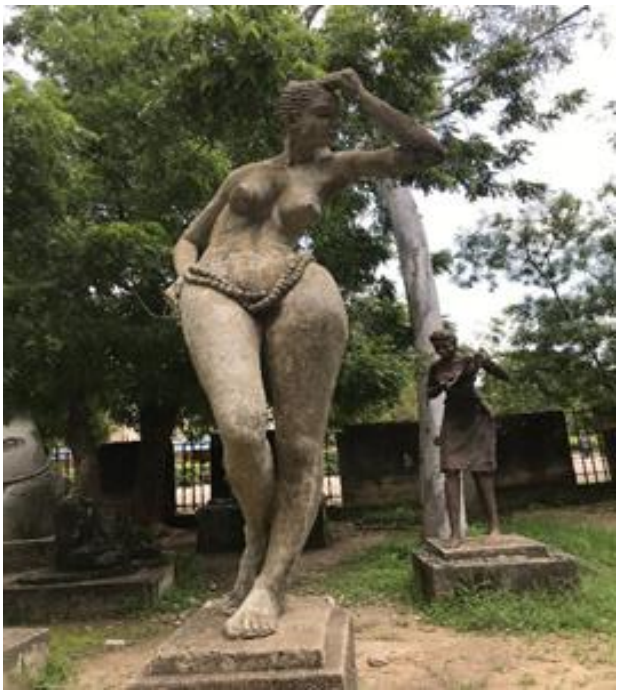


Fig. 2: Unknown Artist and year, concrete,*Nude*, (Source: The Authors, 2023)

Table 2: The themes, sub-themes and titles of selected sculptures in the A.B.U Sculpture Garden

Themes	Sub-themes	Sculpture Titles
Social	Religion	Pray for the Nation, Dilemma of a Nation, Sango, etc.
	Culture	Drunkard, A Hunter, Genius, Plod Evolution, Aftermath, etc.
	Entertainment	Le Rhythm de la vie, Let's Play, Eyo, Rhythm of Africa, etc.
	Education	Philosopher, Space, Age, Knowledge is Power, etc.
political	Nationalism	Peasants' Day, Kwame Nkrumah, Herbet Macaulay, etc.
	Leadership	Abacha, Yakubu Gowon, Olusegun Obasanjo, Invisible King, etc.
economic	Agriculture	Feed the Nation, The Farmer, etc.
	Trade	Dignity of Labour, Nono Hawker, etc.
military	Law	Justice, Injustice, etc.
	Warfare	Defence, Where Next? Sarauniyar Zazzau Amina, etc.
natural	Man	My Heritage, Motherly Affection, Child, Expectation, etc.
	Animals	False Love, Anthill, Peace, etc.
	Death	Peril, Suicide, etc.

The Functions of the A.B.U Sculpture Garden

One of the important functions of the Garden apart from the fact that it creates a conducive atmosphere for people to interact directly with the artworks, an opportunity that is missing in a typical museum setting, it serves as a meeting point for lovers, students, staff and outside visitors[17]. The provision of concrete chairs and the artistic colouration of the Garden have been attracting many visitors who use it as a place for socialization, meetings, tutorials and peaceful contemplation[18]. Along this line, Agada and Caleb opine that the Sculpture Garden has 'been speaking, singing new tunes and addressing societal issues in visual forms'[19].

Due to the presence of endless visitors during and after festivities, many businesses also evolved (Fig. 4). For example, Malam Sani Sansiro20 has been selling kebabs, and locally-made bread for over twenty (20) years21. The business attracts many customers who normally come to appreciate art, enjoy the Garden's natural setting and catch some fun. Attached to this business is a special kiosk where drinks of different kinds are also sold to visitors.



Fig. 4: Malam Sani Sansiro roasting meat (Source: The Authors, 2023).

From ecological and conservational dimensions, the greener nature of the Garden and its quietness attract different species of birds, animals such as lizards and rats. Some of these animals also find shelters inside broken sculptures, while the birds have created their nests on the trees.

The Garden also serves as a safe haven for smokers amongst both students and staff[22]. As a result of the strict university laws against smoking in public, smokers found the Garden not only serene, but also secretive[23]. Recently,

[17] Interview with Ade Lanke Peter, Sculpture Garden, 2nd September, 2022.

[18]Focused Group Discussion with the lecturers of the Department of Fine Art at A.B.U, 7th September, 2022.

[19] Agada Onya Ladi and Caleb Samuel. Visual Communicative Philosophy of the Sculpture Garden at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria: A New Consciousness. *Journal of Media and Aesthetics*, Vol. 5, no. 1.

[20]Interestingly, he too was an apprentice to his father who finally left the business for him to run due to old age.

[21] Interview with Lasisi Lamidi, Sculpture Garden, 8th January, 2023.

[22] Interview with Misses Sarah Ade Peter, Sculpture Garden, 9th July, 2023, and Interview with Maryam Yahaya Adati, 19th February, 2023.

[23] Interview with Abdulkareem Abdulkareem, Sculpture Garden, 1st July, 2023.

however, the Fine Art Department of A.B.U has also criminalised smoking in the Garden.

Most importantly, the sculptures in the Garden serve as educational materials for art historians who write on different aspects of their contents, or aesthetics. It is also an open studio for practical students in the sculpture and painting sections, who use them as reference materials.

Challenges

Despite the special socio-economic and cultural functions of the Garden, it also confronts the following challenges:

1. Many sculptures have no titles, names of artists, and year of production due to weathering, poor execution, or visitors' bad handling.

2. A large number of sculptures need to be restored and;

3. There is no funding, especially from the university management to manage the Garden in line with best global practices.

Conclusion

Contrary to previous studies on the sculpture Garden that focus mainly on the art historical analysis of its sculptures, this paper traced its historical development laying emphasis on its features and functions. Though the Garden emerged from the necessity of providing space for the reservation and preservation of the outdoor sculptures produced by students of the Fine Art Department of A.B.U, this paper argued that the Garden provides a conducive atmosphere for people to interact directly with the artworks, while serving as a meeting point for lovers, students, staff and outside visitors. The paper concludes that beyond its artistic and aesthetic values the Garden also serves many socio-economic purposes including the proliferation of businesses. Despite its functions, however, the garden faces some administrative, inventorial, social, and financial challenges. It also observed that many of the sculptures are dilapidating due to weathering and other uncoordinated human activities and therefore, demand restorative interventions.

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IMPACT OF THE WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The menace of corruption and its corrosive effects on the Nigerian people and polity is pervasive and obvious throughout her history. These fatal effects corruption has produced and will continue to produce if left unchecked, has propelled successive Nigerian governments to devise strategies and policies to decisively tackle corruption with the aim of reducing it as much as possible. The necessitating factor for this research, however, is that despite these efforts, the problem of corruption still persists in Nigeria with insinuations that it is getting even worse. This study, therefore examines the impact of the whistle-blowing policy on the fight against corruption in Nigeria; From the findings of this work, the whistle blowing policy has not had the desired impact on the country's anti-corruption crusade. This work, therefore, recommends, among other things, that the whistle blowers should be given adequate legal and security protection and adequate public awareness be embarked upon to educate the people of the need to expose corrupt individuals.

Introduction

Over the last few decades, corruption around the world has manifested in different forms including bribery, embezzlement, subsidy and pension theft, fraud, contract and procurement inflation, money laundering, price-fixing, and rent-seeking among others. In the case of Nigeria, the act of indiscipline, bribery, misuse and misappropriation of public resource as well as favouritism and cronyism are common acts of corruption that forms headlines in the news. Other manifestations of corruption in Nigeria include admission fraud, grade trading and all forms of examination misconducts in the educational institutions; perversion of justice among law enforcement agencies and the judiciary; and outrageous criminalities such as foreign exchange swindling, hoarding and smuggling, and over-invoicing of goods perpetrated against the economy and so on (Salihu and Gholami, 2018).

The effects of corruption are immense and widely felt across the country. It is evident in the inability of the government at all levels to invest in, and effectively manage the productive sectors and infrastructures, increased production costs, slowed economic growth and weakened rule of law. The implications of these on the average Nigerian include, but not limited to, poverty, unemployment, provision of substandard goods and uneven service delivery, injustice, and impunity (Salihu and Gholami, 2018).

However, the fight against corruption has been the claimed agenda of successive governments in Nigeria since independence in 1960. To this end, many policies in the form of detection, preventive and punitive measures are

put in place to address all forms of corrupt practices.Such notable efforts were the Federal Assets Investigation Panel (FAIP) of 1975;War Against Indiscipline (WAI) which operated between March 1984 to September 1985;National Committee on Corruption and other Economic Crimes (NCCEC) inaugurated by the Babangida's administration on 3rd April 1989; the two anti-corruption agencies established by the Babangida administration namely; Mass Mobilization for Economic Recovery, Self-Reliance and Social Justice (MAMSER) and National Orientation Agency (NOA) and War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC) introduced by Sani Abacha's administration in 1994.

In the Fourth Republic, former President Olusegun Obasanjoinherited the second most corrupt nation in 1999, and this prompted him to embark on many optimistic measures aimed at sanitising the Nigeria society. These include: Commencement of the process of recovery of looted funds from foreign banks; Setting up of ad-hoc panels of inquiry to investigate and report on allegations of corrupt practices especially of failed contracts; establishment of ICPC and subsequently the EFCC for investigation and prosecution of persons implicated in corrupt practices and economic crimes; Initiation of reform of the public sector through privatization and commercialization of government business ventures; monetization of benefits of public servants, guaranteeing pensions and retirement benefit; Signed international anti-corruption instruments such as the UN Conventions, the AU Conventions, the ECOWAS Protocol; and constant reaffirmation of zero tolerance for corruption and the need for ethical and values reorientation.

Other measures put in place by the Federal Government also include the launching of a new National Orientation Campaign; introduction of a code of Ethics for Federal Ministers and Special Advisers. The code of conduct for Ministers and Special Advisers of the Federal Government of Nigeria subscribes the officers to the seven principles of public life, namely: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership (Anifowose, 2002:116). This is the anti-corruption blueprint sustained by the Yaradua/Jonathan administrations. However, the above measures to curtail the menace of corruption may appear to be the scourge that has continued to ravage the country. Nevertheless, as efforts to eradicate corruption progresses, so does corruption advances in methods.

Typically, Nigeria's anti-corruption agencies, particularly the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), rely essentially on public complaints and petitions about corruption allegations to initiate investigations. People are often encouraged to notify the authority of any financial misconducts they noticed around them. However, this method has suffered several challenges. Among the major challenges include lack of credibility in many of the petitions received by the authority (some are politically motivated) and lack of direction and adequate information that may assist in the investigation and evidence gathering. Also, the fear of unknown consequences often prevents many people from reporting corrupt activities around them (Enweremadu, 2012).

Thus, this method seems ineffectual as it fails to produce desirable outcomes (in term of evidence-gathering) within a reasonable time to convict perpetrators. This is evident in the inability of the EFCC to successfully gather evidence to prosecute many individuals accused of corruption; there are cases of corruption under investigation for more than ten years (Ethelbert, 2016). Also, the Commission continues to lose corruption cases even after spending substantial time and resources on investigation and evidence-gathering. The fact remains that there is hardly any credible evidence rising to a level of conviction. Judges and legal practitioners have, in several cases, suggested to the Commission to conduct proper investigations and gather relevant and tenable evidence before bringing up a trial against suspects. These thus suggest that the petition method has not contributed meaningfully to the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

Recently, however, the Nigerian government through the Federal Ministry of Finance introduced whistleblower policy as a tool to complement the existing anti-corruption measures. The policy seeks to detect corruption in both the public and private sectors. Although, the policy has not received legislative approval for it to be fully implemented and supported by law, yet it appears to have produced considerable outcomes compared with the petition system adopted in the past. Generally, whistleblowing policy is one of the anti-corruption tools widely adopted around the world to detect corrupt practices. Its adoption has improved governance, transparency and

promoted healthy government in some countries (Transparency International, 2010). It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate the impact of the whistleblowing policy in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

Conceptual Issue

Whistleblowing and Whistleblower

There is no consensus definition of whistle-blowing (Brennan & Kelly, 2007). One consistent element that scholars agree on is that whistle-blowing is an act to account, report as well as expose wrongdoings. The whistle-blowing term has been differently defined and debated in the available literature. The substantial disagreement, as well as arguments, surround which channels (external vs. internal whistle-blowing) to report and whether auditors (external or internal), should be countered as whistleblowers.

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010), whistle-blowing as "[causing] something bad that someone is doing to stop mainly by bringing it to the attention of other people". Lewis (2001) stated that what is very important is not the definition of the term but the definition of the condition and conditions under which the employees who disclose wrongdoing are at liberty to protection from reprisal. Though, a working definition for this article may be significant. Dehn (2003) stated whistle-blowing as: "…a colloquial term usually applied to the raising of concerns by one member of an organization about the conduct or competence of another member of the same organization or about the activities of the organization itself".

Gilan (2003, quoting Latimer, quoting Cripps 1986) defined whistle-blowing as "passing on information from a conviction that it should be passed on despite (not because of) the embarrassment it could cause to those implicated". Lately, it has been defined as "a tradition that supports the challenge of unsuitable behaviour at all levels" (Getting the Balance Right, 2005, Cm 2407). It may also be synonymous with the culture of raising concern by a member of staff about wrongdoing or misdemeanour taking place in his place of work (Shipman's Inquiry (b) 2005). Whistle-blowers are persons (usually workers) who at their own risk, having been "motivated by a sense of ownership, and/or public duty, may unveil what they see as specific examples of wrongdoing, which may be within the private and/or public sector" (Shipman's Inquiry (b) 2005).

The term "whistleblowing" is thought to have its root in two different but related activities. First, the term follows from the practice of the police who blow whistles when attempting to apprehend a suspected criminal. Secondly, it is thought to follow from the practice of referees during sporting events that blow their whistle to stop an action. It can be deduced from the above that whistleblowing involves the disclosure of illegal, immoral or illegitimate practices with the aim that wrongdoing will be minimized if not tackled. There are two types of whistleblowing: internal and external whistleblowing. Internal whistleblowing encompasses the disclosure of wrongdoing to a supervisor within the organisation.

On the other hand, external whistleblowing is reporting unethical activities to outside parties believed to have the power to correct it.It, therefore, presupposes that the motivation towards internal whistleblowing is dependent upon the existence of effective internal channels of complaint in the organisations. Nevertheless, internal reporting should be first resorted to before going outside the walls of an organisation. Internal whistleblowing, if successfully carried out, is capable of concealing the ugly state of the organisation to the society. Whistleblowing may also be public or private. It is public when the disclosure relates to a public company and private when the disclosure has to do with a private company or an individual. In all these, the jurisprudence behind the disclosure is the protection of public interest.

According to the 2017 Bill section, an act of disclosure may be made where it can be shown that concerning the performance of a public function, a public authority, a public officer, or a public sector contractor is, has been, or proposes to be involved in improper conduct. It could also be that there is a miscarriage of justice, an act or omission that constitutes an offence under a written law or an act or omission that involves the risk of injury to the public health, prejudices public safety, or harm to the environment has been committed. A similar provision is found in Ghana, UK, and Zambia. The import of these provisions is that whistleblowing must proceed from a genuine foundation which contemplates public interest.

Literature Review

There is growing literature on Whistleblowing globally as a strategy of curbing corruption. Brown (2008) researched on whistle-blowing in the Australian public sector: enhancing the theory and practice of internal witness management in public sector organizations, recommends that internal whistle-blowing mechanism should be given attention to achieve an effective result. Clark (2013) wrote on external whistle-blowing in the public service: a necessarily messy practice argues that external whistle-blowing should not be practised, and recommends the strengthening of the internal reporting mechanisms to limit external disclosures made in the public service. However, these studies do not assess the impact of the whistleblowing policy on the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

Bordeleau (2011) argues that external whistle-blowing by whistleblowers would disrupt the feedback loop of accountability bypassing those who are charged with responsibility when problems emerge. The influence of attitude in explaining the intention of external whistle-blowing is not as great as for internal whistle-blowing, which explains why the widely observed disjunction between attitude and intentions is greater for external than for Internal whistle-blowing. However, this study does not assess the impact of the whistleblowing policy on the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

Shelvin (2012) argues that stakeholders who play an important role in the effective running of an Organization need to recognize the value that the organization brings to the economy and the wider society. Therefore, the interests of all stakeholders should not be jeopardized by improper management of whistleblowing practices. However, these studies do not assess the impact of the whistleblowing policy on the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

Bond and Manyanya (2003) incited and exciting debate on the moral justification of whistle-blowing. Proponents of whistleblowing have advanced lines of argument to vindicate the contentions that whistleblowing is morally justifiable. Whistleblowers are morally justified to report immoral business practices if they have good reasons to think that they are potentially harmful to the health and well-being of the public. Fasua and Osifo (2017) examined effective whistle-blowing mechanism and audit committee in the Nigerian banking sector, discover that there is a strong relationship between effective whistleblowing mechanism in the Nigerian banking sector and audit committee independence, audit committee financial expertise, and audit committee meeting. They conclude that whistleblowing mechanism in the Nigerian banking sector should be strengthened. However, these studies do not assess the impact of the whistleblowing policy on the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

Sunday (2015) researched on effects of whistleblowing practices on organizational performance in the Nigerian public sector, discovered that there is a positive association between the whistle-blowing system in the public sector and performance and practice in public service and encouraged the establishment of whistleblowing mechanisms in the public sector. According to Miceli and Near (2002), when research is designed to capture the experiences of a wider range of whistleblowers, managers and case handlers a more varied picture of whistle-blowing is found in which the outcomes for both organizations and whistleblower is sometimes negative but often positive. However, these studies do not assess the impact of the whistleblowing policy on the fight against corruption in Nigeria. It is against this background this study seeks to make contributions to the research endeavour.

Theoretical Framework

There is various theory to the study of whistleblowing in the literature. The standard theory is not just about whistleblowing, as such, but about justified whistleblowing and rightly so. Whether this or that is or is not whistleblowing is a question for lexicographers. Standard theory corresponds to the original model of generative grammar laid out by Chomsky in 1965 and later developed by Richard De George. A core aspect of this theory is the distinction between two different representations of a sentence, called deep structure and surface structure. The question is, when, if ever, is whistleblowing morally justified that will not result in disloyalty to an organization or the public interest?

According to Standard theory, disloyalty is morally permissible when: the organization to which the would-be whistleblower belongs will, through its product or policy, do serious and considerable harm to the public; the would-be whistleblower has identified that threat of harm, reported it to her immediate superior, making clear both the threat itself and the objection to

it and concluded that the superior will do nothing effective; and the would-be whistleblower has exhausted other internal procedures within the organization or at least made use of as many internal procedures as the danger to others and her safety make reasonable.

Therefore, whistleblowing is required according to this theory when; the would-be whistleblower has evidence that would convince a reasonable, impartial observer that her view of the threat is correct; and the would-be whistleblower has good reason to believe that revealing the threat will probably prevent the harm at a reasonable cost (all things considered).

The complicity theory proposed by Michael Davis is an account of when whistleblowing is morally required of one. It is developed out of a critique of the now-standard theory identified with the work of Richard De George. Davis labels the standard theory as the paradoxes of burden, missing harm and failure. To burden, Davis argues that Standard theory asserts that whistleblower can act with little cost to themselves, but the history of whistleblowing shows this is false. Furthermore, Standard theory does not justify the central case of whistleblowing. It fails to justify the considerable burden placed on the whistleblower. Whistleblowers are not minimally decent Samaritans. If they are Samaritans at all, they are good Samaritans. They always act at considerable risk to career and generally, at considerable risk to their financial security and personal relations.

Assessment of Whistle-Blowing on Corrupt Practices in Nigeria

Although no law presently guarantees the protection of whistleblowers in Nigeria, some patriot Nigerians have provided valuable information that led to the recovery of funds, arrest and prosecution of guilty parties. Immediately after the launch of Whistle-Blowing Policy by the Federal Government of Nigeria, recovery of looted fund increases with the personnel of Economic and Financial Crime Commission, Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offence Commission, Department of State Security, and other security agencies, on alert with available information.

So far, the actual amount of money recovered through whistleblowers' information is not known. However, in 2017, the government disclosed that more than $160 million (US dollars) have been recovered through whistleblowing policy (Jannah, 2017). Also, the record of recoveries reported in the media revealed that on February 3rd, 2017, the EFCC raided an apartment in Kaduna State, following a whistleblower's information, where a sum of $9.2 million (US dollars) was found. Similarly, on April 10th 2017, N250 million (Naira) was found in an abandoned shop in Lagos. Also, on April 13th 2017, $43 million, N23 million and £27,000 was found in a building at Osborne Tower in Ikoyi, Lagos (Vanguard News, 2017, Ibrahim, 2017, Akinkuotu, 2017, Akinkuotu and Godwin, 2017, Akinkuotu, 2017). Daily Trust on April 18, 2017, reported that this laudable initiative has resulted in the discovery of $9.8 million cash in a Kaduna slum residence in Sabon-Tasha and over $30 million cash in an apartment in Ikoyi, Lagos State. At an exchange rate of N350 to $1, the cash recovered so far will be over N14,000,000,000 (fourteen trillion naira in cash), just to name a few.

Besides, News Agency of Nigeria reported on February 12, 2017, that, Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed says the Federal Government's Whistleblowing policy has yielded $151million and N8billion in looted funds. In a statement signed by Segun Adeyemi, the Special Assistant to the Minister, Alhaji Mohammed said the looted funds were recovered via the clues provided by three whistleblowers who gave actionable information to the office of the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of the Federation. The biggest amount of $136,676,600.51 was recovered from an account in a commercial bank, where the money was kept under a fake account name. This was followed by the recovery of N7 billion and $15 million from another person and 1 billion Naira from yet another. The recovered loots do not include the $9.2 million in cash allegedly owned by a former Group Managing Director of the NNPC, MrYakubu, which was also a dividend of the whistleblower policy, All the monies recovered so far totalled over $160million (NAN, 2017).

Moreover, the Minister of Finance, Mrs Kemi Adeosun, in her word stated that Whistle-Blowing Policy has made every Nigerian a detective. Speaking about the whistle-blowing policy and the treasury single account (TSA) as tools for fighting corruption, the minister revealed that some whistleblowers are not requesting reward. "We have over 2,500 tips

from various quarters. Not just the big money that you all see in the papers, but a lot of these small monies," she said "Somebody diverting the petty cash for the university, we were able to get in there and stop him. The fight against corruption is now the people's fight. "And not all the whistleblowers are looking for a reward. Some are just patriotic citizens who tell us this is what is going on in a particular institution, and they are not asking any reward, they are just sharing information. "We thank everybody who has helped the government. This is a national fight against corruption" (The Cable, 2017).

Nevertheless, the question of who is responsible for some of the alleged recovered loot is still hanging on the investigative panels of the police and those set up by the government and the prosecution of those culprits is yet to have a green light. The media reportage of recovered loots cannot be said to be the final answer to the question with which Whistleblowing policy was initiated by the administration of President Mohammadu Buhari. Though the policy has identified that there is embezzlement of public fund, the next action of investigation and prosecution is the cause for concerns.

Whistleblowing generally seeks among others to expose corruption. However, to blow the whistle is not an easy task. It needs courage, moral evaluation and one has to put the interest of the public first. Effective implementation of the whistleblowing policy leads to increased accountability and transparency in the management of public funds, and more funds would be recovered that could be deployed in financing Nigeria's infrastructural deficit. Where the policy is successful, there will be transparency and accountability. For this to be feasible, the citizens should be willing to expose corruption, the law enforcement agency should be sincere in prosecuting those involved in alleged corruption. Credible reports of the recovered funds and its application are paramount.

Whistleblowers are heroes. They are agents of change as they oppose corruption by exposing it. They uphold transparency and credibility hence they do not accommodate illegal dealings. This fact will only be appreciated by those that place a premium on public interest over organizational or individual interest. Thus, where reporting culture is a common practice, whistleblowers are held in high esteem as ambassadors of change. Another benefit the policy bestows on the whistleblower is the financial incentive. A successful whistleblower receives monetary compensation from the Government. If the act or culture of raising concern against illegalities affecting the people can attract reward, then it should be embraced. As a tip of an iceberg, the Nigerian Federal Government through the ministry of finance paid the sum of ₦421,000,000.00 to the Ikoyi whistleblower in December 2017. In another development, the Federal Government paid a set of 14 whistleblowers the sum of ₦439,276,000.00 for providing tips on tax evaders.78 Whistleblowing may thus serve as a means of income to the blower.

Whistleblowing may also have a negative impact on the blower or an organisation. On the whistleblowers, they suffer in various ways including ostracism, harassment, punishment, punitive transfers, discrimination, reprimands and dismissal. This is common where no legal instruments are protecting those exposing acts of corruption. These negative reactions may emanate from an employer or fellow employees who feel the whistleblower is an enemy to the organisation. Thus: Organisations typically regard whistleblowing as a form of betrayal. They believe that whistleblowing is a deviant act that threatens the profitability of the organisation and tarnishes its reputation. They, therefore, tend to deal with whistleblowers as traitors by punishing those who engage in this kind of activity.

In Nigeria, some whistleblowers experienced this form of retaliation. Mr. Aaron Kaase, a public officer with Nigeria's Police Service Commission (PSC) blew a whistle on 22 May 2015 to the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Offences Commission (ICPC) involving the Chairman and Nigeria ‘s former Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mike Okiro. The alleged fraudulent dealing by Mr. Okiro was to the tune of N275 million. Following Kaase‘s allegation against Okiro, the PSC on 27 May 2015 suspended him (Kaase) indefinitely without pay. He was also denied accruing promotions and entitlements. His suspension persisted without pay until 7 March 2018 when he was reinstated.

Another instance was that of members of Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) at the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), in Ogun State in 2016. The workers made the allegations of massive corruption and abuse of office against the Governing Council, the Vice-Chancellor and

some University staff by writing to the EFCC and ICPC in July and August 2016. The act which later triggered off a crisis within the University led to a clampdown on the workers, their suspension and later dismissal. However, after various petitions, letters and calls by the National Body of SSANU, Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and other concerned individuals and groups, they were eventually reinstated by the university authority in December 2016.

Jurisdictions with formal statutes have provisions protecting whistleblowers from victimization on grounds of the disclosure. The Zambian Act section 42 protects whistleblowers from reprisal. The Act also empowers a person to approach a court for remedies where he can establish that he has been subjected to reprisals. A similar provision is found under the Indian Act section 11 and the Ghanaian Act sections 12-15. Under the Ghanaian Act, a person subjected to victimization can file a complaint to the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the order of such Commission has the same effect as the judgment of the High Court. Under the UK Act section 47B clothes the whistleblower with the right not to suffer detriment on grounds of protected disclosure. The right not to be subjected to an occupational detriment as well as to approach a court for redress is also provided for under the South African Act sections 3 and 4. In *Solidarity Obo Ross v South African Police Service &Ors* decided under the South African Act, the applicant, Col Ross was removed from his position as the head of Internal Audit Crime Intelligence Division of the South African Police Service as a result of disclosure he made regarding fraud and corruption that has been committed in his workplace. The Court ordered his reinstatement.

Under the 2017 Bill section 23, a whistleblower does not incur civil or criminal liability as a result of making a protected disclosure. It is also an offence punishable with a fine of five hundred thousand Naira or three years' imprisonment or both for taking or threatening to take detrimental action against a whistleblower. A person who attempts to commit a detrimental act, or who incites another person to take a detrimental act commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of five hundred thousand naira or a term of imprisonment for three years or both. By the 2017 Bill section 25, a tort action may be taken against a person who takes or threatens to take detrimental action against a whistleblower and such action may be taken against a perpetrator of an act of such victimization or an employer of the perpetrator. However, an employer may be exculpated if he can show that he did not knowingly involve in the act of victimization, or did not know and could not reasonably be expected to have known about the act of victimization and could not by the exercise of reasonable care have prevented the act of victimization.

Apart from the banking industry, the whistle has also been blown in the Nigerian judiciary. The officers of Department of State Security (DSS) in October 2016 invaded, searched the homes of some judicial officers and arrested them on allegations of corruption. What makes this action unprecedented is that it has broken the myth of the sacrosanct authority of the judge in Nigerian affairs.48 On the other hand, the legality or otherwise of this act generated controversies among stakeholders. Some of the judges caught in the web of corruption include Justices Nwali Sylvester Ngwuta and John Inyang Okoro of the Supreme Court. Others are Justices Mohammed Yunusa, HyeladziraNganjiwa and Ibrahim Auta of the Federal High Court. Some of the affected judicial officers were suspended by the National Judicial Council.

Also, Nganjiwa, Ngwuta Justice Adeniyi Ademola of the Federal High Court and Justice Rita Ofili-Ajumogobia were prosecuted. The recent case of the then Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Walter Onnoghen is also worth mentioning. In *the Justice HyeladziraNganjiwa v Federal Republic of Nigeria*,50 the appellant, was by a 14-count information charged for offences ranging from unlawful enrichment by a public officer to making false information contrary to the Criminal Law of Lagos State 2011 section 82(a) and the EFCC Act 2004 section 39(2)(a). The appellant raised a preliminary objection challenging the jurisdiction of the Trial Court on the ground that conditions precedent to the filing of information had not been fulfilled. The trial Court dismissed the preliminary objection and ruled against the appellant who appealed. The issue on appeal was the propriety or otherwise of prosecuting a judicial officer by the EFCC without first exhausting the disciplinary procedure of the National Judicial Council (NJC) as provided in the CFRN 1999 as amended. The Court of Appeal, Lagos division considered the CFRN 1999 as amended sections 153(1), 158(1) and paragraph 21(b) of Part 1 of the Third Schedule which deals with the establishment, and the disciplinary powers of NJC over judicial

officers and held that, as a serving judge, the appellant is under the management, control and disciplinary jurisdiction of the National Judicial Council and that whenever there is any allegation of misconduct by a judge, recourse to the NJC is a condition precedent as clearly set out by the Constitution.

Similarly, in *Federal Republic of Nigeria v Sylvester Ngwuta*, the defendant was arraigned before Justice John Tsoho of the Federal High Court, Abuja on 13 count charges bordering on corruption and false declaration of assets. The defendant filed a motion on notice challenging the jurisdiction of the court inter alia that by the CFRN 1999 as amended section 158(1) and paragraph 21(b) of Part 1 of the Third Schedule and the Court of Appeal's decision in *Nganjiwa v FRN*,52 the action was incompetent, premature, is a gross violation of the Constitutional provisions and liable to be dismissed. On his part, the respondent posited that a judicial officer can be arrested and prosecuted directly without recourse to NJC for offences committed outside the scope of the performance of his official function and as such the action brought should be entertained. In his rulings the trial judge held that haven failed to fulfil the condition precedent for action against the applicant, the action was a nullity. The applicant was therefore discharged and acquitted.

Another judicial officer that was not spared by the anti-graft war is late Justice Innocent AzubikeUmezulike, the former Chief Judge of Enugu State. Umezulike was suspended by the NJC over an allegation that he accepted ₦10,000,000.00 donation from a litigant. This disclosure was made by an Enugu based legal practitioner, Mr Peter N Eze. Umezulike was subsequently arraigned by EFCC before a Port Harcourt High Court for corruption and false declaration of assets.

In the *Federal Republic of Nigeria v Justice OnnoghenNkanu Walter,* the defendant, the Chief Justice of Nigeria was charged before the Code of Conduct Tribunal Abuja for false declaration of assets among others. His application to strike out and or dismiss the charge against him on grounds that he is a judicial officer, Justice of the Supreme Court, as well as the Chief Justice of Nigeria, was dismissed. He was subsequently tried and suspended as the Chief Justice of Nigeria.

The analysis of whistleblowing in the judiciary shows the political will of the Buhari administration to tackle corruption. Despite the reactions by some people that the arrest, detention and prosecution of judges are unusual in a democratic state like Nigeria, others are of the view that though highly respected and regarded as an embodiment of justice, a judge sits in rank with other public officers in both the states and the federal government. A judge is not above the law.

However, using the DSS to arrest and investigate judges is not legally proper. The DSS is meant to detect and prevent crimes not to investigate and arrest persons alleged to have committed acts of corruption. By the CFRN 1999 as amended section 158(1), in exercising the power of appointment or discipline, the NJC is not under the direction or control of any other authority or person. It follows that the NJC is the first and competent body to investigate and discipline judicial officers alleged to have involved in acts of corruption before the intervention of any other body or authority like the DSS. This is also recognised in the 2017 Bill section 4(3)(h), which is to the effect that a disclosure relating to a judicial officer is made to the NJC. The DSS investigation and arrest of judicial officers was, therefore, a right action with the wrong approach.

Whistleblowers have not spared the legislature either. A member of the House of Representatives (the lower house of the Nigerian National Assembly) Hon AbdulmuminJibrin blew the whistle that the House padded the 2016 Appropriation Bill (budget). Padding the budget takes place when legislators resolve to rewrite the budget by introducing new items outside the estimates prepared and presented to them by the president. Jibrin disclosed that the aggregate expenditure as contained in the budget details as passed was higher than that in the Appropriation Bill by about ₦481 billion. The CFRN 1999 as amended section 81(1) vests the president with exclusive powers to prepare and present the budget to the National Assembly for approval. Upon receipt of the budget by the legislators, they may make reasonable corrections. The National Assembly is however not clothed with any legal right to add or insert anything that was not included in the Appropriation Bill by the executive. Neither are the lawmakers competent to add any amount in an Appropriation Bill that does not contemplate public interest.

While the issue of budget padding saga was in its tempest, the speaker of the House of Representatives, YakubuDogara asserted that

budget padding is not a crime under the Nigerian law. This statement received public reactions. Jibrin's idea of blowing the whistle is to do a clean-up, flush out corruption and corrupt members of National Assembly so that in 2019, only corrupt-free people who want to serve will be elected. Conversely, some members of the House of Representatives were not on the same agenda with him. In the light of this, the House made counter allegations that MrJibrin single-handedly changed the budget estimate by adding ₦250 billion.

He was also accused of a deliberate plot to blackmail the president during the budget process by inserting funds for the so-called Muhammadu Buhari Film Village in his (Jibrin) Kano constituency without the consent of the President.

To this end, his removal was justified by the Chairman House Committee on Media and Public Affairs, AbdurazakNamdas based on acts of misconducts, incompetence, total disregard for his colleagues and abuse of the budgetary process, immaturity and lack of capacity to handle the affairs of his office. The whistle has also been blown in respect of allegedly ownerless funds. One of the remarkable cases of whistleblowing policy in Nigeria is that of a young man who blew the whistle that led to the recovery of funds at Flat 7B Osborne Towers, Ikoyi, Lagos State on 7 April 2017.The money which was in foreign and domestic currencies was valued at ₦13,000,000,000.00 at that time.

Immediately after the news of the recovery of the funds, Governor NyesomWike of Rivers State alleged that the money belonged to the Rivers State Government. Governor Wike added that investigations by his administration revealed that the money was the proceeds from the sale of gas turbines by the immediate past governor of the State, Rotimi Amaechi. Amaechi on his part debunked the claim by Governor Wike whom he described as being frivolous and baseless. While the real owner of the recovered funds deepened, the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) laid claims that the recovered funds belonged to them.

In another development, there were wide speculations that the money belonged to the former NNPC Managing Director, Mrs Esther NnamdiOgbue. This allegation was based on the fact that the apartment that housed the recovered sum belonged to her. Ogbue on her part denied ownership of the money. In the same vein, it was equally alleged that the money belonged to the former chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), AdamuMu'azu on the ground that the entire building was linked to him. To shoulder himself out of the ownership saga, Mu'azu explained that he built the house but had since sold out all the apartments in the building. In the midst of this, a Federal High Court sitting in Lagos ordered the temporary forfeiture of the Ikoyi fund in April 2017. As of the time of writing, there is no available information showing the genuine owner of the recovered Ikoyi funds. From the forging analysis, it can be said that the whistleblowing policy has made a significant effort in curbing the growing tide of corruption in Nigeria in recent years.

Whistleblowing being a praiseworthy and commendable policy had led to the discovering of $9.8 million cash in Kaduna State in a house in Sabon-Tasha and above $30 million cash in a residence in Lagos State. At an exchange rate of N350 to $1, the cash recovered so far will be over fourteen trillion naira in cash, just to mention a few (Akinnaso, 2017).

In a different report, Gabriel (2017) reported that thestolen funds discovered via whistleblowing include €547,730 and £21,090. The sum was recovered from three sources excluding the $9.8m recovered from a former group MD of the NNPC, Mr Andrew Yakubu. who however claimed that the amount was a present from an unidentified Nigerian. Besides, the Minister noted that the largest sum discovered was $136,676,600.51 (N42billion) from a commercial bank account. The money was banked under a false account name. N7bn and $15m, he said, followed this, from another person and N1bn from yet another Nigerian (Gabriel**,** 2017**)**.

A whistleblower who provides the government with relevant information that directly resulted to the intentional returns of embezzled or hidden public funds or properties will be worthy of 2.5% to 5.0% of any sum recovered from the embezzler (Akinnaso, 2017). However, to be eligible for the compensation, the whistleblower should supply the government with dependable information it does not possess previously, and could not otherwise obtain from any new publicly obtainable source to the government. The real recovery must also be on report of the information provided by the whistleblower (Akinnaso, 2017).

In a different view, Gabriel (2017) submitted that previously the Federal government specified the reward awaiting whistle-blowers and guarantees their security. Any whistle-blower whose information resulted in the discovery of up to N1b received 5% of the sum. Compensation for any recovered sum between N1b and N5b would be 5% for the initial N1b and 4% of the outstanding N4b, and any sum above N5b will receive 2.5% reward. Furthermore, The Federal Government had pledged that any whistle-blower whose information resulted in the discovery of cash or assets with a value of N5b, would be paid N210 million (Gabriel, 2017).

Meanwhile, the Federal Government of Nigeria cited in Ogbomo (2019) outlined the relevant information under the whistleblowing policy via the online portal of the FMF by email or by phone. This can be on issues like; misappropriation of government resources and assets; fraud; soliciting/collecting bribes; corruption; diversion of revenues; falsified and unapproved payments; dividing of contract's sum; over-invoicing and kickbacks (FGN, cited in Ogbomo, 2019).

Conclusion

The general global perception about graft in Nigeria is that it is generally acknowledged that corrupt practices are endemic and systemic in both public and private sectors of Nigeria. Over the years several statutory and policy attempts have been devised to arrest this ill, with hardly a positive result. Whistle-blowing Policy is not new in the recent time of Nigeria fight against corruption underthe present administration of President Muhammadu Buhari. On 1st October 2016, duringIndependence Celebration Speech, President Buhari stated that “Corruption will kill us if we did not kill corruption”. The present administration tackles corruption in Nigeria through the whistleblowing policy. Whistleblowing is one of the international best measures used in tackling corruption. Its introduction in Nigeria must be commended. Corruption is a hidden crime that is difficult to detect except it is reported. Although the policy was received with mixed feelings, it recorded tremendous success at the initial stage. However, the story subsequently changed. The decline may be attributed to the number of problems the policy created more than it sought to solve. One of the major challenges associated with this policy is the lack of legislation facilitating it. Similarly, the policy is more interested in recovering funds than in punishing the actors behind the act thus vitiating the punitive objective of the criminal justice system which serves as deterrence. The whistleblower seems inadequately protected. It is against this background this study seeks to make recommendations on ways of improving the whistleblowing policy of the Federal Government of Nigeria in a bid to sustain the successes already recorded.

Recommendations

a. The National Assembly should expedite action on the passage of the Whistleblower Protection Bill before it. Thus, there should be adequate protection for whistleblower against loss of job, reputation and adequate compensation.

b. There should be a separate court for corruption cases to reduce long and indefinite adjournment being experienced on cases in Nigeria’s court system. The court should ensure speedy dispensation of justice on corruption related cases to ensure that it serves as a deterrent to other public office holders who may be thinking of embezzling public fund.

c. Furthermore, the adoption of plea bargaining should be discouraged as it is capable of encouraging corruption. Just like any other crime, punishment is the right pill for the ill of corruption and this should be treated as such. To this end, any person found to have involved in the looting of public treasures or any act or omission capable of affecting the interest of the public should be prosecuted and punished appropriately. It is immaterial whether the person involved has voluntarily returned the stolen funds.

d. Finally, the principles of sincerity and transparency must be applied in giving rewards to the whistleblowers, this will encourage people to come forward to unveil information about financial irregularities. However, people should be enlightened that public interest comes first and it is above the rewards or personal interest. Whistleblowing or revealing information about misconducts should, therefore, be seen as a moral responsibility.

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