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In this issue 2024

Method Of Data Analysis In Christian Religious Studies
Apostle Yaro Moses Shok & Mrs.Serah Ishaya Dado

Assessment Of The Factors Influencing Technology Integration In Teaching And Learbing In Shehu Shagri College Of Education, Sokoto
Bashar Muhammad Yabo

Re-examining the Contours of Social Values and Insecurity in Nigeria
Benjamin, Tyavkase Gudaku & Robert Chibueze Ugwuogo

Asymmetric Impact of Oil Revenue on the Well-being in Nigeria: Empirical Evidence from Non Autor Regressive Distributed Lag (NARDL)
Chima Chidi Iloabuchi & Okekpa Udoka Ede

Empirical Legal Research and Scholarship in Nigeria: Issues, Challenges and Prospects
Chukwunweike A.Ogbuabor & Clara C. Obi-Ochiabutor & Samuel I. Nwatu & Damian U. Ajah

Challenges Of Observational Methods In Humanities
Ezirim, Joel Kelechi

Psychology And Security Challenges: Psycho-Social Problems And Counseling Needs Of Traumatised Women And Children Of Insecurity And Banditry In Sokoto State
Hajara Yahaya Bello

Causes And Prevalence Of Drug Abuse Among Secondary School Students In Sokoto Metropolis: Implications For Counselling And Behaviour Change
Halima Muhammad Maishanu

Mathematics And Public Health: The Role Of Mathematical Models In Combating Infectious Diseases
Ekwemuka Chiedu

Human Capital Development And Productivity In Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma Nigeria
Adolphus Chukwuemeka Anoruo & Nestor Obumneme Obiakonwamuo & Nwuke Daniel Nnaemeka

Impact Of Infrastructure On Human Capital Development In Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma Nigeria
Adolphus Chukwuemeka Anoruo & Nwuke Daniel Nnaemeka & Njemanze, Tochukwu Amarachi

An Analysis Of Public Bureaucracy As A Veritable Instrument For Change And Development In Nigeria: A Study Of Imo State Public Service System
Adolphus Chukwuemeka, Anoruo

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP AMIDST SECURITY CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

A PAPER ON IMPERIALISM AND PROTESTS IN AFRICA

BY

OTTA, EMMA

Abstract

Resistance to colonial rule is a dominant topic in the historical study of Africa. But resistance to attempted transfer of colonised peoples and territories, to promote peace in Europe, has not gained similar attention in African and colonial historiographies. This paper looks at the origin of imperialism in Africa and how imperialist control of political or economic power resulted severe resistance and protests across many African nations. The paper argues that imperialism is more of exploitation and control than development and that this exploitation resulted to protests in many African countries such as south Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Ghana and even Nigeria. Therefore, this paper concludes that Africans should form a united force against any colonial power and domination, same was imperialists were resisted in its earliest years of formation.

Keywords: Imperialism, Africa, Protests

Introduction

The word "imperialism" is both anachronistic and a recent term especially when we try to grapple with the idea of understanding its political economy in Africa before and after the conquest of the "Dark Continent" by European Colonialists in the early 1830s. Since empirical and policy questions motivate modern scholars to pursue both lines of research, it would be pertinent for us to take as a point of departure the extant literature concerning the origin of imperialism. The term imperialism originated from France in 1830, where Napoleon was busy acquiring colonies for his country and became acceptable in academic circles when British radicals used the word to refer to British Colonialism in Africa and other less Developed Countries (LDCs). Since then, the word has been "over-flogged" by both the former Soviet Union now the Commonwealth of independent States (CIS) and the United States who "mutilated" the word beyond recognition especially during the cold war propaganda era In Africa, the word gained currency during the decolonialisation period when nationalists adopted the slogan "Down with European Imperialism" as their war cry. Perhaps

the most recent "cry" against imperialism in the world scene is that of Yugoslavia against American-led F.ll7 Missile air strikes in Kosovo. After each attack, President Yeltsin- now reduced to a toothless bull-dog - is said to be shouting "Clinton, you IMPERIALIST swine: You will pay for this. You hear me? You will pa_y" (Yeltsin, 1999:P.9). In The Diplomacy of Imperialism, Langer (1925:P.67) defined imperialism as "the rule Of control, political or economic, direct or indirect, of one State, nation or people over other similar groups, or . . . the disposition urge or striving to establish such rule" Thus, imperialism has to do with exercising control, mainly by Europeans to developing countries of Africa. This always resulted to resistance and protests as discussed below.

Rebellions Against Colonial Rule Before the Second World War

After 1900, Europe began to introduce changes to colonial rule in an effort to increase revenues from the colonies. These changes included taking land from African people and giving it to the growing number of Europeans in the colonies. The other changes were the introduction of taxes like the hut tax and poll tax that forced Africans to work for European settlers. Africans were forced to work for Europeans in order to pay these taxes (Baohen, 2000). This was because the new taxes had to be paid in cash and not as cattle or crops as was the practice before. Exploitation of African labourers by European employers added to the growing resentment among the local people.Resistance movements began to rise in Africa. In colonies with a growing number of settlers, the demand for more land and labour increased tensions between colonial authorities and the white communities that had settled in the colonies. More land was taken from African people and given to Europeans for settlement. In response to these developments, some chiefs organised rebellions against colonial authorities.

Revolt: To rise against the government with the aim of removing it and replacing it with another government that is more acceptable.

One of the chiefs who organised an armed rebellion against British colonial authority was Zulu Chief Bambatha. He was not happy with the loss of land his people suffered and the poll tax of one pound that they were forced to pay. His demand was that his people's land be returned and the poll tax lifted. The armed rebellion was finally crushed after lasting out a year. Chief Bambatha together with his 3000 followers was killed. There were similar **revolts** in Eastern Africa, South West Africa, and Zimbabwe (Ibhawoh, 2008). Like the Bambatha rebellions they were all crushed. In East Africa there was the MajiMaji revolt organised by KinjigitileNgwale in 1905. The revolt was against forced labour and tax policies

forced upon the people by the German government, which was implementing a cotton scheme to increase her exports. To implement their scheme the Germans forced Africans to plant cotton instead of their traditional staple crops. And the MajiMaji revolted.

These MajiMaji revolts shared similar traits. In all of them there was a strong belief in African spirit mediums and a strong influence of Ethiopianism. This philosophy originated in Ethiopia. The aim of Ethiopianism was to restore African traditions and political structures. It rested on African faith in spirits to protect them. People believed that the spirits were capable of turning European bullets into water and that they would be immune to bullets by undertaking a cleansing ritual before battle. The initial success of the MajiMaji rebellions strengthened the people's belief in their spirit mediums. The African emphasis also managed to unite different ethnic groups to fight for the same purpose. However, pitted against European machine guns, the Africans were doomed to fail and they lost their faith in the protection of MajiMaji. About 26 000 people were killed by German forces. To avoid future rebellions the colonial government reduced its use of force and began to rely strongly on missionary education for implementing colonial policies.

An Uprising in Nyasaland (Malawi)

Not all uprisings in this period were influenced by African spirit mediums. In Nyasaland, now Malawi, the Christian church and the Seventh Day Adventist Church under the leadership of Priest John Chilembwe, played an important role organizing and carrying out an early uprising against colonial authority. John Chilembwe was the leader of this uprising to protest against the hut tax, which was increased by 8 shillings in 1909, and unfair labour practices on white owned estates (Ibhawoh,2008). The First World War made matters even worse. John Chilembwe noticed that a large number of people who died while fighting against the Germans in September 1914 in Karonga were black people. He then wrote a letter to the Nyasaland Times newspaper challenging the idea that participation in the war would improve things for black people in Nyasaland.

John Chilembwe organised an armed rebellion against the colonial government. On the 23 January 1915, an armed group of men attacked the Livingstone Estate while another group attacked the Bruce Estate. A third group was sent to attack the Blantyre armoury in a bid to obtain weapons for an armed revolt on the capital, Zomba, to overthrow the colonial government. Although the first two attacks were successful, the attack on the Blantyre African Lakes Corporation Armoury was not and the final revolt failed. John Chilembwe was

shot and killed while attempting to escape from Nyasaland. By the 4 February 1915, the uprising was over.

Though unsuccessful, the uprising prompted the government to reconsider the land and labour practices in Nyasaland. These were major causes of the uprising. They had been introduced mainly to exploit the colonies by extracting more labour from them and squeezing more productivity from the workers to lower the cost to the colony (Rotberg,1996).. At the same time taxation on black people was increased. The uprising had the effect of raising the awareness of black people to colonial rule and encouraged them to stand up for their rights and demand an end to colonial rule.

Herero Uprising

The rinderpest epidemic of 1896 to 1897 had destroyed the cattle of the Herero and Nama people of South West Africa, now Namibia. The Germans took advantage of the Herero's loss and occupied most of their good grazing land. At the same time, the German government adopted a policy of encouraging Germans to settle in the colonies. Because of this, more land was taken from the Herero people and given to German settlers.

In 1904 the Herero broke out in revolt and succeeded in regaining some of their land for a while. Hundreds of Germans were surrounded and killed by Herero fighters. The Herero tried to get the support of Nama people but failed to do so. The German government brought in reinforcements from Germany and was thus able to drive back the rebellions Herero (Rotberg,1996). Commander of the German forces, Lothar Von Trotha gave orders to shoot the Herero because, according to him, they no longer deserved German protection. Many Herero were killed and others fled to Botswana to hide. Because this was an attempt to wipe out all Hereros, it can be called genocide. The German victory resulted in more hardships for the Herero. All their remaining cattle were confiscated and their chiefs stripped of their authority.

Responses to Colonial Rule after the Second World War

After the Second World War, revolts and struggles against colonial rule no longer demanded reform but full political independence. This was influenced by African participation in the Second World War. Africans played an important role in the liberation of Ethiopia. Independence for Ethiopia showed that freedom from colonial occupation was possible and inspired other struggles for liberation.

Political parties that were formed in this period became more radical in their demands and received growing support. To a large extent this support came from the increasing number of

Africans living in urban areas following the Second World War. The colonial government's expansion of education had also played a role in this. The spread of education and urbanisation of Africans led to the growth of ideas about independence. The people began to question colonial rule and challenged their exclusion from the governmental process. It was because of these developments that the process of decolonisation in Africa began.

The Sekhukhuneland Revolt (South Africa)

The Sekhukhuneland revolt was organised by Pedi migrant workers in 1958. They formed an organisation called the Sebatakgomo. Migrant workers were not as concerned about urban politics as about the pressures being brought to bear on rural areas. These developments affected their control of land and the economic benefits they were getting from owning land in rural areas. The revolt was organised to challenge the introduction of betterment schemes and the Bantu Authorities Act.

Migrant men understood that the Bantu Authorities Act placed chiefs under the control of government instead of the people they were supposed to serve. They realised that the government would use chiefs to implement unpopular schemes like the betterment schemes and segregation of Africans. At the heart of this revolt was also the increasing control of migrant workers by the government through their chiefs.

Unlike the Nyasaland uprising, the Sekhukhuneland revolt did not attempt to overthrow the colonial government. The aim of the revolt was to protect the land of the Pedi from being taking away by the government and thus safeguard the integrity of the Pedi kingdom. Migrant workers attacked people suspected of collaborating with the government. These were chiefs who had accepted the Bantu Authorities Act and the betterment schemes. They were expelled from the villages and replaced by popular chiefs. The revolt was unsuccessful in the end. Effective rural revolt was only realised later through the efforts of South African political parties.

Current Trends

Today in 2024, the African continent is still recuperating from the stranglehold of European colonialism. While most of its nations achieved what can ostensibly be called “flag independence” during the 20th century, colonial powers continued to exert enormous economic, political, and military influence. As Kwame Nkrumah stated, ‘The African “nations” of today, created artificially by foreigners for their own purposes…continue to struggle on, each one separately, in a pathetic and hopeless attempt to make progress, while the real obstacle to their development, imperialism, mainly in its neo-colonialist stage, is operating on a Pan-African scale.’

Western imperialism in the form of neocolonialism has served to deprive Africans of real political power in their homelands and trapped them in dire poverty, despite the immense mineral wealth underneath their feet. But recently, the masses have taken to the streets to voice their righteous anger at the neglect and corruption of their leadership, and its self-enriching collusion with western capital.

Over the last three years, the African Sahel region has witnessed a wave of coups in several countries. Out of these, the three that appear to have progressive potential, occurred in the Sahel regional nations of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. Recently, the three countries have convened to form the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), in order to expand cooperation on key matters including defense from both internal threats and from external western aggression. This confederation came into being just months after the three countries withdrew from the hub of western influence on the continent known as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in January of 2024. In an additional act of sovereignty, Niger expelled the French and U.S. military from their country.

Also, in June of this year, protests erupted in Kenya against a controversial tax bill that would have made essential commodities significantly costlier. Kenya's President, WillamRuto, indicated that the tax hikes were necessary to pay off exorbitant loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This was a troublesome betrayal for millions of struggling Kenyans. In the minds of many Kenyans, Ruto was directly linked to the IMF, an imperial tool of the West that is used to gain access to global south resources., As a result, the protests have continued, along with calls for Ruto's removal, despite his withdrawal of the tax hike.

Furthermore, in July of this year, widespread protests against corruption have emerged in Uganda, which like Kenya, is a former British colony in east Africa. Since Yoweri Museveni became what appears to be president for life in 1986, his regime has imposed mass privatization and sold Uganda's assets to international financiers, as he and his cronies benefited through corrupt deals. This widespread looting of resources has had a catastrophic effect on the working class and the rural masses.The national poverty rate in Uganda is a dreadful 41 percent. And, between 2013 and 2017, poverty in Uganda increased from 6.7 million to 10 million people, in a nation with a population of over 48 million people. At the same time, income inequality has skyrocketed.

Most recently, Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, is struggling with soaring inflation and a sharply devalued naira currency after President Bola Ahmed Tinubu introduced IMF reforms a year ago which were supposedly aimed at reviving the economy. Undoubtedly spurred by the wave of anti-corruption and anti-colonial activism across the continent,

Nigerians have taken to the streets to protest against the rising inflation rates, the dire unemployment and the crippling hunger. The standard of living in Nigeria has been in decline for decades. And as the living conditions worsen, economic desperation increases, which further feeds into the corruption that's endemic in the political culture.

Conclusion

While western media and governments focus on the cosmetics of "democracy" in Africa, they pick and choose where such democracy exists and where it does not, and hence who's an enemy or not. Meanwhile, only nations whose leaders are willing to prioritize western capital at the expense of its people are deemed to have a sufficient "democracy." But no true democracy can exist where there is such widespread poverty and deprivation. Only through cooperative unity can Africa defend itself from outside aggression and exploitation. And only through scientific socialism, as advocated by Nkrumah himself, can Africa develop itself sufficiently according to the needs and potential of its people. The time is now for Africa to rid itself of the chains of bondage and servitude and to achieve its true destiny of greatness.

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THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THE HERDSMEN FARMERS' CONFLICT ON SECURITY IN SOUTHERN KADUNA, NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

The causes and effects of herdsmen and farmers' conflicts in the northern and southern states of Nigeria had resurfaced over and over. This study aimed at examining the causes and effects of farmer-herder conflicts within the study areas. The objectives are to; examine the location and belief of the people in the study areas and; examine the causes and effects of the farmer-herderconflicts in the study areas. This study adopted both primary and secondary data. The primary data made used of questionnaires which were administered to 385persons who are either farmers or herders within the study areas. The secondary data employed the use of online Journals and relevant literatures. The method of Sampling technique adopted in the study is Simple random sampling. This allows the Sample size to be drawn at random from the larger population group in the study areas. The instrument of data collection was questionnaire administration and analysis was carried out using both frequency and percentage.The study identified religious sentiment, religious extremist and intolerance as the main causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts in the study area among others. The study also identified loss or destruction of life and buildings,fear, tension and divisions and emigration as the regular effects of herdsmen farmers' conflicts in the study area among others. The study is recommended to security agencies, security consultants, policy makers and the government.

Key words: conflict; destruction; farmers; livelihood; herdsmen; properties.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Conflict over resources, land use, religion, beliefs, and family are somehow connected and could be traced to the same sources. This conflict over resources, land use, religion, beliefs, and family and even women is a cornerstone of many societies and the Nigerian society appears to be no exception (Baderinwa, 2019).

According to Kwaghga (2018), the incessant conflicts are driven by a range of factors from the environmental to political but at central of them all, is the problem of land scarcity. Climate change and the desertification of Nigeria's north made the herdsmen to migrate to the south so as to feed and sell their cattle, a means of their livelihood. This thus leads to encroachment on the land areas used for farming by the farmers.

Nigeria was amalgamated between the Northern and Southern protectorate. The Muslim dominates the north and the Christian dominates the south, and thus religious tensions bubble regularly for relevance and prominence.

1.1 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to Byimui (2013), the story of the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Northern Nigeria is marred by conflicts, doubt, mutual mistrust and violence commonly among herdsmen and farmers.Although Islam and Christianity both claim to be religions of peace, but a year hardly pass without religious violence in some part of the country, especially in the Northern region between either worshippers of Islam and that of Christianity or herdsmen and farmers (Abimboye, 2009).

According to Nwachukwu, (2024), many blameless lives have been cut short, belongings worth millions of naira lost, guiltless Nigerian villages and communities displaced and turned to refugees in their father's homeland all as a result of religious chauvinism. Therefore, Nigeria is still contending with challenges of religious coexistence and cohesion as well as conflict and other resource issues.

The scenario of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria has left indelible psychological trauma and mistrust among the Nigerians. Carnage, arson and physical assaults were recorded in the past crises and these continue to threaten the corporate existence of the Federal polity (Toki, Gambari and Hadi, 2015).

Many scholars had studied on the causes and effects of herdsmen and farmers' conflicts in the northern states from one period to another. However, in southern Kaduna, this study intends to review the causes and effects of herdsmen and farmers' conflicts as it

concerns the present reality. It is on this note, this research examines the causes and effects of farmer-herder conflicts on security in Southern Kaduna.

1.2 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The Aim of the study is to examine the causes and effects of farmer-herder conflicts on security within the study areas.

i. To examine the location and belief of the people in the study areas;
ii. To examine the causes and effects of the farmer-herderconflicts in the study areas

THE NATURE OF HERDSMEN FARMERS' CONFLICTS

Kwaghga (2018) observes that the herdsmen are mostly Muslim while the farmers are mainly Christian. Genyi (2014) asserts that Christianity appears the dominant religion in the south. Next in line is Islam practiced by the predominantly migrant Hausa- Fulani settlers usually residing in the northern part of the country.

Baderinwa, (2019) opined that the cause of the farmer- herder conflict is a combination of several factors, ranging from land ownership and use, scarce resources, religion, values, beliefs and women. The conflicts begin when both the farmers and herdsmen encounter on the same land and try to protect their own benefits (Genyi, 2017; Gursoy, 2019)

Despite, ethnic and religious dimension or approach to it, there is also a regional dimension to the conflict. The herdsmen are from the North while the farmers can be located southwards.More than 90% of nomadic herdsmen in northern Nigeria are ethnic Fulanis and the majority of the Fulanis are Muslims. (International Crisis Group, 2017). This ethnic group is originally migrated from Arabic peninsula and today they are living in not just Nigeria but in several countries in West and Central Africa (Genyi, 2017).

THE CAUSES OF THE HERDSMEN FARMERS' CONFLICTS

Onah and Olajide (n.d.) explain that the ethnic and religious basis of farmers and herdsmen have contributed to the numerous conflict and attack among the two groups. This had stressed the fact that greater numbers of the herdsmen are Hausa-Fulani and Muslims, and the farmers are mainly Christians and non-Hausa-Fulani, bringing it to the state of complexity (Gursoy, 2019).

The immediate causes of the farmer-herder conflict as noted byEnwelu et al (2015) are: destruction of crops by cattle, contamination of drinking water source, Sexual harassment of women by herders, harassment of herders by host community, cattlerustling, disregard of herders to constituted authority. The remote causes as described by Baderinwa (2019)

areethnic and religious inclination, poverty, effects of climate change, and rapid population growth.

Farmer-herder crises in Nigeria occur as a result of resource scarcity; there exists a growing scarcity of arable land and water sources that are equally essential to sustain crop cultivation and cattle herds (Kwaghga, 2018). The growing business sector built so many buildings over the pathways that herders used to walk their animals (Shehu, 2018).

The climate change is one of the root causes of this conflict. Nigeria's northern regions face desertification problem which effects the livelihoods of many people (Okeke, 2014). The effects of drought and desertification are vital for the people who earn their lives from the soil itself. Water resources and grazing lands decreased in northern parts of the country, which drifted the grazing routes of herders into more southern areas (Gursoy, 2019).

Gursoy (2019) observes that in recent years, there has been an incredible increase in the numbers of rustling incidents. The terror organization Boko Haram also exist in north east region and one of the most important sources of money for them is cattle theft. Other than Boko Haram there are also several violent bandit groups who threaten the herders' and their animals' security in the northern Nigeria (Shehu, 2018).

EFFECTS OF THE HERDSMEN FARMERS CONFLICT

Apart from thwarting the country's economic development to an enormous extent, other economic impacts of these crises include impeding trade practices, reducing in crop yield, displacement of farmers, loss of lives and properties, loss of products in storage and destruction of public and private buildings. It becomes glaring that if nothing is done to arrest this ugly situation, the achievement of food security and sustainable development becomes a mirage (Akinkuolie, 2018)

In the host communities, nomadic herdsmen relocate as a result of conflict and host farmers, especially women and children, who remain behind, stop going to the distant farms for fear of attack by the nomads in the bush (Blench, 2010). According to the International Crisis Group (2017), Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue and Taraba states in the central Nigeria have the highest numbers of casualties because of violent clashes between farmers and herders in these transitional regions between the north and the south of Nigeria.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted both primary and secondary data. The primary data made used of questionnaires which were administered to 385persons who are either farmers or herders within the study areas. The secondary data employed the use of online Journals and relevant literatures. The method of Sampling technique adopted in the study is Simple random

sampling. This allows the Sample size to be drawn at random from the larger population group in the study areas. The instrument of data collection was questionnaire administration and analysis was carried out using both frequency and percentage.

3.1 Sampling Technique and Sample Frame

The Sampling technique adopted is simple random sampling. The research considered at random the human populations who are either herdsmen or farmers that constitute the population of people in places where herdsmen farmers' conflicts had been predominantly recorded. The settlements where there high incidences of herdsmen farmers' conflicts are drawn from the respondents and used for the study.

3.4 Sample Size

Using the Online Sample size calculator at the 95% confidence level at 5% margin of error, the Sample size of ZangoKataf is 384, the Sample size of Kachia is 384, the Sample size of Kajuru is 384, the Sample size of Kaura is 384, and the Sample size of Kagarko is 384. The different populations in respective settlements of ZangoKataf, Kachia, Kajuru, Kaura and Kagarko also agreed to give a sample size of 384 according to Krejcie and Morgan's table of 1970 which remain valid till date. Therefore the sample size of 385 will be used across the study areas because they will be randomly selected based on availability and participation across the areas.

3.1 THE STUDY AREAS

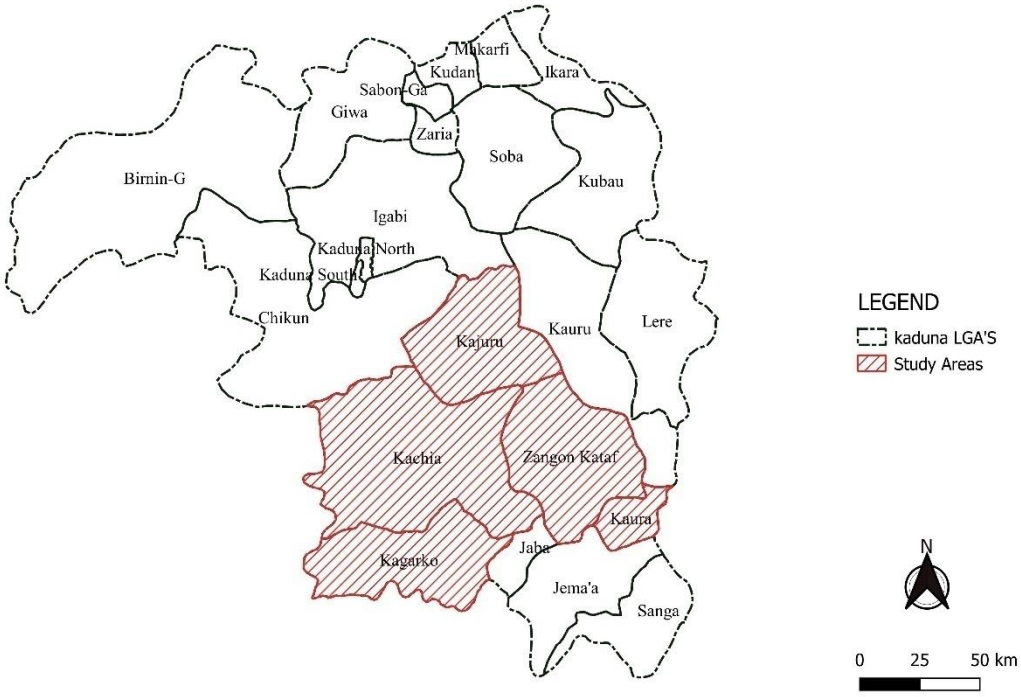


Figure 1: Map of Kaduna State showing study areas

Figure 1 is the map of Kaduna sate showing some parts of the Southern Kaduna, the study areas. The estimated projected population of Southern Kaduna in March, 2022 is approximately 595,000. The study focuses on Local Government areas where there are hotspots of herdsmen farmers' conflicts in ZangoKataf, Kachia, Kajuru, Kaura and Kagarko. ZangoKataf has a population of 471,300, Kachia has a po`pulation of 373,100, Kajuru has a population of 162,200, Kaura has a population of 258,000 and Kagarko has a population of 353,200.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDING

Table 1: Geographical Location of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Rural	116	30.1
Urban	269	69.9
Total	385	100

Source; Field Survey, 2024

S/N	VARIABLE	VERY OFTEN FREQ.(PERCENT)	OFTEN FREQ.(PERCENT)	OCCASIONAL FREQ.(PERCENT)	RARELY FREQ.(PERCENT)	NOT AT ALL FREQ.(PERCENT)

Table 1 is the Geographical location of respondents. 30.1% of the respondents reside in rural area while 69.9% of the respondents reside in the urban setting. This implied that majority of the respondents dwell and live in urban area.

Table 2: Religion of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Islam	347	90.1
Christianity	38	9.9
Total	385	100

Source; Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 gives a description of the religion of respondents. 90.1% of the respondents are muslims while 9.9% of the respondents in Southern Kaduna are Christians. This implied that majority of the respondents are Muslims who either lives in urban or rural parts of Southern Kaduna.

TABLE 3: THE CAUSES OFHERDSMEN FARMERS' CONFLICT

Source: Field Survey, 2024

1.	Mistrust	180(46.8)	138(35.8)	53(13.8)	14(3.6)	0(0)
2.	Self-centeredness	206(53.5)	118(30.6)	61(15.8)	0(0)	0(0)
3.	Intolerance	282(73.2)	80(20.8)	23(6.0)	0(0)	0(0)
4.	Poverty inducement control by politicians	257(66.8)	100(26.0)	14(3.6)	14(3.6)	0(0)
5.	Religious Extremist	272(70.6)	75(19.5)	38(9.9)	0(0)	0(0)
6.	Hate Speech	182(47.3)	145(37.7)	58(15.1)	0(0)	0(0)
7.	Religious sentiment	299(77.7)	50(13.0)	36(9.4)	0(0)	0(0)

Table 3 identifies the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts. It can be revealed that 46.5% strongly agree and 35.8% agree out of a total of 100% both indicate that mistrust is one of the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts. In the same manner, 53.5% strongly agree and 30.6% agree out of a total of 100% that self-centeredness is one of the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts. More so, 73.2% strongly agree and 20.8% agree out of a total of 100%that intolerance is one of the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts while 18.8% strongly agree. Also, 66.8% and 26.0% strongly agree and agree out of a total of 100%, that poverty inducement control by politicians is one of the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts. 70.6% of the respondents strongly agree with the 19.6% of the respondents who agree that religious extremist is one of the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts.47.3% and 37.7% of the respondents both strongly agree and agree out of a total of 100%,that hate speech is one of the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts. Lastly, on the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts, 77.7% and 13.0% of the respondents both strongly agree and agree out of a total of 100% that religious sentiment is one of the causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts.

Table 4: EFFECTS OF HERDSMEN FARMERS' CONFLICT

S/N	VARIABLE	VERY OFTEN FREQ.(PERCENT)	OFTEN FREQ.(PERCENT)	OCCASIONAL FREQ.(PERCENT)	RARELY FREQ.(PERCENT)	NOT AT ALL FREQ.(PERCENT)
1.	Loss or Destruction of life and buildings	360(93.5)	25(6.5)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)

2.	Painting and Distorting of the image of the community	197(51.2)	139(36.1)	49(12.7)	0(0)	0(0)
3.	War, Hate and Isolated community	220(57.1)	105(27.3)	60(15.6)	0(0)	0(0)
4.	Emigration	232(60.3)	93(24.2)	22(5.7)	38(9.9)	0(0)
4.	Fear, Tension and Divisions	248(64.4)	87(22.6)	50(13.0)	0(0)	0(0)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4 is on the effects of herdsmen farmers' conflict. 93.5% strongly agree and 6.5% agree that the loss or destruction of life and buildings is one of the effects of herdsmen farmers' conflicts. Also, 51.2% strongly agree and 36.1% agree that painting and distorting of the image of the community is one of the effects of herdsmen farmers' conflicts.Furthermore, 57.1% strongly agree and 27.3% agree that war, hate and isolated communityis one of the effects of herdsmen farmers' conflicts. In addition, 60.3% strongly agree and 24.2% agree emigration is one of the effects of herdsmen farmers' conflicts while 64.4% strongly agree and 22.6% agree that fear, tension and divisions is one of the effects of herdsmen farmers' conflicts.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study revealed that the majority of the respondents are Muslims who live in the urban area. The study identified religious sentiment, religious extremist, intolerance, Poverty inducement control by politicians, self-centredness, mistrust and hate speech as the main causes of herdsmen farmers' conflicts in the study area. The study also identified loss or destruction of life and buildings, fear, tension and divisions, emigration, war, hate and Isolated community and the painting and distorting of the image of the community as the regular effects of herdsmen farmers' conflicts in the study area among others. **The study is recommended to security agencies, security consultants, policy makers and the government**.

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THE SPATIAL ANALYSES OF THE HERDSMEN FARMERS' CONFLICTSON SECURITY GOVERNANCE IN SOUTHERN KADUNA, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The Spatial analyses of herdsmen farmers' conflicts provide the basis for segmentations. This research is aimed at assessing the herdsmen farmers' confliction security governance within the Southern Kaduna in Nigeria. The objectives are to; identify keys that promote the security of the herdsmen farmers' conflict in the study areas; examine theoccurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict in the study areas and; the assess the impact of the keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict in the study areas on the general wellbeing of the people within the study areas. This study adopted both primary and secondary data. The primary data made used of questionnaires which were administered to 385 persons who are either farmers or herders within the study areas. The secondary data employed the use of online Journals and relevant literatures. The method of sampling technique adopted in the study is Simple random sampling. This permits the representative fractions to be drawn at random from the larger population

group within the study areas. The instrument of data collection used was questionnaire administration and analysis was carried out using frequency, percentage, ArcGis and simple linear regression. The study identified high, moderate and low density areas of occurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict. The study also identified 'showing greater understanding and the appreciation of difference' in the study areas as the highest keys to promote safety among herders and farmers. The research shows there is a statistically significant relationship between the keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict and the general wellbeing of the people within the study areas. The study is recommended to security agencies, security consultants, policy makers and the government.

Key words: conflict; farmers; herdsmen; loss; safety; security.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Security covers protection of human rights and provision of basic human needs which are necessary for social system transformation (Nwizu& Cyprian, 2018). Security is defined as every mechanism undertaken to ensure peaceful coexistence and development at large (Adedoyin, 2014).

George-Genyi (2013) described security asthe condition of feeling safe from harm or danger, the defense, protection and preservation of values, and the lack of threats to acquire values. George-Genyi (2013) expressed further that "Security mean the freedom from danger or threats to an individual or a country". The UN Habitat (2007) defined security as the state where communities and assets are being free from crime, violence and related fear.

In Africa, security governance has remained a major issue in view of the various forms of carnage, brutality, pogroms as well as acts of genocide occasioned by the persistence of civil wars, communal clashes and religious conflicts across the continent (Nnoli, 2006).

According to the International Crisis Group (2017), Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue and Taraba states in the central Nigeria have the highest numbers of casualties because of violent clashes between farmers and herders in these transitional regions between the north and the south of Nigeria.It is on this note, this research is aimed at examiningthe herdsmen farmers' conflict on security governance within the Southern Kaduna in Nigeria.

1.1 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nwachukwu, (2024) expressed that lives have been cut short, belongings worth millions of naira lost, guiltless Nigerian villages and communities displaced and turned to refugees in their father's homeland all as a result of religious chauvinism. Therefore, Nigeria is still

contending with challenges of religious coexistence and cohesion as well as conflict and other resource issues.

The scenario of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria has left indelible psychological trauma and mistrust among the Nigerians. Carnage, arson and physical assaults were recorded in the past crises and these continue to threaten the corporate existence of the Federal polity (Toki, Gambari and Hadi, 2015).

Many scholars had studied on the causes and effects of herdsmen and farmers' conflicts in the northern states from one period to another. However, in southern Kaduna, this study intends to review the causes and effects of herdsmen and farmers' conflicts as it concerns the present reality.

1.2 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research is aimed at examiningthe herdsmen farmers' conflict on security governance within the Southern Kaduna in Nigeria.

The objectives are to;

1. identify keys that promote the security of the herdsmen farmers' conflict in the study areas;
2. examine the rate of occurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict in the study areas
3. examine the relationship between the keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict and the general wellbeing of the people within the study areas

2.0 THE DEFINITION OF SECURITY GOVERNANCE

Governance is the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its social, political and economic affairs through interactions within and among the civil society, private sector and state (Aribigbola, 2011). Urban governance implies a greater diversity in organization of services, a greater variety of actors and stakeholders, and a greater flexibility in the relationship between municipalities and their citizens (Aribigbola*et al*, 2013).

Security governance addresses the entire gamut of state security as it covers virtually all aspects of security such as human security, environmental security, economic and social security, as well as the security of the ethnic group (Nwizu& Cyprian, 2018). Security governance has to do with the multifaceted approaches undertaken to address and improve various aspects of security

2.1 FACTORS THAT PROMOTE HERDSMEN FARMERS' CONFLICT

Identity is perhaps the broadest set of drivers of conflict. It encompasses ethnicity, race, language, territory, caste, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, and potentially all

"markers" of difference between human beings. Identity carries the seeds of conflict in its womb: those who share the same identity are part of the "in-group," while those who do not are the "out-group"—the others. When people acquire a strong and exclusive sense of belonging to a single group, the stage is set for conflict (Sen 2006).

Resources are another major driver of conflict, whether they are natural resources such as oil, minerals, and gemstones; common pool resources such as fisheries, forests, grazing land, and water basins; or private resources such as agricultural land and cattle. An extensive literature associates natural resources with the onset of violent conflict (Caselli, Morelli, and Rohner 2015; Ross 2015).

Economic and other shocks may also drive conflict: An external (exogenous) event or condition (such as a drought, climate change, the discovery of a new trade route, or a hike in commodity prices) or an internal (endogenous) event or condition (such as technological change or demographic shifts) can disrupt a stable situation by introducing tension in the control of scarce or expanding resources

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted both primary and secondary data. The primary data made used of questionnaires which were administered to 385 persons who are either farmers or herders within the study areas. The secondary data employed the use of online Journals and relevant literatures. The method of Sampling technique adopted in the study is Simple random sampling. The estimated projected population of Southern Kaduna in March, 2022 is approximately 595,000. The study focuses on Local Government areas where there are hotspots of herdsmen farmers' violence in ZangoKataf, Kachia, Kajuru, Kaura and Kagarko. ZangoKataf has a population of 471,300, Kachia has a population of 373,100, Kajuru has a population of 162,200, Kaura has a population of 258,000 and Kagarko has a population of 353,200.

3.1 Sampling Technique and Sample Frame

The Sampling technique adopted is simple random sampling. The research considered at random the human populations who are either herdsmen or farmers that constitute the population of people in places where herdsmen farmers' conflicts had been predominantly recorded. The settlements where there high incidences of herdsmen farmers' conflicts are drawn from the respondents and used for the study.

3.4 Sample Size

Using the Online Sample size calculator at the 95% confidence level at 5% margin of error, the Sample size of ZangoKataf is 384, the Sample size of Kachia is 384, the Sample size of Kajuru is 384, the Sample size of Kaura is 384, and the Sample size of Kagarko is 384. The different populations in respective settlements of ZangoKataf, Kachia, Kajuru, Kaura and Kagarko also agreed to give a sample size of 384 according to Krejcie and Morgan's table of 1970 which remain valid till date. Therefore the sample size of 385 will be used across the study areas because they will be randomly selected based on availability and participation across the areas.

3.5 THE STUDY AREAS

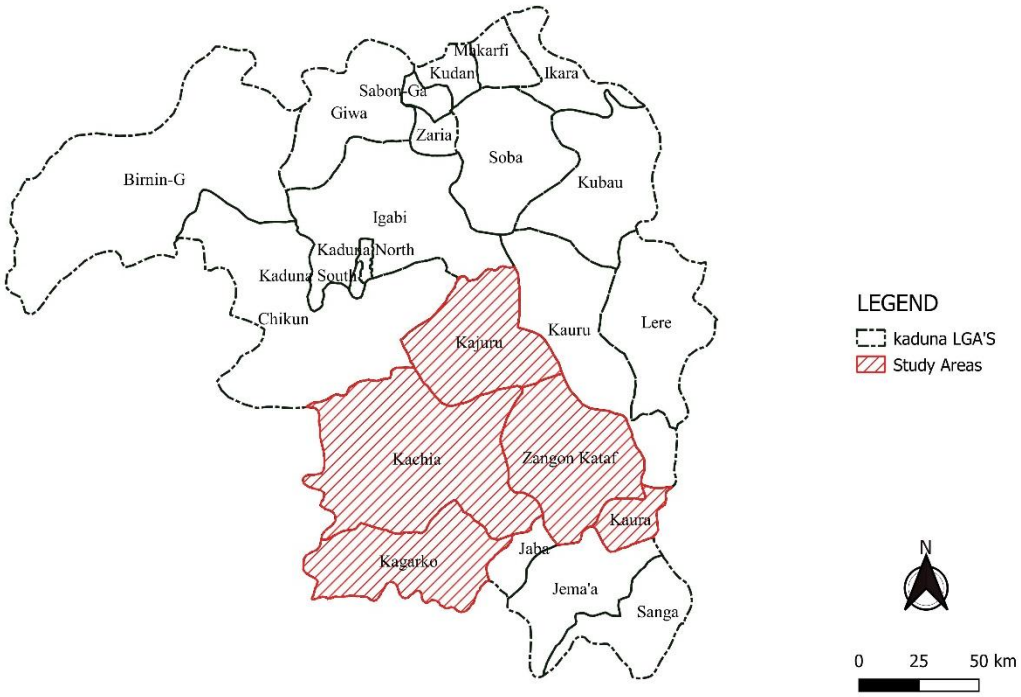


Figure 1: Map of Kaduna State showing study areas

Figure 1 is the map of Kaduna sate showing some parts of the Southern Kaduna, the study areas. The estimated projected population of Southern Kaduna in March, 2022 is approximately 595,000. The study focuses on Local Government areas where there are hotspots of herdsmen farmers' conflicts in ZangoKataf, Kachia, Kajuru, Kaura and Kagarko. ZangoKataf has a population of 471,300, Kachia has a po`pulation of 373,100, Kajuru has a population of 162,200, Kaura has a population of 258,000 and Kagarko has a population of 353,200.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDING

TABLE 1: THE KEYS THAT PROMOTE THE SECURITY AND SAFETY OF THE HERDSMEN FARMERS' CONFLICT IN THE STUDY AREAS

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Showing greater understanding	116	30.1
Acceptance	89	23.1
Appreciation of differences	114	29.6
Similarities within Religious traditions	66	17.1
Total	385	100

Source; Field Survey, 2024

Table 1reflects the keys that promote the security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict in the study areas. 30.1% of the respondents agree that it in showing a greater understanding, 23.1% of the respondents agree that it is in embracing acceptance, 29.6% of the respondents agree that it is in appreciating of difference while 17.1% of the respondents agree that it is in similarities within religious traditions. It can be deduced that the keys that promote the security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict in the study areas are showing greater understanding and appreciation of differences.

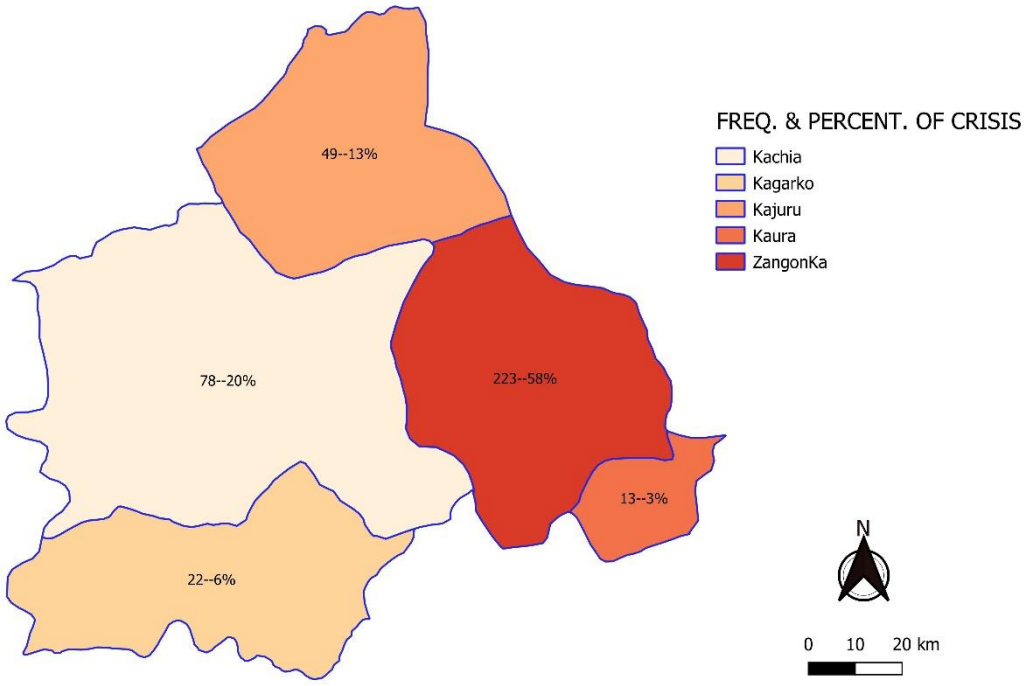


Figure 2: Map of Study Areas showing the occurrence of herdsmen farmers

Source: ArcGis on data analyzed from field Survey, 2024.

The figure 2 represents the rating of the occurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict within the study areas. It is evident from the map of Southern Kaduna that ZangoKataf has the highest percentage of the occurrence of herdsmen farmers'conflict at 58%, followed by Kachia, at 20% occurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict, at Kajuru, the percentage of occurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict is 13%, at Kagarko, the percentage of occurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict is 6% and Kaura, the percentage of the occurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict is 3%. It can be deduced that ZangoKataf is the hottest spot of herdsmen farmers' conflict.

HYPOTHESIS :

Null Hypothesis (**H_0**) - There is no statistically significant relationship between the keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict and the general wellbeing of the people within the study areas

Alternate Hypothesis ($\mathbf{H_1}$) - There is statistically significant relationship between the keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict and the general wellbeing of the people within the study areas

Table 4.11: ANOVAof Simple Linear Regression

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.604	1	6.604	2.921	.088[a]
	Residual	865.994	383	2.261		
	Total	872.597	384			

Source: Statistical Computation using SPSS

a. Predictors: (Constant), Keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict

b. Dependent Variable: General wellbeings of the people

A general rule of thumb is often used in regression analysis if F>2.5, then we can reject the null hypothesis. F is equal to 2.921 which is greater than 2.5, hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between the keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict and the general wellbeing of the people within the study areas.Also, the F value (2.921) is greater than the critical value (0.088), it means that the null hypothesis can be discredited and also the alternate hypothesis can be uphold that there is statistically significant relationship between the keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict and the general wellbeing of the people within the study areas.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study identified high, moderate and low density areas of occurrence of herdsmen farmers' conflict. The study also identified 'showing greater understanding and the appreciation of difference' in the study areas as the highest keys to promote safety among herders and farmers. The research shows there is statistically significant relationship between the keys that promote security and safety of herdsmen farmers' conflict and the general wellbeing of the people within the study areas. **The study is recommended to the security agencies, security consultants, policy makers and the state government.**

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LEGISLATIVE ROLES OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE DELTA STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

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Abstract

This study examined the legislative functions of the public accounts committee and service delivery in Nigeria: a study of Delta State House of Assembly. Four null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and the study employed descriptive survey design. The sample of the study consist of twenty-nine (29) members of the House of Assembly in Delta State and the Clerk of the Public Accounts Committee to make a total of 30 samples. The

instrument used for the data collection was self-structured questionnaire and collected data were analyzed using t-test statistical tool. Findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the Public Accounts Committee and its role in promoting accountability and curbing corruption in the public sector, there is a significant relationship between the channels of engagement and areas of collaboration with other accountability stakeholders; there is a significant relationship between the expectations of Public Accounts Committee and other accountability stakeholders, there is a significant relationship between the roles of the Public Accounts Committee and the promotion of service delivery in Delta State. The study recommended amongst others that government should review and strengthen the legal frameworks governing PAC to ensure they have the necessary authority and independence to conduct thorough investigations and audits, political leaders should publicly endorse the role of PACs and ensure they operate free from political interference. This support is crucial for maintaining the committee's credibility and effectiveness and adequate financial, human, and technical resources should be allocated to PAC to enable them to perform their duties effectively. This includes funding for training, technology, and hiring of skilled personnel.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Legislative functions of the Public Accounts Committee and service delivery in Nigeria could be equal to that of National Assembly Public Accounts Committee which is saddled and empowered committees established by the standing orders of both houses to examine Federal Government (FGN) accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted to meet the public expenditure and Auditor's report thereon. This study would probe the effectiveness of the committee oversight function on expenditure and auditing report of the Federal Government to address the significant financial indiscipline, weakness and wastage of national resources in the penal public sector. Critically, the study will be narrowed down with special reference to Delta State Government Administration.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is a key legislative body tasked with ensuring transparency and accountability in the management of public funds. In Delta State, Nigeria, the PAC plays a crucial role in scrutinizing government expenditures and ensuring that public resources are used efficiently and effectively. The Nigerian society is filled with stories of wrong practices such as stories of ghost workers on the pay roll of Ministries, Extra-ministerial Departments and parastatals, frauds, embezzlements and setting ablaze of offices housing sensitive documents and corruption are found everywhere in the country Adeyemi, (2021). According to Akanbi(2022), huge amount of Naira is lost through one financial malpractice or the other in Nigeria, which to say the least, drains the nation's

merger resources through fraudulent means with far-reaching and attendant consequences on the development or even socio-economic or political programmes of the nation. Billions of Naira is lost in the public sector every year through fraudulent means. This represents only the amount that is ferreted out and made public. Indeed much more substantial or huge sums are lost in undetected frauds or those that are for one reason or other hushed up. Gogo (2018) argues that cases of fraud is prevalent in the Nigerian public service, could seem to be unveiled in one way or the other in some of these nasty acts.

In the same vein, accounting is viewed as the most critical system for maximizing efficiency and minimising costs of public services Igwe-omoke et al., (2020). Consequently, the existence and use of a good financial reporting system was regarded as key to achieving the objective of maximizing efficiency in the public sector. The imperativeness of good governance demands quick reporting of the activities and operations of government for the attainment of accountability and transparency. Audit reports keep the citizenry informed of the financial activities of the government. The auditor assesses the financial activities of the Government. The role of auditor in an economy is assurance of transparency and accountability Iyang, (2019). An audit ensures proper and effective use of public funds and the development of sound financial management. Effective operations of the functions of the Auditor General provide the proper execution of administrative activities. Moreover, it is in promoting accountability, sound financial management and the encouragement of sound internal control mechanism Kaiser, (2017).

Effectiveness of auditing has a dissuasive effect on those who might otherwise engage in fraud and other financial malpractices. Audit, Accountability and Transparency are the tripod for sustainable financial and economic development in the comity of nations. However, there is absolutely a dismal state of accountability for public funds in Nigeria. There is a lot of gross negligence and ineffectiveness on the part of public officers in the discharge of their duties. Employees and government officials in the civil service do not discharge the responsibilities placed on them by statue and this results in inefficiency, in public finances. Nigeria has grossly misappropriated the large monies it earned from oil and has been faced with chaotic fiscal managementKousoulos(2018). According to Lienert (2019), Federal Government of Nigeria public procurement revealed that Nigeria lost several hundred billions of Naira over the last few decades due to flagrant abuse of procedures, lack of transparency and merit in the award of contracts in the public sector.

Statement of the Problem

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Delta State House of Assembly is crucial for

ensuring financial accountability and improving service delivery in sectors such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. However, its effectiveness is hindered by political interference, inadequate resources, and inefficiencies in implementing audit recommendations. Political influence compromises the PAC's autonomy, undermining its neutrality and credibility. Additionally, insufficient financial support, staffing, and access to information limit its capacity to conduct thorough audits, leaving many irregularities unchecked. Even when financial mismanagement is identified, delays in executing audit recommendations perpetuate corruption and weaken governance. Furthermore, low public awareness and limited engagement with civil society and media reduce societal pressure on the PAC, diminishing its impact. Consequently, critical issues like poor infrastructure, inadequate healthcare, and substandard education persist, eroding public trust in government institutions and highlighting the need for reforms to enhance the PAC's performance (Kehinde, 2023; Umar &Aliyu, 2022; Eme et al., 2021).

Objectives

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the legislative functions of the public accounts committee and service delivery in Nigeria focusing on Delta State House Assembly. The specific objectives are to:

i. Examine roles of the Public Accounts Committee of the State House of Assembly in promoting accountability and curbing public sector corruption.
ii. Ascertain the expectations of the Public Accounts Committee from other accountability stakeholders
iii. Examine the channels of engagement and possible areas of collaboration with other accountability stakeholders.

Hypotheses

H_{01}: There no significant relationship between the Public Accounts Committee and its role in promoting accountability and curbing corruption in the public sector

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between the expectations of the Public Accounts Committee and other accountability stakeholders

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between the channels of engagement and areas of collaboration with other accountability stakeholders.

Review of Related Literature

Auditing, in its traditional disposition, is deeply rooted in financial statement audits. It requires practitioners (Auditors) to express their opinions whether financial statements prepared, in all material respects, are in accordance with an applicable reporting framework.

This is usually because business owners, investors, creditors, regulatory agencies and other users of accounting information need a reliable report to make informed decisions, and with auditing, they obtain a reasonable assurance that the audited financial statement does not contain any misstatement or error and that, it is true and fair. According to Needham (2019), there are sorts of decisions, decision makers, and an infinite number of possible information sets in addition to historical cost- based financial statements. To address the influence of audit reports in improving financial management of Nigerian federal parastatals therefore, it is ideal to begin here by first conceptualising the meaning of audit as differentiated from other similar concepts such as review service, harness its nature and its types in terms of financial audits, fraud audit and forensic accounting. Also conceptualized here in this section are: the meaning and component of financial management.

Public Accounts Committee Framework in the National Assembly

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in the National Assembly of Nigeria is a vital mechanism for ensuring accountability and transparency in government spending. The framework of the PAC can be explored through various literatures, which typically cover its structure, functions, and challenges. Below are some key aspects and references you might find useful:

Key Aspects of the Public Accounts Committee Framework

Structure and Composition: The PAC is a standing committee in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. It typically includes members from different political parties, with a significant representation from opposition parties to enhance impartiality.

Functions and Responsibilities: The primary function of the PAC is to examine the audited accounts of government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs). This includes scrutinizing the reports of the Auditor-General of the Federation. The PAC investigates any discrepancies or irregularities found in the financial records of these MDAs and makes recommendations for improvements.

Challenges and Constraints: Literature often discusses challenges such as political interference, lack of technical expertise, inadequate funding, and limited enforcement power, which can hinder the effectiveness of the PAC.

Public Accounts Committee Framework in Delta State

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is viewed as the apex for financial scrutiny and accountability in any democratic government. PAC is both a standing and special Committee, being the only Committee mentioned in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal

Republic of Nigeria. The Committee is an important legislative oversight tool through which the legislature oversees government's accounts, income and expenditure to ensure transparency, accountability and proper utilization of public funds. In Delta State, the Public Accounts Committee of the Delta State House of Assembly is established by the provisions of Section 125(5), 128 and 129 of the 1999 Constitution (as altered) and in line with Order XV, Rule 110 of the Standing Orders of the House. The Committee is therefore, aimed at ensuring accountability and transparency in the management of public funds in the State.

The Concept of Audit and Auditing

The term 'audit' historically was derived from the Latin word "audire" which means "to hear" Osumah (2020). It commonly refers to accounting profession and its practices. Though, its general definition is "the evaluation of a person, organization, system, process, enterprise, project or product" Rockman (2021). Sandra et al., (2020) specifically define it as a systematic process or approach of objectively obtaining and evaluating evidence regarding assertions about economic actions and events to ascertain the degree of correspondence between those assertions and established criteria and communicating the results to interested users.

An audit usually follows a structured documented plan. While the process of carrying it out is referred to as auditing, in its actual process, accounting records are analyzed by the auditors using a variety of Generally Accepted Techniques (GATs). Auditing is as old as accounting, evolved and grew rapidly after the industrial revolution in the 18th century Sandra et al., (2020). With the growth of most joint stock companies, the ownership and management became separate, and shareholders who were owners of the companies needed an audit report from an independent expert on the accounts of the company managed by the board of directors. The main specific objective of auditing has however, been to detect and prevent errors and frauds Stair-Hall (2019). An audit is an independent, objective and expert examination and evaluation of accounting evidence Weaver (2020) and Williams, (2019), which must be planned and structured in such a way that those carrying out the audit can fully examine and analyze all important evidences. Auditors are fair and do not allow prejudice or bias to override their objectivity. They maintain an impartial attitude and assess the reliability and sufficiency of the information contained in the underlying accounting records and other Source data by:

i. Studying and evaluating accounting systems and internal controls on which he wishes to rely and testing those internal controls to determine the nature, extent and timing of other auditing procedures; and

ii. Carrying out such other tests, inquiries and other verification procedures of accounting transactions and account balances, as he considers appropriate in the particular circumstances (Anderson (2018).

Defining Audit and Auditing

In view of the foregoing harnessed nature of the concept of audit and auditing, there exists no single accepted definition of an audit or auditing per se except for the definition given by some auditing reporting frameworks such as The International Standards on Auditing Santisoand Belgrano (2020). Many authors have subscribed definitions to the meaning of auditing. Woodrow (2017) for example, define auditing as such an examination of books of accounts and vouchers of business, as will enable the auditors to satisfy himself that the balance sheet is properly drawn up, so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the business and that the profit and loss account gives true and fair view of the profit/loss for the financial period, according to the best of information and explanation given to him and as shown by the books; and if not, in what respect he is not satisfied.

On the other hand, Lawal and Oluwatobi(2023)defines auditing as an examination of accounting records undertaken with a view to establish whether they correctly and completely reflect the transactions to which they relate. In all, (ISA 200) states that the objective of an audit of financial statements is to enable the auditor to express an opinion whether the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with an identified financial reporting framework. The phrases used to express an auditor's opinion are "give a true and fair view" or "present fairly, in all material respects", which are equivalent terms.

Two problems with the ISA (200) definition are that, it restricts an audit to examination of the financial statements meanwhile some auditors would believe that the terms "present fairly" and "true and fair view" is not equivalent. Although the great majority of auditing work today is financial auditing, operational auditing and compliance auditing and are becoming more and more important everywhere. Some auditors say "present fairly," means in accordance with laws and regulations. "True and fair", they say, includes the possibility of deviating from law and regulation when that deviation provides a "true" view Ojo(2022). A better, more general, definition of auditing however is an audit is a systematic process of objectively obtaining and evaluating evidence regarding assertions about economic actions and events to ascertain the degree of correspondence between these assertions and established criteria, and communicating the results to interested users.

Distinctions between Financial Audit and a Review of Service Delivery

In a financial audit, the assertions about which the auditor seeks objective evidence relate to the reliability and integrity of financial and, occasionally, operating information Omoleke, (2020). The examination of the objective evidence underlying the financial data as reported is called an audit The Cable (2020). Although a review service is less extensive than an audit Business Day Nigeria (2020), it is essentially designed to enable an accountant, without applying comprehensive audit procedures, to assess management's representations and to consider whether the financial statements appear to be in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) IbrahimandOlatunji, (2023). To perform a review therefore, the accountant must be familiar with the company's business and the accounting practices of its industry. Based on this knowledge, theaccountant inquiries about the company's accounting practices and procedures, financial statements and other matters, and performs analytical procedures to identify unusual items or trends. Performing such inquiry and analytical procedures hence provide the accountant with a reasonable basis for expressing limited assurance that there are no material modifications that should be made to the statement in order for them to be in conformity with GAAP.

The objective of a review service differs significantly from the objective of an audit of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS) Ejumudo and Ikenga (2021). The objective of a financial audit is to provide a reasonable basis for expressing an opinion regarding the financial statements taken as a whole. A review service does not provide a basis for the expression of such an opinion because a review does not contemplate obtaining an understanding of the internal control structure or assessing control risk; tests of accounting records and of responses to inquiries by obtaining corroborating evidential matter through inspection, observation or confirmation and certain other procedures ordinarily performed during an audit. A review may bring to the accountant's attention significant matters affecting the financial statements, but does not provide assurance that the accountant will become aware of all significant matters that could be disclosed in an audit Onyango,(2019).

Financial Accounting Auditors, Fraud and Investigation Auditors, and Forensic Accounting and Fraud Examination

In accounting lexicon, terms such as fraud auditing, forensic accounting, fraud examination, fraud investigation, investigative accounting, litigation support, and valuation analysis are not clearly defined. Some distinctions exist between fraud auditing and forensic accounting. Fraud auditing involves a specialized approach and methodology to discern fraud; that is, the auditor is looking for evidence of fraud. The purpose is to prove or disprove that a fraud

exists. Historically, forensic accountants have been called in after evidence or suspicion of fraud has surfaced through an allegation, complaint, or discovery. They are experienced, trained, and knowledgeable in all the different processes of fraud investigation including: how to interview people (especially the suspect) effectively, how to write effective reports for clients and courts, how to provide expert testimony in court, and rules of evidence Cohen and Wright, (2020). Dicke (2021) refers to this definition of forensic accounting as fraud examination. In recent years, the broadest of these terms in the antifraud profession is forensic accounting, which typically refers to the incorporation of all the terms involved with investigation, including fraud auditing; that is, fraud auditing is a subset of forensic accounting.

Fraud investigation usually encompasses about the same thing as a fraud audit except investigation typically involves a lot more nonfinancial evidence, such as testimony from interviews, than a fraud audit. So fraud investigation includes fraud audit but goes beyond it in gathering nonfinancial forensic evidence. Litigation support refers to a forensic accountant assisting attorneys in prosecuting or defending a case in the legal system Cohen and Wright, (2020). That support can take on a variety of skills but ultimately is intended to conclude with the forensic accountant offering an opinion in a court of law as an expert witness on whether a fraud occurred.Financial auditing is a wholly different term that needs to be distinguished from forensic accounting and fraud auditing. Financial auditing typically refers to the process of evaluating compliance of financial information with regulatory standards, usually for public companies, by an external, independent entity.

Financial Auditors

The term financial auditor broadly applies to any auditor of financial information or the financial reporting process. They are those who work for public accounting firms and perform audits of financial statements for public companies. This classification is the most commonly used in this study when referring to auditors. Financial auditors have expertise in their knowledge of accounting and financial reporting (such as in generally accepted accounting principles [GAAP], or International Financial Reporting Standards [IFRS]), auditing (generally accepted audit standards [GAAS]), and how those Forensic Accountant and Audits standards apply to business transactions Hubbard, (2018). As expressed in the GAAS literature, the most important financial auditing attributes are independence, objectivity, and professional skepticism Dibie (2021).

Financial auditors traditionally have been seen as, and to an extent have been numbers

oriented, and their processes have been driven by the audit trail Cohen and Wright, (2020). The financial audit procedures are designed to detect material misstatements, and thus financial auditors focus on misstatements that singularly or in the aggregate are large enough to be material. Fraud auditors and forensic accountants are not constrained by materiality. The discipline of financial auditing has been thought to be almost a checklist of items to complete. In reality, judgment is crucial in financial auditing and has progressively increased in the direction of more dependence on auditor judgment Corder, (2019). While most investors (shareholders of firms) require financial auditor's judgment to a large degree in assessing theperformance of their companies; the auditors are most often required to understand processes significant to financial reporting and to evaluate management's controls over those processes. Additionally, financial auditors are to consider environmental, including soft, intangible, factors in that evaluation.

Research Method

The population of the study is made up of all members and stakeholders of the Public Account Committee in Delta State.A total population sample type was used. This technique examined the entire population of the 29members of the Delta State House of Assembly and the Clerk of the Public Accounts Committee. A sample size of 30. The research technique used in this study is self-structured questionnaire and interview guide to collect the needed opinions and responses from the chosen sample on the problem or issue being investigated.All hypotheses were tested using t-Test inferential statistics

Presentation of Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between Public Account Committee and its role in promoting accountability and curbing corruption in the public sector

Two-tail table

Response	N	$\bar{x}$	σ	df	α-val.	t. cal	t. cri	Remark
Agree	25	5.8	-2.16	4	0.05	10.58	2.776	Significant
Disagree	5	12.2	2.16					

Decision rule

If the *t-cal*. is less than the *t-cri*, we reject the null hypothesis (*Ho*), otherwise accept it.

Since the computed t-cal. value is less than the table value of t-cri, we accept the null hypothesis (Ho) and reject the alternative hypothesis (H_I). Hence, it can be concluded that

there is a significant relationship between Public Accounts Committee and its role in promoting accountability and curbing corruption in the public sector.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the expectations of Public Accounts Committee and other accountability stakeholders

Two-tail table

Response	N	$\bar{x}$	σ	Df	α-val.	t. cal	t. cri	Remark
Agree	26	4	-10	8	0.05	11.10	2.776	Significant
Disagree	4	14	36					

Decision rule

If the *t-cal*. is less than the *t-cri*, we reject the null hypothesis (*Ho*), otherwise accept it.Since the computed t-cal. value is higher than the table value of t-cri, we reject the null hypothesis (Ho) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_I). Hence, it can be said that there is a significant relationship between the expectations of Public Accounts Committee and other accountability stakeholders.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between the channels of engagement and areas of collaboration with other accountability stakeholders.

Two-tail table

Response	N	$\bar{x}$	σ	Df	α-val.	t. cal	t. cri	Remark
Agree	19	8.4	20.16	4	0.05	12.38	2.776	Significant
Disagree	11	9.6	-5.75					

Decision rule

If the *t-cal*. is less than the *t-cri*, we reject the null hypothesis (*Ho*), otherwise accept it.Since the computed t-cal. value is less than the table value of *t-cri*, we accept the null hypothesis (Ho) and reject the alternative hypothesis (H_I). Hence, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between the channels of engagement and areas of collaboration with other accountability stakeholders.

Discussion of Findings

Public Accounts Committee and its role in Promoting Accountability and Curbing Corruption in the Public Sector

The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between Public Account Committee and its role in promoting accountability and curbing corruption in the public sector. This finding may be attributed to the fact that government plays a major role in the development of education in the society. This finding concurred with a view of Bovens (2007) and Mulgan (2000) that effective PACs contribute to a culture of accountability and transparency, which are essential for good governance. However, the effectiveness of PACs varies widely across different jurisdictions, influenced by factors such as political support, resources, and legal frameworks.

Expectations of Public Account Committee and other Accountability Stakeholders

The study shows that there is a significant relationship between expectations of Public Accounts Committee and other accountability stakeholders. This could be attributed to PAC collaboration with other bodies like the EFCC, ICPC, Civil Society Organizations and the Media. This finding is in line with the view of Jones (2019) that the Public Account Committee is a parliamentary committee responsible for examining the expenditures of the government to ensure they are used efficiently and effectively. It acts as a watchdog for public funds and plays a key role in promoting transparency and accountability in the public sector.

Channels of Engagement and Areas of Collaboration with other Accountability Stakeholders

The study indicated that there is a significant relationship between the channels of engagement and areas of collaboration withother accountability stakeholders. This finding agrees with the view of Donahue et al., (2011) which was of the opinion that effective channels of engagement and well-defined areas of collaboration contribute to the accountability of stakeholders. They argue that when stakeholders from different sectors engage through structured channels and collaborate in targeted areas, it leads to enhanced accountability due to shared goals, mutual oversight, and transparent processes.

Conclusion

The study underscores the pivotal role of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in promoting accountability, curbing corruption, and enhancing service delivery in the public sector. The findings reveal a significant relationship between PAC activities and improved accountability, supporting the views of Bovens (2007) and Mulgan (2000). Effective PACs foster transparency and good governance, contingent upon political support, adequate resources, and robust legal frameworks. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of structured stakeholder engagement, aligning with Donahue et al. (2011), who emphasize

collaboration for improved accountability. The PAC's role in scrutinizing government spending and addressing inefficiencies directly correlates with better resource allocation and service delivery, as supported by Egwuja (2020). Overall, the findings demonstrate that strengthening PAC operations through enhanced political backing and institutional support is essential for achieving accountability and effective governance.

Recommendations

1. Strengthen legal frameworks governing PACs.
2. Ensure PACs operate free from political interference.
3. Allocate adequate financial, human, and technical resources to PACs.
4. Implement continuous professional development and training for PAC members and staff.
5. Conduct public awareness campaigns on the role of PACs.
6. Appoint professionals as members of the Public Accounts Committee.

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THE NEGLECT OF CONSTITUENCY PROJECTS IN ISOKO SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENMT AREA, DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the neglect of constituency projects in Isoko South Local Government Area, Delta State, Nigeria, focusing on its impact on the community and public trust in legislative practices. A sample of 120 residents was surveyed using a self-structured questionnaire and interview guide, with chi-square analysis employed to test hypotheses. Results reveal significant disparities in project allocation between urban and rural areas, with urban centers receiving more infrastructure projects due to higher population densities and economic activities. This uneven distribution underscores potential developmental and resource allocation disparities. Neglect of these projects correlates with diminished public trust in government institutions,

highlighting perceptions of mismanagement and inefficiency. Conversely, effective project execution enhances community satisfaction by meeting expectations through timely and well-managed completion. The study concludes that equitable project distribution and effective execution are pivotal for maintaining public trust and satisfaction in governance. Recommendations include implementing policies for balanced project allocation, enhancing transparency and accountability mechanisms, fostering community involvement in project planning, and investing in capacity-building for government officials. These steps are crucial for improving project outcomes and rebuilding public trust in legislative and governance practices in Isoko South.

Introduction

The Isoko South Local Government Area in Delta State, Nigeria, is a region rich in cultural heritage and natural resources, yet it remains marginalized in terms of infrastructural development and social services. This disparity is particularly glaring when scrutinizing the allocation and implementation of constituency projects by the National Assembly, which are intended to foster local development and improve living conditions. Despite the existence of these projects, there is a persistent narrative of societal neglect, underpinned by inadequate oversight, mismanagement, and corruption.

Constituency projects, as envisioned by the Nigerian legislative framework, aim to bring developmental projects closer to the grassroots, addressing the specific needs of local communities Ojo, (2020). These projects are funded by the federal government and managed by elected representatives, who are supposed to consult with their constituencies to identify priority areas. In practice, however, there is often a significant gap between the allocation of funds and the actual execution of these projects on the ground. This -discrepancy is particularly pronounced in Isoko South LGA, where many projects remain incomplete, poorly executed, or nonexistent, thereby failing to meet the developmental needs of the area (Nwabueze, 2019).

The issue of societal neglect in Isoko South can be traced to several factors, including political dynamics, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and the pervasive culture of corruption. According to Ezeani (2018), the implementation of constituency projects in Nigeria is often marred by lack of transparency and accountability, with funds being diverted for personal gain by some legislators. This has resulted in a disconnection between the intended benefits of these projects and the actual outcomes experienced by the local population. The

consequence is a vicious cycle of underdevelopment, where promised improvements in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and other critical sectors remain unfulfilled.

Political dynamics play a crucial role in the allocation and execution of constituency projects. Legislators often prioritize projects that will enhance their political capital rather than those that meet the genuine needs of their constituents. This patronage system undermines the equitable distribution of resources and exacerbates regional disparities (Okechukwu&Agbo, 2017). In Isoko South LGA, this manifests in projects that are either strategically located to favor certain political supporters or entirely neglected due to political rivalries.

Bureaucratic inefficiencies also contribute to the problem. The process of project implementation is often bogged down by red tape, delays, and a lack of coordination among various government agencies. According to Okeke (2021), there is a significant gap in the monitoring and evaluation processes that should ensure the proper execution of constituency projects. This lack of oversight allows for the perpetuation of substandard project delivery, where projects that could potentially enhance education, healthcare, and infrastructure are either left undone or poorly executed.

Corruption is another critical factor undermining the effectiveness of constituency projects. The culture of corruption in Nigeria's public sector is pervasive, with funds meant for development projects frequently siphoned off by officials. According to Transparency International (2020), Nigeria consistently ranks high on the Corruption Perceptions Index, reflecting the systemic corruption that affects all levels of government. In the context of Isoko South, this means that funds allocated for local development are often misappropriated, leaving the community deprived of essential services and infrastructure.

Moreover, the oversight mechanisms that should ensure the proper execution of constituency projects are often weak or non-existent. There is a significant gap in monitoring and evaluation processes, which allows for the perpetuation of substandard project delivery (Okeke, 2021). In the context of Isoko South, this means that projects that could potentially enhance education, healthcare, and infrastructure are either left undone or poorly executed, contributing to the ongoing underdevelopment and societal neglect. This study aims to explore the dynamics of constituency projects in Isoko South LGA, examining the extent to which these projects have been neglected by the National Assembly and the impact this neglect has had on the local community.

Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to examine Isoko South Local Government constituency projects in Nigeria with emphasis on the societal neglect of National Assembly. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Ascertain the specific projects allocated to Isoko South.
2. Examine how the projects allocated has been managed and executed
3. Determine the perceptions of the local population regarding the projects.
4. Ascertain the implications of neglected projects for legislative practices and governance in Nigeria.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship in the types of projects allocated to rural versus urban areas within Isoko South.
2. There is no significant relationship between poor management practices sand under-execution of allocated projects in Isoko South
3. There is no significant relationship between the level of project execution and the local population's satisfaction.
4. There is no significant relationship between neglected projects in Isoko South and decreased trust in legislative practices and governance.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Constituency Project

A legislative constituency project refers to any project that is conceived, designed and implemented within a legislative constituency with the collaboration, input or influence of the legislator(s) representing that particular constituency in the legislature. Such projects are however funded from the national or state budgets (Orimogunje, 2015). In other words, "Constituency Project/Development Funds" was defined as "funding arrangements that channel money from central government directly to electoral constituencies for local infrastructure projects." (Orimogunje, 2015).

In Nigeria, Constituency Projects officially called Zonal Intervention Projects (ZIP) are public projects selected by Federal legislators to extend the dividends of democratic governance to their various constituencies to enhance development in the country side. Procedurally, the projects are recommended to the Executive during the budgeting process for implementation. However, National Assembly has the constitutional oversight obligation on government projects as its checks and balances function to ensure transparency, accountability and good governance (Orimogunje, 2015).

Dogara (2016) referred to constituency projects in Nigeria as developmental projects sited in the constituencies of state and federal legislators by various MDAs of Government as appropriated in the budget of the Federation or State. That these projects came into existence owing to the demands of Nigerians for equitable distribution of infrastructural development projects (NILS, 2016). While Tambawal (2016) posited that the Legislature views Constituency and Zonal Intervention Projects as a crucial strategic driver of socio-economic development and regeneration within our country. Thus, it is a development initiative concentrated in the constituencies by allocating resources to the local government areas to meet socio-economic objectives. That the main objectives of the programme are to fund projects with direct socio-economic impact with a view to improving lives, alleviating poverty and general development resolution. It supports rural development projects, especially those aimed at alleviating poverty and developing infrastructure at the grassroots (NILS, 2016).

Although Constituency projects though officially called Zonal Intervention Projects (ZIP) in Nigeria, other countries are referred to as "Constituency Development Funds" ("CDFs"), Pork barrel projects etc. It also includes projects which the legislator attracted to the constituency through his collaboration with legislative committees chairmen, Civil Society Organisations, and International Development agencies as well as the projects/ programmes executed with his personal resources. Furthermore, Constituency projects are similar to the U.S. congressional allocations known as "pork barrels," "earmarks" or "member items" in national and state-level policy making. The management of such projects has sometimes been controversial because they raise fundamental questions about the efficacy of government service delivery. It highlights the extent to which such service delivery can be made accountable, the role of legislators in choosing development priorities, and how public participation in policy-making can be made more significant (Udefuna, Jumare& Adebayo, 2013).

The 1999 Nigeria Constitution clearly stipulate the framework for rule of law, separation of powers, and checks and balances between the arms of government, an area of disagreement experienced in the operation of the Constitution is the constituency projects. Thus, questions have been asked on such constituency projects, such as: what is the constitutional source or the legal basis in Nigeria for such projects? Would the implementation of such projects not be conflicting to the principles of accountability and transparency enshrined in the Constitution and some other statutes? Would such projects be continued in view of the answers that might be derived from the questions posited above? (Orimogunje, 2015).

'Dividends of democracy' or "democratic dividends" is a popular term, widely used in Nigeria by some persons, including politicians, scholars, political commentators, etc. The common denominator of all the usages of the term is that it is about the development of the generality of the populace in any democratic culture' (Edigin and Otoghile, 2011). Since the primary essence of democracy is to ensure the welfare of the people, their wishes and aspirations then the constituency projects are actually dividends of democracy that serve as a channel in which democracy can bring about development in the society through good governance (Udefuna, 2013).

On the whole, constituency projects, 'involves direct interaction between representatives and constituents and the allocation of projects that are of benefit to the community lies at the heart of the initiative. It, therefore, lends itself to an evaluation of how local interests are taken into consideration in representative actions and the impact of such actions on constituents can be seen. The fact that it captures the substantive actions of the legislators in Nigeria suggests that it can tell us the extent to which they use this policy initiative to represent the needs of constituents (Benson, 2018).

Emergence of Constituency Project in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the phenomenon of constituency projects took root at the dawn of the Fourth Republic, with the quest by Nigerian legislators for more equitable distribution of resources to their constituencies as "dividends of democracy. Thus, one of the measures put in place by the government to facilitate development at the grassroots is the constituency fund. Constituency funds evolved as a form of government funding appropriated by the legislature, directed to ensure equitable distribution of public goods across the country through constituency based projects (Kakungu, (2013); Ochieng&Tubey, (2013); Ojwang, 2014). Public goods of this ensure provision of boreholes and public health services and parking facilities, lighting of public spaces and roadways, among others (Awofeso&Irabor, 2020).

Constituency projects issue came into the public domain in Nigeria during Olusegun Obasanjo's administration. The Fourth National Assembly sought and got approval from the Executive branch for the disbursement of N5 million and N3 million per Senator and House of Representatives Members, respectively for constituency projects (Udefuna, Jumare& Adebayo, 2013). It was envisaged that constituency projects should guarantee that all over-lapping Federal constituencies in Nigeria are provided with social amenities such as roads, primary healthcare centres, rural electrification, electricity transformers, streets light, water boreholes, rural roads and drainage system, environmental sanitation wares, and also educational and leadership development programs among others (BudgiT, 2016; De, 2008;

KIM, 2006). Expectedly, good infrastructure helps to raise productivity and lower costs, as poor infrastructure hinders economic growth in any economy (KIM, 2006). Also, constituency projects are the development initiatives geared toward improving the lives of people of different constituent units periodically (Ezeobi, 2021). The citizens were persuaded that such a scheme would directly impact the lives of the people, especially those at the grassroots as well as bring governance closer to them.

The main reason for instituting any government is to deliver public good to the majority of the populace through good governance. In the case of Nigeria, the people were hungry for democracy dividends and demanded the same from their elected representatives. Hence, the constituency project is a response to the yearnings of Nigerians for democracy and its dividends. As a result, Constituency projects were created to ensure at least the presence of government in each constituency by having some grass-roots projects sited in each, during the budgeting process. Legislators were only required to identify projects which they wished to be sited in their constituencies for inclusion in the budget, with a financial limit for the budgetary provisions for such projects in each constituency. The 1999 Constitution gave power to the National Assembly to appropriate funds for government spending as highlighted in section 80 (2, 3 and 4) (Udefuna; Jumare& Adebayo, 2013).

Senator Femi Okuronmu posited that the rationale behind the introduction of the constituency project was: To guarantee a minimum presence of government in every district by having some grass-roots projects sited in each one, during the appropriation process. Legislators were only required to nominate projects which they wished to be sited in their electoral districts for inclusion in the budget, with a financial ceiling for the budgetary provisions for such projects in each constituency. The award of contracts and the supervision and payments for such contracts were left totally in the hands of the appropriate executive agencies of government (Udefuna, Jumare, and Adebayo, 2013).

Similarly, Senator AyoguEze confirmed the above position, he argued, “Our role is simply to identify the projects for our constituency while the Executive arm of government will identify the contractor to implement the project” (cited in Tunji, 2010). The CFRN 1999 equips the National Assembly with the power to appropriate funds for government spending as indicated in section 80 (2, 3 and 4). The former Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu, asserted that the concept of the constituency project came up due to the need to ensure fair distribution of infrastructure and that every part of the country has a good representation, in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. ‘’Ekweremadu argued that this is due to the fact that there will be lopsided development in the country if governors and senators are allowed to decide

where projects should be cited. Therefore, all the representatives usually come up with what their constituents want'' (Anyanate, 2009) (Udefuna, Jumare, & Adebayo 2013)

It is deducible from the foregoing, that the idea of the constituency project emerged as a result of the need to guarantee fair and even distribution of infrastructural facilities. Safeguard adequate representation of every part of the country in the State House of Assembly, the House of Representatives and the Senate. However, legislators only recommend programmes and projects to be sited in their constituencies based on the needs and requests of their constituents. The award of contracts and the management and payments for such contracts are entirely in the hands of the executive agencies of government (Udefuna, Jumare, & Adebayo, 2013).

On the other hand, there was another school of thought that was against the foregoing arrangement that warrants members of the National Assembly to directly determine what projects to be sited in their constituency coupled with influencing the potential contractors, agreement was reached between the legislators and the Executive branch that paved the way for an annual practice whereby the Federal Government allocated funds for the implementation of the projects through the Office of Special Adviser to the President on Millennium Development Goals. Thus, these projects are recommended by lawmakers for implementation in their various constituencies in order to engender socio-economic development at the grassroots as well as among Nigerians in every State and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) (Budglt, 2018).

Constituency project in other climes

Constituency projects are not peculiar to Nigeria. In fact, they are now a growing phenomenon in democratic nations and exist in one form or another in over countries in the world. Constituency project in the USA is known as the Pork Barrel while in other countries "Constituency Development Funds" ("CDFs") etc. It is found in other countries and likened to the "pork-barrel" or "earmarks" in the United States. The practise was first adopted in India but gained prominence when Kenya established a CDF in 2003. Due to its success in Kenya, the practice has spread to other African countries (Orimogunje, 2015).

Presently, about 23 other countries in Africa operate the CDF mostly by the same mechanism and name. However, the degree to which these funds are controlled by legislators and the extent to which local citizens participate in them vary from one country to the other (Benson, 2018). This key role of the legislature in constituency development has gained credence across countries including United States of America, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Malaysia, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda,

Zambia, Zimbabwe etc. (Baskin, Haibo, Samrat& Ryan, 2010; Chibomba, 2013; International Budget Partnership, 2010). While the concept remains a relatively new field of research (International Budget Partnership, 2010; Kakungu, 2013). There is growing importance of constituency projects owing to governance challenges inhibiting the provision of the public project due to prolonged executive bureaucracies; participation of constituents in the choice of project to be provided; and power of the legislature to allocate funds for the development of their constituency (Chibomba, 2013; Hickey, 2010; Ojwang, 2014) (Orimogunje, 2015).

Although legislative constituency projects represent an obvious departure from the usual constitutional role of the legislature under the doctrine of separation of powers, and usurpation of the role of the executive by the legislature. There are different models of the CDFs, some common features identifiable with most constituency projects or CDFs are as follows:

i. The constituency project sought to be carried out or implemented is usually identified by the legislator representing the host constituency, acting in the parliament, or in a CDF Committee of his constituency;

ii. The project is designed, funded and executed, with some participation or collaboration of the legislator in the process;

iii. The project is funded directly from the budget of the central or state government;

iv. The project is usually nominated by the legislator as his/her constituency project.

However, CDFs may arguably be credited with some merits or benefits, such as:

a. the provision of infrastructure, promptly, without prolonged bureaucratic red-tape formality;

b. the active involvement of the constituents in the identification of developmental projects for implementation in their constituency;

c. better articulation and the utmost satisfaction of the pressing needs of the constituency;

d. the creation of opportunity for elected representatives to directly contribute to the alleviation of the problems faced by their constituents (Orimogunje, 2015).

Origin of representative system of governance

The parliament or legislature is the foremost institution in a democratic government and is composed of elected representatives of the populaces. Thus, it occupies a special position in contemporary democracy. The common interest, as well as collective relationships of man, have been voiced through deliberation, decision making, and implementation. Hence, the Greek City- States, of which Athens was the most exceptional were organized and legislated

for by the Assembly or ''Ecclesia''. It consists of all the male citizens above the age of twenty and met forty times a year (Anyaegbunam, 2021). The ancient Romans Republic which existed between 509 BC and 27 BC is recognized by scholars as the first government in the western world to have a representative modern-day. Hence, "modern day legislatures were inspired by the Roman model government in which citizens elected representatives to rule on their behalf" (PLAC, 2016). Furthermore, the English Parliament which traced its origin to Anglo Saxon England political institution ("Witenagemot: meaning meeting of the wise men") which operated between the 7th – 11th centuries is attributed as the mother of the modern legislature (PLAC, 2016).

Sequel to the creation of Nigeria in 1914, British colonization as well as the country's independence in 1960, our country adopted the British parliamentary system and later the Presidential system in 1979. Because of Nigeria's colonial background, our National Assembly still maintains some British parliamentary procedures (PLAC, 2016). The core functions of the parliament include making laws pertaining to issues affecting public interest; representing the opinions and interests of citizens and the nation as a whole; and oversight of the other arms of government which involve the review, evaluation, assessment and supervision of the other arms of government and their agencies, programs, activities and policies implementations (PLAC, 2016).

Role of the legislature in promoting good governance

The legislatures form an important branch of most government; in the separation of powers model, they are often differentiated from the executive and judicial branches of government. The legislature observes and directs government actions and usually has exclusive authority to amend the budget(s) involved in the process. Accordingly, Kalu&Chikwe (2017) stated that Okereke (1993) opined that the legislature is that organ of government whose responsibility it is to make laws. He detailed that the importance of the legislature can be fully appreciated if being reminded that no kind of government can rule properly unless there are defined rules or laws to which members of the society are subjected. Further, Anamgba (2007) stated that the legislature is an organ of government that makes laws and comprises the representatives of the people. In addition, representatives is that group of people, that has the power to make and change existing laws and they are democratically elected (PLAC, 2016).

Montesquieu (1748:13) articulated and explained his Separation of Powers theory as: "If the legislative and executive powers are combined in the same organ, the liberty of the people gets jeopardized because it leads to the tyrannical exercise of power" (Ukachukwu, 2021).

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) 1999 (As Altered) Section 14 (2) (b) stresses that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". Thus, one of the basic functions of government is the provision of public services and the preservation of the lives and properties of the people. Among the branches of government, the legislature – is the pillar of representative democracy through which the will of the people can be brought to the fore and implemented (Brunner, 2013); Mattes &Mozaffar, 2011) (Awofeso&Irabor, 2020). Arter, (2011); Rehfeld, (2006); Urbinati& Warren, (2008) stated that the legislature as the law-making branch of government also performs other core functions known as representation and oversight. As the representative of the people, the legislature is a forum for expressing the views and aspirations of the citizens in policy-making process (Awofeso&Irabor, (2020). More so, Awofeso&Irabor (2020) highlighted that Fagbadebo, (2019); Friedberg, (2011); Pelizzo&Stapenhurst, (2004) indicated that the oversight function of the legislature relates to the role of providing checks and balances on the performance of the executive branch and its agencies to ensure effective implementation of government policies and programmes for the good ordering of the people (Awofeso&Irabor2020).

The Fourth Republic in the Federal Republic of Nigeria refers to the democratic system of government that emerged with the effect of the CFRN 1999. The system of government is presidential, with the executive powers vested in the President at the Federal level and the Governors in the component States. The legislative power is conferred on the National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives) comprising 109 and 360 members, respectively. Thus, Section 4 of the Constitution vests the legislative power of the Federation in the legislature as follows: 'The legislative powers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be vested in a National Assembly for the Federation which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives; the National Assembly shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation or any part thereof with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List set out in Part 1 of the Second Schedule to this Constitution; the power of the National Assembly to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List shall, save as otherwise provided in this Constitution, be to the exclusion of the Houses of Assembly of States.' (4), (5), Section 47, the National Assembly is divided into the Senate and the House of Representatives, Sections 48 and 49. (Orimogunje, 2015)

The National Assembly as the apex legislative institution in Nigeria with core function law making (Sections 4, 9, 58, 59, 80, 81, 83 CFRN 1999 As Amended) include enactment of

new laws, repealing repeal of extant laws, annual Appropriation, Constitution amendment, etc. to direct, address the changing needs as well as for the advancement and wellbeing of the society. The foregoing role of the legislature is acknowledged in an assertion of Ben Nwabueze: "The crucial importance of legislation as an indispensable instrument of government is further underlined by the fact that almost all activity of government requires the authority of some enabling law, whether it is the provision of social welfare, economic and industrial development, social or moral reform, land tenure, maintenance of peace and order, the security, safety and integrity of the state, etc."(Komolafe, 2020 andAnyaegbunam, 2021).

One of the principal functions of the National Assembly is oversight (Sections 88, 89, 85(5-7) CFRN 1999(as altered). It examines executive actions and private wrong deeds, places them in the central position of being guardians of democracy and defenders of people's rights. This is supported by the submission of H. Chuma-Okoro: "but it is indisputable that oversight function of the legislature is a cornerstone of and indeed sustains the legislative process. This is so because it ensures that laws passed by the legislature are applied accordingly and that the Executive does not act arbitrarily or ultra vires. This makes the legislative oversight an integral aspect of constitutional democracy" (Anyaegbunam, 2021). Thus, the legislature examines and evaluates policies, decisions, activities and programmes of government thereby making it accountable to the people. More so, oversight is geared towards ensuring compliance by other arms of government in the implementation of laws and disbursement of funds appropriated by the legislature. This is constitutionally provided, to expose corruption, inefficiency and waste in the management of government funds (Komolafe, 2020).

Similarly, another crucial function of the National Assembly is the representative role in serving as an inherent link between the people and their government. The legislature signifies the democratic essence and principle of the power of the people as proven by the representative institution as an elected parliament. This praiseworthy representative role of the lawmakers is echoed in John Stuart Mill's remark of 1862: "in a representative democracy, the legislature acts as the eyes, ears and voice of the people" (Anyaegbunam, 2021). Thus, the legislature offer the popular platform where the citizens' electoral mandate assume life. The parliament operates as the people speaking and representing themselves in legislative deliberations, committee sessions, public hearings and law-making (Anyaegbunam, 2021).

Legislature is the cornerstone of the presidential democracy particularly in developing nations with a long history of military rule such as Nigeria. The legislature in democratic governance is the institution that symbolises republicanism which is the core basis of democracy. That it is about the development of the generality of the populace in any democratic culture. However, several questions have been asked on the constitutional basis or the legal framework in Nigeria for constituency projects as well as whether the implementation of such projects will not be in conflict with the principles of accountability and transparency enshrined in the Constitution and some other statutes (Orimogunje, 2015)

Theoretical framework

"Theories act as a vehicle that drives the study. Theories are defined as a set of interrelated concepts which provides a systematic view of a phenomenon" (Light, 1999) in (Ukachukwu, 2021). In this study, this research will discuss the theories that are relevant to the study such as Representation Political Theory, Principal-Agent Theory is adopted because it adequately addresses the need of the study.

Representation political theory

Generally, representation political theory has been referred to in theoretical and symbolic terms as a state of affairs in which one individual or body could stand for another. In other words, an early sense of one person or body being able to speak for, denotes another body of people emerged not in the form of the represented authorizing the representative (Benson, 2018). In the study of Representative political theory, three models have been historically exceptional. The three models are trustee, delegate, and responsible. Considerations over representation have focused more on the trustee and delegate models as the foremost political representation styles. They place rival and contrary demands on the conduct of representatives.

The trustees carry out their representative function depending on their best decision while the delegates reflect the opinions of their electorates in the course of representation (Benson, 2018). Thus, Hobbes in his discussions of representation in his work "leviathan", where the idea is regarded as a social contract. He held that representation is the establishment of a commonwealth where people reach a contract to give power to a specific man or set of men. Therefore, all the decisions of that person or group are viewed as the action of the entire people. What confers the right of representation in line with this view is that one-off permission is given by the people to the representative to represent them. It implies that every action of the representative is previously authorized by the people even before such action has not been taken. The representative is the only one that can decide what constitutes the

mutual interest of the society. More so, the citizens have no claim from their representative as they have surrendered their rights in advance to the representative. Consequently, the representative is not responsible to the people, they are only liable to their own moral sense. Hence, people cannot make any request to their representative or even demand for better representation (Benson, 2018).

Hobbes' concept of representation is unacceptable because representation cannot be decided by absolute consent to act and should not depend on the pleasure of those that represent. Besides, Pitkin condemned Hobbes's idea of representation as too formal. She argued that parliament is not an assembly where the sovereign with absolute authority in perpetuity without an obligation to consult their constituents cannot be assumed as a representative government, and representation does not imply merely acting with authority from another without any parameters. (Benson, 2018). Burke's view on political representation theory as representatives from diverse and hostile interests, which must be preserved, as a representative and opponent of the other agents and advocates, respectively. He further argued that parliament is a deliberative congress of one country, with one interest of the whole and local biases ought not to come to play, but the only general good, resulting from the collective interest of the whole. Therefore, an elected member does not represent or serve as a member of the constituency, but he is a member of parliament. (Benson, 2018).

One can assume from the foregoing that his theory of representation implies 'unattached interest'. Thus, political representation is the indeed representation of interests which are objective and impersonal. He also posits that representatives should emerge from an elitist group that is aware of the best interest of the nation. He opined that inequalities are common in every society, hence, the masses of people are not capable of governing themselves. As a result, society should breed and train a special group of persons. (Benson, 2018). On the whole, the views of both Burke and Hobbes on representation strongly contradict any authoritative claim from the constituents. It impedes democratic responsiveness to the constituents and makes the representatives responsive to authorisations and merely interested in general public benefits and issues. The constituents are considered inferior to the representative who has the superior ability to consider and decide on their behalf. The relationship and the focus of the representative are to the nation entirely. The representative does not have a remarkable connection with the constituents who elected them. Elections are merely a mechanism by which the representatives that constitute the natural aristocracy of rulers will be found. Accordingly to their view, representatives are trustees taking care of the

needs of the citizens as well as an act on their understanding of what is right and wrong (Benson, 2018).

Further, considering the modern view of representation: Max Weber perceives representation as a state where the decisions of specific members of a group are attributed to the entire group and mandatory on them. His explanation can be held as a social relationship as well as a state of affairs where each member's action is credited to all and can be termed as a solidarity precondition for proper representation, entails that particular members should be authorized to act for the assemblage and not the entire members as this position suggests (Benson, 2018).

While Miller and Stokes stated that congruence is the manifestation of a representative relationship between the legislators and their constituents. They scrutinized the degree to which the representative's plenary attendance and performance match the view of their constituencies. They established that constituents have a degree of influence on their representatives, however, the legislators have a predisposition to be uncertain of the precise nature of constituents' options This is attributable to constituents' lack of knowledge of the policy stance of their representatives. These scholars have been disparaged for taking this stance. Thus, Heinz argued that congruence should not be the obvious measure of representation. That for this to occur, citizens should be in charge and be allowed to elect their representatives. Therefore they elect representatives that have their mutual view and they ought to possess the authority to vote such representatives out of office once they fail to discharge their functions as anticipated (Benson, 2018). Achen also criticized the usage of relationship coefficients in the study of representation. He introduced an alternative model to assess the connection between the representatives and their constituents. He established that the losers are more representative than the winners and that both do not differ on issues (Benson, 2018).

Furthermore, Rousseau postulated an alternative view, he argued that representatives are delegates of their constituents and hence, under obligation to conduct themselves in line with the will or interest of those who bequeathed them the mandate. This belief is anchored on the idea of self-governance as a condition of liberty supported by Montesquieu. This underscores the opinion that the legislative authority should be vested in the people. On the other hand, because of convenience, the people perform through their representatives what they cannot do by themselves (Benson, 2018). Even though there has been a further divide among the scholars on the modern view of political representation theory, the proponents of this view have not been hushed. This model of representation theory is well-thought-out to be highly

rooted in democratic values as representatives are expected to act on the demands of their constituents. However, two forms of this model have emerged with different points of view on how the representative ought to act. The first school of thought perceives the representative as simply errand individual for the constituents and under obligation to always perform their request without question. While the other view permits representatives to apply their own decision to a certain level. The latter could be a situation where the issue may be ambiguous or so weighty and intricate that constituents may not be able to offer appropriate instruction. This can be attributed to the fact that they may not have the relevant information. As a result, there is no doubt that the commonsensical position will be endorsed. Nevertheless, in this, representative view, the demands of the constituents appear to be a general concern (Benson, 2018).

The delegate view suggests that representation must strive for close correspondence between the views of an electoral district and the actions of the representative. More so, they argue that the purpose of representation ought to be for the interest of the specific constituency represented owing to the distinctive relationship to it which does not essentially impede the service to the nation. To them the parliament as an institution can be regarded as representing the entire nation, a member's responsibility should be to the constituency who bequeathed him the mandate. Thus, in representing the interests of the country, the legislator should not oppose the articulated demands and interests of the constituents, particularly on issues that affect the constituent directly. Pitkin opined that the foregoing is acceptable for representation in the practical sense. She further argued that where the essence of the matters to be dealt with does not directly affect a particular group of people. Hence, the consultation of the constituents is not ideal, however, the final decision taken by the representative should be in their interest (Benson, 2018).

Principal – agent theory

The first scholars that proposed and began the creation of the theory of principal agency, were Stephen Ross and Barry Mitnick, individually and concurrently in 1972. While Ross is responsible for the origin of the economic theory of agency, and Mitnick for the institutional theory of agency, also the basic concepts of these approaches are related. Actually, the approaches are complementary in their uses of similar concepts under different assumptions. Ross initiated the study of agency in terms of problems of compensation contracting; the agency was seen, in principle, as an incentives problem. Mitnick introduced the common insight that establishments form around agency, and advance to deal with the agency, in reaction to the vital imperfection of agency relationships: Performance never ensues as it is

desired by the principal because it does not pay to make it impeccable. However, society establishes institutions that attend to these imperfections, managing them, adapting to them, or becoming regularly distorted by them. Therefore, to fully agency, we need to see the motivations as well as the institutional structures (Mitnick, 2006).

However, the principal-agency theory was not applied in political science in a major way until Moe's article in 1984; it did not enter sociology equally until Shapiro's article in 1987 and did not become prominent in management work until after Eisenhardt's article in 1989. In all cases, Mitnick's work was cited, but it took many years before these authors took their primary course from the theory of agency in economics. Even though the law of agency played a role in the naming of the theory of agency, it took many years before other scholars applied the law of agency to the social science theory of agency. Presently, there is a very large literature in law that makes use of the theory of agency as well as crucial concepts from it (Mitnick, 2006).

The foregoing theory has the limitations of game theory as a mechanism for clarifying behaviour. Principal-agent analysis is also not suitable for evaluating the accountability of certain actor to another, when the second is not aware of its dependence on the first and/or can do literally nothing to affect the behavior of the former. Lastly, its very flexibility is also a sort of limitation. Within its field of application, there does not appear to be any pattern of behaviour that the model cannot explain. While any particular model in this category may have empirical content, it is not clear what content the family as a whole has (Gailmardy, 2012). Furthermore, principal-agent problem theory describes problems that occur when agents and principals have conflicting interests. Popularly elected governments though more peculiar to developed economies have become an emerging phenomenon among developing countries as well. These nations are often governed as direct democracies that operate by letting citizens elect government officials. These officials are agents of the people that they represent. However, does the government truly represent the people (Investopedia, 2020).

Thus, a principal-agent problem can occur in governance when officials have motivations to act in their pecuniary interests rather than as agents for the people, who are the principals. This view is reinforced by the fact that unelected bureaucrats are not accountable to the voters and likely to act in their own interests. According to economist Niskanen (1994), the goal of civil servants is to maximize their own budgets rather than general social welfare. If this view is correct, then unelected administrators have a conflict of interest with voters. Unelected officials, especially those who are difficult to fire, would seem to have chronic difficulty acting as agents for the people. Similarly, elected officials and bureaucrats

(unelected) among others face different pressures to act against the public interest. Occasionally, principal-agent problems occur owing to the fact that government officials lack the knowledge to act effectively as agents for the people (Investopedia, 2020). Principal-agent problems in government can be reduced by entrenching transparency and accountability in administration and thereby ensuring good governance.

Research Method

All people who live in Delta State's Isoko South Local Government Area make up the study's population. A sample of the entire population was employed. The project population of the 322,300 people living in the Isoko South Local Government Area was investigated using this technique. a 120-person sample size. In order to get the necessary viewpoints and replies from the selected sample on the problem or subject under investigation, a self-structured questionnaire and interview guide were employed as the research technique in this study. Chi-square was used to test each hypothesis at the 5% significance level.

Data Presentation

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship in the types of projects allocated to rural versus urban areas within Isoko South.

Table 7: Chi Square Table for Relationship between types of projects allocated to urban and rural and areas of Isoko South

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	df	X^2_{cal}	X^2_{crit}	Level	Remark
1	60	10	30	20	120	18	38.7	28.85	0.05	Rejected
2	45	30	40	5	120					
3	20	80	20	-	120					
4	77	15	13	11	120					
5	50	50	12	8	120					
6	90	10	-	20	120					
7	70	10	10	30	120					
Total	**412**	**210**	**125**	**94**	**841**					

From table 8 above the Chi-Square X^2 calculated value of 38.7 is greater than the X^2 critical value of 28.85 at 18 df and level of significance of 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between types of projects allocated to urban and rural areas of Isoko South was rejected and the other alternative was accepted.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between poor management practices sand under-execution of allocated projects in Isoko South

Table 8: Chi Square Table for Relationship between poor management practices and under-executed allocated projects in Isoko South

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	df	X^2_{cal}	X^2_{crit}	Level	Remark
1	5	90	15	10	120	15	35.97	24.99	0.05	Rejected
2	20	98	2	-	120					
3	111	9	-	-	120					
4	80	30	5	5	120					
5	50	60	9	1	120					
6	5	90	15	10	120					
Total	**271**	**377**	**46**	**26**	**720**					

From table 4.7 above the chi-square X^2 calculated value of 35.97 is greater than the X^2 critical value of 24.99 at 15 df and level of significance of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between poor management practices sand under-execution of allocated projects in Isoko South was rejected and the alternative was accepted.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between the level of project execution and the local population's satisfaction

Table 9: Chi Square Table for Relationship between the level of project execution and the local population's satisfaction

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Df	X^2_{cal}	X^2_{crit}	Level	Remark
1	102	10	2	6	120	15	37.80	24.99	0.05	Rejected
2	78	20	18	4	120					
3	90	20	10	-	120					
4	85	30	1	4	120					
5	70	30	14	6	120					
6	102	10	2	6	120					
Total	**527**	**120**	**47**	**26**	**720**					

From table 10 above the Chi-Square X^2 calculated value of 37.80 is greater than the X^2 critical value of 24.99 at 15 df and level of significance of 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis

which states that there is no significant relationship between the level of project execution and the local population's satisfaction was rejected and the other alternative was accepted.

Hypothesis Four

There is no significant relationship between neglected projects in Isoko South and decreased trust in legislative practices and governance.

Table 4.5: Chi square table for relationship between neglected projects in Isoko South and decreased trust in legislative practices and governance

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Df	X^2_{cal}	X^2_{crit}	Level	Remark
1	102	10	2	6	120	15	35.97	24.66	0.05	Rejected
2	78	20	18	4	120					
3	90	20	10	-	120					
4	85	30	1	4	120					
5	70	30	14	6	120					
6	90	10	4	6	120					
Total	**515**	**120**	**49**	**26**	**720**					
E	64	47	2	0.3						

From table 4.7 above the chi-square X^2 calculated value is 35.97 which is greater than the X^2 critical value of 24.66 at a level of significance of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between neglected projects in Isoko South and decreased trust in legislative practices and governance was rejected and the alternative was accepted.

Discussion of Results

From the analysis above, it was find that there is a significant relationship between the types of projects allocated to rural versus urban areas within Isoko South. This implies that the distribution of projects is not uniform across urban and rural areas in Isoko South. This finding may point to disparities in the developmental focus or resource allocation between these areas. Urban areas might be receiving a different set or quantity of projects compared to rural areas, potentially reflecting differing priorities or needs. The result is in accordance with the findings of Smith (2010) and Adeyemi (2015) which shown that urban areas often receive more infrastructure projects due to higher population densities and greater economic activities. This allocation can lead to disparities, where rural areas may lag in development due to fewer project allocations.

The findings suggest that there is a clear connection between the neglect of development projects and a decline in public trust in governmental and legislative bodies. This is

consistent with previous studies that have examined similar issues in different contexts. For instance, research by Anderson and Tverdova (2018) found that governmental corruption and mismanagement, including neglect of public projects, are strongly correlated with decreased public trust in government institutions. This aligns with the current findings, as the neglect of projects likely signals mismanagement or inefficiency to the public, leading to a decline in trust. Similarly, Norris (2018) argued that the effective implementation of public projects is a key factor in maintaining public trust. When projects are neglected or fail to meet community needs, it undermines confidence in the government's ability to serve its constituents. This idea is supported by the current data, which shows a significant relationship between neglected projects and decreased trust. Furthermore, a study by Rothstein and Stolle (2022) emphasized that visible government performance, such as the successful completion of public projects, is crucial for building and maintaining trust in public institutions. When such performance is lacking, as indicated by the neglected projects in Isoko South, trust in governance structures erodes.

The finding indicates that how well projects are executed significantly affects the satisfaction levels of the local population. This result can be supported by previous studies which have consistently shown that effective project execution leads to improved satisfaction among beneficiaries. For instance, a study by Ali and Choudhury (2019) found that there is a strong correlation between the efficiency of project execution and the satisfaction of local communities in infrastructure development projects. They argue that timely and well-executed projects meet the expectations of the community, thereby increasing their overall satisfaction. Similarly, research by Zhan, Wang and Yu (2018) in the context of urban development projects highlighted that the quality of project execution, including adherence to timelines, budget, and quality standards, plays a crucial role in determining the level of satisfaction among the local population. Their findings suggest that projects which are perceived to be well-managed and executed with minimal delays and within budget are more likely to receive positive feedback from the local community. Moreover, a comprehensive review by Brown and Adams (2020) on public sector project management indicated that public satisfaction is often tied to how well a project addresses their needs and expectations. They concluded that higher satisfaction levels are generally associated with projects that are completed as planned, without significant deviations or issues.

The findings indicate a statistically significant association between neglected projects and diminished trust in legislative practices and governance. This suggests that when projects in Isoko South are neglected, there is a notable decrease in the population's trust in their

legislative bodies and governance structures. The results align with findings from other studies that have explored the impact of neglected or poorly executed public projects on trust in governance. For instance, Olowu and Erero (2023) found that in many African contexts, the neglect of public infrastructure projects leads to diminished public trust in government institutions. Similarly, a study by Agbaje (2018) highlighted that in Nigeria, the public's perception of governmental effectiveness is closely tied to the completion and maintenance of public projects. Further corroborating these findings, a study by Lewis and Pettersson (2009) in East Africa demonstrated that communities experiencing neglected public projects often exhibit lower levels of trust and confidence in their local and national governments. This relationship is attributed to the perceived inefficacy and unresponsiveness of government authorities in addressing community needs and fulfilling project commitments.

Conclusion

From the findings, the study concludes there is a significant disparity in project allocation between rural and urban areas in Isoko South, indicating that urban areas receive more infrastructure projects due to higher population densities and economic activities. This uneven distribution highlights potential disparities in developmental focus and resource allocation. Furthermore, the neglect of development projects is linked to a decline in public trust in government institutions. Poor project execution signals mismanagement and inefficiency, eroding confidence in governance. Effective project execution, on the other hand, is crucial for maintaining public satisfaction. When projects meet community expectations through timely and well-managed completion, satisfaction levels increase. Overall, the study underscores the critical impact of equitable project distribution and effective execution on public trust and satisfaction in governance.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn based on the findings of the study.

1. The government should implement policies and strategies to guarantee a balanced distribution of development projects between rural and urban areas in Isoko South.
2. To rebuild public trust, the Senator represent the local government area should strengthen mechanisms for transparency and accountability in the planning and execution of projects
3. The government should foster greater community involvement in the development process by incorporating local feedback and encouraging active participation in project planning and execution.
4. To improve project outcomes, the government should invest in training and capacity-building programs for project managers and government officials.

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Burnout and Psychological Distress among the Inhabitants of Nimbo Community in Enugu state, invaded by Killer Herdsmen

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Abstract

Incessant bloody clashes between cattle breeders and *sedentary –farmer communities have posed serious security challenges in Nigeria.* It has also impacted negatively on the mental health and quality of life of members of the society. Pastoralists and farmers clashes in different parts of Nigeria have been on the increase since the return to democratic governance in 1999.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) were used to assess burnout and psychological distress among 455 inhabitants of Nimbo community in Enugu state, who survived the bloody massacre of the Fulani herdsmen which occurred in 2016. It was discovered that 154(33.84) had emotional exhaustion; 169 (37.14) had reduced personal accomplishment, while 57 (12.54%) had depersonalization. Furthermore, result showed that majority 295 (64.8%) had psychological distress. Suggestions on how to prevent future occurrences and reduce the security threats emanating from farmers'-herders' clashes in Nigeria, were recommended.

Key words: Farmers, Herders, Clashes, Burnout, Psychological distress, Nimbo community.

Introduction

Incessant bloody clashes between cattle breeders and sedentary –farmer communities have posed serious security challenges in Nigeria. *It has also impacted negatively on the mental health and quality of life of members of the society.* Between 2010 and 2015, the country lost 6,500 persons with over 62000 people being internally displaced in more than 850 clashes in North-Central region of the country alone (Uche and Iwuamadi, 2018). *Pastoralists and farmers clashes in different parts of Nigeria have been on the increase since the return to democratic governance in 1999. While it is recognized that both parties have been living in peace for decades, several factors have affected this relationship and have made the onset of conflicts inevitable. For instance, climate change, drought, desertification and flooding have*

necessitated the movement of herders from their base in the northern part of the country to the south for greener pastures, a move that has pitched them against southern farmers whose crops are often destroyed during such migrations. Furthermore, population explosion, blocking of traditional grazing routes, cattle rustling and banditry as well as manipulation of the crisis by the political elite, have all aided the exacerbation of the conflict (Egwu 2015).

Nimbo is a border town in Uzo-Uwani in Enugu state, Nigeria, where seven villages- Ekwuru, Nimbo-Ngwoko, Ugwuijoro, Ebor, Enugu-Nimbo, Umuome and Ugwuachara were invaded, and scores massacred by over 500 armed Fulani herdsmen in the early hours of April 25, 2016. Uzo Uwani has boundaries with the Southern States of Ebonyi and Anambra and central states of Benue and Kogi where these attacks have increased lately. The herdsmen, who reportedly were bent on occupying a portion of the farming community's land for cattle grazing plotted attack, and went on to notify the natives about their invasion on April 23, 2016. The intelligence was promptly reported to security agencies who met accordingly. However, in the early hours of April 25, 2016, the armed herdsmen struck killing 40 people. The following day, April 26, 2016, six more bodies were recovered and many critically injured victims were sent to nearby hospitals in Nsukka. Many buildings and churches were equally burnt down by rampaging herdsmen. As a result of the insecurity, displaced natives fled to neighboring communities to take refuge for fear of further attacks. Invasion of Ukpabi-Nimbo community, known as "Enugu Massacre", by roaming Fulani herdsmen followed similar massacre of hundreds of natives in a community in Benue state by the same herdsmen just a little over a month. There was invasion of neighboring Abbi, another Uzo- Uwani community, where a brother and sister were reportedly killed on the spot earlier in February 2016. 19 persons were declared missing whilst seven houses and motorcycles were raised down. It was reported the invasion was carried out by 30 masked Fulani herdsmen (This Day, 2016). The Fulani herdsmen have been categorized as the fourth deadliest terror group in the world (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). Roaming herdsmen have reportedly terrorized, occupied lands, raped, kidnapped, and killed hundreds of people across the farming communities of southern and north central states in 2016. Total casualties attributed to roaming Fulani herdsmen, due to their reluctance to, invest in private cattle ranches or agricultural holding and, improve social responsibility amongst the communities, hit 1,229 in 2014, a massive increase from just 63 in 2013, and it has soared since the beginning of 2016 (Institute of Economics and Peace: Global Terrorism Index 2015). According to Alexander and Klein (2005) the objectives of terrorists are: (i) creation of mass anxiety, fear and panic (ii) fostering a sense of helplessness and hopelessness (iii)

demonstrating the incompetence of the authorities and (iv) destroying the sense of security and safety. Generally speaking, reactions to terrorist attacks often include: (i) emotional shock, numbness, denial, fear, anxiety, helplessness and hopelessness (ii) cognitive disorientation, confusion, intrusive thoughts, images, hyper-vigilance (increased sense of risk), impaired concentration and memory (iii) social withdrawal, irritability, loss of trust and faith, avoidant behavior (such as, of any reminders of the event); and (iv) physical autonomic hyper-arousal, insomnia, loss of energy. Armed conflict and violence disrupt social support structures and exposes civilian populations to high levels of stress; and there is a positive association between conflict and depression and anxiety disorders. While most of those exposed to emergencies suffer some form of psychological distress Obilom & Thacher, 2008). Furthermore, WHO (2003) posited that in a crisis situation, about 35-50% of the population manifest light to moderate depression; 15-20% manifest light to moderate distress such as psychosomatic issues and post traumatic stress disorder whereas 3-4% of the population suffer from a major psychiatric disorder such as psychosis, severe depression and major anxiety disorder. The WHO further posited that in all these catastrophes, youths usually get more affected apart from women and children, because the youths are at their early developmental stages trying to form self identity and determining acceptable roles for themselves within their community and society as a whole.

Freudenberger (1974) initially noticed burnout among some voluntary health workers. According to him burnout has three major features comprising emotional exhaustion, disillusionment and withdrawal, Burnout occurs when people devote so much time, effort and energy to their work without making out some time for rest pauses; it is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that results from too much involvement in emotionally demanding tasks (Ibikunle et al 2012). Furthermore, Maslach, et al.(1989) identified emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishments as the three significant components of burnout. According to them, emotional exhaustion occurs when people feel so tired and drained by their work, depersonalization manifests in the form of negative attitudes and dehumanizing treatment of people towards their clients; whereas reduced personal accomplishment has to do with lack of feelings of competence and achievements in one's work. Some symptoms like tiredness, headache, eating problems, insomnia, irritability, emotional instability and rigidity in relationship with other people have been associated with burnout (Ibikunle et al,2012). The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), developed by Maslach and Jackson (1996), has widely been used as a major instrument for assessing burnout. According to Chalfont, et al. (1990) psychological distress relates to

continuous experience of unhappiness, nervousness, irritability and problematic interpersonal relationship by an individual. Broadly speaking, exposure to violence in the social environment is a serious and significant risk factor for the development of psychopathology in both children and adults witnessing the violence, with studies documenting relations between violence exposure and aggression, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress symptoms, burnout and psychological distress. This paper investigated burnout and psychological distress among the inhabitants of Nimbo community in Enugu state who survived the bloody massacre of the Fulani herdsmen which occurred in 2016.

Method

Descriptive cross sectional study design was used for the study, and it was conducted between the months of June and August, 2024.

Participants

Participants are 455 male and female inhabitants of Nimbo community in Enugu state who survived the bloody attacks by Fulani herdsmen which occurred in the community in 2016.

Instruments

Instruments for data collection were made up of three parts as follows: (1) a socio demographic instrument containing information about the respondent's age, gender, educational level, occupation and marital status. (2) Burnout was assessed using the Maslach burnout inventory (MBI), which is a 22 item questionnaire that relates to the three dimensions of burnout: Emotional exhaustion (EE), which captures the experience of having ones emotional resources depleted and having no source of replenishment. (b) Depersonalization (DP) describes the experience of becoming cold and indifferent to the need of others. (C) Reduced personal accomplishment (PA) is a sense of inadequacy about one's ability to relate to people which may result in a sense of imposed verdict of 'failure'. In the MBI, respondents rate each item on a seven- point likert type scale for how frequently they experienced the feeling (o= never, 6= every day). The scale is scored by calculating subscale means (Maslach 1996). The MBI have been sighted in over 500 studies since it was developed more than 20 years ago and this made it to be regarded as the most viable instrument for the assessment of burnout (Thorsen et al. 2011). Furthermore in Nigeria the MBI has been validated and used in many studies on burnout among different population groups including nurses, doctors, psychologists and teachers (Ibikunle 2012). This wide usage of the MBI for various researches in Nigeria therefore justifies its usage in the present study.

Part three is the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12): The GHQ-12 (Goldberg 1978) is an instrument used to screen for psychiatric morbidity. Although it does not yield a diagnosis, positive scores are indicative of psychological distress. Each item is rated 0 or 1 on the basis of the frequency with which the subject had experienced the symptom in the recent past, yielding a maximum score of 12. In the GHQ-12 subjects are asked to indicate, for instance, how recently they have been able to concentrate on whatever they have been doing. The response options include; better than usual, same as usual, less than usual and much less than usual. A score of 1 or above is suggestive of psychological distress. The GHQ has been used for studies in Nigeria (Lasebikan and Oyetunde 2012).

Procedure

. A total of 455 male and female inhabitants of the seven villages in Nimbo community, who survived the attacks of the Fulani herdsmen, in the age range of 18-55 years were sampled, between the months of June and August 2024, using convenient sampling method. The confidentiality of the responses obtained from the participants was assured and they were told that they will not be identified in person. All the participants gave verbal consent to participate in the study.

Data analyses: Data obtained from the study was analyzed using the Statistical package for social science; version 25.0. To find relationships between variable, means, standard deviations, percentages and chi square test were performed; while $p \leq 0.05$ at 95% confidence interval was chosen as the level of significance.

Results

Age of respondents ranged from 18-55 years with a mean of 37.34 ±10.17 years; 249 (54.73%) were females. Majority of the respondents were self employed (40.44%; N=184); while 268 (58.9%) were married. Furthermore, 75(16.4%) showed no sign of burnout; 154(33.84) had emotional exhaustion; 169 (37.14) had reduced personal accomplishment, while 57 (12.54%) had depersonalization. Furthermore, result showed that majority 295 (64.8%) had psychological distress (Table 1). Gender significantly predicted burnout χ^2=8.907; P= 0.03. (Table 2); Marital status significantly predicted burnout χ^2=8.596; P=0.03. (Table 3), and also, educational attainment significantly predicted burnout χ^2=19.0366; P=0.00 (Table 4).

TABLE 1: Distribution of Socio Demographic Variables; Burnout and Psychological distress among the respondents

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender		
Male	206	45.27
Female	249	54.73
Age Range (in years)		
18-35	211	46.37
36-55	244	53.63
Mean age	37.34	
Standard deviation	10.17	
Education		
Primary	83	18.24
Secondary	126	27.69
Tertiary	246	54.07
Occupation		
Student	113	24.83
Self employed	184	40.44
Public servant	158	34.73
Marital Status		
Unmarried	187	41.1
Married	268	58.9
Burnout		
No burnout	75	16.48
Emotional exhaustion	154	33.84
Reduced Accomplishment	169	37.14
Depersonalization	57	12.54
Psych. distress		
Present	295	64.83
Absent	160	35.17

TABLE 2: Burnout and Psychological distress by Gender

Burnout	Gender	
	Male (N=206)	Female (N=249)
No burnout	25 (12.14)	50 (20.08)
Emotional exhaustion	77 (37.38)	77 (30.92)
Reduced	72 (34.95)	97 (38.96)
Depersonalization	32 (15.53)	25 (10.04)
	χ^2=8.907; P= 0.03*	
Psychological distress		
Present	131 (63.59)	164 (65.86)
Absent	75 (36.41)	85 (34.14)

*= Significant;

TABLE 3: Burnout and Psychological distress by marital status

MARITAL STATUS	UNMARRIED (N= 187)	MARRIED (N =268)

Burnout		
No burnout	37 (19.79)	38 (14.17)
Emotional exhaustion	70 (37.43)	84 (31.34)
Reduced Accomplishment	55 (29.41)	114 (42.53)
Depersonalization	25 (13.37) χ^2=8.596; P= 0.03*	32 (11.96)
Psychological distress		
Present	119 (63.63)	117 (43.65)
Absent	69 (36.37)	92 (56.35)

NB: * = Significant

TABLE 4: Burnout and Psychological distress by Education

EDUCATION	Primary (N= 83)	Secondary(N=126)	Tertiary(N=246)
Burnout			
No burnout	14 (16.87)	22 (17.46)	39 (15.85)
Emotional exhaustion	22 (26.51)	51 (40.47)	81 (32.92)
Reduced accomplishment	39 (46.98)	29 (23.01)	101 (41.05)
Depersonalization	8 (9.64)	24 (19.06) χ^2=19.0366; P= 0.00	25 (10.18)
Psychological distress			
Present	55 (66.26)	82 (65.07)	158 (64.23)
Absent	28 (33.74)	44 (34.93)	88 (35.77)

NB: * = Significant

Discussion

Incessant bloody clashes between cattle breeders and sedentary –farmer communities have posed serious security challenges in Nigeria. *It has also impacted negatively on the mental health and quality of life of members of the society.* This study investigated Burnout and Psychological Distress among the inhabitants of the seven villages in Nimbo Community invaded by killer Herdsmen. Result revealed that 154(33.84) had emotional exhaustion; 169 (37.14) had reduced personal accomplishment, while 57 (12.54%) had depersonalization. Furthermore, result showed that 295 (64.8%) had psychological distress.

Previous studies have observed that exposure to violence in the social environment is a serious and significant risk factor for the development of psychopathology among the victims

of such violence, with studies documenting relations between violence exposure and aggression, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress symptoms, and academic difficulties. One of the social effects of this attack is the disruption of social services like education, hospitals, churches and family buildings. A positive association has been found between conflict and depression and anxiety disorders. While most of those exposed to emergencies suffer some form of psychological distress (Obilom & Thacher, 2008).

Gender, marital status and education significantly predicted burnout measurements. This may imply that psychological impact of the attacks is more stressful to males than the females. In Nigeria, males are more involved in providing resources for the family upkeep while females are more inclined in looking after the children and the sick. These bloody attacks by the Fulani herdsmen might have overtaxed the stress tolerance of the males, and this might have reflected in the high levels of burnout and psychological distress noticed among them. The males might have felt so dehumanized due to their inability to adequately care for the women and children from this invasion. In this regard Narme (2018) observed that higher personal distress predicted higher burnout scores among caregivers. Roaming herdsmen have reportedly terrorized, occupied lands, raped, kidnapped, and killed hundreds of people across the farming communities of southern and north central states in 2016. Besides loss of human lives, it is estimated the bloody conflicts cost the West African country billions in lost revenues According to the Institute for Economics and Peace's Global Terrorism Index (2015) total casualties attributed to roaming Fulani herdsmen, due to their reluctance to, invest in private cattle ranches or agricultural holding and, improve social responsibility amongst the communities, hit 1,229 in 2014, a massive increase from just 63 in 2013, and it has soared since the beginning of 2016. To help prevent the incessant attacks by the Fulani herdsmen there is need for government to establish ranches where these animals can be kept instead of allowing them to roam the farmlands. It is known worldwide that cows kept in ranches produce better than grazing cows. Also aggressive Nomadism must not be allowed to become an avenue for ethnic expansionism and conquest of citizens protected by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. There is need for government to put policies in place to reduce the rate of incessant attacks by Fulani herdsmen.

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Communal Conflict and Mental Health Conditions of Youths from Selected Communities in South East Nigeria

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Abstract

One of the most recurrent security challenges facing Nigeria in particular and Africa as a whole is communal conflict. The impacts of communal disputes on mental health are still largely unexplored within the field of peace and conflict studies. This study investigated communal conflict and mental health conditions of youths, from selected conflict-affected communities in South East Nigeria, using a cross sectional research design. A total of 1492 youths aged between 15-34 years were sampled. Data was collected with the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), Short Screening Scale for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Generalized anxiety disorder scale (GAD-7); Beck depression inventory (BDI-2) and Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale. Descriptive statistics and Logit estimation techniques were used to analyze the data, and test the hypotheses at a 5 percent level of significant. Result showed that youths from conflict communities manifested significantly more mental health conditions than those from non-conflict communities. The need for government to find lasting solutions to recurrent conflicts, and reduce the security challenges facing the inhabitants of these communities was emphasized.

Key words: Communal conflict, security challenges, mental health conditions, Youths, South East Nigeria

Introduction

One of the most recurrent security challenges facing Nigeria in particular and Africa as a whole is communal conflict (Ololo, 2017). In general, communal disputes are not new in Nigeria; they have existed since both the pre-colonial and colonial periods. All six geopolitical zones of Nigeria have seen the emergence of violent communal or ethnic conflicts since the Fourth Republic was proclaimed in 1999. The fundamental idea behind communal disputes in Nigeria is that groups fight over control of scarce resources that are accessible to them (Onwe, Nwogbaga, and Nwakamma, 2015). Numerous factors have been cited as the cause of Nigeria's high conflict rate, including poverty, unemployment, and exploitation (Akinwale, 2010; Alimba, 2014). Apart from their inherently violent character, communal conflicts pose more security challenges in terms of management. They are also

less responsive to diplomatic intervention or conventional approaches to crisis management and peaceful dispute resolution (United Nations, 2013; Alimba, 2014).

The World Health Organization states that good mental health is essential for good physical health, and that it is closely related to other aspects of development like economic growth, employment, and poverty, as well as peace and justice.

Within the field of peace and conflict studies, the impacts of communal disputes on mental health are still largely unexplored. One major mental health condition of communal conflict that has been consistently documented in the literature is post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD] (Musisi, 2004).

For instance, in their study on the ethno-religious riots that occurred in 2001 in Jos northern Nigeria, Obilom and Thatcher (2008) using a multistage cluster sampling technique, recruited 290 respondents and reported that 89.7% of the respondents met re-experiencing criteria, 49.1% met avoidance criteria, and 84.0%, met arousal criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Beiser, Wiwa and Adebajo (2010), undertook a study in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, the scene of long-standing violence and human rights abuse that reached its peak in 1995; their investigation focused on two villages, one that was heavily exposed to the conflict (A, the affected village), and the other relatively spared (NA, not affected). They reported a 60 percent six-month period prevalence of PTSD in the conflict affected village and 14.5 percent in the village not affected by the conflict. According to them, degree of exposure to stress as well as compromised sense of moral order, not feeling safe, and perceived lack of social support were independent predictors of PTSD. In another study among conflict affected youths in Jos, Nigeria, Tangurum, Chirdan, Obindo, et al. (2014) reported that their subjects experienced varying symptoms of PTSD. They argued that 68.1% experienced constant watchfulness and being easily startled, 67.6% experienced denial or avoidance of thoughts of the conflict, and 52.9% experienced numbness and detachment from surroundings, while 42.2% experienced nightmares. The authors concluded that PTSD is a common mental health effect of conflict. Furthermore, Ogwuche and Mkpelanga (2014) examined the mental health effects of cultural conflict with a particular focus on a sample of 335 respondents drawn from refugee population of the Tiv/Fulani armed conflict in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria. The Sample was made up of 173 males and 162 females. They reported that 46.3% of the respondents did not suffer from any form of mental ill health, while 53.7% suffered from various mental disorders. The breakdowns of results indicate that 23.6% suffer post-traumatic stress disorder, 15.8% were down with depression and 9.3% reported symptoms of acute anxiety disorder. Also 5.1% of the victims

suffered co-morbid condition of PTSD and depression. The results further revealed that the psychological consequences of armed conflict were felt more by females than males. The researchers therefore recommended that health services offered to refugees of cultural conflict should include both chemotherapy and psychotherapy in order to keep the flesh and the soul together and avert increasing incidence of mental disorders. Studies from outside Nigeria have equally reported a number of mental health conditions associated with conflict both on youths and other population groups. For instance, Paardekiiper, DeJong and Hermanns (1999) found, in a comparative study, that young Sudanese living in Northern Uganda, exposed to war, had higher rates of behavior issues, depressive symptoms, and complaints similar to post-traumatic stress disorder compared to young Ugandans not affected by the hostilities. According to Betancourt, Spleeman, Onyango and Bolton (2009), in a related study on the psychosocial issues facing young men in war-affected Uganda, young men between the ages of 14 and 30 had, on average, been exposed to nine serious acts of violence. Both high levels of hostility and poor social functioning were reported by the majority of their samples. In another study, Scholte, Olff & Ventevogel (2004), used a cross-sectional multi-cluster sample of approximately 1011 respondents aged 15years and above, to estimate the prevalence of mental health effects of conflict, identify resources used for emotional support and risk factors, and assess the current coverage of basic needs. They discovered that PTSD was present in 20.4% of the respondents; 38.5% showed signs of depression while 51.8% showed signs of anxiety

One of the most extensively researched conflicts in recent years is undoubtedly the one in the Balkans. A preliminary investigation conducted on migrants from Bosnia revealed a link between mental health issues and disability. After an initial evaluation, a three-year follow-up research on the same group, found that the former refugees from Bosnia who stayed to live in the region showed signs of mental health issues and impairment (Barber 2008).

Moreover, 17.1% of Kosovo Albanians, aged 15 years and older, who participated in a cross-sectional cluster sample study said they had symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. People who were internally displaced have a higher chance of developing mental illness. Furthermore, 90% of women and 89% of men said they had strong anti-Serb sentiments, and many of them said they would take action if given the chance (Dyregov, Gupta, Gjestad, &Mukano, 2000). Numerous other global investigations have illustrated the deleterious psychological consequences on young individuals subjected to conflict, terrorism, and ethnic political violence from various parts of the globe, including Iraq, Palestine, Bosnia, and Rwanda (Abdeen, Qaswari, Nabil and Shaheen 2008; Miller and Rasmussen, 2010). The

psychosocial impairment linked to these conflicts might have detrimental impacts on young people's social functioning and productivity as well as their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral levels (Nasqshband and Amin, 2013).

Most studies on communal conflicts in South- east Nigeria have focused on the physical and material damages unleashed to the inhabitants; none of the studies have looked at the effects of communal conflicts on the mental health conditions of youths (Obilom and Thatcher, 2008; Beiser, Wiwa, and Adebajo, 2010; Tangurum et al 2014). The youths are the focus of this study because they face a lot of mental health risks during communal conflict. Anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, psychological distress, decreased self-esteem, high risk drug use, suicidal ideation, suicidal attempts and suicide completion, have all been previously reported as some of the disturbing aspects of psychosocial health risks facing the youths and other inhabitants in communities witnessing communal conflicts (Obilom and Thatcher, 2008; Beiser, Wiwa, and Adebajo, 2010; Tangurum et al 2014).

The psychosocial capacities of young people were also impacted by communal conflicts, which are typically linked to resource scarcity, joblessness, and disruptions in the educational system. According to Naqshbandi and Amin (2013), a significant number of individuals who fought as combatants may be killed, imprisoned, or go missing, which will have a detrimental effect on family unity. The young people's psychosocial health may be harmed by the chronic stressors linked to the aftermath of conflict as well as the severe stress-related symptoms that have persisted from communal conflicts (Ogwuche and Mkpelanga 2014)..

Many young people from communities impacted by security challenges created by conflict may not be able to attend school regularly as a result of closures, curfews and school demolition (Oji, Eme and Nwoba 2015). Community conflicts resulted in either fatalities, injuries, or multiple members of the conflicting groups going missing, according to Rumun (2013). Along with home destruction, incarceration, agricultural property devastation, strict curfews, and closures that keep residents confined to their homes for extended periods of time, they have also experienced violence. Rumun (2013) further argued that the population's health and nutritional status have been negatively impacted by the economic downturn, high rates of poverty, and lack of both physical and financial access to high-quality healthcare. This paper examines the impact of community disputes on the mental health conditions of youths from Ezillo/Ezza-Ezillo in Ebonyi State and Oruku/Umuode in Enugu State, aged 15 to 34. For numerous years, internal disputes have devastated these communities. Anxiety, sadness, PTSD, psychological anguish, and low self-esteem are some of these mental health problems. These mental health conditions have been reported to be very prevalent among the

population of communities ravaged by conflicts including the youths (Obilom and Thatcher (2008; Beiser, Wiwa and Adebajo 2010; Miller and Rasmussen, 2010; Ogwuche and Mkpelanga (2014); and this justifies why the study is focusing on these mental health conditions to investigate their presence among the youths from these conflict communities in south east Nigeria.

Aim and Hypotheses

The aim of the present study is to investigate communal conflict and mental health conditions of youths from conflict affected communities in south east Nigeria.

The following hypotheses guided the study:

1. Communal conflicts will have no significant effect on psychological distress among the youths from conflict affected communities. 2. Communal conflicts will have no significant effect on Post traumatic stress symptoms among the youths from these communities. 3. Communal conflicts have no significant effect on depressive symptoms in youths from conflict-affected communities. 4. Communal conflicts will have no significant effect on the self –esteem of youths from these communities. 5. Communal conflicts will have no significant effect on anxiety symptoms of youths from these communities.

Methods

Design: This study adopts the cross-sectional research design to investigate communal conflicts and mental health conditions of youths.

Area of Study: The study was conducted in Oruku/Umuode communities in Enugu state and in Ezillo/Ezza-Ezillo communities in Ebonyi state, all in South-East Nigeria. These communities have been involved in protracted violent conflicts for many years, contesting the ownership of land and chieftaincy tussles, as well as recognition of autonomous communities. The inhabitants of these communities are predominantly farmers. The effects of these crises include injuries, emotional trauma, disabilities, loss of homes and livelihoods including deaths. Most of these conflicts were executed by the youths because they act as combatants during conflicts.

The justification for the selection of these communities is because since the onset of the communal conflicts in these communities, a number of studies have been conducted on various aspects of the conflicts but none has looked at the mental health effects of these conflicts on the youths.

However, to isolate conflicts from other factors that may have effects on the mental health conditions of youths, two other nearby communities to the conflict afflicted communities that

were not affected by communal conflicts were included in the study. The communities are Nara and Nkalagu. The study was conducted between the months of March and August 2024.

Participants

A total of 1492 youths aged between 15-34 years, who gave verbal consent to participate in the study, were sampled using systematic sampling technique. This number is made up of 751 youths from the conflict afflicted communities and 741 youths from the non-conflict afflicted communities.

Method of Data Collection

Before engaging in data collection, the researcher interfaced with the community leaders of these communities and solicited for their permission and corporation to conduct the research. To assist in data collection, the researcher engaged the services of four research assistants. They were trained on how to administer the instruments for data collection for one week. The following are the inclusion criteria: (1) Those aged 15 - 34 years (2) those that were not sick as at the time of data collection. (3) Those that consented to participate. On the other hand, the following are the exclusion criteria: (1) those that are below 15 years; those above 34 years (2) Those that are sick at the time of data collection (3) those that did not consent to participate. All the subjects were assured that their responses will be treated with the strictest confidence and no respondent will be identified in person, thereby assuring them of the anonymity of their responses. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from University of Nigeria teaching hospital ethics committee.

Instruments for data collection

The instruments used for data collection are:

The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ –12). The GHQ-12 was used to assess psychological distress among the respondents. It was developed by Goldberg in 1978 (Goldberg, 1978/1981), and has been widely used in both clinical and epidemiological studies and general psychological research, thus making it one of the most extensively utilized self-administered questionnaires around the world including Nigeria (Adekola, 2012).

Short Screening Scale for PTSD: The seven-item Short Screening Scale for PTSD (Breslau, Peterson, Kessler & Schultz, 1999), was created for all individuals who have gone through trauma related to rape, natural disasters, violent conflicts, war, or other traumatic experiences. The seven items were the ones that predicted PTSD diagnosis status the most accurately. Each item is rated as "yes" or "no" by the respondents, and the scale is scored by adding the total number of "yes" responses. A score of 0–3 denotes the absence of post-traumatic stress symptoms, whereas a score of 4 or higher suggests the presence of such symptoms. The scale

has been used in numerous investigations conducted across the globe, including Nigeria (Kimerling, Quimette, Pins & Nisco, 2006; Taiwo, Abdulaziz, Ike, & Oluwatosin, 2014).

The Generalized anxiety disorder scale (GAD-7): Spitzer, Kroenke, Williams & Lowe, (2006) created this validated seven-item test to detect generalized anxiety in the general population. It is a helpful tool for determining if a person who has experienced trauma is likely to suffer from generalized anxiety. A score of 0–4 indicates no anxiety, 5–9 suggests mild anxiety, 10–14 shows moderate anxiety, and a score of 15 or more indicates severe anxiety. Studies conducted in Nigeria have employed the GAD-7(Adewuya, Ola, & Mapayi, 2006).

Beck depression inventory-version two (BDI-2): The respondents' levels of depression were measured using the 21-item Beck Depression Inventory-2 (BDI-2). The BD-2 has well-established validity and reliability across a wide range of clinical and non-clinical populations. Every item is given a score between 0 and 3 on a 4-point scale. A maximum of 63 can be achieved overall. Scores ranging from 0 to 9 represents no depression, 10 to 18, mild depression, 19 to 29, moderate depression, and 30-63, severe depression. This scale has been used for studies in Nigeria (James, Omoaregba, Eze, &Morakinyo, 2010).

The Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (SES): The Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (SES) was used to assess self-esteem (Rosenberg 1965). The SES is a widely used and validated self–report measure for assessing self-esteem. This is a ten-item measure that is scored on a 4-point Likert type response format starting from 1=strongly disagree to 4= strongly agree. Total obtainable score ranged from 10-40 with high scores indicating high self-esteem. Furthermore, the SES has been used for studies in Nigeria (Terna, 2014).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics and Logit estimation techniques, which allowed for t-statistics and odd ratio tests, were used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses at a 5 percent level of significant. In general, data obtained from youths in the conflict affected communities are classified as ‘CAC’; while data obtained from youths from non-conflict communities are classified as ‘non-CAC’.

Results

Demographic distribution of respondents

The demographic distributions of respondents are shown in figures 1, 2 and table 1.

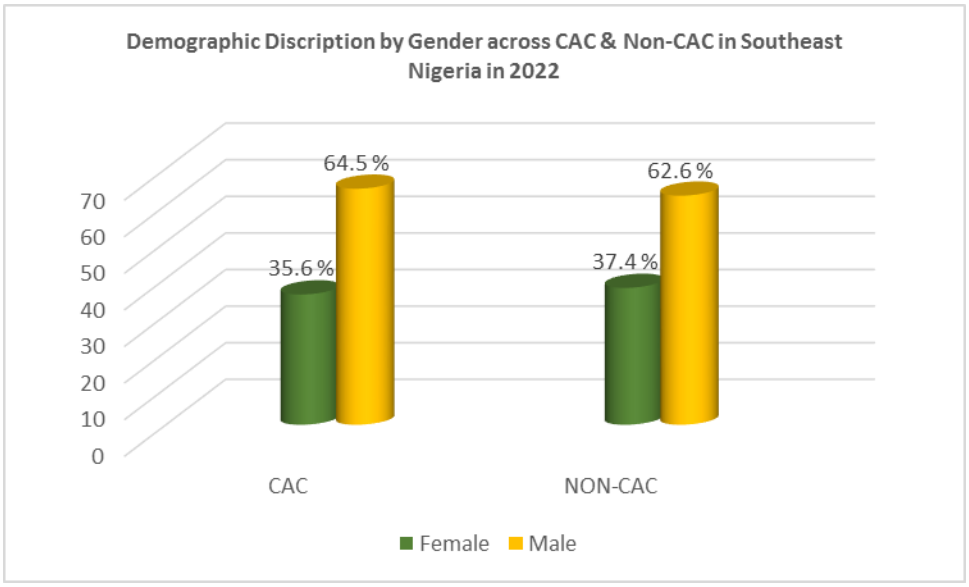


Fig 1 above shows the demographic distribution of gender across the conflict-affected communities (cac) and non-conflict affected communities (Non cac). The distribution showed that 65 percent of the respondents from cac are males while 36 percent are females; whereas from non-cac male respondents accounted for 63 per cent while females accounted for 37 percent respectively.

Fig.2: Distribution of respondents based on Educational Attainment across CAC &Non-CAC

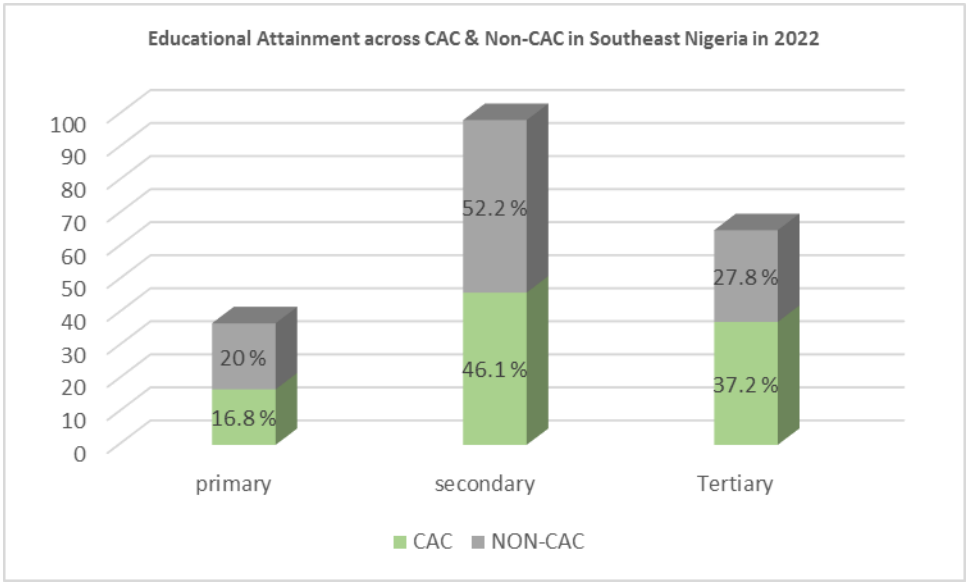


Figure 2 revealed that 17 %, 46% and 37% of youths from conflict affected communities had primary, secondary and tertiary educational attainment respectively. Whereas, for youths from non-conflict affected communities, 20%, 52% and 28% had primary, secondary and tertiary educational attainment respectively.

Table 1: Showing Socio Demographic Variables of Youths from Cac and Non Cac.

VARIABLES	CAC	Non CAC

GENDER	N (%)	N (%)
Males	484 (64.4)	464 (62.5)
Females	267 (35.6)	277 (37.5)
AGE (In years)	N (%)	N (%)
15-25	270 (36.0)	335 (45.2)
26-34	481 (64.0)	406 (54.8)
Mean	27.10	25.94
Standard Deviation	4.75	4.83
EDUCATION	N (%)	N (%)
Primary	126 (16.8)	148 (20.0)
Secondary	346 (46.1)	387 (52.2)
Tertiary	279 (37.2	206 (27.8)

Prevalence of Mental Health conditions (Psychological distress; PTSD; Depression and Self esteem) across CAC & Non-CAC are shown in figures 3, 4 and table 2 below.

Fig.3: Prevalence of Mental Health conditions (Psychological distress; PTSD; Depression and Self esteem) across CAC & Non-CAC

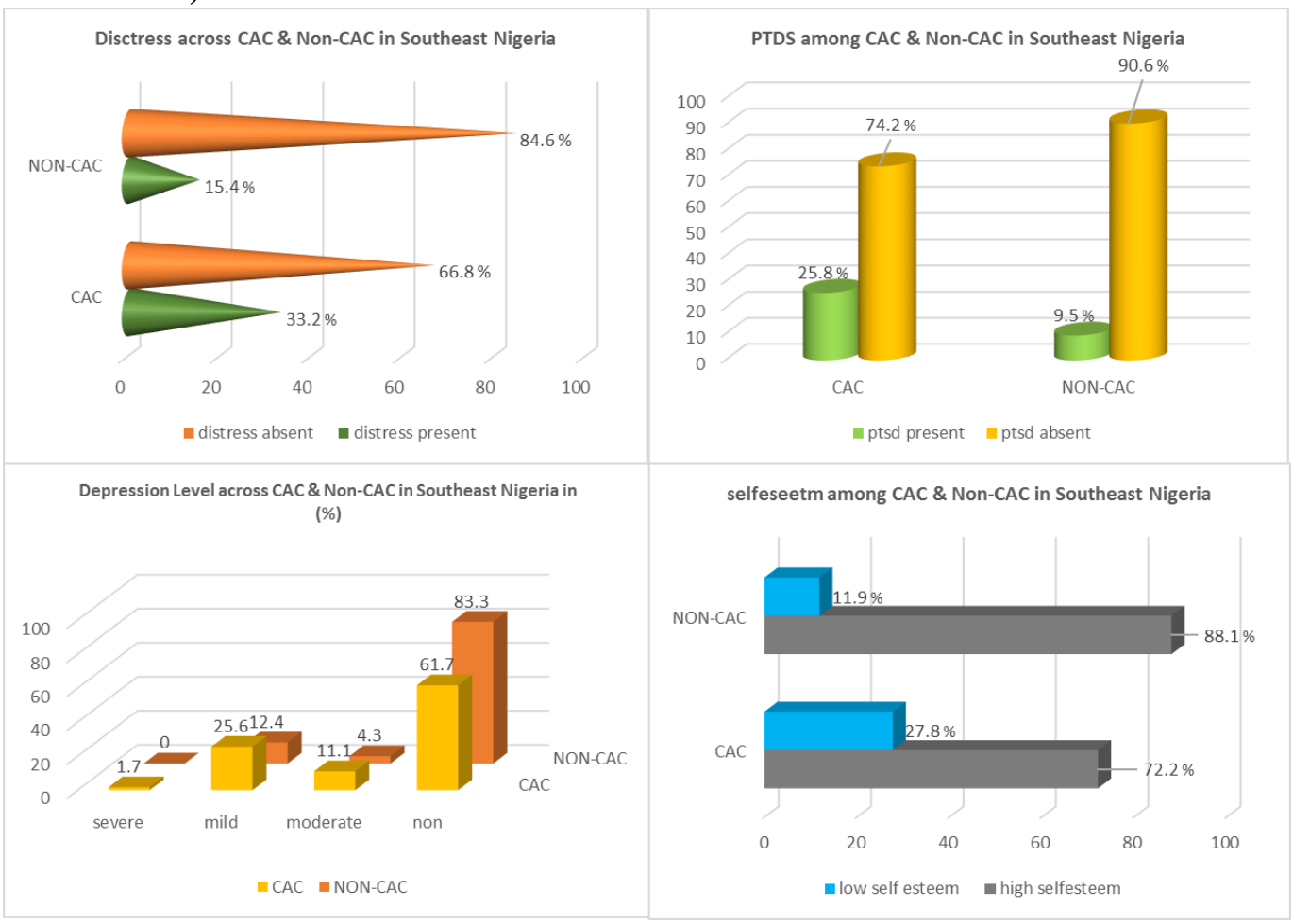
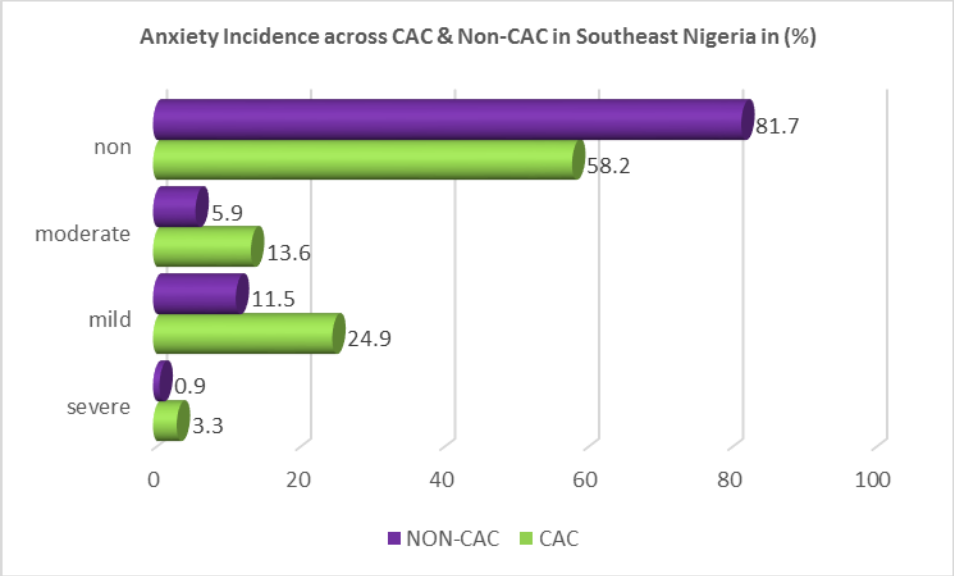


Fig .3 above revealed that psychological distress was present in 33 percent of youths from conflict affected communities (CAC) as against 15 percent of youths from non-conflict affected communities (non-CAC). With regards to Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), 26

percent of youths from CAC as against 10 percent of youths from non-CAC showed signs of PTSD symptoms respectively. Responses on self-esteem revealed 28 percent of youths from CAC as against 12 percent from non-CAC showed signs of low self-esteem. With regards to depression, it was discovered that 26 percent, 11 percent and 2 percent of youths from CAC showed symptoms of mild, moderate and severe depression respectively; while 12 percent and 4 percent of youths from non-CAC showed signs of mild and moderate depression respectively. No sign of severe depression was noticed in this group.

Figure 4 revealed the prevalence of anxiety symptoms among the subjects.



The responses showed that 25 percent; 14 percent and 3 percent of youths from CAC showed signs of mild, moderate and severe anxiety symptoms respectively; whereas 12 percent; 6 percent and 0.9 percent of youths from non-CAC showed signs of mild, moderate and severe anxiety respectively.

Table.2: Showing Psychological Distress, PTSD, Self Esteem, Depression and Anxiety Symptoms of Youths From Conflict and None Conflict Afflicted Communities.

VARIABLE	Conflict Com.	None Conflict Com.
PSYCH. DISTRESS	N (%)	N (%)
Present	249 (33.2)	114 (15.4)
Absent	502 (66.8)	627 (84.6)
	t=18.1538; p=0.005	
PTSD	N (%)	N (%)
Present	194 (25.8)	70 (9.4)
Absent	557 (74.2)	671 (90.6)
	t=17.5163; *P*=0.000	
SELF ESTEEM	N (%)	N (%)
High	542 (72.2)	653 (88.1)
Low	209 (27.8)	88 (11.9)

	t=7.8698; *P*= 0.005	
DEPRESSION	N (%)	N (%)
None	463 (61.7)	617 (83.3)
Mild	192 (25.6)	92 (12.4)
Moderate	83 (11.0)	32 (4.3)
Severe	13 (1.7)	0
	t=10.3054; *P*= 0.005	
ANXIETY	N (%)	N (%)
None	437 (58.2)	604 (81.6)
Mild	187 (24.9)	85 (11.5)
Moderate	102 (13.6)	44 (5.9)
Severe	25 (3.3)	7 (0.9)
	t=8.7166; *P*=0.000	

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one**:** There is no significant effect of conflict in psychological distress among the youths.

Logit estimation technique result for hypothesis one.

```
Logistic regression                                     Number of obs   =       1492
                                                        LR chi2(1)      =     289.08
                                                        Prob > chi2     =     0.0000
Log likelihood = -889.59981                             Pseudo R2       =     0.1398

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   cacnoncac | Odds Ratio   Std. Err.      z    P>|z|     [95% Conf. Interval]
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
    distress |   6.079041   .7011294    15.65   0.000     4.849102    7.620946
       _cons |   .0783016   .0132754   -15.02   0.000     .0561638    .1091655
------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Two-sample t test with equal variances for distress
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   Group |     Obs        Mean    Std. Err.   Std. Dev.   [95% Conf. Interval]
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
       0 |     741    1.210526    .0184748    .5029076    1.174257    1.246796
       1 |     751    1.668442    .0171902    .4710868    1.634695    1.702189
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
combined |    1492    1.441019    .0139323     .538155     1.41369    1.468348
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff |           -.4579158    .0252243               -.5073946   -.4084369
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff = mean(0) - mean(1)                                      t = -18.1538
Ho: diff = 0                                     degrees of freedom =     1490

    Ha: diff < 0                 Ha: diff != 0                 Ha: diff > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.0000         Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000          Pr(T > t) = 1.0000
```

Table 3: reveals the result from the logit estimation technique on the level of psychological distress in youths from conflict communities and those from non-conflict communities. The result showed that a unit change in conflict-affected communities and those from non-conflict communities (*cacnoncac*) increases the odds ratio of distress (*distress*) by 6.079041 (that is 61 per cent) at 5 per cent level of significant given a p-value of 0.000 that is less than 0.05.

On the first hypothesis, that there is no significant effect of conflict in psychological distress among the youths, it was found that the first hypothesis is rejected; hence the conclusion is that there is significant difference in psychological distress between youths from conflict-afflicted communities and those from non-conflict afflicted communities.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant effect of conflict in post-traumatic stress symptoms among the youths from these communities.

Table 4: Logit estimation technique result for hypothesis two.

```
Logistic regression                                     Number of obs   =       1492
                                                        LR chi2(1)      =     278.37
                                                        Prob > chi2     =     0.0000
Log likelihood = -894.95947                             Pseudo R2       =     0.1346

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   cacnoncac | Odds Ratio   Std. Err.      z    P>|z|     [95% Conf. Interval]
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
        ptsd |   5.367712   .5911018    15.26   0.000      4.32567    6.660779
       _cons |   .0841773   .0142933   -14.57   0.000     .0603477    .1174166
------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Two-sample t test with equal variances for ptsd
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   Group |     Obs        Mean    Std. Err.   Std. Dev.   [95% Conf. Interval]
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
       0 |     741    1.261808    .0223215    .6076196    1.217987    1.305629
       1 |     751    1.741678     .015983    .4380038    1.710301    1.773054
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
combined |    1492    1.503351    .0150367    .5808152    1.473856    1.532847
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff |           -.4798694    .0273955               -.5336073   -.4261315
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff = mean(0) - mean(1)                                      t = -17.5163
Ho: diff = 0                                     degrees of freedom =     1490

    Ha: diff < 0                 Ha: diff != 0                 Ha: diff > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.0000         Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000          Pr(T > t) = 1.0000
```

Table 4 above reveals the result from the logit estimation technique on post-traumatic stress symptoms in youths from conflict communities and those from non-conflict communities. The result showed that a unit change in conflict-affected communities and those from non-conflict communities (*cacnoncac*) increases the odds ratio of post-traumatic stress symptoms (*ptsd*) by 5.367712 (that is 54 per cent) at 5 per cent level of significant given a p-value of 0.000 that is less than 0.05. On the second hypothesis that there is no significant effect of conflict in post-traumatic stress symptoms among the youths from these communities it was found that the second hypothesis is rejected; thereby indicating a significant difference in post-traumatic stress symptoms between youths from conflict-afflicted communities and those from non-conflict afflicted communities.

Hypothesis three: There is no significant effect of conflict in depressive symptoms in youths from these communities.

Table 5: Logit estimation technique result for hypothesis three.

```
Logistic regression                                     Number of obs   =       1492
                                                        LR chi2(1)      =     103.13
                                                        Prob > chi2     =     0.0000
Log likelihood = -982.57674                             Pseudo R2       =     0.0499

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   cacnoncac | Odds Ratio   Std. Err.      z    P>|z|     [95% Conf. Interval]
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
  depression |     .40493   .0379273    -9.65   0.000      .337018    .4865269
       _cons |    4.63416    .768003     9.25   0.000     3.348917    6.412651
------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Two-sample t test with equal variances for depression
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   Group |     Obs        Mean    Std. Err.   Std. Dev.   [95% Conf. Interval]
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
       0 |     741    1.846154    .0132633    .3610449    1.820116    1.872192
       1 |     751    1.528628    .0276666     .758186    1.474315    1.582942
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
combined |    1492    1.686327    .0159396    .6156908    1.655061    1.717594
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff |            .3175254    .0308115                .2570868    .3779639
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff = mean(0) - mean(1)                                      t =  10.3054
Ho: diff = 0                                     degrees of freedom =     1490

    Ha: diff < 0                 Ha: diff != 0                 Ha: diff > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 1.0000         Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000          Pr(T > t) = 0.0000
```

Table.5 reveals the result from the logit estimation technique on the level of depression in youths from conflict-affected communities and those from non-conflict communities in Southeast Nigeria. The result showed that a unit change in conflict-affected communities and those from non-conflict communities (*cacnoncac*) decreases the odds ratio of depression by 0.40493 (that is 40 per cent) at 5 per cent level of significant given a p-value of 0.000 that is less than 0.05; given the third hypothesis that there is no significant effect of conflict in depressive symptoms in youths from these communities, it is was found that the third hypothesis is rejected hence the conclusion is that there is significant difference in depressive symptoms between youths from Conflict afflicted communities and those from non-conflict afflicted communities.

Hypothesis four: There is no significant effect of conflict on the self-esteem of these youths.

Table 6: Logit estimation technique result for hypothesis four.

```
Logistic regression                                     Number of obs   =       1492
                                                        LR chi2(1)      =      61.02
                                                        Prob > chi2     =     0.0000
Log likelihood = -1003.6332                             Pseudo R2       =     0.0295

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   cacnoncac | Odds Ratio   Std. Err.      z    P>|z|     [95% Conf. Interval]
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
  selfesteem |   2.861393   .3998251     7.52   0.000     2.175897    3.762848
       _cons |   .2900739   .0499517    -7.19   0.000     .2069803     .406526
------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Two-sample t test with equal variances for selfesteem
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   Group |     Obs        Mean    Std. Err.   Std. Dev.   [95% Conf. Interval]
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
       0 |     741    1.118758    .0118922    .3237226    1.095412    1.142105
       1 |     751    1.278296    .0163645    .4484584     1.24617    1.310421
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
combined |    1492    1.199062    .0103408    .3994284    1.178778    1.219346
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff |           -.1595372     .020272               -.1993018   -.1197725
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff = mean(0) - mean(1)                                      t =  -7.8698
Ho: diff = 0                                     degrees of freedom =     1490

    Ha: diff < 0                 Ha: diff != 0                 Ha: diff > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.0000         Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000          Pr(T > t) = 1.0000
```

Table 6 reveals the result from the logit estimation technique on the level of self-esteem of youths from conflict communities and those from non-conflict communities in Southeast Nigeria. The result showed that a unit change in conflict-affected communities and those from non-conflict communities (*cacnoncac*) increases the odds ratio of self-esteem (*selfesteem*) by 2.861393 (that is 29 per cent) at 5 per cent level of significant given a p-value of 0.000 that is less than 0.05. Therefore, on the fourth hypothesis that there is no significant effect of conflict on the self-esteem of these youths, it was found that the fourth hypothesis is rejected, hence the conclusion is that there is significant difference in self-esteem between youths from conflict afflicted communities and youths from non-conflict afflicted communities.

Hypothesis five: There is no significant effect of conflict on anxiety symptoms of youths from these communities.

Table 7: Logit estimation technique result for hypothesis five.

```
Logistic regression                                     Number of obs   =       1492
                                                        LR chi2(1)      =      74.73
                                                        Prob > chi2     =     0.0000
Log likelihood = -996.77506                             Pseudo R2       =     0.0361

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   cacnoncac | Odds Ratio   Std. Err.      z    P>|z|     [95% Conf. Interval]
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
     anxiety |   .4839227   .0424959    -8.27   0.000     .4074058    .5748106
       _cons |    3.62799   .5894167     7.93   0.000     2.638619    4.988333
------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Two-sample t test with equal variances for anxiety
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   Group |     Obs        Mean    Std. Err.   Std. Dev.   [95% Conf. Interval]
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
       0 |     741    1.905533    .0107517    .2926748    1.884426     1.92664
       1 |     751    1.620506    .0306996    .8413039    1.560239    1.680773
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
combined |    1492    1.762064    .0167554    .6472005    1.729198    1.794931
---------+--------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff |            .2850271    .0326994                .2208853    .3491689
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    diff = mean(0) - mean(1)                                      t =   8.7166
Ho: diff = 0                                     degrees of freedom =     1490

    Ha: diff < 0                 Ha: diff != 0                 Ha: diff > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 1.0000         Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000          Pr(T > t) = 0.0000
```

Table 7 reveals the result from the logit estimation technique on the presence of anxiety symptoms in youths from conflict communities and those from non-conflict communities in Southeast Nigeria. The result showed that a unit change in conflict-affected communities and those from non-conflict communities (*cacnoncac*) decreases the odds ratio of anxiety (*anxiety*) by 0.4839227 (that is 48 per cent) at 5 per cent level of significant given a p-value of 0.000 that is less than 0.05; on the fifth hypothesis that there is no significant effect of conflict on anxiety symptoms of youths from these communities; it was found that the fifth hypothesis is rejected hence the conclusion is that there is significant difference in anxiety

symptoms between youths from conflict afflicted communities and those from non-conflict afflicted communities.

DISCUSSION

Result revealed that psychological distress was present in 33 percent of youths from conflict affected communities (CAC) as against 15 percent of youths from non-conflict affected communities (non-CAC), and this was significant (t=18.1538; p=0.005). This finding corroborates earlier reports by Betancourt, Spleenman, Onyango, & Bolton, (2009) who observed that youths, aged 18-30 years, exposed to emergencies arising from conflict suffer some form of psychological distress.

Symptoms of Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were noticed in 26 percent of youths from conflict affected communities as against 10 percent noticed in youths from non-conflict affected communities; this was also significant *(t*=17.5163; *P*=0.000) . This finding was in line with previous reports which posited that PTSD is a common mental health effect of conflict (Beiser, Wiwa and Adebajo, 2010; Tangurum, Chirdan, Obindo et al., 2014). Furthermore, the presence of significant PTSD symptoms on youths from conflict communities might be attributed to some of the negative effects of conflicts on the youths; because communal conflicts can lead to either the deaths, injuries or the disappearances of several people from the conflicting communities. The inhabitants have also been exposed to violence in the form of destruction of homes, imprisonment, razing of agricultural property, stringent curfews and closures confining them to their homes for prolonged periods of time. Economic decline, growing poverty and lack of financial and physical access to quality health care usually had a detrimental effect on the health and nutritious status of the people experiencing conflicts (Ogwuche and Mkpelanga, 2014; Paardekiiper, De Jong, &Hermanns, 1999). Significant difference in depressive symptoms was noticed between the youths from conflict affected communities and those from non conflict communities *(t*=10.3054; *P*= 0.005). Furthermore, 26 percent, 11 percent and 2 percent of youths from conflict-affected communities showed symptoms of mild, moderate and severe depression respectively; whereas 12 percent and 4 percent of youths from non-conflict affected communities showed symptoms of mild and moderate depression respectively. No symptom of severe depression was noticed in this group. Interestingly, these high levels of depressive symptoms noticed among the youths from conflict communities have been reported elsewhere (Obilom and Thatcher, 2008).

Furthermore, 28 percent of youths from conflict affected communities had low self-esteem as against 12 percent from non-conflict affected communities, also indicating significant

difference between the two groups *t*=7.8698; *P*= 0.005). The daily stressors and hardship imposed on these youths by communal conflict can make them have negative appraisal about themselves. Musisi (2004) had earlier posited that youths who undergo traumatic experiences of communal conflicts usually develop special needs for understanding, a negative sense of belonging and self-worth.

Significant difference in anxiety symptoms was equally noticed between the youths from conflict and non conflict communities *(t*=8.7166; *P*=0.000). Ogwuchwe and Mkpelanga (2014) had attributed high levels of anxiety symptoms among youths from conflict communities to frequent exposure to daily stressors such as hunger, poor medical and sanitary conditions, lack of regular access to their schools due to closure, curfews, destruction of schools and general uncertainty about the future. The pattern of finding noticed in this report corroborates this earlier report.

Conclusions

The effects of conflict on mental health conditions of affected populations started to attract attention only in the recent past. Negative consequences of conflict have been traditionally evaluated in terms of mortality; attention was not paid to social trauma and mental health of those who survived these various conflicts. Conflict is obviously a reality of human existence. This study has shown that youths from post conflict environments experienced significant levels of mental health conditions than youths from non conflict environments. Post traumatic stress symptoms were found to be the most prevalent mental health condition associated with conflict especially on the youths. Other mental health conditions noticed among the youths are depression, psychological distress, and low self esteem and anxiety symptoms. The result of the study supported earlier findings reported from many studies conducted both within and outside Nigeria on the mental health conditions of conflict. Furthermore, the findings of the study has provided base line data on the mental health conditions associated with conflict, especially in south east Nigeria, where such study has not been conducted before. It has paved the way for further researches on the mental health aspects of communal conflict among conflict and other health researchers. Since conflict and mental health can increase poverty level, negatively affect economic growth and safe and resilient cities and settlement, effort should therefore be intensified by government, through effective policy formulation relating to peace building and peacemaking, to find a lasting solution to the recurrent communal conflicts in these communities and other parts of the country, as this will help to reduce the increasing mental health conditions conflicts have on the youths. The use of only youths and non-inclusion of other age groups like children and

the elderly to equally assess how communal conflicts affected their mental health conditions is a limitation of the study; however, this will be the focus of future research. The ability of this study to reveal that communal conflicts posed significant mental health conditions in youths from post conflict environments than those from non conflict environments is a major strength of the study.

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A Critical Analysis of Pastoralists/Agriculturalists Clashes and Security Challenges in Nigeria: Causes and Effects

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Abstract

Competition for scarce resources especially land and water has often times resulted to violent clashes between pastoralists and agriculturalists in different parts of Nigeria. In recent years, these clashes have taken more dangerous dimensions culminating on the one hand, in herders carrying sophisticated ammunitions with which they kill, kidnap and maim perceived opponents at the slightest provocations. On the other hand, farmers perceive the herders as their greatest enemies coupled with the attendant destruction of their crops; leading to scarcity of food in particular and insecurity in general in Nigeria. This study, therefore, attempts a critical analysis of the causes and effects of persistent conflicts between herders and farmers as it relates to security in Nigeria. The theoretical framework applied is that of intractable conflict theory and frustration-aggression theory. The study adopts a qualitative approach to data analysis which anchors on secondary sources. Findings show that the clashes have resulted to loss of lives and livelihood, displacements, destruction of properties, insecurity, lack of food etc. The study recommends among others the establishment of cattle ranches by government, re-orientation and honest dialogue.

Keywords: Pastoralists, Agriculturalists, Security, Nigeria.

Introduction

The history of Pastoralists and Agriculturalists clashes in Nigeria dated back to pre-colonial times. However, these conflicts have become more severe in recent decades. The Fulbe or Fulani are the main pastoral people in Nigeria who entered into what is now known as Nigeria through the Sahel belt.

In the early colonial period, demographic pressure on land was still very low and the herders could move across a sparsely populated landscape. Disease and predation by wild animals were the most noticeable constraints. There was a kind of symbiotic relationship between the herders and farmers. As a result of this, the colonial authorities created grazing Reserves and legally gazette cattle traits where herders were allowed to graze and set up temporary shelters and where farmers were prohibited from farming. This arrangement persisted into the era of independence in Nigeria in 1960. However, a growing population and a declining respect for colonial era institutions changed the situation.

The aftermath led to violent clashes between the pastoralists and agriculturalists. The causes include but not limited to the following: struggle for control and domination over grazing land and scarce resources, desertification occasioned by climatic change, population explosion, proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria. These conflicts have some serious consequences which include loss of lives and livelihoods, displacement, destruction of properties, food insecurity, poverty, unemployment, proliferation of small arms, kidnapping, banditry etc. Although, the Nigerian government and a few mediating agencies and organizations have responded in a bid to tackling these crises, but, their interventions and efforts have not yielded much in terms of curtailing the crises. Most times, it is discovered that government of the day lacks political power to address the issues at stake because of political, ethnic and economic considerations. Pastoralists-Agriculturalists clashes in Nigeria have persisted and it stands a serious threat to national security and sustainable development. It is against this backdrop that the specific objectives of the study are: (1) a critical analysis of the persistent clashes between the pastoralists and agriculturalists in Nigeria. (2) the causes and effects on security challenges in Nigeria The study aims to adopt a content analysis research method. The study recommends the establishment of cattle ranches by government at strategic locations in the country.

Conceptual Clarification

Pastoralists

The Fulani originated from the Senegambia before spreading out into about 20 states which cut across West Africa and the Sahel as well as western Sudan and Central African Republic (McGregor, 2014). The people are found in large number in Nigeria but while some have moved into the cities, many are still living as semi-nomadic herders. However, these groups who own and rear herds of animals like cattle for commercial purpose are called herdsmen. Fulani herdsmen or Fulani pastoralists are nomadic or semi-nomadic herders whose primary occupation is raising livestock (Iro, 1994:22). They usually move their herds from one place to another in search of pasture and fresh water. It is predominantly the occupation of the Fulani ethnic group in Nigeria. They are often armed and visibly move about with weapons (like daggers, machetes, arrows etc) to protect their live stocks, the more disturbing issues about the pastoralists is that they also block the highways with their cattle, rob and kidnap people, keep them captives in the bush and demand for ransom. The herdsmen have also been involved in the rape of old and young women and burning of communities (The Vanguard, 2015) due to their violent nature and associated killings, the group was described as the world's fourth deadliest militant group (GTI,2015; Mikailu, 2016).

Agriculturalists

Agriculturalists also called farmers are persons who engage in agriculture, raising living organisms for food or raw materials. The term therefore applies to people who do some combination of raising field crops, orchards, vineyards, poultry, or other livestock. Based on this broad definition, agriculturalists are both the herdsmen who herd or keep livestock like cattle, goat and sheep, and crop farmers. However, for the purpose of this study, agriculturalists are the crop farmers (those who raise field crops) also called peasant farmers/subsistent cultivators only.

Pastoralists-Agriculturalists conflicts

Pastoralists-agriculturalists conflicts are as old as the existence of man. Okoro (2018) avers that herdsmen/farmers or herder-farmer conflicts are conflicts occurring between peasant farmers or subsistent cultivators and nomadic or transhumance livestock keepers. According to Hagmann (2003), there exist differences between 'herder-herder' conflicts and 'farmer-herder' conflicts. He maintained that herder-herder conflict are conflict between transhumance livestock keepers that arise between receiving groups over their territory's resources and incoming groups searching for water and pastures, and cattle raiding. Herder-herder conflict is a conflict that results from theft of cattle or other animals among the Fulani herdsmen. It is herdsmen rustling cattle of other herdsmen, or when inexperienced herders entrust their animals in the care of experienced herders under agreement, and when such agreements are breached conflict occasions within. Hussein, Sumberg, and Seddon (1999) sea farmer-herder conflicts has comprising different types of conflicts, including ethnic conflicts, interest conflicts, resource dispute, political action, evictions, killings, cattle raiding and cattle rustling.

Theoretical Framework

According to Le Meur and Hochet (2010), theorizing pastoralists-agriculturalists conflicts remains very difficult, since the actors, causes and dynamics are complex and varied. They believe that a combination of theories is needed to explain vividly Pastoralists-agricultural conflict escalation. This is why this study adopts a twofold- theoretical perspective to discuss the issues in pastoralists-agricultural relations and to allow for a more in-depth understanding of the issues. Therefore this study adopts Intractable Conflict Theory and Frustration-Aggression Theory in order to understand the causes and effects of the pastoralists-agriculturalists clashes in Nigeria.

Intractable Conflict Theory

Intractable Conflict Theory was made popular by Northrup in 1989 essay titled, "The Dynamics of Identity in Personal and Social Contract". According to Maiese (2006), Conflicts that go unsolved for a long time and then become entrenched at a high degree of intensity and destructiveness are known as intractable. Many parties are usually involved, and they deal with a complex combination of historical, religious, cultural, political, and economic problems. These issues are fundamental to human social existence and are notoriously difficult to resolve. In reality, parties frequently refuse to discuss or compromise on such matters. As a result, each side sees the other's uncompromising stance as a danger to its own existence. They may acquire a mutual fear of each other as well as a strong desire to do each other as much bodily and psychological pain as possible. This sense of fear and animosity typically penetrates the participants' daily lives, obstructing their capacity to perceive whatever shared issues they may have. Any physical concerns may become buried inside a wider set of values, beliefs, identities, and cultures as conflict intensifies. Land, money, and other resource disputes may take on more symbolic significance.

According to Burgess and Burgess, 2006, Intractable Conflicts persist despite repeated attempts to resolve them. Each side regards the other's resolute stance as a threat to its own survival. They all involve interests or ideas that the disputants see as vital to their survival (Udo, 2021).

Frustration- Aggression Theory

In their book, "Frustration-Aggression 1939, John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer and Robert Sears, proposed a psychological frame work that sought to explain the relationship between Frustration and Aggression. The theory says that aggression is the result of blocking, or frustrating, a person's efforts to attain a goal (Friedman Schustak, 2014). The core principle of the theory argues that frustration always leads to some form of aggression, and aggression is always a result of frustration. They defined frustration as the state that emerges when an individual's goal-directed behaviour is blocked or thwarted. Aggression was described as a natural, instinctive response to frustration. They argued that the intensity and type of aggression depended on the severity of the frustration and the individual's circumstances.

However, in a reversed version, Miller and Sears re-formulated the hypothesis to suggest that while frustration creates a need to respond, some form of aggression is one possible outcome. Therefore, the re-formulates hypothesis stated that while frustration prompts a behaviour that may or may not be aggressive, any aggressive behaviour is the result of frustration, making frustration not sufficient, but a necessary condition for aggression (Zillmann Dolf, 1979). The theory says that frustration causes aggression, but when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target (scapegoat). Hence, it is also called /known as "Frustration-aggression-displacement theory".

Causes of Clashes between Pastoralists and Agriculturalists

The sparks for herder-farmers clashes tend to be disagreement over the use of land and water, livestock theft or the obstruction of traditional migration routes. But the conflict's roots lie in the - often forced- migration of the herders south from their traditional grazing grounds in Northern Nigeria. As drought and desertification have dried up springs and streams across Nigeria's far Northern Sahelian belt, large numbers of herders have had to search for alternative pastures and sources of water for their cattle. Insecurity in many Northern states due to the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast and under-reported rural banditry and cattle rustling in other areas, has also driven herders Southward. So, too, has the encroachment of settlements, farms and ranches on lands designated as grazing reserves by the pre-independence government of the former Northern region (now split into nineteen states).

As the herders migrate into the Savannah and rainforest of the central and southern states, they enter regions where high population growth over the decades has increased pressure on land. Not surprisingly, disputes over crop damage, water pollution and cattle theft have become more frequent. With the decline of traditional mediation mechanism and in the absence of mutually accepted alternatives, such quarrels increasingly turn violent.

Two additional factors have aggravated the conflict. Firstly, while the jihadist Boko Haram indiscriminately killed both Christians and Muslims, it also heightened religious insensitivities, leading mostly Christian southerners to resent the influx of predominantly Muslim herders, which some southern Christian leaders portray as an Islamising force. Secondly, the growing availability of illicit firearms - locally produced, circulating from other

Nigerian conflict zones in the North East and Niger Delta or smuggled in from other countries - has also enabled the carnage.

Alluding to the causes of pastoralists - agriculturalists conflicts in Nigeria, Okoro (2018) points to what can be referred to or regarded as the triggers and enablers to the conflict namely:

1) **Revenge or reprisal attacks**: For example, the conflict that resulted to the killing of 86 persons on the 4th of Dec. 2017 in Adamawa State was as a result of Pastoralist's reprisal to avenge the killing of 51 members of their community.

2) **Disputes over destruction of farmlands and crops**: the serial attacks on March 7, 8, 13 and 17 at Mbaya-Tombo in Benue State where over 35 persons died were precipitated by the destruction of their farmlands and crops.

3) **Grazing rights disputes**: Over 50 persons were killed on March 20th 2017 when the people of Zaki Biam in Benue State clashed with the Agriculturalists over the grazing space where Fulani Herdsmen claimed belong to them and were not allowed to access it.

4) **Decades-long history of violent competition for land resources:** Many people have died as a result of long term dispute of land resources between the herders and the farmers.

5) **Reactions to Anti-Grazing Law**: The anti open grazing law adopted by some states government has received open condemnation from the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN), which threatened to frustrate any move to enforce the law.

6) **Cattle Rustling**: Some of the attacks were triggered by cattle are stolen or harmed by some community youths. When this occurs, the Herdsmen vent their frustrations on anybody they spot around.

7**) Violence Habit**: The herders equally attack their victims without any known provocation. The herdsmen have a habit of sending their cattle to cultivated farmlands which destroy crops that are source of livelihood to the farmers. Any attempt to stop them from feeding their cattle on farmer's crops results in killing, raping and destruction of farmland as well as sacking of a whole community.

Drought and desertification in the North have forced pastoralist herdsmen to seek grazing lands further south resulting in competition over resources and clashes with settled farmers (UNTFHS,2019).

Effects of Clashes

Several landmarks of the crises between farmers and herders have been documented. According to Okoro (2018), the following under listed are some of them:

1**) Loss of Human Lives**: Most of the clashes have resulted to humanitarian catastrophe precipitating human loss for example according to Oli, Ibekwe and Nwankwo (2018), the Tiv people in Guma, Gwer-west, Makurdi and other towns at the border with Taraba State have recorded about 458 deaths and over 350 communities been sacked and are now living in IDP camps.

2**) Displacement of persons:** Reports of internally displacement of persons abounds. Displacement occurs when herdsmen and farmers clash. Displaced farmers have become liabilities to other farmers whom they have to beg for food for themselves and their families.

3) **Destruction of houses:** Clashes between herders and farmers are also not leaving houses untouched in most affected communities across Nigeria. For Instance, the killing of Nimbo indigenes in Uzo-Uwani LGA of Enugu State where 40 deaths were recorded also saw to the destruction of ten residential houses, a church, in addition to vehicles, motorcycles and domestic animals.

4) **Destruction of farmland and crops**: It is Factual to say that most clashes between herdsmen and farmers were triggered as a result of frustration from farmers whose farmlands and crops were destroyed by herders.

5) **Distrust:** The conflict has created distrust between the two groups-farmers now see herdsmen as intruders and vice versa.

6) **Unemployment:** About 90% of the rural population is involved in activities related to the crop sub-sector which provides the bulk of agricultural income. However, the current herdsmen-farmers imbroglio has continued to deny many farmers access to their farmlands-many community members deserting their farmlands and already cultivated crops in fear of being attacked by the herdsmen.

Moreover, they result in significant loss of lives and livelihoods, undermine food security, permit the proliferation of small arms, displace large numbers of people, and divert resources meant for development, Vulnerable groups such as women, children and youth, IDPs and indigenous people are particularly impacted (UNTFHS, 2019).

Interventions by the Government

The violence arising from conflicts between the herders and farmers in Nigeria are not new, so also are efforts by governments in form of interventions. The under listed are some interventions by government as enumerated by Egbuta (2018):

1. **Creation of Grazing Reserves in 1965**: In 1965 the northern regional government initiated one of the first attempts to respond to the herdsmen-farmer conflict in the country. The grazing reserves allocated large portions of land to be exclusively used by herders to rear their livestock. However, the grazing reserve system was not supported adequately. The government was still in progress of initiating legislations to legitimise the grazing reserves before natural factors such as population growth and other relatable consequences like urbanisation, and migration encroached on these designated areas reducing chances of accessing the reserves,
2. **Establishment of the National Commission for Nomadic Education in 1989**: The federal government in 1989 established the NCNE and it is supported by the Nigerian legal system. The main goal of the programme was to integrate nomadic pastoralists into national life through mobile basic education and skill acquisition. The programme tended to integrate them into society through education.
3. **The use of Armed Forces to curb internal security**: One of the federal government's immediate measures to address the herdsmen-farmer conflicts is the

engagement of the armed forces of Nigeria as enshrined in the constitution. For example, in Plateau state, in 2001, the government deployed a Special Task Force called Operation Safe Heaven (STF-OSH) to check insecurity resulting from the herdsmen-farmers clashes. Recently, the OSH mandate was expanded to replace Operation Harbin Kunama 11 in Southern Kaduna state whose mandate was similar to that of OSH in Plateau. Presently, many are calling for a total declaration of a state of emergency in Benue and Plateau states as a result of gruesome killing and displacement of thousands of people in those states. Nigerians also expect the government to activate all the necessary sections of the constitution regarding the use of the military in internal security. This call came as a fall out of recent actions taken by the government to suppress the Indigenous People of Biafra's (IPOB) agitations in the South-East and similar uprising in other parts of the country. The military was deployed in September 2017 in an operation code named Operation Python Dance to suppress the (IPOB) agitation and protest.

4. **Establishment of the National Grazing Reserve Bill 2016**: A National Grazing Reserve bill was sponsored in 2016 at the parliament to address the herdsmen-farmer conflicts. The Bill did not survive due to opposition from different stakeholders. Those that opposed the Bill hinged their rejection on the provisions of the Land Use Act of 1998 which vests all powers related to the regulation of ownership, acquisition, administration, and management of Nigerian Land with the state governors. Thus, the Land Use Act is an act of the National Assembly, and by implication, a binding Legislation, unless it is amended. State governments and their representatives at the parliament have always opposed any attempt to establish grazing reserves in their domain. They consider it to be usurping the constitutional powers vested in them.
5. **Proposed Cattle Ranching System 2018**: In reaction to increasing conflict and mass killings resulting from seasonal pastoral movements, the government in 2018, as a matter of policy approved a 10-year National Livestock Plan at a cost of about 179 billion naira. The plan would culminate in the establishment of 94 ranches in 10 pilot states of the federation. Again, state governments, especially in the South and North Central areas rejected the proposal on the grounds of not having enough space for such projects.
6. **Legislation Prohibiting Open Grazing**: As part of measures to end the persistent conflict between herdsmen and farmers in various states, government at state levels began enacting legislations prohibiting open grazing in their state. This, they hope would reduce the risk of herdsmen destruction of farmlands and the associated conflicts. Benue, Ekiti and Taraba states are leading this opposition by enacting state laws prohibiting open grazing. On 22 May 2017 Benue State enacted the open grazing prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law (2017) and its implementation began on 1 November 2017. Ekiti and Taraba states have also signed Bills prohibiting open grazing in their states. This makes open grazing under any guise, an illegal activity punishable by law.
7. **The Great Green Wall Agency of the Federal Government**: In 2013 the Federal government established the Great Green Wall Agency to tackle desertification. This was in response to the 2007 African Union Great Green Wall Initiative that aimed at

encouraging member states to plant 800km of trees along the Southern Sahel to counter the effects of desertification along that area. Continued desert encroachment along the Sahel region as a result of climate change is a major factor responsible for seasonal migration of herdsmen from one region to other in search of Water and Vegetation for cattle grazing.

Criticisms of Government Interventions

The country has been bedeviled with non-visionary and incompetence on the part of the various governments in Nigeria since its inception (Bamiyi, 2013). Livestock keeping subsector has been one of the areas that has not enjoyed goodies from various agricultural policies. Mayekodunmi et al; (2014) and Ducrotoyetal; (2016) discovered that the data generated from their studies from Katcha Grazing Reserve in Nigeria were not different from what had been generated over the past forty years and so found that productivity and management practices have remained relatively static, implying that these pastoralists have not benefited from the activities of other stakeholders, Including the government. If attention had been given and livestock farming had been rightly funded while formed education had been promoted among all Nigerians, the country should not be groaning on herder/farmers clashes (Ogunbode et al; 2023). Livestock keeping is a sector that should be generating substantial revenue to the government if it has taken care of it as it should be (Philip et al; 2009). Various policies of the government have not considered comparative advantage of various regions and areas in the country. It is expected that if the northern part of the country had been developed for its livestock keeping and the Southern part had been developed for its tree crop farming, the crises between the herders and farmers would not have been (Nwoko 1981; Philip et al; 2009; Jabbar et al; 2002).

Recommendations

1. The government both federal and states should establish cattle ranches at strategic locations. Those interested in cattle rearing can take advantage of that and pay taxes to the government.
2. States enacting anti-open grazing laws should see the herders not as unwanted intruders but as a crucial link in the food security chain. The state governments should implement open grazing bans in phases.
3. Community leaders should curb inflammatory rhetorics and encourage compromise. Herders' organizations must accept that the old frameworks of farmer-herder relations and conflict resolution are no longer workable and that a transition to ranching is, over time, likely inevitable.
4. There is need to strengthen the judicial system and customary institutions so that grievances related to land use or resource allocation can be settled through legal processes rather than through violence.
5. International partners should advocate for accountability and support livestock sector reform in line with 21st century global best practices.
6. The media should ensure a balanced reporting of the herdsmen/farmers conflict as a means of de-escalating the conflict. There are instances where the media practitioners seem to be biased in favour of one group against the other in their reportage.
7. Government through the security agencies should mop up all small arms and light weapons from unauthorized users and block all their entry points into the country.

Evaluation and Conclusion

The pastoralists-agriculturalists conflict has arguably become the greatest threat to Nigeria's peace and security. It is exerting an ever-deadlier toll and could destabilise the country if nothing serious is done by the government to contain it without measures ranging from immediate genuine dialogue between affected communities to long term livestock sector reform, the conflict risks escalating. Findings from available literature reveal that factors triggering herdsmen/farmers conflict in Nigeria are competition for resources, desertification, anti-open grazing laws, lopsided reportage by the media, and lack of appreciable efforts by the federal/ state governments to stop the attack. The attendant consequences include low agricultural output, loss of lives and properties, hunger and insecurity. It is strongly advocated here for transition from open grazing to ranching, which involves giving up traditions developed over many centuries of pastoralism, though, will not be easy. But it is not impossible and not without benefits. The leaders of herders' groups should endeavour to persuade their members to embrace ranching or related alternative vocations.

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Security challenges and tourism growth in Southeastern Nigeria: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

In the context of Southeastern Nigeria, where the area's rich cultural heritage and natural attractions contrast with growing security challenges, the relationship between security and tourism has become increasingly critical. This article critically examines the impact of insecurity on tourism growth in the study area.It identifies key security challenges, including insurgency, communal conflicts, activities of unknown gunmen, kidnappings, and infrastructural inadequacies, that hinder the area's potential as a tourism hub.Despite the importance of tourism to economic development, there is a dearth of research on the impact of security challenges on tourism growth in Southeastern Nigeria. The security challenges facing Southeastern Nigeria are escalating, and it is essential to understand their impact on tourism growth and development. Methodologically, data were obtained through a review of existing literature and other documentary sources on tourism and security in Southeastern Nigeria. The data was analyzed descriptively. Findings reveal that persistent insecurity not only deters tourist arrivals but also affects local livelihoods and investment opportunities. The article concludes by proposing strategic measures for mitigating security risks, including improved governance, community policing, and sustainable development initiatives. Ultimately, the study underscores the imperative of prioritizing security to unlock Southeastern Nigeria's tourism potential and foster regional economic growth.

Keywords: Security challenges, tourism growth, Southeastern Nigeria, economic development, insurgency.

Introduction

Nigeria is the largest country in Africa, both in population and economy, with an estimated population of over 200 million people, with enormous potential and, undoubtedly, good access to skills, fertile land, mineral resources, capital, and technology, and a favorable geographic location, with a GDP of $488 billion and a GDP per capita of $2,688 (National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria, 2014 in Elechi et al., 2023). Nigeria is among the African countries with significant tourist attractions globally. Southeastern Nigeria is endowed with different economic, natural, and human resources that can be exploited for mutual benefits (Elechi et al., 2023). This is evidenced in its rich cultural heritage, vibrant festivals, historical

landmarks, and natural attractions such as caves, waterfalls, and wildlife reserves. These features position the area as a potential tourism hub in Nigeria and West Africa. Despite this potential, the tourism sector has struggled to thrive due to various systemic challenges, with insecurity being a significant deterrent.

Tourism is one of the world's fastest-growing industries and a major foreign exchange and employment generator for many countries. It is one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena. Tourism is one of the largest contributors to gross domestic product (GDP), economic development, and job creation (UNWTO, 2018). The rising number of people around the world that are patronizing tourism for diverse reasons has transcended the sector among the fastest-growing businesses in Africa. Though the security challenges that are bedeviling the continent are affecting the progress of tourism development in different parts of the world, as many tourists will avoid visiting attraction areas that are unsecured.

The word 'tour' is derived from the Latin word tornus, meaning 'a tool for making a circle. Tourism may be defined as the movement of people from their usual place of residence to another place (with the intention to return) for a minimum period of twenty-four hours to a maximum of six months for the sole purpose of leisure and pleasure (Tourism Notes, 2024). Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that involves people traveling for leisure, pleasure, and relaxation, often for personal or professional purposes. Visitors, also known as tourists or excursionists, are individuals who engage in tourism activities, some of which may involve expenditure, and can be residents or non-residents.

Security is a cornerstone of tourism development, as safety concerns are a primary consideration for travelers. A secure environment not only attracts domestic and international tourists but also fosters investments in infrastructure, hospitality, and local businesses. Conversely, insecurity tarnishes a area's reputation, reduces tourist arrivals, and stifles economic growth. In the case of Southeastern Nigeria, persistent security threats have hampered the realization of its tourism potential. Not only in Nigeria, the global tourism sector is presently facing serious security threats. Places of tourist attractions have happened to be key areas of terrorists' attacks. It is a common knowledge that security has become a scarce It is a common knowledge that security has become a scarce commodity as long as the enclave called Nigeria is concerned (Ifegwu & Bridge, 2022).

Security has become a major concern at global, regional, and national levels. Safety and security are among the most basic needs in life and are essential in tourism as in other research areas. Safety and security are among the basic needs of people and critical for the tourism sector, considering the mobility of tens of millions of people every year. People want

to know that they are safe, and a crisis is highly likely to emerge if they feel their safety is threatened in a destination they prefer for vacation (Toker & Emir, 2023).Direct or indirect human-related security issues, such as terrorist attacks, local wars, natural disasters, and health concerns, can lead potential tourists to reconsider their destination preferences, change their destination, or cancel their travel plans (Hamarneh & Jeřábek, 2018).

Security is a situation where people are free from all forms of threat or fear to their lives and valuables (properties). In other words, security means that citizens are free to go about their everyday lives without fear or threat to their lives and livelihoods in any part of the country.There is an ultimate relationship between security and tourism development. Stability and peace are generally considered significant and ultimate prerequisites for tourism development. Therefore, security is the catalyst of development and a major determining force of the stability of every country in the world. The current Nigeria's security threats in the form of ethnic/religious violence, kidnapping, and insurgencies are presumed to be the major challenges that are affecting the development of tourism in the country.

Security and tourism are paramount to many nations' development. This study is essential and timely in Nigeria, as tourist' centers have become no-go areas in recent years as a result of ethnic clashes, religious extremism, kidnapping, armed robbery, and ritual killings (Umeakuka, 2022).The study of security challenges in southeastern Nigeria becomes imperative because the increase in competitiveness and attractiveness of tourist destinations depends on it. Given the inestimable value of S&S in tourism destinations, especially in the area of image-making and generating tourist traffic with economic gains, among others, a study of this nature is needed, and the value of tourism scholarship cannot be overemphasized (Muoneke, 2024).

This article critically analyzes the intersection of security challenges and tourism growth in Southeastern Nigeria since there is a dearth of research on the study topic in Southeastern Nigeria. The security challenges facing Southeastern Nigeria are escalating, and it is essential to understand their impact on tourism growth and development. The paper seeks to unpack the various dimensions of insecurity plaguing the study area, assess their impacts on the tourism sector, and propose strategies to mitigate these challenges while fostering sustainable tourism development. The study has significant implications for policymakers, tourism stakeholders, and security agencies in Nigeria and beyond. The findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the complex relationships between security challenges and tourism growth and provide valuable insights for promoting tourism development in Southeastern Nigeria. It will provide policymakers with a deeper

understanding of the study topic, enabling them to develop effective policies and strategies to address these challenges. The study will contribute to the economic development of Southeastern Nigeria, creating jobs, generating revenue, and reducing poverty.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to critically analyze the relationship between security challenges and tourism growth in Southeastern Nigeria, focusing on:

- To identify some major tourist attractions and cultural heritage sites in Southeastern Nigeria
- To identify and analyze the major security issues impacting the study area.
- To evaluate the effects of insecurity on tourism growth and the local economy
- To explore opportunities for tourism growth despite security challenges.
- To propose actionable strategies and policy recommendations to enhance security and revitalize tourism in Southeastern Nigeria.

Scope and Methodology

The study focuses on the five states in Southeastern Nigeria (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo), examining security and tourism trends over the past decade. Methodologically, data were obtained through a review of existing literature and other documentary sources on tourism and security in Southeastern Nigeria. The data collection methods and analysis focused on identifying key security concerns and their impact on tourism development. The research focused on gathering detailed and insightful information to understand the multifaceted nature of security issues and their direct and indirect effects on tourism development. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and pathways to sustainable tourism development in the area.

Literature Review

Security

Security is seen as the feeling of safety from harm or danger; that is, it has to do with the defense, protection, and preservation of values and the absence of threats in the process of acquiring values (George-Genyi, 2013 in Elechi et al., 2023). For Adeleke (2013), security is seen as freedom from threat or violence, which could lead to loss of lives and properties. Deriving from the above, security can be seen as a situation where people are free from all

forms of threat or fear to their lives and valuables (properties). In other words, security means that citizens are free to go about their everyday lives without fear or threat to their lives and livelihoods in any part of the country (Elechi et al., 2023). Safety and security issues in tourism have become especially important with the evolution of mass tourism after the 1950s. The reasons that accelerate this evolution are the fact that tourism is not confined to a narrow social group or class activity but spread to the general population with the increase in personal income and leisure time, which affects a growing number of countries in the world, and that the advancements in transportation technologies increase geographical mobility (Toker & Emir, 2023).Although the relationship between tourism and safety and security had existed since the period when tourism emerged as an industry, academic interest in the subject started only in the 1970s. However, it is only in the last few decades that tourism safety and security research has gained momentum (Toker & Emir, 2023). Boustras & Waring (2020) have evaluated principal components linking the concepts of safety and security and considered their impacts on various environments. The results concluded that more integration of safety and security is necessary for theoretical, empirical, policy, and practitioner evaluations and programs at both the governmental and business levels. In the field of education, Xaba (2014) conducted a literature review on school safety and security and made suggestions for South Africa. Based on the evaluations, he underlined that the maintenance of facilities and school environment surveillance is critical for safety and security. Safety and security have become a source of concern for tourism stakeholders and beyond, due to their role in destination attractiveness and their capacity to affect tourists' intent to travel. Unfortunately, insecurity appears to be a common feature in many emerging economies like Nigeria, where herdsmen, religious and political violence, kidnapping, etc. affect tourism development and growth (Muoneke, 2024).

In the last twenty years, safety and security have become prominent issues due to natural disasters, epidemics, and social violence occurring around the world. There was severe harm to tourism in Japan due to the fear and anxiety after the Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami in 2011; the incidents, such as theft, fraud, harassment in India (Shu-Pin & Shih-Yen, 2011). sexual assault and murder of tourists in Thailand (Mydans, 2008); pickpocketing, mugging, and theft, which are common in Bangkok (Batra, 2008); robbery, rape, and murder of tourists who are considered easy prey in Malaysia (Amir et al., 2015). the dramatic decrease in tourism activities and tourist arrivals the coup attempt in Turkey in 2016 (Yıldız & Işıldar, 2020), and the COVID-19 outbreak brought tourism activities to a standstill in 2019 and demonstrated the eminent position of safety and security issues in tourism.

Furthermore, Russian aggression toward Ukraine in the first weeks of 2022 will negatively affect tourism both in Russia and Ukraine for safety and security reasons and in countries such as Turkey, which hosts millions of tourists from both countries. In addition to disasters, attacks, and epidemics, food significantly impacts the issue of safety and security (Toker & Emir, 2023). Given that dining is one of the main services provided in the tourism industry, numerous food-based incidents in China (Lee & Boccalatte, 2019) publicly witnessed by the global community in recent years have also raised serious concerns about destination safety and security.

Terrorism and local security threats are identified as one of the challenges of inbound tourism in South-Eastern Nigeria (Nwokorie et al., 2014). This factors were emphasized in the study of Ukabuilu et al., (2018), unsafe environment (security concern) poses a problem to tourism development. Security concerns, fear of diseases and outbreak of epidemic were also indicated as impediments to inbound tourism during festivals and cultural events with the study area; no thanks to the negative local press. However, most rural communities in the study area are in dare need of hospitals and improved healthcare services (Ukabuilu et al., 2018). Security and safety in tourism in Nigeria: S&S is a basic concern for any tourist; they influence travelers' decisions and intentions (Kaszás & Keller, 2022) for travel plans. This means promoting tourism in Nigeria requires an adequate S&S network around tourist facilities to protect visitors (Kaszás & Keller, 2022).

Security and Tourism Growth/Development

Tourism/tourist safety and security are not only the premises of general tourism activities (Ding & Wu, 2022) but critical factors in tourism development and for the basic physiological needs of people. Participation of tens of millions of people from all over the world in various tourism activities also shows safety and security are integral parts of tourism that must be kept on the agenda (Toker & Emir, 2023). Safety and security, hereinafter referred to as S&S, are major variables that affect destination attractiveness and competitiveness due to their ability to affect tourists' decisions in choosing destinations (Santana-Gallego et al., 2019). But where safety and security are ignored, the destination is bound to lose or be edged out in the ever-competitive tourism market (Badiora et al., 2022). According to the study of Muoneke (2024) S&S in tourism has also become a source of concern to tourism stakeholders across the globe, causing it to appear in the Africa Union Agenda of 2063 with the interest of making Africa a preferred destination. Both are major

factors that influence tourist's decisions towards visiting destinations(Chili, 2018). This entails that the S&S of a destination has a likelihood of determining its success or failure (Owiyo & Mulwa, 2018).

The economic outcome of tourism potentials has made countries of the world (developed and developing) to adopt measures and/or tourism oriented programmes that will curtail forms of threats to tourism development and tourists (Imikan & Ekpo, 2012). This is because tourism potentials have moved nations of the world toward achieving its economic goals. For this reason, tourism has been called to take its place in nation's development goals. This, in turn, made countries with tourism potentials to promote products of tourism attractions to its development projects. An industry that to the best of our knowledge is most affected by insecurity is the tourism industry (Asongu et al., 2019).

Tourism has many connotations as it has different connections to different people. Tourism is defined as 'the act and process of spending time away from home in pursuit of recreation, relaxation, and pleasure, while making use of the commercial provision of service (Walton, 2021). In tourism studies, researchers have found that the feeling of safety is an important factor for the choice of tourists' destination (Achu et al., 2024; S. Asongu et al., 2019; Ukabuilu et al., 2018). Hence, security is ranked above infrastructures, favourable economic environment, capital investment and technology as determinants of tourism development (Awode, 2020). In this vein, studies have found that insecurity is the major factor that is negatively affecting the development of Nigeria's tourism industry, and its choice as a tourist destination (Mshelia et al., 2024; Ukabuilu et al., 2018). Global characteristics of peace and insecurity influence travelers' decision on potential countries of destination (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006).Accordingly, the selection of a travelling destination by a tourist is largely determined by safety concerns which are contingent on security risks and ability of forces of law and order to mitigate such underlying security risks (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006; Seabra et al., 2013).

The Study Area – Southeastern Nigeria

The Southeastern region of Nigeria, comprised of five states, namely Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo states, with 85 local government areas, has a population of over 20 million people in fourteen major cities and towns (Emegha, 2023). Southeastern Nigeria, strategically located in the southern part of the country, is home to the Igbo people, renowned for their cultural heritage and economic contributions.Southeastern Nigeria is strategically

located in the southern part of the country, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the south, the Middle Belt to the north, and the Niger River to the west. Southeastern Nigeria, bordered by Cameroon and South South and South West zones, is centrally located within Nigeria, offering trade and cultural exchange opportunities. Covering 65,000 square kilometers, it features diverse topography.

Southeastern Nigeria's tropical climate, with distinct wet and dry seasons, supports the cultivation of staple crops like yam, cassava, cocoyam, and plantain. Rainfall in Southeastern Nigeria leads to lush vegetation, including tropical rainforests and oil palm plantations. Fertile soil supports agriculture and ecotourism, with diverse forests offering biodiversity. Southeastern Nigeria, a place with strong political traditions, has historically been a hub of state and national politics, influenced by issues like resource allocation and federalism.

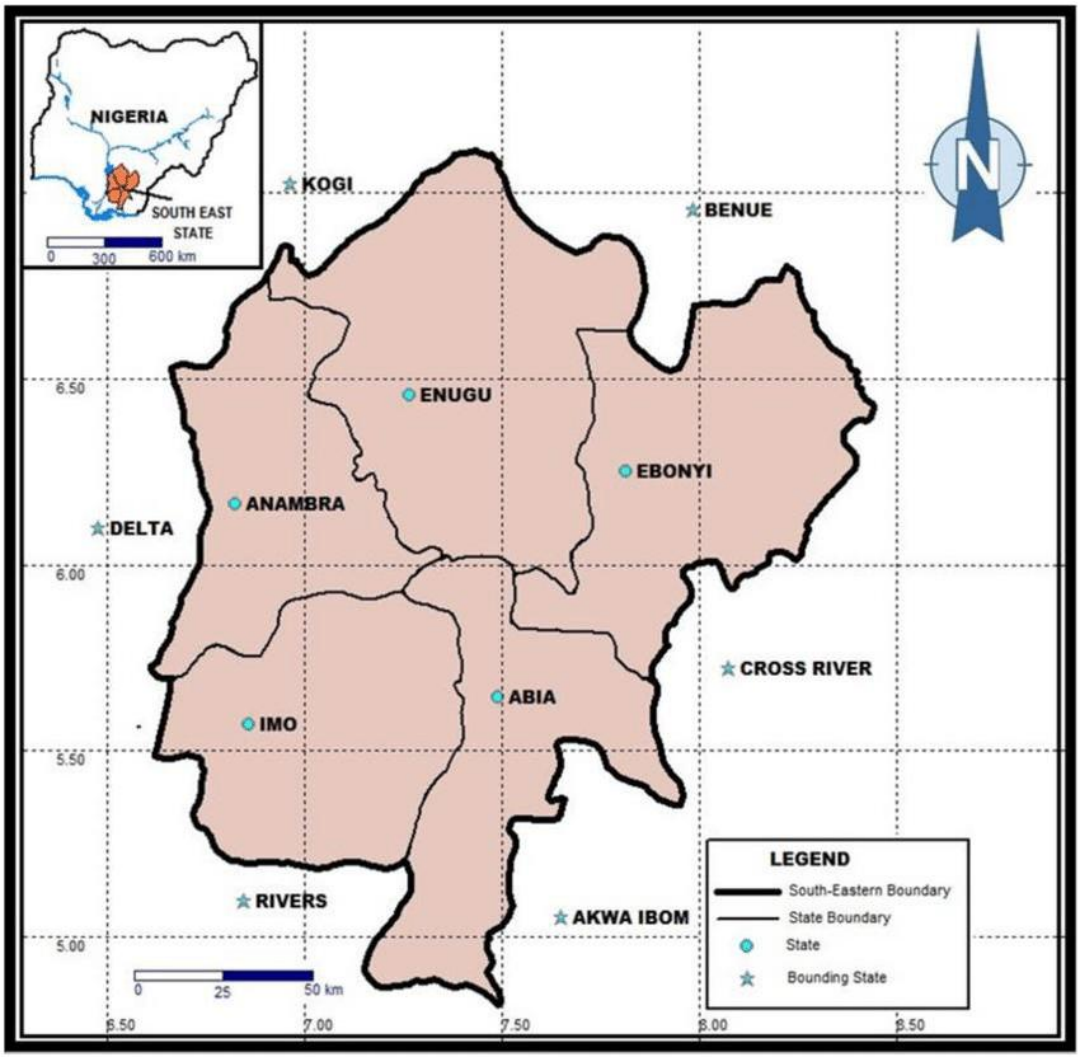


Fig 1: Map of Southeastern Nigeria Showing the Five States (Onoja et al., 2015)**.**

Findings

Major Attractions and Cultural Heritage Sites

Southeastern Nigeria boasts a diverse array of attractions that highlight its rich cultura,l natural heritage and ecological diversity of Igbo people, offering a compelling destination for both domestic and international tourists. It is a treasure trove of natural wonders, cultural sites, and historical landmarks. Here are some of the top attractions to explore:

Natural Wonders/Attractions (e.g waterfalls, caves and hills)

- **Azumini Blue River (Abia State):** A picturesque riverwith crystal-clear waters, perfect for swimming, fishing, boating, and relaxation.
- **Arochukwu Waterfall and Cave (Abia State):** A picturesque waterfall surrounded by lush vegetation, offering a tranquill atmosphere for relaxation and picnics. Arochukwu has a historic cave that served as a hideout during the Nigerian Civil War, now popularly tourist destination for its natural beauty and historical significance.
- **Ihediowa Spring (Abia State):** A natural spring with crystal-clear waters, believed to possess healing properties, attracting visitors seeking spiritual rejuvenation.
- **Umuahia Waterfalls and Hills (Abia State):** A scenic waterfall perfect for hiking, picnics, and relaxation. Umuahia has a picturesque hill range with breathtaking views, perfect for hiking, picnics, and relaxation.
- **National War Museum Umuahia (Abia State):**The National War Museum in Umuahia is a fascinating place to visit, showcasing Nigeria's military history, particularly the Biafra-Nigeria Civil War. The museum features a collection of tanks, armored vehicles, ships, and aircraft from Nigeria and the defunct Republic of Biafra.
- **Ogbunike Caves (Anambra State):** A UNESCO World Heritage Sites featuring ancient caves, waterfalls, and unique rock formations.
- **Agulu Lake and Waterfall (Anambra State):** A scenic lake with crystal-clear waters, sorroundes by lush vegetation and offering opportunities for boating, fishing, and relaxation. The waterfall is perfect for hiking, picnics, and relaxation.
- **Owerre Ezukala Cave and Waterfall (Anambra State):** A picturesque waterfall surrounded by lush vegetation, offering a tranquil atmosphere for relaxation and picnics.
- **Omabala River (Anambra State):** A serene river that flows through the heart of Anambra State, providing a tranquil atmosphere for picnics, boat cruises, and fishing.

- **Abakaliki Green Lake (Ebonyi State):** A scenic lake with crystal-clear waters, surrounded by lush vegetation and offering opportunities for boating, fishing, and relaxation.
- **Okposi Salt Spring (Ebonyi State):** A natural spring with crystal-clear waters, believed to possess healing properties, attracting visitors seeking spiritual rejuvenation.
- **Oferekpe Waterfall (Ebonyi State):** A picturesque waterfall surrounded by lush vegetation, offering a tranquil atmosphere for rexation and picnics.
- **Akaeze Cave (Ebonyi State):** A historic cave that served as a hideout during the Nigerian Civil War, now popular tourist destination for its natural beauty and historical significance.
- **Awhum Waterfalls and Cave (Enugu State)**: Awhum Waterfall, a serene natural site in Udi Local Government Area, is a popular destination for tourists and religious pilgrims due to its serene environment and spiritual significance, despite its remote location and limited access roads.
- **Ngwo Pine Forest (Enugu State)**: A picturesque forest offering tranquility and eco-tourism opportunities. A scenic forest with limestone caves, waterfalls, and picnic areas.
- **Nike Lake (Enugu State):** Nike Lake, a renowned natural landmark in Enugu, offers serene landscapes and recreational activities, and holds cultural significance for the Nike people. Despite its picturesque environment, its tourism potential is underdeveloped due to limited infrastructure.
- **Udi Hills (Enugu State):**Udi Hills, a symbol of Enugu's natural landscape, are the site of Nigeria's first coal mines, a significant industrial heritage, offering breathtaking views, ideal for hiking and sightseeing.
- **Ezeagu Tourist Complex (Enugu State):** A cultural and recreational centre featuring a museum, art gallery, and outdoor exhibits showcasing the history and traditions of the Ezeagu people.
- **Akwuke Beach (Enugu State):** Akwuke beach, located in Akwuke community, is a popular tourist destination offering natural beauty, cultural significance, and recreational activities. Accessible by car or public transportation, it serves as a water source and income source for surrounding communities, including tipper drivers.
- **Adada River (Enugu State):** The Adada River, a cultural, economic, and environmental asset, flows through various communities and is revered in traditional

Igbo culture. The river originates from Lejja (Shrine) through Udi Hills and flows into the Cross River. It's used for commercial fishing, irrigation, picnics, and recreation, attracting tourists and generating revenue for local communities.

- **Oguta Lake (Imo State)**: Nigeria's second largest natural freshwater lake, offering stunning views, boating, fishing opportunities and relaxation.
- **Urashi River (Imo State)**: A serene river that flows through the heart of Imo State, providing a tranquil atmosphere for picnics, boat cruises, and fishing.
- **Amusement Park, Owerri (Imo State)**: A popular recreational spot featuring a zoo, gardens, and children's play areas, perfect for family outings and relaxation.
- **Nekede Zoo (Imo State)**: A wildlife reserve home to various animal species, including lions, monkeys, and crocodiles, offering a unique opportunity for wildlife exploration.
- **Njaba River and waterfall (Imo State):** A picturesque waterfall surrounded by lush vegetation, offering a tranquil atmosphere for relaxation and picnics.
- **Uhuru Cave (Imo State):** A historic cave that served as a hideout during the Nigerian Civil War, now a popular tourist's destination for its natural beauty and historical significance.

Cultural Heritage Sites (e.g e.g., festivals, traditional art, historical landmarks).

- **Igbo-Ukwu Archaeological Sites (Anambra State)**: Renowned for ancient bronze artifacts showcasing the advanced metallurgy of the Igbo civilization.
- **Lejja Arcaheological Site (Enugu Stae)**:
- **Nri Kingdom (Anambra State)**: Considered the cradle of Igbo culture and spirituality.
- **Arochukwu Long Juju Shrine (Abia State)**: A historic and spiritual site with links to the slave trade era.
- **Awka Cultural Centres (Anambra)**: A cultural and recreational center featuring a museum, art gallery, and outdoor exhibits showcasing the history and traditions of the Awka people.
- **Mbari Cultural and Art Centre (Imo State)**: An outdoor art gallery showcasing traditional Igbo art, culture, and architecture, set amidst a serene and natural environment.
- **Traditional Palaces and Shrines**: These historic resources abound in all the communities in Southeastern Nigeria.

- **Abakaliki Museum (Ebonyi State)**: A museum featuring exhibits on the history, culture, and traditions of the Ebonyi people.
- **Igbo-Ukwu Museum (Anambra State)**: This museum houses ancient artifacts, including bronze works that date back to the 9th century. It is a testament to the advanced civilization and artistic craftsmanship of the Igbo people.
- **Ojukwu Bunker (Abia State)**: A historical site from the Nigerian Civil War, the bunker offers visitors a glimpse into the region's political history and resilience.
- **Arochukwu Long Juju Shrine (Abia State)**: Steeped in history, this shrine is linked to the slave trade era and the spiritual traditions of the Arochukwu people. It attracts both cultural enthusiasts and historians.
- **National War Museum (Abia State)**: This museum preserves artifacts from the Nigerian Civil War, offering educational experiences for visitors interested in the region's history.
- **Slave Route and Relics (Arochukwu, Abia State)**: A sobering reminder of the transatlantic slave trade, this site provides historical context and insight into the resilience of the Igbo people.

Festivals and Cultural Events:

- **New Yam Festival**: Celebrated across the region, showcasing traditional customs and cuisines.
- **Ofala Festivals**: Royal ceremonies honoring traditional rulers, blending pageantry and history.
- **Masquerade Festivals**: Festivals showcase Igbo people's artistic and spiritual traditions, attracting visitors with colorful masks, intricate costumes, music, dance, and local cuisine, fostering cultural exchange and communal pride.
- **Traditional Crafts**: Artisans in the region produce exquisite works, including pottery, weaving, and wood carving, which are sought after by tourists as souvenirs.

Ecotourism and wildlife reserves

- **Ngwo Pine Forest (Enugu State)**: A serene forested area with picturesque pine trees, ideal for picnics and eco-tourism activities.
- **Amadioha Shrine and Forest Reserve (Imo State)**: A sacred site blending spirituality and nature conservation, attracting both eco-tourists and cultural enthusiasts.

- **National Parks and Reserves (Enugu State)**: While less developed compared to other areas, Southeastern Nigeria has untapped potential for wildlife conservation and ecotourism, providing opportunities for birdwatching and nature exploration.

Major Security Issues in Southeastern Nigeria

Southeastern Nigeria faces security challenges affecting socio-economic development, stability, and safety. These include kidnapping, armed banditry, political instability, communal conflicts, land disputes, and cybercrime, posing a threat to tourism and investment potential.

1. Kidnapping and Armed Banditry

Kidnapping and armed banditry are major security concerns in Southeastern Nigeria, with criminal groups targeting individuals and groups for ransom, demanding large sums for release.

In Abia State, high-profile kidnappings have led to widespread fear, impacting various sectors, including the tourism industry. In 2021, a businessman, Kenechukwu Okeke, at Umuozuo village in the Osisioma council was kidnapped by four armed men, leading to widespread fear and affecting other sectors of society (Nwankwo, 2021).Local residents and visitors in Imo State have been urged to be cautious due to increased kidnapping activities targeting both wealthy and ordinary citizens. Weekly, individuals are kidnapped in five states, often innocent travelers, by ruthless kidnappers who demand ransom from their families.

Kidnapped victims survived or died after paying ransom, with some surviving and others being killed, causing a 'Sambisa Forest' in the villagers' bushes. Governor Alex Otti's administration has made significant strides in enhancing security in Abia, but recent attacks and killings have questioned the effectiveness of these measures. The Otti administration resisted criminal threats to South East residents, especially those using the busy Enugu-Port Harcourt road, especially on the Isiukwuato and Umunneochi axis (Vanguard News Nigeria, 2024).Governor Otti revealed 50 decomposing and 20 headless bodies were found around Lokpanta Cattle Market in Uthe Umunneochicouncil, highlighting the potential for similar incidents in other forests and bushes due to recent pains (Vanguard News Nigeria, 2024).Gunmen abducted a lawyer and two others in Nkpologwu, Aguata LGA of Anambra, who were visiting from Rivers State for an event (Vanguard News Nigeria, 2024). Enugu metropolis has seen security relief under Mbah administration, but outskirts like Ugwogo-

Opi-Nsukka, Ituku Ozalla, Four-Corner-Udi Road, Umumba, Mgbabgu Ìwa, and Ezeagu area council continue to face kidnapping incidents (Vanguard News Nigeria, 2024). Armed bandits in the region commit violent robberies, targeting businesses, transporters, and families, causing fear and insecurity, reducing the area's appeal to local and international tourists. Similarly, insecurity in Anambra State was high that a civilian governor in Anambra State was kidnapped in broad daylight (Anedo & Anedo, 2019). If a governor was kidnapped, what would happen to citizens and non-citizens, especially visitors? While this seems like rhetoric, it is worrisome for a state and nation that want to develop sustainable tourism.

2. Political Instability and Secessionist Agitations

Political instability and secession agitation, led by Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), have exacerbated security challenges in Southeastern Nigeria since the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970).The Biafra independence movement has sparked violent clashes between IPOB members and security forces, with militant wing ESN (Eastern Security Network) engaging in attacks, causing instability in Anambra, Imo, and Enugu States, similar to Boko Haram's insurgency.Political instability in Nigeria leads to attacks on government installations, security personnel, and perceived enemies, causing civilian casualties and property damage, and affecting tourism and investment.

3. Communal Conflicts and Land Disputes

Southeastern Nigeria faces long-standing communal conflicts and land disputes, often arising from competition over resources, ethnic rivalries, and local power struggles, which can escalate into violence due to farming.For example, in Ebonyi State, land disputes between farming communities and local governments have led to violent clashes between neighboring communities. The Akaeze people in Ebonyi State, for example, have had frequent confrontations with neighboring communities over the control of farmland, leading to killings and property destruction. Similarly, in Anambra State, disputes over boundaries and land ownership have triggered violent confrontations between communities, affecting not only the local residents but also disrupting businesses and travel in these areas.Communal conflicts, often involving ethnic clashes, harm individuals and discourage tourism, as tourists avoid violent areas, reducing revenue and reducing the region's potential as a safe travel destination.

4. Cybercrime and Fraud

Southeastern Nigeria faces cybercrime and fraud, causing socio-economic implications through online scams, identity theft, and hacking (commonly referred to as "Yahoo Yahoo"), causing significant financial losses for individuals and businesses.Southeastern Nigeria, particularly Enugu and Aba, has gained notoriety for internet fraud, with a number of young individuals participating in online scams aimed at defrauding foreigners, especially those in Western countries.Aba internet fraud syndicates engage in "419 scams" (advance-fee fraud), involving large sums of money in exchange for upfront payments, damaging the area's reputation and economic prospects. Cybercrime, often driven by desperation or financial gain, negatively impacts foreign investment, local businesses' credibility, and the international image of a region.Cybercrime in Southeastern Nigeria is causing data breaches, financial fraud, and loss of customer trust, requiring stronger cybersecurity measures and education.

5. **Activities of Unknown Gunmen in Southeastern Nigeria**

The rise of "unknown gunmen" in Southeastern Nigeria has become a significant security concern in recent years. These individuals or groups, often masked and operating under the cover of anonymity, have been responsible for a variety of violent activities that have led to widespread fear and insecurity in the area. The actions of these gunmen are diverse, including attacks on security personnel, government institutions, and civilians, often escalating into a climate of terror. This phenomenon has been particularly notable since 2020, with a surge in the activities of these unidentified groups, believed to be linked to agitations for Biafra and other political motivations.Unknown gunmen in Nigeria ambush and attack security forces using military-grade weapons, targeting police officers and law enforcement agents in southeastern states. In April 2021, a brutal attack on Imo State Police Command headquarters in Owerri, Nigeria, freed over 1,800 prisoners. Anambra State experienced increased attacks, causing high casualties and escalating insecurity. The gunmen, believed to be linked to the Eastern Security Network (ESN), a militia group associated with the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).

Unknown gunmen are attacking government institutions in Ebonyi and Enugu States, allegedly as part of a secessionist group, disrupting operations and challenging state authority. In Enugu State, unknown gunmen targeted the Enugu State Independent Electoral Commission (ENSIEC) office, destroying documents related to the upcoming local government elections. The attacks have paralyzed local administrative functions and left civil servants fearing safety.Unknown gunmen are targeting political figures, traditional rulers, and

influential individuals in Anambra State, creating fear and causing them to flee their communities. In 2021, Igwe Benjamin Eze, a prominent traditional ruler in Anambra State, was killed by unknown gunmen, a move seen as part of a strategy to destabilize the area. Similar attacks have been reported in other southeastern states, indicating a breakdown in law enforcement and potential government collaboration.

Gunmen in Imo State are targeting public infrastructure, disrupting movement, causing insecurity, and affecting businesses and travelers, thereby exacerbating the region's insecurity.Gunmen in Nigeria are targeting security personnel, government facilities, and civilians, collaborating with secessionist groups. Civilian attacks threaten population safety, displacement, and economic activity, limiting travel and tourism.Unknown gunmen in Southeastern Nigeria are using extortion to control local businesses, forcing owners to pay protection money to avoid attacks, affecting industries like transportation, construction, and retail.In Aba, business owners are coerced into paying gunmen for protection, leading to violent retaliation and a negative economic impact, as it drains resources, discourages investment, and fosters lawlessness.Gunmen in Anambra State are systematically destroying police and military equipment, causing symbolic and financial damage, hindering the state's ability to restore order and protect security agencies.

Discussion

Impact of Security Challenges on Tourism Growth in Southeastern Nigeria

The security challenges in Southeastern Nigeria, driven by factors such as kidnappings, political instability, communal conflicts, and the activities of unknown gunmen, have had a significant negative impact on tourism in the region. The region, known for its rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and vibrant history, has seen a marked decline in tourism due to escalating insecurity. The impacts of these security challenges can be classified into direct and indirect consequences for the tourism sector.

Direct Impacts on Tourism Growth

1. **Decline in Tourist Arrivals:** The most immediate and observable effect of the security situation in Southeastern Nigeria is the decline in tourist arrivals. As concerns about safety have risen, many potential visitors, both domestic and international, have opted to avoid the Southeastern area. Recent violence, security threats, and kidnappings have deterred tourists,

and foreign travel advisories have further limited tourism growth in the area.Kidnappings in Imo State have sparked fear among tourists, leading to a decline in popular tourist destinations like Ogba Waterfalls and Arochukwu Caves. Nigerian tourists avoid Southeastern destinations due to security concerns, including 2021 attacks on security forces in Owerri and government curfews, further discouraging visitors.

2. **Negative Perception of Safety in the Area:** Insecurity in Southeastern Nigeria has led to a negative perception of safety, with media portraying the area as volatile and dangerous, deterring tourists and investors. Negative media coverage and travel warnings create an unsafe perception of an area, overshadowing its attractions and cultural richness, and amplifying fear of visiting even isolated incidents.Governments like the US and UK frequently issue international travel advisories warning against travel to Southeastern Nigeria due to security threats, influencing tourists and travel agencies to choose safer destinations. Insecurity in Southeastern Nigeria discourages domestic tourists from exploring cultural festivals, leading to a decline in the tourism sector, which heavily relies on positive perceptions of safety.

3. **Loss of Revenue for Local Businesses and Governments:** The tourism sector in Southeastern Nigeria is facing security challenges, affecting local businesses and causing revenue loss for businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, tour operators, and souvenir vendors, relying on tourists.

Insecurity has led to decreased visitor numbers, resulting in lower revenue for state governments, hospitality businesses, and local communities, affecting entrance fees, sales of local crafts, and hotel patronage, and restaurants have all suffered as a result of insecurity.

In Aba, which is a major commercial hub, the fall in tourism has affected a variety of businesses. Local traders who sell arts and crafts to visitors, such as wood carvings and textiles, have experienced reduced sales due to a drop in tourist numbers. Hotels and guest houses in tourist areas like Enugu and Owerri are experiencing declining occupancy rates, impacting small business owners' livelihoods and local government income. The decrease in tourism's visitor numbers has severe economic impacts, particularly on rural communities, where it is a vital income source, disproportionately affecting individuals and small businesses.

4. Job Losses: The decline in tourism directly impacts employment opportunities in the hospitality and service sectors. Loss of income affects families and communities reliant on tourism for their livelihoods.

Indirect Impacts on Tourism Growth

1. Reduced Investment in Tourism Infrastructure: Insecurity in Southeastern Nigeria has led to reduced investments in tourism infrastructure, with both local and foreign investors being hesitant to invest in such unstable areas. Investments in tourism-dependent businesses, such as hotels, resorts, theme parks, and cultural centers, are crucial for attracting visitors and enhancing the tourism experience.Security concerns have led to delays in large-scale tourism projects like Anambra International Airport and Ebonyi State's attractions, reducing investor investment in new facilities.Underutilized infrastructure in Nigeria hinders tourism competitiveness, leading to reduced capacity and disrepair, compared to other regions offering better facilities and security.

2. Displacement of Local Communities

Southeastern Nigeria's security issues have resulted in the displacement of local communities, especially those affected by armed conflict, causing displacement of businesses and properties.The displacement of these communities' results in the loss of local cultures, traditions, and crafts that once served as a draw for tourists.Militant attacks and unknown gunmen in Imo State have caused displacement of residents, affecting areas with vibrant local markets and cultural festivals, and affecting tourism appeal. Displaced people seek safety in cities, disrupting local economies and reducing tourist attractions. These harms displaced individuals and weakens the tourism sector, as communities lack capacity for events, traditional art, and hospitality.

3. Long-Term Damage to the Areas Image: Security challenges can significantly impact tourism growth by damaging an area's image, which can take years or decades to recover from.Enugu, once a popular tourist destination, has experienced a decline in visitors due to rising insecurity and political unrest, affecting cultural festivals and the Enugu International Trade Fair, which were once a significant attraction.The negative image of Southeastern Nigeria discourages potential tourists from returning and considering the area as a destination, potentially leading to the emergence of other attractive destinations.

Opportunities for Tourism Growth Despite Security Challenges in Southeastern Nigeria

Despite the security challenges facing Southeastern Nigeria, the area has significant potential for tourism growth. By strategically leveraging its unique assets and addressing security concerns through innovative and collaborative approaches, Southeastern Nigeria can tap into opportunities that ensure the sustainable development of its tourism sector. These

opportunities include both leveraging existing strengths and implementing forward-looking strategies.

1. Abundance of Untapped Natural and Cultural Resources

Southeastern Nigeria is endowed with diverse natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and historical landmarks, many of which remain underutilized. Attractions like the Arochukwu Long Juju Shrine, Ogbunike Caves, and Oguta Lake have the potential to draw tourists if promoted effectively.Developing ecotourism packages around these attractions can appeal to a global market of environmentally conscious travelers.Promoting traditional festivals, such as the New Yam Festival and Ofala Festival, can attract cultural enthusiasts while preserving indigenous traditions. Many sites, such as lesser-known waterfalls, caves, and forests, remain unexploited for tourism. These attractions can be developed with sustainable practices to create new tourism opportunities. Coastal areas like the Oguta Lake basin hold potential for water sports and beach resorts.

2. Rise in Domestic Tourism

Domestic is the tourism activity of the people within their own country. Traveling within the same country is easier because it does not require formal travel documents and tedious formalities like compulsory health checks and foreign exchange. A traveler generally does not face many language problems or currency exchange issues in domestic tourism. As insecurity affects international travel, there is an increasing trend of Nigerians seeking domestic tourism experiences. Southeastern Nigeria can capitalize on this shift by promoting safe and culturally enriching travel experiences to domestic tourists.Creating weekend getaway packages for urban dwellers in nearby cities like Lagos and Abuja can encourage domestic visits.Investment in infrastructure, such as accessible road**s** and affordable accommodations, will support the influx of local tourists.

3. Potential for Community-Based Tourism

Involving local communities in the tourism value chain presents a dual benefit: enhancing security and creating economic opportunities. Community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives can empower locals to act as custodians of tourism sites while fostering trust between tourists and residents. This could be visible by encouraging homestays, community-guided tours, and cultural workshops can provide tourists with authentic experiences and ensure locals benefit

economically. Secondly, community involvement in site management and security patrols can enhance the safety and sustainability of tourism activities.

4. Leveraging Technology for Security and Marketing: Advancements in technology provide tools to both address security concerns and promote tourism effectively.The use of surveillance technologies, emergency alert apps, and online safety platforms can enhance tourist confidence.Digital platforms can be utilized to market the area's attractions to a global audience. For instance, using social media campaigns and virtual tours can boost visibility and appeal, even to cautious travelers.

5. Development of Niche Tourism Markets: Targeting specific tourism niches can help Southeastern Nigeria grow its tourism sector even amidst security challenges. Promoting heritage tourism, adventure tourism and religious tourismin the area**.** Highlighting the area's rich historical sites, such as the National War Museum in Umuahia, can attract visitors interested in history and culture.Activities like hiking at Awhum Waterfalls or exploring the caves and hills of the region can appeal to adventure seekers.The area is home to significant religious centers, such as the Adoration Ministry in Enugu, which already draws large crowds.

6. Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships: Collaboration between the government, private sector, and international organizations offers a pathway to tourism growth by involving public-private partnerships (PPPs), which can fund the development of tourism infrastructure, such as hotels, roads, and recreational facilities.Partnerships with international tourism boards and travel companies can enhance safety standards, improve visibility, and attract more tourists.

7. Development of Tourism Clusters: Creating tourism clusters; areas with concentrated tourism developmentcan help overcome security challenges by focusing resources on a manageable scale. For example:Developing security-enhanced zones around popular sites like Enugu's Ngwo Pine Forest and Abia's Arochukwu Caves can ensure the safety of visitors while promoting these areas.

8. Promoting Diaspora Engagement: Southeastern Nigeria has a large diaspora community with strong ties to their ancestral roots. Tourism campaigns targeting this group can help foster tourism growth.Organizing heritage tours or cultural festivals specifically for diaspora audiences can provide a safe and meaningful way for them to explore their heritage.Diaspora

investments in tourism-related businesses, such as hotels and tour companies, can stimulate growth while improving facilities and infrastructure.

9. Eco-Conscious Tourism Development: With global interest in sustainable tourism, Southeastern Nigeria has an opportunity to position itself as an eco-tourism destination. Protecting and showcasing natural reserves like Ngwo waterfall and pine forest can attract nature lovers and conservation-focused travelers.Initiatives such as tree planting, wildlife conservation projects, and eco-friendly lodging can align the region with global trends in green tourism.

10. Regional Collaboration for Security and Tourism Development

Southeastern Nigeria can collaborate with neighboring regions and countries to create **regional tourism corridors** that enhance security and draw tourists. Joint efforts to market the **Eastern Nigeria Cultural Circuit** could highlight a variety of safe and enriching experiences across states.

Proposing Actionable Strategies to Enhance Security and Revitalize Tourism in Southeastern Nigeria

The challenges of insecurity in Southeastern Nigeria, marked by issues such as kidnapping, banditry, political instability, and communal conflicts, have significantly impeded the growth of the region's tourism sector. However, addressing these challenges offers an opportunity to not only improve security but also revitalize tourism, creating a catalyst for regional development. A strategic approach, combining short-term interventions with long-term sustainable policies, is crucial.

1. Strengthening Security Frameworks

A robust security infrastructure is foundational for fostering tourism. Establishing specialized tourism police units trained to operate in high-risk areas can provide direct protection for tourists and attractions. These units could work in tandem with rapid response teams, ensuring swift action in emergencies. Additionally, modern technologies like CCTV networks, drones, and data-driven intelligence systems should be integrated into law enforcement strategies to monitor and mitigate risks proactively.The implementation of secure tourism zones—encompassing major attractions—can serve as controlled

environments where visitors feel safe. Such zones, supported by physical barriers, regular patrols, and visitor assistance centers, can build trust among both tourists and investors.

2. Leveraging Community-Based Security Initiatives

Local communities play a pivotal role in enhancing security. By empowering communities to participate in neighborhood watch programs and providing training to monitor activities around tourism sites, security efforts can be decentralized and more effective. This approach fosters a sense of ownership among locals, who then become active stakeholders in preserving their area's reputation.For instance, involving communities in projects like guided cultural tours or site management committees can simultaneously enhance site safety and offer economic benefits. Programs that provide alternative livelihoods, such as skills training for youth, reduce reliance on activities that contribute to insecurity, such as theft or participation in militant groups.

3. Utilizing Technology for Security and Promotion

Technology can bridge significant gaps in both security and marketing. The deployment of GPS-based emergency alert systems for tourists and mobile apps providing real-time safety updates can boost visitor confidence. A tourism-focused platform could also include information on safe routes, emergency numbers, and nearby hospitals or police stations.From a promotional perspective, digital tools like virtual tours and social media campaigns can attract tourists who are hesitant to travel due to safety concerns. Highlighting security improvements alongside the area's cultural and natural assets can shift perceptions and rebuild the area's image.

4. Revitalizing Infrastructure and Secure Tourism Zones

Infrastructure development is crucial for the tourism sector. The state of infrastructure in Southeastern Nigeria significantly affects both security and tourism experiences. Poor road networks and inadequate facilities not only discourage visitors but also pose safety risks. Governments and private investors must prioritize the construction and maintenance of secure transport corridors and modern amenities near tourist sites.Creating secure tourism zonesareas with heightened security, controlled access points, and 24/7 surveillancecan provide a model for safe tourism. For example, focusing resources on popular destinations like Ngwo Pine Forest or Oguta Lake ensures that these areas become symbols of safety and development, encouraging tourists to explore other parts of the study area.

5. Education and Awareness Campaigns

Raising awareness about the benefits of tourism among local communities is critical to fostering a supportive environment. Public campaigns emphasizing the economic advantages of tourism can motivate communities to actively participate in its development and security.Training programs for tourism operators, guides, and hotel staff are equally important. These initiatives should include crisis management, emergency response training, and customer service to ensure tourists feel safe and valued throughout their visit.

Policy Recommendations for Tourism Growth Amid Security Concerns in Southeastern Nigeria

Given the ongoing security challenges in Southeastern Nigeria, it is critical to develop and implement policy recommendations that not only address safety issues but also foster the growth of the tourism sector. The following policy recommendations aim to create a safe, stable, and sustainable environment for tourism development, enabling the region to harness its full potential while addressing security concerns.

1. Creating Robust Security Frameworks for Tourism Hotspots

Southeastern Nigeria needs robust security frameworks for key tourism hotspots, including dedicated units, partnerships, and enhanced infrastructure, to boost visitor protection and local community safety. Establishing specialized police units dedicated solely to securing tourism areas can ensure a higher level of preparedness and faster response to incidents. Collaborating with private security firms and community watch groups to patrol tourist hotspots can increase safety. Furthermore, tourists should be educated on basic safety protocols such as traveling in groups, avoiding risky areas, and adhering to local guidelines.

2. Offering Incentives to Encourage Investments in the Tourism Sector

The government should encourage private sector investment in the tourism industry to stimulate growth and create a resilient sector in Southeastern Nigeria.The government should offer tax breaks and financial incentives for businesses that invest in tourism infrastructure such as hotels, transportation, and recreational facilities. These incentives could help reduce the cost of doing business in a region struggling with insecurity. The government should encourage public-private partnerships (PPPs) with private tourism companies to co-finance large-scale projects like theme parks, resorts, and cultural centers, enhancing safety and quality standards.

3. Developing Sustainable Tourism Policies that Account for Local Realities

Sustainable tourism policies are critical for the long-term growth of the tourism sector, especially in areas with security challenges. These policies must be tailored to local realities and should address both the economic and social aspects of tourism development. Policy frameworks should encouragecommunity involvement in tourism planning, Environmental sustainability, and Inclusive tourism.

4. Building Partnerships with International Tourism Boards and Agencies

To attract international tourists, Southeastern Nigeria must develop stronger ties with international tourism boards and global travel agencies. These partnerships can help the area improve its global profile and create a more coordinated approach to tourism marketing and promotion.

Conclusion

Southeastern Nigeria faces security challenges like kidnapping, political instability, communal conflicts, and cybercrime, hindering development, stability, and tourism attraction due to disruptions in daily lives and key sectors, including tourism and local business.Addressing these security challenges requires a multifaceted approach that includes strengthening law enforcement agencies, promoting peaceful coexistence between communities, resolving political grievances through dialogue, and tackling the rising trend of cybercrime with modern security measures. Only by addressing these issues can Southeastern Nigeria hope to create a safer and more stable environment that fosters economic growth, social harmony, and a robust tourism industry.**Robust security frameworks** for tourism hotspots, **incentives for investment, sustainable tourism policies,** and**international partnerships** are all vital components of a broader strategy to boost the sector.

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ABUSE OF POWER IN MATTHEW 2:16-18; THE LEADING CAUSE OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

A search to discover the leading cause of insecurity in Nigeria seems to be unending, inconclusive and unyielding. Yet, the rate of insecurity in the country has increased geometrically now than ever. Every nook and cranny of the country has one form of security challenge or another, ranging from kidnapping, killer herdsmen, organ harvesting, ritual killings, child trafficking, internet hacking, as well as food insecurity. Every measure put in place by any government in power to tackle insecurity, over the years, has proven abortive. Therefore, citizens are living in heightened fear since their innocent lives are unprotected. Meanwhile, to tackle insecurity in any country, the integrity of the leaders who are at the forefront must be tested and trusted. Thus, this research aims at evaluating the different ways in which wrong use of power by leaders in Nigeria has amounted to the leading cause of insecurity in the nation, drawing inference from Matthew 2:16-18. Adopting lexico-grammatical hermeneutical method, the research explores different ways in which Nigerian leaders abuse power and how such has become the leading cause of insecurity in the country. It is discovered that why insecurity is on the high increase in Nigeria is because the faceless perpetuators are machinery and servicemen the leaders use to suppress others. The research therefore recommends that leaders of integrity should be repositioned in all leadership cadres in Nigeria and abuse of power among the leaders should be checkmated. It is believed that, if abuse of power by leaders in Nigeria is checkmated and leadership of integrity repositioned, the high rate of insecurity in the country will reduce drastically, as the leaders would be the pivotal change agent fighting sincerely to assuage all forms of insecurity in Nigeria.

Key Words: *Abuse of Power, Leaders, Leading Cause, Insecurity*

INTRODUCTION

Abuse of power could be defined as using a powerful position to take unfair advantage of others in a given organization, public office, or government. It has to do with inhumane suppression imposed on the led or weak subordinates in order to gain undue advantages over them. This barbaric act, according to David Kuot, is historically common and typical today, as leaders in Nigeria take advantage of their power to bully, manipulate and intimidate their subordinates whether in physical, mental, economic, social and/or sexual form.[1] Amidst myriads of negative factors militating against a progressive Nigeria, abuse of power by some people in the corridors of power has been identified as the most damaging element. The evil of abuse of power is usually prompted by ethnic, religious or

1Kuot, David. *Abuse of Power | Definition, Types & Examples.* Study.com. updated 11/12/2023. Accessed 17/11/2024.

personal biases which interfere with the Rule of Law, has become a major hindrance to the country's advancement. This practice reduces the effectiveness of national security as some people in positions of power have chosen to pervert justice to suit their personal interests.[2]

Consequent upon the foregoing, one of the, if not the greatest, resultant effect of abuse of power is high rate of insecurity in Nigeria. For instance, Ibadin observed with dismay that since 1999 terrorists and criminals have not faced adequate prosecution under any democratically elected government. This is because those in power always hamper vital investigations. Again leaders with the spirit of "Do you know whom I am" lack accountability, effective policy system and respect for the Rule of law and obedience to court orders.[3] Thus, in the recent past, leaders in Nigeria have been accused of sponsoring insurgent groups like the Egbesu Boys in the Niger-Delta region, unknown gunmen, kidnappers and the killer herdsmen ravaging the southeast region, as well as Boko-Haram and suicide bombers in the northern region. Not all, it is evidential that most leaders in Nigeria raise thugs and servicemen during electioneering periods to brutally manhandled the weaklings in the society and cause mayhem just to secure unmerited positions for themselves and even their generations yet unborn. After electioneering era, each time innocent citizens rise to condemn the inhumane suppression and high-handedness of the leaders via public peaceful protests, leaders always mount some security operatives, who supposedly should have defended the citizens, to disorganize such peaceful protests and/or even kill the peaceful protesters, knowing fully well that immunity covers them. This and innumerable others are the undisclosed reasons in which Ozoigbo opines as why leaders in Nigeria do not want to curtail or stop insecurity in the country.[4]

Thus, Nigeria presently is synonymous with insecurity; which has to do with the state of being subjected to danger or injury or the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury.[5] And the effects of this are countless — underdevelopment, poverty, hunger, insurgency, militancy, youth restiveness, kidnapping, armed robbery, fear, drug abuse, political thuggery. Others include religious bigotry, intolerance, fanaticism, militancy, vandalism, child abuse, illegal and irregular migration, ecological degradation, power drunkenness, cultural disparity and ethnocentricity, tribal conflict, communal clash, nepotism, social ostracism and gender discrimination.[6] Worse still, the

2 Ibadin, Matthew. *Abuse Of Power As The Most Damaging Phenomenon In Nigeria.* Frank Oshanugor(Ed). Atlantic News Online, November 7, 2024.

3 Ibadin, Matthew. *Abuse Of Power As The Most Damaging Phenomenon In Nigeria.* Frank Oshanugor(Ed). Atlantic News Online, November 7, 2024.

4 Ozoigbo, Bonaventure Ikechukwu. *Insecurity in Nigeria: Genesis, Consequences and Panacea*. European Journal of Social Sciences Studies. Volume 4 | Issue 4 | 2019. Accessed: 22/11/2024.

5*Free Online Dictionary.* 2013. Accessed 1/12/2024.

6Bassey Theophilus. *The Prophetic Church: A Sociological Reflection in Nigeria.* Uyo: Trube Mega Resources, 2023. 106-107.

perpetuators of these heinous crimes, especially among the leaders present themselves as innocent and unaware of the leading cause of insecurity in Nigeria.

Therefore, being that insecurity is on the high increase in the country and leaders who supposed to curtail or stop it are the ones engineering the menace through abuse of power, this research explores abuse of power in Matthew 2:16-18 with the aim of evaluating how such has heightened the rate of insecurity in the country. Adopting lexico-grammatical hermeneutical method, the research depicts abuse of power as the leading cause of insecurity in Nigeria, stressing that if the various ways leaders abuse power in Nigeria is checkmated and offenders made to face the full wrath of the law, and as such restore leadership of integrity, the high rate of insecurity in Nigeria will be assuaged to the barest minimum, if not eradicated.

HERMENEUTICAL STUDY OF ABUSE OF POWER IN MATTHEW 2:16-18

The biblical pericope Matthew2:16-18 presupposestheprevious periscope ofMatthew 2:13-15.Matthew2:13-15narratesthedivineinstructiontoJosephtotakethechild and themotherandfleetoEgyptagainsttheattemptbyHerodtodestroyhim.Contextually, verses 16-18 extend backtotheaccountoftheencounterofthewisemenwithHerodonthebirthof"thekingof the Jews"inverses 1-12. Thehistoricityoftheeventsreportedinthis periscope iscontestedandthereareno independentsupportingrecordstocompare.[7] Itishowever,nothistorically implausible;itismoreofatheologicalaccountandthestudyhereisbasedthereforeontheaccountof Matthewandis synchronic.

Herod's Violent Exercise/Abuse of Power (v. 16a)

Our text in verse 16a states, ***"Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage."*** Who then is this Herod mentioned in the text? The term Herod Ἡρώδης' (Herōdēs) is the name of Idumaean princes whose rule was established in Palestine through the favour of Mark Anthony and Ottavian towards Herod I (the Great). According to the Jewish historian, Josephus, the Herods were Edomites from the Nabattean area around modern Petrain Jordan and therefore not regarded as true Jews.[8] They constituted a dynasty and continued to rule Palestine in various forms until after the death of Herod Agrippa I. The Herod referred to in this passage is Herod I identified as Herod the Great; he served as a satellite king of Judea under the Romans from 37-4BC.[9] He was astute, ambitious, and skilful in political manoeuvre but was equally tyrannical and brutal. He was therefore, the king in the region of Palestine at the time of the birth of Jesus

7Keener, Craig S. *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew.* Grand Rapids: William B.Eerdmans, 1999. P. 265.

8 Graves, David E. *Key Themes of the New Testament: A Survey of Major TheologicalThemes.* Moncton: David E. Graves, 2014. P. 218.

9Bauer, Walter and Frederick & William Danker. *A Greek English Lexicon of the NewTestament and Early Christian Literature.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. P. 439.

(Matthew 2:1). He thus perceived the birth of Jesus as a threat to his own dynasty. His displeasure at the non-return of the wise men reveals that his plan to visit and pay homage to the new born-king in verse 8 was a farce. It reveals his uneasiness and consequently his natural instinct to retain power.

The term μάγος *(magos)* is used to refer to persons considered as wise among the Persians and the Babylonians and as priests who were experts in astrology, interpretation of dreams, and various other occult arts.[10] The plural used in this verse means 'wise men.' In their capacity as astrologists they interpreted the stars in Matthew 2:2 as indicating the extraordinary birth of a king. Their inquiry in Herod's court is for a confirmation of the event and their refusal to return to Herod is interpreted by Herod as his being 'tricked.' The Greek verb used is ἐμπαίζειν *(empaizein)* and it underscores mockery or ridicule. It is used in Matthew 27:29, 31, 41 at the passion narrative to describe the mockery of Jesus as king during his trial. This occurrence marks the connection between the Matthean infancy and passion narratives. But while the mockery at the passion leads to Jesus'pacifist acceptance of humiliation and death for the good of humanity, the one felt by Herod leads to abuse of power which led to his killing of innocent children. While the former reveals a profound sense of altruism that dispenses with the self to gain life for others, the other reveals an egotism that prefers to terminate lives to preserve personal power.

The relationship between Herod and the Magi underscores the social nature of the human person in its interdependence. It is in this interdependence that the political is underscored and managed with the attendant democratic structures. Democratic structures on the other hand, are aimed at enhancing mutual coexistence and wellbeing and include the rule of law, freedom of expression and worship, and respect for the dignity of the person. While co-existence implies mutual dependence it does not imply usury of the other as object for the achievement of personal ends. The magi's recourse to Herod for guidance on the location of the child depicts the social human need for the other. Herod's decision on the other hand to send them for the purpose of verifying so that he may go to destroy the child (verse 16b) underscores the danger of exploration and abuse of power. The authority to request the shepherds to return to him flows from his power and he exercises it brutally.

Herod's Rage and the Great Infanticide (verse 16b-d)

The remaining part of verse 16 of our text reads,***"And he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men" (RSV).*** Herod's reaction to the decision of the Magi is 'rage,' he

10McKenzie, John L. *Dictionary of the Bible.* Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1965. P. 534.

becomes furious and the verb used, θυμόειν *(thymoein)* in its passive form means 'to become angry' and expresses a state of intense displeasure; anger, or indignation. The adverb λίαν *(lian)* that follows implies degree and denotes 'being exceedingly angry.' The root of the verb ***thymoein*** is ***thy*** and is cognate with the Latin ***fumus*** which means smoke.[11] This underscores the smoke that screens one's sense of objective reasoning and thus leads to actions that may sometime appear irrational. So the non-return of the Magi turned Herod's anxiety into an exceeding displeasure that became irascible. His anger is sudden and based on perceived but unproven assumption of being tricked; 'being tricked' was his interpretation rather than what the Magi intended. Anger is anthropomorphically identified even with God in the Old Testament (1Kings 14:15; 2 Kings 22:17), but God's anger is ethically motivated as an outpouring of his 'moral will,' holiness, and justice in the face of human unfaithfulness. Herod's anger on the other hand is dictatorially motivated and becomes an unleashing of his authoritarian will and injustice in the face of a neighbour's perceived failings. Humans are advised against yielding to anger (Psalm 37:7-9; Proverbs 19:19,Matthew 5:22) and inciting others to anger (Proverbs 6:34; 15:1).

The anger of Herod is translated into a decision to kill the new born-king; the decision is executed not by him but by his lieutenants or better still thugs whose names or titles are not mentioned. Matthew's silence on names sometimes denotes his non-approval of the values embodied by the anonymous character. They are therefore, not meant to be remembered. Compare his silence on the names of the Gadarene demoniacs in Matthew 8:32 to Mark 5:9 and Luke 8:30. The verb used is ***apostelilein*** 'to send' which implies Herod's commissioning of his servicemen to carry out the killing. These servicemen, from the verb are therefore Herod's apostles, who, receiving orders from him are trained to reflect the mind-set of Herod and enforce his laws. His is an executive order that flows from his authority as king and therefore an abusive exercise of power. His apostles, as followers and subjects are under obligation to carry out the master's order. They are his foot soldiers and without them his directive would not take its course. In other words, a tyrant is successful because his servicemen make his directives and wishes realities. They have his mandate and are therefore represent him in the action on the streets of Bethlehem and the region. The non-inclusion of their names equally underscores the central role of Herod and reflects especially this emphasis on culpability. It rests first and foremost on Herod himself. Herod's culpability is further accentuated by the Greek sentence construction, which literally translates: '***and having sent he massacred in Bethlehem.'***But the question raised is: to what extent is one morally obliged by the order of a

11Schōnweiss, Hans. "Anger, Wrath; θυμός." *The New International Dictionary of the NewTestament (Vol. 1).* Colin Brown (Ed). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975. P. 105.

superior? Should one in conscience carry out an unjust order? A person who executes an unjust order in the name of obedience equally bears great responsibility for the action. There are contemporary arguments following from this however; the fear of being persecuted may compel service men to comply. The decision to carry out an unjust order may be considered the better in relation to risking one's life. A service man may actually feel a lesser burden of conscience preventing the master's attack on his family by carrying out an unjust order. This reversal of values is consequent on the malformation of conscience. An unjust order remains unjust notwithstanding the reason behind the acceptance to carry it out.[12]

The killing ἀνεῖλεν *(aneilen)* in this active sense implies the taking away of life mostly by violence, in battle, by execution, murder or assassination especially in the context of preventive measures taken by political authorities.[13] It is here restricted only to 'all' male children: παῖδας *(paidas)* in Bethlehem and all the neighbouring farm communities of the region of Judea. This would therefore include Ramah alluded to in verse 17 which is five miles north of Jerusalem. While Jeremiah uses the plural of***technon*** for the murdered children Matthew uses the plural of ***pais.*** The change is only a matter of style though in the Old Testament ***technon*** is also used to imply an unborn child (Genesis 3:17). Matthew may therefore be underscoring the exclusion of unborn children. This therefore depicts the monstrosity of Herod's act in his decision to put an end to the lives of children in their state of innocence, and helplessness. His action expresses not just the absence of respect for life but a deadened feeling for the sentiments of the family of the children and the terror such an action would inflict on the Naserientire society. The sense of insecurity associated with an unlawful possession of power provoked in Herod the feeling of being threatened even by an innocent infant and thus drives him into such atrocious acts. When the wise men first came Matthew reports that Herod consulted with 'all the chief priests and scribes' (verse 4). Now in the event following his anger, he is not reported to have consulted with the team again. So the decision is solely spontaneous, unilateral and impulsive.

Though a rash decision there is precision in the timing and target. Herod takes advantage of the intelligence gathered from the wise men and determines the geographic coverage of the operation by limiting it to towns surrounding Bethlehem (16c). He is likely to have heard rumour of a messianic birth from his extensive network of informers before the arrival of the wise men. Bethlehem is the city of David (1 Sam 16; 17:12, 58), about five miles from Jerusalem and is used here to underscore Matthew's identification of Jesus with the royal family of David. With the same intelligence Herod

12Naseri, Christopher N. "Power and Violence in Matthew 2:16 and the Nigerian Political Climate."*The Nigerian Political Climate.* Accessed Dec., 02 2024.

13Danker, Frederick William. *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament.* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009. P. 25.

determines and restricts the killing to male children and the age range between zero and two (16d). His ability to gather the information from the wise men flows from his position of strength as the king and therefore part of his power. He is astute and prompt in his attempt to circumvent what he interprets as'deception' by the wise men. He is skilful about the plan on how not to miss the desired target, and smart in the choice of the available and most effective means for accomplishing the plan. He is brutal in the use of the means and the execution of the plan, which consists in the taking of many innocent human lives.

This brutality is in tandem with the scholarly acclaimed ruthlessness of Herod in history. In the records of Josephus, Herod is said to have killed any member of his close and extended family he perceived as political threats.[14] This kind of political murder was common to the period and given the population of Bethlehem as a small town, the number of children killed is estimated at twenty.[15] Other scholars estimated it to be between thirty and forty persons.[16] In the context therefore of Herod's high-level political assassinations Richard T. France suggests that twenty children may have attracted merely little attention.[17] But it must, at the same time, be acknowledged that the taking of human lives for any reason has always been unacceptable in the course of human history.

The massacre recalls Pharaoh's killing of newly born male children of the Israelites in Egypt (Exodus 1:22) and the consequent liberation of Moses. It also embraces the theme of exile evident in the reference to Ramah. Incidentally, Pharaoh's previous attempt to kill the newly born male children through the midwives was thwarted by the women's refusal to obey the order of the king. The midwives; Shiphrah and Puah, are described as God-fearing (Exodus 1:15-21) to explain why they would not obey unjust orders. Their action, which implies a first biblical peaceful civil disobedience against an oppressive regime,[18] contradicts those of the anonymous messengers of Herod sent to do the killing of the innocent children. It underscores the women's sincerity to their profession as midwives who are called to mediate rather than destroy lives. Their being identified by name stands in contrast to the anonymity of Herod's disciples and underscores the need to immortalize and emulate their sense of respect for life.[19] The reflection of the killing in Egypt in this story therefore

14Graves, David E. *Key Themes of the New Testament: A Survey of Major TheologicalThemes.* Moncton: David E. Graves, 2014. P. 98-120.

15Brown, Raymond E. *The Birth of the Messiah.* New York: Doubleday, 1993. P. 204.

16Kapolyo, Joe M. ""Matthew." Africa Bible Commentary. Adeyemo, Tokunboh (Ed). Nairobi: WordAlive, 2006. P. 1138.

17France, Richard Thomas. "Herod and the Children of Bethlehem." *Novum Testamentum.* Richard T. France, . 1979. P. 114-119

18Olson, Dennis T. "Exodus." *The Old Testament and Ethics: A Book by Book Survey.* Joel B. Green and Jacqueline E (Eds). Lapsley. Ebook edition. Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2013. N.P.

19 Exum, J. Cheryl. "'You Shall Let Every Daughter Live': A Study of Exodus 1:8-2:10." *The Feminist Companion to the Bible: Exodus to Deuteronomy(Vol. 6).* Athalya Brenner (Ed). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991. P. 45, 46.

enables Matthew to adopt the 'Moses' typology. Herod represents Pharaoh; the children in Bethlehem represent the first born in Egypt, while Jesus whose birth provokes the massacre is presented as the new Moses who escapes death to liberate his people. In the theology of Israel the enslavement in Egypt and the atrocities of the exile were the greatest trials that the people were exposed to as God's people. On the other hand the exodus and the return from exiles were the greatest manifestations of the nearness of God to his people.[20] The use of these two motifs by Matthew announces the arrival of Jesus as God's grand intervention in the final liberation of his people. This interest in the exile is captured especially in Matthew's account of the genealogy of Jesus, which is demarcated principally by the exile (Matthew 1:11-12).

Exegetical Conclusion

So far, abuse of power as seen in Matthew 2:16-18 starts with legislations and enacting of inhumane policy that truncate the fundamental human rights and cause mayhem in the society. Such evil legislations are aimed at annihilating anything that looks as a threat to the one in power. Just like the case of Herod the Great, those in power have their thugs/apostles/servicemen, whose job are to execute the order from their political Godfathers, even when such order might be inhumane and cruel to the victims. As seen in the text, those who are always victims of abuse of power are mostly innocent citizens who know little or nothing about the ambition of the perpetuators. Peaceful civil disobedience and God's intervention to providing leader of integrity who would liberate God's people are two strong ways to eradicate abuse of power among political elites.

IMPLICATIONS OF ABUSE OF POWER IN MATTHEW 2:16-18 TO THE HIGH RATE OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

According to George Christian Nche, leadership in Nigeria is characterized by extra-judicial killings, thuggrery, kidnapping, misappropriation of public funds, political assassination, ritual killings, Godfatherism and death threats.[21] This is because leaders at all levels abuse power just to maximize their selfish interest, to the detriment of the poor masses. Thus, abuse of power is a prevalent reason why there is a high rate of insecurity in Nigeria. Just as Herod the Great used unlawful means to exercise power which led to the killing of innocent children in Bethlehem, most leaders in Nigeria have taken laws into their hands by using their power to abuse the fundamental human rights of the citizens in various ways and as well cause civil unrest in all the nooks and crannies of the country. Some of the ways they execute their hanky-panky are extensively discussed below:

20Brown, Raymond E. The Birth of the Messiah. New York: Doubleday, 1993. P. 216.

21George, Christian Nche. "The Concept of National Cake in Nigeria Political System: Implementations for National Development. *Journal of Cultural Studies (Vol. 4).* Uka, E. (Ed). Calabar: Andah Centre for Cultural Studies, University of Calabar, 2011. P. 73.

i. Enacting Inhumane Political and Economic Policies that Jeopardize Life: Herod's policy of killing the infants could be best described as inhumane and uncalled-for of a leader who supposedly should have protected the fundamental human rights of all his subordinates. This action of his caused and promoted insecurity in the land of Bethlehem, which *ab initio,* was why God asked Joseph in a dream through an angel to take the infant Jesus to Egypt for safety (Matthew 2:13-15). Herod should be best described as a typology of Nigerian leaders in the present democratic dispensation. The infants killed by Herod should be likened to innocent citizens of Nigeria who are put to untimely death due to unhealthy policies made by the leaders. Leaders in Nigeria do enact inhumane political and economic policies which induce insecurity in the country. Similarly, policies are made, changed or distorted to benefit certain political divide, and since politicians are the one who formulate policies, the policies are formulated along personal aggrandizement and political bias.[22] Such policies among other things cause civil unrest and heighten insecurity in the country. Hence, Achebe asserts that the federal government of Nigeria and political leaders are the enablers of violence and Insecurity in Nigeria.[23] Leaders in the country are enablers of insecurity and violence having known that immunity covers them; and no one can drag them to court or prosecute them.

The foregoing is exactly what abuse of power is all about. And the easiest and most frequently means of abusing power in Nigeria is through enactment and imposition of inhumane policies and legislations on and against the citizens. Just as Herod's policy of massacring the infants happened overnight thereby causing insecurity in Bethlehem, the leaders in Nigeria, without due process, do enact, impose and sometimes distort both political and economic policies without minding the effects of such policies on the citizenry. For instance, policies as: the production of new Naira notes and its saga in 2022 and earlier 2023; the removal of subsidy announced by the presidency at assumption of office in 2023, without functional government refineries; embargo on importation of foreign goods/closing of boarders without local contents and substitutes, introduction of election card readers without using it to conduct and count the result of 2023 presidential election, issuing of 'no work no pay,' against striking labour unions, just to mention but a few, are among the endless list of illegal policies the leaders in Nigeria have enacted, not for the interest of the masses, but for actualizing their political ambitions on one hand and causing high rate of insecurity on the other hand.

Consequently, security of life and property is bastardized. People, on daily basis, die out of frustrations emanating from such policies. Also, many people have traveled oversees, not because

22Bassey, Theophilus. *The Prophetic Church: A Sociological Reflection in Nigeria.* Uyo: Trube Mega Resources, 2023. P.115.

23Achebe, Chinua. *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra.* New York: Penguin Books Publishers, 2012. P. 251.

they wanted to, but instead of waiting to die via frustrating policies, they go to take shelter abroad just as Jesus alongside his parents did during Herod's infanticide policy saga. Worse still, the more people die or travel overseas, the more Nigerian despotic leaders with their shenanigans gain much more grounds. This is why Ozoigbo maintains that leadersinNigeriadonotwanttocurtailorstopinsecurityinthecountry.[24]

ii. Using Servicemen and Thugs to Kill Innocent Citizens: When Herod enacted his infanticide policy, he did not execute it by himself. He rather used his servicemen. Here in Nigeria, political juggernauts at all levels have their servicemen. Those servicemen are nothing but thugs who do not know the value of peaceful civil disobedience but rather swallow hook line and sinker the directives of their godfathers just as Herod's did. Although in Herod's case, his servicemen preferred anonymity in Matthean account, to avoid looking suspicious, the thugs in Nigeria are baptized with political titles and nomenclatures such as Senior Special Adviser (SSA), Special Adviser (SA), Technical Adviser (TA), Personal Assistants/Aid (PA), and many others. All of these are special squads trained with ammunition to butcher opponents or anything that looks like threats against those in power. They are always sent to cause mayhem and insecurity in all the nooks and crannies of the nation especially during electioneering periods. Hence, a-one time Chief of Army Staff in Nigeria, Major General David Ejoor (Rtd), as quoted by Bassey describes Nigerian political life as being engulfed by the spirit of assassination.[25]

Not all, most of the insurgent groups in Nigeria have been alleged to be sponsored by political leaders as a means of actualizing their political ambitions. Northern leaders have been accused of sponsoring Boko-Haram and killer herdsmen; South Eastern leaders, especially Biafra agitators, have been accused of sponsoring unknown gunmen and kidnappers; while Niger-Delta leaders have been accused of sponsoring Niger-Delta militants, Avengers and Egbesu Boys. These groups midwife all sort of violence in Nigeria. And being that they are sponsored by political leaders, it becomes almost impossible of any of them to be prosecuted to face the full wrath of the law when apprehended.[26]

In most cases, innocent citizens are always the victims of the actions of political thugs sent by their godfathers to ransack the targeted personalities. In the case of Herod, Jesus was the target. Unfortunately, Jesus ran for safety, through his parents under divine providence, leaving behind about twenty or at most forty innocent infants who were massacred by Herod's thugs.[27] Similarly, in

24Ozoigbo,BonaventureIkechukwu.*InsecurityinNigeria:Genesis,ConsequencesandPanacea*.EuropeanJournalofSocialSciencesStudies.Volume4|Issue4|2019.Accessed:22/11/2024.

25 Bassey, Theophilus. *The Prophetic Church: A Sociological Reflection in Nigeria.* Uyo: Trube Mega Resources, 2023. P.115.

26Ibadin, Matthew. *Abuse Of Power As The Most Damaging Phenomenon In Nigeria.* Frank Oshanugor(Ed). Atlantic News Online, November 7, 2024.

27 Kapolyo, Joe M. ""Matthew."*Africa Bible Commentary.* Adeyemo, Tokunboh (Ed). Nairobi: WordAlive, 2006. P. 1138.

Nigeria, innocent citizens are always the most affected of all the brutalities of political thugs, extra-judicial killers, kidnappers, Boko-Haram, killer herdsmen, and unknown gunmen. Just as Jesus was taken and hidden in Egypt through the directive given by the angel, many known politicians have their talisman that reveals what their opponents have in mind. Before the execution of their plans, the targeted persons, in most cases, might have escaped for their lives and take refuge in diaspora. As such, innocent citizens become victims of circumstances.

LEADERSHIP OF INTEGRITY; A PANACEA TO INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

According to Rudy Giuliani as quoted by John Maxwell, "When the right person is the leader, he does even better during tough times."[28] To say the obvious, Nigeria presently is in its toughest time as regards insecurity. Just as it was tough in Bethlehem during the days of Herod the Great, that people were being oppressed and incessantly butchered, leading to high rate of insecurity, Nigeria is at the peak of insecurity now. The country needs people of integrity in the leadership cadre now than ever. Although great destinies and potential leaders of integrity have been massacred by political leaders, directly or indirectly, in order to retain political positions for themselves, it is possible that it can still be found in the country prospect leaders of integrity who are positioned and protected like Jesus in order to restore government of orderliness. In the case of Herod, he might be thinking that he had killed Jesus, but, little did he know that prospect leaders of integrity hardly die as victims of insecurity, because God always use them to redeem tough times.

It can be recalled that Pharoah was the first leader to promote insecurity by passing into law the policy of killing all the male children born to Israelites (Exodus 1:22). However God thwarted the policy as he miraculously intervened to save a leader of integrity in the person or Moses. There was nothing the children of Jacob could not do to kill Joseph, a man of integrity, but God protected him and used him to save the household of Jacob from food insecurity. Haman, in the book of Esther tried to annihilate all the Jews in Sussan but could not succeed because God used leadership of integrity in the persons of Mordecai and Esther to turn down Haman's evil plot. The same thing is applicable between Herod's plot and God keeping Jesus safe, a leader of integrity, who is to save not just the Jews but the entire world from total collapsing. These show that God always keep safe in every generation prospect leaders of integrity who would deal with insecurity and free human being from the tyranny of worldly leaders that derive joy in abusing power. To ensure such leaders assume political positions in Nigeria, Achebe assets thus:

We have to nurture and strengthen our democratic institutions — and strive for the freest and fairest elections possible. That will place the true candidates of the people in office. Under the

28Maxwell, John C. *Leadership Gold:* Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2008. P. 138.

rubric of democracy, a free press must thrive and strong justice system must flourish... It is this kind of environment that a leader, humbled by the trust placed upon him by the people, will emerge, willing to use the power given to him for the good of the people.[29]

Unlike the servicemen of Herod and the despotic leaders rampaging this country now, such leaders as described above will be persons whose integrity is attested for by the people not leaders imposed on the people. They must be leaders who are humane and willing to respect rule of law, free press and the fundamental human rights, obey court orders, and would be able to see the otherness in other people, not those who use others as means of actualizing their evil ambitions. When leadership of integrity takes over the leadership affairs of this nation, definitely, it (leadership of integrity) can stand out to fight insecurity, because there would be no any skeleton in the cupboard of the leaders.

CONCLUSION

Abuse of power is the leading cause of insecurity in Nigeria having evaluated the action of Herod in Matthew 2:16-18, and compared it to that of the political leaders in Nigeria. It is established therefore that Herod is a typology of Nigerian leaders who wrongfully exercise power in order to retain political positions, to the detriment of the common masses. The killed infants in Bethlehem represent unfortunate citizens of Nigeria who are victims of insecurity in Nigeria. Truly discovered, there is an alarming rate of insecurity in the country because the leaders who supposed to be at the forefront of cubing insecurity are the enablers. They enable Insecurity directly by enacting political and economic policies that induces loss of lives and destruction of property (Insecurity), and on the other hand enable it indirectly by using their servicemen or thugs to massacre anyone that looks like threats just to ensure that they retain power to themselves and even their generations yet unborn. It therefore becomes imperative for Nigerians to get back to the drawing board and raise leadership of integrity who would restore normalcy and orderliness in the leadership milieu, using all available judicious means to cub insecurity in Nigeria. Only through this that the over-lingering security challenge witnessed in Nigeria can be a story of the past.

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INVESTIGATING THE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE NATIONAL SECURITY CONCERNS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The tensions existing between human rights deemed to be fundamental and inalienable and the national security concerns are very complex, complicated,andvery often contentious and inundating. Today, insecurity remains the greatest existential threat across the globe. Nowhere is safe or sacred: from the highbrow palaces to the privacy of rustic peasant homes and fromchurches/mosques to railway tracks, highways, waterways and airways, offices, farmlands and indeed wherever man is found. Ithas been the same sordid, perennial, gloomy story of bloodletting. Hobbes, a famous 17th century philosopher, political and social contracts' theorist, envisioned life outside society as "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short". The nagging question then is, "how can the elaborate fundamental rights' legislations and protocols be balanced againstenormous security concerns?" The work adopted historical, qualitative-content analytical methodology against the backdrop of theoretical framework of social contract theory to weigh a delicate balance between individual freedoms against collective societal/communal safety and security. The paper investigated existing challenges, tensionsor concerns and made far-reaching recommendations bordering on proportionality, transparency, accountability and faithful application of international best practices to maintain the delicate balance in resolving identified areas of concern.

KEY WORDS: Fundamental rights, Social-contract, Gloom, Insecurity, Bloodletting Covenants and Protocols

INTRODUCTION

Insecurity is the greatest existential threat across the global community.Nigeria has the awful distinction of being the poverty capital of the world "with 71 million people living in extreme poverty today (World Poverty Clock, 2023) and a total of 133 million people classed as multi-dimensionally poor according to National Bureau of Statistics data".[1]The country is also notorious for undergoing two successive economic recession within a period of five years and eight recessions from 1960 to date (1967, 1975, 1978, 1981,1983, 1993, 1916 and

2020).[2] Nigeria is facing its worst socio-religious and economic crises which are attributable to unbridled corruption. Its currency is in triple lows. Spiral inflation is soaring to record heights which exacerbated poverty and scarcity of staple food items with many families struggling for the basic necessities of life.

The astronomical increase in the nation's economic woes which in turn push more citizens to fall below the poverty line and make people more desperate to resort to criminalities for survival. As state influence declined, foreign mercenaries, armed groups and non-state actors stepped in to fill the power vacuum and entrenched themselves at different regions, sometimes exacting tributes and collecting revenues to oil their illegalities. Boko Haram holds sway in the North East, Fulani herdsmen and armed gangs in the North Central and North West; Sea Pirates in the Niger Delta the secessionists in the South East and South West, Unknown Gunmen and armed gangs and murders across the nation. Kidnapping for ransom has become a booming, most lucrative vice across the country. SB Morgan Intelligence Report (21/08/2024) titled "Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria's Kidnapping Industry – A 2024 Update" revealed that of the 1,130 kidnapping incidents across the country between July 2023 and June, 2024, the seat of power, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) had the highest ransom demands, followed closely by Lagos and Kaduna contended that within the said one year period "kidnappers demanded at least the sum of N10,995,090,000 (approximately $6,871,931) as ransom and killed 1,056 Nigerians"[3].

The relationship between human rights and national security is complex and often a contentious one. The skills required in balancing human rights and national security concerns are not only intricate, but complex, delicate and also very challenging.According to Onu, Olisa and Oluji(2021:328), national insecurity remains the greatest albatross in Nigeria, dwarfing other national malaise like poverty, corruption, unemployment, social decay and contended further as follows:

> The country has been overrun by various criminal and violent activities like terrorism, militancy, kidnapping, armed robbery, fraud, sexual abuse,assassinations, ritual killings, thuggery, cultism, drug and inhuman trafficking, political and religious conflicts, communal clashes, brutality of state security forces, among others in different parts of the federation. These have resulted in the loss of lives and displacement of persons, economic hardship and retarded national development. The unabated security challenges in Nigeria have created a negative perception and assumption in the global community.The World economic forum in 2017 ranked Nigeria 5th out of the 20 most dangerous countries in the world.in 2019, Forbes Media ranked Nigeria 3rd behind Brazil and South Africa among the 20 most dangerous places to live.… These horrific rankings based on the constant volatile security situation in the country have made some nations of the world advice against making Nigeria their travel destinations.[4]

Against the backdrop of the foregoing are widespread provisions for the protection and preservation of the fundamental rights of the human person in the 'grundnorm' of the Nigerian law which is the constitution as well as elaborate legal provisions in the UN Human Rights Declaration, 1948, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Right, 1985 as well as other international and regional covenants and protocols

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The palpable tensions existing between the human rights of citizen which are deemed to be innate, fundamental and inalienable and the national security concerns in Nigeria could be fully comprehended through various theoretical frameworks which explore the interplay between individual liberties, state sovereignty and security imperatives. These frameworks include the Social Contract Theory, the Realist Theory of security, Critical Theory, Transitional Justice Framework and the International Human Rights Norms. It is proposed to briefly discussthese herein.

The Social Contract Theory waspropounded by philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Lock (1632-1704) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)The theory established the foundational framework and bird's eye view for a proper appraisal of the existing tensions. Here, it postulates that citizens voluntarily surrendered some of their natural rights and basic freedoms to the state in exchange for protection and greater security. In the Nigerian state for instance, Chapter four of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) made elaborate provisions for the guarantee of the fundamental

rights of citizens with the judiciary arm of government empowered to protect those rights when threatened or abridged between individuals and the government. The legislative arm is empowered to make laws whereas the executive arm of government enforces the law including individual rights and national security. However, there is often abuse and excessive use of state machinery of power in forms of arbitrary arrests, detention, restriction of freedom of speech, and even complete disappearance, 'accidental discharge' or murder of political opponents which ultimately leads to gross violation of the social contract, where human rights are unfortunately curtailed at the altar of national security. Its greatest challenge as expounded by the Anarchist is therefore that the social contract justifies oppressive state control while the Marxist critiques argue that it overlooks economic inequality and class struggle.

The Critical Theory Concept challenges the traditional state-centric view of security and highlights systemic inequalities and power imbalances. Here state security stand point which emphasizes and gives priorities to the greater interest of the elites rather than the greater majority of Nigerians. The bloody suppression of the recent #EndSars# and #EndBadGovernance# protests across Nigeria is a case in point essentially to suppress dissent voices so as to maintain political dominance rather than genuine security concerns. In each case the government at the center cracks down on dissent and restrict right of assembly, association and movement to protect ruling interest and unpopular anti-people policies rather than the much touted national security measures.

The realist theory of security encapsulates security as the primary responsibility of the state and thus prioritize national security over and above individual right of citizens. thus to the international and national anarchic systems, the state must at all times place its survival and continued existence over and above the civil liberties of individuals or those of its component. It is on the basis of this mantra that the Nigerian-Biafran civil war was fought:

"to keep Nigeria one is a task that must be done". Similarly, Nigeria's justification of strict anti-terrorism laws, surveillance and military interventions such as the notorious operations python dance particularly in the South Eastern part of Nigeria, often based on the perspective of this realist theory of security, have unfortunately led to the maiming and untimely death of many youth in the South East.[5]

ANALYTICAL OVER-VIEW OF THE CONCEPTS

The theories constitute the starting points in understanding political authority, individual rights and the development of modern democratic states. It provides the framework for questioning the legitimacy of governments and forms the basis for defending the individual's basic fundamental rights even in autocratic regimes while also sparking the legality and legitimacy of actions, and general debates over justice, liberty and the role of government in the society. Hence there is the emerging adaptation of the philosophical and political theories to contemporary issues such as social justice, neo-colonialism, globalization and economic emancipation as well as the modern ideas of fairness, equality, environmental responsibility and sustainability.

LEGAL PROVISIONS, INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS AND PROTOCOLS

The Nigerian laws made wide provisions concerning the preservation and protection of fundamental human rights including the procedure[6] for approaching the courts to espouse and enforce those rights against individuals, governments and its agencies. **The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) 1999** (as amended) devote the entire chapter 4 to guarantee fundamental human rights which among others include right to life (S.33), right to privacy (S.37)and freedom from torture (S. 34) [7]. Every one charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed to be innocent until he is proved guilty.[8] The National Human Rights Commission was established by the **National Human Rights Act, 1995**(as amended) aimed at creating an enabling environment for extra-judicial recognition, promotion, protection and

enforcement of human rights of citizens, on the basis extant laws, treaty obligations and provision of forum for public enlightenment and dialogue on human right issues.

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Right (ACHPR), 1985 is another pivotal legal instrument for the protection of human rights in Nigeria and the continent at large having been expressly adopted and domesticated as a Nigerian legislation. That piece of legislation emphasizes the importance of promoting and protecting human rights, dignity of the human person and the well-being of the African peoples. It protects rights to life (Article 4), dignity, liberty and security (Articles 5-6) as well as the peoples' right to self-determination (Article 20)The legislation which have been ratified by 53 independent African states including Nigeria provided elaborate enforcement mechanisms against state actors which include in its Article 30, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights charged with monitoring implementation and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (Article 32) which adjudicates human right abuses.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly as isa foundational document outlining fundamental human rights and freedoms of the human person and came into effect on December 10, 1948. It contains 30 articles covering fundamental rights and freedoms such as the basic right to life, liberty and security (Article 3), freedom from torture and cruel treatment (Article 5), right to education (Article 26) and right to freedom of expression (Article 19).

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,1966and came into effect in 1976 after its ratification by 35 UN member states. The treaty which comprises of 53 articles, elaborates on the civil and political rights including right to life (Article 6), freedom from torture and cruel treatment (Article 19), right to freedom of expression (Article 19) and right to lawful assembly and association (Article 21). Other relevant human right instruments applicable in Nigeria include **Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or**

Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT-adopted 1984, and became effective in 1987); **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC**-adopted 1989, effective 1990)[9]; and **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women(CEDAW** – adopted 1979, effective 1981).In conclusion, it must be noted that these instruments are foundational to international human right laws and provide the necessary frameworks for the promotion and protection of human rights in Nigeria and globally.

It is pertinent to note that the Child Rights Act is the first national law to fix the age of marriage at 18 years which outlaws early child marriage. It incorporates the basic principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), to which Nigeria is a signatory and state party. It prohibits and criminalizes traditional and cultural practices that violate the rights of the child such as early marriages, child betrothal, tattoos and genital mutilation. However the Act needed to be specifically adopted and passed into law by the various State Houses of Assembly in order to be applicable.

HIGHLIGHTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS' CONCERNS NATIONALLY AND GLOBALLY:

Right to life,liberty and security; Freedom from torture and cruel treatment; Right to privacy and family unity, peace and tranquility; Protection from arbitrary detention and arrest; Freedom of expression, assembly and association

SECURITY LEGISLATIONS AND CHALLENGES

The principal national security legislations that are germane in this discourse include:

a. The National Security Agencies Act.[10]The Acts divided and streamlined Nigeria's key security architecture into three agencies namely, the State Security Services (SSS) charged with the responsibility for domestic intelligence and counter-intelligence operations; the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), tasked with the foreign intelligence and counter-intelligence operations and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) whose primary focus is on military intelligence for the Nigerian Armed Forces. The Act outlined the respective

duties of each agency to guarantee optimal protection of the national security interest – sovereignty, territorial integrity and internal security and became very critical in the definition cum delineation of the operational structure and roles of Nigeria's intelligence community. Although the act allowed for greater effectiveness in addressing Nigeria's security challenges, its drawbacks has been the manifest capacity of infringing on the fundamental human rights of citizens especially with the notorious cases of surveillance, extortion, detention and murder of innocent citizens which negates the legal presumption of innocence of an accused until proven otherwise.

b. The Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention, Etc.) Act, 2015. This is Nigeria's principal legislationthat addresses cybercrime and related offences. The law dealt with issues relating to cyber threats while potentially infringing on freedom of expression.

c. **Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA), 2014.** The act criminalizes same-sex relationships with a penalty of 14 years' imprisonment and invalidates as unenforceable any such purported marriage or civil union whether celebrated in Nigeria or elsewhere while witnessing or aiding such celebration attracts p to 10 years imprisonment upon conviction. However, the wide ranging gamut of restrictions to the acts and private personal rights of LGBT had sparked fundamental human rights' concerns especially in America under the regime of President Obama which threatened to withdraw some of its aids to Nigeria.

Highlights of the National Security Concerns:

Protecting Nigerian citizens and residents from terrorism and violent attacks; Maintenance of public order and stability; Safeguarding critical infrastructure and strategic interests; Countering cyber threats and espionage and ensuring border security and controlling migrations.

INHERENT TENSIONS BETWEEN THE NEED TO GUARANTEE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE NEED TO ENSURE NATIONAL SECURITY.

There is an ever existing conflict between the concern for the protection of individual's fundamental rights to right to life and liberty (guaranteed under Chapter 4, of the Nigerian Constitution and Article 3, UDHR) against the collective communal and national security. Additionally, there is the divergent prioritization and application of right to privacy and family unit against the interests of national security, countering cyber threats and espionage, hence infringements through surveillance and counter-terrorism measures. Similarly, against the human right concern of protection from arbitrary detention and arrest is the security concern of protecting citizens and foreigners alike from terrorism and violence. Furthermore against the threat or infringement from freedom expression, assembly, movement and association, disappearances and extra-judicial killings guaranteed by the enabling laws, charters and protocols against the rational security concerns, challenges in defining and addressing threatsand safeguarding critical national infrastructures and strategic interest.

THE ROLE OF THE JUDICIARY IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE TENSIONS

The constitutional provisions, regional and international covenants, charters and protocols are pivotal instruments for the protection and preservation of human rights, dignity and well-being of citizens and are enforceable by the courts in Nigeria having been expressly adopted as applicable by legislation.[8]Thus while the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights is empowered by Article 30 to monitors compliance of the rights created, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Right, by Article 32, adjudicates on such human right abuses. However, a sad commentary is that the Nigerian judiciary which is acclaimed to be the last hope of the common man and idealized for the actualization of these fundamental rights,[9] is unfortunately steeped in unimaginable dimensions of unbridled corruption. Equity and fairness in judicial arbitration appear to have been thrown to the winds while justice is often

given to the highest bidder. It portends a dreadful and disastrous future if judgments are founded on the quantum of bribes and weight of political influence exerted rather than raw facts and legal prescriptions. Judges are meant to be incorruptible as impartial arbiters mandated to hold the ace between competing interests. Regrettably, many are manifestly neck-deep in corruption. In his article titled "Judges are the biggest bribe-takers in Nigeria", OluFasan substantiated the above assertion with factual credible survey analysis and contended as follows:

> It is now official! The judiciary is the most corrupt institution in Nigeria; judges are the takers of bribes in this country…. a recent survey conducted and published by the National Bureau of Statistics, NBS, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC, Nigeria's public officials received N721 billion cash bribes in 2023, and judges topped the list of the recipients. The 160 page report titled "Corruption in Nigeria: Patterns and Trends", published this month, makes a sobering reading indeed. Those in denial about how utterly broken and rotten things are in Nigeria must now realize the incongruence of their position with the reality. What hope is there for a country when its judges are the biggest takers of bribes and receivers of kickbacks? [11]

The ripple impact of a corrupt judiciary is better seen than imagined and is evident everywhere with dire consequences across Nigeria's socio-economic and political landscape. OluFasan again on this contended as follows:

> According to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), judges who cannot be corrupted, inspire and compel corrupt-free conduct in a society as a whole". The converse is also true: judges who can be corrupted induce and foster a corrupt conduct in a society at large…. Truth be told, there is a prevalent perversion of justice in this country, with right called wrong and wrong called right, precisely because Nigerian judges are extremely corrupt. …. Nigeria has "a judiciary notorious for accepting bribes and awarding favourable rulings to the highest bidder" But how can any Nigerian or any foreigner have confidence in the ruling of any judge when everyone knows that it was probably influenced by bribery or political pressure? This is not a trivial matter. Judges are next to God in matters of their powers: they can order the incarceration or execution of a person; they can decide who is a legislator or governor; they can set a country in any direction. Recently, the judiciary changed the Constitution in the local government autonomy case and everybody said whatever the court says is final.[12]

In a recent conference in Abuja, Sam Amadi strongly criticized the Nigerian the judiciary and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for compromising 2023 Nigerian election. His criticism cantered on "pervasive political strategy where success in elections is secured through bribery of key institutions, including INEC, the judiciary and the security agencies".[13]Amadi further contended that INEC and the courts, including the Supreme Court, failed to adhere to the clear provisions of the law, resulting in what he views as a subversion of the democratic process and the resultant erosion of public trust in the electoral system.[14] It is pertinent to state that with proper synergy, the priesthood could partner with technocrats and think-tanks in the legal and allied professions to plug the loop-holes and technicalities identified by Amadi, which fraudulent politicians and their accolades capitalized upon to corrupt fraudulent INEC officials and thus defeat the will of the people through constitutional, legislative, judicial and electoral reforms.

CASE LAW AUTHORITIES ON THE SUBJECT

1. SHUGABA ABDULRAHAMAN DARMAN VS. FEDERAL MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND OTHERS.[15]

The applicant in this case (Shugaba) was a politician and the majority leader in the Bornu State House of Assembly. In1980, he was declared a prohibited immigrant and his Nigeria passport was seized by the federal authorities and he was subsequently deported to Chad. The applicant claimed in court that his deportation was effected for political purposes and contrary to Section 38 of the then 1979 Constitution which guarantees him right to personal liberty, movement and privacy. By Section 42 (1) of the said Constitution, any person who felt that his fundamental rights under the Constitution were threatened by the State to apply to the High Court for redress. The prayers of the applicant grant granted by the court which restored his fundamental rights.

2. **OTUNBA GANI ADAMS & 2 OTHERS VS. ATTORNY-GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION.[16]**

The appellants were detained on allegations relating to the operations and activities of the Odua People's Congress (OPC) and arraigned before a Federal High Court upon a four-count charge of being members of an unlawful society and forming and managing an unlawful society contrary and punishable under the Nigeria law.[17] Their appeal against the lower court's refusal for bail (infringement of personal liberty) was unanimously dismissed.

3. **CHEDI VS A-G FED.**[18]

This case borders on arbitrary arrest and detention of citizens on questionable circumstances by the police and or the executive. The issue for determination on appeal was "whether the learned trial judge was right and exercised his discretion properly when he failed to admit the appellants to bail on the unproved grounds that they would impede police investigation and will continue with their unlawful activities". The Court of Appeal unanimously upheld their appeal securing their civil liberty.

4. **ABIODUN VS A-G FED.,**[19]

The Court of Appeal gave a decisive decision on the contentious issue on which piece of legislation will prevail over the other in case there is a conflict between a local statute and a provision of the African Charter or any international covenant. Sankey, JCA contended as follows:

> It has been since settled that where there is a conflict between a statute and the provisions of the African Charter, which is a statute with international flavour, its provisions will prevail over those of the other statute for the reason that it is presumed that the legislature does not intend to breach an international obligation…. Indeed, the days of submitting helplessly and surrendering wordlessly to draconian laws fashioned for inhabitants of a barrack are happily behind us. Democracy has dawned in Nigeria and the rule of law prevails where citizens' rights are respected and laws are obeyed.[20]

5. **IGP VS. DELE FARATIMI CHARGE NO. FHC/AD/CR/104/2024**[21]

Attached herein is a detailed on-going 12 count charge on the provisions of the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention etc.) Act, 2015 and the freedom of expression guaranteed by legislation and international covenants and protocols. It is currently pending at the Federal High Court, Ado Ekiti, Judicial Division, AdoEkiti and is of keen interest to many Nigerians as events unfold.

RECOMMENDATIONSTOWARD RESOLUTION OF THE TENSIONS BETWEEN APPARENT HUMAN RIGHT CONCERNS AND THE NATIONAL SECURITY CONCERNS

There has been a grave concern for the protection of the fundamental (Human Rights) of citizens and residents as abundantly enshrined in Chapter four (4) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) and other international covenants and protocols as against threat by zealous state and non-state actors on one hand. On the other hand, there have been frequent external threats, violent attacks and guerilla warfare tactics employed by the various criminal gangs and non-state actorsagainst the collective communal interests and the national security concerns. In the light of these, the challenges, controversies and tension between human rights and the national security concerns are quite apparent. The Nigerian government face criticisms for prioritizing national security over fundamental rights of its citizens particularly in its counter-terrorism efforts. The recent bloody "END-SARS" protest in Nigeria is a case in point. There are also reported cases of unexplained and unjustifiable cases of enforced disappearances and extra-judicial killings. Against this backdrop, it is recommended as follows:

a. Religious organizations and the civil society should remain vigilant, mobilize and enlighten the people as to the existence of these fundamental, inalienable rights through sermons, seminars, workshops, town hall meetings, village, age grade, market association meetings, women's August and other informal meetings/gatherings Human rights', education and awareness must evolve from the grass-root.

b. The legislative assemblies at the national and state levels must make laws aimed at good governance that balancing human rights and national security concerns which would always consider, weight or contextualize specific threats against varying circumstances. The ensuing and contingent challenges and threats must be clearly defined while there shall be very clear modalities for addressing them.

c. The national assembly and state houses of assembly should ensure adequate accountability, oversight desk offices, checks and balances on the powers and excesses of the executive arm of government and the law enforcement agents. The emphases must be laid on the principle of proportionality by balancing security measures with the impacts on human rights must be stressed. The notorious Odi massacre for instance, could have been avoided if the national assembly were proactive and alive to its responsibilities.

d. The courts officials, legal practitioners and judges should receive constant training and retraining on human right issues and modern strategies for their protection and enforcement procedure so as to attain the ends of justice rather than technicalities.

e. There should be adequate training for the law enforcement agencies and provision of sophisticated modern technological security equipment.

f. The National Human Right Commission should be truly independent and marshal out national action plans for the promotion, preservation and protection of human rights aimed at strengthening human rights protection.The papers salutes the commendable efforts of Amnesty International on their regular reports on Nigerian government's rights abuses and further recommend that they continue to beam its search light and continue to mount pressures that Nigeria's security measures comply with international human rights standards and best practices.

g. The need for constitutional and electoral reforms cannot be over-emphasized. The present constitution is not autochthonous and is the federal system (structure) of government is inappropriate for a multi-ethnic conglomeration being essentially unitary and neither federal nor secular but constitutes a potential time-bomb for chaos and anarchy.

h. Finally the need for synergy between the local and international human rights community and security operatives especially in the areas of sharing intelligence and application of the international best practices is highly advocated.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The paper investigated the nature and character of the tensions between the practices of the fundamentalhuman rights against the national security concerns in Nigeria. It highlighted certain national and international legal instruments, covenants and protocols which are pivotal that forms the bedrock of national and international human right laws as well as the basic framework for the national and global protection and promotion of fundamental human rights. The national security legislations examined included the National Security Agencies Act 1986; Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.)Act, 2015 and Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act,2014.The numerous cases of extortion, illegal detention, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings remain a recurrent decimal in the practical implementation of these laws.The paper made wide ranging recommendations including constitutional, judicial and electoral reforms aimed at balancing the identified human rights and national security concerns so as to ensure optimal legislative over-sight functions, administrative accountability, conscious monitoring and strict compliance to constitutional provisions, international covenants and protocols as well as global best practices.

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Understanding Religious Conflicts in Kaduna State, Nigeria: A Study of Christian-Muslim Relations

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Abstract

Religious conflicts in Kaduna State, Nigeria, remain a significant challenge, threatening peace, security, and development in the region. Situated at the crossroads of Nigeria's predominantly Muslim north and Christian south, Kaduna is characterized by religious and ethnic diversity that often turns into a source of tension. This study explores the root causes, dynamics, and consequences of Christian-Muslim conflicts in Kaduna, shedding light on the historical, political, and socio-economic factors that drive these tensions.

Historically, colonial governance exacerbated divisions between the Christian-dominated southern Kaduna and the Muslim-majority northern areas, fostering mistrust. Politically, elites have exploited religious identities for power, intensifying divisions, while socio-economic disparities, including high poverty and unemployment rates, have made youth vulnerable to manipulation and violence. Notable incidents like the Sharia law crisis of 2000, the Miss World riots in 2002, and recurring clashes in southern Kaduna over land and ethnic identity reflect deep-seated inequalities and grievances. Religious leaders and institutions play a dual role in these conflicts. While some foster peace through interfaith dialogue, others contribute to tensions with inflammatory rhetoric. The consequences of these conflicts are severe, including loss of lives, displacement, economic disruptions, and social fragmentation.

This paper emphasizes the need for multi-faceted solutions, including promoting interfaith dialogue, addressing socio-economic inequalities, ensuring justice, and fostering education to encourage tolerance. Achieving sustainable peace requires collaborative efforts by religious leaders, policymakers, civil society, and community members to build trust and equity across all sectors of society.

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Keywords: Religious Conflicts, Peace, Kaduna, Christian, Muslim, Relations.

I. Introduction

Background on the Researcher's Personal Experience (1997-2000)

From 1997 to 2000,the researcher and my parents left Lagos for Kaduna State precisely the southern part of Kaduna aroundKakuri, on getting to Kakuri, which happens to be a very peaceful area we had no issue until the proposition of sharia law in all Norther for states of Nigeria which was immediately adopted or accepted by other Northern states like Borno, Kano etc. There erupt the beginning of the crisis in Kaduna because majority of those who stay at the Southern Part of Kaduna are Christians, so, imposing sharia law cannot be accepted easily. The decision of the people of southern Kaduna got the Muslims angry and war began. The researcher remember that when all this was taking place, they had to hide away from this because many couldn't walk in the street at this time. After this personal experience, the researcher discovered that Kaduna State generally has really not been at peace because of continuous war. In addition, the researcher has been really studying about Kaduna State after his departure from Kaduna to Lagos State and it was discovered that the state hasn't been at peace. Kaduna State stood as a microcosm of Nigeria's broader religious diversity and tension. Living in Kaduna during this period provided firsthand insights into the complexities of Christian-Muslim relations. This time frame was marked by both shared communal living and sporadic religious violence, which revealed deep-seated animosities and mistrust between the two dominant religious groups.

Context of Religious Conflict in Nigeria

Nigeria, as Africa's most populous nation, is distinguished by its diverse cultural and religious landscape. Its religious makeup primarily consists of Islam, Christianity, and African Traditional Religions, each of which has a significant following. The northern region of Nigeria is predominantly Muslim, while the south is largely Christian. African Traditional Religions are practiced across the country, often integrated with either Islam or Christianity. This diversity, while rich, has also been a source of tension and conflict.

Religious conflicts in Nigeria are not isolated incidents but are deeply intertwined with historical, social, and political factors. During the colonial era, British policies often created divisions by favoring certain regions and religious groups over others. These divisions were later exacerbated in the post-independence period as political leaders began to manipulate religious identities to secure power and resources.

The competition between Islam and Christianity has particularly been pronounced in the Middle Belt, where communities of both faiths coexist. Kaduna State exemplifies this dynamic, frequently serving as a flashpoint for violent clashes. For instance, the introduction of Sharia law in northern states, including Kaduna, in the early 2000s triggered widespread unrest, as non-Muslim communities viewed it as an imposition on their rights and freedoms.

At its core, religious conflict in Nigeria often stems from a combination of economic inequality, political exclusion, and cultural mistrust. Religion frequently becomes a convenient lens through which these broader societal grievances are expressed. As a result, disputes over land, employment, and political representation are often framed in religious terms, heightening tensions and fostering a cycle of violence.

This context underscores the complexity of Nigeria's religious conflicts. While on the surface they may appear as disputes over faith, their roots lie in deeper structural inequalities and historical grievances. Addressing these underlying issues is crucial for fostering peace and stability in the country.

II. Historical Context of Religious Conflict in Nigeria

Overview of Religions in Nigeria

Nigeria is home to three major religious traditions: Islam, Christianity, and African Traditional Religions (ATR). Each plays a significant role in shaping the country's cultural, social, and political identity.

Islam in Nigeria

Islam was introduced to northern Nigeria in the 11th century through trans-Saharan trade routes. The religion gained significant influence with the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate in the early 19th century, following the jihad led by Usman Dan Fodio. The Caliphate's political and religious dominance institutionalized Islam in northern Nigeria, where it remains the majority religion. Islamic practices in Nigeria range from Sunni orthodoxy to Sufi traditions, with the latter having a significant presence among northern Muslims.

Christianity in Nigeria

Christianity arrived in Nigeria later than Islam, during the 15th century, through Portuguese explorers and missionaries along the southern coast. However, it gained widespread

acceptance in the 19th century due to British colonial influence and the missionary activities of various denominations, including the Anglican, Catholic, and Methodist churches. The southern regions of Nigeria, particularly the southeast and southwest, became Christian strongholds. In recent decades, Pentecostalism has emerged as a dominant force in Nigerian Christianity, reshaping the country's religious landscape.

African Traditional Religions (ATR)

Before the arrival of Islam and Christianity, African Traditional Religions were the dominant spiritual practices across Nigeria. These religions are diverse and rooted in local customs, with belief systems centered on the worship of ancestors, deities, and natural forces. ATR remains influential, often practiced alongside Islam or Christianity, blending traditional rituals with modern religious observances.

Religious Diversity and Interactions

Nigeria's religious plurality is one of its defining characteristics, but it also serves as a source of tension. In regions like the Middle Belt, where adherents of Islam and Christianity coexist, competition over resources and political power often takes on a religious dimension. This overlap of religious and ethnic identities has fueled conflicts, particularly in states like Kaduna, Plateau, and Benue.

Religions in Nigeria are not just spiritual systems but also markers of identity that influence political, social, and economic life. Their interactions continue to shape the nation's history and its efforts toward national unity amidst diversity.

History of Intercommunal Strife

Intercommunal strife in Nigeria has deep historical roots, shaped by the country's diverse ethnic and religious composition. These conflicts often arise from a blend of religious, ethnic, and socio-political grievances, reflecting a long history of competition and mistrust between communities.

Colonial Foundations of Division

The colonial period (1900–1960) laid the groundwork for intercommunal tensions in Nigeria. British colonial administrators governed the north and south separately, using indirect rule in the predominantly Muslim north and direct administration in the south. This policy reinforced regional and religious divisions, fostering perceptions of inequality. For example, the north

was largely excluded from Western-style education, which flourished in the south due to Christian missionary activities. This created disparities in access to education and economic opportunities, fueling resentment between the regions.

Ethno-Religious Dimensions of Strife

Intercommunal strife in Nigeria is often characterized by a complex interplay of religion and ethnicity. The north is dominated by the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, primarily Muslim, while the south is home to various Christian-majority ethnic groups, including the Yoruba and Igbo. In the Middle Belt, ethnic and religious diversity coexists, but it has frequently been a flashpoint for violence due to disputes over land, political representation, and cultural identity.

Notable Historical Incidents

1. Maitatsine Riots (1980-1985): These violent uprisings, led by the radical Islamic cleric Mohammed Marwa Maitatsine, began in Kano and spread to other northern cities. Thousands of lives were lost in these clashes, which were fueled by religious extremism and economic frustrations.
2. Kaduna Religious Riots (1987): Sparked by tensions between Muslim and Christian students in Kafanchan, this conflict spread to other parts of Kaduna State, resulting in significant loss of life and property.
3. Sharia Crisis (2000): The adoption of Sharia law by northern states, including Kaduna, led to widespread protests and violent clashes. Non-Muslim communities viewed the implementation of Sharia as discriminatory, leading to deadly confrontations.
4. Jos Crisis (2001, 2008, 2010): Jos, the capital of Plateau State, witnessed repeated outbreaks of violence between Christians and Muslims. These conflicts were driven by disputes over land rights, political power, and indigene-settler dynamics.

Contemporary Trends in Strife

In recent years, intercommunal conflicts have been exacerbated by economic inequalities, climate change, and population growth. For example, disputes between farmers (often Christian) and herders (often Muslim) in the Middle Belt have intensified due to competition over diminishing resources. These clashes are frequently framed in religious terms, deepening divisions.

Legacy of Intercommunal Strife

The history of intercommunal strife in Nigeria has left a legacy of mistrust and insecurity. Efforts at reconciliation have often been undermined by cycles of retaliatory violence, political manipulation, and the absence of justice for victims. Understanding this history is essential for addressing the root causes of Nigeria's conflicts and fostering lasting peace.

III. The Nature of Religious Conflict in Kaduna State

Major Causes of Religious Conflict in Kaduna State

Kaduna State, situated in Nigeria's Middle Belt, has a unique ethno-religious composition, with a Muslim-majority population in the northern part of the state and a predominantly Christian population in the south. This diversity, while potentially enriching, has often led to tensions and violent confrontations. The causes of religious conflict in Kaduna State are multifaceted and deeply rooted in historical, socio-economic, and political dynamics.

1. Religious Fundamentalism and Intolerance

Religious fundamentalism, where adherents of Islam or Christianity hold extremist views and refuse to tolerate differing beliefs, has been a significant driver of conflict. Leaders and followers who preach exclusivity often escalate tensions, creating an environment where violence is seen as a justified means of defending one's faith.

2. Competition Over Resources

Economic competition, often framed in religious terms, has been a persistent issue. In urban centers like Kaduna city, access to land, jobs, and public services is highly contested. These struggles frequently take on religious dimensions, as communities align along faith-based lines to advocate for their interests.

3. Political Manipulation of Religion

Politicians in Kaduna State often exploit religious identities to gain electoral support or consolidate power. By framing political contests as battles between Christian and Muslim interests, they deepen divisions and incite violence. This manipulation is particularly pronounced during elections, when rival parties mobilize supporters along religious lines.

4. Historical Grievances and Retaliatory Violence

The history of violent clashes in Kaduna has created a cycle of mistrust and retaliatory violence. Incidents like the 2000 Sharia crisis, where clashes erupted over the introduction of

Islamic law, left deep scars on the community. Such events have fostered a culture of vengeance, where communities retaliate for past attacks, perpetuating violence.

5. Ethnic and Religious Identity Overlap

In Kaduna State, ethnicity and religion are often intertwined, complicating intercommunal relations. The Hausa-Fulani, who dominate northern Kaduna, are predominantly Muslim, while the indigenous ethnic groups in southern Kaduna are mainly Christian. This overlap reinforces divisions, as conflicts over land ownership, political representation, and cultural rights are often interpreted through a religious lens.

6. Marginalization and Inequality

Southern Kaduna communities often perceive themselves as marginalized in terms of political appointments, economic opportunities, and resource allocation. This sense of exclusion fuels resentment and deepens religious divides, as these grievances are frequently attributed to the dominance of northern Kaduna's Muslim leadership.

7. Role of Extremist Movements

Extremist groups, both within and outside the state, have contributed to the escalation of religious tensions. Radical Islamic movements and Christian militias have occasionally mobilized followers for violent confrontations, undermining efforts at peaceful coexistence.

8. Breakdown of Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

In the past, traditional rulers and community leaders played crucial roles in mediating disputes and fostering peaceful coexistence. However, the weakening of these institutions, coupled with the rise of modern governance structures, has left a gap in effective conflict resolution.

Religious conflict in Kaduna State is not simply a matter of theological differences but a complex interplay of historical, socio-economic, and political factors. Addressing these root causes requires fostering tolerance, ensuring equitable resource distribution, and promoting inclusive governance. These efforts must involve both government and community stakeholders to break the cycle of violence and build lasting peace.

Consequences of Conflict in Kaduna State

Religious conflicts in Kaduna State have had profound and far-reaching consequences, affecting lives, property, and the overall socio-economic and political stability of the region. The repeated cycles of violence have left lasting scars on communities, creating challenges for reconciliation and development. Below are some of the key consequences of religious conflict in Kaduna State.

1. Loss of Lives

Religious conflicts in Kaduna State have resulted in the deaths of thousands of people over the years. Clashes, such as those during the 2000 Sharia crisis and subsequent retaliatory attacks, have caused mass casualties, leaving many families devastated. The loss of life undermines the fabric of society and deepens divisions between communities.

2. Destruction of Property

During periods of religious violence, homes, businesses, schools, and places of worship are often targeted. This destruction not only leads to economic losses but also represents an attack on the cultural and spiritual symbols of affected communities. The rebuilding process is often slow and costly, further exacerbating tensions.

3. Displacement of People

Religious conflicts have forced many people to flee their homes, creating a large population of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kaduna State. These individuals often live in overcrowded camps or host communities, facing challenges such as inadequate shelter, poor healthcare, and limited access to education and employment opportunities.

4. Erosion of Trust Between Communities

One of the most significant consequences of religious conflict is the breakdown of trust between Christian and Muslim communities. Repeated cycles of violence have fostered suspicion, fear, and hostility, making coexistence difficult. This mistrust hampers efforts at dialogue, reconciliation, and joint community development.

5. Economic Decline

Religious conflicts disrupt economic activities, including farming, trade, and small businesses, which are critical to the livelihoods of many residents in Kaduna State. The

destruction of infrastructure, coupled with the fear of violence, deters investors and limits economic growth. Over time, this contributes to increased poverty and unemployment, creating a vicious cycle that fuels further conflicts.

6. Political Instability

Religious conflicts undermine governance and political stability in Kaduna State. They often lead to heightened tensions during elections, as political actors exploit religious divisions to gain support. This destabilization makes it challenging for the government to implement policies effectively and foster development.

7. Social Fragmentation

Violence divides communities along religious and ethnic lines, leading to segregation in neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. This fragmentation weakens social cohesion and hinders collective efforts to address shared challenges.

8. Impact on Education

Religious conflicts disrupt educational systems, with schools often being closed for extended periods due to insecurity. In some cases, educational institutions are directly targeted during violence, resulting in damage to infrastructure and the loss of educational materials. Many children in conflict-affected areas are unable to continue their studies, further limiting their future opportunities.

9. Psychological Trauma

Survivors of religious conflict often experience severe psychological and emotional trauma, including grief, fear, and anxiety. This trauma can persist for years, particularly for children and families who have witnessed violence or lost loved ones. The lack of adequate mental health support in Kaduna State exacerbates these challenges.

10. Weakening of Religious Institutions

Places of worship, which should serve as spaces for spiritual growth and community-building, are often targeted or become rallying points for violence. This undermines their role in fostering peace and reconciliation and erodes their moral authority in the eyes of their followers.

The consequences of religious conflict in Kaduna State are far-reaching, affecting not only the immediate victims but also the broader socio-economic and political fabric of the state. Addressing these consequences requires a multi-faceted approach that includes fostering dialogue, rebuilding trust, ensuring justice, and promoting inclusive development to break the cycle of violence and build a more peaceful society.

IV. Christian-Muslim Relations in Kaduna State

Christian-Muslim relations in Kaduna State reflect a complex interplay of coexistence, tension, and periodic conflict. As a microcosm of Nigeria's religious diversity, Kaduna is split along religious and ethnic lines, with a predominantly Muslim population in the north and a largely Christian population in the south. While these communities have historically interacted in trade, politics, and cultural exchanges, relations have been strained by repeated cycles of violence and mistrust.

1. Historical Interactions

Historically, Christians and Muslims in Kaduna State coexisted relatively peacefully, engaging in trade, education, and governance. The introduction of Christianity by missionaries and the establishment of Islamic emirates during the pre-colonial and colonial eras shaped the state's religious demographics. However, the colonial strategy of indirect rule amplified divisions by isolating communities along religious and ethnic lines.

2. Sources of Mistrust

Over time, mistrust has grown between Christians and Muslims, fueled by perceived marginalization and mutual suspicion. Key factors include:

Land Ownership and Resource Allocation: Disputes over land, especially in southern Kaduna, are often framed in religious terms, exacerbating tensions.

Political Representation: Both groups frequently allege bias in appointments and policymaking, leading to grievances about exclusion.

Religious Prejudices: Negative stereotypes and inflammatory rhetoric perpetuate mistrust, making reconciliation more difficult.

3. Outbreaks of Violence

Several violent clashes between Christians and Muslims have deepened divisions in Kaduna State. Prominent examples include:

2000 Sharia Crisis: The decision to implement Sharia law in Kaduna State sparked violent protests and clashes, with both communities experiencing significant casualties and property destruction.

Post-Election Violence (2011): Disputes over election results, perceived through religious lenses, led to deadly riots in several parts of the state.

Southern Kaduna Conflicts: Frequent clashes over land and herding rights, often between predominantly Christian farmers and Muslim herders, have further strained relations.i

4. Retaliatory Attacks and Escalation

One of the most significant challenges in Christian-Muslim relations is the cycle of retaliatory violence. Attacks by one group are often met with revenge by the other, perpetuating hostility and making peaceful coexistence elusive. These cycles are fueled by a lack of justice and accountability for perpetrators of violence.

5. Social Segregation

The repeated outbreaks of violence have led to a growing physical and social separation between Christian and Muslim communities. Many neighborhoods, schools, and markets are now segregated along religious lines, limiting opportunities for interaction and deepening divisions.

6. Efforts Toward Reconciliation

Despite these challenges, efforts have been made to improve Christian-Muslim relations in Kaduna State, including:

Interfaith Dialogue: Religious leaders and organizations, such as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Jama'atuNasril Islam (JNI), have organized dialogues to promote understanding and reduce tensions.

Community-Based Initiatives: Grassroots efforts by local NGOs and civil society organizations focus on fostering trust and collaboration between communities.

Government Interventions: The Kaduna State government has occasionally implemented policies aimed at addressing grievances, such as commissions of inquiry into religious violence.

7. **Challenges to Reconciliation**

Despite these initiatives, several obstacles hinder reconciliation, including:

Deep-Rooted Grievances: Historical injustices and unresolved disputes over land and political power continue to fuel animosity.

Extremist Rhetoric: Radical religious leaders and groups perpetuate divisive narratives that exacerbate tensions.

Lack of Accountability: Many perpetrators of violence remain unpunished, undermining trust in the justice system.

Christian-Muslim relations in Kaduna State are marked by a complex mixture of coexistence and conflict. While efforts to foster peace and reconciliation have been undertaken, addressing the root causes of mistrust and violence remains critical. Building sustainable peace will require inclusive governance, equitable resource allocation, and sustained interfaith dialogue to bridge the divides between these two religious communities.

V. Factors Contributing to Religious Conflict

Religious conflict in Kaduna State arises from a complex interplay of historical, socio-economic, and political factors. These factors are deeply embedded in the state's diverse religious and ethnic composition and have contributed to cycles of mistrust and violence. Below are the key factors driving religious conflict in Kaduna State:

1. Ethnicity and Religion as Identity Markers

In Kaduna State, religious and ethnic identities often overlap. The northern part of the state is predominantly Muslim and associated with the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, while the southern region is predominantly Christian, with indigenous ethnic groups such as the Kataf, Bajju, and Adara. This overlap creates a strong sense of in-group versus out-group dynamics, where conflicts over land, resources, and political representation are framed along religious and ethnic lines.

2. Political Manipulation of Religion

Politicians often exploit religious sentiments to gain support, particularly during election periods. Religious identity is used as a tool to mobilize followers, resulting in heightened tensions and, at times, violence. This manipulation exacerbates divisions and undermines trust between communities, as each side perceives the other as a threat to its political and social interests.

3. Land Ownership and Resource Competition

Competition over land and resources is a significant driver of conflict, especially in the southern parts of Kaduna. Farmers, who are often Christian, and herders, who are predominantly Muslim, frequently clash over access to grazing lands and water resources. These disputes are compounded by population growth, environmental degradation, and insufficient conflict resolution mechanisms.

4. Socio-Economic Inequalities

Socio-economic disparities between communities exacerbate tensions. Southern Kaduna, for example, has long perceived itself as marginalized in terms of political representation, resource allocation, and infrastructure development compared to the northern part of the state. This perception of inequality fuels resentment and contributes to religious and ethnic polarization.

5. Extremism and Intolerance

Religious extremism, often driven by radical preachers or movements, has heightened intolerance between Christians and Muslims. Some groups promote exclusivist ideologies, demonizing members of the other faith and justifying violence as a means of defending religious identity. This radicalization undermines peaceful coexistence.

6. Historical Grievances and Cycles of Retaliation

The state has experienced a history of violent clashes, such as the 1987 Kafanchan crisis and the 2000 Sharia crisis. These events have left deep scars, fostering a culture of mistrust and a cycle of retaliatory violence. Communities often seek revenge for past attacks, perpetuating the cycle of conflict.

7. Weak Governance and Impunity

The inability of the state to effectively address grievances and prosecute perpetrators of violence has fueled a culture of impunity. Many communities feel that justice is inaccessible, leading to frustration and a willingness to take matters into their own hands. Weak governance has also limited the capacity for effective conflict prevention and resolution.

8. Indigene-Settler Dichotomy

The concept of "indigene" and "settler" status has contributed significantly to religious conflict. In Kaduna State, indigenous groups in the south (mainly Christian) view themselves as the rightful owners of the land, while Hausa-Fulani Muslims in the north are often labeled as settlers. This dichotomy has implications for access to land, political appointments, and socio-economic opportunities, further straining intercommunal relations.

9. Poverty and Unemployment

High levels of poverty and unemployment, particularly among youth, make communities vulnerable to manipulation by religious and political leaders. Idle youths are often recruited to participate in violence, further escalating conflicts.

10. Role of External Influences

External actors, such as extremist groups and international ideologies, have occasionally influenced religious tensions in Kaduna State. Radical Islamic movements and evangelical Christian groups with hardline views have contributed to the escalation of mistrust and conflict.

The factors contributing to religious conflict in Kaduna State are multifaceted and deeply intertwined. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that includes promoting inclusive governance, equitable resource distribution, interfaith dialogue, and economic opportunities. Only by tackling these underlying issues can sustainable peace be achieved in Kaduna State.

VI. Consequences of Religious Conflict on National Stability

Religious conflicts, such as those experienced in Kaduna State, have far-reaching consequences on Nigeria's national stability. These conflicts undermine social cohesion, economic development, and political governance, while threatening the unity of the country. Below are the major consequences of religious conflict on Nigeria's national stability:

1. Threat to National Unity

Religious conflicts exacerbate existing ethnic and regional divides in Nigeria, challenging the nation’s unity. With different parts of the country dominated by distinct religious groups—Muslims in the north and Christians in the south—violence in regions like Kaduna reinforces

perceptions of a divided nation. These divisions undermine efforts to build a cohesive Nigerian identity.

2. Destabilization of Governance

Religious violence often disrupts governance by diverting resources and attention from development to conflict management. Politicians and leaders, instead of focusing on policies that benefit the nation, are forced to address crises and rebuild communities affected by conflict. Additionally, governments may lose credibility if they are perceived as biased or ineffective in addressing religious grievances.

3. Economic Consequences

Religious conflicts disrupt economic activities, such as trade, agriculture, and investments, which are critical to national development. For example:

- Businesses are destroyed during violent clashes.
- Investors are deterred by the instability, reducing foreign direct investment.
- The national economy suffers from the costs of reconstruction and the provision of relief for displaced persons.
- Religious conflicts also exacerbate unemployment and poverty, creating a vicious cycle that further destabilizes the country.

4. Displacement and Humanitarian Crises

Conflicts lead to significant internal displacement, with thousands fleeing their homes to escape violence. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) place additional pressure on already strained resources in host communities, causing further social and economic challenges. The lack of stability in these areas contributes to a broader sense of national insecurity.

5. Weakening of National Security

Religious conflicts often escalate into broader security challenges, such as terrorism and insurgency. For instance, the emergence of groups like Boko Haram and banditry in northern Nigeria can be linked to unresolved religious and ethnic tensions. These security threats destabilize the nation, requiring costly and prolonged military interventions.

6. Polarization of National Politics

Religious conflicts heighten polarization in national politics, as political leaders exploit religious differences for electoral gain. This deepens mistrust between different regions and religious groups, undermining the principles of democracy and good governance. The politicization of religion creates an environment where policies are shaped by sectarian interests rather than national priorities.

7. Erosion of Social Trust

Religious conflicts weaken trust between citizens and institutions. Communities affected by violence often distrust the government, security agencies, and even religious organizations if they are perceived as biased or ineffective in managing conflicts. This erosion of trust hinders collaboration on national development initiatives.

8. Disruption of Education and Health Services

Religious violence disrupts access to basic services, such as education and healthcare, especially in conflict-prone areas. Schools and hospitals are often closed or destroyed during conflicts, depriving affected populations of essential services and exacerbating inequality.

9. International Reputational Damage

Persistent religious conflicts tarnish Nigeria's international image, portraying the country as unstable and unsafe. This reduces its influence on the global stage and may result in decreased foreign aid, reduced investment, and strained diplomatic relations.

10. Undermining Efforts at National Integration

Programs aimed at fostering national integration, such as the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), are threatened by religious conflicts. Participants and administrators fear violence in conflict-prone areas, limiting the effectiveness of such initiatives in promoting intergroup understanding.

Religious conflicts in Nigeria, particularly in states like Kaduna, pose a significant threat to national stability by deepening divisions, weakening governance, and undermining economic growth. Addressing these consequences requires a comprehensive approach that includes promoting inclusive policies, fostering interfaith dialogue, and ensuring justice for victims of violence. Only by addressing these challenges can Nigeria achieve sustainable national unity and stability.

VII. Possible Solutions to Religious Conflict

Resolving religious conflicts in Kaduna State requires a multifaceted approach that addresses the underlying causes and promotes reconciliation, tolerance, and equitable development. Below are some key solutions:

1. Promote Interfaith Dialogue and Understanding

Fostering Communication: Encourage open and regular dialogue between Christian and Muslim communities to address grievances, build trust, and promote mutual respect.

Role of Religious Leaders: Religious leaders from both faiths should collaborate to preach messages of peace and unity, discouraging inflammatory rhetoric.

Community Forums: Establish local interfaith committees to mediate disputes and create platforms for shared problem-solving.

2. Strengthen Governance and Rule of Law

- Fair Representation: Ensure equitable political representation for all communities in decision-making processes to address feelings of marginalization.
- Accountability: Prosecute individuals and groups responsible for inciting or participating in violence to break the cycle of impunity.
- Conflict-Sensitive Policies: Formulate policies that prioritize the interests of all communities, avoiding favoritism based on religion or ethnicity.

3. Address Underlying Socio-Economic Issues

- Poverty Alleviation: Invest in programs that create jobs and reduce poverty, particularly among youth, who are often exploited during conflicts.
- Infrastructure Development: Improve access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure in both northern and southern Kaduna to reduce inequalities.
- Resource Allocation: Ensure transparent and fair distribution of resources such as land, water, and public services to avoid competition along religious lines.

4. **Strengthen Conflict Resolution Mechanisms**

- Traditional Leaders: Empower traditional rulers to mediate disputes, as they are often trusted by their communities.
- Early Warning Systems: Establish mechanisms to detect and address potential conflicts before they escalate.
- Community Peacebuilding: Train local leaders in conflict resolution and mediation techniques to foster grassroots reconciliation.

5. **Reform Educational Curricula**

- ✓ Peace Education: Integrate peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and tolerance into school curricula to shape the mindset of future generations.
- ✓ Interfaith Schools: Promote schools that cater to both Christian and Muslim children, fostering early interactions and reducing segregation.

6. **Promote Inclusive Development**

- o Balanced Development: Prioritize inclusive development projects that benefit both Christian and Muslim communities equally.
- o Youth Empowerment: Provide vocational training and entrepreneurship opportunities to reduce idleness and the susceptibility of youth to manipulation.
- o Land Reforms: Implement fair and transparent land ownership policies to address disputes over land, particularly in southern Kaduna.

7. **Regulate Religious Practices**

- ▪ Monitoring Sermons: Monitor and regulate public religious messages to prevent hate speech and inflammatory rhetoric.
- ▪ Licensing of Preachers: Require preachers to obtain licenses and undergo training on peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

8. FosterMedia Responsibility

- ✓ Curbing Misinformation: Encourage the media to avoid sensationalism and ensure accurate reporting of religious issues.
- ✓ Promoting Peace: Use media platforms to disseminate messages of unity, reconciliation, and coexistence.

9. **Strengthen Security Measures**

- ➢ Community Policing: Establish community policing structures that include representatives from both religious groups to foster trust.
- ➢ Quick Response Teams: Create rapid response units to address outbreaks of violence before they escalate.
- ➢ Neutrality of Security Forces: Ensure that security agencies act impartially during conflicts to prevent accusations of bias.

10. **Encourage Government and Civil Society Collaboration**

- ❖ Partnerships: Foster collaboration between government agencies, civil society organizations, and international bodies to implement peacebuilding initiatives.

- ❖ Capacity Building: Train government officials and civil society actors on managing religious conflicts effectively.
- ❖ Reconciliation Programs: Develop programs aimed at healing the wounds of past violence and promoting long-term peace.

Addressing religious conflict in Kaduna State requires a combination of proactive governance, equitable development, and interfaith collaboration. By tackling the root causes of conflict and fostering a culture of dialogue and coexistence, lasting peace can be achieved. All stakeholders, including government, religious leaders, civil society, and the community, must work together to break the cycle of violence and build a united and prosperous state.

VIII. Recommendations

To address the religious crisis in Kaduna State effectively, targeted recommendations must focus on promoting peaceful coexistence, addressing systemic issues, and building sustainable mechanisms for conflict resolution. Below are key recommendations:

1. Strengthen Interfaith Collaboration

Establish Interfaith Councils: Set up permanent interfaith councils at state and local government levels to facilitate dialogue, mediate disputes, and promote peaceful coexistence.

Joint Community Projects: Encourage collaborative projects between Christians and Muslims to foster mutual trust and shared purpose, such as building schools or healthcare centers.

Regular Dialogues: Organize periodic interfaith workshops and town halls to address grievances and reduce misconceptions about the beliefs of other groups.

2. Promote Equity and Inclusion in Governance

Fair Representation: Ensure that both Christians and Muslims are adequately represented in government appointments, policymaking, and public service.

Transparency in Resource Distribution: Implement mechanisms to ensure equitable distribution of resources, such as infrastructure, social amenities, and land, across religious and ethnic communities.

Merit-Based Leadership: Encourage the appointment of leaders based on merit rather than religious or ethnic affiliation to foster inclusivity.

3. Reform and Regulate Religious Practices

Monitoring Sermons: Require religious leaders to promote messages of peace, tolerance, and unity, and take action against those who incite violence or hatred.
Interfaith Training for Leaders: Provide training for pastors, imams, and traditional leaders on conflict prevention, interfaith dialogue, and tolerance.
Licensing of Religious Institutions: Introduce licensing requirements for religious institutions to monitor activities and discourage extremism.

4. Focus on Socio-Economic Development
Job Creation Programs: Invest in job creation and vocational training programs, particularly for youth, to reduce their vulnerability to manipulation during conflicts.
Infrastructure Development: Ensure balanced infrastructure development in both northern and southern Kaduna to address perceived marginalization.
Land Reform: Develop transparent land ownership policies to resolve disputes over land, especially in areas prone to conflict.

5. Enhance Security and Justice
Community Policing: Implement community-based policing initiatives to improve trust between security agencies and local communities.
Prosecution of Perpetrators: Ensure swift prosecution of individuals or groups responsible for inciting or participating in violence, regardless of their religious affiliation.
Conflict Early Warning Systems: Establish mechanisms to detect and address potential triggers of conflict before they escalate.
6. Reform Education Systems
Promote Peace Education: Introduce peacebuilding, tolerance, and conflict resolution into school curricula to foster a culture of nonviolence from a young age.
Interfaith Schools: Encourage the establishment of schools that integrate children from Christian and Muslim communities to promote interaction and mutual understanding.
Scholarship Programs: Provide scholarships and incentives to reduce disparities in educational opportunities between northern and southern Kaduna.

7. Leverage Media for Peacebuilding
Responsible Reporting: Train journalists to report on religious issues sensitively and avoid sensationalism or inflammatory content.

Peace Messaging: Use media platforms to broadcast programs that promote unity, tolerance, and reconciliation among religious groups.

8. Support Grassroots Peace Initiatives

Empower Civil Society: Support local NGOs and community-based organizations working on peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts.

Traditional Leaders' Role: Strengthen the involvement of traditional rulers in conflict resolution, as they are respected by both religious groups.

Community-Based Mediation: Train local leaders in mediation and negotiation skills to handle disputes at the grassroots level.

9. Foster Healing and Reconciliation

Truth and Reconciliation Processes: Establish state-level truth and reconciliation commissions to address historical grievances and foster healing.

Support for Victims: Provide psychological and financial support to victims of religious violence, including widows, orphans, and displaced persons.

Memorialization: Build memorials or organize events to honor victims of past conflicts and promote collective reflection.

10. Strengthen Institutional Capacity

Government Collaboration: Foster partnerships between the government, religious institutions, and international organizations to implement peacebuilding initiatives.

Capacity Building: Train government officials and security agencies on conflict prevention and management, focusing on neutrality and professionalism.

Funding for Peacebuilding: Allocate sufficient funds for programs that promote reconciliation, education, and socio-economic development in conflict-prone areas.

Addressing the religious crisis in Kaduna State requires a holistic approach that prioritizes interfaith collaboration, socio-economic development, equitable governance, and robust security measures. By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can work towards fostering lasting peace and rebuilding trust among Kaduna's diverse communities. This comprehensive strategy will not only stabilize Kaduna State but also contribute to Nigeria's overall unity and development.

Conclusions

Understanding the religious crisis in Kaduna State requires acknowledging its deep-rooted historical, socio-political, and economic dimensions.

Kaduna's crisis stems from historical grievances tied to colonial policies, which exacerbated divisions along ethnic and religious lines. Northern Kaduna is predominantly Muslim, while Southern Kaduna is largely Christian. These divides have fueled mistrust and competition over resources, power, and land.Disparities in access to resources, opportunities, and political representation have deepened tensions. Religious and ethnic affiliations often become rallying points for expressing frustrations over these inequalities, turning economic struggles into communal conflicts.Politicians and elites have often exploited religious and ethnic identities to gain support, further polarizing communities. This manipulation has perpetuated cycles of violence and hindered efforts toward peaceful coexistence.Failures in governance, including lack of accountability for perpetrators of violence, have contributed to recurring conflicts. When grievances are ignored or poorly addressed, communities resort to self-defense, often leading to escalation.Despite its misuse as a divisive tool, religion also holds potential as a unifying force. Faith leaders and institutions can play significant roles in promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and coexistence.

- Inclusive Governance: Policies should promote equity and representation for all groups to reduce marginalization.
- Community Dialogue: Initiatives to foster interfaith and interethnic dialogue can help build trust and understanding.
- Justice and Accountability: Implementing strong legal frameworks to prosecute violence and ensure justice is vital for breaking cycles of impunity.
- Economic Empowerment: Addressing poverty and unemployment can reduce vulnerabilities that lead to manipulation and violence.
- Grassroots Peacebuilding: Empowering local communities to engage in peace initiatives creates sustainable conflict resolution mechanisms.

Understanding the religious crisis in Kaduna requires viewing it through a multidimensional lens and prioritizing holistic approaches to healing historical wounds, addressing current grievances, and fostering peaceful coexistence.

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AMNESTY PROGRAMME AND THE SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIGER DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria, where oil multinational corporations (MNCs) conduct the nation's oil exploration activities, is plagued by environmental degradation from gas flaring and oil spills. With the strong cooperation of the oil multinational corporations, the country's successive administrations not only ignored the people and other non-governmental groups' pleas for attention to the region, but also occasionally responded with crackdown s and repression. The crisis escalated when the locals in this area resorted to self-defense by bombing, kidnapping, and capturing foreign workers and other employees of the oil multinational corporations in return for cash ransom. The government created the amnesty program in 2009 as a way out of the quagmire because it could no longer stand the humiliation, the decline in daily oil output, and the significant financial loss. Examining how the amnesty program affects longterm peace and sustainable development in the Niger Delta is the goal of the study. The study used a qualitative approach to data analysis and a historical research methodology. It is based on conflict transformation theory and suggests, among other things, that all social groups should have equal access to the Amnesty program in order to establish a system of peace, regardless of their ethnic background or affiliation. To satisfy the Niger Deltas' demands for unfettered rights, all tiers of government— local, state, and federal—must carry out their obligations to the people. The federal government and its National Security Agencies (NSAs) should take adequate action to combat insecurity and the spread of weapons across the country.

Keywords: **Amnesty, Niger Delta, Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, Development.**

Introduction

The concept of amnesty is not new. The word "amnesty" is a Greek word that comes from "amnestia," which is defined as an act of grace in which the state's supreme authority restores those who may have committed any offense against it to the status of innocent persons (Novus homo). It goes beyond a pardon in that it erases all legal reminders of the offenses. It

is also the government's act of power to pardon people, particularly for political offenses, and to absolve them of the guilt or punishment associated with those offenses (Ikelegbe&Umokoro 2014).

Different types of amnesty programs exist. Delinquent taxpayers amnesty get a onetime chance to settle their accounts by paying taxes and interest without facing criminal penalties. Tax amnesty may help governments generate more income, but it may also enrage lawabiding taxpayers who don't like it when tax defaulters receive tax incentives.The goal of the amnesty policy was to lessen France's overcrowded prison system. However, governments all around the world now regularly implement such policies (Ogannah, 2009).

Amnesties, which target common crime, are now a common part of presidential campaigns. Historically, they were utilized as a tool for national reconciliation following political crises. The goal of the socalled housing amnesty initiative is to give the populace access to inexpensive housing. Although the concept of amnesty is not new to Nigerians, the current amnesty program's scope and significant financial implications is to assist end insurgency in the oilrich Niger Delta region. It was for this intent the Nigerian government made the decision to implement the approach(Ungerleider, 1998)..

According to Watts (2006), the Nigerian scenario serves as an example of how oilbased development fails. The Nigerian government was unable to ignore the Niger Delta issue any longer, primarily because crude oil, which provides roughly 90% of the country's foreign earnings, has steadily grown to be the foundation of the Nigerian economy. Crude oil production in the Niger Delta hit a record low of 700,000 barrels per day during the height of youth unrest. This is because young people in the Niger Delta actively participated in activities that disrupted the region's exploration process, such as vandalizing oil sites, kidnapping oil workers, and bunkering. Following extensive discussion, the Late Umar Ya'Adua administration chose to implement a new policy known as the "Presidential Amnesty Program" in order to help provide a solution to the threat of violence in the Niger Delta region (Ejovi, & Ebie,2013).

Statement of the Problem

The goal of the Niger Delta insurgents' amnesty was to bring about a lasting peace and foster an atmosphere that would hasten sustainable development. It was a tactic used to put an end to militancy or insurgency and restore peace to the unstable Niger Delta region of Nigeria in order to enable the continuous oil exploration and consequently increasedrevenue for the Nigerian stateand to generate revenue that would be used to address a variety of issues related to underdevelopment in the Niger Delta region.It was therefore intended to clear the Niger

Delta of the militant youths in order to protect the oil industry in the region. This study examines howthe amnesty program has brought about peace and sustainable development to the Niger Delta region. The statement of problem for the study is: What are the noticeable consequences of the amnesty program in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria?

The Niger Delta Region

One of the federated states in the Federal Republic of Nigeria is the Niger Delta. It occupies 70,000 square kilometers (27,000 square miles) in the southern part of the country and accounts for 7.5% of Nigeria's total land area (Obi 2010). The Niger Delta is a federated state that is administratively composed of nine entities: Abia and Imo, which are both in the southeast geopolitical zone; Ondo, which is in the south west geopolitical zone; AkwaIbom, Bayelsa, CrossRiver, Delta, Edo, and Port Harcourt (Rivers), all of which are in the south south geopolitical zones. With over 31 million inhabitants from over 40 ethnic groupings and 250 dialects, the Niger Delta is a multiethnic federal state. (Alao 2007: Peel, Michael 2011).

The majority of inhabitants in the densely forested Niger Delta region have always worked in agriculture and fishing. Additionally, the area produces and supplies a large amount of food that is available for consumption and trade throughout the year. The rain forest in this area, which was formerly referred to as oil rivers due to its capacity to produce palm, extends up into the Atlantic Ocean, making the Niger Delta one of the most significant wetlands with a rich, intricate, yet delicate environment (Kuku, 2012). The 1966 uprising, the 1990 nonviolent protest, and the most recent mass militancy attacks are only a few of the conflicts that have occurred in the Niger Delta, which is internationally recognized as the area with the richest petroleum resource (Alao2007).

Additionally, it is home to a number of well-known social movements and organizations that have been fighting for indigenous peoples' rights to their natural resources in this area, such as the Chikoko Movement (FNDIC), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Ijaw National Congress (INC), and the Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC). Similarly, it has been a site of global controversy for over the past 50 years due to oil and gas operations that have resulted in pollution, corruption, and human rights abuses (Orbach 2011). The Niger Delta has become an impoverished region with widespread poverty, underdevelopment, and environmental degradation as a result of neglect by the oil firms operating there and by successive Nigerian governments (Obi 2010)

A brief overview of the Niger Delta Conflict:

In the context of equity, self-determination, ethnic autonomy, lack of political participation and democratic accountability, underdevelopment, and pervasive poverty, the violent conflict

in the Niger Delta can be interpreted as a microcosm of the larger Nigerian state. The conflict between British traders and indigenous traders from the Niger Delta dates back to the colonial era and concerned the sale and control of palm oil prices. The conflict, which claimed many native lives and nearly destroyed a whole town, set the stage for the domination of the Niger Delta that continues to this day. When commercial oil was discovered in 1956 at Oloibiri (now in Bayelsa State) and later expanded into other parts of the Niger Delta, the conflict shifted from palm oil to fossil oil, placing the region in a strategic position on a national and global scale (Hurso, 2018).

Transnational oil companies (TOCs) like Shell, ExxonMobil, Total, Chevron, Elf, Agip (Eni), and Texaco, in joint ventures with the Nigerian National Petroleum Company, operate the 600 oil fields and well over 400 oil production and storage facilities strewn throughout the Niger Delta region. As a result, the area is a hub for international relations and oil production worldwide, and it provides context for comprehending the issues facing the Niger Delta. The Niger Delta region gained importance in Nigeria's oil political economy once fossil oil was discovered; export revenue climbed from 1% in 1958 to over 98% of the state's total revenue in the 1990s (Oluwatoyin, 2018).

Oilrich Niger Delta communities live in extreme poverty despite the advantages of the oil and gas economy for the Nigerian state. This is further supported by the gradual downward revision of the revenue allocation derivation principle under each regime and the decrease in the "share" of federal allocations to oil-producing ethnic minority states from 50% in 1966 to 3% in the mid-1990s. Only in 1999 was it given another upward assessment, reaching a derivation of 13%. Oil extraction and exploitation by various TOCs since the 1960s has had a negative environmental impact on the soil, forest, and waterways of the Niger Delta communities through oil spills and gas flares committed by the TOCs. This is because agriculture is the most prevalent activity in the Niger Delta and employs the most active labor force. The Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) was established and led by Ken SaroWiwa to fight environmental deterioration in Ogoniland against the backdrop of the problems faced by the oil-rich communities.

Despite MOSOP's successful local nonviolent protests, Ogoniland was the target of a wave of state terror in what Major Paul Okutimo, the commander of the Rivers State Internal Security Task Force, called "wasting operations" meant to put an end to the MOSOP demonstration. SaroWiwa and eight others were hanged after a jungle trial. The rise of a new ethnic minority resistance movement in the Niger Delta, headed by the Ijaw, was influenced by lessons learned from the MOSOP battle and the valiant actions of the Boros in the 1960s. On

December 11, 1998, the Ijaw youth assembled in Kaiama, where they established the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) and released the Kaiama Declaration. This proclamation, among other things, served as a deadline for local oil corporations to evacuate the Niger Delta by December 30, 1998. In response, the federal military administration flooded the area with troops and engaged in rapes, shootings, and killings. Youths in the area began using violence as justifiable protest tools as a result of this official intervention.

Even as politicians in the Niger Delta capitalized on the surge of popular ire among the region's many unemployed and disgruntled youth, the return to democracy also had broader implications for the human rights and pro-democracy movements. In the 1999 and 2003 elections, some of the young people were used as political pawns, contributing to a wave of local violence that linked to community disputes, local resistance politics, and the fight for control of resources. By 2006, the violence had escalated to full-scale insurgency. Broad militant alliances were involved in the complex conflict, including the Joint Revolutionary Council (JRC), the Martys brigade (Mb), the Icelanders, the Coalition for Militant Actions (COMA), the Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and the Tompolo boys, to name a few. These organizations effectively used international media to promote their mission of fighting for the control of oil revenues by combining deadly attacks and sabotage of oil installations(Hurso, 2018).

It is instructive to observe that the state sought to address the economic gap and promote regional development through non-violent means. A number of commissions were established as part of the mix of strategies,

A commission led by Sir Willink was established by the colonial government in 1957 to look into the region's developmental difficulties. The Willink Minorities Commission's report included several suggestions, including the following: The Commission suggested adding a provision establishing the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) to the Independence Constitution of 1960, and a Board was established to address the region's unique developmental needs (Kuku, 2012; Ogbogbo, 2005). The Balewa administration established the NDDB in 1961 in accordance with the second recommendation (Isumonah, 2003). The Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) was established in 1992 by the Babangida administration to build infrastructure in the Niger Delta. Lieutenant General Alexander Ogomudia served as the chair of the Security Committee on Oil Producing Areas, which was established in 2001 by former President OlusegunObasanjo.

To address the issue, the committee suggested short-, medium-, and longterm solutions (Kuku, 2012):

Temporary actions, A review to increase the 13% derivation fund to at least 50%, the government should pass legislation requiring manufacturing firms in the delta to create local content for towns that generate oil.

Communities ought to be encouraged to diversify into environmentally specific agriculture production. The establishment of civic centers to foster youth sports and extracurricular activities; the mobilization of youth for community development; the training of indigenous people for jobs in oil companies; the provision of a marine/coastal mass transit transportation system; the dredging of the Eastern Obolo (AkwaIbom State), Ayetoro waterway; and the establishment of police stations in oil producing communities.

Measures for the medium term; New communities should be built by filling swamps with sand; erosion should be prevented; roads, water, and power should be provided; and coastal areas' ocean surge should be controlled. To prevent disputes, the National Boundary Commission (NBC) ought to start and finish demarcating boundaries.

Long-term actions; Industrialize the whole Niger Delta region; repeal any regulations that force people to give up l and in oil-producing regions. To protect oil production, secure oil installations, quell community protests, and address any acts [sic] that endanger the operations of oil corporations or workers in the oil business, the FGN for med the JTF, a military task force, in the Niger Delta in 2003 (Kuku, 2012). Also implemented in 2004 was the Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan (NDRMP). The participation of experts and stakeholders from 25 different economic sectors in the area served as the foundation for this master plan. . In order to transform the region's development, it sought to promote economic expansion, infrastructure development, community needs, and environmental preservation (Kuku, 2012).

The NTDC was established by the Yar'adua administration in 2008. LedumMitee, the MOSOP head, served as its chair. The following are the committee's recommendations: Henry Okah, a militant under arrest, will have an open trial and be granted bail, the East-West road from Calabar to Lagos will be completed, with at least one link road per state to the coastline, the current 13% derivation will be increased to 25%, and the additional revenues will be primarily allocated to new infrastructure and sustainable development of the region., Disarming young people engaged in militancy by establishing a credible DDR process and providing an enabling atmosphere with measures to foster confidence, Paying outstanding statutory amounts owed to the NDDC , Pregnant women, children under five, and

those over 65 should all receive free medical care from all existing health care facilities, all public primary and secondary schools should be renovated and outfitted with qualified teachers and the FGN should completely relocate all displaced Bakassi residents and put an end to their continued dispersion (Iyabobola,2015).

After the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in 2000 and in spite of the state established Joint Task Military Force (JTF) defense of the region's oil companies and facilities from the militants and criminals, there was still violent disturbance. Ending Insurgency in the Niger Delta by the end of 2008, it was widely acknowledged that the region's young rebellion could not be defeated by military means alone.

As a result, the government suggested the Niger Delta Summit and selected Ibrahim Gambari, the Undersecretary General of the United Nations (UN), to mediate the dispute between the federal government and the Niger Delta. The Niger Deltas, however, turned down his candidacy. The summit was canceled as a result of this refusal, and the Niger Delta Technical Committee was established on September 8, 2008, based on the group's alternate proposal to the president. Its responsibilities included compiling, reviewing, and distilling a variety of reports, recommendations, and suggestions from the Willink Commission's 1958 report to the present, providing a summary of the recommendations required for government action, and offering ideas for addressing issues in the Niger Delta.

The committee made several recommendations, including the creation of a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration" (DDR) commission to deal with the militants in the Niger Delta, the negotiation of amnesty for those militants who were willing to take part in the DDR program, improved independent regulation of oil pollution, an efficient environmental impact assessment (EIA) procedure, and the cessation of gas flares by December 2008. The government established the Presidential Panel on Amnesty and Disarmament of Militants in the Niger Delta to carry out the presidential pardon after significant deliberation over a wide range of political, economic, and social issues. Consultations were placed at the highest levels of government and involved top command officials and members of the Niger Delta elite speaking with militia commanders, in contrast to the proposals for open talks between the government and militias. President Yar'Adua granted presidential amnesty on June 25, 2009, to militants who had either directly or indirectly committed crimes related to militant activities in the Niger Delta and who were prepared to give up their weapons and give up armed conflict within a 60- day period (6 August–4 October 2009) (Oluwatoyin, 2018).

The Amnesty Program

The Presidential Panel on Amnesty and Disarmament of Militants in the Niger Delta made recommendations that served as the basis for the amnesty program for the region. The panel was established on May 5, 2009, to carry out the NTDC's recommendations on giving Niger Delta militants amnesty. Then, on June 25, 2009, President UmaruYar'adua declared amnesty for the insurgents in the Niger Delta. Section 175 of the 1999 constitution, which grants the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria certain powers, was a major source of support for the declaration (Iyabobola, 2015).

1. I hereby offer everyone who has directly or indirectly taken part in the commission of crimes related to militant activity in the Niger Delta amnesty and unconditional pardon.

2. The pardon will take effect when the affected individuals surrender and turn over all weapons, ammunition, and equipment, as well as complete the renunciation of militancy forms listed in the schedule hereto, at the closest collection center set up for government purposes in each of the Niger Delta states.

3. Everyone currently facing charges related to militant activity will be eligible for the unconditional pardon granted under this proclamation.

4. This declaration will no longer be in force as of Sunday, October 4, 2009. None of the militants were forced to accept the offer of amnesty by the proclamation of the amnesty program. Only those who willingly accepted the offer were given contracts by the government, and they were thereafter subjected to a proper and non-coercive DDR procedure (Iyabobola, 2015) .

There was a 60- day opportunity for the militants to turn in their weapons (i.e., accept the offer of amnesty). August 6–October 4, 2009, was the time frame for the 60 days. There are four parts to the amnesty scheme. These include the DDR, infrastructure, petroleum, and environmental subcommittees. Nonetheless, peace and stability in the Niger Delta are directly impacted by the DDR component (Iyabobola, 2015)..

NdutimiAlaibe, the Federal Government's National Coordinator and Chief Accounting Officer, claimed that in order to calm the unrest in the Niger Delta, the Nigerian federal government granted militants amnesty in 2009. The thenPresident responded to the security issues by implementing a fundamental reduction in the level of violence occurring. Following stakeholder deliberation, it was determined that the militants needed to surrender their weapons. That served as the foundation for the amnesty, which was intended to maintain, stabilize, and solidify the security situation in the Niger Delta region as a necessary condition for fostering regional economic growth (The Daily Independent, June 3, 2012). The Niger

Delta saw around seven years of comparatively calm conditions following President Umaru Musa Yar'adua's 2007 proclamation of amnesty.

The amnesty procedure raised a lot of problems. First, all three elements of the process must be integrated and carried out for "disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration" (DDR) to be successful. Reintegration, which should involve resettlement, training, alternative jobs, etc., was not thoroughly planned for in the Niger Delta's current approach. The willingness of certain oil firms to help with technical training to improve the employability of those granted amnesty was one possible resource that was not utilized. Second, it was likely that just a small portion of the weapons that were in use were turned in, and it's unclear even if the weapons being turned in were utilized by the militants. This is true of most DDR programs worldwide. Third, a DDR process must be a component of a larger peace process in order to be fully successful.

DDR is unlikely to be successful if the militants' and other Delta residents' complaints were not addressed. Fourth, inviting foreign monitors as witnesses with the guarantee that the weapons surrendered were rendered useless will boost the trust of many militants in the disarmament process. The administration, however, opposed foreign observers. Fifth, some militants believed that the amnesty process is being used to incite conflict among the militants. What is the government's plan at the conclusion of the amnesty program, one could wonder? Are there going to be real peace talks with the demobilized militants? What happens if the main insurgent leaders reject the amnesty?

The area was once more besieged by militants known as "the Niger Delta Avengers" in May 2016. Utilizing the Delta's intricate, creek filled terrain to keep one step ahead of the Nigerian soldiers pursuing them, they operated in groups, carried small arms and explosives, blow up pipelines, and sabotage installations in order to destroy oil infrastructures.

Militants: Disarmed and Registered

Disarmament is the process by which former combatants turn in their weapons and ammunition at specified locations or camps, signifying the end of hostilities. Amnesty in the Niger Delta has helped a sizable portion of militants give up their weapons and accepts peace. In accordance with the amnesty granted 30,000 members of various militant groups from the nine (9) oilproducing states that made up the Niger Delta turned in their weapons and ammunition and registered at the various arms collection centers for the demobilization process. In particular, it further demonstrates that in the first phase, 20,049 militants were disarmed and registered; in the second phase, 6166 militants were disarmed and registered; and in the third phase, 3,642 militants were disarmed and registered. While precise numbers

on the number of militants in the Niger Delta states are not given, the literature recorded the total, which is used for the third phase appropriately demonstrating that, by the conclusion of the third stage, the states of Bayelsa, Rivers, and Delta had the most number of militants disarmed (Lanre and Shaibu, 2019).

Ex-militants were Demobilized and Reintegrated

Demobilization, according to Egwu (2013), is the process of leaving combat and militarized life behind and returning to civilian life. It entails dismantling and disbanding paramilitary and non-state fighting units, which are typically gathered in camps for a change in life orientation that includes professional and non-violent life counseling. Reintegration, on the other hand, entails reintegrating former fighters or militants into society through profitable training and empowerment aimed at achieving self-empowerment and economic independence as well as the peaceful and civil responsibilities that former combatants should play in society. By providing support in the form of education, professional training, microcredit, skills development, and help to return to peaceful and sustainable livelihoods, reintegration helps to meet the unique needs of former combatants, veterans, and disabled combatants as well as their families and communities.

According to the study, demobilization (transformational training and counseling in various camps) and reintegration of the former militants by attending to their specific needs and those of noncombatants in the area are two more significant areas where the Amnesty program has helped to build peace in the Niger Delta. Approximately 15,434 were changed as part of the peacebuilding process to help former militants reintegrate into civilian life between June 2010 and May 2011. 6,067 exmilitants were reintegrated through formal education between 2013 and 2014; 2,500 went to universities; 13,000 took part in skill- building programs at domestic and international training facilities; 113 worked in welding fabrication and the maritime industry; and others in various domestic and international agencies. Niger Delta ex-militants and noncombatants who were beneficiaries of the Amnesty program's reintegration component received specialized and vocational training, as did the numerous international organizations that served as the scheme's human infrastructure building component, a proliferation of noncombatants and former soldiers in formal education (B.Sc., M.A., M.Sc., MBA, M. Engr., and L LM courses) Primarily postgraduate degree programs offered by international universities in various academic fields. The United States of America (USA), Sweden, Cyprus, Dubai, Malaysia, Belarus, and the United Kingdom (UK) are the training host nations, correspondingly. However, the majority of the Niger Delta recipients under the

Amnesty scheme were housed in Universities in the UK and Malaysia (Lanre and Shaibu, 2019).

Government Financial Contributions for Reintegration of Transformed Ex-militants.

There is general agreement that the Federal Government of Nigeria, in its endeavor to establish peace in the Niger Delta, has contributed billions of dollars to the Amnesty program through the annual budget from 2009 to 2018 in order to ensure that the DDR scheme results in enduring peace in the area. The program's budgetary contributions and allocations made it clear that the Federal Government was financially committed to peace building in the Niger Delta. In addition to the government's demonstrated financial commitment to the Amnesty program, data regarding finances shows that exmilitants protested in 2015 in response to grievances or concerns that the government intended to discontinue the monthly payment, as well as the low funding for the program. However, the Amnesty Office was able to pay all of the ex-militants' backlog of stipends through the end of 2016, thanks to the increase in funding in 2017. In addition to giving the former militants a monthly salary of between N65,000 to N66,000, the Amnesty program has continuously provided for reintegration activities (Premium Time, Wednesday, August 22, 2018) (Lanre and Shaibu, 2019).

Prospects and Challenges Facing the Implementation of the Amnesty Program in Nigeria

According to government reports, the country's oil production increased from 800,000 barrels per day (during the 2006-2008 periods) to 2.3 million barrels per day after the ceasefire brought about by the amnesty declaration. This is because the security situation in the oil region has improved. A daily increase of 1.5 million barrels translates into daily revenue of $124.45 million for the national coffers. Additionally, other businesses used the occasion to fix some of their damaged oil facilities. Undoubtedly, the amnesty program is anticipated to enhance the nation's currently poor level of human capital development. Nigeria is ranked 156th out of 187 countries and territories with a 2011 Human Development Index (HDI) score of 0.459, which includes the three fundamental components of human development: a long and healthy life, access to information, and a respectable level of living (UNDP 2011).

The "resource curse" argument, which holds that resourcerich economies like Nigeria, Congo, Angola, etc. are more vulnerable to poor management, underdevelopment, and violence, may be disproved if the amnesty program in Nigeria is carried out properly. With effective institutions and sound governance in place, the resource curse can be avoided, as demonstrated by the examples of the UK and Norway, two significant oil exporting nations. Despite the program's successes, elders in the Niger Delta region called for the dissolution of

the Presidential Amnesty Committee after reports from the group established in January 2010 to examine the DDR's rehabilitation component showed certain shortcomings. Among these are the following: the overabundance of registered exmilitants; the ongoing detention of multiple militants; some training centers operating with subpar facilities and falling short of acceptable standards; and the fact that approximately 80% of the budget was allocated to paying consultants and contractors, with only 20% going toward the rehabilitation of the ex-militants (Obi &Rustad, 2011).

NwajiakuDahou (2010) commented on the shortcomings of the amnesty program, saying: "Among the many flaws of the Amnesty program are: Lack of a wider political settlement involving the larger Niger Delta population that has borne the costs of conflict, vast differences in compensation between former militant commanders and foot soldiers, restricted access to rehabilitation training and allowances for those who turned in weapons after the deadline, inadequate training provision, limited employment opportunities, and the politically motivated staffing of organizations tasked with implementing and coordinating the amnesty program." Five new committees were established to address postamnesty programs and expedite development difficulties in the Niger Delta after the Federal Government abolished the Presidential Committee on Disarmament and Amnesty for Militants in the Niger Delta on December 2, 2009. These included the Environmental Remediation Committee, the Oil and Gas Assets Protection Committee, the Disarmament and Reintegration Committee, the Presidential Monitoring Committee on Amnesty, and the Infrastructural Committee. Poor execution of the amnesty package is one of its main problems (Olubayo&Olubisi, 2012).

The amnesty scheme was not carried out as suggested in the Niger Delta Technical Committee's report. The consultations took place at the highest levels of the federal government, with top government officials of Niger Delta origin and Niger Delta elites/elders negotiating with the militant commanders, instead of holding open talks or signing a formal peace agreement with the militants (Obi &Rustad, 2011). Since the militants on the ground feel deceived and ignored by the government, this topdown, non-inclusive strategy, implemented by militant leaders who are only interested in what is profitable to them or for their own personal advancement, poses a severe threat to the amnesty program. The failure of earlier unsuccessful development initiatives like the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB), Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA), and Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC) based on a topdown approach demonstrates that the Nigerian government has not really learned anything from them.

Adopting a bottomup strategy that incorporates aspects of democracy, accountability, equity, and active public participation from all stakeholders— including grassroots individuals, militants, youth organizations, women's groups, and civil society—is necessary to achieve sustainable peace and development in the Niger Delta. Additionally, compared to the 26,358 militants who registered for the amnesty program, the overall number of weapons and ammo turned in by the militants— 1,798 rifles, 1,981 guns of various sorts, 70 RPGs, 159 pistols, one spear, and six cannons— is undoubtedly low. The numerous strikes that militants have taken out even after the disarmament exercise demonstrate how armed the region is. The region is extremely hazardous and vulnerable to a return to violence as long as there are a lot of weapons in circulation, hence the disarmament program needs to be strengthened (Olubayo&Olubisi, 2012)

Amnesty, Militia Insurgency and Violence in the Niger Delta?

There is ample evidence that, in spite of the Amnesty program's enormous achievements and contributions, violent attacks on multinational oil companies (MNOCs) continued to occur between October 2010 and 2016, which is essentially the post-amnesty period. There is ample proof that the Amnesty program was tangled with issues of violent attacks and revival associated with the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) in Bayelsa state, Delta state, and Abuja, the Nigerian capital. Even yet, it was noted that the program's largest beneficiaries were in Delta and Bayelsa States. The activities shown in Tables 1 as well as the reemergence of militant organizations under the MEND banner are proof that the Amnesty program was unable to stop violence or establish a peace regime in the Niger Delta.

Table 1: Evidence of Militia resurgence and violent attacks 2010-2016

S\N	Date	Millitia Attack\MillitantOrganisation	Outcome
1	10th October 2010	Nigeria's 50th independence Celebration. Allegedly MEND	Detonation and blast of 2 car bombs killing 2 persons and wounding 36 others
2	October, 2010	Agip Pipeline in Bayelsa. MEND	Explosion
3	March 5, 2010	Post Amnesty Conference at Warri, Delta State. MEND	Car bombing near event. 1 person killed and 11 injure
4	November 8, 2010	Raid on Oil rig and kidnapping of seven foreign staff. MEND	Kidnapping of seven staff
5	November 15, 2010 .	Attack on Exxon Mobil Oil platform. MEND	Kidnapping of seven Nigerian workers.
6	February 4, 2012	Attack/ bombing of Agip trunk pipeline. Allegedly MEND	Bombing of Agip trunk Pipeline
7	March 20, 2013	Attack on Oil Pipeline. Allegedly MEND	Bombing and Destruction
8	April 13, 2013 .	Attack on Shell oil well in Nembe L.G.A, Bayelsa State. Allegedly MEND	Bombing and destruction
9	July 4, 2013	Attack on oil pipeline. Allegedly Militants affiliated to MEND	Bombing and Destruction

10	December 20,2013	Attack on Oil Plant	Kidnapping of 4 South Korean
11	January 15, 2014.	Agip facility in Nembe- Brassanbiri, Bayelsa. Allegedly New group of MEND trainee fighters	Kidnapping of vessel staff. Hostages released (Ransom allegedly paid)
12	October 14, 2016	Attacks on pipeline Niger Delta Avenger (NDA)	Bombing and Destruction
13	October 25, 2016	Attacks on pipeline Niger Delta Avenger (NDA)	Bombing and Destruction
14	November 16, 2016	Attacks on pipeline Niger Delta Avenger (NDA)	Bombing and Destruction

Source: Authors compilation 2024

There is ample evidence that, in spite of the Amnesty program's enormous achievements and contributions, violent attacks on Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs) continued to occur between October 2010 and 2016, which is essentially the post amnesty period. There is ample proof that the Amnesty program was entangled with issues of violent attacks and revival associated with the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) in Bayelsa state, Delta state, and Abuja, the Nigerian capital. Even yet, it was noted that the program's largest beneficiaries were in Delta and Bayelsa states. The activities shown in Tables 1 as well as the reunification of militant organizations under the MEND umbrella reveal that the Amnesty program was unable to stop violence or establish a peace regime in the Niger Delta.

Even worse, Ikelegbe and Umukoro (2016) found that in addition to MEND's violent operations, there have been occasional outbreaks of new and resurgent militia activities, including those of John Togo in the western Delta in 2011, KeitiSese's camp at Foropa in Bayelsa state in 2010, Coastal Revolutionary Forces, and the Idiot Family in Bayelsa state in 2014. Additionally, the same MEND was found to have been involved in various criminal operations, including piracy, oil theft, and sailor kidnapping, between 2011 and 2014— a time that could be described as a new face of militancy (Ejovi&Ebie, 2013). Despite a drop following the 2009 Amnesty, maritime and waterway piracy has sharply increased since 2011. Between December 2012 and March 2013, attacks occurred on 39 vessels and coastal craft in Nigerian waters, resulting in approximately 7 fatalities and 33 hostages taken.

In 2013, there were 29 piracy incidents in Nigerian waters, including two hijackings, the boarding of 11 ships, attacks on 13 vessels, and attempted attacks on three more. The Niger Delta Avengers (NDAs) also carried violent attacks in 2016 by bombing and demolishing Chevron installations and oil pipelines in Warri (Ejovi&Ebie, 2013).

Theoretical Frame Work

Conflict transformation theory

In the realm of peace building, conflict transformation theory is a relatively recent development. Nonetheless, a lot of the well-known ideas of conflict management and conflict resolution are incorporated into the theory's foundation. Conflict transformation is viewed as a reconceptualization of the field to make it more relevant to modern conflict circumstances, rather than a completely new method, due to its ideological connection to these (Miall, 2004). The nature of modern conflicts has changed, making this rethinking essential. For instance, the majority of modern wars takes place inside national borders and are exacerbated by structural factors such as unequal power dynamics and the allocation and appropriation of resources.

Additionally, many modern confrontations are drawn out and characterized by intermittent intervals of violence and quiet, as noted by Smith (2004). Conflict in this situation arises in waves, rising sharply until some compromise is made, then sharply declining (nearly to the point where conflict is no longer evident), and then rising once again. In the end, protracted conflicts damage society and cause complex emergencies in addition to upsetting social stability. Three separate theoretical processes are embodied in the conflict transformation approach: conflict transformation (Lederach, 1995), conflict management (Bloomfield & Reilly, 1998), and conflict resolution (Deutsch & Coleman, 2000).

"Positive and constructive handling of difference and divergence" is how Bloomfield and Reilly (1998) defined conflict management. Instead of promoting strategies for eliminating conflict,... tackles the more practical issue of conflict management: how to resolve it in a positive manner, how to unite opposing sides in a collaborative process, and how to create a workable, realistic, cooperative system for the constructive management of differences. Violent conflicts, according to theorists and practitioners in this tradition, arise from disagreements over values and interests ingrained in the social structure. These distinctions cannot be eliminated since they are ingrained in both macro and micro social structures, including historical experiences, institutional ties, resource appropriation and distribution, current power coalitions, racism, ethnicity, tribalism, egos, and so forth. The best course of action for society is to control the dispute and keep it from getting worse to the point where it might interfere with daily operations. .

As noted by Miall (2004), there are times when a historic compromise may be reached that leads to the temporary suspension or renunciation of violence in order to promote peace. Therefore, achieving political settlements via the use of the resources of a few important actors who are strong enough to put pressure on the disputing parties to reach a settlement or

steer the inevitable conflict in the right directions is the aim of conflict management. In contrast to conflict management theory, conflict resolution theory emphasizes the role of knowledgeable but helpless outsiders who work outside of the political system to help disputing parties comprehend, investigate, evaluate, challenge, reframe, and synthesize their interests and perspectives.

Conflict management theorists' systemic approach is criticized by theorists in this lineage as being ineffective and unable to resolve disputes because it fails to take into account the depths of identity and community from which conflicts originate. They contend that individuals engaged in identitybased disputes are frequently unwilling to engage in compromise negotiations; rather, it is necessary to investigate the conflict's origins in order to develop innovative solutions that the disputing parties might have overlooked because of their deeply held beliefs.

Accordingly, conflict resolution basically entails assisting the disputing parties in shifting from harmful zero-sum interactions to constructive ones (Deutsch & Coleman, 2000). This method has been critiqued by Lederach (2003) due to its "definitiveness" or "finality" and the way it uses terminology that "implies finding a solution to a problem." Consequently, it obsesses about "ending something that is not desired" rather than creating "something that is desired." The goal of conflict transformation is to create the kind of peace that all parties involved want. Therefore, conflict transformation goes beyond conflict management and conflict resolution theories that only reframe positions and identify positive outcomes. It also addresses the creation of a new system, procedure, or method that integrates and uses the benefits of ending a conflict to promote peace.

It explores the nature of the conflicting parties, including their operational structures, historical experiences, and relationships that extend conflicts beyond specific sites. Lederach (2003) defines it as envisioning and responding to "the ebb and flow of social conflict as lifegiving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to reallife problems in human relationships." It is a "process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses, and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict," according to Miall (2004). Conflicts may be changed from their virulent, destructive form to circumstances that are acceptable to all parties involved by affecting and influencing these domains (i.e., both the epicenter of conflict, such as the web of relational patterns, including the history of lived episodes from which new episodes of conflict emerge, and the actual fighting).

Theoretically, this NDAP analysis might be examined under the heading of conflict transformation. The theory provides a framework for talking about the Niger Delta conflict's cause or causes as well as the best ways to alter the intricate dynamics of the conflict in the delta. Using this method, it is common to see the NDAP as being caught in the middle of a significant conceptual divide: the need for order in light of current realities, particularly declining oil revenue and the potential impact of the delta violence on Nigeria's economic and political stability; and a historical legacy of ecological abuse combined with structural violence that has sparked massive rage, protests, and violence.

The NDAP must foresee and address the multitude of factors that led to the conflict in the first place, including the coercive structural cracks, if it is to bring about enduring peace. Conflict transformation, as a result of peacebuilding, denotes a qualitative shift from a state of violence to one of peace with little to no chance of reversal. The conflict itself, certain facets of the sociohistorical and political system in which it takes place, the individuals engaged, and the connections between adversaries are all transformed by this change system (Notter and Diamond, 1996). Ebiede (2017), asserts that peace is ultimately the result of transformation at the several levels. Thus, it is clear that the Niger Delta is threatened by the current oppressive sociopolitical structures, inequality, lack of legal economic access, pollution, extreme poverty, illegal oil bunkering, and class and ethnic differences in human development. To address these issues, more serious peacebuilding efforts are needed to transform the infrastructures that are required to achieve a relatively successful outcome.

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Discussion of Findings

The amnesty was exclusive:

Without any formal negotiation or mediation process that could have explicitly stated the other essential elements of the peace process that the amnesty deal was backing, the federal government forced the Niger Delta amnesty arrangement on the people of the region. The amnesty agreement was founded on the idea that the Federal Government, which was denied unrestricted access to the Niger Delta's oil resources, was the target of any crimes the militants in the region may have committed. This is because the Nigerian amnesty agreement did not adhere to the best international standards for empowering victims, particularly the communities in the Niger Delta that have been devastated by oil exploration and by the numerous military operations that have occurred there. The victims (and not just the Federal Government in this instance) were given the opportunity to come forward and describe the crimes committed against them in other parts of the world. These were included in the amnesty.

The Nigerian Government amnesty only targets militants and disregards the victims of hostagetaking and militancy in the area. Presumably because they lacked the means of violence, mothers and children who had lost fathers, sons, and houses due to the fighting were left out of the amnesty package. The militants' arms surrender and renunciation of violence did not relieve the discontent of the entire people, given the grassroots' exclusion from the sustainability of the existing calm in the region.The Niger Delta deprivation did not affectonly militants. The focus on only former militants and the amnesty scheme could exacerbate the resentment of those who refrained from using force against the Nigerian government. This leads us to the conclusion that the frustrations that fuel insurgency were not addressed; violence may erupt or recur in the area. Therefore, resolving these annoyances is necessary for the region to achieve peace. The government's empowerment program might have been applied to all local residents in the area; if not, it might give the false impression that crime is profitable to those who have been left out and could encourage others to pick up arms in order to get attention.

Only militants were eligible for the government's empowerment program, which included training and employment prospects. Addressing the militants alone while ignoring the region's appalling poverty, underdevelopment, and predicament will not resolve the issue or accomplish the amnesty's goal. The appalling state of affairs, the region's poverty and underdevelopment, and corporate and governmental poor governance all contributed to the militancy and subsequent criminality in the area. These factors will undoubtedly mark the end of the amnesty program. Only a small portion of the Niger Delta's population— 31,224,577 million according to the 2006 population estimate— are militants currently being reintegrated

under the program (Nigerian News Census, 2006). The Niger Delta population has to be lifted out of the "poverty trap," which is characterized by a declining environment, bad health, poor education, inadequate infrastructure, and a low level of living.

Conclusion

The goal of the amnesty for Militants in the Niger Delta was to bring about a lasting peace and foster an atmosphere that would hasten sustainable development. The study evaluated and discussed the amnesty contributions to peacebuilding in the Niger Delta,specifically how militants were disarmed and registered throughout the region; how many former militants were demobilized and reintegrated through formal education, vocational training, and specialized training; and the significant financial commitment made by the Federal Government of Nigeria through various budgetary contributions to the Amnesty program since 2009 to the present. . Nevertheless, evidence from 2010 to 2016 demonstrated that the Amnesty program did not prevent insurgency and violent attacks, including piracy, oil theft, and kidnapping in the Niger Delta, despite the funding allocated to it.

Fascinatingly, the reasons behind this resurgent threat were found and categorized into sociopolitical, socioeconomic, and environmental issues. This classification largely showed that the DDR peacebuilding efforts lacked the framework necessary to deal with the underlying causes of the issues. Therefore, the Niger Delta amnesty program undoubtedly represents a temporary crisis management win, but the Niger Delta issue has not yet been resolved. The initiative disregarded fundamental principles of global best practices for resolving disputes and promoting peace. Although it was promoted as a "comprehensive" DDR exercise, reintegration was hardly mentioned. No provisions were made for institutional reform, dialogue, mediation, or reconciliation. Unresolved locallevel conflicts within and between communities continued to be open wounds and a haven for violent attacks, revival, and radicalization.

Recommendation

Regardless of their ethnic background or affiliation, all social segments should have equal access to the Amnesty program in order to build a peace system. All levels of government—local, state, and federal— should fulfill their duties to the populace in order to allay the Niger Deltas' demands for unrestricted rights.

Insecurity and the spread of weapons should be addressed appropriately nationwide by the federal government and its National Security Agencies (NSAs). If not, peacebuilding would continue to be difficult. To achieve the desired stability in the Niger Delta, the government and all other entities involved in the implementation should adhere to the provisions of the amnesty deal with ex-militants.

The fundamental principles of international good practice and diplomatic tools for conflict resolution, such as the availability of mediation, dialogue, reconciliation, or institutional reform to handle locallevel conflicts within and between communities, should be acknowledged and utilized by amnesty programs.

Peacebuilding efforts in the Niger Delta should involve sufficient cooperation between the government and regional players, such as militant commanders, regional politicians, and traditional authorities. Before acting in a way that may breed mistrust, the federal government should discuss matters.

The government should provide microcredits to the trained Niger Deltas so they can practice the skills they have learned. Government representatives and contractors must demonstrate transparency and accountability as duty givers or holders.

All levels of government ought to practice peoplecentered development. Development that will have a positive impact on people's lives in all communities. In order to do this, public opinion ought to be permitted throughout the entire policymaking process, from formulation to implementation to monitoring. The government shouldn't decide to end the amnesty program alone; all parties involved should consult and come to an agreement.

When it comes to environmental regulatory problems, the Federal Government Agencies should make sure that MNOC operations and activities are ecologically benign and adhere to current environmental laws, rules, and regulations.To prevent more complaints, MNOCs should also do their CSR on a regular basis in the area in which they operate in compliance with International Best Practices.

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CORRUPTION AND SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA: INSIGHTS FROM ESIABA IROBI'S *HANGMEN ALSO DIE*

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, Nigeria has been plagued by security challenges exemplified by militancy, banditry, kidnapping, assassinations, and so on, which are exacerbated by corruption. Using Irobi's *Hangmen Also Die as* a critical lens of analysis, this paper examines the intricate relationship between corruption and security challenges in Nigeria. The play unarguably explores the themes of corruption, social justice and security challenges. Through a critical analysis of the play therefore, this research work argues that corruption is a major factor that fuels militancy and such other security challenges, thereby giving rise to criminal networks across the country. The play is therefore a true reflection of the stark realities of Nigeria's parlous security situation while at the same time highlighting the urgent need for drastic and far-reaching reforms in the country's security architecture. By so doing, it is hoped that the root causes of insecurity such as poverty and exploitation of the poor by the rich and privileged class as well as the importance of promoting transparency and accountability among members of the leadership class will be addressed. Case study and content analysis approaches of the qualitative research method were adopted by the researcher for data collection and analysis. The primary source of data is *Hangmen Also Die* while the secondary sources are books, journals, magazines and newspapers from the library and the internet. The Marxist philosophy of a classless society provides the theoretical framework for the thematic and ideological position of the playwright whose work has been used in this study. Marxism contends that the masses who are the exploited class are locked in perpetual conflict with the bourgeoisie because of the tendency of the exploiter class to continue to exploit them since they (the bourgeoisie) own and control the means of production. The work recommends responsible and transparent leadership as a panacea to security challenges as captured in *Hangmen Also Die.* Finally, the work presents drama and theatre as tools for conscientization, reformation, transformation and national development.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has been plagued by myriad of violent security challenges in different forms in recent years. These security challenges are outcomes of the lop-sided relationship between the leadership class and the governed. Nigerian playwrights and pundits in other fields contend that government at all levels, is to be held responsible for the security challenges which the

country is facing, mainly because of the profligate lifestyles of our leaders who do not bat an eyelid in flaunting their ill-gotten wealth; wealth openly acquired through corruption. Through their intellectual and literary outputs, these playwrights have made conscious efforts to x-ray the varying degrees of exploitation and injustice which those in the leadership class unleash on the masses. Therefore, these exploited and short-changed masses resort to rebellion, violent demonstrations, riots, banditry, kidnapping and even armed conflicts against the State as their own way of confronting their oppressors.

In his commentary on the state of insecurity, Festus Iyayi notes in his book entitled *Violence* that we have a prevalence of crime and violence in our society because our leaders confiscate and deny their citizens the opportunities to actualize themselves and realize their goals in life. He states that "… acts of violence are committed when a man is denied the opportunity of being educated, of getting a job, of feeding himself and his family properly…" (185). In the same vein, LaPalombara states that "all around us today, we find evidence that political systems and the governments, from cities to nations, fail to keep violence within decent bounds. In fact, these governments often instigate and perpetuate violence… (5)

Thus as shown in *Hangmen Also Die,* it is in frustration resulting from denied opportunities that the oppressed masses resort to militancy and banditry as the only available tools they can use to confront the authorities and change the not too palatable situation they find themselves in Nigeria. The Suicide Squad as change agents boldly march on the venue of Chief Erekosima's coronation, disrupt the ceremony, abduct him to their hideout in a bush clearing, torture and ultimately murder him. Yekini, one of the characters in the play explains that:

> … Sometime ago, the Federal Government gave the citizens of this State… the sum of three million naira as compensation money for the oil spillage which has ruined their farms, their homes and their lives… Chief Erekosima, a commissioner for Local Government, Rural Development and Chieftaincy Affairs, connived with his councilors and local government chairmen to confiscate the 3 million naira … No single citizen, no matter how wretched, got a single kobo. (13)

Murdering Chief Erekosima sends a clear signal from the Squad that corrupt and insensitive political leaderships whose stock-in-trade is to deny the masses their God-given opportunities to actualize themselves, will not be tolerated. Thus the Squad can be correctly said to have embarked on a cleansing mission to rid the society of rotten eggs personified by the likes of Chief Erekosima.

Change Through Revolution

According to the Institute of Social Sciences, there are "… methods of a socialist transformation of human society"(18). There are radical approaches characterized by revolution, to change. Marxism is a major theory that supports the radical approach to change. Broadly speaking, socialism which may be regarded as Marxism-Leninism changed the philosophical outlook of social change, especially Marx's theory of scientific socialism. This theory "… is inseparably linked with revolutionary practice" (Institute of Social sciences, 19). What gives rise to revolution as an approach to social change is the insistence of the exploiter class to continue the exploitation of the less privileged. Therefore, Marxism insists that social change through revolution requires "Revolutionary unity of all working class people irrespective of their religion, nationality and race, the formation of the local working class as an embodiment of the revolutionary will …" (Institute of Social Sciences, 335).

The thematic and ideological standpoint expressed by Irobi in *Hangmen Also Die,* derive from the Marxist approach to revolution. The Marxist ideology about class struggle is the philosophical premise upon which the theme of the play rests. Marxism is a theory about political and economic changes in the society as a result of the opposition between the two dominant social classes. The conflict theory as developed by Marx examines the relationship in terms of basic inequalities between the privileged and the less privileged, otherwise, the bourgeoisie and the proletariats. The bourgeoisie also referred to as the capitalists are in a position to dominate and exploit the masses since they control the means to produce wealth. This explains why there is on-going struggle or conflict between the two classes. It is this class struggle that is fundamentally responsible for the prevalence of revolution, rebellion and other forms of security challenges, including kidnapping and banditry which the Nigerian State has continued to experience. Henslin, quoting Robert Merton, explains that the feeling of discontent created by the exploitation of the oppressed and the marginalized masses by the wealthy, privileged class elicits different responses from the masses, one of which is rebellion. This response means that the masses that are short-changed and confronted with limited opportunities and possibilities "reject both goals and legitimate means of achieving such goals". Lauer and Lauer state that rebellion is "… not only rejection of both goals and means but also a commitment to replace them with a different system…" (19) This brings us to Robert Merton's Strain Theory also captured by Lauer and Lauer thus:

> People who experience strain are likely to feel anomie, a sense of normlessness. Because the dominant norms (work, education, etc) do not seem

> to be getting them anywhere, they have a difficult time identifying with them. They may even feel wronged by the system… Strain theory underscores the main sociological point about deviance, namely, that deviants… are not pathogenic individuals but the product of society itself… if a society emphasizes the goal of material success, groups deprived of access to this goal will be involved in… crime (203)

This is the reason that young males form or join gangs like the Suicide Squad in *Hangmen Also Die.* As a footnote to this researcher's reference to the reason for the formation of gangs, Saint Gbilekaa states that "… Furthermore, the enormous wealth as a result of the oil boom dichotomized and intensified class struggle in Nigeria as the gap between the economically privileged and the groveling proletarian and peasant class yawed abominably… (73). He states further that "violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons- not by those who are oppressed, exploited and unrecognized…" (92)

In his opinion, Chinua Achebe states that:

> Economic deprivation and corruption produce and exacerbate financial and social inequities in a population which in turn fuel political instability. Within this environment, extremists of all kinds- particularly religious zealots and other political mischief-makers find a foothold to recruit supporters and sympathizers to help them launch terrorist attacks and wreak havoc on the lives of ordinary citizens (250)

The International Encyclopedia of Sociology, Volume two states that terrorism which be regarded as an extreme form of violence is "… a political tactic intended to produce intimidation through the use or threatened use of violence. It has become an increasingly common feature of political disputes at both the domestic and international levels". (1408). In his conclusion, Iyayi states that violence and revolution will continue to rock the Nigerian State so long as "… whereas one man has more than enough to feed himself, his dogs, cats, children and monkeys and many other men are weak and thin from hunger and their children are suffering from kwashiorkor… (186)

Portrayal of Corruption and Security Challenges in *Hangmen Also Die*

Hangmen Also Die is simply metaphorical; it aptly depicts the crises plaguing the Niger Delta region of Nigeria as a result of environmental pollution emanating from the oil exploring activities of oil companies operating in the region, such as Shell B.P. This deplorable

situation is responsible for the abject poverty that has bedeviled inhabitants of the region. Hardship, health hazards, including blindness and despair are constant companions of the people of the region. This situation has therefore, given rise to militancy, banditry, kidnapping, especially of expatriate oil workers and in some cases, outright murder of victims. However, it must be noted that the ultimate rationale behind these unwholesome activities of militants, bandits and other "criminals" is to invite or draw the attention of the Federal Government to the sufferings of the people. This was the situation that produced environmental activists like Ken Saro Wiwa who was killed by hanging along with eight other Ogoni patriots who teamed up with him to agitate for a safer environment for their people. This was during the draconian regime of Nigeria's maximum ruler, General Sani Abacha.

The Suicide Squad being a terrorist group, came into existence out of the need to correct the various forms of injustice that the region has over several decades been subjected to. The Squad is informed by Tamara, a mother to a member of the Squad that:

> … But there is a man in my local government area, a Commissioner for that matter, Chief Erekosima by name, who is being crowned the Ametemeso 1 of Izon State today. This man is a distinguished thief. He confiscated our money. Stole our 3 million naira… 3 million naira compensation money which the Federal Government gave to the citizens of Izon State, to balm our minds against the crude oil spillage which has ravaged our farms and wrecked our lives. This man seized it and is using it to crown himself today. (58)

Consequently, the Squad acting on this information, storms the venue of the ceremony, disrupts the coronation ceremony, abducts Chief Erekosima to their hideout in a bush clearing, tortures him and finally executes him. By so doing, the Squad sends out a clear signal to the audience that corruption will not be tolerated and that anybody, no matter how highly placed, who feeds on the people's sweat will be made to pay the supreme prize. Their actions and utterances also indicate that they are totally for a just society where no citizen of the State is short-changed under whatever guise. To them terrorism is the available tool to achieve this clear-cut objective. ACID, a member of the Squad justifies their actions and states that:

> …Terrorism is a legitimate tactic of all down-trodden people seeking to combat oppressive governments… that revolutions are always based on terrorism. Revolutions are never achieved by holding hands and singing "we shall overcome". Revolutions are never achieved that way because a

> revolution is not a dinner party, it is not a disco competition, it is not an ideological romance. It is an act of insurrection where one party overthrows the other. it occurs as the accumulated grievances of the common man. It explodes like gun powder (25)

The playwright goes ahead to assert that hunger, starvation and frustration resulting from denied opportunities which the masses suffer from the leadership class are the causes of the various security challenges plaguing the country. Again ACID states that:

> … Revolutions do not start in the head. They start in the stomach with starvation and hunger… with joblessness… Revolutions topple… they frown because what they are facing is the slime, the rot, the maggots, the viruses, the nauseating residue of a consumptive society! (26)

In a barely disguised endorsement of violence as a tool which the down-trodden can use to confront their oppressors, the playwright indicates that when terrorists succeed, they are celebrated. ACID states that "the world is willing to forget and forgive the crimes of terrorism and in fact honour those it once called criminals provided the terrorist has sheathed his knife and washed blood off his hands… if a terrorist succeeds, he becomes a hero…" (26) This explains why The Niger-Delta Militants, later christened Freedom Fighters led by the likes of Asari Dokubo, Boyloaf and Tompolo were granted amnesty by the YarAdua administration. The highpoint of the amnesty programme is that they were later sent abroad for various trainings in skill acquisition as part of the Federal Government's strategy to reintegrate them into the society. But the fact is that they succeeded in drawing the attention of the Federal Government to the plight of the region. With terrorism comes vandalisation of public facilities which result in economic sabotage in order to bring the Government to its knees. In those difficult days of the activities of the Niger Delta Freedom Fighters, oil installations were the main and direct targets for destruction. The idea was that the Federal Government could not continue to ignore the region that lays the golden eggs on which Nigeria's economic survival and stability rest.

The play also reveals that sometimes, young men get recruited by "respectable" members of the society to unleash mayhem on the society, most times, to hit back at their imagined or real enemies. Sometimes too, it could be to address some social ills like electoral fraud as is the case of Dr. Ogbansiegbe in the play who was rigged out of the gubernatorial elections in Imo State. In real life situations, we hear or read stories of how politicians recruit thugs to murder their opponents. RIP and Dayan, two characters in the play reveal this fact when their statements that:

> … Dr. Ahitophel Ogbansiegbe was bent on hitting back on his political adversaries. And he wanted to use us as his henchmen… He succeeded for some time. Like the night he incited us to steal the car of one of the government officials. That night we stole the car and parked it in the bush… He kept using us until one night he detailed us to go and burn down the house of the chairman of the party that rigged him out of the election. (28)

Politics in Nigeria from the first Republic to the present day is synonymous with arson, thugery, riots, electoral fraud, political assassinations, kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery and even hostage taking. In 1966, the Western region of Nigeria earned for itself, the sobriquet, "wild, wild West". The riots, killings, destruction of property in the West and in other parts of the country allegedly sponsored by corrupt politicians were mainly the factors that drew the anger of the soldiers that ended the life of the first Republic. When in 1983, the Buhari-Idiagbon coup shoved the civilian administration of Alhaji Shagari aside, the same reasons of corruption and the dangers posed to lives and property as a result of the shameful activities and conducts of politicians were adduced as reasons for the overthrow of Shagari. At the end several Executive Governors: Sam Mbakwe of old Imo State, Jim Nwobodo of old Anambra State, Lateef Jakande of Lagos State, Aper Aku of Benue State, Professor Ambrose Ali of Bendel State, Alhaji Shagari and his Vice, Dr. Alex Ekwueme, and so many others, were either sentenced to long terms of imprisonment or simply detained.

Apart from being corrupt, Chief Erekosima being a representational image of the average Nigerian politician is accused of favoritism. According to Yekini:

> And the Commissioner they killed is Superintendent Daminagbo's god father. He smuggled Daminagbo into the Prison Service after Daminagbo failed the West African School Certificate in 1962. He also gave him N200,000 out of his own one million naira … that Commissioner who they killed was also responsible for Daminagbo's rapid promotion in the Prison Service… (13)

The playwright reveals that the determination to take revenge on the society that has woefully failed the masses is the main reason that individuals resort to revolutions, banditry, kidnapping and pose huge security challenges to the society. Dimeari, one of the characters and a member of the Squad explains that he desires to be a member of the Squad because:

> I want to have my own revenge on the society for what it has done to me… I have no job… no money. Which means I cannot marry… and cannot have children… I am a reject of the society. A piece of human furniture standing unobserved in the living room of a blind world. I feel empty. I feel impotent. I

> feel useless. I want to do something that will shock the world. Something that will make the world realize that I exist… something violent. (51)

The failure of our leaders to meet the rising expectations of the people as a result of corrupt undoubtedly breeds security challenges. The members of the Squad attempt to defend the use of violence as a tool of confrontation with the authorities. They state that:

> … So if today, we have turned to violence as the only weapon to redeem our destiny, redeem our fate, our future and our manhood, it is because… we have no place in the politics of this nation… we have no place in history… no solid earth beneath our feet… (32)

The revealing statement from the Squad explains the springing up of all kinds of militant groups in present day Nigeria. For some years now, the *Boko Haram* sect has been holding the country hostage. It has unleashed mayhem on the country, killing and maiming innocent and defenseless Nigerians; soldiers and other security personnel have been killed by the sect in their thoiusands, yet the situation is not getting any better. Before *Boko Haram,* we had the Niger Delta Militants who have sheathed their swords to enable relative peace and security of lives and property return to the region. Recently in the Northwestern region of the country, very close to the Nigerien border, reports have it that there is a new terrorist group known as *Lakurawa*. The group is reportedly made up of jihadists from Mali, Burkina Faso and Chad. Most of these groups posing security challenges to the country emerged as the masses' reaction to insensitive and corrupt leaderships in the country. This researcher is also of the opinion that these groups have not been defeated by the country's security forces because our leaders pay lip-service to the fight against insurgency in spite of huge budgetary provisions to enable the country's Armed Forces prosecute the war against the insurgents. Commenting on the hydra-headed monster called corruption, Chinua Achebe states that:

> It would be impossible and even if possible, of little value to attempt a comprehensive picture of the type and scope of Nigerian corruption. I will only say that most people will agree that corruption has grown enormously in variety, magnitude and brazenness since the beginning of the Second Republic because it has been extravagantly fuelled by budgetary abuse and political patronage on an unprecedented scale. Public funds are now routinely doled out to political allies and personal friends in the guise of contracts to execute public works of one kind or another, or licenses to import restricted commodities… (42)

Talking of budgetary abuse, our Senate has been embroiled in one scandal or the other bordering on "budget padding" which literarily translates to inflating the figures of the budget just to enable a few unscrupulous individuals corruptly enrich themselves from the sweat of the tax payer.

The hangman, Yekini, refuses to be persuaded to by the Prison's Doctor to hang members of the Suicide Squad. He goes on to express dissatisfaction with the Nigerian public service system, comparing his job as a Prison's Warden with his days of fulfillment as a fisherman. He states that:

> … Doc, I was happy. A very happy man. A contented man… But one day, one Saturday, I remember very well, in 1965, the Superintendent, that Pekeletubo Daminagbo, that obtuse being shaped like a water pot came to my stilt hut at Forcados and said to me, "Yekini, my brother-in-law, I don find job for you. Better job. Warden's job… And you will be paid a salary every month…" I dropped my paddle and my net and followed him like fish follows a flattened worm… since that day, that I climbed into these uniforms and put on this black glove on my right hand and started to turn the handle of that useless hanging machine, something in me has been dying… (9)

Yekini also laments the Government's lack of interest in the welfare of its citizens as well as its failure to provide basic social amenities for members of its work force and the entire citizens of the country. He queries thus:

> Why hasn't the government protected me from poverty all these years? Why has it not promoted me from Hangman to Chief Warden? Where I live, I have no water. I have no light. The stream is two miles away. I have no car. (16)

The statement above by Yekini is a sad commentary on the failure or the inability of the Nigerian Government to protect its citizens against poverty and suffering over the years. Civil servants get stagnated and are denied their promotions for years. When they eventually get promoted, their promotion arrears are withheld and sometimes, do not get paid at all. The play also highlights that social amenities like good roads, pipe borne water are virtually non-existent in some parts of the country. Electricity supply is at best epileptic even years after the privatization of the sector. These are indications that the leadership has failed woefully, yet the same leadership class lives in mind-boggling opulence. In Abuja, our legislators claim all manner of allowances including furniture and curtain allowances. Yet, they deny civil servants, including University lecturers their dues. This can be classified as injustice because Plato in his four cardinal virtues makes it clear that there is justice if leaders give unto every

citizen his due. But because the masses are denied their dues in a country like Nigeria that flows with milk, honey and crude oil, there is bound to be one form of security challenge or the other as consequences of exploitation of the masse or the people who get cheated by the system and feel so. Yekini's way of letting the authorities know that he is not happy with the system is to defy government's orders to carry out the death sentence passed on members of the Suicide Squad, hoping that by so doing, he would have contributed his quota towards changing the system for the good of the masses. He asks the doctor who has been trying to persuade him to carry out the sentence "Can your useless government protect me from the faces of the dead, the death masks I see every second in my sleep, my dream, by day light and moon light? Can the government erase the scar their grin leaves on my soul?" (17)

The militant activities of the Suicide Squad and Yekini's refusal to carry out the execution of members of the Squad, thus defying the authorities and his open condemnation of the government for its failure to adequately provide for its citizens is a reflection of the determination of the oppressed to usher in change, using tools of defiance, rebellion, revolution and banditry. This is what the playwright has striven to artistically convey to the audience.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The researcher's findings reveal that the playwright has made great efforts to expose the uncanny inclination of leaders in Africa to inflict poverty and sufferings in various forms on the masses. The playwright has shown that the leadership class does not have the interest of the masses at heart as it has continued to exploit and deny the masses their God-given opportunities to better their individual and collective destinies. The playwright has also shown that leaders in Africa have failed to make the necessary provisions that will enable them to meet the rising needs of the people. Oil or mineral deposits are ordinarily nature's blessings to enable Nigerians have a meaningful existence. But these mineral deposits have become sources of misery and woes for the masses as their environment is devastated from oil spillage and the attendant pollution from the spillage. The consequences of this devastation include poverty of the worst order with attendant health challenges such as blindness, which is a serious form of disability as is the case of Ibiaye in the play and hopelessness as the people are not sure of where their next meal will come from especially since their means of livelihood which is fishing have been destroyed by oil spillage. That is the absurdity of our existence in Africa's most endowed country.

The researcher has therefore, been able to deduce from the analysis of the play that the contention of the playwright is the fate of the average Nigerian in a materialistic, capitalist, corrupt, exploitative and selfish society where there is serious imbalance between the haves and the have-nots, the rich and the poor. One of the expressions of this observation for instance, is lack of faith in the ability of the Nigerian government to put measures in place to ensure that the people enjoy the basics of social amenities. This research work also reveals, although with dismay, how easily and without conscience, our politicians hijack and divert the government's interventions meant to assuage the sufferings of the masses. This play can therefore be rightly referred to as an artistic instigation of doubts on the ability of leaders in Nigeria to make the country a model of good governance in Africa. Through content analysis of the play selected for this study, the researcher is able to reveal that part of the reasons that Nigeria is referred to as the poverty capital of the world with stunted economic growth and development is traceable to the hypocritical attitude exemplified by the insensitivity of the country's leaders to the plight of the less privileged.

The researcher therefore, recommends that Nigerian playwrights should continue to use their art to encourage the government to rise up to it responsibility of providing basic amenities, employment opportunities as well as ensure that the masses are not unduly exploited and short-changed. It also recommends that the radical theatre genre should be explored as the Nigerian masses who are predominantly down-trodden have a lot to benefit from it, especially as drama has come to be a veritable tool for liberation, reformation, transformation and change that ushers in and ensures a better society. That way the image of the theatre as a seriously inclined medium of change rather than an entertainment medium would have been enhanced.

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BETWEEN THE BULLET AND THE BOOK: WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN THE CROSSHAIRS OF BOKO HARAM: AN EXPLORATION OF ISHA SESAY'S *BENEATH THE TAMARIND TREE*

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ABSTRACT

Female education in Nigeria, particularly, North-eastern Nigeria over the decades, has been impeded by a lot of factors such as early marriages and a religious system that places high premium on male education, as well as the objectification of women and lack of agency in a fundamentally patriarchal society that is deeply rooted in Islamic deals. The future of the girl child in this geographical space in Nigeria has become compromised by the advent of the Islamic terrorist group, Boko Haram, which ideologies reject Western education, but upholds Sharia law as well as restrict the roles and rights of women (Abdularahim 2015), which has further fueled the complexities surrounding female education, agency, and the realization of their full potentialities.

This paper therefore undertakes a critical analysis of the intersection of terrorism, particularly security and the challenges associated with female education through a critical analysis of the survivors' narrative, and those of their parents. This study reveals how Boko Haram perpetratespatriarchal norms and insecurity, thus undermining female educational aspirations and agency. Deploying intersectional feminist theory and Cathy Caurth's model of Trauma theory, this work high- lights the systemic suppression of women's education, by juxtaposing the 'bullet' of terrorism and the 'book' of knowledge to portray the dynamics of power, culture, resistance, resilience and violence, mitigating women's education in conflict zones.

KEY WORDS: Boko Haram, Chibok, terrorists, abduction, agency

INTRODUCTION

The world over, security has become in contemporary times, one of the topmost priorities of different nations and political blocs. Most nations, particularly Western nations devote a very large percentage of their yearly budget to security. It is one of the primary duties of the different governments of the world to defend her citizens against external aggression as well as maintaining internal security and, the protection of lives and properties. In Nigeria, the

military is responsible for the internal security of the citizen as well protecting the country from any form of external aggression. But corruption, nepotism and poor training facilities as well as the lack of modern security gadgets, have dealt a devastating blow on the Nigerian security architecture.

Exploiting this security*loophole,* an Islamic militant group, Boko Haram, which literally means Western education is forbidden, made its early incursion into the Nigerian Socio-political space in 2002. Founded by Mohammed Yusuf, a Nigerian Islamic cleric, with the core tenets of opposing western style education and promoting a radical form of Islam, with the ultimate aim of establishing an Islamic state governed by "Sharia laws". The group also has as one of its core beliefs, the rejection of democracy as it is of viewed as a western imposition that is incompatible with Islamic values, curbing the influence of the Christian religion and its pervasive influence on Islam, among other tenets of Boko Haram.

According to the United Nations, 2020 Report, Over 37,000 people were killed by Boko Haram, while over 1,000 children were kidnapped in the years preceding the Chibok girls abduction, resulting in a monumental economic losses to the Nigerian, estimated at 89 billon, according to the Nigerian Economic Summit Group in their 2015 report, while over 20% of Nigerians GDP was lost due to the activities of Boko Haram, including bombing and destruction of public facilities and military installations.

In the usual Nigerian government method of paying lip service to serious security issues and the lack of the political will on the part of the federal government to deal headlong with Boko Haram in its teething days, the issue was politicized and provincialized as a North-eastern Nigerian security challenge, until Boko Haram dealt a decisive blow on the security, apparatus of the Nigerian military, when it abducted 276 Chibok school girls in a remote area of Brono state, which brought the militant group to national and international limelight.

The abduction of the 276 Chibok school girls clearly exposed the weak and politicized security architecture of the Nigerian military, as the soldiers stationed proximally within the confines of Chibok town failed in their duties to protect the town and the vulnerable school girls, which brought about an open confrontation between the bullet and the book. But the questions many asked was, "Why would a girl's school be the target of the Islamic militant group, as a way of stamping its authority and the seriousness of its mission".

The Bullet and the Book Metaphor

By the juxtaposition of the bullet and the book, "Boko Haram sent a clear message of fear and an impending reign of terror to the people, particularly the vulnerable school girls. While

the bullet is symbolically represented by Boko Haram, as an agent of the suppression and the oppression of the girl child in a religious and cultural milieu that down plays the education of the female child, this intersection therefore further deprives the girl child in this socio-religious space the much-needed agency, enlightenment and freedom associated with education. The only excuse for the abduction of the girls is encapsulated in the response of one of the militants, *"we told you no girl should be in school. As we found you there in that school, that is why we took you" (p 128.)* Robbed of the illuminating tool of education, the girl child in the North-eastern part of Nigeria becomes prone to exploitation, dehumanization, and perpetually neck deep in poverty and exploitation.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical frameworks adopted for this work are Intersectional Feminism and Cathy Caruth's model of trauma theory.

Intersectional Feminism as a critical tool of literary engagement views how a multiplicity of factors such as race, class, gender, sexuality, ability and age intersect to produce a unique experience of oppression and marginalization. It believes that forms of oppression are connected and cannot be addressed in isolation. It seeks to understand how power operates across different axes of Identify and seeks to promote inclusivity and amplify marginalized voices:

This theory is closely associated with bell hooks, who views intersectionality as a critical framework for understanding the multiple ways in which oppression intersect feminist theory (1984)

On the other hand, Trauma theory posits that traumatic experiences are not fully understood by the trauma victim and this lack of understanding is characterize by a sense of belatedness. According to Caruth, traumatic events have a certain latency and cycles of repetitiveness on the victims of trauma, so that the initial traumatic experiences have a way of haunting the victims, especially when they find themselves in situations such as those associated with the original traumatic events.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The abduction of the Chibok School girls in 2014 by Boko Haram has attracted a lot of scholarly attention. Fatima Akilu. (2017) in *"Gender and Violent Extremism: The Case of Boko Haram"* submits that Boko Haram uses gender-specific strategies, targeting women and girls with promises of education and of economic empowerment, using them as spies, informants and suicide bombers, while subjecting them to forced marriages and other forms

of sexual and psychological abuses. On his part, Hilary Malfess *(2017*) reveals and that Boko Haram has abducted and enslaved thousands of girls and women, subjecting them to sexual violence, forced marriage, and domestic servitude. This Systematic abuse of women and girls, the paper concludes, have forced women into a cocoon of psychological serfdom and stigmatization, resulting in lack of agency and poverty,

To the best of the knowledge of the present work, no scholarly work has approached the subject matter of Boko Haram security challenge in Nigeria from the perspective of the symbolic representation of the militant group and its intersectionality with women education, gender and resilience.

Unmasking the symbols

In the context of this paper, symbols are used to portray the concealed agenda of Boko Haram ideologies,couched in religious extremism, which ultimate aim is the subjugation and dehumanization of the female gender, using religion and intimidation as instruments of fear and terror, to displace the female gender from the center to margin.

According to Northrop Frye (19), symbols have a range of meanings from the literal to the archetypal, and they can take the symbol that are descriptive, formal, mythical, analogic, and archetypal; these Frye argue operate on different levels simultaneously, enriching literary works. To Frye, symbols are key parts of literary analysis as they can carry complex and multiple meanings.

It is also a common practice for writers who write under oppressive regimes to use symbols to obscure the writers meaning as well as shield the writer from possible attacks from those criticized. For example, Athol Fugard in *SizweBanzi is Dead*uses symbols to criticize the apartheid regime in South Africa, while Toni Morrison in *Beloved*, deploys symbols to explore the themes of racism and the subjugation of African Americans in America.

Therefore, writing on the volatile theme of Boko Haram necessities, the writer's use of symbols and coded message to clamorfor social change and the repositioning of women in the socio-political mechanics of Africa. To begin with, the tamarind tree is a powerful symbol used by the water to portray the resilience and survival spirit of the abducted Chibok school girls, who go through a lot of nerve-jarring traumatic experiences, yet would not give up, just as the tamarind tree is known for its ability to thrive in very harsh climatic conditions. In the same way, in the context of this paper, the Bullet is used as a symbol of all forms of oppression, intimidation, marginalization as tools of subversion and dehumanization, encapsulated in Boko Haram. On the other hand, the book is viewed in the context of this

paper as the symbol of enlightenment, development, self-actualization and liberation. By extension, the juxtaposition of the book and the bullet represents the socio-political conflicts of religious and political ideologies of the Christian Western world and the Islamic world.

For the purpose of this paper, analytical focus will be based on the feminist slant of advocacy, resilience, agency and recovery and therapeutics of trauma and reintegration, while the trauma analytical lens will focus on the traumatic experiences of the Chibok school girls in Boko Haram captivity. Feminism in it holistic sense, irrespective of brands and persuasions, is all about the advocacy of the right of women and the girl child and a paradigm shift of the female gender from the marginality of society to a possible spatiality at the center. The novel in focus, *Beneath the Tamarind Tree* is a product of female advocacy and gender equality based on the events that characterized the abduction, enslavement, exploitation, and eventual liberation of some of the Chibok school girls abducted by Boko Haram in 2014. The national and international outcry for the release of the Chibok school girls and the intense pressure mounted on the federal government of Nigeria, were loudest on from the camp women groups and international organizations and renowned international female voices, such as musicians, female professional bodies and organizations. At the home from the news of the kidnap of the 276 Chibok school girls instantly sparked the feminist sensibilities of prominent Nigerian politicians, particularly the former minster for education, Obiagheli Ezekwesili, Aisha Yusuf and wife of the Nigerian President at the time, Patience. Johnathan. These women worked tirelessly under the mantra of the #Bring Back our Girls Mantra to mount pressure on the federal Government to ensure the release of the Chibok school girls in Boko Haram captivity was vigorously pursued.

The same measure of advocacy, resilience and quest for relevance is displayed by some of the abducted Chibok school girls, particularly Priscilla, who is an embodiment of resistance, agency and resilience. Her pivotal role in giving hope and speaking for the rest of the girls, even at the risk of her life is legendary- all a products of the liberating power of education (Book) against the intimidating and fear-inducing power of the 'bullet', terrorism.

Arising from the training at the Chibok Girls' School, some of the girls are already exhibiting leadership roles. Upon the event of their abduction, the girls are not just "zombified" to surrender themselves to Boko Haram. Waking up from the initial stock of the reality of the abduction, the girls make several attempts to escape, many risk their lives and jump out of their captors' truck in the night to break the news of the terror stricken Chibok town folks.

Negotiating Agency, Resilience and Resistance

The narrative of the escapees and eventual survivors upon the release of some of the abducted Chibok School girls and those of their parents, have a common congruence, the abducted Chibok girls do not just give up to their abductors, they resist them, and negotiate their ways into their freedom, some at very great costs. In Habila's account in Chibok School Girls: The Boko Haram kidnappings and Islamist Militancy in Nigeria (2016), the girls are not unaware of the activities of Boko Haram in Chibok, but they are deceived and taken into captivity. *"These people (Boko Haram) have come and we are here to protect you, so don't run, stay in one place" (21*), is the false assurance of the terrorists to the girls, "*and they gather them in one place. Then they marched them out the school gate to the waiting cars." (21)*

The Chibok school girls as symbols of enlightenment, agency and liberation of other women and their parents from the inextricable hold of patriarchy and educational backwardness is put in perspective by one of the parents whose daughter is abducted when he says, *"Better if they had burned down the whole town than what they have done to us." (25)*

The training the girls receive in their school arms them with the needed resilience, advocacy, and tenacity of purpose to engage their captors in their psychological warfare to break the down the human survival instinct and self-esteem of the girls. Priscila stands out amongst the abducted school girls as a mobilizer and source of strength and hope for the rest of the girls to hold on.

Buoyed by her exposure in school and her solid Christian faith foundation, where her physical power and strength fails, she plunges into the spiritual for strength and hope of survival and liberation. Priscilla organizes prayer and worship sessions, with the rest of the girls, at the risk of her life, thus elevating the spirits of the other girls to the strong hope of a possible divine intervention that would bring about their liberation, so that,*"whenever they sat or lay, they too prayed quietly."(12*), believing that with their prayers and those of their parents, they would eventually regain their freedom, despite constant threats, *"We will kill you if we ever catch you performing Christian prayers again".*

Stunned by the girl's tenacity of purpose and a strong sense of resilience and agency, the terrorists engage in a subtle psychological warfare to break the girls' mental and spiritual balance. They attempt to make the girls harbor a deep sense of guilt and self-pity. They blame the girls for their predicament, *"we told all of you, no girl should be in school. As we found you there, in that school, that is why we took you... (128*), a claim which Priscila and many of the girls refuse to believe.

The terrorists' psychological warfare of attempting to break the girls' resolve with the promise that they will regain their freedom if they convert to Islam, to the girls,becomes

another one of their failed promises, showing that their captors are not to be, having failed to keep theirpromise to release them to their parents, previously.

The refusal of the non-Muslim Chibok girls to convert to Islam forces the terrorist to adopt the forceful wearing of the hijab and compulsory Islamic lessons, as subtle tools of breaking the girls'resolve not to give up the fight for their freedom. Despite the failure of the terrorists to force the Chibok girls to convert to Islam, somehow, they manage to break the bond of sisterhood and camaraderie, when the Stockholm syndrome sets in. As would be expected, in such life threating- situations, some of the girls accept the offer to marry some of the terrorists, as a prerequisite for their freedom and preferential treatment. But the terrorists' wives soon realize that they are deceive, brainwashed and radicalized.

Several of the girls, at the risk of execution jump from moving trucks from dangerous heights in the night and escape into the forest, at the risk of being killed either by dangerous animals or other bandits in the forest, while others trick their captors into permitting them to ease themselves in the bush, thus securing their freedom. It is thenarratives of these escapees that give the parents' search party a clue of what has befallen them in the hands of their captors.

The girls despite finding themselves in a very harsh and difficult environment, devise some means of resisting the orders of their captors. They, at a point in their captivity refuse to have their baths for days, questioning, "*Why should we bath when you came and took us away from our parents?" (129)*this resistance by the girls throws back at the terrorists, the burden of flouting their Islamic religious injunction of performing ablution rituals, as a way of unveiling their religious hypocrisy. Priscilla becomes the collective symbol of the girls'resistance and agency as she questions the veracity of the terrorists' claims that they are fighting a just war. She is able to penetrate the religious mask of Boko Haram to discover that they are not sincere in their claims of fighting a just war and declaiming western education, as they are patronizing the products western education.

Priscilla plunges into introjection, consciouslyor otherwise, as keeps a diary of the events and their experiences in Boko Haram captivity. This practice, becomes a tool for releasing her energies in the face of excruciating ordeals in the hands of their captors. This practice gives her and the rest of the girls psychological and mental balance, without which she (they) would go mad. This habit gives Priscilla and the rest of the girls the much needed shock absorbers for their traumatic experiences, and it foreshadows Priscilla creativity and self-discovery.

Of course, psychologists posit that journaling is a powerful tool for managing stress, trauma and anxiety, because, by putting thoughts together, individuals can process and release

emotions, and gain clarity and perspective.Priscilla's diary turns out to be one of the most honest and authentic chronicle of the Chibok girls' saga. But while the girls are facing the worst inhuman conditions in their lives, going hungry for weeks, and surviving on leaves and unripe fruits, a coalition of women activists, spear headed by a former Minister for education during Goodluck Jonathan's administration, Obiageli Ezekwali, synergize with other influential women and women groups in Nigeria and internationally to clamour for release of the abducted Chibok school girls, through the #Bring Back our Girls, which pressure on of the government contributes to the eventual release and rehabilitation of the abducted Chibok school girls.

Trauma, Surviving Trauma and Trauma Therapeutics

Trauma experts assert that the outset of trauma is not at the point where victims of trauma experience traumatic events. It is the propensity of these traumatic experiences to haunt trauma victims that trauma and post-traumatic stress syndrome set it. According to Caurath, it is the repetitive revisitation of traumatic experiences and the latency associated with such experiences, which throw the victims of trauma into the states of the original traumatic experiences that constitute the definitive destructive experience of trauma in the life of trauma victims.

For the Chibok school girls, who are writing their certificate examinations, that is supposed tobecomea ticket into the club of the educated, it is most traumatic to them to wake up one morning to discover that such lofty dreams are shattered by the intervention of the terrorists. Theirdisplacement from their familiar school environment, the peace and the ambiance as well as their psychological attachment to the school environment and the fond memories of their school life is most traumatic. In the same way, the pain of displacement from their Chibok home, their loved ones and parents, leave lingering latency in the girls.

The forced abduction of the girls and the endless tortuous, journey into the heart of the Sambisa forest, haunts the girls' senses of reality and rationality. They do not know what fates await them as they are constantly exposed to the harsh Sambisa forest environment that is alive with dangerous animals. At several points, the girls come face to face with death, through the bullets of their captors and the bullets of the Nigerian Air Force operatives in one of their poorly executed rescue missions, which results in some of the girls sustaining sever injuries.

The betrayal of some of the Chibok school girls who turn against their established sisterhood to marry some of the terrorists, haunts Priscilla's sense of sisterhood and sanity. She is

surprised that some of the girls who before their ordeal, at Sambisa forest, were their friends and confidants, have suddenly turn against their fellow girls and reduce those who refuse to marry the terrorists to the status of slaves. For Priscilla, her near execution after a failed escape attempt haunts her all through her stay in the terrorist captivity. In the same way, the girl's parents' become traumatized, to the point where some of them develop high blood pressure, while some attempt suicide, as is the case of Esther, whose only daughter is one of the abducted girls. She becomes doubly traumatized as some of the girls' mange to escape, while at the successful negotiation of the government representatives, whose efforts secured the release of some of the girls,Esther's hope that her Dorcas would be one of the lucky one is dashed. She is shocked to discover that her daughter, Dorcas has become radicalized and has even embrace the Islamic religion as well as become a strong advocate of the Islamic terrorists' cause.

For the released girls, the sour memories of their captivity, sexual and psychological abuses they experience in Sambisa forest and other places they are moved to, is etched in the subconscious of the girls, leaving them with a sense of self worthlessness, stigmatization and self-guilt. The federal government's rehabilitation programmes, interviews, repetitive re-enactment of their experiences in the captivity of the terrorists, purposively tailoredplay therapies and songs, has a penetrating effect towards the healing process of the trauma survivors,so that the girls' (survivors') instant propulsion to celebrity status give back to the girls' a sense of self-worth and human dignity.

CONCLUSION

Boko Haram tenets mostly affect women. To show the extent of the effect of their beliefs, the Chibok girls are abducted. But the question is,"why Chibok Girls', a school that is dominantly made up of 80% Christian girls? The Chibok School happens to be the only educational legacy in an environment where so many factors work against the realization of the potentialities of the girl child such as early marriage and other retrogressive practices that deemphasize female education.

Therefore, the symbolic attack and eventual abduction of the 276 Chibok girls is a clear case of the Islamic religion and its tool of propagation, Boko Haram, mulling and instilling fear in the female gender, in order to keep them in a state of perpetual servitude and otherness. This is a conscious effort to push women from the center to the margin of the societaland political irrelevance.

But a careful juxtaposition of the two religions in the novel, Christianity and Islam, would reveal that while one, Christianity is to a very large extent, the purveyor of education, civilization, freedom, enlightenment, female liberation and development, Islam on the other hand, tend to oppose and destroy every legacy of the Christian faith. Therefore it becomes safe to conclude that the abduction of the Chibok girl is just a smoke screen for a brazen confrontation of Christianity and what it stands for.

This explains why one of the orders of Boko Haram is that women should not go to school, realizing that if the girls go to school, they would be enlightened and would be in a position to assert for their agency, freedom and fundamental human rights. The novel presents a situation where Boko Haram sees the education of women as a threats to their goals. Thus, militants force the girls to convert to Islam. Those who would not wish to accept their religion are coaxed to wearing the hijab as well as receive Islamic teachings, and the hijab therefore becomes a symbol of invisibility, voicelessness and female objectification.

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FACTORS INFLUENCINGHUMAN TRAFFICKING IN POST NATURAL DISASTER:A QUEST FOR CLARITY AND CONSIDERATION FOR SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION IN NIGERIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

Disasterswhether man-made, natural, or technological, have become an occurring and recurring decimal in different parts of the world. It is widely believed that the aftermath of devastating natural disasters increases the level of human trafficking in the geo-political zone or country where it occurs. Human trafficking on the other hand remains a pervasive and an issue of great concern worldwide, affecting individuals' wellbeing. While its root causes are complex and multifaceted, socioeconomic and socio-cultural factors have been identified as key players in determining whatever happens within the human environment. This study therefore examines factors influencing human trafficking in post natural disaster: a quest for clarity and consideration for social work profession in Nigeria. This study employed an **empirical review methodology** to investigate the relationship between natural disasters and human trafficking, particularly within the context of Nigeria. By systematically analyzing existing scholarly literature and reports, the study identified and synthesized findings from diverse sources. The selection of materials was guided by relevance to the research objectives, focusing on the interplay of socioeconomic and sociocultural factors in post-disaster settings. The review process emphasized the inclusion of studies addressing vulnerabilities exacerbated by natural disasters, such as economic hardships, displacement, and governance failures. The findings were thematically analyzed to establish patterns, links, and key factors influencing human trafficking in post-disaster contexts. This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the topic, highlighting gaps in existing literature and offering policy and practice recommendations to mitigate human trafficking risks through social work interventions.

Keywords: Natural Disaster, Human trafficking, Vulnerability, Victims, Social work, Nigeria.

Introduction

Natural disasters have enormous impact on the socioeconomic well-being of affected communities, often leading to increased vulnerability and the heightened risk of human trafficking (Birhanu et al., 2017). Natural disaster is described as catastrophic events that

have their origin in natural hazard. Natural hazard is explained as extreme and severe weather and climate events that have damaging potentials. Such phenomena include droughts, extreme temperature, floods, cyclones, wild fires, earthquakes, and volcanic outbursts among others. In severe cases of natural hazards, it has the potential to cause loss of life or injury, social and economic disruption, property damage, or environmental degradation (World Meteorological Organization [WMO], 2018).

In the aftermath of such catastrophic events, the disruption of social, economic, and political structures can create an environment ripe for the exploitation of the most marginalized populations(Hermwille et al., 2017). Natural disaster can also be associated with situations such as displacement and migration; forcing people to move due to threatened livelihoods, inadequate food supplies, and destroyed homes (Nkwunonwo, 2021; Gerrard, 2016).Most significantly, it is well recognized that displacement contributes to a noticeable rise in human trafficking(Chhibber &Laajaj, 2008; Birhanu et al., 2017).Bowersox (2017) revealed that people are readily exposed to manipulation and exploitation as disasters upset state processes and systems and subsequently create protection gaps. Singh (2012) further noted that the breakdown of a state system after an emergency actually creates protection vacuums, which makes it easier for traffickers to take advantage of vulnerable victims.Also, the chaos and disruption caused by natural disasters can strain the capacity of law enforcement and social services, hampering their ability to effectively identify and assist victims of trafficking (Chhibber &Laajaj, 2008).

There have been enormous reported cases of trafficking across different situations of post disasters, however, there is a paucity of academic research containing such link, thus, leading to a little or no consensus.Some scholars have reported some incidence where trafficking of humans exacerbated after occasions of natural disasters (Dutta, 2017; Gupta & Agrawal, 2010; Finn, 2016; Norlha, 2015; Carletti, 2017; Boria, 2016; Singh, 2012).On the contrary, while not dismissing the possibility of such risk, scholars have argued that the link between the phenomena is more of a myth than reality (Montgomery, 2011; Gozdziak& Walter, 2014).Amidst this mix of complexity, other scholars suggest several state factors that are recognized as key in comprehending human trafficking which include law enforcement (Cho et al. 2013; Frank & Simmons, 2013; Akee et al. 2014) and the effective control of corruption (Cho et al., 2013; Simmons, 2013; Jonsson, 2018; Shelley, 2010; Van Dijk & Mierlo, 2010).

Globally, different countries across the world have experienced the challenges of natural disasters with China, the United States, India, Indonesia and the Philippines ranked

top five; accounting for 30.1 percent of all disaster incidences in 2016, and they continue to appear prominently in the list of countries exposing the highest number of disaster occurrences (Guha-Sapir et al., 2016).Among the ten topmost countries in the world, some variations exist in terms of geographical location, country size, and income level among others;considering income-level,the US and Japan are regarded as high-income countries, China and Mexicoare considered upper-middle while Indonesia, Pakistan, India, the Philippines and Vietnam are considered as lower middle countries with low-income level alongside Haiti (Guha-Sapir et al. 2016). Irrespective of existing variations, all are susceptible to natural disasters. The chaos and collapse of government systems in post-disaster situations are factors that no country in the world is insusceptible to. The surge in numbers of homeless people, increase in the rate of unemployment, and decline in the level of income are some of the negativeconsequences that occur in the aftermath of disasters (Singh, 2012). In such situations, it may subsequently attract traffickers to target the vulnerable victims.

Evidence from the resultant effects of the Nepalese earthquake in 2015 indicates that declining governance and insufficient social protection mechanisms amplified the vulnerabilities of disaster-affected people to exploitation.The weakened state system with no adequate protection or support from the government during and after the disaster put the already vulnerable population at even greater risk of trafficking (Brülisauer, 2015). Moreover, the feeble performance of the Nepalese government in post-disaster prompted frustration and anger among people as they were coerced to experience situations of greater vulnerability and accept perilous conditions concerning their livelihood(Southard, 2017). Hence, the Nepalese case provides good reasons to presume the link between disaster and human trafficking.

Studies have been conducted on natural disasters and human traffickingby some scholars like (Boria,2016; Carletti, 2017;International Organization for Migration, 2015; Montgomery, 2011), but no study, to the knowledge of the researchershas been conducted on factors influencing human trafficking in post natural disaster and consideration for social work profession in Nigeria. Therefore, this study empirically examines factors influencing human trafficking in post natural disaster and consideration for social work profession.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking around the world is a serious violation of human rights and a manifestation of social injustice (David et al., 2017).Several definitions have been given for human trafficking; with each definition shaped by its country's legal interpretation of

significant concepts. It is rather tasking when analyzing such phenomena with varying views (Ali, 2010; Guinn, 2008; McCarthy, 2014). Comprehensively, the United Nations defines human trafficking as:

> "The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs." (The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2000).

Over the years, the concept of "human trafficking" has often been interchanged with another term "human smuggling" or seen as another form of migration (Bowersox, 2017; Batsyukova, 2012).It is germane to elaborate the element of exploitation. Exploitation refers to both sexual abuse and hard labor; trafficking sufferers often have their wages seized by their traffickers and further coerced to live in unhealthy servitude (Shelley, 2010).

Before discussing the factors influencing human trafficking, it is necessary to add that some concepts are associated with the process of trafficking. One of these concepts includes "country of transit," this refers to region in which victims are transferred through before they become exploited in the final country destination. On the other hand, "the source/origin of trafficking" refers to the specific region of recruitment of victims through coercion or deception (Guinn, 2008).

Factors influencing human trafficking in Nigeria

Several key factors contribute to the risk of human trafficking in Nigeria, particularly in the aftermath of natural disasters. These factors include poverty, experience of neglect and domestic violence and previous experience of marginalization and discrimination (Adesina, 2014). Another associated factor is that traffickers prey on others' weaknesses, unfortunate

circumstances, unfamiliarity, and inexperience.Traffickers are trained to detect weakness and use expert manipulation tactics to sway and control their victims (Allain, 2017). They identify a void and offer to fill it. Adepelumi (2015) reported that socioeconomic factors have a role in shaping the dynamics of human trafficking. Lack of education, and limited employment opportunities can render individuals more vulnerable to exploitation. Poverty, in particular, can create desperation and make people susceptible to deceitful recruitment maneuvers and promises of better livelihoods, eventually leading them into the clutches of traffickers. Also, the absence of adequate social support systems and economic resources can make it difficult for potential victims to resist or escape trafficking situations.

In addition to socioeconomic factors, sociocultural reasons also exert considerable influence. Cultural norms, beliefs, and practices can inform perceptions of gender roles, power dynamics, and social expectations, which, in turn, can contribute to human trafficking (Preble, 2016; Msuya, 2017). Gender inequality, discrimination, and limited opportunities for women and girls can heighten their vulnerability to trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation (Meshkovska e al., 2015). More so, cultural attitudes towards migration, trust in informal networks, and lack of awareness about the dangers of trafficking can create an enabling environment for traffickers to operate (Gezie et al., 2021; Andrijasevic, 2010).

Furthermore, the displacement of individuals and families, a common consequence of natural disasters, can further exacerbate the risk of human trafficking. Displaced persons, especially women and children, may become separated from their support networks and lack access to basic resources, rendering them more vulnerable to exploitation. (International Organization for Migration, 2015).

Challenges associated with trafficking and trafficked victims

Human trafficking has overwhelming consequences on individual victims, they often suffer physical and emotional abuse, rape threats against self and family, passport theft, and even death (Meshelemiah & Lynch, 2019). Victims of human trafficking are deprived of the most basic human right, the right to freedom. Trafficking victims are often forced into cruel and dehumanizing working conditions and are helpless to leave their exploitative situation or seek help (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004, cited in General, 2004).However, the impact of human trafficking transcends individual victims; it destabilizes the security and safety of all nations it is traced to. In Nigeria, the prevalence of human trafficking is very high (Aisedion& Edoghogho, 2021).

The health implications of trafficking are often extensive (Zimmerman et al., 2003); extending beyond the physical abuse induced by traffickers to exert control (for instance,

assault, rape and beatings). Victims may be coerced to perform multiple sexual acts with 10 to 20 patronages daily, work extensive hours in hazardous environments, and live-in filthy conditions with negligeable nutritional nourishment (Zimmerman et al., 2011).

The Nigerian Context

Nigeria is identified as the source, transit, and destination for children and women exposed to trafficking in persons including forced prostitution and involuntary labour (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020).Human trafficking in Nigeria encompasses both internal and external dimensions, with distinct regional dynamics. Internal trafficking manifests as domestic servitude and street begging, while external trafficking largely involves sex work and labor exploitation abroad.Nigeria is ranked 32 out of 167 countries with the highest number of slaves (1,386,000). This is confirmed by the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report (2022), which stated that the highest figure of trafficked persons in Nigeria are women from 18 years and above. Also, the National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters statistics from 2019 – 2022 showed that 61% of human trafficking activities in Nigeria happens internally, while only 39% is generated from cross-border trafficking.

Edo and Delta States dominate sex trafficking cases, accounting for 95% of incidents nationwide. Lagos and Ogun are hotspots for child labor and domestic servitude, whereas Benue and Sokoto grapple with street begging and domestic servitude (CNN, 2012; Adepoju, 2005, 2010; TIP Reports 2000-2013). Statistical evidence highlights the severity of the problem: over 100 girls aged 10-15 are trafficked via Togo to Europe annually, with 1,880-2,500 minors working as street prostitutes in Italy (Okojie, 2009). The period 2000-2006 saw a marked rise in reported trafficking cases, including a 65.2% increase in 2005-2006 (UNICEF/CRC/UNILAG, 2009). Root causes include extreme poverty, regional inequalities, and limited youth employment programs, exacerbated by economic declines and structural adjustment programs (Salah, 2001; Talens, 1998).

Nigeria is a major supplier of child labor in West Africa, with girls trafficked for domestic work and boys exploited in plantations (Adepoju, 2005; UNICEF, 1998, 2000). Beyond these forms, trafficking has expanded to include baby selling and organ harvesting. Notably, Edo State remains a leading source of women trafficked for prostitution overseas (UNESCO, 2006). Human trafficking is seen as the third most common crime in Nigeria after drug trafficking and economic fraud (Ukwanyi et al., 2019).

The 2003 enactment of the Prohibition in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act established the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons, tasked with enforcing anti-trafficking laws and addressing this pervasive issue.

Government efforts to ameliorate human trafficking

The International Justice Mission (IJM), an anti-trafficking NGO, recorded significant declines in the availability of minor victims for sex trafficking in both Philippines and Cambodia owing to improved access to legal and judicial systems. IJM's work emphasizes rescue and rehabilitation of victims, prosecution of traffickers through law enforcement training programs, provision of legal assistance, and referral of victims to aftercare services (Bedi et al., 2009).Cambodia where the availability of minors for sex trafficking dropped from between 15 and 30 percent in the early 2000s, to just 8.16 percent in 2014 (Gary, 2014). The availability of children under age 15 is even lower, at just 0.75 percent (Enos & Roberts, 2019). The Philippines and Cambodia are notable cases where rule of law programming—the promotion of economic freedom—has significantly reduced trafficking. In too many of the developing countries that are the sources of trafficked persons, the government has tended to reinforce powerful and corrupt local elites who remain in control—sometimes for decades—in part by encouraging a dependency mindset among their constituents. This sense of dependency and helplessness matches closely with the outlook that is common among trafficking victims. Therefore, another important step by the authorities in the fight against trafficking is the reduction of ineffective foreign aid programs and promote trade and investment by private businesses (Miller, 2014).

Policy has also been identified as government effort to addressing the issues of human trafficking. Policies include the implementation and execution of prevailing anti-trafficking rules that punish offenders while at the same time defend and rehabilitate victims. They include the prosecution of the perpetrators of trafficking (Kotrla, 2010; Sloan & Wahab, 2000; Engstrom, et al., 2004; Potocky, 2010; Roby, 2005); harsher laws against traffickers and implementation of existing laws (Jani & Anstadt, 2013; Hodge & Lietz, 2007; Gjermeni& Van Hook, 2012); empowering women to seek help from the establishments without fear of deportation (Van et al., 2006); and safeguarding victims during legal proceedings against their traffickers (Jordan et al., 2013; Roe-Sepowitz, et al., 2014; Acharya, et al., 2016). Although Roby (2005) argued, there is a gap between lawmaking and its effective implementation due to attitudes of disregard for women and girls, inadequate funding, and even police conspiracy in the multi-billion-dollar trafficking industry. In some cultural situations, traditional beliefs about the earning role of children can produce

unwillingness among policymakers to make and enforce anti-child trafficking laws (Warria et al., 2015).

Furthermore, Enos and Roberts (2019) presented a robust framework to guide governments across world in its fight against human trafficking. These include first, focus more foreign aid resources from Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries on specialized law enforcement and judicial training programs that address Trafficking in Persons (TIP) concerns; TIP victims must have access to fair and honest legal and judicial protection. The key to stopping trafficking is effective law enforcement and a judicial system free from corruption. Secondly, prioritize foreign aid to countries with significant human-trafficking challenges and implement anti-TIP best practices; here, the government should provide funds for training and assistance to law enforcement agencies in TIP source countries if they demonstrate a willingness to confront the problem. Finally, promote free market and private sector-led economic growth; Free enterprise and innovation create employment opportunities and reduce vulnerabilities to human trafficking. Improvements in the rule of law, the promotion of regulatory efficiency and openness to global trade and investment, along with restraints on the size and reach of government, therefore, provide the best environment to inspire people to develop practical solutions to economic and social challenges confronting the world.

Social work and human trafficking

Social work profession has it as a core responsibility to pursue social change and human rights, mainly on behalf of helpless and oppressed people, and toward the liberation of all people (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2008; the British Association of Social Workers [BASW], 2012; the International Federation of Social Workers [IFSW], 2012).In the same vein, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the accrediting body for social work programs in the United States asserts that “the purpose of social work purpose is attained through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally” (CSWE, 2015). Furthermore, the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) as well as the IFSW and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), suggested that in order to achieve this shared mission, social work as a profession and informative structure ought to “advocate for a new world order which makes a reality of respect for human rights and dignity and a different structure of human relationships” (IFSW, ICSW & ASSW, 2012). The values implicit and explicit in these

statements make it clear that, as one of the most critical human rights problems, human trafficking should be of fundamental concern to the profession and to social work education.

The role of the social work profession becomes increasingly critical. Social workers are uniquely positioned to understand the complex interplay of factors that contribute to human trafficking in post-disaster settings and to implement holistic, trauma-informed interventions to support affected individuals and communities (Harms & Alston, 2018). Okech et al. (2012) proposed the imperative of a social work perspective on human trafficking and write how it is critical in anti-trafficking efforts not only because of the professional guiding principles and values but also because of the holistic nature of social work interventions. The issue of human trafficking has some implications for the social work profession, especially in assisting victims. Social workers and other medical professionals have a role in the areas of identification, exit from trafficking, and restoration (Cole, 2009). Social workers play an important role in identifying victims (Clawson et al., 2009). Dovydaitis (2010) reported that 28 percent of trafficked victims, particularly women visited a health professional while being trafficked. Social workers in direct practice in healthcare settings identify victims in emergency rooms, health clinics, and shelters (Alvarez & Alessi, 2012).

The consequences of trafficking (health and economic) are often enormous (Zimmerman et al., 2003). As traffickers seek to maximize their returns, victims can develop health difficulties, which can bring them into contact with social workers. Also, for victims, the choice to break with traffickers is mostly fraught with numerous risks, some of which may be imaginary and some of which are quite actual. In certain situations, victims have attempted to escape from traffickers only to find that health care professionals discounted their accounts at the hands of traffickers (Pearce, 2011). By communicating acceptance, empathy, and genuine concern, social workers can encourage victims who decide to take on the risks associated with seeking a new life apart from traffickers (Kalergis, 2009). A social worker who is willing to serve as a caring advocate and who has the victims' interests at heart can be helpful in their decision to seek an alternative life (Aron, et al., 2006).

Sequel to the above, social workers can initiate a need assessment to identify victims', emotional, physical and spiritual needs (Hom & Woods, 2013). Survivors often have pressing needs for medical treatment given that traffickers tend to neglect routine medical care to avoid detection and to maximize victims' working time to obtain as much profit as possible. The victims' needs for health care and safety for their children and family members are typically prioritized during the first stages of the recovery process (Busch-Armendariz, et al.,

2011). Although the physical health consequences of trafficking are substantial, the mental health needs are likely to be even more profound due to the intense psychological damage inflicted by traffickers on victims (Zimmerman et al., 2011). Consequently, the U.S. Department of State (2012) has emphasized the critical role social workers and medical personnel can play in helping survivors move toward psychological wellness.

Conclusion

This study analyzes the issue of the impacts of natural disasters on the level of human trafficking outcomes. The studyassesses the nexus between natural disasters and the likelihood of human trafficking as a consequence. Findings from this studyis of significance to the understanding of the relationship between natural disasters and human trafficking. They have provided with important mechanisms through which disasters indirectly impact trafficking flows (Boria, 2016; Jasparro& Taylor, 2008; Dutta, 2017) where trafficking is often exacerbated in the aftermath of disasters (Norlha, 2015; Finn, 2016; Carletti, 2017; Gupta & Agrawal, 2010; Boria, 2016). Nonetheless, another group of authors claims that the increase of trafficking in the aftermath of disasters is more a myth than a reality (Gozdziak& Walter, 2014; Montgomery, 2011). These uneven results from the two strands of literature can be due to the lack of empirical data on human trafficking, which has been one of the main limitations when attempting to investigate this issue.

However, the results of this thesis have shown that there is a clear relationship between natural disasters and human trafficking. Despite no moderating effect was to be found in the results, it shows that both natural disasters are significantly correlated with trafficking outflows.Findings from the study reveala positive relationship between poverty and the incidence of human trafficking, meaning that poverty is associated with a higher occurrence of human trafficking. This implies that individuals who are victims of natural disasters (such as flooding) face economic hardships, and are more vulnerable and potentially targeted by traffickers. Furthermore, sociocultural factors, such as gender inequality and cultural norms, contribute to the vulnerability of individuals to human trafficking. The findings highlight the influence of sociocultural factors on the vulnerability of victims of natural disasters to human trafficking. Gender inequality and cultural norms can create an environment where certain individuals, particularly marginalized groups, are more susceptible to exploitation and trafficking.

Findings from this studycontribute to important policy recommendation in relation to the disaster-trafficking nexus. Most importantly, human trafficking outflows are estimated to increase along the risks of climate-induced disasters such as flooding. With experts

estimating that the accelerated rate of climate change will contribute to more severe and frequent climate-related disasters in the near future (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2017).This nexus contributes to major challenges. Climate-induced disasters, such as flooding have resulted to unprecedented impacts on people's livelihoods and contributed to massive displacement of people. With increased vulnerability, human trafficking is often the hidden consequence that needs to address in disaster relief efforts. Therefore, as natural disaster is rarely considered as a contribution to trafficking in persons (UNOCHA, 2017) this study stresses the importance to acknowledge that trafficking in human beings can be unintended but direct outcome of disaster-induced displacement and migration.

In conclusion, findings from this study are of significance to policy-making, activists and practitioners such as social workers in the field of disasters-trafficking nexus. For policy recommendation, it is crucial to focus on improving the socioeconomic conditions for the survivors in the aftermath of disasters, as it possibly reduce their vulnerabilities and motivation to migrate. Policy makers should address and focus on a more efficiently resource allocation as well as include counter-human trafficking interventions in disaster-relief efforts, which may reduce the risks for disaster survivors becoming exploited by traffickers.Also, education and information programs regarding the risks of trafficking should be assured and prioritized, in particular disaster-prone areas by social workers.

Recommendation

In line with the findings from the study, the following are recommended:

- More effort should be channeled towards improving the security architecture and security personnel well-equipped to fight against human trafficking by identifying perpetrators and holding them accountable.
- People should be enlightened by social workers and other relevant practitioners across different communities on the dangers of human trafficking and how to avoid the enticing traps of traffickers.
- Policy makers and the legislatives should make strict laws against human trafficking in order to uphold the sanctity of human life and punish offenders found guilty.
- The government should initiate programs to uplift victims of natural disasters from economic vulnerabilities and place them in a position of independence. This strengthens them against the enticing benefits promised by traffickers.

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CULT KILLINGS IN AWKA METROPOLIS: ESCALATING INSECURITY AND THE PERILIOUS FUTURE OF THE YOUTH

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Abstract

This research examines the contemporary rise in cult-related killings in Awka metropolis which has become a significant threat to the safety and future of the youth, who represent the potential workforce and leadership of the community. It also contributes to the heightened insecurity in the area. The study utilizes interviews with community leaders and youths, alongside extant literature on its unique content. It adopts the Social Disorganization Theory in evaluating its insights; whereas the necessary generalizations and conclusions were qualitatively delineated using ethnographic and phenomenological approaches. Findings indicate that the erosion of societal stability has gained ascendency in the metropolis, as youths who should contribute to the development of Awka are being drawn into violence or becoming victims. Moreover, the killings not only wipe out a generation but also hampers their education and prospects for a better future. Furthermore, cultism in Awka is driven by a lack of opportunities, peer pressure, and ineffective policing: Many youth are recruited due to economic hardship, a desire for belonging, and inadequate mentorship. Consequently, the constant killings have led to heightened insecurity. Regardless of this social issue, there is limited academic exploration of the socio-economic impact of cultism on Awka's long-term development. The study recommends strengthening of community policing by local authorities; improving youth engagement in community development through mentorship programs and employment opportunities; alongside collaboration of religious and traditional leaders with law enforcement to foster a more cohesive strategy to eradicate cultism.

Key Words: Cult, Insecurity, Perilous, Future, Youth, Killings, Escalating, Metropolis, Awka.

Introduction

Okoroafor (2020) describes the rise of cult-related violence in Awka, Anambra State; pointing its spike to be specifically after the #ENDSARS protests in 2020, when police retreated due to attacks on personnel. He argues that the disbandment of tactical squads, like SARS, weakened efforts to combat cultism, leading to numerous deaths, with some areas recording at least 12 fatalities at two week intervals within that period. Many families avoid reporting cult killings, leaving gangs to conduct burials and evade police inquiries. The

author streamlines that residents, including those abroad, expressed fear over their safety, and local youths urged the government to address the escalating violence.

Okoroafor (2021) reports that Awka residents are persistently worried over the growing cases of cult-related violence in their milieu as young persons were consistently killed by suspected cult members. He specifies that on Sunday, April 18, 2021; three young men were shot in cold blood by suspected cultists in different parts of Awka, the capital of Anambra State, Nigeria. Offor et al (2023) and Egwu (2024) conclude that cultism exacerbates insecurity and poses a significant threat to the safety of both urban and rural communities in Anambra State. Abdullahi (2023) documents that Governor Chukwuma Soludo of the State consistently condemns cult-related violence and killings in Anambra State; assuring that those responsible will always be apprehended and brought to justice, even if they flee from the region.

Eleke (2024) stipulates that the Governor of Anambra State is prioritizing youth development to make the state the largest skill hub in Africa. The reporter narrates that during a workshop in Awka on 29th August, 2024, the second phase of the "One youth, two skills" program was launched, aiming to train 8,000 youths in various skills. The initiative includes 620 master trainers who will mentor the trainees, supported by N3.5 billion in seed capital from the government. Eleke delineates that the program seeks to equip all Anambra youths with employable skills, fostering independence and economic growth. Aniagbado (2024) equally intimates that the federal government of Nigeria is set to partner with Anambra State on such youth empowerment venture.

Okeke (2022) investigates the extent of youth involvement in community development activities in Awka metropolis; insisting that there is significant youth participation in activities such as environmental sanitation, road maintenance, and security. She recommends that stakeholders involve youths in all phases of development projects, recognizing them as crucial to the community's future. Relatively, Anikeze et al (2024) affirms that digital platforms, specifically social media, have a significant positive effect on youth empowerment in Anambra State. The author thus, recommends that youths should leverage digital tools for self-development and that training centers integrate social media into their curricula. One can then, understandably reckon the reason for the Anambra State's Government's investment in youth capacity building; ensuring that youngsters within the State are completely socioeconomically enabled.

It is most unfortunate and regrettable that while the Anambra State Government, stakeholders and entrepreneurs are promoting youth abilities cum capacity; deviants and hoodlums are busy wasting the lives of promising youngsters under the banner of cultism. Pertinently, Afunugo et al (2023) identifies poor parental relationships, bad role models, negative societal influences, wealthy adults' sponsorship and a lack of Godly upbringing as key factors driving youth involvement in cultism within Awka metropolis. Consequently, this paper examines how escalating insecurity driven by cultism is decimating the youth population in Awka, jeopardizing the town's socio-economic future by eroding traditional values and instilling fear. Using a mixed-methods approach that incorporates law enforcement data and interviews with key community figures together with extant literature on the topic, the study fills a gap in research by exploring the long-term impact of youth cult violence on Awka's growth. The generalizations and conclusions were qualitatively delineated through ethnographic and phenomenological approaches, highlighting the severe threat to the town's future.

Indices of Cult-Affiliated Youth Homicides in Awka Metropolis

Mbachi (2024) in her report highlights a surge in cult-related killings in Awka, Anambra, with at least 34 deaths occurring in the month of April, 2024. Lawmaker Henry Mbachu, representing Awka South I (cited by Mbachi) expresses concern over the inability of security forces to curb the violence and calls for a security summit to address the issue. Adeoye (2024) being the Anambra State Commissioner of Police, insists that the contemporary resurgence of cult-related killings in Awka is attributed to the release of suspected cultists who had been in custody. He rationalizes that despite a six-month period of calm, the Easter weekend saw a spike in violence, with several people killed. He maintains that the Anambra Police Command is investigating the circumstances of the suspects' release.

Luper (2024) documents the need for a more deliberate approach to the crisis, such as the excommunication and disrobing of *Ozo* title-holders who facilitate bail for cultists, urging mothers to monitor their children's behavior, prioritizing security by state agencies, creating employment opportunities for the youth, and enforcing the anti-cult law that punishes not just cultists, but also their sponsors, associates, and those who support their bail conditions. Eleke (2024) in his account, details that the recent 2024 resurgence of youth cult-related killings in Awka metropolis occurred across various locations, including Okpuno, Dike Street, and

Obinagu, and one victim was an innocent state judiciary staff member. This marked the first significant incident after a period of reduced cult activities due to police efforts.

Eleke (2024) narrates that three people were shot dead in Awka, Anambra State, in separate incidents on Monday July 1, 2024, following a recent killing the day before, all linked to cult violence. The victims include a private security officer and a shawarma seller. He details that despite being close to police facilities, the gunmen escaped, raising concerns about local policing. The journalist declares that the state police are investigating but have made no arrests yet, as cult-related killings continue to plague the area despite earlier efforts, such as a security summit, to address the violence. Henry Mbachu, representing Awka 1 in the Anambra State House of Assembly (cited by Ujumadu, 2024) expresses deep concern over the recent surge in cult-related killings in Awka metropolis: Stressing that despite Awka being the state capital and home to top security officials, including the governor, the killings persist.

Obianeri (2024) elucidates that the recent surge in cult-related killings in Awka, Anambra State, has created widespread fear and disrupted economic and social activities. The violence is primarily fueled by rival cult groups, often linked to struggles over revenue collection and local governance control. The stringer highlights that stakeholders, including government officials, have expressed concerns about the threat to public safety and the region's development. Chukindi (2024) files a shooting spree in Ifite Awka, Anambra State, on thursday morning, October 24, 2024 at exactly 9:15am, reportedly linked to cultism, which claimed several lives: Stressing that the area is primarily populated by Nnamdi Azikiwe University students. O. Ezechi, I. Okafor and S. Ekwune (personal communication, October 22, 2024) decry that the recent surge in high-cult-related youth homicides in Awka metropolis is both despicable and deplorable, painting a grim picture of escalating violence. Young lives are being cut short in brutal, retaliatory killings, with cult groups fighting for dominance. This wave of crime has fostered fear and insecurity, affecting the daily lives of residents. Schools, markets, and streets that were once vibrant now witness bloodshed, while families are torn apart by grief. The situation is further exacerbated by a perceived lack of effective intervention, leaving the community feeling vulnerable and hopeless amidst the chaos.

Factors behind the Rise in Cult-Related Killings in Awka Metropolis

Digital technology, significantly, Social Media is now widely accessible and has become predominant part of everyday life: O. Eze and C. Ezenwa (personal communication, October 18th, 2024) express that Social Media have become critical tools for cult recruitment and operations, allowing groups to target vulnerable individuals through online platforms, often under the guise of shared ideologies or belonging. Cults exploit social media to build trust, communicate in encrypted spaces, and coordinate activities while evading detection. At the same time, they use these channels to track and gather personal data on victims or potential targets. This digital reach enables them to manipulate, intimidate, or even plan attacks more efficiently, bypassing traditional surveillance mechanisms.

Contention for territorial control is another factor that ignites youth cult related killings in Awka metropolis. I. Nwoye and T. Anunobi (personal communication, October 18th, 2024) together with Nmah et al (2024) include that rival cult groups often engage in violent clashes to assert dominance over specific areas for influence and recruitment: This also involves contention for control and dominance of specific public transport parks, especially "Keke Napepe Pits", in addition to land ownership and allocation of lands in now developing cum expensive landmarks within Awka metropolis. Cult groups are mostly used as hatchet men that maims alongside murders opposition parties engaged in such tussle. Moreover, cult groups engage constantly in local guerilla warfare over unfounded struggle for supremacy.

E. Anyaora and K. Ozor (personal communication, October 18th, 2024) assert that political exploitation of cult group spikes youth related killings in Awka metropolis. Politicians use cult groups for personal agendas, leading to increased violence, especially around election periods. This is equally enabled by proliferation of arms facilitated by the political overlords since they ensure that they equip their minions to do their atrocious biddings: Easy access to firearms and other weapons intensifies the lethality of conflicts between rival cults.

Another factor is drug trade. P. Ezeanyika and O. Nzeaghara (personal communication, October 18th, 2024) intimate that cult groups are often involved in the drug trade, leading to disputes over distribution networks and turf wars. This is equally exacerbated by peer pressure and social influence. It is obvious that many young people take to hard drug and dealing along with joining cults due to pressure from peers, seeking a sense

of belonging or identity. Unemployment and Poverty coupled with inadequate youth engagement also aids cult related youth killings in Awka metropolis. High rates of joblessness push youths towards cultism as a means of survival and status. Moreover, Lack of sufficient educational, recreational, and skill development opportunities leaves young people vulnerable to cult recruitment.

J. Onuorah and K. Anabuike (personal communication, October 18th, 2024) insist that weak law enforcement equally expedites cult affiliated youth homicides in the area. Insufficient policing and delayed justice embolden cultists to act with impunity. This as well perpetuates cultural and societal decline. A breakdown in traditional values and the weakening influence of family and community structures contribute to the normalization of cult activities.

Insecurity Concerns over Youth Cult Killings in Awka Metropolis

Observations from Awka metropolis, information retrieved from E. Nzekwe and A. Nzeadigo (personal communication, October 19th, 2024), alongside Offor et al (2023) and Egwu (2024), portrays that youth fatalities linked to cult activities is not advancement neither is it gainful to Awka metropolis. It has equally raised the following security threats:

First and foremost is the spike in cult-related youth homicides alongside relative acts of aggression. Youth cult killings in Awka Metropolis have intensified, leading to frequent violent clashes between rival cult groups. These confrontations often result in fatalities, creating fear and instability in the region. Furthermore, many young people, including both male and female students in secondary schools and tertiary institutions, are being recruited into these cults. They are drawn by promises of protection, power, and status, contributing to the spread of violent behavior among youths.

Another is that it creates law enforcement challenges. Despite efforts from security agencies, the elusive nature of cult operations and limited resources make it difficult to effectively control the violence. This persistent insecurity has disrupted daily life and economic activities in Awka, prompting calls for stronger community-based interventions and stricter law enforcement. This basically perpetrates the cycle of revenge between rival cult groups; further fueling insecurity. Each attack often leads to retaliatory killings, escalating violence and creating a constant threat to public safety in Awka Metropolis.

The growing cult affiliated youth homicides have instilled fear in the local population, with many residents afraid to move freely, especially at night. This has negatively impacted social cohesion and contributed to a sense of insecurity in the community. Frequent cult-related violence has led to the disruption of schools and businesses. Students often stay away from schools during violent periods, and business owners, particularly those located around Umuike, Umudioka, Amikwo, Umubele, Amudo and Ifite-Awka villages within Awka metropolis, close shops early, affecting both educational development and economic stability in the metropolis.

Cult-Driven Youth Fatalities in Awka Metropolis and Social Disorganization Theory

According to Wickert (2018) and Thomas et al (2023); Clifford Shaw developed the Theory of Social Disorganization in 1929, later expanding it with Henry McKay in 1942. Based on their study of juvenile delinquency in Chicago, the theory suggests that crime rates remain high in areas with specific environmental conditions like; high unemployment, population turnover, urban decay, deterioration of moral standards, erosion of core traditional values, breakdown of social structures and proliferation of indecent content on social media. These conditions disrupt social cohesion, weakening informal social controls and allowing criminal behavior to flourish. Over time, criminal norms are transmitted within the community, leading to persistently high crime rates regardless of changes in the population, as individuals are shaped by their environment.

The increasing youth fatalities influenced by cult activities in the Awka metropolis can be adequately examined through the lens of Social Disorganization Theory: This theory posits that crime and deviant behavior are more prevalent in communities with weak social institutions, lack of communal cohesion, and poor neighborhood structures. In the case of Awka, the surge in cult-related deaths among youths can be attributed to the breakdown of social structures such as family units, schools, and religious organizations, which traditionally play a role in molding responsible citizens. As these institutions weaken, the youth are left vulnerable to deviant influences, including cultism, as they seek alternative sources of identity and belonging. The high rate of unemployment and economic disparity in Awka, consequent upon the depressed economy of Nigeria further exacerbates the problem. Social Disorganization Theory explains that economically disadvantaged areas with limited access to opportunities and resources are more prone to deviant behaviors, as residents experience frustration and a sense of powerlessness. The youth within Awka metropolis resort to cultism

as a means of survival or as an outlet for their frustrations. With inadequate opportunities for education and employment, these young individuals are often drawn into the allure of cult groups that promise financial rewards, protection, and a sense of community, contributing to the fatal conflicts witnessed.

Moreover, the breakdown of law enforcement and weak governance in Awka contributes to the rise of cultism and youth fatalities. Social Disorganization Theory suggests that ineffective policing and corruption create an environment where crime can thrive. In Awka, the inability of law enforcement to effectively address the menace of cult activities allows these groups to operate with impunity, further entrenching their presence in the community. The absence of a strong legal framework and the failure to prosecute cult-related crimes embolden members to continue their violent behaviors, resulting in the loss of young lives. The spatial organization of Awka, marked by slum development and overcrowded, poorly planned neighborhoods, plays a significant role in youth involvement in cultism. Social Disorganization Theory emphasizes that physical environments contribute to crime rates. Awka's urban growth, coupled with a lack of infrastructural development, creates spaces where social control is weak. In these disorganized communities, youths lack positive role models and face peer pressure to join cults as a form of survival or rebellion against a system that seems to have failed them.

In addition to the social and economic factors, cultural influences also contribute to the rise of youth involvement in cults in Awka. The glorification of power, wealth, and violence often portrayed in media and through peer groups can have a significant impact on young minds, particularly in disorganized communities. Social Disorganization Theory recognizes that in the absence of strong social bonds and positive role models, deviant subcultures can flourish. In Awka, cults are viewed by some youth as a pathway to prestige and influence, as these groups often control parts of the community through intimidation and force. This culture of fear and respect for violent power becomes normalized, leading to an increase in fatal confrontations between rival cult factions. The fragmentation of traditional values in Awka further fuels the problem. Historically, the Igbo community, which predominantly inhabits Awka, values communal living, respect for elders, and collective responsibility. However, with the growing influence of individualism and Western ideologies, there has been a noticeable decline in these shared values, which once served as social glue. Social Disorganization Theory posits that when cultural norms break down, deviance increases as individuals no longer feel bound by communal expectations. Youths in Awka are

increasingly disconnected from these traditional values; thus turning to cultism as an alternative means of identity formation and social cohesion.

Impact of Youth Cult Killings on Awka's Socioeconomic Future

The rise in violence associated with cult activities has instilled a pervasive sense of fear and insecurity among residents in Awka city. This state of affair discourages investment and economic activities, as potential businesses are wary of operating in a volatile area. The rampant youth cult killings contribute to an overall deterioration of public safety, making Awka a less desirable place to live and work. This decline in safety also leads to exodus of residents seeking safer environments, which further diminishes the local economy. M. Onwe, O. Nwoye, F. Okanimee and C. Ezedebego (personal communication, October 20th, 2024) elucidate that irrespective of high cost of house rent in Awka metropolis, some areas like Umuike, Umudioka, Amikwo, Umubele, and Amudo, register low house rents all in the effort to attract residents with very few still showing interest in residing therein because of the spike in insecurity it records. The disruption of local markets and businesses due to sporadic violence further exacerbates unemployment and economic stagnation, leading to a cycle of poverty. Potential investors view Awka as a high-risk area due to the violence, leading to economic disinvestment. Businesses that might have flourished in a stable environment choose to relocate or abandon plans for expansion, stunting economic growth and job creation.

Moreover, the loss of young lives, who are often the most productive members of society, results in a depletion of human capital in Awka metropolis. This not only affects the immediate families of victims but also hampers the widespread community's growth and development. The educational aspirations of youth are also jeopardized as many are either killed or drawn into cult activities, diverting their focus from academic achievement to survival and involvement in criminal enterprises. This undermines the long-term potential of the workforce, leading to a decline in skilled labor. The psychological ramifications of these killings also contribute to a fragmented community. Families and friends of victims often experience trauma and grief, which leads to breakdown of social cohesion. This disintegration of community bonds makes it more challenging to address underlying issues contributing to youth involvement in cultism, such as poverty, lack of opportunities, and social disillusionment. O. Amobi and C. Ezeonu (personal communication, October 20th, 2024) indicate that significant number of Awka indigenes are used to the rampant cult related

youth killings to the extent that once one is murdered, the family members buries such a person immediately, averting due professional police protocols, and even without proper traditional or religious burial rites: This constitutes a social cum psychological anomaly since they are now accustomed to such deaths with no efforts at combating it. A society wherein incessant murder of youngsters is condoned already has a bleak future.

The prevalence of youth murders tied to cult involvement disrupts educational institutions; leading to irregular school closures and a decline in student enrollment in Awka metropolis. Parents withdraw their children from school due to safety concerns, resulting in a generation of youth who are uneducated and ill-prepared for future employment opportunities. E. Ibegbu and O. Eneanya (personal communication, October 20th, 2024) aver that significant number of both Awka indigenous and residential youngsters opt to stay out of school; engaging in Keke Napepe transport business alongside contention for the "Pits" control, irrespective of its high risks and associated dangers.

The consequences of cult violence also strain local healthcare systems. The following records of cult affiliated youth homicides will reckon points regarding this assertion; observations posit that towards the end of 2021, one person at least was being gunned down by suspected cultists each day; Obianeri (2024) registers that no fewer than 34 youths were killed during cult related clashes in the month of June, 2024; S. Ibegbu, E. Ibegbunam and C. Nwammadu (personal communication, October 21st, 2024) lament that the number of cult associated killings among the youth in mainly Ifite-Awka, Okpuno, Dike Street, near Eke Awka Main Market, Obinagu, Nkwelle, Ezinano, and UNIZIK Temp-Site junction within Awka metropolis, is more than the news relay: They stress that it has become common to see corpse of youngsters in the streets of these places on daily basis. Apposite to this concrete situation, hospitals and clinics may be overwhelmed by the influx of victims needing medical attention, diverting resources away from essential services and preventive care. This can lead to a deterioration of general health standards in the community.

Cult groups often engage in drug trafficking and substance abuse, leading to an increase in drug related crimes and addiction among youth. This not only affects the health and well-being of individuals but also imposes significant costs on families and the community in terms of healthcare and social services. Besides, youth cult's drug addictions, abuse, including trafficking often promote violence and anti-social behavior, which erodes traditional cultural values and norms within Awka metropolis. This cultural decay wields

lasting effects on Awka community identity and social cohesion, making it difficult to foster unity and collaborative development.

It was observed that significant number of young individuals exposed to violence within Awka cityscape develops mental health issues; including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This psychosocial impact hinders their ability to contribute positively to society and the economy. Observations in the course of this research unraveled that significant number of youngsters in Awka metropolis easily resort to violence at the slightest provocation; more so, there abounds youngsters that exhibit uncoordinated dispositions as well as mental disorientation because of long-term exposure to violence, murdering and hard drugs. Relatively, this association with youth cult violence leads to widespread stigmatization, making it challenging for culprits to secure employment or participate in community initiatives. This exclusion creates the sense of hopelessness and alienation, driving them more towards criminal behavior.

Youth murders tied to cult involvement often leads to family disintegration, as members cope with the loss of loved ones or the incarceration of those involved in cult activities. This breakdown of family structures can perpetuate cycles of poverty and violence, as children from unstable homes may be more susceptible to recruitment into cults. It was observed that significant numbers of families in Awka metropolis affected by such bereavements are yet to recover from the trauma and associated economic distress. A peculiar family lost three youths within two years: They are currently perpetually faced with the stark reality of having lost the heirs cum beneficiaries of the family.

The ongoing cult affiliated youth homicides necessitates increased funding for law enforcement and security measures, diverting resources from other critical areas such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure development. This financial burden limits the government's ability to invest in community development. Furthermore, in the absence of effective law enforcement, residents of Awka metropolis are resorting to vigilantism to protect themselves, leading to further violence and instability, as such is being infiltrated by cult advocates according to observation. This currently is creating an environment where fear prevails, making it difficult for residents to engage in productive activities.

Ultimately, the cumulative effects of youth cult killings create significant long-term challenges for sustainable development in Awka. With a generation affected by violence,

economic stagnation, and social disintegration, the path to recovery and growth becomes increasingly difficult, requiring concerted efforts from all stakeholders.

Conclusion

This study has highlighted critical aspects in the youth fatalities linked to cult activities in Awka metropolis; its adverse effects on the future socioeconomic development of the territory cum the perilous outlook it poses for the residential youths, including their psychological well-being, alongside its impact on community safety. It has also brought attention to the urgent need for multi-faceted interventions involving community leaders, law enforcement, and social organizations to address the root causes of youth violence and insecurity. Via identifying these key areas, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on youth violence in Nigeria, underlining the importance of collaborative approaches to mitigate the issue effectively.

Noteworthy, is that to further enrich the understanding of youth related cult killings in Awka megacity, future studies should employ comparative analyses with other regions experiencing similar challenges in order to uncover transferable strategies for intervention and prevention. Investigating the role of education and community engagement in countering cultism, together with studying the spiritual dimension of the effects of cult related youth killings may also yield valuable insights, informing policy recommendations aimed at fostering a safer environment for the youth in Awka and beyond.

Recommendations

In view of this study's observations, the following recommendations are herby proffered:

1. Strengthening community policing: It is crucial to establish local policing committees in Awka metropolis that include community leaders, youths, and women's groups to enhance communication between residents and law enforcement. This approach should focus on training police officers in community engagement and conflict resolution, fostering trust and collaboration. Regular community forums should be organized to address residents' concerns, creating an environment where citizens feel empowered to report criminal activities without fear of reprisal.

2. Improving youth engagement: Local authorities should initiate mentorship programs connecting youth with successful professionals, offering skills training, internships, and job placements to enhance employability. Collaborations with local businesses for apprenticeship opportunities can provide hands-on experience, while community development projects led by youth can foster ownership and responsibility. Workshops on entrepreneurship and financial literacy will empower young people to create job opportunities, reducing the allure of cultism.

3. Collaboration with religious and traditional leaders: Collaboration between religious and traditional leaders and law enforcement to create a unified strategy against cultism should be encouraged. There should be regular interfaith dialogues and community meetings organized at intervals to collectively address the issue. These leaders should utilize their influence to educate community members on the negative impacts of cultism and promote positive avenues for social interaction, fostering a culture of accountability and trust.

4. Engaging youth in constructive activities: Awka metropolis stake holders should organize constructive activities for youth through local government and community organizations, such as sports leagues, cultural festivals, and educational workshops. Providing opportunities for youth to showcase their talents will foster personal development and a positive environment. Involvement in community service projects will instill pride and responsibility, steering youth away from negative affiliations with cult groups.

5. A call for inter-religious solemn Assembly and land deliverance: This study suggests that land deliverance program should be organized by both the Christian religious denominations and African Traditional Faith in Awka metropolis to ask for God's mercy and deliverance from curses associated with the blood of youngsters shed over the years in the territory.

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DIGITAL SECURITY CHALLENGES IN THE DISCIPLINES OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Abstract

Security challenges in the disciplines of arts, humanities, and social sciences may not immediately seem as apparent as in fields like technology or defense, but they are increasingly relevant. These challenges can be broadly categorized into digital, physical, intellectual, and ethical dimensions; each impacting the ways research, teaching, and cultural preservation are approached in these fields. In this paper the researcher decides to focus on the digital security. The researcher was informed based on what is currently happening in the field of arts, humanities and social sciences. In the field of humanities today, digital security issues are becoming increasingly prominent due to the widespread use of digital technologies for research, communication, and cultural preservation. The paper adopts the qualitative sociological approach. This paper, therefore aims at describing what digital security is all about and its security challenges in the disciplines of arts, humanities and social sciences. The study discovers that, although Digital security measures protect personal, financial, and sensitive data from unauthorized access, theft, or leaks as the advantages and thus providing a deeper and fuller protection to the fields, yet it has some key challenges which include: Data Sensitivity and Privacy, Copyright and Intellectual Property, Cyber security Awareness and Skill Gaps, Open Access and Data Sharing, Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Ethical Considerations. The study therefore recommends among other things that for an effective and hitch free Digital security, attention must be given to these challenges and ways of overcoming them.

Key Words: Arts, Challenges, Digital Security, Disciplines, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Introduction

The arts, humanities, and social sciences are interconnected fields that collectively study human creativity, culture, behavior, and societal structures. They explore the richness of human experience, often focusing on qualitative aspects of life and addressing questions about meaning, value, and relationships. As a body of knowledge together, these fields form a comprehensive framework for understanding and improving the human condition. This body of knowledge is dynamic, integrating perspectives to address complex global issues, and remains essential for fostering empathy, critical thinking, and informed citizenship. Security challenges in the disciplines of arts, humanities, and social sciences may not immediately seem as apparent as in fields like technology or defense, but they are increasingly relevant. These challenges can be broadly categorized into digital, physical, intellectual, and ethical

dimensions; each impacting the ways research, teaching, and cultural preservation are approached in these fields. In this paper the researcher decides to focus on the digital security. This is because in the field of humanities today, digital security issues are becoming increasingly prominent due to the widespread use of digital technologies for research, communication, and cultural preservation. Digital security is the protection of digital assets from unauthorized access to sensitive information.[1] This paper attempts to describe and critically examine the challenges of digital security in the fields of arts, humanities and social sciences. The paper started with the concept of Digital security, different types of digital security to the fields were identified, described and critically examined, exposing the challenges in the field of arts, humanities and social sciences.

Concept of Digital Security

Digital security is the protection of digital assets from unauthorized access to sensitive information.[2] It is also known as information security, is the practicing of protecting digital information from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or distruction.[3] It is also regarded as cyber security by some scholars notwithstanding the fact that there are notable differences between the two. Digital security refers to the practices, tools, and measures used to protect electronic devices, networks, and data from unauthorized access, attacks, theft, or damage. It encompasses a wide range of techniques such as encryption, authentication, firewalls, antivirus software, and secure coding practices to safeguard personal, academic, business, and governmental information. According to Simplilearn, Digital security is the collective term that describes the resources employed to protect your online identity, data, and other assets. These tools include web services, antivirus software, Smartphone SIM cards, biometrics, and secured personal devices. According to him, it is the process used to protect your online identity[4]. Uwadia and Friday[5] posits that digital security can be understood as the protection of information systems from theft, damage, or unauthorized access, ensuring the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of digital data. This includes measures to safeguard against cyber threats like hacking, identity theft, and malware attacks**.** Digital security aims to maintain the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of data, ensuring that only authorized users can access sensitive information and systems. It covers various domains like cybersecurity, information security, and online privacy protection**.**

Here are some scholars from the arts, humanities, and social sciences and their contributions on digital security from their individual perspectives: While Boyd researches social media, privacy, and the ways young people interact with technology. She emphasizes that digital

security in social networks is not just about protecting information but also about protecting people's social relationships and reputation in digital contexts[6]. Lessig while dealing on cyber law argues that "code is law" in the digital age, meaning that the architecture of digital systems shapes what is possible, permissible, and secure. His work suggests that legal frameworks need to account for how digital code influences individual rights and freedoms, highlighting the need for laws that ensure digital security and privacy[7].

Nevertheless, Crawford examines the ethical implications of artificial intelligence and data, noting that AI can amplify existing power structures and biases. She argues that digital security must address data sovereignty and the impact of big data on marginalized communities, who are often most vulnerable to surveillance[8]. Contributing on digital security Dourish focuses on how people interact with digital technologies in different cultural contexts. He argues that security and privacy policies should consider cultural and social factors, as perceptions of privacy vary across societies and impact how digital systems should be designed and implemented[9].

More so, Eubanks in her work explores how automated systems and data-driven policies affect marginalized communities. She argues that digital security must address systemic inequalities, as surveillance disproportionately affects low-income communities, potentially leading to discrimination and privacy erosion[10]. Angwin is a journalist who has extensively covered digital surveillance, often focusing on how government and corporate practices affect personal privacy. She highlights the need for transparency and accountability in digital security practices, particularly when they involve the collection and analysis of personal data.[11]

Morozov coming from the angle of Sociology, Political Science, Technology Criticism was critical of the way technology companies use digital security as a pretext for invasive surveillance. He argues that cybersecurity is often shaped by corporate interests and highlights the risks of digital monopolies controlling sensitive.[12]

Some Key Digital Security Challenges in the Fields of Arts, Humanities and Social sciences

Each of the following factors forms part of an evolving framework that scholars, researchers, and practitioners use to address the dynamic challenges of digital security.

Digital security poses unique challenges to the disciplines of arts, humanities, and social sciences due to the nature of the data, research practices, and modes of collaboration common in these fields. The following are some of the major security challenges in these fields.

1. **Data Sensitivity and Privacy**

Researchers in these disciplines often work with sensitive data, such as personal interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, or cultural artifacts, which require careful handling to protect privacy and confidentiality. Implementing and maintaining digital security systems can be expensive. Therefore, inadequate security measures due to high costs of maintenance can lead to data breaches, threatening the trust between researchers and participants.

2. **Copyright and Intellectual Property**

Arts and humanities researchers often deal with creative works (music, literature, art) and social sciences handle large datasets. Ensuring that digital versions of these materials are protected against unauthorized access, copying, or distribution is essential. Digital piracy and copyright infringement are ongoing threats.

3. **Cybersecurity Awareness and Skill Gaps**

Scholars in these fields may not have extensive technical training in cybersecurity, making them more vulnerable to phishing, malware, or other forms of cyberattacks. Limited awareness or training in safe digital practices can leave academic projects, archives, and communications at risk. The care-free life of some people in Nigeria, their ignorant of regular security breach and negligence of information has left our worthwhile information or gadget into the hand of cybercriminal.[13] Some people leave their gadget anywhere later to find out that somebody has made away with it and such exposing information into wrong hands that can use it for something evil. Unfortunately, too many users don't deploy the privacy settings on the device. Moreover, advanced digital security systems require highly skilled professionals for setup, monitoring, and management, which can be difficult to find and costly to hire.

4. **Open Access and Data Sharing**

The growing push for open access to research findings and data presents both an opportunity and a security challenge. While openness fosters collaboration, it also requires careful balancing to prevent the exposure of sensitive materials or intellectual property.

5. **Digital Preservation and Integrity**

Long-term preservation of digital works (such as digital art, oral history archives, or social media analysis) faces risks from data corruption, format obsolescence, or even intentional tampering. Ensuring the integrity and authenticity of these works over time requires robust security frameworks.

6. **Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

Increasing collaboration across disciplines, including partnerships with tech developers or data scientists, introduces the challenge of sharing data securely. In interdisciplinary projects,

participants from non-technical fields may not fully understand the vulnerabilities involved, leading to potential breaches.

7. **Surveillance and Censorship**

Researchers in social sciences and humanities often engage with politically sensitive topics. Digital security lapses can make them vulnerable to state surveillance, censorship, or harassment, particularly in authoritarian regimes or environments hostile to certain research topics.

8. **Ethical Considerations**

The ethics of data collection, especially in digital ethnography or social media research, involves navigating the boundaries of privacy, consent, and data security. The potential for large-scale surveillance or data scraping raises ethical dilemmas about participant rights and security.

In short, the challenge is to create secure systems and practices while maintaining the open, collaborative, and creative spirit that defines these disciplines.

Some Major Factors that can be used to Address the Dynamic Challenges of Digital Security.

Digital security encompasses a range of factors that scholars from various fields highlight as essential to protecting information, systems, and individuals in the digital landscape. Here are some of the major factors identified:

1. Confidentiality, Integrity, and Availability (CIA Triad)

Confidentiality: Ensuring data is accessible only to those with authorization.

Integrity: Ensuring data is accurate and has not been tampered with.

Availability: Ensuring data and systems are accessible to authorized users when needed.

Scholars in information security widely use the CIA triad as a foundation for discussing and implementing security measures.

2. **Authentication and Access Control**

Authentication: Verifying the identity of users and systems (e.g., passwords, biometrics, multi-factor authentication).

Access Control: Managing who has permission to access or modify data.

Scholars like David Ferraiolo and D. Richard Kuhn emphasize role-based access control as a critical factor in maintaining security within organizations.[14] The use of flimsy/trivial or stress-free to predict passwords are not good for security purpose. However, passwords are going to continue to be the first point of validation for a long time. Trivial password is like no password, any password that resolves around the name of the owner, name of organization or

acronym of organization can easily be predicted by hacker or people. It can then become an issue of what password should be used for security bearing in mind that owner of password always want what they can remember. The owner of system should think of what cannot easily be predicted regardless of how it will be recall by the individual.[15]

3. **Encryption and Data Protection**

Encryption is key for protecting sensitive information both at rest and in transit.

Cryptography experts like Bruce Schneier[16] highlight encryption as essential for maintaining privacy and ensuring data security. A challenge highlighted by researchers is balancing the utility of data with privacy protection. While organizations collect data to drive insights and improve services, ensuring that sensitive data remains private is critical. Privacy-enhancing technologies (PETs), like differential privacy and homomorphic encryption, are areas scholars are actively exploring to balance data utility with privacy.

4. **Risk Management**

This involves identifying, assessing, and mitigating potential risks, including technical vulnerabilities and human errors. Scholars in cyber security, such as NIST researchers, emphasize a risk-based approach to prioritize resources and address potential threats. The following measures should be adopted to curb such risks:

(i)Always shut down computer: Computer should be shut down when not in use or on your way out of the computer room otherwise exposes the computer to malicious attack which may cause bandit to carry away computer thereby exposing the information into a wrong hands. This can also make hackers to use undue privilege to attack the system.[17]

(ii) Negligence to adopt security progams: This negligence is recorded mostly when security measures are neglected by owners or key players in these fields due undue consciousness to cybercrimes. This paper stands to say that every internet user should be aware of the challenges pose by hackers and give possible solutions to cyber insecurity in Nigeria. It could be none of the aforementioned issue but wickedness of people. People can overlook setting security measures.[17] They get familiar with the society that they neglect security measures. Some of them will end up crying heard I know later.

(iii)Social media: The social media contains the good and bad. Engaging the social media while doing serious academic work exposes your information of hacker or intruder unknown to you. Social media is a hotspot embedded with malwares and vices that may affect academic material.[19]

5. **User Education and Awareness**

Human error is a major factor in security incidents, so user education is essential.

Researchers like Angela Sasse have shown that user training and awareness can reduce security incidents, as people are often the weakest link.[20]

6. **Incident Response and Recovery**

This involves preparing for, detecting, responding to, and recovering from security incidents.

Scholars in cyber security frameworks like the NIST Cybersecurity Framework emphasize structured incident response to minimize damage.

7. **Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

Compliance with regulations like GDPR, HIPAA, and PCI-DSS is essential to avoid legal consequences and protect user data.

Legal scholars and researchers focus on regulatory compliance as critical in the context of protecting data rights and reducing fields and organizational risks.

8. **Privacy Protection**

Privacy extends beyond security to include data collection and usage transparency.

Experts like Daniel J. Solove highlight the importance of privacy-preserving practices, including data minimization and anonymization.[21]

9. **Emerging Threats and Technological Advances**

Staying ahead of emerging threats such as AI-driven attacks, ransomware, and quantum computing is vital. Researchers in fields like artificial intelligence and quantum cryptography study how advances can improve security but also present new risks.

10. **Collaboration and Information Sharing**

Cooperation between organizations, governments, and industries helps in sharing threat intelligence. Scholars argue that threat intelligence sharing helps improve the collective response to security threats on a global scale.

Conclusion

In conclusion, digital security in the fields of arts, humanities, and social sciences presents unique challenges due to the increasing reliance on technology for research, communication, and dissemination of knowledge. These fields often handle sensitive data, including cultural heritage, personal narratives, and societal trends, making them vulnerable to cyber threats such as data breaches, intellectual property theft, and digital misinformation. Addressing these challenges requires tailored strategies that balance accessibility and security, fostering awareness and equipping researchers with the necessary tools and best practices.

Collaborative efforts between technologists and scholars are essential to safeguard digital assets while promoting innovation and trust in these disciplines.

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The Economic Implications of Cyber security Threats on Nigeria Financial Systems and Digital Economies

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Abstract

The digitalization of financial systems has brought about growth, innovation, and financial inclusion, especially in emerging economies like Nigeria. However, this transformation has also introduced cybersecurity threats, such as ransomware attacks, data breaches, and financial fraud, which pose serious risks to economic stability and consumer confidence. In Nigeria, the increase in cyberattacks, such as ransomware attempts by 7% in 2023, highlights the vulnerability of the country's financial systems to digital threats. Global case studies, such as the 2016 Bangladesh Bank heist and the activities of the Carbanak group, demonstrate the economic consequences of cybercrime. This paper examines the economic implications of cybersecurity threats on Nigeria's financial systems and digital economy, focusing on direct costs like financial losses and fines and indirect costs like reputational damage and reduced investor confidence. Strategies for mitigating these risks include strengthening national cybersecurity policies, fostering public-private partnerships, and investing in digital infrastructure. Implementing these strategies can enhance cybersecurity resilience, secure the digital economy, and promote long-term economic stability and growth.

Key Words: Cybersecurity Threats, Digital Economy, Financial Systems, Ransomware Attacks, Financial Inclusion

Introduction

The integration of digital technologies into financial systems has revolutionized global commerce, fostering innovation, efficiency, and financial inclusion. Advancements in financial technology (fintech), blockchain, and e-commerce have enabled faster transactions, reduced costs, and expanded access to financial services, particularly for underserved populations (Saraf and Kayal, 2022). In Nigeria, the rapid adoption of digital technology in finance offers immense potential to overcome traditional barriers such as high costs, geographical limitations, and information asymmetry, thereby enhancing financial inclusion and driving economic growth (Khera et al., 2021).

Financial inclusion is essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promoting equitable economic development. While the integration of digital technologies accelerates growth and modernizes financial systems, it simultaneously exposes them to

significant cybersecurity threats, including data breaches, ransomware attacks, and financial fraud. These threats undermine trust in digital platforms, impose substantial financial and reputational costs on businesses and governments, and pose a direct challenge to economic stability (Daud, Ahmad, and Trinugroho, 2024).

The global financial system has demonstrated the vulnerabilities of digital transformation, as evidenced by the 2016 Bangladesh central bank heist, where hackers exploited SWIFT's vulnerabilities to attempt the theft of $1 billion (Maurer and Nelson, 2021). Such incidents highlight the underestimated systemic cyber risks in financial systems and underscore the growing sophistication of cyberattacks. In Nigeria, ransomware attack attempts increased by 7% in the first half of 2023 compared to 2022, with 71% of organizations affected by ransomware in 2021 (Leyden, 2024). These threats, compounded by cyber-dependent crimes such as phishing, hacking, ATM spoofing, and identity theft, pose significant risks to both public and private sector organizations (Omodunbi et al., 2016).

On a global scale, criminal groups like the Carbanak gang and state-sponsored actors such as North Korea have exploited digital vulnerabilities, collectively stealing billions from financial institutions between 2013 and 2018 (Maurer and Nelson, 2021). These incidents emphasize the need for robust cybersecurity frameworks and collaborative strategies to safeguard financial systems and ensure the stability of digital economies.

This study examines the economic implications of cybersecurity threats on Nigeria's financial systems and digital economies. It explores the direct and indirect costs of cyberattacks, their impact on financial stability and innovation, and strategies for mitigating risks. The study also emphasizes the critical role of collaborative efforts among governments, businesses, and stakeholders in fostering secure and resilient digital economic growth.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Key Challenges in Nigeria's Digital Economy

Nigeria's digital economy faces five critical challenges: digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, innovation promotion, the digital divide, and regulatory constraints. Digital infrastructure is essential for delivering efficient digital services and fostering economic growth. However, issues such as low broadband penetration and inadequate power supply hinder progress (Schade&Schuhmacher, 2022). Robust cybersecurity measures are necessary to safeguard

critical infrastructure and maintain trust in digital systems, particularly as Nigeria experiences increasing cyber threats. Promoting innovation is vital for driving economic growth, generating employment, and fostering entrepreneurship (Murinde, Rizopoulos, and Zachariadis, 2022). The digital divide remains a pressing issue, with rural and underserved populations lacking access to the internet and digital literacy training (Chetty et al., 2018). Addressing these gaps is essential for equitable participation in the digital economy. Furthermore, fragmented policies and regulatory uncertainty limit progress in critical sectors such as fintech and e-commerce (Tang et al., 2022). These interrelated challenges significantly impact Nigeria's digital capacity and economic transformation efforts.

2.2 The Role of Cybersecurity in Economic Stability

Cybersecurity is central to the resilience of digital economies. Makeri (2017) highlights the increasing prevalence of cybercrime and its economic implications, emphasizing the need for robust frameworks to mitigate threats such as phishing, ransomware, and identity theft. The study underscores the role of organized crime and the importance of global cooperation to address these challenges. Venkatachary et al. (2024) explore the economic consequences of cyberattacks on the energy sector, identifying parallels with the financial sector. Financial losses, operational disruptions, and reputational damage are among the key outcomes of cyberattacks. The authors recommend adopting robust cybersecurity measures and fostering international collaboration, which are also applicable to Nigeria's financial systems. Popkova and Gulzat (2020) examine the social consequences of cyber threats, arguing that solutions must address societal impacts rather than just technical vulnerabilities. This perspective is particularly relevant for Nigeria, where cybersecurity threats affect public trust and economic participation.

2.3 Digital Transformation and Financial Inclusion

Digital transformation presents significant opportunities for enhancing financial inclusion. Yang and Masron's study examines the relationship between digital transformation and bank credit risk, highlighting that inclusive finance reduces risks while promoting economic stability. In Nigeria, digital financial services (DFS) driven by fintech innovations are transforming access to financial systems, overcoming traditional barriers such as high costs and geographical limitations. Cuesta et al. (2015) and Nguyen et al. (2023) discuss how traditional banks are adopting digital platforms to remain competitive. This shift is a form of technologically driven financial innovation, with implications for Nigeria's financial sector,

where fintech growth must be matched with robust cybersecurity to ensure stability and consumer confidence.

2.4 Comparative Insights from Global Studies

Chen et al. (2023) analyze digital economy capacities and cybersecurity challenges in nations like China, India, and South Korea. These countries demonstrate the importance of integrating strong digital infrastructure with comprehensive cybersecurity frameworks to foster innovation and resilience. Lessons from these nations can guide Nigeria in strengthening its digital economy. Similarly, Juneja, Goswami and Mondal (2024) use correlation and regression analysis to highlight the interconnectedness of social and economic impacts of cybersecurity threats. Their findings emphasize that public well-being and economic stability is interdependent, reinforcing the need for holistic approaches to cybersecurity in Nigeria.

2.5 Practical Solutions and Policy Recommendations

The reviewed studies converge on the need for coordinated efforts to address cybersecurity challenges. Makeri (2017) and Venkatachary et al. (2024) advocate for robust cybersecurity frameworks and real-time threat monitoring to mitigate risks. Chen et al. (2023) emphasize innovation ecosystems and regulatory clarity as critical enablers of digital economic growth. In the Nigerian context, addressing digital infrastructure gaps, promoting financial literacy, and streamlining regulatory policies are vital. Strategies must include stakeholder collaboration, investment in advanced technologies, and public-private partnerships to enhance cybersecurity readiness and foster sustainable digital transformation.

Nigeria's digital economy, despite its potential for growth, faces significant cybersecurity threats. To mitigate these risks, a holistic approach involving robust infrastructure, innovation promotion, and effective regulations, based on global studies and local contexts, is needed. This paper addresses gaps in existing research on cybersecurity threats and their impact on digital economies, focusing on Nigeria's unique vulnerabilities, comprehensive economic impacts, policy recommendations for emerging economies, and integrating social dimensions. It highlights the need for tailored solutions for cybersecurity infrastructure development and digital financial inclusion in Nigeria.

3.0 Conceptual Framework and Definitions

3.1 What is Cybersecurity in Finance?

The financial sector employs cybersecurity to safeguard digital assets, customer information, and business operations against cyberattacks. This industry handles sensitive data and monetary transactions, making it a target for cybercriminals. To detect, prevent, and respond to potential threats, financial institutions must adopt tight security practices, advanced technologies, and continuous monitoring. According to Statista, as reported by SentinelOne in 2024, the average global cost of a financial sector breach surged to 6.08 million USD this year, underscoring the pressing necessity for effective cybersecurity measures. As cyber threats evolve, attacks on financial institutions become more sophisticated, necessitating continuous evolution in security practices.

Cyber security is crucial for maintaining trust and integrity within the financial system. It involves data security, which protects sensitive customer data, such as personal information and transaction details. A breach can lead to reputational damage and regulatory fines. Effective cybersecurity measures prevent unauthorized transactions, protecting financial assets and preventing fraud or theft. Cyberattacks can cause significant financial losses, including service loss. Continuity of operations is essential for financial organizations to avoid customer dissatisfaction and reputational harm.

Regulatory compliance is crucial in the financial sector, and cybersecurity helps organizations meet these standards by avoiding fines and other legal ramifications. A successful cyber-attack can cause irreparable damage to a financial institution's reputation, causing loss of customer trust and reduced business opportunities. Good cybersecurity protects data while showing commitment to stakeholder interest. Overall, cybersecurity is essential for maintaining trust and integrity within the financial system.

3.2 Types of Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity in financial services involves various types of protection measures.

- Network security safeguards computer networks and their valuable information, preventing unauthorized access through firewalls, intrusion detection systems, and virtual private networks.

- Application security defends software and systems from future threats through periodic security tests and continuous updates.
- Information security protects data integrity and privacy through techniques like data encryption, masking, and access controls. This ensures the confidentiality of sensitive financial information and its accessibility only to authorized individuals.
- Operational security concerns user permission settings and data sharing practices, which are crucial in the finance sector.
- Disaster recovery and business continuity ensure systems are available with minimal delay in case of a disaster or accident. This includes active backup systems, redundant systems, and full recovery plans to minimize downtimes and data loss. Understanding these types of cybersecurity is crucial for organizations in the financial services sector to ensure their operations are secure and efficient.

3.3 Types of Cyber Attacks on Finance

Cyberattacks on the finance sector pose a significant concern for businesses. Understanding these cyber threats is crucial for building effective defenses and enhancing security practices in the finance sector. They include:

- Phishing attacks, which involve obtaining confidential information through false pretenses, often masquerade as banks or financial organizations.
- Malware encrypts data and demands ransom for decryption, targeting financial organizations with crucial data and the ability to pay.
- Ransomware is a type of malware that restricts system access by locking the screen or files until a ransom is paid. Modern cryptoransomware families encrypt specific file types and force users to pay the ransom via specific online payment methods for a decryption key.
- Mobile network operator fraud involves Telco employees stealing money from customers' wallets, unauthorized transfers, and collaborating with other fraudsters to swap SIM cards. This type of fraud typically involves unauthorized manipulation of a customer's account.
- Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks disrupt online banking services and trading platforms, causing operational and reputational damage.
- Insider threats, where an insider has access to systems and data, can lead to data breaches, fraud, or theft of sensitive financial information.

- Man-in-the-middle (MitM) attacks intercept communication between two parties to steal data, stealing during online banking sessions or intercepting financial transactions, perpetuating theft or fraud.
- SIM-swap fraud is a scam where scammers exploit two-factor authentication weaknesses to access personal accounts. They trick victims into activating a SIM card, giving them control over their phone number. This allows them to redirect calls and texts to their device, bypassing the victim's phone.

3.4 How to Protect the Financial Organization?

Various methods exist to safeguard financial institutions by implementing a strong security framework. Nevertheless, businesses must possess a comprehensive understanding of each approach and its elements. For a better understanding, here are several methods that financial institutions can use to enhance their security posture:

- Multi-factor authentication is a method that requires multiple ways to verify an individual before accessing sensitive systems or data, making unauthorized access to the financial system more difficult.
- Regular security audits and penetration testing are essential practices that require frequent assessments of the security infrastructure to identify vulnerabilities.
- Employee education and awareness programs help employees recognize cyber threats and enhance their awareness about their roles in ensuring the organization's cybersecurity.
- Encrypting sensitive data, whether at rest or in transit, using strong encryption protocols ensures that it remains unreadable and unusable to unauthorized entities, making it a common and widely used method by financial organizations to protect against cyberattacks.
- The Zero Trust Security Model, based on the "never trust, always verify" rule, presumes that no user or system requires implicit trust and necessitates verification from any party attempting to access network resources.
- Regular updates and patch management are crucial for maintaining a strong security posture, as cybercriminals often exploit vulnerabilities in outdated software, requiring regular updates to all systems and software.
- Incident Response Plan: The plan involves creating and evaluating an enterprise-wide strategy for reducing cyber incidents, including specific response activities to mitigate

threats, minimize damage, and restore systems to operational status following an actual or suspected attack.

3.5 Best Practices for Finance Cyber Security

The increasing complexity of cyber threats poses a significant challenge to the security of finance organizations' sensitive data and information, necessitating the adoption of best practices to effectively protect these organizations. Among the optimal practices are:

1. The multi-layer security approach, which includes firewalls, intrusion-detection systems, anti-malware, and regular security audits, offers comprehensive protection against various cyber threats.
2. The Data-Centric Security Model prioritizes core data protection over outer layers, classifying data based on sensitivity, enforcing restricted access controls, and encrypting both at rest and moving data in transit.
3. Regular risk assessments are crucial for organizations to identify potential vulnerabilities, evaluate the quality of existing security measures, and prioritize areas for improvement in their cyber security strategy.
4. Implement robust identity and access management by implementing multi-factor authentication, regular review and updating of user access rights, and monitoring unusual login activities to control access to sensitive systems and data.
5. Engender a Security-Aware Culture: The strategy involves regular training programs, phishing simulations, and clear communication of security policies to ensure employees understand their role in protecting the organization's cybersecurity.
6. Implement a Vendor Risk Management Program to assess and monitor the security practices of third-party vendors accessing your systems or data, ensuring strict security requirements, regular patch installation, and regular audits to minimize supply chain attacks.
7. Continuous Monitoring and Threat Intelligence: The system utilizes an advanced monitoring tool set and threat intelligence feeds to detect and respond to security incidents promptly, ensuring swift identification and rectification before they spread.

Cyber security is crucial in the finance sector for modern financial services delivery, as it addresses various cyber threats and challenges. It involves securing sensitive financial information, ensuring business continuity, and ensuring compliance with the law, all of which are vital for the industry's success.

4 Methodology

This study uses a mixed methods approach to investigate the economic implications of cybersecurity threats on Nigeria's financial systems and digital economies. The study focuses on Nigeria's cybersecurity challenges and strategies through interviews with key stakeholders and a review of existing literature. It uses a SWOT analysis, comparative analysis, and economic impact assessment to evaluate Nigeria's digital and financial systems. We use content analysis, correlation, and regression analysis to pinpoint gaps in Nigeria's cybersecurity framework and examine the connection between cyber incidents and economic indicators. The study primarily focuses on Nigeria, but it also draws global insights. However, its limitations include potential issues with data availability and the challenge of quantifying indirect costs such as trust erosion.

5 Analysis and Discussion

Cybersecurity is crucial for maintaining economic and financial stability, as a breach or hack of a Central Bank, Ministry of Finance, or large commercial bank could cause significant financial harm to stakeholders. A 2019 survey by 300 global CEOs identified the lack of cybersecurity as the single greatest threat to the global economy over the next decade. Cyberattacks have a significant impact on the global economy, with an estimated global cost of cybercrime reaching $8 trillion in 2023, larger than the national economies of all but two countries. Cybercrime is expected to continue growing, with projections of $23.84 trillion by 2027 (Nwakalor, 2023).

Ransomware remains a significant threat to information security globally and in the META region. In 2022, the average cost of a ransomware attack was US$4.54 million, with Kaspersky's solutions detecting over 74.2 million attempted attacks. In H1 2023, Nigeria saw a 7% increase in ransomware attack attempts against individual and corporate users compared to H1 2022. In Q2 2023, there was a 2% increase in ransomware attacks compared to Q2 2022. Ransomware attackers target various organizations, from healthcare and educational institutions to service providers and industrial enterprises. LockBit, one of the world's most prolific ransomware groups, remained in the top five at the beginning of 2023. Kaspersky Endpoint Security for Business, Kaspersky Small Office Security, and Kaspersky Internet Security have demonstrated 100% effectiveness against ransomware attacks in Advanced Threat Protection Test assessments by AV-TEST (Kaspersky, 2023).

5.1 Economic Implications of Cybersecurity Threats

Cybersecurity threats have profound economic implications, particularly in vulnerable financial systems and digital economies such as Nigeria's. These implications include:

1. **Direct Costs:**

- Financial Losses: Ransomware attacks in Nigeria resulted in significant financial losses, with an average ransomware recovery cost of $3.43 million per attack in 2021, leading many organizations to resort to ransom payments to regain access to critical data (Ladipo, 2022).
- Fines and Regulatory Penalties: Organizations failing to adhere to data protection and cybersecurity standards, such as Nigeria's Data Protection Regulation, may face significant penalties.
- Litigation Costs: Cyberattacks often lead to lawsuits, especially if customer data is compromised, which can result in additional legal fees and settlements.
- Increased Costs: Businesses and governments face escalating cybersecurity expenses, including investments in prevention, detection, and recovery.
- Operational Downtime: Attacks disrupt banking and payment systems, reducing productivity and hindering financial transactions.

2. **Indirect Costs**

- Reputational Damage: Cyberattacks can damage public trust in organizations, especially in financial systems, leading to reduced customer retention and difficulty in attracting new clients.
- Erosion of Consumer Trust: Cyberattacks are causing a decline in consumer adoption of digital platforms, hindering the growth of digital economies and financial inclusion initiatives.
- Reduced Investor Confidence: Investors may view organizations or regions with high cybersecurity risks as unstable, leading to reduced investments and funding opportunities. For example, Nigeria's increasing ransomware attacks in 2023 could deter foreign investors (Guardian Nigeria, 2022).
- Impact on Foreign Investment: A perception of weak cybersecurity discourages foreign investment, limiting economic growth potential.
- Financial Inclusion Risks: Cyber threats disproportionately affect underserved populations, undermining efforts to expand digital access.

- Macroeconomic Instability: Cyberattacks targeting critical financial infrastructure could destabilize national markets.

5.2 Impact on Financial Systems

A financial system is a network of institutions like banks, insurance companies, and stock exchanges that facilitate the exchange of funds at firm, regional, and global levels. It involves borrowers, lenders, and investors exchanging funds to finance projects, pursue returns on assets, and establish rules and practices for financing (Ihugba, 2008).The financial system can be organized through markets, central planning, or a combination of both. Financial markets involve borrowers, lenders, and investors negotiating loans and transactions, trading economic goods like cash, credit, and equity, and derivative instruments like commodity futures or stock options (Investopedia, 2024).

Cybersecurity threats significantly impact financial systems, undermining stability, disrupting operations, and eroding consumer confidence, with examples from Nigeria and globally.

- Threats to Stability: Cyberattacks on financial institutions can cause operational disruptions and financial losses, as seen in Nigeria with a 7% rise in ransomware attacks in 2023 compared to 2022. A survey by Sophos shows that 71% of Nigerian organizations were hit with ransomware in 2021, up from 22% in 2020. Despite having backups, 44% of organizations with encrypted data paid the ransom to recover their data. The proportion of victims paying the ransom continues to increase globally, despite having other options available. The survey highlights the risk associated with paying a ransom for a decryption key. The 2016 Bangladesh Bank Heist exposed vulnerabilities in global financial systems, raising concerns about the stability of digital financial networks (Ladipo, 2022).
- Disruption of Operations: Cyberattacks disrupt financial systems, causing significant downtime and disruptions in Nigeria and globally. In 2021, 71% of Nigerian organizations hit by ransomware reported days to weeks of operational downtime. The 2020 ransomware attack on Travelex, a global foreign exchange company, exemplified the operational and financial impact of cyberattacks on financial service providers worldwide.
- Erosion of Consumer Confidence: Cybersecurity threats are causing a decline in public trust in financial systems, discouraging consumers from adopting digital

financial services. Nigerian consumers are hesitant to use digital platforms due to increasing ATM spoofing, phishing, and online fraud. This reluctance hinders the adoption of fintech and digital payment systems, critical for Nigeria's financial inclusion strategy. The Equifax data breach in 2017 further impacted consumer trust.

5.3 Impact on Digital Economies

The digital economy refers to the economic activities that arise from connecting individuals, businesses, devices, data, and operations through digital technology. It encompasses online connections and transactions across multiple sectors and technologies, such as the internet, mobile technology, big data, and information and communications technology. The digital economy differs from a traditional economy due to its reliance on digital technology, online transactions, and its transformative effect on traditional industries. Digital innovations such as the internet of things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality, blockchain, and autonomous vehicles all play a part in creating a digital economy (Yasar and Pratt, 2024).

The digital economy began with the rise of e-commerce, social media, increased remote work adoption, omnichannel sales, AI and automation, digital payments and cryptocurrencies, digital entertainment, telemedicine, and the sharing economy. The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated digital economic growth, as remote work, online shopping, telemedicine, and digital entertainment became essential during lockdowns and social distancing. The digital economy continues to evolve and expand rapidly, with emerging technologies and innovations shaping its trajectory.Cybersecurity significantly impacts the digital economy in the following ways:

- Disruption of Economic Activities: Cybersecurity breaches disrupt e-commerce, digital financial services, and online transactions, affecting digital economies. Nigeria experienced a 7% increase in ransomware attacks in 2023, affecting both public and private sectors. Global examples include the WannaCry ransomware attack in 2017, which affected over 200,000 systems across 150 countries, causing significant disruptions to businesses and public services, including healthcare (Ladipo, 2022).
- Erosion of Trust in Digital Systems: Cyberattacks can damage trust in digital platforms, hindering economic growth. Nigeria's reluctance to adopt digital payment systems is a result of fraudulent activities like phishing and identity theft. The 2021 SolarWinds cyberattack, targeting U.S. government agencies and multinational

corporations, raised global concerns about digital supply chain security, impacting consumer trust and corporate partnerships.

- Hindrance to Innovation: Cybersecurity threats hinder innovation by diverting resources from protection to innovation. Nigerian startups and fintech firms must allocate significant budgets to cybersecurity, while large corporations like Facebook and Google invest billions annually in cybersecurity measures, often at the expense of innovative projects.
- Loss of Economic Opportunities: The digital economy thrives on cross-border trade, but cybersecurity risks discourage foreign investors and international collaborations. In Nigeria, perceived risks of cyberattacks deter foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria's tech ecosystem, slowing its growth potential. Globally, international financial institutions have tightened cybersecurity protocols, leading to increased costs and barriers for businesses in high-risk regions.
- Inequality in Digital Access: Cybersecurity issues in Nigeria disproportionately affect low-income users, reducing their access to digital platforms and exacerbate the digital divide, highlighting the need for improved security measures.

5.4 Case Studies

Case studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the real-world impacts of cybersecurity threats, highlighting the economic and operational risks faced by financial systems and digital economies.

Global Cases:

- The Bangladesh Bank Heist in 2016 exposed significant flaws in global financial infrastructure, leading to widespread changes in SWIFT security requirements. The incident highlighted the need for enhanced cybersecurity protocols in international banking systems and emphasized the importance of securing interbank systems and payment platforms to prevent similar large-scale breaches (Wikipedia, 2024).
- The Carbanak Group, a cybercriminal group, stole over $1 billion from financial institutions worldwide by infiltrating banking systems, manipulating transactions, and dispensing cash from ATMs remotely. This incident underscored the sophistication of cybercriminals and the need for robust internal controls and employee training to detect and prevent insider threats (Kabir, 2023).

- In 2022, several notable modern ransomware groups emerged, including Conti, LockBit, BlackCat, Black Basta, AvosLocker, and Clop. Conti, a notorious ransomware group, had the highest number of victim counts from November 2019 to March 2022, amassing 805 organizations. LockBit, a version 2.0 of the group, was known for its ability to automatically encrypt devices across Windows domains. In Q1 2022, it had the most victim organizations among double extortion ransomware groups, with 220 successfully breached. BlackCat, the first professional ransomware family written in Rust, has compromised at least 60 organizations worldwide. Black Basta has gained notoriety for its double extortion attacks on 50 organizations worldwide. AvosLocker emerged in July 2021, targeting critical infrastructure in various sectors of the US. In May 2022, AvosLocker operators were found abusing a driver file to disable antivirus solutions and scanning for Log4Shell, the Apache Log4j remote code execution vulnerability. Clop, which emerged in 2020, has progressively used double extortion strategies, targeting top executives and customers.

Nigerian-Specific Cases:

In the first half of 2023, Nigeria experienced a 7% increase in ransomware attacks, affecting both public and private sectors. These attacks encrypted critical data, demanding ransoms for its release. The consequences included significant financial losses, reputational damage, and operational downtime. The country also experienced a rise in phishing scams, causing stolen credentials and financial fraud. This has eroded trust in digital financial systems, discouraging digital payment adoption and financial inclusion. Public education campaigns are crucial to raise awareness about phishing risks. ATM spoofing and identity theft have also been reported, with consumers facing financial losses and reduced confidence in digital banking systems.

6.0 Strategies for Mitigation

To combat cybersecurity threats in Nigeria's digital economies, a comprehensive approach is needed, focusing on protecting digital infrastructures, fostering economic stability, and boosting consumer confidence, among other strategies.

- Governments and businesses must adopt robust cybersecurity frameworks that align with international standards. Nigeria's National Cyber Security Policy (NCSP) needs to be continuously updated to address emerging threats and improve incident responses. This includes developing advanced intrusion detection systems and proactive cybersecurity monitoring mechanisms to identify potential vulnerabilities.
- Effective cybersecurity requires collaboration between public and private sectors, including financial institutions, tech companies, and government agencies. Public-private partnerships (PPP) can align cybersecurity regulations with market realities and create unified responses to large-scale attacks. For instance, the Nigerian Cybersecurity Collaboration Center (NCCC) can enhance digital security and improve crisis management strategies by forming partnerships.
- Investment in digital infrastructure is crucial for financial institutions to implement AI-driven cybersecurity solutions, such as blockchain technology, to detect and mitigate threats in real-time. Modernized payment systems should also incorporate encryption technologies and multi-factor authentication to protect against unauthorized access and transaction manipulation.
- Cybersecurity incidents often stem from human error, requiring public awareness campaigns and enhanced digital literacy. In Nigeria, where the digital divide exists, understanding risks and protecting oneself is crucial. Regular training for financial institution employees can reduce insider threats and social consequences of cybersecurity threats.
- Cybersecurity insurance is a crucial part of risk management strategies, enabling financial institutions and businesses to recover financial losses from cyberattacks. It also incentivizes preventive measures, helping organizations assess their vulnerability and mitigate potential damages.
- The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) can improve cybersecurity guidelines in the financial sector, ensuring robust security standards. Compliance with global cybersecurity norms like GDPR and ISO can standardize practices across sectors, fostering a secure digital environment and ensuring regulatory bodies enforce stricter cybersecurity regulations.
- A well-defined incident response plan is crucial for financial institutions and businesses to minimize the economic impact of cyberattacks. This plan should include

strategies for data backup, system restoration, and crisis communication, and be flexible to account for different types of cyberattacks.

6.1 Conclusion

Cybersecurity threats pose a significant challenge to digital economies, especially in emerging markets like Nigeria. These risks include data breaches, ransomware, financial fraud, and system disruptions, which can disrupt financial systems, erode consumer trust, increase operational costs, and hinder economic development. To mitigate these risks, Nigeria needs to adopt comprehensive cybersecurity frameworks, invest in digital infrastructure, and foster public-private collaborations. A focus on innovation, robust cybersecurity measures, and increased consumer awareness is crucial. Addressing the digital divide and implementing regulatory reforms can enhance financial inclusion and trust in digital platforms. Nigeria's digital economy needs coordination from all sectors to thrive despite increasing risks. By safeguarding digital infrastructure and enhancing cybersecurity capabilities, Nigeria can contribute to sustainable economic growth and development.

6.2 Policy Implications and Recommendations

1. The Nigerian government should strengthen its National Cybersecurity Policy to address emerging threats and ensure compliance with international best practices. This includes enhancing provisions for financial systems, digital payment platforms, public-private collaboration, data encryption, secure payment systems, and incident reporting.
2. Nigeria needs to invest heavily in cybersecurity infrastructure to protect its digital assets, with the government and private sector collaborating to fund secure digital infrastructure expansion and incentivize advanced technologies like AI and blockchain.
3. Establishing Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for cybersecurity is crucial to ensure collaboration between government, financial institutions, tech firms, and international organizations, enabling sharing of threat intelligence and developing resilient security systems.

4. Nigeria should enhance its legal frameworks for cybercrime prevention, including new offenses like AI-driven fraud and data mining breaches, and explore the establishment of a Cybersecurity and Digital Crimes Tribunal for expedited cases.
5. The policy recommendation is to increase cybersecurity awareness and digital literacy, particularly in underserved communities, by launching national cybersecurity education programs, focusing on safe online practices, secure passwords, and phishing prevention.
6. Establish a cybersecurity insurance market to help businesses recover from cyberattack losses, with the government considering tax breaks or subsidies for companies investing in cybersecurity insurance.
7. Government should enhance cybersecurity diplomacy by collaborating with international organizations like INTERPOL and Europol, adopting global governance standards, and ensuring system compatibility with global partners for effective mitigation.

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Repositioning the National Security Paradigm in Nigeria: The Communication Matrix

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Abstract

Effective communication holds a major key to fostering national security. This study, therefore, explores the interplay between mediated communication strategies and national security in Nigeria; evaluating the extent communication has been adopted in galvanizing national security and advancing the nation. The study was framed on the Securitization Theory. Adopting a methodological synthesis review of extant literature key personality interview (KPI), data were collected from select security agencies and communication experts, which revealed that the best approach to managing national security in the country is by adequate and transparently conscientious communication approach in national security matters. The study also established that a communication gap exists between some sections of the country due to localization of the nation's media outlets. The findings further suggest that sensitive national information strategically and effectively communicated will earn public national security consciousness, and in the long run improve national security and effectively safeguard the national interests. The study made far-reaching academic and policy recommendations aimed at effective use of communication strategies to develop resilient communication inclusivity that will foster national security in the Nigerian society.

Keywords: Communication, Insecurity, National Interest, National Security, Securitization.

1.0 Introduction

The issue of security, both at national and global spheres, has continued to resonate over time and will remain so as long as the society revolves. Many discussions and debates have been generated therefrom on its indispensability in the modern time. There seems to be a convergence of opinion on the essence and relevance of security in the affairs of nations, hence earning discussions for national development (Otto & Ukpere, 2012; Ezeala *et al.*, 2023). However, the communication interplay has remained whittled down, without attracting the level of importance it deserves.

Insecurity has continued to plague Nigeria, obviously because the right strategic tools have not been adequately deployed in addressing the security challenges. Ebeh (2015) conceives that the inability to use the appropriate tools in analyzing Nigeria's national security problems accounts for the difficulties in addressing insecurity in the country. From the point of view of this scholar, any country seeking to achieve security without first evaluating the surrounding issues to the concept has a false sense of security. Some of these issues include acute food shortage, population, low level of productivity, fragile infrastructure base for technological development, inadequate and inefficient public utilities and chronic problem of unemployment. To arrive at this security Eldorado, communication holds a key.

Extant literature have explored the subject of national security as a fulcrum for Nigeria's advancement. Adeleke (2013) examined insecurity as constituting a threat to human existence in the face of economic development in Nigeria. The study evaluated the essence of security in the county and revealed that although efforts have been made to nip the hydra-headed monster on the board, its multifaceted red flags still exist in diverse dimensions and approaches. The researcher, however, did not consider the communication inclusivity in the milieu.

Ezeala & Afolalu (2022) assessed the subject of security in Nigeria from the economic point of view; examining government expenditure in the security sector as a prerequisite for achieving economic development in the country. The researchers proxy the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Human Development Index (HDI) which are strong indices for measuring national security. The conclusion of the study is that government expenditure in security has some significant effect on economic development of Nigeria. The study recommended that more spending on security be adopted in order to sustain the gains attained. However, this

study did not also look at security-communication relationship in the overall realization of this goal for national interest.

Wojunade (2021) investigated insecurity in Nigeria from the perspective of socio-economic development and identified the factors that escalate insecurity in the country to include inability of government to deliver on basic needs, poverty and marginalization of some persons, ethno-religious conflicts, politically motivated violence, unemployment, cultism and terrorism. The study ascertained that insecurity has resulted in social dislocation and population displacement, social tensions and new pattern of settlements in the country which encourages Muslims/Christians or members of certain ethnic groups to migrate to Muslim/Christian dominated areas, heightens citizenship question which encourages hostility between indigenes and settlers, general atmosphere of mistrust, fear, anxiety and frenzy, dehumanization of women and children, and also men; child abuse and neglect are used as instruments of war. It also found that deepening of hunger and poverty in the polity are rife due to inappropriate use of the right strategies to fight insecurity in the country. The researchers, therefore, recommended the creation of an economy with relevant social, economic and physical infrastructure that will engender economic advancement and scale up Nigeria's national security. Among the tools envisaged to drive such environment will be adequate and effective communication of security-driven ideals to the citizenry.

There is undisputed agreement that communication holds a major key to development; thereby according life its very essence (Akinwalere, 2023; Udeze, 2024). As national security is necessary for creating an enabling environment for national development, communication facilitates security for appropriate and necessary advancement of nations and the collective well being of their citizens. The extent to which communication has been adopted as a strategic instrument for enhancing national security in Nigeria has attracted academic inquiry (Agbo, 2024; OLusola, Olakunle & Adebano, 2017; Ali, 2013). The concern of this paper, therefore, is to examine the national security dynamics in Nigeria and the extent mediated communication has been deployed as a strategic instrument in furthering national security in the country.

Objectives of the paper

This paper examined Nigeria's national security kinesis and its interface with mediated communication in the country, specifically directed towards:

1. to establish the significance of mediated communication in the attainment of national security in Nigeria.

2. ascertain the extent mediated communication has been deployed in the overall national interest for the attainment of national security in Nigeria.

3. determine the capacity of mediated communication in repositioning national security in the Nigerian state.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Elucidation

The need to clarify some key and recurrent terms in the paper suffices.

a. Security

Security is a social construct, framed from man-made activities which arise from ideas, imagination, belief system and perceptions. It is relatively defined in connection with different societies and different means. Security is a multinational concept that involves an ordered human existence, free from threats or fears of danger, or harm to life, liberty and property (Akpura-Aja, 2007). Aja observes that security is not all about what gun can do, but the place of the other non-military variable in the promotion and preservation of tolerant and governable system.

Security is geographically bound. That is; what constitutes a security issue in one environment may not attract much security (or any) discussion in another. Consequently, security is dynamic- ever changing with time and space. In a true sense of the word, security is what the different world views ascribe to it- values, beliefs and positionality. An activity is regarded as a security issue only if has been analyzed and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thereby labeling it as security which a relevant agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means (Buzan et al. 1998). Security may be seen from a negative perspective; a failure to deal with issues of normal politics (Waever, 1995).

b. National Security

In the earlier time, different meanings were ascribed to the concept of national security. Brennan (1961) opines that national security connotes the protection of national survival, while Ray (1987) is of the view that national security should be understood in terms of the desire and capacity for self-defence. To Ochoche (1998) national security focuses on the

amassment of military armament, personnel and expenditure. These definitions have been whittled down with the contemporary events around the globe. According to Igbogo (2015), the concept has expanded to include international economics, long term goals of national development and reconciliation, thereby giving a contemporary meaning thereto. Asad (2007) asserts that national security cannot be narrowed down to exclusively military term without encompassing socio-economic and cultural aspects of nationhood, development and modernization, and national integration. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1994) looked at national security from the human security perspective to include such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. Essentially, national security must be related to the presence of peace, safety, happiness and the protection of human and physical resources or the absence of crisis, threats to human injury among others. National security is not a discrete or measurable variable, and therefore cannot be described holistically in quantitative terms.

Understanding the concept and its intricacies is critical, not only in an attempt to define the term and its functions in the society, but also in mobilizing capacity and obligations for a guaranteed national interest and values. Consequently, the Nigerian National Defence Policy states that national security is the aggregate of the security interests of the citizenry, communities, ethnic groups and the socio-political entities that exist in the country. The national security interests of Nigeria are defined in terms of strengthening the Federal Republic of Nigeria, advancing its interests and objectives, containing instability, controlling crime, eliminating corruption, enhancing genuine development, progress and growth of individuals and groups; and improving the welfare and well being and quality of life of every Nigeria citizen. This paper adopts this latter definition of the concept, because the security of every nation is driven by the people: when the citizens' well being is adequately addressed and the people do not feel so alienated from governance and the events in their society, security is guaranteed while national security is projected. The paper also believes that national security is not wholesomely embodied in the amassment of arms as Ochoche (1998) submits.

c. Communication

The society is dynamic- ever changing with time and increasingly becoming more complex. The power of communication in such evolving society, therefore, cannot be underestimated. Communication connects humans with the society; it is a way of life and manifests in various

forms. Communication entails sharing meanings in different contexts. Onwe (2019) describe communication simply as an act of conveying intended meanings from one individual or group to another through the use of mutually understood signs and language rules.

Communication exists in diverse forms. Intrapersonal communication exists within oneself in the form of internal vocalization or reflective thinking (Onwe, 2019). It is triggered by some internal or external stimuli and manifests in the individual talking to no one but self.

There is the interpersonal communication where an individual exchanges information, feelings and meanings with another through verbal or non-verbal relationship. This could be through face-to-face, planned or unplanned interaction. It could amount to the use of technological devices, however, involving two parties or individuals. Because it deals with personal relationships between individuals, it is prone to giving rise to conflicts, particularly when common understanding is lacking in the parties to the communication.

Group communication is another form of communication. This form of communication is a step higher than the interpersonal context (Udeze, 2024). Here, group dynamics play significant roles where communication is between a group and another which have common grounds for sharing communication messages and meanings.

The next is mass communication. This is a form of communication where messages are transmitted to a large heterogeneous, amorphous and scattered audience using the instrumentality of the mass media. Oso & Tijani-Adenle (2014) describe this form of communication as the mediated communication. Bennett & Entman (2001), cited in Oso & Tijani-Adenle describe mediated communication as arising from news programmes to entertainment fares, serving important functions in the contemporary society, and providing good and bad information. It offers engaging and stupefying perspectives on social issues, stimulates conversations among friends or between strangers, and offers a selection of political, scientific, and socially authoritative or dubious sources that audiences may accept or reject in thinking about issues. The channels for mediated communication include the print (newspaper and magazine) and broadcast (radio and television) genres of the mass media. This form of communication has been used overtime across the nations of the world in communicating national security issues to the members of the society.

2.2 Perspectives of Nigeria's National Security Kinesis

Over the years, the Nigerian national security landscape has been plagued by issues which tend to agitate the root of the nation. Across the length and breadth of the country, issues

ranging from politics, religion, corruption, food security, education, crime (particularly armed robbery, kidnapping, murder, rape, arson, ethnic, terrorism, etc), energy crises, and several others continue to resonate. National security, when appropriately harnessed promotes the national interests and shared values of any nation. The global, regional and domestic security environments have endlessly questioned the essence of national interests in the evolving national security dynamics, because national interests begin with the well being of the people. On the other hand, quality and functional well being of the people promotes national security. For example, the 1990 National Security Strategy of the United States enumerated the country's core national interests conventionally to include the survival of the U.S. democratic values and institutions; economic prosperity; and a stable and secure world, fostering freedom, human rights, and democratic institutions (Chin, Skinner & Yoo, 2023). These promote the well being of the people, thus creating enabling environment for national security in the country.

National interests are the shared values, goals and aspirations of the citizenry of every state which constitute the hallmark of national security. Akunyili (2012) cited Collins (1990) and agrees that national security encompasses political, economic, social, military, psychological and technological resources that are manipulated with the assistance of several power variables to achieve national interests, objectives, policies and commitment of the state. National interests hold a strong key to the achievement of national security in any country.

National security is the *primus interperas* of governance benefits to the citizens in any country, particularly under a democratic governance. According to Akpuru-Aja & Ibe (2012), democratic governance exists in an environment where there is efficient and effective electoral body, conduct of free, fair and credible periodic elections, provision and sustenance of indigenous industries predicated on local talents and provision of social services and maintenance of existing infrastructural amenities, goods schools and sound education system *that promotes research and development,* electricity and employment opportunities by those entrusted with the peoples' mandate to represent them at all the strata of governance. There should also be equal rights, justice, equity and fair play. Onah (2005) adds that in such a political climate, common will (national interests) override personal will/interest, in order therefore, to promote national security.

Recent events in Nigeria have continued to question the concept of national security in the overriding interest of the nation. A balance between common will and personal will seems

quite difficult, and exists in the abstract in Nigeria. Issues touching on national security in Nigeria continue to beleaguer the Nigerian state and tend to tilt the national narratives. From the political sphere to security, ethno-religious perspective, socio-economic, education, healthcare, agriculture, national identity and citizenry consciousness, education, and several other vital areas of nationhood, issues revolving around national security and national interest, on the one hand, and common will and personal will on the other continue to revolve.

There are several other issues that have agitated the national security foundations of Nigeria in the recent time. For example, the COVID-19 palliative crises across the states of the nation in 2020, the #EndSARS protest of 2020 and the #EndBadGovernanceInNigeria protest of August 2024 which was organized due to economic hardship and bad governance the citizens experience, and of course questionable electoral victories in the country. There have also been the trade union strikes (Nigerian Labour Congress crises), the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strikes, human rights abuses, kidnapping, armed robbery, rape, corruption, the Niger Delta militancy, the separatist groups' agitations, and many other issues bordering on Nigeria's national security dynamics.

Although these issues may seem not to red-flag national insecurity at the beginning, but agents' speech act, policy management, actions and inactions of people around the issues gave them security dispositions. We all saw the COVID-19 palliatives crises which emanated from hunger and search for food among the citizenry. The #EndSARS protest is still fresh in our memories which began from the quest for human to be treated as humans indeed by security operatives in the country. The country is currently riddled with terrorism- from the north to the south poles of the country.

2.3 The Role of Mediated Communication in National Security

Communication is essential for the advancement of any society. No society; no matter how advanced or primitive, can do without it because it is the fulcrum on which societal advancement revolves. Mediated communication, as adopted in this paper, connotes the newspaper perspective of the mass media communication. As Hynds (1972) cited in Ogbuoshi (2010) posits, the newspaper has been the society's primary instrument of mass communication, and the logbook of human affairs than any other means of communication. The mass media function as information hub for the society- playing surveillance role and mirroring the society to itself; correlating, interpreting and socializing the different sections

of the society; transmitting cultural values; entertaining its audience; and mobilizing the society members for development.

Outside performing the enumerated functions which make it a form of the mass media, the newspaper specifically functions as an opinion vehicle by providing a forum for expression of individual societal member's feelings and suggestions, educates and informs the public on the events in the society, entertains them, plays socialization function, serves crusading/agitation function, mobilizes the members of the society to participate in national development, serves as a propaganda instrument (particularly in developing countries of the third world), and functions as ombudsman to the society (Ogbuoshi, 2010).

Newspaper functions as a journal of record and opinion (Udoakah, 2000). As a journal of record, the events of society are recorded daily, weekly, or monthly, depending on their frequency, however, in carefully framed summaries. Newspaper began by serving the needs of political groups who used it to propagate their ideals (Udoakah, 1996). With the passage of time, newspapers have developed to serving all classes of the society with divergent opinions and in various ways. The subjects of coverage in the newspaper transcend politics to include all issues that revolve around the humans in the society.

Newspaper is an essential tool for projecting national security issues, putting into consideration the avalanche of functions it performs in the society. It enables the populace to understand the issues that affect them as members of the society by providing them the news of the day (Agbanu, 2013). It provides detailed information on subjects, which the broadcast media find difficult to do.

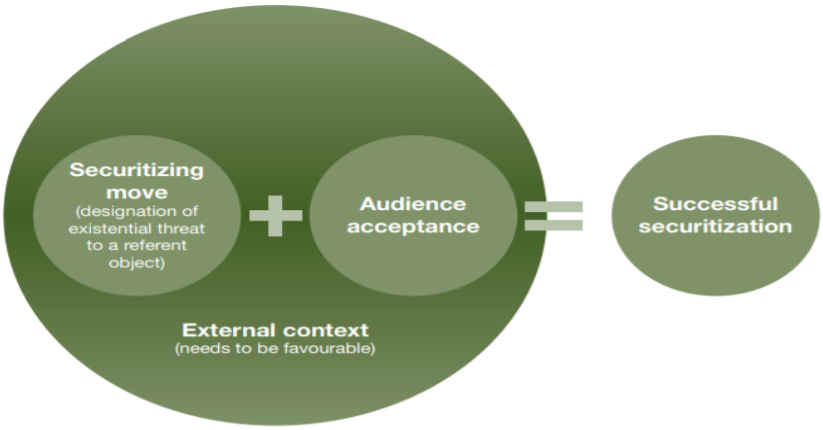
In Nigeria, newspaper has been used to promote national security, overtly or covertly. Daily reports on newspaper pages indicate that Nigerian newspapers are agents of social change, advancing social well being of the citizenry through the reportage of events that took place in the society. That the Nigerian press has shown divisiveness in reporting some events, obviously questioning the credibility and objective ethics of the journalism profession. Sections of the newspaper industry, by their gatekeeping or framing create gaps in adequately communicating the events of the day. This has created some level of bias and credibility question thereby leaving rooms for inadequacy in message communication to the public, and arousing doubts in the minds of the reading public (Ogbonda, 2003), particularly on national security issues.

Wali (2003) observes that the media which ought to be a major stake holder in ensuring the security of the state sometimes trivialize the very sensitive issue by the way such issues are reported. According to the scholar, the Nigerian press is still growing into maturity, hence issues that affect the general well-being of the people of the country but which can cause disaffection and disunity should be de-emphasized or played down. He however noted that the reverse has been the case in many Nigerian media publications wishing to make quick sales on the platform of sensationalism and journalistic scoops.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The paper is framed on the Securitization Theory. Securitization theory is traceable to the 1998 works of Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde- *Security: A new framework for analysis* at the Copenhagen School, London in which they described securitization as a process in which an actor identifies a threat and by doing this is able to justify and then call for exceptional measures to address the threat (Buzan & Waever, 2003). Securitization theory has a twofold objective (Chen & Gao, 2022). First, it examines how specific issues move from the category of 'normal' politics to the realm of security wherein the political actors can bypass normal discourse and procedure. Second, securitization theory 'isolated the mechanisms whereby such a move was enacted' (Sperling and Webber 2016). The process of securitization is triggered by a speech act—namely a securitizing move 'through which an inter-subjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and to enable a fall for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat (Buzan & Waever, 2003).

Securitization takes place under three conditions when (1) an actor decides something is an existential threat; (2) audience accepts it; and (3) external context helps- right timing, it seems like a realistic threat for the audience.



Successful securitization of issues. (**Source**: Nyman, 2018, 103).

For an issue to be securitized, it must emanate from military security, political security, economic security, societal security and environmental security. Each of these has broad-based implications on the well being of the populace and development.

Securitization theory shows that national security policy is not a natural given, but carefully designated by politicians and decision-makers (actors and agents). Issues are constituted as extreme security issues to be dealt with urgently when they have been labeled as 'dangerous', 'menacing', 'threatening', 'alarming' and so on by a 'securitizing actor' who has the social and institutional power to move the issue 'beyond politics'. So, security issues are not simply 'out there' but rather must be articulated as problems by securitizing actors. Calling hunger and poverty 'threat to national security', for instance, shifts such matters from a low priority national concern to a high priority issue that requires action, hence attempt must be made to provide food for the people before their anger is vented on the society. Securitization theory challenges traditional approaches to security and asserts that issues are not essentially threatening in themselves; rather, it is by referring to them as 'security' issues that they become security problems.

The main argument of securitization theory is that an issue becomes a security issue not because something constitutes an objective threat to the state (or another referent object), but rather because an actor has defined something as existential threat to some object's survival. By doing so, the actor has claimed the right to handle the issue through extraordinary means to ensure the referent object's survival. Security is thus a self-referential practice; that is, an issue becomes a security issue only by being labeled as one. However, the fact that security is a social and inter-subjective construct does not mean that everything can become easily securitized. In order to successfully securitize an issue, a securitizing actor has to perform a securitizing move (present something as an existential threat to a referent object) which has to be accepted by a targeted audience. Only by gaining acceptance from the audience, the issue can be moved above the sphere of normal politics, allowing elites to break normal procedures and rules and implement emergency measures.

Securitization is a process. It emanates from an actor(s) (likely political actors) identifying and justifying a threat and then call for exceptional measures to address them. The Copenhagen School examined the concept of security from three dimensions- national, regional and global perspectives, specifically as it affects countries of the world.

Securitization revolves around the internal dynamics of countries (Beidollahkhani and Rahmani, 2023), which rubs off on the wellbeing of the citizenry.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted qualitative approach to data gathering. Although this approach tilts towards survey design which is primary-data-driven, knowledge-sharing method was used to generate information from security experts and communication professionals. Consequently descriptive and explanation-building approach to interview was adopted. Expert views of senior serving and retired security officers in the nation's security architecture and communication teachers and practitioners were obtained through interviews. To avoid response homogeneity, the researchers adopted diversified demographic characteristics in selecting the respondents to the study. Purposive sampling method was employed to select five each of security operatives, mass communication lecturers in universities and communication professionals in the newspaper industry. They were all senior personnel in their different areas of calling. To ensure diversities in the process of selection, the research effort considered their years of practice, job status and placement. Attention was also given to gender balance and age disparity. These heterogeneous characteristics enabled the researchers to maximize response diversities of data accrued from the interviews. Odoemelam & Clofford (2023) are in agreement with Braun & Clarke (2006) and upheld that this approach is suitable for a study of this kind.

Structured interview schedule was designed to elicit responses from the respondents in a Key Personality Informant (KPI) format. Although Kashuulpolwa-Malwa & Akpabio (2022) adopted Key Informant Interview (KII) to obtain data for their study on the assessment of government-media relations in Namibia, this approach takes the same process with KPI.

Three key questions were posed to the interviewees and the summaries of their responses are collectively analyzed as depicted here under.

Question 1: Is mass media communication of any significance in the attainment of national security in Nigeria?

Question 2: To what extent has mass media messages been adopted as a strategic instrument to enhance national interest for the attainment of national security in Nigeria?

Question 3: How effective is mass media communication in the effort to reposition national security in the Nigerian state?

4.0 Findings

Question-one which sought to establish the significance of mass media communication in the attainment of national security in Nigeria. There is a convergence of opinions that communication, especially media messages are quite essential for the advancement of the nation security. Notwithstanding, the respondents advocated for strategic communication and enjoined the mass media to embrace media objectivity in their practice so as to earn credibility from the public and promote national trust among the diverse multi-ethnic groups in the cuntry. Specifically, the communication teachers admonished the practitioners to make the professional ethics their watchword and not practice divisive journalism. The media practitioners, however, advised that national security should not be strictly defined from the perspective of military operations, but with communication inclusivity because the people must ask questions and look forward to obtaining answers about their well-being and the society in which they live.

The second question was posed to ascertain the extent to which mass media messages have been adopted as a strategic instrument to arouse national interest for the attainment of national security in Nigeria. There is a sharp division of opinions to this question. While the interviewees agreed that the importance of communication in advancing national interest cannot be whittled down, they agreed that the media are divided on their use to strategically position Nigeria for national security. Majority of the respondents attested that the media are polarized in the pursuit of personal interest above national interest, at times pursuing parochial interests above national interest. Some of the respondents pointed out that the concentration of the Nigerian press in the south-west axis of Nigeria is not a good omen for the country. They, therefore, called for a decentralized media positioning for a broad-based national coverage that will report larger segments of the country. It is envisaged, according to the respondents, that this will help educate the public on the demands of national security in their own interest and for the gain of the entire nation.

The third question was posed to determine how effective mass media communication could be used and applied to reposition national security in Nigeria. Respondents agreed that communication holds a vital key by serving as a platform for equipping and mobilizing the people for national security consciousness. With this level of consciousness, it was agreed by

the respondents, that a new national security consciousness will be cultivated that will increase citizens' demand and hold on accountability and checks on power excesses from people holding public trust in the management of state affairs.

5.0 Conclusion

It is unarguable that communication holds a vital key to the attainment of national security in Nigeria. The quantity and quality of communication appropriately disseminated to the public trough the media channels, particularly the newspaper genre, goes a long way to determine how they react to national security issues over time. The media, as an instrument of change stands tall in message dissemination on national issues, especially in national security. It is a relevant instrument to galvanize the people towards understanding the tenets and demands of national security in a world of security uncertainties. The Nigerian press, therefore, remains indispensable in this function, particularly in the quest to communicate national security ideals to the people.

5.1 Recommendations

Rising from the findings of this paper, the following recommendations suffice:

1. The media should adopt objective national security communication strategy through their reportage in order to earn credibility from the public that will promote national security.

2. National security should not wholesomely be defined from the perspective of military operations, but with communication inclusivity for public education and awareness. This is necessary because when the people are conscious of national security, they will be able to contribute to its attainment.

3. The Nigerian media landscape should be decentralized by encouraging broad-based community press for effective national security coverage that will report larger segments of the country. This will help to create awareness and build national security consciousness in the people, both urban and rural populace.

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A Review: Factors That Influenced Teenage Participation in the Recent End Bad Governance Protests in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The protests that took place in Nigeria from the 1st to the 10th of August in 2024, known as the End Bad Governance protests, represented a pivotal moment in the country's contemporary history. Of particular note was the active participation of adolescents in these events. Unfortunately, this tumultuous protest resulted in the tragic deaths of more than 20 demonstrators and left nearly 200 others wounded. The Nigerian security forces' attempts to manage the initially peaceful protests were met with fierce resistance, leading to sporadic outbreaks of violence, looting, and the destruction of both public and private property by certain young individuals who were allegedly incentivized to disrupt the demonstrations. Despite the security agencies' efforts to regain control by apprehending and detaining numerous suspected protesters, who were promptly brought before the courts, the situation remained tense. This review article delves into the various factors that influenced the involvement of teenagers in these protests, focusing on social, political, economic, and digital influences. Through a qualitative analysis of existing literature, media accounts, and sociopolitical theories, valuable insights are gleaned regarding the motivations and challenges faced by adolescents during this period of activism. The findings highlight that a confluence of socio-economic grievances, political disenchantment, and the pervasive impact of social media played pivotal roles in mobilizing teenage participation in the protests.

Keywords: End Bad Governance, Protest, Teenage, Influence.

INTRODUCTION

Teenage participation in protests against bad governance has emerged as a significant socio-political phenomenon in recent years. The engagement of young people in these activities reflects their awareness and response to issues such as corruption, inequality, and lack of accountability within governmental systems. Various factors shape this participation, ranging

from social media influence to educational background, and understanding these elements is crucial for addressing the broader implications of youth activism (Joyce & Hodge, 2020).

Social media serves as one of the most potent catalysts for teenage activism. Platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok not only disseminate information quickly but also foster communities among young activists. Research indicates that social media can empower adolescents by providing a space for self-expression and collective organization, which enhances their propensity to participate in protests (Boulianne, 2019). This digital mobilization is especially relevant in contexts where traditional media may not adequately cover issues of governance, thus galvanizing youth engagement in social justice movements (Bennett &Segerberg, 2013).

Another critical factor influencing teenage protests is the educational environment. Schools and universities often serve as breeding grounds for social consciousness, instilling values of civic responsibility and social justice in students. According to research by Hart (2016), educational institutions that encourage critical thinking and civic engagement significantly increase the likelihood of students participating in protests. Moreover, peer influence within educational settings can amplify the desire to join such movements, as adolescents often seek to align with their social circles (Meyer &Tarrow, 1998).

Family background also plays a pivotal role in shaping teenagers' views on governance and political participation. Families that discuss political issues and encourage civic engagement tend to raise children who are more likely to participate in protests. A study by Flanagan and Galston (2001) emphasizes that parental involvement in political discourse promotes a sense of agency among teenagers, equipping them with the confidence to challenge perceived injustices.

The End Bad Governance protests in Nigeria marked a significant moment in the nation’s contemporary history, particularly with the active involvement of teenagers. The protests in emerged as a significant response to years of poor governance, corruption, and economic hardship. This movement, garnered national and international attention, due to high number of deaths and injuries recorded during the unrest. This review paper aims to review existing literature and analyze the various factors that influenced teenage participation in these protests, focusing on social, political, economic, and digital influences. The findings suggest that a combination of socio-economic grievances, political disillusionment, and the pervasive influence of social media played crucial roles in mobilizing teenage participation.

DISCUSSION

Factors Influencing Teenage Participation

1. Socio-Economic Conditions

One of the primary factors influencing teenage participation in the protests was the deteriorating socio-economic environment in Nigeria. Many teenagers face high levels of unemployment and lack of access to quality education. A survey by the National Bureau of Statistics (2021) indicated that youth unemployment in Nigeria reached approximately 42%, which led to widespread disillusionment among the younger population (Johnson, 2020). This harsh reality fueled a desire for change, encouraging teenagers to join the protests to demand better governance and opportunities.

2. Political Disillusionment

Teenagers in Nigeria expressed significant disillusionment with the political system, viewing it as corrupt and unresponsive to their needs. The youth's engagement in politics is often marred by a lack of representation and frequent broken promises by politicians (Olayemi, 2019). The End Bad Governance protests provided a platform for teenagers to voice their frustrations and demand accountability from their leaders. This sentiment was echoed in Interviews conducted by media outlets, where young activists articulated their disappointment with the political elite's failure to address pressing issues (Adeshola, 2021).

3. The Role of Social Media

Social media played a pivotal role in mobilizing and organizing the protests. Platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook facilitated rapid dissemination of information, allowing teenagers to connect and coordinate their efforts. Influential social media campaigns using hashtags like #EndSARS and #EndBadGovernance galvanized the youth, providing a sense of community and shared purpose (Khan, 2020). The interactive nature of social media allowed teenagers to share their stories, express their grievances, and inspire others to join the movement.

4. Peer Influence and Community Engagement

Peer influence proved to be another critical factor in encouraging teenage participation. Social interactions within communities and among friends fostered a collective identity that often propelled teenagers to participate in the protests. Participation became a social norm within certain circles, as seen by the widespread involvement of school and university students (Umar, 2021). Community engagement initiatives, including town hall meetings and youth forums, further empowered teenagers by amplifying their voices in local governance

discussions, thus increasing their resolve to participate in the larger movement (Ibrahim, 2020).

5. Ideological Motivations

Many teenagers were motivated by ideological beliefs centered on justice and human rights. The protests were not merely a reaction to bad governance but were also fueled by a desire to advocate for systemic change. Teenage activists articulated their visions for a better Nigeria, emphasizing concepts of equality, transparency, and civic responsibility. Literature indicates that young people are increasingly aligning with global movements advocating for social justice, and this ideological alignment played a crucial role in their active participation (Olojo, 2021).

Disadvantages of Youth participation in Protest

a. **Legal Consequences**

Youth protesting may face arrest or legal actions, which can lead to criminal records that impact future employment and educational opportunities (Peters, 2020).

b. **Physical Safety Risks**

There is a heightened risk of violence during protests, with youth potentially exposed to crowd-related dangers (Della Porta, 2018).

c. **Reputation and Stigmatization**

Youth participation in protests can lead to stigmatization by peers or authority figures, which can negatively affect personal and professional relationships (McAdam& Paulsen, 1993).

d. **Impact on Education and Employment**

Protests can interrupt academic schedules or job performance due to absenteeism, which can have long-term consequences (Kahne&Sporte, 2008).

e. **Emotional and Psychological Strain**

The stress of engaging in protests, especially in volatile conditions, can lead to mental health issues, including anxiety and depression (Harlow & Bridges, 2014).

f. **Risk of Radicalization**

Youth involvement in protests may attract them to extremist groups, leading to radicalization if they seek more aggressive forms of activism (Borum, 2011).

g. **Potential for Disillusionment**

Continuous engagement in protests without visible results can lead to disenchantment with civic engagement, potentially resulting in decreased participation in future social movements (Klein & Merrifield, 2017).

h. Divided Opinions

Youth may find themselves at odds with family, community leaders, or peers, creating tension and conflict that can complicate their social lives (Putnam, 2000).

CONCLUSION

The involvement of teenagers in the End Bad Governance protests in Nigeria highlights a confluence of socio-economic conditions, political disillusionment, social media influence, peer dynamics, and ideological motivations. These factors not only facilitated mobilization but also showcased the potential of teenage activism in shaping Nigeria's political landscape. Understanding these influences paves the way for future research on youth engagement in activism and governance, providing insights that could help policymakers address the concerns of Nigeria's younger generation effectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Educating youths about political process and democratic participation to empower them to engage in constructive dialogue rather protest.
- Create youth engagement platforms so that they can express their opinions and concerns about governance.
- Engage youths in community development initiatives that allow them to contribute positively to their communities
- Develop initiatives that provide job trainings, internships, and educational support to reduce economic frustrations that can tempt them into participating in protest.
- Use of social media to disseminate positive messages about governance and civic engagement, as well as countering misinformation that may incite protest.

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The effects of security challenges on the business of education and research in Nigeria

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Abstract

Every government is charged with the responsibility of securing the lives and properties of its citizen, and when this primary responsibility is not achieved; such a country would be in grave danger and stands a risk of collapse. Nigeria in the 21st century is faced with different kinds of security challenges, ranging from kidnapping, herders-farmers conflict, rape, banditry, militants or ethnic militia, assassination, ritual killings, terrorists group such as Boko-Haram among others. This study examines the effects of security problems on the business of education and research in Nigeria. The data used was generated from the secondary sources such as books, journals, periodicals, monographic seminar papers, conference papers, published and unpublished research books, magazines, and internet materials. The study adopted the social contract theory as its theoretical umbrella for analysis. Finding of the study revealed that Security challenges in Nigeria had constituted threat to not only lives and properties, but has hindered business of education and research which in turn affected and retards socio-economic development of a country. The implications of the study finding for social work profession were highlighted. It was recommended that the government should address the issues of unemployment, poverty, corruption, re-training of Nigerian security personnel to international standard as well as using modern technology in fighting insecurity.

Keywords: Education, Research, Governance, security, poverty.

Introduction

Education and research form the bedrock of societal progress, driving economic development, technological advancement, and cultural enrichment. policymakers globally have emphasized the transformative power of education and research, noting their role in fostering innovation, addressing societal challenges, and ensuring sustainable development. According to UNESCO (2021), education empowers individuals by equipping them with knowledge, skills, and values essential for personal development and active citizenship. Educated individuals are more likely to secure stable employment, reduce poverty levels, and improve their quality of life (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2018). Education also has a transformative impact on reducing inequalities, especially for marginalized groups. Evidence suggests that increased female education leads to lower child mortality rates and improved

health outcomes (King & Winthrop, 2015). The World Bank (2019) emphasizes that investment in girls' education can boost economic productivity and reduce societal disparities. Numerous studies, including those by Hanushek and Woessmann (2012), have highlighted a strong correlation between education and economic growth. Countries with higher literacy and education levels tend to experience accelerated economic development through enhanced human capital. Research on the other hand aids in the manifestation of education. For instance Research fosters innovation, leading to the development of new technologies, products, and processes that improve quality of life. For instance, biomedical research has contributed to groundbreaking treatments and vaccines, including those for COVID-19 (WHO, 2021). On the other hand,research provides policymakers with data and insights to design effective interventions. Studies in public health, education, and environmental sustainability guide governments in addressing pressing global challenges (OECD, 2015). Nations that invest in research and development (R&D) often gain a competitive edge in global markets. According to the Global Innovation Index (2023), countries with robust R&D ecosystems, such as the United States, Germany, and South Korea, consistently lead in technological and economic innovation. Universities and higher education institutions serve as hubs for research, producing knowledge that informs teaching and learning. Research-led education enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students (Altbach & Salmi, 2011). Integration of research into education prepares students for the demands of the 21st-century workforce. By engaging in research, students acquire practical skills that improve their employability and adaptability in dynamic job markets (Council of Graduate Schools, 2020). Despite their importance, education and research face significant challenges, particularly in developing countries.Insufficient investment in education and research undermines their potential. According to UNESCO (2020), many African countries allocate less than 5% of their GDP to education, far below the recommended 15-20%. In regions like Nigeria, insecurity hampers the functioning of educational institutions and disrupts research activities. Adegoke et al. (2021) highlight how conflicts and violence deter scholars and students from participating in academic endeavors. Insecurity has become a significant impediment to education and research in Nigeria, with devastating consequences for national development. The prevalence of insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and other forms of violence has disrupted the functioning of schools and universities, hindered academic research, and undermined the progress of the

country's intellectual capital. This review examines existing literature on how insecurity affects education and research in Nigeria, exploring the social contract theory to explain the course of insecurity in Nigeria.

Impact of Insecurity on Education in Nigeria

Insecurity has affected Nigeria's education sector in multiple ways, including school closures, reduced enrollment, and declining quality of learning.For instance, the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast has led to widespread destruction of educational infrastructure. Okonkwo et al. (2020) reported that over 1,500 schools were destroyed between 2009 and 2018, displacing thousands of students and teachers. Similarly, kidnapping incidents, such as the Chibok (2014) and Kankara (2020) abductions, have created an atmosphere of fear, leading to the closure of schools in high-risk areas (Adamu & Zuwaira, 2021).Insecurity has significantly reduced school enrollment, particularly in conflict-affected regions. Reports from UNICEF (2021) indicate that 10.5 million children are out of school in Nigeria, with insecurity being a primary cause. Female students are disproportionately affected, as cultural norms and safety concerns discourage parents from sending girls to school in insecure areas (Edeh et al., 2022).Teachers in insecure regions face risks of violence and kidnapping, leading many to flee to safer areas or abandon the profession entirely. This exacerbates the problem of teacher shortages and reduces the quality of education. Ugwumba and Odom (2020) highlight that insecurity has made it difficult to retain qualified teachers in rural and conflict-affected regions.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on Social Contract Theory developed by Thomas Hobbes in the year (1981). This theory emphasizes the role of the state in ensuring security, law, and order. The theory states that citizens agree to surrender certain freedoms to the government in exchange for protection of their lives, property, and well-being. When the government fails to meet these obligations, the social contract breaks down, leading to disorder and insecurity.In Nigeria, this breakdown can be seen in the following ways: The Nigerian government's inability to provide adequate security, particularly in regions affected by terrorism, banditry, and communal violence, undermines the social contract; Embezzlement of funds meant for security, poor resource allocation, and favoritism weaken the capacity of the police and military to combat insecurity effectively. For example, soldiers have been reported to lack

adequate equipment to fight insurgents, reducing morale and effectiveness; The lack of accountability for acts of violence or corruption encourages further criminal activities, as perpetrators feel emboldened; Nigeria's high unemployment rates, especially among the youth, leave many feeling disenfranchised. This creates fertile ground for recruitment into violent groups like Boko Haram, militant groups in the Niger Delta, and banditry in northern states; Regional disparities in wealth and development create resentment among marginalized communities, leading to agitation and violence. For example, oil-rich Niger Delta communities have long complained of exploitation without corresponding benefits.

Social work's person-in-environment approach allows practitioners to address the multifaceted effects of insecurity on education and research. By advocating for systemic change, empowering communities, and providing direct support to individuals, social workers can play a pivotal role in mitigating the impact of insecurity and fostering sustainable development in Nigeria. Collaboration between social workers, policymakers, educators, and communities is essential to achieving lasting solutions.Social work, as a profession rooted in advocating for social justice, equity, and the well-being of individuals and communities, is uniquely positioned to address the multifaceted challenges posed by insecurity to education and research in Nigeria. Insecurity disrupts access to education, diminishes the quality of learning, impairs research activities, and undermines national development. However, through a holistic and multidimensional approach, social workers can contribute significantly to mitigating these impacts.

At the individual level, social workers provide vital psychosocial support to students, educators, and researchers affected by violence and displacement. This support addresses the psychological and emotional toll of insecurity, enabling individuals to rebuild their lives and reengage with education and research. Social workers also ensure that marginalized groups, such as displaced children, women, and those in underserved communities, receive the resources and opportunities they need to access education and rebuild disrupted livelihoods.
At the community level, social workers are catalysts for empowerment, mobilizing local resources, fostering community ownership of security measures, and facilitating conflict resolution and peacebuilding initiatives. By working with local leaders, parents, and educators, they help create safer environments for learning and research, even in high-risk regions.

At the systemic level, social workers advocate for inclusive and sustainable policy reforms. Their evidence-based recommendations can influence policies that address the root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, unemployment, and social inequality. They also play a critical role in ensuring that interventions—such as the Safe Schools Initiative, increased funding for education, and digital learning innovations—are effectively implemented and tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations.

Social work's ability to bridge gaps between government agencies, NGOs, and local communities is essential for fostering collaboration and maximizing the impact of interventions. Social workers' skills in advocacy, research, and capacity building enable them to promote resilience and ensure the continuity of education and research despite challenges.

In essence, social workers serve as agents of change, promoting both immediate relief and long-term solutions to the insecurity crisis. By addressing the individual, community, and systemic dimensions of insecurity's effects, they contribute to restoring the integrity of Nigeria's education and research sectors. This, in turn, supports national development by cultivating a more educated, innovative, and resilient society. To fully harness the potential of social work in this regard, collaboration with policymakers, educators, and international partners is imperative.

Conclusion

According to Social Contract Theory, insecurity in Nigeria arises from the government's failure to fulfill its responsibilities to the people, including ensuring safety, equitable resource distribution, and justice. This breakdown leads to frustration, lawlessness, and a loss of faith in state institutions. To restore the social contract and address insecurity in Nigeria, it is therefore imperative that Nigerian Government does the following;

1. Strengthen institutions and governance.
2. Address economic inequalities.
3. Promote justice and accountability.
4. Foster national unity and reduce divisive politics

Conclusion

The literature review reveals that insecurity poses severe challenges to Nigeria's education and research sectors, with far-reaching implications for national development. While efforts have been made to address these challenges, significant gaps remain, particularly in terms

of policy implementation and resource allocation. Future research should focus on innovative solutions, such as leveraging technology and fostering international partnerships, to mitigate the adverse effects of insecurity on education and research in Nigeria.

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF CROSS-FERTILIZATION AND INFILTRATION OF FOREIGN CULTURE ON INDIGENOUS ARTS IN AFRICA

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Abstract

Cross-fertilization, or cultural exchange, has been a driving force in the development of art throughout history. Indigenous arts, in particular, have been shaped by interactions with foreign cultures, resulting in both positive and negative consequences. This empirical study investigates the impact of cross-fertilization and infiltration of foreign culture on indigenous arts and examines the ways in which African indigenous art has been influenced by foreign cultures. Using a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys, interviews, and case studies, the research examines the effects of cultural exchange on the traditional art forms and expressions of indigenous communities in Africa. Findings reveal that while cross-fertilization can lead to innovation and global recognition, excessive infiltration of foreign culture can result in cultural erosion, loss of traditional techniques, and commercialization of indigenous arts. The study identifiesglobalization, technology, and economic pressures as factors that contribute to cultural homogenization.

Key words: Cross-fertilization, Infiltration, Foreign Culture and Indigenous arts.

Introduction

Africa has undoubtedly faced numerous challenges that have threatened the development and stability of its indigenous culture. According to Ilo (2008), this has led to an identity crisis among Africans, characterized by a lack of self-awareness and confusion about their place in the world. However, the evolution of contemporary indigenous arts reflects the efforts of Africans to address emerging challenges. This is evident in the creation of innovative artistic works, equipment, and accessories designed to meet modern artistic challenges in various contexts, including traditional institutions, social gatherings, and places of worship (Faniyi, 2012).However, in a bid to project African arts in a more profound manner, there is need to interrogate the extent to which Western culture has affected African arts or otherwise. Faniyi (2012, p.264)puts it poignantly when he asserts, ‘In an effort to project African arts values to

the rest of the world, arts scholars and arts educators require in-depth investigation into literature, performance and analytical study of form, function as well as technology of indigenous arts.

This research investigates the impact of cross-fertilization and infiltration of foreign culture on indigenous arts and examines the ways in which African indigenous art has been influenced by foreign cultures. It further addresses the effects of cross-fertilization and infiltration of foreign culture on African indigenous arts. It also addresses how African indigenous artists responded to foreign cultural influences, and what strategies they have employed to preserve and promote their cultural heritage. For the purpose of this research, both terms "art" and "arts" are used interchangeably as both words highlight human creativity and cultural significance respectively.

Theoretical Framework: Cultural Exchange Theory

A theoretical framework is essential for the study as it provides a structured lens to examine the complex interplay between foreign cultural influences and indigenous artistic expressions. The justification for the choice of Cultural Exchange Theory is to ensure a systematic analysis of how external cultural elements shape, enhance, or disrupt indigenous arts. The theory also helps to identify patterns, processes, and contextual factors driving cross-cultural interactions by offering a foundation for the understanding of the socio-political dynamics at play.

The Cultural Exchange Theory was propounded by Huntington in 1993 andhas been improved upon by many scholars in the fields of sociology, anthropology and international relations.Some of these scholars includeClaude Lévi-Strauss and Bronislaw Malinowski. Lévi-Strauss, in his contributions, asserts that the culture of a society is simply an expression of the structures developed by the human mind (Strauss, 1963). According to him, these structures define how members of a system work together.More so, Bronislaw Malinowski introduced aspects of functionalism into the theory. According to him, functionalism looks at how the different parts of society work together. Hefurther emphasized that cultures meet basic human needs as it keeps society running smoothly (Malinowski, 1961).

The theory hascontributed significantly to the understanding of cultural exchange, its process, and its implications.In sum, cultural exchange is a dynamic and reciprocal process that influences the cultural practices, values, and beliefs of participating entities. It describes how cultures interact and exchange ideas, practices, and values between societies, groups, or individuals which may often result in cultural clash. By extension, itis a dynamic and mutual process that shapes the traditions, beliefs, and practices of those involved. This shows that

cultural exchange is a two-way process that involves sharing and receiving of cultural ideologies between different cultures in order to meet societal needs. Such exchanges can lead to cultural adaptation, cultural change and cultural innovation which is often influenced by power dynamics and social contexts of a more perceived powerful culture.

Influence of Foreign Cultures on African Indigenous Arts

The positive influence of foreign cultures on indigenous arts in Africa is characterized by a dynamic interplay of preservation, adaptation, and innovation. While it is essential to recognize the challenges that accompany cultural exchange, such as the risk of cultural homogenization, cultural clash, cultural hybridization, the dialogue between foreign and indigenous cultures has ultimately enriched African arts. This interaction has fostered a vibrant, globally respected artistic landscape that celebrates Africa's diverse heritage while engaging with the world. African indigenous arts have been influenced by foreign cultures through means such as increased global connectivity that facilitates cultural exchange; movement of people across culture, and through communication and information sharing. It is common knowledge that culture is dynamic and evolving following societal needs. This explains why cultural exchange is a two-way process which involves give-and-take because people from diverse cultures interact and exchange ideas. This, often, leads to cultural change, adaptation, and innovation as the dominant culture tends to exert its influence over other cultures in the social context.

An Overview of African Culture

African culture encompasses a rich and diverse array of traditions, customs, languages, and histories spread across the continent. This diversity is reflected in its unique cultural practices, including food, clothing, dance, and traditional ceremonies. With over 2,000 languages and more than 3,000 ethnic groups, it embodies a vibrant tapestry of experiences, perspectives, and creative expression (Ilo, 2008). Africa's unique physical and human geography, varied landscapes, habitats, and wildlife have all contributed to its diverse cultures.However, Pan-African movement promotes unity and solidarity among Africans and the diaspora, despite cultural and ethnic differences. Overall, African culture is a vibrant, diverse, and complex entity thatcontinues to evolve and adapt to global changes.

Orji (2020) defines culture as a system of symbols, emblems, and identity markers that provide insights into a particular group, nationality, or era. In the view of Birukou, Blanzieri, Giorgini, and Fausto (2009), cultured isdefined as the whole complex of traditional behavior which has been developed by the human race and is successively learned by each generation.Similarly, earlier authors such as Keesing and Harris as cited in Birukou, et al.

(2009) define culture as: (i) those socially transmitted patterns for behaviour characteristic of a particular social group; (ii) complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society ; and (iii) the total socially acquired life-way or life-style of a group of people which consists of the patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that are characteristic of the members of a particular society or segment of a society . In the light of the above definitions, Nwanaju (2012) further adds that before colonization, Africa's traditional values significantly influenced cultural, artistic, and technological achievements as exemplified by the Igbo-Ukwuarts, Benin bronzes, and Awka metalworks to mention but a few.

These artistic contributions not only showcased the ingenuity of the people but also fostered economic and developmental growth, enhancing Nigeria's reputation as both a tourist hotspot and an investment hub. Asagba (2011)cited by Nwanaju(2020)observes that "It is universally recognized that culture is strongly linked to societal well-being and national development; arts and culture have always been crucial to the transformation of societies." Similarly, Okeke (2020) stresses that culture plays a vital role in shaping the identity of the people. However, the diminishing appreciation for indigenous culture in modern society has created challenges for identity formation. On this, Ilo (2008) maintains that 'the cultural traditions of Africa, the history of Africa, African civilization, African values, African religion and spirituality, and her stock of knowledge and rationality along with what she has gained or lost in her contact with cultures and civilizations outside Africa, all constitute African.

In addition, Williams (1923) as cited in Ilo (2008), argues that the erosion of identity contributes to cultural deprivation, which in turn, disrupts social cohesion. This fragmentation fosters uncertainty about moral principles, a diminished sense of purpose, and an increased emphasis on short-term gratification and self-centeredness. It weakens the community's ability to work together towards building a more cohesive and improved society.At this juncture, it becomes necessary to understand the goals of culture cross-fertilization.

Cross-Fertilization of Culture

Bjorkdahl(2017) cited in Pinero, Aviles and Feliu (2021) sees cross-fertilization as interdisciplinary combinations of different knowledge and technologies, creating extensive technological opportunities in terms of product performance and functionality. Similarly, Bogers and Horst, (2014) defined cross-fertilization of culture as the exchange and blending of ideas, values, and traditions from different cultures, fostering mutual understanding, innovation, and enriched perspectives. They note that the goal of Cross-Fertilization of Culture is to foster mutual understanding, collaboration, and innovation by bringing together

diverse cultural traditions, ideas, and perspectives. This exchange enriches societies by promoting creativity, breaking down stereotypes, and building bridges between communities. In their view, it seeks to celebrate shared human values while respecting unique identities, encouraging dialogue, and inspiring new ways of thinking and problem-solving in a globalized world.

The foregoing, therefore, underscores the idea that cross-fertilization is not bad on its own andshould be encouraged as no country can record any meaningful development in her indigenous arts without healthy interactions with other cultures and people of other nations. Every culture is unique. In other words, no culture should feel inferior or more superior than the other. Africans should be proud of their culture even to the point of protecting and preserving same with the last drop of their blood. The nitty-gritty of cross-fertilization is to give room formutual understanding, improvement on culture and socio-economic development among other nations of the world.Ilo (2008) highlights that while the African continent is rich in diverse cultural traditions, there is a convergence of values rooted in a shared historical experience. He notes that:

> A people who are not self-conscious and who cannot define where they stand culturally, from a human point of view, cannot really and concretely take control of their fate and future in the historical process. A people who do not believe in themselves and take firm control of their destiny cannot define their future. A people who neglect their history and cultural identity may not have the foundational impetus to appropriate their inner riches and strengths (Ilo, 2008).

In his perspective, a fundamental aspect of survival is having an inherent belief in oneself. This self-belief requires acknowledging one's past, accepting the truth of the present situation, and bravely facing current challenges while striving to create a new path for the future. He further notes that the past offers a "surplus value" for it makes the past to come alive not as concrete past, but a reconfigured reality that offers meaning to the present and hope for the future (Ilo, 2008). There is need to have an overview of western culture for a better understanding of the study.

An Overview of Western Culture

According to Jariya (2012)western culturebroadly refers to a heritage of social norms, ethical values, traditional customs, religious beliefs, political systems, and specific artifacts and technologies. The term is also referred as western civilization. He further expounds that it also refers to the cultural, social, and philosophical norms and values that originated in Europe and have since spread to other parts of the world. Western culture has a rich and

diverse history, shaped by various influences, including ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, Christianity, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and modernism.In the light of that, Arowolo (2010) notes that western culture is currently regarded as frontline civilization. It is often associated with key themes such as individualism, secularism, scientific progress, and democracy.

Moreover,Jariya(2012) highlights that western culture is a dynamic tradition that has shaped much of the modern world. While its emphasis on individualism, progress, and rationality has brought immense benefits, it is crucial to approach its influence with a balanced perspective. He notes that recognizing the interplay between Western and non-Western traditions can foster greater global cooperation and cultural appreciation.However, the study also looks at how foreign culture has infiltrated indigenous arts.

Infiltration of Foreign Culture on Indigenous Arts

Arowolo (2010) observes that the global influence of Western culture on indigenous arts has been profound and often detrimental, particularly, as it has shaped how indigenous cultures are perceived, valued, and practiced in the contemporary world. This influence is rooted in colonial histories, globalization, and the continued dominance of Western institutions in the global cultural economy.

Africa has undeniably faced issues that posed threat to the sustainability of the nations since its colonization.The situation is captured vividly in the following words:

> These issues have bordered on ethnicity, religion, resource control among other factors that team up to shake and question the African identity. No doubt, the issues have come from near abandonment of the cultural values, skills and arts on the altar of perceived reverenced colonial values embraced as the messiah for socio-economic uplift which adoption has undeniably placed the Africa continent in clogged wheels towards development (Nwanaju, 2012, p.1).

Asagba (2011) as quoted in Nwanaju (2012) argues that cultural diffusion and acculturation have been key precursors to the challenges and cultural contradictions faced by the African continent today. Similarly, Faniyi (2012) notes that while changes in indigenous arts reflect responses to modern technological advancements, such influences carry significant implications.

Firstly, these changes threaten the continuity of indigenous arts, as the adaptation to foreign cultures may eventually lead to the extinction of their original forms. Secondly, they impact the value of indigenous arts when alterations lack alignment with the cultural area's origin, history, material resources, or performance context. Lastly, the shift poses a challenge for

indigenous creative artists, who may increasingly rely on foreign materials and methods, potentially abandoning traditional raw materials and techniques altogether.

Since the beliefs and totality of a people are enshrined in their culture, it would be detrimental to push aside their ways of life and belief system to improve it. People must be the means and end of their development (Ilo, 2008). Corroborating the position, Ayandelenotes as follows:

> The disintegration caused by external influences in African society reveals a dilemma for Africans. They are becoming more and more hybridized. The rapidity with which the traditional is lost or severely modified, and with which the new is being apparently adopted, leave very little time for the Africans to fully understand the new forms of European customs and institutions they are adopting. They do not have the time, or do not take the trouble to make a judicious selection of what is best in the European for a grafting upon what is best in old Africa (Ayandele, (1987) cited in Ilo, (2008, p.39)).

The Western culture's infiltration,unlike culture cross-fertilization has negatively impacted indigenous arts in several ways, including but not limited to:

a) **Language dominance:** The spread of Western culture is closely tied to the global dominance of the English language. English has become the lingua franca of international business, diplomacy, and the internet. Through the use of English in global media, business, and education, Western ideas and cultural products have become accessible to people worldwide. This has created a shared space for cultural exchange, but it has also led to debates about cultural homogenization and the erosion of local languages and traditions.

b) **Cultural Appropriation and Exploitation**: One of the most significant negative impacts has been the widespread appropriation of Indigenous art and cultural symbols by Western artists, fashion designers, and the entertainment industry. Without a deep understanding of the cultural context, these elements are often extracted, commodified, and re-contextualized in ways that strip them of their original meaning. For example, art and media; Indigenous art styles have often been co-opted in commercial art markets, where the work is separated from its original cultural context and sometimes misrepresented in ways that erase the artist's cultural identity or distort its meaning.

c) **Loss of Cultural Knowledge and Traditions**: Western colonization often sought to suppress indigenous cultures and their traditional practices, including their arts.

Indigenous people were often forced to abandon their artistic traditions and adopt Western art forms, leading to the loss of important cultural knowledge. These experiences have led to the forced assimilation and language losses.Considering forced assimilation, it is a known fact that under colonial rule, many indigenous people were banned from practicing their traditional arts. These were done though restrictions on ceremonies, music, dances, storytelling, and visual arts that were integral to indigenous identity. These prohibitions contributed to the loss of cultural practices across generations. Language losses were also observedas a result of the suppression of the indigenous languages by Western education systems. In fact, much of the rich symbolism and traditional knowledge embedded in these languages were also lost. Obviously, the infiltration of western culture on African traditional ways of life had a lasting impact on oral traditions, including storytelling and song which are key components of many indigenous art forms.

d) **Western Art Market Dominance**: The global art market which is heavily influenced by Western standards often marginalizes the indigenous arts by imposing Eurocentric ideals and creating a generalized and dominant impression of what arts should be. Such actions result in the under-representation and under-valuing of indigenous artists.

In the light of the infiltration of foreign culture on indigenous arts highlighted above, Arowolo (2010) notes that the trend of cultural westernization of Africa has become very pervasive and prevalent, such that Western civilization has taken precedence over African values and culture and the latter is regarded as inferior to the former. The study also looks at the changing order in indigenous arts technologies.

The Changing Order in Indigenous Arts Technologies

The areas of changing order in indigenous art technologies are numerous and varied, reflecting the dynamic and evolving nature of indigenous cultures and artistic practices. Scholars are increasingly examining early cultural and historical events that influenced the blending of indigenous arts such as music, language, fashion, craft, food and other aspects of arts. Adeyeye (2009) as cited in Faniyi, (2012, p.267) highlights that in the distant past, medieval horns lacked valves, and flutes had very few keys. These features were later added to modernize the instruments and improve playability, leading to changes in their tonal quality (Faniyi, 2012).

Similarly, the organ's evolution over time reflects significant technological advancements. Initially, organs required air to be blown into them manually. Over time, bellows operated by

hand, and later, water-powered mechanisms were introduced, until more sophisticated innovations emerged (Gass (1953) as cited in Faniyi, 2012).Music, as noted by Clayton, Herbert, and Middleton (2003) varies in its intentionality and meaning depending on the context, individual, or cultural setting.

Furthermore, the use of foreign materials in textile industries and digital tools such as drum machines, synthesizers, and software-based rhythm generators, complex percussive patterns can now be produced with precision and ease. These technologies allow for blending of natural and synthetic elements in innovative ways.Faniyi (2012) observes that this change is partly driven by the need to replicate indigenous technologies as skilled practitioners pass away without transmitting their expertise. Additionally, freedom of choice and adaptability contribute to these changes.

Adegbite(1981) as cited in Faniyi(2012) notes that other African indigenous arts, which have survived in the New World, have also undergone transformations due to cultural cross-fertilization. The infiltration of western culture can be seen in various aspects of African indigenous language use, language structure, and language planning. These has significantly resulted to language shift and language loss. Western languages, particularly English, have replaced indigenous languages in many parts of the world. Its spread has contributed to the decline and endangerment of many minority languages.The dominance of English language has led to a loss of linguistic diversity, as many languages are no longer spoken or taught. Consequently, it has led to language stigma, where indigenous languages are perceived as inferior or less prestigious. Dishearteningly, indigenous language planning and policy makers of most countries adopted Western languages as official languages or languages of instruction.

African Indigenous dressing is also affected asthe influence of Western fashion has led to the decline of traditional African clothing styles such as the *Agbada*, *Buba* and *Aso oke*for the Yorubas, *dashiki, kaftan or jalabiya*for the Hausas, *Isiaguagu*for the Igbos and *Akwaocha*for the Igbo speaking part of Delta State. The modernization, innovation and obvious modifications of African clothing styles by Western designers and brands has led to cultural appropriation often to the point that African designers and artisans often do not receive fair credit or compensation for their creativity. The dominance of Western fashion has also resulted in the homogenization of African fashion with many Africans adopting Western styles and discarding their traditional clothing. Similarly, the influence of Western technology and manufacturing has led to the decline of traditional African craft skills, such as woodcarving and textiles. The commercialization of traditional African crafts has led to the

exploitation of African artisans and the loss of control over their cultural heritage.The dominance of Western crafts has also resulted in the homogenization of African crafts, with many African artisans adopting Western styles and techniques.

Western culture has also negatively affected African Indigenous food western cuisine has led to the decline of traditional African foodways, such as the use of indigenous ingredients and cooking techniques.The commercialization of traditional African foods also led to the exploitation of African farmers and food producers, as well as the loss of control over their cultural heritage.However, the study highlights its contribution to knowledge and the gap filled.

Contribution to Knowledge and Gap Filled

This research offers critical insights into cultural preservation policies, focusing on protecting and promoting indigenous art forms in an increasingly globalized world. By examining the contributions of African arts to global artistic traditions, it challenges stereotypes of African art as static or "primitive" and highlights its dynamic adaptability. The findings advocate for integrating nuanced discussions on cultural interconnectedness into art education, fostering appreciation for indigenous African arts while addressing their evolution through external influences. This study underscores the importance of equitable cross-cultural collaborations, ensuring that artistic exchanges honour and amplify indigenous voices, and provides actionable insights for contemporary artists, educators, and cultural institutions.

The study also delves into the interplay between foreign cultural influences and traditional African arts, exploring how these dynamics have enriched and challenged indigenous practices. It highlights the resilience and creativity of African artists in balancing preservation with transformation, particularly in the face of globalization, colonization, and cultural exchange. By investigating the mechanisms of cross-fertilization and addressing concerns over commodification and the erosion of traditional values, the research contributes to broader discussions on cultural diversity and hybridity. Its empirical evidence offers valuable perspectives for policymakers and scholars, advancing the discourse on sustaining African cultural heritage and its significance in the global exchange of artistic traditions.

The study addresses a critical knowledge gap by exploring how external cultural influences shape, transform, and coexist with traditional African art forms. It provides a multifaceted understanding of the interplay between indigenous creativity and foreign cultural elements, highlighting both the enrichment and the challenges posed by this dynamic. By empirically examining instances of cross-fertilization, the work sheds light on the adaptive strategies employed by African artists to incorporate foreign motifs, techniques, and themes while

preserving local authenticity. Furthermore, it evaluates the potential erosion of indigenous identity in the face of cultural infiltration, contributing valuable insights into the ongoing dialogue about cultural preservation, globalization, and artistic evolution in Africa.

Methodology

Data were collected through interviews. A total of 20 indigenous artists who engage in painting, sculpture, music, literature and 30 adults who are communities' leaders were interviewed to gather firsthand insights on the influence of foreign cultures on indigenous arts.The researchers also carried out direct observation of indigenous arts practices and performances to identify visible influences of foreign cultures on indigenous arts. Existing literature of scholarly works on cross-cultural interactions and their impact on indigenous African arts were also analysed.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Being a qualitative and quantitative study, the study adopts both analytical procedures in the analysis of data. In the qualitative analysis, the indigenous and foreign artistic elements were compared to highlight areas of similarity or contrast. In the quantitative analyses, numerical data from interviews were used to measure the prevalence of foreign influence on indigenous arts.The data is analysed underthe listed sub-headings:

Incorporation of Foreign Influences

A significant 70% of the artists reported that they incorporate foreign elements into their work which suggests that globalization and cultural interactions are profoundly shaping artistic practices. The implication of this is a hybridized artistic expressionswhere traditional motifs and techniques merge with foreign styles, media, and themes. Besides, the demand for globally appealing arts and colourationsmotivate artists to adapt and blend indigenous arts with global aesthetics to increase marketability. The danger of such action is the dilution of original cultural identity and the risk of commodification of traditional art forms.

Cultural Authenticity Concerns

30% of participants expressed concerns over the erosion of cultural authenticity.This indicates a minority, yet significant, apprehension about the preservation of core traditional values in arts.These concerns are often rooted in the fear of losing the cultural heritage amidst the dominant influence of foreign culture.

Decline in Traditional Techniques and Symbolism

The majority (60%) observed a decline in the use of traditional techniques and symbolism in contemporary indigenous.The implications is that the younger generations may not be

learning traditional skills, leading to the gradual disappearance of indigenous craftsmanship. Hence, the traditional symbols, which often associated with deep spiritual or cultural meanings are replaced by more globally recognizable motifs.

Role of Cultural Exchange Programs

80% of the respondents recognized the importance of cultural exchange programs in preserving indigenous. Exchange programs create platforms for dialogue between cultures, fostering mutual respect and understanding.

In sum, the empirical data underscores a transformative phase for indigenous African arts. While cross-fertilization with foreign cultures enriches and diversifies artistic expressions, it also poses risks to the continuity of traditional practices. To achieve a sustainable future for indigenous arts, deliberate efforts are needed to preserve authenticity while embracing the benefits of cultural exchange. Initiatives such as cultural exchange programs, mentorship, and the promotion of traditional techniques can play a pivotal role in striking this balance.

Discussion of Findings

The impact of foreign culture on indigenous African arts is a complex interplay of enrichment and erosion, leading to significant cultural and artistic transformations. On the one hand, cross-cultural exchanges-fuelled by trade, colonization, migration, and globalization – have inspired creativity and innovation, enabling modern African artists to integrate global influences into their work. This is evident in the fusion of African motifs with global trends in media and art. On the other hand, foreign influences have also eroded indigenous traditions, with colonization devaluing African arts and disrupting continuity through the expropriation of artifacts. However, this interaction is not purely antagonistic; it has also spurred adaptation and resilience. Contemporary African artists skillfully blend indigenous traditions with foreign techniques, exemplifying a synthesis that preserves cultural identity while embracing global influences.

Recommendations

Efforts to preserve and promote African indigenous culture are crucial for safeguarding its rich heritage. This includes documenting traditional music, dressing, crafts, food, and languages, as well as revitalizing these aspects through education, media, and cultural events. Government and Non-Governmental Organisations should play a key role in supporting African artists and artisans by ensuring that their crafts remain sustainable and vibrant.Organizing Cultural exchange programs would further enhance understanding between the African and the Western world thereby, fostering mutual respect and learning as well as helping African artists to reach a broader audience.

Another important recommendation is to explore the role of globalization and digital media in accelerating cultural exchanges. For instance, platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok should be used as spaces where African artists blend traditional ideas with global trends thereby reaching international audiences. In addition, investigating the dual impact of digitalization on preserving cultural heritage while accommodating external influences would offer a contemporary dimension to the study.

It is also recommended that balancing the benefits of cultural cross-fertilization with the risks of infiltration requires strategic initiatives. Investments in documenting and revitalizing traditional art forms can protect against cultural erosion while enabling innovation. Equitable relationships between African artists and the global art market can ensure that cultural exchange benefits local communities without compromising their identities. These efforts help African arts thrive globally, allowing artists to adapt and reinterpret their traditions while maintaining authenticity.

Finally, the dynamic interplay between foreign influences and African arts presents challenges and opportunities. While globalization risks diluting cultural integrity, it also offers a platform for artistic innovation and recognition. Many stakeholders advocate for the preservation of the distinct African essence of traditional art, even as others embrace the blending of cultures. By showcasing indigenous works on a global stage, these initiatives reinforce the value of traditional practices and encourage further documentation and archiving, thereby, ensuring that African arts remain both relevant globally. It is hoped that the above recommendations would deepen the current study's relevance and contribute meaningfully to the discourse on cultural preservation and innovation in African arts.

Conclusion

The paper examines the impact of cross-cultural exchange on indigenous arts. While cultural exchange can enrich indigenous arts with new ideas and techniques, excessive foreign influence can lead to cultural homogenization, threatening the authenticity and uniqueness of indigenous arts. The paper highlights several concerns, including the adaptation of foreign cultures at the expense of indigenous arts, despite the continued validity of indigenous artists' creativity. The global dominance of Western culture has significantly impacted on indigenous arts leading to cultural erosion, misrepresentation, and economic exploitation.

Issues such as commercialization, appropriation, and misinterpretation of indigenous art are exacerbated by a lack of respect for indigenous cultural sovereignty and intellectual property. However, there is growing awareness and advocacy around these issues, with indigenous artists and communities working to reclaim and revitalize their traditions. To address these

historical wrongs, it is essential to support indigenous-led initiatives, respect cultural protocols, and ensure fair representation and compensation for indigenous artists.

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MATHEMATICS AND PUBLIC HEALTH: THE ROLE OF MATHEMATICAL MODELS IN COMBATING INFECTIOUS DISEASES

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Abstract

Public health crises such as COVID-19, Ebola, and malaria outbreaks have highlighted the crucial role of mathematics in understanding and controlling the spread of infectious diseases. In my opinion, mathematical models are not merely technical instruments; they are indispensable frameworks that transform scattered observations into actionable knowledge. They provide the rigor necessary for predicting disease transmission, evaluating interventions, and planning resource allocation. Without such models, public health responses would remain largely reactive, guided more by anecdote and speculation than by evidence.Epidemiological models such as the classical Susceptible-Infected-Recovered (SIR) framework have, for decades, captured the dynamics of infectious diseases and shaped our theoretical understanding of epidemic growth and decline. Modern extensions, including stochastic and agent-based models, now allow for the simulation of complex, real-world interactions that account for demographics, mobility patterns, and social behaviour. Globally, such models were instrumental in shaping COVID-19 responses, from estimating reproduction numbers (R_0) to forecasting hospital bed demands and testing the impact of interventions like lockdowns and vaccination campaigns. In Nigeria, mathematical modeling has been central to malaria research, vaccination policy, and the evaluation of vector-control programs, providing evidence that directly influences public health decisions.Admittedly, these models are not without limitations. They often rely on uncertain parameters, incomplete data, and simplified assumptions about human behaviour. Nevertheless, I argue that these weaknesses do not diminish their relevance; rather, they highlight the complexity of disease dynamics and the need for continuous refinement. The strengths of models—predictive power, integration of diverse datasets, and capacity to quantify uncertainty—make them indispensable in both global and local health planning. Ultimately, mathematics does not simply describe epidemics; it equips humanity with the foresight and tools needed to prevent, mitigate, and, in some cases, eradicate infectious diseases.

Introduction

Mathematics has long been an indispensable tool for understanding complex natural and social phenomena, and one of its most transformative applications lies in the field of epidemiology. From the earliest efforts to conceptualize how diseases spread within

populations, mathematical models have offered frameworks for prediction, prevention, and intervention. The history of mathematical epidemiology can be traced to Daniel Bernoulli's 18th-century smallpox model, which demonstrated the potential benefits of inoculation (Dietz, 1988). Later, in the early 20th century, Kermack and McKendrick formalized the Susceptible–Infected–Recovered (SIR) model, laying the foundation for modern infectious disease modeling (Kermack&McKendrick, 1927). These historical milestones reveal that mathematics has always been more than an abstract pursuit; it has served as a life-saving tool in public health.

The role of models became particularly visible during past pandemics. For example, during the 1918 influenza pandemic, simple mathematical approaches provided insight into how quickly the virus could spread and the potential impact of interventions such as school closures (Mills et al., 2004). More recently, the 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak highlighted the utility of real-time modeling in estimating infection rates and vaccine allocation strategies (Fraser et al., 2009). Such experiences established modeling as central to evidence-based health policy, especially in situations where waiting for complete data was not an option.

In the Nigerian context, mathematical epidemiology has been crucial in understanding endemic diseases such as malaria, cholera, and Lassa fever. Researchers such as Okosun et al. (2011) have developed compartmental models to study malaria transmission, offering insight into how interventions such as insecticide-treated nets and drug therapy could reduce transmission rates. Akpa and Oyejola (2010) similarly modeled vaccination strategies for childhood diseases, demonstrating how relatively simple mathematical frameworks could guide life-saving interventions. In regions where resources are limited, such models serve as cost-effective tools for planning and prioritizing scarce public health interventions. Nigeria's experience underscores the local relevance of mathematical epidemiology: without these models, health strategies would risk being guided more by intuition than by evidence.

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic reaffirmed the indispensability of mathematical models. From the early outbreak in Wuhan, China, to the global spread that followed, models projected infection curves, hospital bed demand, and mortality under different intervention scenarios (Ferguson et al., 2020). These projections were central to the decisions of governments worldwide, including lockdowns, mask mandates, and vaccination rollout strategies. While some critics argued that models overstated risks or relied on uncertain assumptions, it is clear that they provided the only systematic way to anticipate possible futures. Without them, public health responses would have been delayed and less coordinated, with devastating consequences.

Despite these successes, mathematical epidemiology faces significant challenges. Chief among them is the issue of data quality. In many developing contexts, including Nigeria, underreporting, incomplete surveillance systems, and logistical barriers complicate model calibration (Adegboye et al., 2020). Moreover, human behavior—a key driver of disease spread—is notoriously difficult to quantify and predict. This limitation became clear during COVID-19, where compliance with social distancing and vaccine acceptance varied widely across communities. These challenges mean that models are never perfect mirrors of reality. However, as Saltelli et al. (2020) argue, uncertainty does not diminish their value but rather enhances their importance, since they allow decision-makers to prepare for a range of plausible outcomes.

In my view, the indispensability of mathematical models lies in their ability to transform uncertainty into structured foresight. While anecdotal evidence, intuition, and political considerations often shape public health decisions, models provide a rigorous framework that disciplines speculation with mathematics. They are not crystal balls but decision-support systems, helping policymakers weigh risks, costs, and benefits. From malaria in Nigeria to global pandemics like COVID-19, mathematical models remain the most powerful tools available to bridge the gap between limited data and urgent decision-making. Thus, rather than questioning their necessity, scholars and policymakers should invest in improving data systems, expanding local modeling expertise, and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure models remain central to public health planning.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Mathematical Models in Public Health .

Mathematical models have become central to public health decision-making, offering structured insights in situations of uncertainty and urgency. They have guided responses to epidemics and pandemics by projecting possible futures, testing the implications of interventions, and quantifying risks. However, like all scientific tools, they also face limitations, particularly when applied in contexts with poor data systems or rapidly changing human behavior. In this section, I examine the strengths and weaknesses of mathematical models in public health, drawing on both global and Nigerian experiences.

Strengths of Mathematical Models

1. Predictive Power

One of the greatest strengths of mathematical models is their predictive capacity. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, models projected infection curves, mortality rates, and hospital bed demand under different conditions (Ferguson et al., 2020). These forecasts allowed policymakers to anticipate when health systems might be overwhelmed and to

prepare accordingly. In Nigeria, early COVID-19 models helped anticipate the need for increased testing and resource mobilization, even though health infrastructure remained limited (Adegboye et al., 2020). Predictive power transforms uncertainty into actionable foresight, enabling governments and health agencies to prepare for crises before they peak.

2. Scenario Testing

Models are particularly valuable because they allow the exploration of "what-if" scenarios. For example, policymakers could compare projections under strict lockdowns versus minimal restrictions, or mass vaccination campaigns versus limited rollout. Such scenario testing was crucial during COVID-19, when governments weighed the trade-offs between economic disruption and public health. In Nigeria, scenario modeling for malaria interventions has similarly demonstrated how different combinations of bed nets, spraying, and drug treatment could reduce disease burden (Okosun et al., 2011). This ability to simulate interventions before implementation makes models indispensable for efficient policy design.

3. Uncertainty Quantification

Critics often accuse models of being "wrong," but their true strength lies in quantifying uncertainty. Rather than offering a single outcome, most epidemiological models generate ranges of possible futures, expressed through confidence intervals or probability distributions (Saltelli et al., 2020). This probabilistic reasoning is familiar in weather forecasting and is equally vital in public health. By showing best-case, worst-case, and most likely outcomes, models help policymakers plan for contingencies. For example, Ebola outbreak models quantified the risk of spread under different containment strategies, guiding global response efforts (Chowell& Nishiura, 2014). The explicit acknowledgment of uncertainty strengthens, rather than weakens, their utility.

4. Integration of Diverse Datasets

Another strength of modern models is their ability to integrate data from multiple sources, such as hospital capacity, demographic distributions, mobility patterns, and vaccination coverage. During COVID-19, models incorporated data on international travel to predict how quickly the virus might spread across borders (Chinazzi et al., 2020). In Nigeria, models of Lassa fever and malaria have combined climatic, demographic, and epidemiological data to better capture local disease dynamics (Akinwande et al., 2019). This integrative capacity makes mathematical models more comprehensive than intuition-based planning and ensures that diverse risk factors are considered.

Weaknesses of Mathematical Models

1. Reliance on Assumptions

Despite their power, models are only as good as the assumptions underlying them. Key parameters—such as the basic reproduction number (R_0), duration of infectiousness, or levels of population mixing—often need to be estimated, particularly in the early stages of an outbreak. If these assumptions are flawed, predictions may diverge significantly from reality. For instance, early COVID-19 models sometimes overestimated mortality rates due to limited data on asymptomatic cases (Ioannidis, 2020). Assumptions simplify reality, but they also risk producing misleading results when they fail to capture complex social, economic, and biological dynamics.

2. Poor Data Quality in Low-Income Countries

A major limitation of modeling in countries like Nigeria is the scarcity and unreliability of epidemiological data. Weak surveillance systems, underreporting of cases, and limited testing capacity undermine model accuracy. For example, during COVID-19, case data in Nigeria was incomplete due to restricted testing and delays in reporting, making projections less reliable (Adegboye et al., 2020). Similarly, malaria models are constrained by uncertainties in case detection and vector distribution data. Without high-quality, timely data, even the most sophisticated models cannot achieve their full potential.

3. Difficulty Modeling Human Behavior

Human behaviour remains one of the most unpredictable variables in epidemiology. Vaccine hesitancy, social distancing compliance, and adherence to preventive measures are influenced by cultural, political, and psychological factors that resist precise quantification. During COVID-19, models that assumed high compliance with mask-wearing or lockdown restrictions sometimes overestimated intervention effectiveness. In Nigeria, where mistrust of government health campaigns can be widespread, predicting behavioral responses poses additional challenges (Fawole et al., 2021). This limitation underscores the need for closer integration between epidemiological modeling and social science research.

4. Inequitable Access to Modeling Capacity

Finally, there is the issue of inequitable access to modeling expertise and infrastructure. High-income countries often lead in developing sophisticated models, while low- and middle-income countries like Nigeria must rely on imported models or external collaborations. This dependence can create mismatches between local realities and global models. For instance, models developed for European or North American populations may not adequately capture

Nigerian demographic patterns, healthcare capacity, or social structures. Without investment in local expertise, modeling risks reinforcing global health inequalities (Nkengasong, 2020).

Policy and Practical Implications

Mathematical models are not just academic exercises; they have direct implications for policy and practice. By transforming data into actionable forecasts, they guide decisions at global, national, and local levels. In this section, I discuss how models influence global institutions such as the World Health Organization (WHO), their role in Nigeria's public health strategies, the practical challenges of applying them, and why I believe developing nations must strengthen indigenous modeling capacity to ensure sustainable health planning.

Models in Global Institutions

Global institutions such as the WHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) rely heavily on mathematical models to coordinate international responses to pandemics and epidemics. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, WHO used model projections to issue guidelines on travel restrictions, testing strategies, and vaccination rollouts (WHO, 2021). These models informed the timing of interventions such as border closures and helped allocate limited resources like personal protective equipment (PPE) and vaccines across countries.Similarly, mathematical models were central during the West African Ebola epidemic of 2014–2016. The WHO relied on models to estimate the potential number of infections and deaths, which justified the urgent declaration of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (Chowell& Nishiura, 2014). By quantifying risks, models shape global health diplomacy, funding allocation, and humanitarian interventions. Without them, responses would be slower, less targeted, and more politically driven.

National Applications: Nigeria as a Case Study

At the national level, Nigeria provides a striking example of how models inform policy. Malaria control is one of the most prominent areas where mathematical models have been applied. Because malaria remains endemic in Nigeria, models have been used to assess the effectiveness of long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs), indoor residual spraying (IRS), and drug administration strategies. Research shows that combining interventions produces greater long-term benefits, and these insights have guided the National Malaria Elimination Program (Okosun et al., 2011).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nigerian public health officials used projections of infection rates and hospital bed needs to prepare isolation centers and expand testing capacity (Adegboye et al., 2020). Although constrained by data limitations, these forecasts allowed for

more structured preparedness compared to ad hoc reactions. Similarly, vaccination campaigns—whether for polio, measles, or COVID-19—have been optimized using mathematical models to determine coverage targets, anticipate immunity gaps, and minimize logistical challenges.

Hospital preparedness is another domain where models have practical applications. Simulations of patient inflows and resource use enable hospitals to allocate beds, ventilators, and staff more effectively during surges. In a context like Nigeria, where resources are scarce, such optimization can mean the difference between manageable outbreaks and overwhelmed facilities.

Practical Challenges in Application

Despite their utility, the practical application of models faces several challenges.

Data availability remains the most pressing issue. Many low- and middle-income countries, including Nigeria, struggle with incomplete disease surveillance systems, underreporting, and weak health information infrastructure. Without reliable data, models cannot produce accurate projections.

Computational resources also pose a barrier. Advanced stochastic and agent-based models require significant computing power, which is often unavailable in resource-limited settings. As a result, many countries rely on simplified models or depend on foreign institutions for complex simulations.

Training and expertise are equally critical. Mathematical modeling requires advanced knowledge in epidemiology, statistics, and computer science. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of trained modelers in Nigeria and similar countries. This limits local ownership of models and results in dependence on external collaborators. While international partnerships are valuable, they risk reinforcing dependency if local capacity is not simultaneously developed.

In my opinion, developing nations must invest in indigenous modelingcenters to reduce overdependence on Western projections. While global models provide useful insights, they are often designed with assumptions suited to high-income countries. For example, models calibrated for European or North American populations may not adequately reflect Nigeria's demographic structure, healthcare capacity, or cultural practices. Relying exclusively on such models risks misaligned policies.Establishing regional or national modelingcenters would allow countries to generate locally relevant forecasts that incorporate context-specific variables, such as informal settlement patterns, transportation infrastructure, and cultural attitudes toward vaccination. Indigenous modeling would also empower governments to

make decisions with greater autonomy rather than waiting for external reports.Investment in modelingcenters should go hand-in-hand with training programs to build human capital. Universities and research institutions can establish interdisciplinary programs combining mathematics, epidemiology, and computer science. In the long term, this would create a pipeline of experts capable of sustaining modeling initiatives. Furthermore, collaborations between local and international researchers should prioritize capacity transfer rather than one-sided dependency.

Conclusion

Mathematical models in public health occupy a paradoxical position: they are both indispensable and imperfect. Throughout history, from malaria control in Nigeria to the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide, models have demonstrated their ability to transform fragmented data into structured foresight. They provide predictions, test intervention scenarios, quantify uncertainty, and integrate diverse datasets. These functions make them more than academic abstractions—they are essential instruments for guiding life-saving interventions. Without them, public health planning would be reduced to speculation, reactive measures, and delayed responses.

Yet, their limitations cannot be ignored. Models depend on assumptions, rely heavily on the quality of available data, and struggle to fully capture complex human behaviour. In low- and middle-income contexts like Nigeria, poor surveillance systems and inequitable access to modeling expertise often exacerbate these weaknesses. Despite these challenges, dismissing models because of their imperfections would be both intellectually and ethically irresponsible. As Saltelli et al. (2020) argue, uncertainty does not diminish the value of models; instead, it underscores their necessity by providing structured ways to plan under risk.

In my opinion, the ethical dimension of modeling is as important as its technical rigor. Mathematics offers not only predictive power but also moral responsibility. To ignore evidence provided by models—whether about hospital capacity, vaccination strategies, or disease spread—would mean abandoning foresight in favor of improvisation. Such negligence disproportionately harms the most vulnerable populations, who suffer most from poorly managed epidemics. In this sense, mathematics becomes a matter of justice, ensuring that policies are grounded in rational, evidence-based projections rather than political expediency or guesswork.

Looking ahead, the challenge for countries like Nigeria is not whether to use models but how to strengthen them. Investment in indigenous modelingcenters, improved data systems, and

local expertise will reduce overreliance on external forecasts and make public health planning more context-sensitive. Globally, greater collaboration between mathematicians, epidemiologists, and social scientists will help address weaknesses, particularly in modeling human behaviour.

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HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY IN IMO STATE POLYTECHNIC, OMUMA NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine human capital development and productivity in Imo State polytechnic, Omuma. The data for the study was raised through both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include; questionnaire administration and empirical review while the secondary source was the review of the related literature from the textbooks, journals and newspapers. The human capital theory by Adam Smith (1776) and G.S. Becker were used. The population of 1553 which is the staff population of the institution was used with the sample size of 318 calculated with Taro Yamane formula with 5% coefficient error estimated. Simple random sampling technique was used in order to give the respondents equal opportunity to participate in the study irrespective of their academic and administrative categories. The data presentation, analysis and interpretation were carried out with the use of simple percentage, statistical tables and Pearson corelational analysis. The researchers observed that there are human and structural effects such as; poor motivation, infrastructures, and multi campuses in rural areas and system corruption which undermine the productivity of the institution. The researchers conclude that infrastructures, motivation of the staff, adequate funding and security will enhance productivity of the organization. The recommendations include abolition of multi campuses into single campus,

provision of infrastructures, security and stop government undue interference in the institution, motivation of the staff and funding of the institution.

Key: Human Capital, Productivity, development, Training, Organization.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Human capital development encompasses all forms of development on education, skills acquisition, knowledge building, experiences, creativity and innovation geared towards enhancing individuals' development and organizational productivity. Boujelbene and Affice (2013) opine that human capital is the employee values creating potential depicted in the knowledge, competence, skills, experiences, abilities and talent of firm employees and managers. Anosa (2021) opine that human capital captures knowledge, professional skills, experience and innovativeness of staff within an organization. Muogbo and Obonnaya (2022) Stated that employee performance is viewed as the direct outcome or returns on human capital investment. This informs Okoye and Eze(2016) cited in Ogunode,(2022) to state that training and career development are essential for enhancing the effectiveness of public service delivery particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors like telecommunications where innovation and regulatory responsiveness are essential, the need for strategic human capital development cannot be over emphasized. Oforegbunam, Ebiringa & Okoroafor(2010)opine that human capital has become an indispensable and dynamic nature of business environment to the point that development of such capacities especially through training has therefore emerged as a necessary requirement in preparing a long term strategic plan of the organization. Cedar Crestone, (2012) opine that organization with workforce management applications have higher operating income growth. The organization succeed when relies heavily on human capital management driver, which includes; leadership practices, employee engagement, knowledge accessibility, workforce optimization and learning capacity.

Therefore, Dess and Picken (1999) argued that human capital consists of the individual's capabilities, knowledge, skills and experience of the company's employees and managers, as they are relevant to the task at hand as well as the capacity to add to this reservoir of knowledge, skills and experience through individual learning. It justifies the assumption that skill development and career growth are not costs but strategic investments with high performance payoffs, (Schultz, 1961, Becker 1993). This informs the argument on why human capital development has been adjudged as a panacea for organizational productivity with the presence of trained personnel while productivity remains low. The absence of infrastructures, poor funding, lack of adequate healthcare, multi campuses operation and its administrative dependence, poor motivation of the staff, government undue

interference/leadership issue, system corruption and promotional issues provoke this study which aimed at discovering why human capital development does not necessarily influence organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic Omuma. That is the contending issue which led to this study. So, pertinent to the above statement is the study of human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo State polytechnic. The study seeks to find out the relevance of human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic under high skilled personnel with low productivity. Considering the above subject matter the organization tend to achieve the **following objectives**:

i. To examine the relevance of human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic.
ii. To identify the strategies necessary to address the human capital challenges in Imo State polytechnic

Research Questions are:

i. What is the relevance of human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic?
ii. What are the strategies necessary to address low productivity under well trained personnel?

Hypotheses

H0i. Human capital development is not relevance to organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma

Hoii. There is no relevant strategy to address low productivity in the organization

However, this study is essential to public and private sectors. It provides, more skills, knowledge acquisition and creativity needed to improve socio-economic development and reduction of poverty and ignorance, provision of infrastructural facilities, utilization of agricultural products to improve seedlings and food sufficiency, industrialization, economic buoyancy and reliance in the organization. It can as well improve education, healthcare and international cooperation through knowledge building, creativity, skills and outputs production. The knowledge of this will reduce deficiencies occasioned with lack of knowledge, skills and creativity including poor management and administrative governance. It will serve as material for good research studies. The researchers will appreciate the viability of the information contend in the work.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Human Capital: - Human capital is an innate, intricate and intangible value that enhances individual personality growth and development. Man is an epitome of human capital (Volejnikova, 2005). World Bank (2021) states that countries investing in people optimally to prevent the hard won human capital gains from being eroded more and builds back better to ensure green, resilient and inclusive development. Human capital is a concept used by human resource professionals to designate useful attributes in production process. It is knowledge; know how, skills, education, creativity and healthcare services which boost the mental, social and economic strength of employees in the production and services. The types of human capital include: Knowledge capital, social capital, emotional capital, biological capital and track record capital.

Human Capital Development: Human capital is a series of trainings and development given to individuals for personal growth and development. It is through these skills acquisition, knowledge buildings, education (schooling), knowledge, creativity and innovation and values orientation that enable personnel revival and positively developed in the society for optimal growth and developments. The approaches in the study of human capital development according to Ndinguri et al (2012) is targeted towards improving values, team work and consciousness among individual employees towards ensuring overall performance of the organization.

Productivity: Productivity is the relationship between output of goods and services of workers of the organization and inputs of resources, human and non human used in the production process. It is the ratio of output to inputs. The higher the numerical value of this ratio, the greater the productivity. This productivity can be applied at any level, whether for individuals, for work unit, for the organization (Onah, 2010). Mali, cited in Anosa, (2021) holds that productivity is the measure of how well resources are brought together in organization and utilization for accomplishment of a set result. It is reaching the highest level of productivity with the least expenditure of resources.

2; 1.3 Socio-Economic Importance of Human Capital Development

Investing in people (human capital) is the only source of economic growth in a modern economy. Man is an epitome of human capital (Volejnikova, 2005). The indications are as follows:

(a) A periodic and acceptable increase in gross domestic products

(b) An increase in housing and other infrastructural development

(c) An increase in unemployment/employment as a result of increase in the number of graduates and staff training periodically.

(d) An increase in the economic growth comparing to the past administrations, by improving production of goods and services in both public and private sectors.{Anoruo et al, 2020}

Training is concerned with the teaching of specific skills for carrying out a definite assignment (Ile, 2000, p. 122, Ile, 2003, p.42). Management development is a process of improving the overall effectiveness of managers in the present positions and to prepare them for greater responsibility when they are promoted (p. 139). Human capital was often applied as a key indicator of economic and social development all around the world (Kotsantonis and Serafeim, 2020). The following are the essential qualities of managers/leaders in the organization:

1. Management Charisma: - Ability to influence the performance of others and derive satisfaction from doing that considers one a good leader/manager.
2. Effective power Control: - A good leader/manager is endowed with the power and skills to influence others for good job performance.
3. Team spirit and tolerable behaviour: - Effective leader/manager is the one that understands and cope with the unexpressed emotional reaction of the people in the organization to win their cooperation and unalloyed commitment.
4. The impact of globalization. The need for training is base on the impacts of global developments which necessitates training needs for employees to measure up with the international requirements for public service.
5. It fosters efficient leadership and good governance.
6. It fosters good ethics and value orientation.
7. The need to preserve talents and building capacity through creativity and innovation.
8. It is useful for updating of human knowledge on technological advancement.
9. It impacts positive to the economy through the knowledge and skills acquired in the training which help in advance the economy to positive light.
10. It meets the need for the performance improvement of leaders and staff.

(Anoruo, 2018, p.100-114)

The main objectives of training are to meet with the current and future needs of the organization and to reduce the challenges facing the organizational and individual development. Therefore, training activities are classified into two ways such as:

1. On-the-job training

2. Off-the-job training

Chika et al, (2014:p.5), training is an ongoing process that is used to continuously improve the employee and make the staff of the bank and public service fit to deliver the required standard. It also enhances the performance of the employees in the long run. It involves a teaching process that is directed towards increasing the on-the-job competency level and skills of the employees. Therefore, the analysis of the classification of training and development is sacrosanct towards ensuring an optimal and timely understanding of the needs and aspirations for the training and development of the staff. So, we consider them in the following capacity.

On- the- Job Training

This is a form of training given to staff that are in service to improve their services delivery. It is a process of giving an employee further training to enhance performance in an organization. On-the-job training reduces the risk of employees' inexperience and helps him or her to overcome the challenges that might occur while rendering services. Therefore, on-the-job training inculcates useful and resourceful ideas, knowledge and aptitudes to employee which are necessary for the effective discharge of the assigned duty to the organization. On the job training is very attractive in organizations due to the fact that it is generally cheap and allows for the employee continuous service while in training. (Fred, 2010:p.202).

Off-the-Job Training

Off the job training is defined as the training an employee acquires outside his or her normal working environment. It is a special training given to staff outside the context of assigned service. Off-the-job training is very expensive to acquire because, the trainees expend their salaries on the training and could also incurs travel costs, tuitions fees and accommodation fees depending on the nature of training being received. Benefits of off-the-Job training include:

1. It enables trainees or employees to be exposed to relevant skills and knowledge needed to ensure effective interaction and communication with other staff within and outside the employees institution or organization.
2. It widens the employees' intellectual knowledge and boosts human relation techniques, aptitudes and skills.
3. It is a source of knowledge update and system reform.

Therefore, off-the-job training includes: conferences, seminars, workshops and higher educational attainment. Training is a catalyst that propels good performance in an organization. It is a systematic way of inculcating skills, knowledge, experience and aptitudes

to the people (staff) in an organization. There are two types of training: Formal and informal training.

Empirical Review

Olonade & Omotoye(2020) Studied human capital development and employee training as correlates to employee job performance in Redeemer University Ede, Osun. The objectives was to ascertain the significance of human capital development and employee training on employee job performance with the used of research survey design to collect data through primary data method. It was tested through the use of Pearson correction and linear regression analysis. The findings are that human capital development significantly and positively influence employee performance[r[98]=401**,p greater than 0.01. Employee Training has significant contribution to employee job performance in Redeemer University Ede, Osun state (f[2.97)=7.834, PC0.05, R2= 0.139.

Ughamadu and Ozioma (2016) assessed the state of human capital development in Nigeria with a view to determining the extent to which it can support the Nigeria manufacturing sector in achieving objectives established for it by the countries policy document, vision 2020. It relies on existing data (secondary) and using OLS techniques to achieve its objectives. It was found that there is a very strong positive relationship between human capital development and development in the country must improve significantly in order to provide the manufacturing sector with the quantity and quality of human capital which will enable it to achieve the objectives according to vision 2020.

Okuwa et al. (2016) studied the impact of human capital development and organizational resilience in selected manufacturing firm in Rivers State. Using simple random sampling technique and Taro Yamane's formula, 119 managers were drawn from the 31 manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. The statistical tool used was spearman rank order correlation coefficient. The findings showed that performance management and trainings have influence on organizational ability and organizational adaptive capacity in manufacturing firms. From the findings, they concluded that human capital development has significant influence on organization resilience.

Muogbo and Obonnaya (2022), studies state that employees' performance is viewed as the direct outcome or return on human capital investment. From theoretical lens, performance is not merely a result of natural ability or experience. It is the product of deliberate capacity building efforts when employee are trained and given opportunities for career growth, they are more likely to perform at higher levels contributing meaningfully to organizational goals.

Theoretical Framework

The theory used in this study is human capital theory propounded by Garry Stanley Becker in {1964}. This theory fundamentally rooted from macro-economic development theory captured from Becker classic book captioned "human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis of education". Becker viewed different kinds of capital which include; schooling, computer training courses, expenditure on medical care, important of punctuality and honesty as indicators that improve health, raise earnings and add values to personality thereby enhances productive performance. Other scholars such as Theodore Schultz opined that human capital is the added value that people bring in an organization. Therefore, it is consented that the theory acknowledges well trained personnel as a great asset to the organization. It is a potential based of an organization and acknowledges organizational competitive advantage to the direct function of its human capital base availability. This theory was elaborated by Chicago economists. The target is to build human capital theory which was championed by Shultz in 1981, where he said "take into account the innate and acquired skills which are paramount towards human capital development. He maintains that investing in skills and innate values promote organizational productivity. Human capital theory is a theory on finance and economics. This theory articulates that companies have an incentive to set productive human capital of their existing employees. It is also a concept that recognizes labour capital. It posits that human beings can increase their productive capacity through greater education and skills training.

Assumptions of human capital theory

It states that the composition of the employee in form of skills, knowledge, and abilities is the key to organizational performance.

Investing in skills and innate values promote organizational productivity. It is also a concept that recognizes labour capital and posits that human beings can increase their productive capacity through greater education and skills training. Human capital development is the employee knowledge, skills; know how, good health and education that enhances personal and organizational productivity. Organization invests in its citizens through expenditures on education, training, research and health that enhance their productive capacity. Human capital is the added value that people bring in an organization.

Critics

i. The critics of human capital theory argue that it is flawed overly simplistic and confounds labour with capital. One of the critics of human capital theory by name, Richard freeman, and a Harvard economist in 1976 argues that human capital only acted as a signal about talent and ability, real productivity came later through

training, motivation and capital equipment and concluded that human capital should not be considered as the factors of production.

ii. The Marxian economists; Samuel Bowels and Herbert Gintis argued against the human capital theory, stating that turning people (labour) into capital essentially squashes arguments around class comply and efforts to empower workers' rights.

iii. However, with emergence of behavioural economists in the 1980's and the 1990's give room for new critique of human capital theory that it relies on the assumption that human beings are rational actors which will make human capital theory experience the same defects and limitations when it attempt to explain issues because of the fact that its basic assumptions are on human motives, goals and decisions which are not well grounded to achieve the expectation.

iv. The sociologists and Anthropologist criticized the human capital theory with their assertions that it offers extremely simple principles that purported to explain ones wages as a determinant of productivity and income of an organization and argued further that the productivity differences between individuals cannot be measured objectively.

The Strengths of Human Capital Theory in Education and Policy Making

i. It is used in education research and policy making. It helps the policy makers and researchers evaluate the relationship between the educations and training as inputs and economic and social benefits as outputs. Since the assumption stated that increase amount of schooling will bring growth in higher individual wages, Gross domestic product and increase in citizens participation, crime reduction and adequate healthcare services. Therefore, this enables the policy makers evaluate relatively the efficiency of public programs that encourage education (Schooling).

ii. It provides a useful avenue for understanding how policy can be developed to promote individuals investment in their education. It reviews that embarking in further education (schooling) involves both cost that is spending (sacrificing at present and benefiting through higher wages in future) within individual level. Therefore, adopting human capital theory in this study will help the policy makers develop rational policies geared towards providing avenues for students' loan and enrolment programmes to change individual costs and benefits calculation by reducing the short costs in order to encourage the likelihood of pursuing education increasingly.

iii. Human capital theory can be used to address individual social investments in education, such as the quality knowledge/investment in education that are productive and the best time for education and policy development best to reduce the costs of education.

iv. It helps to increase the creative and innovative knowledge and how to utilize the knowledge to further productivity, investment, growth and development of the society.

Limitation of Human Capital Theory

i. Human capital theory assumes that education increases productivity in the work place, resulting in higher individual wages, but it provides little insight into the processes through which education and training acquired lead to increase in salaries and wages of individual in the organization.

ii. The top most organization like state/nation acknowledges that higher education attainment and its quality provide increase productivity and increase in earnings.

Importance of human capital theory to the topic of the study

i. It provides good opportunity for education and trainings among individuals and organization thereby promotes economic growth and productivity. This is because; long term economic growth depends to greater extent on the improvement on human capital. A good education, creativity or innovative workforce fosters labour productivity and economic growth and development.

ii. It provides good opportunities for well paid job/employment: Building upon the human capital theory enables knowledge and trainings that can lead to provision of quality employment. This is because the acquisition of high skilled and creative workforce has increasing opportunities for self-employment or good employment contacts and job provision.

iii. It enables the beneficiaries of the abilities who are surrounding with limited raw materials to utilize their skills and knowledge in order to ensure economic growth. For instance; countries like Japan and Koreans who are surrounded with limited natural resources always rely on human capital for advancement and capacity building.

3 METHODOLOGY RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design used in this study include, survey research design. It involves procedures outline for the conduct of any given investigation, such as the equipments and the materials used in the successful achievement of research study. Survey research design is adopted due to its descriptive nature of research analyzing. The population of the study is 1553 staff member of the Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma. The researcher drew the population of the

study from the staff of the council towards determining the sample size of the study. The population of 850 staff the sample size of 360 calculated with Taro Yamane formula is as follows:

n = Sample size 1 = Constant

N = population E = coefficient error by 4%

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N\ x\ (e)^2} \quad n = \frac{850}{1+850\ (4)^2} \quad n = \frac{850}{1+850\ (0.04)^2} \quad n = \frac{850}{1+850x\ 0.0016}$$

$$n = \frac{850}{1+850x\ 0.0016} \quad n = \frac{850}{1+1.36} \quad n = \frac{850}{2.36} \quad n = 360 \quad n = 360$$

The simple random sampling technique was used in the study. Obasi, (2000, p.134) states that simple random sampling technique is a sampling technique where every member of the population has equal and independent chance of being selected in the sample to be studied. The equality of chance given to every member of the population distinguished the simple random sampling technique from others.

The two methods used in data collection are the primary data collection and secondary data collection. The primary data collection involves the gathering of information through questionnaires, interviews and empirical study, while the secondary data collection involves the review of the related literature which is done by extracting information from textbooks, journals; internet explores materials, newspaper and magazines etc.

The researchers adopted face/content validity and construct validity to measure the extent to which the data for the study are reliable. In the face validity, well-structured questionnaire instrument were carried out by the researchers. The researchers also ensured that the items in the questionnaire were in conformity with the items in the objectives of the study, research questions and research hypothesis which are the representativeness of sampling adequacy of the content {the substance, the topic, the issue}.The researchers also constructed instrument of responds for the respondents in a four (4) likert scale. This questionnaire was confirmed that the questionnaire is subjectively viewed as covered the concept it purported to cover and test as it appears to test participants. The test-retest methods were used to confirm the reliability of the study. It could be observed in the consistency and dependability of the result given by the respondents while responding to the questionnaires and hypothetical studies. The result of the study is adjudged to be consistency, dependable and credible when questionnaires administered and the responses given by the respondents agreed majorly with and disagreed with the research questionnaires, objectives and hypotheses of the study. Here, the instrument has produced consistency the same result over time.

In the first test, the researchers distributed hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires to the public (Imo state polytechnic staff) and in return, hundred and forty (140) were recovered and recorded. While analyzing the questionnaires, it is observed that the respondents' maintained consistent views over time. Retest method, later, one hundred and sixty eight (168) questionnaires were distributed to the public (Imo state polytechnic staff) and in return, one hundred and forty five (145) were recovered and recorded. While analyzing the questionnaires recovered, it is observed that the results are correlated with the earlier test results, which implies that there is high coefficient of correlations between the two results hence the used of SPSS was made paramount in calculation of mean of the scores, standard deviation and Pearson correlation coefficient which give room to conclusion that the results of the tests are reliable. The data collected have been analyzed using the descriptive approach. They study employed statistical percentages and statistical tables to analyze the questionnaire.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1.1

Response	**Number Distributed**	**%**	**Number Returned**	**%**	**Number not Returned**	**%**
Appointed Staff	25	6.9	15	4.2	10	2.8
main Staff	335	93	270	75	65	18.1
Total	**360**	**100**	**285**	**79.2**	**24**	**20.9**

Source: field study, 2024

Research Question

What is the relevance of human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo State polytechnic?

Table 2

	The relevance of human capital development in Imo State polytechnic Omuma include:	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
{a}	It enhances creativity and innovation among the staff members of the institution towards effective productivity.	124(44%)	128(45%)	14(5%)	19(7%)
{b}	Human capital development enhances polices and decision-making abilities and result oriented attitudes towards productivity of the staff of the institution.	172(60%)	101(35%)	4(1.4%)	8(3%)
{c}	It provides sound teaching, quality research writing and progress and problems solving	188(66%)	92(32%)	1(0.4%)	4(1.4%)

	ability in the institution				
{d}	It enhances knowledge and experience necessary for communication and information dissemination, hiring and retention of the staff in the organization	121(42.5)	155(54.4)	3(1.1%)	6(2.1%)

Source: field work, 2024

In research question one option one; stated that human capital development improve creativity and innovative skills to enhance organizational productivity. In the responses, 124 respondents represents (43.5%) strongly agreed that human capital formation improve creativity and innovative skills to enhance organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma 128 represent(45%) agreed while 14 respondents represented(5%) and 19 respondents represented(6.6%) strongly disagree and disagreed respectively. Here 252 respondents represented 88.5% sound positive that human capital development improves creativity and innovative skills to enhance organizational performance in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, while 33{11.6%} respondents responded negative to that effect.

In research question one options two, stated that human capital development provided input for technological development. 172 (60%) respondents strongly agreed that human capital development provided input for technological development. 101(35%) agreed with the notion above. So, 4 (1.4%) respondents strongly disagreed and 8(3%) disagreed respectively. Therefore, 273(95%) respondents sounded positive that human capital development provides input for technological development in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, while 12{4.4%} respondents responded negative to that effect

In research questionnaire one options three, stated that human capital development improves employability skills and knowledge in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma. 188 (66%) of the respondents strongly agreed that human capital development improves employability skills and knowledge in the organization {Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma}. 92 respondents represented (32%) agreed with the notion, while 1(0.4%) respondents strongly disagreed and 4(1.4%) respondents disagreed respectively. Therefore, the total of 280(98%) respondents out of 285 sounded positive that human capital development improves employability skills and knowledge in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, while 5{2%} respondents responded negative to that effect

In research questionnaire one option four which states that human capital creates and designs other capitals resources to accomplish organizational objectives. 121(42.5%) respondents

strongly agreed on those notion above. 155 (54.4%) respondents agreed with the notion while 3(1.1%) respondents strongly disagreed and 6(2.1%) respondents disagreed respectively. Meanwhile, 276(96.9%) respondents sounded positive that human capital development creates and designs other capital resources to accomplish organizational objectives; while 9(3.2%) respondents responded negative to that effect.

The relevance of human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Table 4.2: Mean responses on the relevance of human capital development to Organizational Productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.	Remark
1	It enhances creativity and innovation among the staff members of the institution towards effective productivity.	81	108	53	43	2.80	1.02	**Agreed**
2	Human capital development enhances polices and decision-making abilities and result oriented attitudes towards productivity of the staff of the institution.	102	102	26	55	2.88	1.10	**Agreed**
3	It provides sound teaching, quality research writing and progress and problems solving ability in the institution	138	82	27	38	3.12	1.05	**Agreed**
4	It enhances knowledge and experience necessary for communication and information dissemination, hiring and retention of the staff in the organization	62	137	15	71	2.67	1.08	**Agreed**
	Grand Mean					**2.87**	**1.06**	**Agreed**

Table 4.2 examined relevance of human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma. The table indicates that human capital development remains

relevance to organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma by enhancing creativity and innovation among the staff members of the institution towards effective productivity (mean=2.80, std.=1.02), enhancing polices and decision-making abilities and result oriented attitudes towards productivity of the staff of the institution (mean=2.88, std.=1.10), providing sound teaching, quality research writing and progress and problems solving ability in the institution(mean=3.12,std.=1.05), and by enhancing knowledge and experience necessary for communication and information dissemination, hiring and retention of the staff in the organization (mean=2.67, std.=1.08).

The Important Relationship between Human Capital Development and Organizational Productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma

Correlations

		Strategies adopted by Imo State Polytechnic	Organizational Productivity
Strategies adopted by Imo State Polytechnic	Pearson Correlation	1	-.930**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	285	285
Organizational Productivity	Pearson Correlation	-.930**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	285	285

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table showed the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis on the relationship between strategies adopted by Imo State Polytechnic, to improve human capital development and organizational productivity. The result showed the value of the R-square -0.930 was roughly -93% contributions of strategies adopted to improve human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma. The result also showed that the p (significant value=0.00 is less than 0.05 at 285 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis three is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. Therefore, there is a significant negative relationship between the strategies adopted to improve human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma.

Summary of Findings

Therefore, human capital theory builds up by Garry Stanley Becker and Theodore Schultz imperatively considered education, health and training as a panacea for human development

and productivity in the organization. It fosters knowledge, creativity, innovation, effective and efficient service delivery of individuals for organizational productivity. It Improves skills, aptitudes, know how, tacit knowledge, situational knowledge, system thinking, design, social capital, social status, cultural capital, relations capital, leadership and management abilities, strategic thinking and decision making, problem solving, Research, diligence and personal resilience in building of the organization.

It enhances creativity and innovation among the staff members of the institution towards effective productivity. Here 252 respondents represented 88.5% sound positive that human capital development improves creativity and innovative skills to enhance organizational performance in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, while 33{11.6%} respondents responded negative to that effect.

Human capital development enhances polices and decision-making abilities and result oriented attitudes towards productivity of the staff of the institution. It is observed that human capital provides input for technological development which promotes the availability of infrastructures, tools and materials that enhances personal and organizational productivity. The knowledge, skills, competence and experiences gathered through human capital formation provides employability skills and knowledge needed to ensure effective service delivery in council. 273(95%) respondents sounded positive that human capital development provides input for technological development in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, while 12{4.4%} respondents responded negative to that effect

Human capital development provides sound teaching, quality research writing and progress and problems solving ability in the institution to enhance employability skills and knowledge: 280(98%) respondents out of 285 sounded positive that human capital development provides sound teaching, quality research writing and progress and problems solving ability, improves employability skills and knowledge in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, while 5{2%} respondents responded negative to that effect

The knowledge acquired from human capital enhances knowledge and experience necessary for communication and information dissemination, hiring and retention of the staff in the organization formation enables the creation and designs of other capital resources such as natural capital and physical capital in the organization to accomplish organizational objectives. 276(96.9%) respondents sounded positive that human capital development creates and designs other capital resources to accomplish organizational objectives; while 9(3.2%) respondents responded negative to that effect

Conclusion

Human capital formation has been adjudged as a panacea for organizational productive performance particularly in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma. This is as a result of the increasing skills, knowledge, know how, system thinking, creativity and innovative skills, leadership and management abilities, strategic thinking, decision making skill and problems solving skills, its research ability and diligence effort towards human and material development, problems solving and capacity building.

However, base on empirical study (evidence), the study concluded that human capital formation has socio-economic and political effects; such as improves knowledge and skills, education and health care services, leadership and management of the organization, information and communication technology, infrastructural development and performance evaluation. Others include; the tendency towards increasing gross domestic products and national income, unemployment and joblessness, increase economic growth, organizational productive performance, professionalization and specialization of the personnel at work place. It also improves on the job and off the job training and development. It improves behavioural and human relation trainings and managerial competency. It however reduce poverty and increase self employment opportunity, industrial performance and revolution, monetization of productive equipment, infrastructural development, effective administrative planning, knowledge of maintaining machines and equipment, effective utilization of materials and non materials resources. It provides motivation to personnel and enhances capacity in the organization. This also discussed some of the constraints of human capital development. Such as, corruption, leadership and government interference, poor healthcare and inadequate nutrition services, poor education standard and school enrolment, lack of awareness and inequality in wealth, poor training and development, inadequate manpower planning, Brain drain, absence of industrialization, poor motivation, lack of professionalism and specialization, negligence of culture and values, indiscipline and criminalities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study; the following recommendations are made;

1. There should be adequate motivation and remuneration of staff regularly by training and development and regular payments of salaries and remuneration. This will improve morale capacity to work hard, committed spirit of service, effective and efficient service delivery in the institution.
2. Adequate security and environmental sustainability should be provided to enhance human capital need of the personnel in the organization.

3. Government should ensure the provision of adequate health care services by providing more health equipments, materials and well trained personnel that will facilitate the effective and efficient health care services and capacity building in the institution.
4. Government should provide adequate infrastructural facilities to enhance human capital development.
5. The legislature and executive governments are obliged to make more people oriented policies and programmes that will promote creative and innovative state of human capital, secure human capital and regulate effectively the activities of human capital development.
6. Government should ensure corrupt free environment devoid of exploitation, misappropriation of funds, mismanagement and malpractices which endangers socio-economic development of the institution

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IMPACT OF INFRASTRUCTURE ON HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN IMO STATE POLYTECHNIC, OMUMA NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined impact of infrastructure on human capital development in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma. The epileptic power supply, absence of communication service providers to better communication system, transport services and the shortage of classroom and staff offices, insecurity and unfavorable government policies influencing the growth and development of human capital development in Imo State Polytechnic. The study adopted descriptive survey which involved the application of both primary and secondary data collection to obtained information for the study. The primary data collection was obtained through questionnaires administration and empirical review while the secondary sources include; literature review gotten from textbooks, journals and newspapers. The population of the study is 1353 while sample size is 318 calculated with Taro Yamane formula of 5% coefficient error estimated. Simple random probability sampling technique was used to ensure the equal participation of all the personnel. The face validity and reliability was used. The theories used in this study are A demand side economic theory of infrastructure propounded by Brett, M. Frischmann in (2005) and theory of Human Capital development by Stanley Becker (1964). The data presentation and analysis were carried out with the use of simple percentage and the statistical tables. The researchers observed that infrastructure enhances creativity, innovation, improve communication, fosters technological development and facilitates information and communication technology on human capital development on

productivity in Imo State Polytechnic. The training; education, skill acquisition and other needed abilities and capabilities including good health condition cannot be achieved without infrastructures which enable effective production and services in the organization and the inadequacy mare productivity. The recommendations include that management in collaboration with state government should as a matter of urgency ensure policy that can sustain infrastructural development and provide standard health care services to enable staff have access to routine services to enable organizational productivity. The conclusion opine that infrastructure such as electricity, buildings, class rooms, water, access roads, information and communication gadgets both hardware and software are essential for human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma.

Key Words**: **Infrastructure, Human Capital Development, Productivity, Impact, Organization

INTRODUCTION

Etymologically, the word infrastructure was coined from the Latin word 'infra' which means "below". It is taken to mean "foundation" (Buhr, 2003). Infrastructure is the bedrock of every successful human capital development in our environment. It is the fundamental structure to which organizations are established and operates. Nijkamp,(2000) opined that infrastructure is a material of public capital which include; roads, railways, airport, seaport, pipelines etc and supra-structure which means immaterial, public capital(knowledge networks, communication, education, culture etc). It is essentially material infrastructure supplied by the state and its formulation of political technocracy. Traditionally, infrastructure is the permanent installations requires for military purposes. The modern general usage of infrastructure means the necessary economic and organizational foundation of highly developed economy (transport network, labour force etc, (Wermke/Stubenrecht, 1997, p.359). This informs Jalilia and Weiss (2004) who study on the" impact of roads investment on poverty levels and education enrolment in secondary school to argue that the impact of roads investments on poverty levels increase by nearly thirty percent as secondary school enrolments in an area increase from 25 to 75 percent. This can be related to Imo State polytechnic where roads and transport network are in sorry state. The poor/dilapidated roads network coupled with other network of communication experiences poor setup and malfunction affecting human capital development and productivity in the Institution. The absence of communication network services like MTN, GLO, ETISALAT network etc that should enable the promotion of viable socio-economic and Administrative system of the institution are at the bottleneck. These affect the productive service delivery in the

organization. Infra-structure and info-structure are the components structure of the organization that makes possible the foundation of the organization. The importance of electricity, water supply, school, markets, hospitals, roads network, library and buildings cannot be over-emphasized as they represented infra-structure, while e-records, e-documentation, authentication, e-payments and portal are the info-structure which enables the transparent nature of organization services. These determine the quality of human capital development and the organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma. The epileptic power supply within the institution mare the activities geared towards improving electronic governance in public sector.

However, in Imo state polytechnic, just like every other tertiary Institution; infrastructure plays significant roles in the actualization of greater human capital development and organizational productivity. It is worthy of note that infrastructure determines the nature of education, trainings and development thereby enhancing socio-economic, political and administrative development of the organization. Therefore, Kenny and Yang (2022) argue further that infrastructure needs human capital to generate revenues. Its investments rely on adequate stocks of human capital to create demand and revenue. This is because human capital is regarded as the force that propels economic prosperity. This informs World Bank to conclude in their survey that human capital measure accounted for about 64 percent of total global wealth, (human capital and physical plus natural resources). This made Johnsen, (1966, p.100) defines infrastructure further as the sum of material, institutional and personal facilities and data which are available to the economic agents and which contribute to realizing the equalization of the remuneration of comparable inputs in the case of a suitable allocation of resources which the complete integration and maximum level of economic activities. These considered the objectives of infrastructure as the formation of the concept for the term infrastructure, the incorporation of theoretical approaches, (for example, the theory of public goods and the description of the reality of infrastructure provision.

However, being the institution established in 1978 as the college of agriculture, Imo state polytechnic was upgraded to polytechnic status in 2007 by the then government of His Excellency, Chief Ikedi Ohakim. The institution was upgraded to multi-campus in 2013, with the campuses across the three senatorial districts of Ehime Mbano representing Okigwe zone, Orlu Campus representing Orlu/Imo West Senatorial district and Ikeduru Campus representing Owerri senatorial district including the main campus in Omuma formerly at Umuagwo. Before the multi campus system, the institution had faced challenges of infrastructure with epileptic power supply, lack/poor recreational facilities, poor/insufficient

school, hostels, absent of markets, insecurity and absent of other infrastructural facilities. The multi campus system compounded the challenges as a result of its location to rural areas such as Ehime Mbano, Amaimo in Ikeduru and local community in Orlu local government area. The challenges of providing quality roads, poor power supply, water, poor structures and high cost of transportation and poor network services becomes unimaginable to achieve quality human capital development and organizational productive performance.

Based on the above analyses, that the researchers asked the related questions; what are the constraints of infrastructure to human capital development in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma? What is the importance of infrastructural to human capital development in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma? What are the need of infrastructure to security of lives and properties in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma? How does infrastructure contributes to the human capital problems of Imo state polytechnic, Omuma? What are the problems of infrastructure to productive performance in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma? Based on these questions, that the researchers adopted descriptive research approach for the study in order to unravel the problems of the institution and cushion the negative effect to engender human capital development which is a precondition to improve organizational productivity and capacity building. So, when infrastructure is bottleneck, it rapidly rises up the list of critical issues for business surveys of manufacturing enterprises worldwide suggesting that electricity is the single biggest obstacle to business (Kenny and Yang, 2022). Epileptic power supply is responsible for both administrative and productive performances in the organization. It is based on the above issues that this study was conducted to address the infrastructure challenges in the polytechnics especially, Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma. So, the research questions include the followings:

Research Questions

1. What are the impacts of infrastructures on human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma?
2. What are the remedies?

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impacts of infrastructures on human capital development in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma
2. To articulate the remedies of poor infrastructures on human capital development in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma

Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the study include the followings;

$H0_1$ There is no impacts of infrastructures in human capital developments and organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma.

H02. There is no remedies on infrastructures to human capital developments in Imo State Polytechnic; Omuma

The study has academic contributions, practical contributions and theoretical contributions. The academic contributions opined that this study is essential for academic development because of its tendency of adding more knowledge and creativity into existing literature. It has capacity to close gap incurred by previous scholarly writing and production because of the creative approach to problems identification and solution provision. It can as well help to improve education, healthcare and knowledge building, creativity, skills acquisition and outputs production. The knowledge of this will reduce deficiencies occasioned by lack of knowledge, skills, experiences and creativity including poor management and administrative governance.

Practical contributions: It addresses the problems that affect human capital of the organization confronting productivity of the institution in particular and Nigeria state in general. It shows the impacts of the human capital to employees and how it improves organizational productivity. It becomes paramount owing to its relevance to socio-economic and political development of both individuals and the organization in terms of building skills, knowledge, and creativity and making positive ways of utilizing it for efficient productive performance in both public and private. It will help the policy makers, leaders, managers and administrators of Imo state polytechnic, Omuma to be able to identify the human resources of the society, its utilization by exploring, exploiting, harnessing and galvanizing and also improve the organization productive performance.

The theoretical relevance of the study states that this study improves the existing literature on four areas: First, It identified the constraints of human capital development to organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma. Secondly, it articulates the effects of human capital development to organizational productivity. Thirdly, it examined the indices and parameter for measuring human capital performance of the organization/institution

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Infrastructure: Frischmann (2005) states that certain important resources should be governed not by a property regime but a regime that incorporates open and nondiscriminatory access. Infrastructures are essential social amenities that necessitate socio-economic

development in our organizations. It is an essential aspect of social services that enhances human capital development and organizational growth and development. Infrastructure includes the followings: Road network, Transport services, electricity, provision of water supply, Stocks, building and equipments. Infrastructures are amenities that help to facilitate socio-economic, administration and political development. According to Kenny and Yang (2022), Infrastructure is a central component of modern economies and need human capital to generate revenues that help organizational development. Its investment relies on adequate stocks of human capitals to create demand and revenues over the long term due to the fact that human capital is the underlying force behind economic prosperity compared to 31 percent for produced capital (infrastructure, building and equipments). In the technological aspect, infrastructure is the gadgets use to facilitate information and communication service between and among organizations and institutions that share similar interests, have business association and share organizational philosophies in the pursuit of common interest. Technology is a hardware mechanisms, equipments, devices and electronic gadgets use to spur the electricity and internet to access electronic government in public service delivery. It is a hardware electronic transformed with internet and electric connection for online service delivery in the organizations. Maittamo, (2008) posits that government is working on broadband connection to schools refurbishment of computers then delivered to schools and training of teachers and administrators on e-learning.

Based on the above exposition, it is observed by Kenny and Yaung study that 31 percent of capital infrastructure obtained in productivity. Going by the study, it is clear that infrastructures have great impact in determining the extent to which human capital achieved organizational productivity. Is that related issue in Imo state polytechnic? The question can be asked;" what are the impacts of infrastructures on human capital development in the productivity of Imo state polytechnic? How do the skills, knowledge, creativity, competency and experiences gathered through the series of trainings and development of staff engendered organizational productivity and capacity building under unlimited government influence in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma? It is upon this development that this study was conducted and also no initial study known by the researchers on this topic about Imo State Polytechnic was conducted ab initio. This left the institution with many unsolved problems to examine, and evaluate the degree to which infrastructures have impacted to human capital development and organizational productivity in the institution. The empirical studies questions poor infrastructure and environmental instability purported by government negligence, insecurity and poor funding. The poor motivation, short change of staff in salaries payment and

nonpayment of pension and gratuities to pensioners. The financial dependency where every payment of the institution activities and services come directly from government is an ideal situation. These affect socio-economic and administrative systems and capacity building of the organization. Ogohi, (2019, p. 95) opined that the productivity of workers is falling resulting to low performance of the organization. This is due to lack of funds needed to realize projects in the organization. Therefore, it is important to rationally investigate what significant infrastructures have to human capital development and organizational productivity under high unemployment rate among the graduates. However, it involves: **Info-structures**: The United Nation Public Administration network acknowledged the requirement of infrastructure towards achieving effective e-governance development. The fundamental implementation of this electronic governance system is information related infrastructure which is known as "info-structure". There are four info-structures necessary for e-governance implementation and development in our organizations. They are:

i. Electronic Records (e-records) ii. Authentication and Digital signature iii. Electronic payment (e-payment) and iv. Portal

However, the basic Infrastructures include the followings: i. Access to electricity, ii. High speed internet connectivity with huge digital divides. iii. E-records: This, include infra and info-structure for e-government. Government information infrastructure according to United Nations Public Administration network for e-records aligns with a government existing communications infrastructure with the implementation of the government wide data network (GDN) establishment of government information infrastructure (GU). This leads to the plans on how national information infrastructure can be built to enhance e-governance. Therefore, stake holders, institution and government require consultative effort and committement to improve the knowledge of the people, infrastructure and capacity building.

Infrastructures include; road network, electrification, pipe borne water, bridges, schools, libraries, houses, buildings and equipments. It is the availability of standard markets, hospitals that help to improve socio-economic and political development of the state.

2.2.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The two theories used for the study are, "A demand side economic theory of infrastructure and commons management propounded by Brett, M. Frischmann in (2005) and human capital theory propounded by Garry Stanley Becker in (1964). However, a demand side economic theory according to Brett, Frischmann provides a better means for understanding and analyzing societal demand for infrastructure resources. The theory showcases the important citizens attached and obtain access to infrastructure resources, be it traditional and modern

infrastructure. The individuals desires to value and the societal aggregated desires to value (utility). The values people created on the demand for infrastructure enable one analyze and compare provisional mechanisms (supply system such as markets, Government, community, family etc) and institution aimed at optimizing these mechanisms(laws, norms, subsidies, taxes etc.). This is because the critical aspects of the comparative analysis concern the relative effectiveness of those mechanisms to generate, communicate, process, and respond to demand signals. In the study, Frischmann described infrastructure resources as a public goods, network goods and natural monopolies etc stating that markets will fail one way or the other to efficiently provide the society with infrastructure, and government is obliged to pay significant role in the provision of the infrastructure for government intervention and proceed to analyze the regulatory options by supplying resources directly or contracting directly providers on behalf of the citizens. However, Brett developed a general definition of infrastructure which comprises of three demand side criteria common to traditional and nontraditional infrastructure. The section A of the theory explores the key economic characteristics necessitate the demand side analysis of infrastructure. The section B develops a general definition of infrastructure comprised of three demand side criteria common to traditional and nontraditional infrastructure resources while section C, develops an infrastructure typology to distinguish between commercial, public and social infrastructure based on the nature of the productive activities facilitated by an infrastructure resources and the potential for these activities to generate positive externalities. Section D compares infrastructure and network effects. Both types of economic effects have the potential to generate demand side externalities but the externalities attributable to network effects are more likely to be internalized by network providers than the externalities that are attributable to infrastructure effects. Section E evaluates the economic arguments for managing different types of infrastructure resources in an openly accessible manner. Section F addresses how price discrimination affects the demand side concerns raised.

However, A demand side theory of infrastructure begins by reviewing traditional economic concepts used in welfare analysis of infrastructure goods and deepening the understanding of societal demand for infrastructure resources. Brett Frischmann opined that demand side theory of infrastructure explain human desire to realize value (utility) and societal aggregated desires on infrastructure resources and also how human beings created and realized the desires for the acquisition of infrastructure to better its socio-economic and political development, stability and the capacity building. The understanding of the analysis and comparative nature of the provisional mechanisms (supply system such as markets,

government, community, family) and institutions optimizing mechanisms (laws, norms, subsidies, taxes) and how effective the mechanisms to generate, communicate, process and respond to demand signals and analyse different infrastructure resources as public goods, network goods and natural monopolies and combination.

Therefore, the impact of infrastructure in both in individuals and in societal stability and development complement human capital development in realizing organizational/institutional stability, growth and development and also enhance capacity building. However, Frischmann in his argument stated that certain important resources should be governed not by a property regime but a regime that incorporates open and nondiscriminatory access.

Human Capital theory was propounded by Gary Stanley Becker in (1964). This theory was used as the second theoretical framework of analysis in this study. Human Capital theory is fundamentally rooted from macro-economic development theory captured in Becker's classic book captioned "Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis of Education". The theory assumes that the composition of the employee in form of skills, knowledge, and abilities is the key to organizational performance. It went on to state that investing in skills and innate values promote organizational productivity. Human capital is also a concept that recognizes labour capital and posits that human beings can increase their productive capacity through greater education and skills training. Therefore, human capital development however, is the employee knowledge, skills, good health and education that enhances personal and organizational productivity. Organizations invest in its citizens through expenditures on education, training, research and health that enhance their productive capacity. Therefore, human capital is the added value that people bring in an organization.

Strengths of the theories in Education and Policy Making

v. The theories are used in education research and policy making. They help the policy makers and researchers to evaluate the relationship between the educations and training as inputs and economic and social benefits as outputs. Since the assumption stated that increase amount of schooling will bring growth and higher individual wages, Gross domestic product and increase in citizens participation, crime reduction and adequate healthcare services. Therefore, these enable the policy makers evaluate relatively the efficiency of public programs that encourage education

vi. They provide useful avenue for understanding how policy can be developed to promote individuals investment in their education. They review that embarking in further education (schooling) involves both cost that is spending (sacrificing at present and benefiting through higher wages in future) within individual level. Therefore, adopting

infrastructure theory of Brett Frischmann and Garry Stanley Becker human capital theory in this study will help the policy makers develop rational policies geared towards providing avenues for students' loan and enrolment programmes to change individual costs and benefits calculation by reducing the short costs in order to encourage the likelihood of pursuing education increasingly and improve the knowledge geared towards the provision of infrastructure resources in the society.

vii. The economic theory of Infrastructural can be used to address deficiency occasioned by lack of infrastructure in organization, While human capital theory also can be used to address individual social investments in education, such as the quality knowledge/investment in education that are productive and the best time for education and policy development aim at reducing the costs of education.

viii. The theories are meant to help increase the creative and innovative knowledge and how to utilize the knowledge to further productivity, investment, growth and development of the society.

Therefore, adopting infrastructure theory and human capital theory as well as its associated principles in Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, will enhance infrastructural development, knowledge; skills and education which provide sustainability and development thereby providing opportunities for future generation of staff and students. It will go on to provide good opportunities for education and trainings among individual staff and the institution in general, thereby promoting economic growth and productivity. This is because; long term economic growth depends to greater extent on the improvement on infrastructure and human capital. A good education, creativity or innovative workforce fosters labour productivity and economic growth and development. Furthermore, building upon the human capital theory and a demand side economic theory of infrastructure enable knowledge and trainings that can lead to provision of quality employment and promotion in the institution. This is because the acquisition of high skilled and creative workforce will increase opportunities for higher promotions in the Polytechnic. Finally, adopting the principles associated with these theories will enable the beneficiaries of the abilities to utilize their skills and knowledge in order to ensure better development of Polytechnic community.

2.3.EMPIRICAL REVIEW

The impacts of infrastructure on human capital development and organizational productivity determine the positive/negative effects to productivity in any organization. However, infrastructures are amenities that help to facilitate socio-economic, administration and political development. It includes; electricity, provision of water supply, standard road

network, standard class rooms, library, Hostels, Provision of Information and Communication Technologies and other ICT networks and Broad bands to facilitates digital services.

Kenny and Yaung (2022), In their studies "Should Infrastructure Investors Care About Human Capital" defined infrastructure as a central component of modern economies and need human capital to generate revenues that help organizational development. Its investment relies on adequate stocks of human capitals to create demand and revenues over the long term due to the fact that human capital is the underlying force behind economic prosperity and infrastructure capital (infrastructure, building and equipments). Therefore, the role of human capital as compared to physical capital as the fundamental underpinning for progress can be illustrated by occasions on which the stock of physical capital including infrastructure was considered diminished by war. Based on this definition and analysis of requirement of infrastructure resources, Imo state polytechnic need also need human capital to generate revenue for the institution and even beyond. The available ones still requires more practical training and development including discipline and moral reorientation to perform creditably for better. However, Hasler et al cited in Kenny and Yang (2022) stated that when energy prices tripled in the 1970s, the energy input share in US production tripled as well. The quality of energy inputs remained largely unchanged. At least in the short term, a given level of transport and electricity services is simply essential to sustaining output. It is similar worldwide and over the long term. In the bottleneck of infrastructure, it is worthy of note that electricity is the single biggest obstacle to business management. This report came from reasonable numbers of firms in South Africa that about 54% of firms in South Africa, 45% in Pakistani, 28% in Bangladeshi, 27% in Nigeria are affected by poor electrification and this affects the employment by constraining the launch of new busses, reducing the output and the productivity of existing firms and negatively affecting the trade and export competiveness of firms. Electricity becomes the major factors that affect productivity. However, similar case is observed in the tertiary education especially Imo state polytechnic where poor electrification contributed greatly in challenges in education and learning. It mares the operation of ICTs, reduces earnings and productivity in Imo state polytechnic. The study has; however, contend that many tertiary institutions especially in the polytechnic subsector seem to have demonstrated poor commitment to the development of the human capital which should be inherent in their human resources. There is no doubt, that this has the capability of dragging the productivity of such institutions to the mud. World Bank (2018) stated that human capital measure counted for about 64% of total global wealth (human and physical capital plus natural resources). However, Kenny and Yaung, continue that it's unsurprising that a range of

studies suggest strong positive macroeconomic returns to infrastructure investments. One broad based studies literature review of statistical studies which suggested that 63% of the analyses surveyed found a positive and the significant link between infrastructures assets directly increased GDP per capita by 0.7 to 1percent. The relationship between infrastructures and human capital development have been seen in increase electric power consumption, when the capital stock and private capital stocks are higher in countries with high human capital as measured by average years of education, electricity consumption and the physical stocks and when strongly correlated with income levels. There are relationship between electricity consumption and human capital controlling for private investment in electricity, income, population and the measure of the regulation. The regression is based on 4 years times periods between 1998-2018 (Kenny and Yaung, 2020). The analysis states that a more highly educated population is associated with greater electricity consumption. An extra year of average education in the adult population at a given income is associated with an increase in electricity consumption opinion is that there is positive relationship between health and electricity consumption. This is quite different in Imo state polytechnic where there is clear relationship between electricity, ICTs and productivity.

Kurcharcikova in (211) in Alika & Aibieyi (2014, p, 58) studied human Capital-Definition and Approaches: In his analysis opined that '' the new theories of economic growth characterized the human capital as the sum of the individual congenital and acquired skills, knowledge and experiences of individuals. However, he argues that often time writers omit 'commitment' in their list of the characteristics of human capital such as knowledge, skills, experience, etc One may possess, but without the spirit of 'commitment' to perform, the individual may still not perform as expected unless there is the 'commitment' to perform credibly the given task or job. In the forgoing analysis, Alika & Aibieyi, (2014, p. 58) opined that an organization can be said to be 'sick' if it is not the setup per se but a reference to the employees of the organization for lack of performance. That's the picture where the top employees set their standard of administrative operation instead of public service operational standard in the system. For instance in promotion where public service rule considers the year approved by employees who embarked on training/education graduated for upgrading/promotion in the institution, internal arrangement by committee adjusted the policy on their own considering the year an employee's evidence of the training/education is registered in their internal administrative arrangement, setting back some hardworking staff whose effort need growth to be struggle in the system. However, Bitsch, et al analyzed that the investment funds supported by the European Bank for reconstruction and development

suggests that infrastructures deals outperform non infrastructure deals despite low default risk.

Methodology and Research Design

The research design used in this study includes survey research design. The major survey instrument for this study is a structured questionnaire and interview. The methods were designed to reflect the research questions used in the study. The population is made up of entire staff of the polytechnic which includes the academic and non-academic staff of the polytechnic is 1353.Sampling method was adopted to adequately manipulate the enormous population. In determining the sample size of the study, the researcher drew the population from both academic and non-academic staff of the Institution. The population of 1350 was gathered and the sample size was calculated with Taro Yamane formula as follows:

n = Sample size 1 = Constant

N = population E = coefficient error by 5%

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N\ x\ (e)^2} n = \frac{1353}{1+1353\ (5)^2} n = \frac{1353}{1+1353\ (0.05)^2} n = \frac{1353}{1+1353x\ 0.0025} n = \frac{1353}{1+1353x\ 0.0025} n =$$

$$\frac{1353}{1+3.375} n = \frac{1353}{4.375} \quad n = 318 n = 318$$

The researchers used simple random probability sampling technique in the research study. This technique gives equal opportunity for all respondents to participate in the research study. The equality of chance given to every member of the population distinguished the simple random sampling technique from others.

The researchers used two methods in data collection: The primary data collection methods and the secondary data collection methods. In the primary data collection, the researchers administered questionnaires to the respondents to gather information. The questionnaires were accompanied by letter addressing the respondents to assist by responding to questionnaires administered. The letter explained the purpose of the study and request for information to accomplish the study. The respondents were assured the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaires were designed to achieve a high rate of response from the respondents to the survey. It was divided into two. The section A handles the background information such as sex, age bracket, qualification, designation of the respondents and the marital statuses of the respondents, while section B handles questionnaire option. The researchers carried out interviews to staff members of the polytechnic who are also called the respondents and observations were made. The secondary data collection was used: In that case, the researchers gathered information through the

existing literature such as; journals, extraction from textbooks and internet explorer materials respectively.

The researchers adopted face/content validity and construct validity to measure the extent to which the data for the study are reliable. In the face validity, well-structured questionnaire instrument were carried out by the researchers. The researchers also ensured that the items in the questionnaire were in conformity with the items in the objectives of the study, research questions and research hypothesis which are the representativeness of sampling adequacy of the content {the substance, the topic, the issue}.The researchers also constructed instrument of responds for the respondents in a four (4) likert scale. This questionnaire was assumed to have covered what it appears to test participants.

The test-retest methods were used to confirm the reliability of the study. It could be observed in the consistency and dependability of the result given by the respondents while responding to the questionnaires and hypothetical studies. The result of the study is adjudged to be consistency, dependable and credible when questionnaires administered and the responses given by the respondents agreed majorly with and disagreed with the research questionnaires, objectives and hypotheses of the study. Here, the instrument has produced consistency the same result over time. In the first test, the researcher distributed hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires to the public (Imo state polytechnic staff) and in return, hundred and forty (140) were recovered and recorded. While analyzing the questionnaires, it is observed that the respondents' maintained consistent views over time. Retest method, two months later, hundred and fifty nine (168) questionnaires were distributed to the public (Imo state polytechnic staff) and in return, hundred and forty five (145) were recovered and recorded. While analyzing the questionnaires recovered, it is observed that the results are correlated with the earlier test results, which implies that there is high coefficient of correlations between the two results hence the used of SPSS was made paramount in calculation of mean of the scores, standard deviation and Pearson correlation coefficient which give room to conclusion that the results of the tests are reliable. The data collected were analyzed using the descriptive approach. The study used Arithmetic mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient and statistical tables to analyze the questionnaire. Pearson correlation was used to test hypotheses. The data were obtained from questionnaire administered to the respondents.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSION OF FINDINGS

The data presentation, analysis and interpretation are done with the use of simple percentage, mean and standard deviation and Pearson correlation regression analysis. The study starts with the analysis of the sex of the respondents, designation, and marital status, age bracket of the respondents and educational qualification of the respondents. Others are the data presentation, analysis and interpretation with hypothetical analysis of the study. Bellows are the tables:

Table 4.1 Demographic Representation of the Respondents

Parameter	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	140	49.1
	Female	145	50.9
	Total	**285**	**100**
Age	18-25	3	1.1
	26-35	107	37.5
	36-45	142	49.8
	46-55	31	10.9
	56-65	2	0.7
	Total	285	100
Educational Qualifications	PhD	10	3.5
	M.Sc	123	43.2
	B.Sc/B.ED	96	33.7
	HND	38	13.36
	Others	18	6.3
	Total	285	100
Designation	Academic Staff	136	47.7
	Non-Academic staff	149	52.3
	Total	285	100
Marital Status	Single	15	5.3
	Married	256	89.8
	Separated	12	4.2
	Widowed	2	0.7
	Total	**285**	**100**

Source: field study, 2024

Base on questionnaire administered, out of 285 respondents; 140 respondents representing (49.1%) are male while 145 respondents representing (50.9%) are female staff respectively.

Considering the age distribution of the respondents above, 285(Two hundred and eight five respondents who responded to the questionnaires options articulated above, the respondents between 18years and 25years old with (1.1%) rate were 3 persons. The respondents between 26 and 35years old were 107 persons with percentages of (37.5%), while the respondents between 36years old to 45years with percentages of (49.8%) were 142 persons making it the highest number of respondents among the groups. The age between 46 to 60years with percentages of (10.9%) were 31 persons while the range of age between 61 and 70years with percentage of (0.7%) is 2persons making it the lowest numbers of respondents within the age bracket of the respondents

It is worthy that out of 285 respondents who responded to the questionnaires distributed. Ten (10) respondents were PhD holders with (3.5%) frequency percentage rate. While 123 respondents representing (43.2%) were M.Sc/MA/M.Ed holders. In the same vein, 96 respondents representing (33.7%) of the frequency rate were B.Sc/BA/B.Ed holders degree. Meanwhile 38 respondents representing (13.3%) percentage rate were the holders of HND (Higher National Diploma) while is respondents representing (6.3%) were the holders of WAEC, NECO, ND and NCE etc.

Note, that out of 285 respondents in the research study, 136 respondents representing 47.7% were academic staff of the Polytechnic, while 149 respondents representing (52.3%) were non-academic staff of the Polytechnic respectively

It is very clear that out of 285 respondents who responded on the research studies, 15 respondents representing (5.3%) respondents were single person (staff), while 256 respondents representing (89.8%) percentages rate of the population were married persons (staff). Meanwhile 12 respondents representing (4.2%) percentage rate were separated in their marriage, while 2 persons (respondents) representing (0.7%) were widowed respectively

Research Question 2: What are the impacts of infrastructures on human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo State polytechnic, Omuma?

Table 4.2 Relationship between the impacts of infrastructures to human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo State polytechnic, Omuma

S/N	The impacts of infrastructures to human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo State polytechnic,	Strongly Agreed	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1					

	Omuma are as follows:				
1	Inadequate knowledge and experience necessary for communication and information dissemination, hiring and retention of the staff in the organization	190(67%)	81(28.4%)	5(1.8%)	9(3.2%)
2	Absence of infrastructures affect creativity and innovative skills in the organization	118(41.4%)	154(54%)	7(2.5%)	6(2.1%)
3	It affects effective information and communication in the organization.	185 (65%)	88(31%)	2(0.7%)	10(3.5%)
4	Poor/absence of infrastructures affects quality productive output and investment attitudes in both public (Institution) and private sectors of the economy.	71(25%)	99(35%)	20(7%)	95(33%)
5	Inadequate trainings and development of human resource management in the organization	68(24%)	151(53%)	15(5%)	51(18%)
6	Inadequate skill acquisitions, creativity and innovation in the organization	59 (21%)	103(36%)	19(7%)	104(36%)
7	Unemployment and appointment of ill experienced personnel from one subsector to another in the organization	76(27%)	149(52%)	14(5%)	46(16%)
8	Inadequate incentives for workers motivation in the organization	79 (28%)	102(36%)	43(15%)	61(21%)

Source: field study, 2024

In research question one option one articulated that absence of infrastructures influence human capital development through the provision of inadequate knowledge and experience necessary for communication and information dissemination, hiring and retention of the staff in the organization/Imo state polytechnic. In the research studies, 190 respondents represented {67%} strongly agreed that lack of infrastructures affects human capital development by the knowledge and experience necessary for communication and information

dissemination, hiring and retention of the staff in Imo state polytechnic. Then 81 respondents represented {28.4%} agreed on the notion above, while 5{1.8%} of respondents and 9{3.2%} strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. Meanwhile 271{95.4%} respondents representing (95.4%) sounded positive; while 14(5%) respondents responded negative to that effect

In research question one option two articulated that the absence of infrastructures affect creativity and innovative skills in the organization. The combination of the infrastructures with creativity and innovation skills enhances result oriented attitudes among the staff members of the organization and this influences output quality in Imo state polytechnic. Therefore, 118 respondents representing (41.4%) strongly agree to the effect. 154 respondents representing (54%) agree, while 7 respondents representing (2.5%) and 6 respondents representing (2.1%) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. Meanwhile 272 represented with {95.4%} sounded positive that lack of adequate infrastructures affect creativity and innovative skills thereby ensures result oriented attitudes among the staff members of the organization in Imo state polytechnic while 13 respondents represented by {4.6%} sounded negative to the effect.

In research question one option three assert that inadequate infrastructures affect effective information and communication in the organization. Based on this, 185 respondents representing {65%} strongly agreed that lack of infrastructures affect information and communication in the organization. 88 respondents representing (31%) agree on the notion above; while 2 respondents representing (0.7%) strongly disagreed and 10 representing (3.5%) disagreed respectively. Meanwhile 273 respondents representing (96%) sounded positive that inadequate infrastructures affect the provision of information and communication in the organization such as Imo state polytechnic.

In research question one option four, 71 respondents representing (25%) strongly agree that poor infrastructures to human capital development affect quality productive output and investment attitudes in both public (Imo state polytechnic) and private sectors of the economy. 99 respondents representing (35%) agreed on the notion above. At this juncture, 20 respondents representing (7%) and 95 respondents representing (33%) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. Meanwhile 170 respondents represented {60%} sounded positive that poor infrastructures affect human capital development and quality productive output and investment attitudes in both public (Imo state polytechnic) and private sectors of the economy.

In research question one option five, 68 respondents representing ((24%) agreed that Inadequate trainings and development of human resource management in the organization affect human capital development in Imo state polytechnic. 151 respondents representing (53%) strongly agreed on it while 15 representing (5%) and 51 representing (18%) disagree and strongly disagree on the notion respectively. Meanwhile, 219 (77%) said that Inadequate trainings and development of human resource management affect human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma while 66 (23%)\ disagreed on the notion.

In research question one option six, 59 respondents representing (21%) agreed that Inadequate infrastructures affect education, skill acquisitions, creativity and innovation in the organization thereby hamper human capital development. 103 respondents representing (36%) strongly agreed on it while 19 respondents representing 7% and 104 representing 36% disagree and strongly disagree on the notion respectively. Meanwhile, 162(57%) said that poor infrastructures lead to inadequate skill acquisitions, creativity and innovation in the organization while 123(43%)\ disagreed that inadequate infrastructures affect human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic Omuma.

In research question one option seven, 76 respondents representing (26%) agreed that lack of infrastructures may lead to unemployment and appointment of ill experienced personnel from one subsector to another in the organization thereby affect human capital development in Imo state polytechnic. 149 representing52% strongly agreed while 14 representing 5% and46 respondents representing (16%) disagree and strongly disagree on the notion respectively. Meanwhile, 225(79%) said that poor infrastructures affect employment and appointment of personnel from one subsector to another in the organization thereby undermine human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma while 60(21%) disagreed to the effect.

In research question one option eight, 79 respondents representing (28%) agreed that poor infrastructures lead to inadequate incentives for workers motivation in the organization thereby hamper human capital development in Imo state polytechnic.102 respondents representing (36%) strongly agreed while 43 representing 15% and 61 representing 21% disagree and strongly disagree on the notion respectively. Meanwhile, 181(64%) said that poor/absence of infrastructures lead to poor incentive to workers motivation in the organization of human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma while 104(36%) disagreed with the notion that poor infrastructures

demotivate workers thereby affect human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic Omuma.

ANALYSIS

The research looked forward on 2007-2025 to determine the positive impacts of infrastructures to human capital development as follows:

1. Economic growth development, enhances training; education and skills acquisition, it helps in risk management, enhances creativity and Innovation, it facilitates productivity and service delivery, organization effectiveness and efficiency, employment and empowerment creation and sustainability, attainment of goals and the objectives of the organization

The impacts of human capital development to infrastructures are as follows:

2. Manufacturing and creation of machines, equipments and buildings, sustaining the productivity in the organization, risk management and Reduction, goal realization and sustainability, employment and Productivity, provision of electrification, information and communication technology etc to ensures effective service delivery,

RESULT AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Summary of Findings

The study observed that poor infrastructure lead to inadequate knowledge and experience necessary for communication and information dissemination, hiring and retention of the staff in the organization. Based on this, 271{95.4%} respondents representing (95.4%) sounded positive to the above; while 14(5%) respondents responded negative to that effect.

It is worthy of note that absence of infrastructures affects creativity and innovative skills in the organization thereby hamper human capital development and organizational productivity. However, based on the above, 272 represented with {95.4%} sounded positive that lack of adequate infrastructures affect creativity and innovative skills thereby affect result oriented attitudes among the staff members of the organization in Imo state polytechnic while 13 respondents represented by {4.6%} sounded negative to the effect.

Poor Infrastructures affects effective information and communication in the organization thereby undermine human capital development. However, 273 respondents representing (96%) sounded positive that inadequate infrastructures affect the provision of information and communication in the organization/Imo state polytechnic thereby undermine the human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo State Polytechnic

Poor/absence of infrastructures affects quality productive output and investment attitudes in both public (Institution) and private sectors of the economy. 170 respondents represented

{60%} sounded positive that poor infrastructures affect human capital development and quality productive output and investment attitudes in both public (Imo state polytechnic) and private sectors of the economy.

The study observed that poor infrastructure give room to inadequate trainings and development of human resource management in the organization: 219 (77%) said that absence of infrastructures lead to inadequate trainings and development of human resource management thereby affect human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma while 66 (23%)\ disagreed on the notion.

The study observed that inadequate skill acquisitions, creativity and innovation in the organization are the product of poor infrastructures in Imo state polytechnic. However, 162(57%) sounded positive that poor infrastructures lead to inadequate skill acquisitions, creativity and innovation in the organization while 123(43%)\ disagreed that inadequate infrastructures affect human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic Omuma.

The study observed that unemployment and appointment of ill experienced personnel from one subsector to another in the organization is caused by poor infrastructure. Based on the above, 225(79%) agreed that poor infrastructures affect employment and appointment of personnel from one subsector to another in the organization thereby undermine human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma while 60(21%) disagreed to the effect.

The study observed that poor infrastructures give room to inadequate incentives for workers motivation in the organization. However, 181(64%) agreed that poor/absence of infrastructures lead to poor incentive to workers motivation in the organization thereby undermine human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic, Omuma while 104(36%) disagreed with the notion that poor infrastructures demotivate workers thereby affect human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic Omuma.

Recommendations

Based on the summary of findings; the following recommendations were made:

1. Both government of Imo state and private sector should partner to provide adequate infrastructural facilities such as; uninterrupted power supply/electricity, ensure standard roads network, quality classroom buildings and library, adequate water supply, good markets, schools, ICT equipments and Hostels where necessaries that will provide adequate and contribute towards human capital development

2. Provision of autonomy/semi-autonomy to the Institution to distant it from undue interference by sub-national actors/states.
3. The government of Imo state should ensure adequate and regular motivation and remuneration of staff (human capital) by ensures regular payments of salaries, wages, bonuses and other remuneration packages and also ensures routine training, skills acquisition, knowledge building capacity and development. This will improve morale capacity to work hard, committed spirit of service and effective and efficient service delivery among the staff of the institution and organizations in general.
4. Provision of More Funds: Government should help the Management of Imo state polytechnic to provide adequate health care services by providing more health equipments, materials and well trained personnel that will facilitate the effective and efficient health care services and capacity building in the organization (Imo state polytechnic).
5. Government of Imo state and private sectors should ensure environmental stability capable of fostering mental, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development and also reduce insecurity and related cases within the institution in particular and other tertiary institutions in Imo state.
6. More investment on Infrastructure to enable human capital trainings and capacity building in the institution.

Conclusion

It is worthy to note that infrastructure and human capital development were adjudged as the panacea for organizational productive performance particularly in Imo State Polytechnic. This is as a result of the increasing skills, knowledge, system thinking, creativity and innovative skills, leadership and management abilities, strategic thinking, decision making and problems solving skills, its research ability and diligence effort towards human and material development, problems solving and capacity building. The study focuses on infrastructure and human capital development in Imo state polytechnic. Base on empirical study (evidence), the study concluded that infrastructures and human capital development have socio-economic and political effects; such as improves knowledge and skills, education and health care services, leadership and management of the organization, information and communication technology, infrastructural development and performance evaluation. Others include; the tendency towards increasing gross domestic products and national income, unemployment and joblessness, increase economic growth, organizational productive performance, professionalization and specialization of the personnel at work place. It also

improves on the job and off the job training and development. It improves behavioural and human relation trainings and managerial competency. It however reduce poverty and increase self-employment opportunity, industrial performance and revolution, monetization of productive equipment, infrastructural development, effective administrative planning, and knowledge of maintaining machines and equipment, effective utilization of materials and non-materials resources on organization (Imo state polytechnic) . It provides motivation to personnel and enhances capacity in the organization.

However, the choice of human capital development and organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic is based on the critical impact of this variable to socio-economic development and the overall determination of input quantity and output quality of the polytechnic. Also the choice of 2007- 2025 was born out of the need of establishing the impacts of infrastructures on human capital development in determining organizational productivity in Imo state polytechnic. The choice of 2007 was when the polytechnic was upgraded from monotechnic to polytechnic. These added more strength and power to the newly upgraded institution. The studies acknowledge that human capital development enhances organizational productivity and efficient performance of the employees in the Institution. Education and training are the panacea for skills acquisition; creativity, innovation, knowledge building and experience in Imo state polytechnic but due to poor/absence of infrastructures the reverse is now the case.

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AN ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY AS A VERITABLE INSTRUMENT FOR CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF IMO STATE PUBLIC SERVICE SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

Bureaucracy is a catalyst that determines the livewire of government development. it spurs the activities to achieve all governmental plans and aspirations are built. The contemporary public bureaucracy in Nigeria, there is a need for sound and inter-connected services delivery to realized national development. the effective public bureaucracy is a pre-condition towards ensuring efficient capacity building in nigeria. the poor policies implementation resulting through incessant corruption and structural challenges have been a cog on the wheels of bureaucratic performance. the ill-performance caused by low motivation thwart reasonably, the team spirit of ensuring improve service Delivery. However, Ensuring Effective Capacity Building Through Effective Policies Implementation, Innovation And Reforms With Collective Commitment Will Realized The Roles Of Bureaucracy Towards Improve Nation Building. To Achieve These, The Researcher Made Use Of Both Primary And Secondary Data Collection Which Include Interviews And Observational Methods And Literature Review. The Content Analysis Are Used. The Findings Indicate That The Problems Of Public Bureaucracy Will Linger As Far As The Origin Of The Problems Are Left Tackled.

KEYS WORDS: *Public Bureaucracy, Development, Capacity Building, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Accountability, Innovation, Responsiveness, Meritocracy, Ethics.*

INTRODUCTION

Public bureaucracy "A veritable instrument of change and development in the country's socio-economic and political development is a subject of no doubt regarding its multi-spherical experiences and strategic position occupied in the country. To make this topic more clear and understandable, public administration is a discipline. We have development administration and administration development from which it associates itself into socio-politico and economic development. In the words of weidner (1962:99) "development" is

never complete; it is relative, more or less of it being possible. Development is a state of mind, a tendency, a direction. Rather than a fixed goal, it is a rate of change in a particular direction. According to Milton, "Development is the rational process of organizing and carrying out prudently conceived and staffed programmes or projects as one would organize and carry out military or engineering operations".

The need to achieve maximum social, economic and political advantages in policies formulation and implementation geared towards achieving effective and efficient services delivery cannot be over emphasized. This is because it promotes nation building in its multi-spherical dimensions. We have come to know that the impediments in national development arise as a result of problems of policies formulation and implementation. It is upon this development that (Ikelegbe, 2006) defined public policy as a government action or proposed action directed at achieving certain desired goals or objectives. This is because, public policies in a nutshell determine the government direction of what to do, when to do it in other to achieve all round development.

However, despite the fact that, the public bureaucracy faces some challenges in achieving affective policies implementation, the fundamental problems could be traceable in the policies formulation pattern. This is because in policy making process, the legislators placed their interest first before the interest of the public while deciding policy resolution. These happened that there occurred some adjective absently requires for effective implementation of such policies by the public bureaucracy. To this extent, therefore, the role of government in development is to a very large extent, the role of public bureaucracy in nation building which is of paramount important towards ensuring effective formulation, implementation of government policies, projects and programmes aimed at achieving developmental goals and objectives of the nations. Therefore, the objectives of the study are:

i. What are the roles of bureaucracy in nation building?
ii. What are the challenges of bureaucracy in the implementation of government policies and programmes of action?
iii. What are the remedies to cushion the effect in the organization?

Therefore, the followings are the objectives of bureaucracy in the organization of public Administration in nations building. They include the followings:

i. To articulate the role of bureaucracy in nation building?
ii. To know the challenges bedeviling bureaucracy from achieving the objectives in the organization

iii. To determine the remedies to cushion the challenges of bureaucracy in the organization

Therefore, the roles of bureaucracy in nations building include the followings:

ROLES OF PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY IN NATION BUILDING

i. To initiate undertaken that are aimed specifically at improving the capacity of the public sector of the various sector to meet millennium development goals initiative, such goals are: (1) engaging in the act of governance, decentralization, transparency and accountability. The application of information and communication technology (ICT) becomes great catalyst that fosters the effective and efficient service delivery in our organization. The capacity building can be accelerated by the activities of bureaucrats in the organization. This ensures capacity building in the area of statistics, e-governance and data storage system.

(i) They have to provide clean, honest and transparent government, thereby discarded the old rules and procedures in governments to install the new and simplified ones in the system.

(ii) **INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY:** Innovative and the successful practices that contribute directly to these goals is important for effectiveness of roles and achievement of greater efficiency. Therefore, public servants should play such roles by ensuring the creation of new ideas; production of goods and service with the ideas created and remain dynamism in the course of implementation of governmental roles and regulations etc.

(iii) **SYSTEM MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS:** This is a very important obligation which every bureaucrats are ought to abide by, and/or take it as their responsibility in their course of service, most especially the Armed forces and police force whose responsibility are to ensure absolute maintenance of law and order, protection of life and property of individuals and publics within the territory of the state, ensuring peace and conflict resolution in the society, security of life and properties as well as direct and redirect of the governments to accelerate capacity buildings in the country.

(iv) **Service functions**: Governments by the assistance of its public institutions undertake activities directly at the promotions of individual and collective welfare and the fulfillment of other purposes of the state, such service/functions are the provision of good roads and rural areas (water, electricity, recreational services etc) the provision of education, relaxation centers, the provision and maintenance

of hospitals and other infrastructure that aid public health administration to ensure stability and development of society. These services require extensively capital intensive thereby needed an institution such as government with its large capital outlay and resources base to effectively provide necessary ingredience in the act of governance.

(v) **Management of public enterprises:** It is the role of public bureaucracy to ensure effective management of public enterprises. Public enterprises are commercial activities carried out by governmental agencies and corporation, such as the railway, power-holding company, Telecommunication Company, Nigeria ports Authority and Nigeria Mining Authority etc. The measure of National interest, security implication and capital involved in this enterprise weiled tremendous economic importance as socio-political significance. Therefore, government as oriental body established an agency that managed and implement the activities of the enterprises in the country, called bureaucrats.

(vi) **ADVISORY AND MONITORING ROLES:** The public bureaucrats are urged to ensure a provision of effective services in the country by advising the political executive, legislature and the judiciary in their day to day governance. They caution the political leaders when they go wrong and they redirect them on the measure to take towards ensuring smooth administration. They monitor all structural arms and tiers of governments in all they do to facilitate checks and balances. They criticize any political leader that failed to adopt due process or work in contrary to the stipulated law etc. They evaluate the functions of any governments in the country for future recognition and motivation.

(vii) **TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY:** One of the most important and laudable role bureaucrats' plays is to be transparent and accountability while in office. This counts openness, explicit and clarity in the act of governance, and it goes a long way to ensure maximum provision of the needs of governments and governed thereby restored absolutely the lineage of the public bureaucrats as the life wire of government. To ensure accountability, all bureaucrats are obliged to be honest, probity, patriotism, openness in their service delivery. It is government task to bring any corrupt agent to book and punished him or her severely. They are under obligated to sanction those who do not maintain a cordial relationship

after disciplinary measures are carried out. Selfless service and patriotism are the hallmark for effective service delivery in the country.

(viii) **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ROLE:** In public administration, there are several kind of training; such as in service training and off service training. In service training are those training giving to public servants to accelerate their performance. Such as seminars and workshops, orientation and re-orientation training. While off-service training are those training giving to a public bureaucrat in order to improve him/her for future services such training are: professional training, supervisory training, executive and managerial training as well as training of administrators. Most of the time, the professional and management training are in service training because, some bureaucrats normally get fortune to be in service without getting on university experience then after some times, they may decide to read it as a course in high institution so as to professionalized themselves in that particular course/discipline for effective management.

(ix) **IMPROVING DEMOCRATIC ROLE:** The function of public administration is; are; to ensure acceleration of democracy; by adopting decentralization system, rule of law (due process) united and equalitarian society. It is the duties of public bureaucrats to ensure abidance by the laws. To ensure harmony and decentralization of the governmental rules and regulations according to the hierarchy of individuals, group and organization etc.

However, the successful bureaucratic performance is determined by the qualities exhibited by the bureaucrats in the organization of public Administration in the society. The qualities are as follows:

QUALITIES OF GOOD BUREAUCRATS

i. Foresight (forecast) based on knowledge and experience.
ii. Ability to delegate (able to delegate work to sub ordinate).
iii. Sense of judgment. The ability to engage into an assignment which requires evaluation, weighing of evidence, accessing the mood and temper of those sections of the public which are clients of the department and which the department has to consult or take into consideration before arriving at decisions and formulating policies.
iv. Imagination and perseverance (renown) administrator should be creative and have the sense of innovation.
v. School of experience.

vi. Tact: A bureaucrat must develop and cultivate a sense of tact, must be tactful in dealing with his political bosses president or governor, minister or commissioner, he must be efficient and brilliant.

Compassion, sympathetic and consideration: The above quality of bureaucrats will enable the administrators to be effective in actualizing their objectives that will enhance development of socio-politico and economy of the society. Therefore, the measures towards achieving set of goals in the bureaucratization of the administration. The following principles are to be considered.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The essence of this chapter is to ensure effective minimization of perils engender by capacity which equate each other with development. The available evidence showed that the performance of the public bureaucracy in virtually all tiers and sectors of the government have remained very dismay. The dismal performance of the parastatals and the agents of government like the formal National electric power Authority (NEPA), now power Holding Company of Nigeria and Port Authority As Well As Railway Corporation is obvious. A quest for better services has not been met. To address the holistic problems of the public bureaucracy and to ensure effective actualization of the millennium development agenda on education, skill development and working condition remain utmost consideration; an effective management, leadership and motivation scheme is of paramount important. Therefore, for public bureaucracy to achieve and effective service delivery a far-reaching reform is needed. These reforms are a necessary tool use to ensure:

The adoption of meritocracy as the measures for the recruitment of personnel into public bureaucracy without compromise to the concept of ethnicity is required for efficient public service system. Selfless service and discipline is a topnotch for efficient public bureaucracy.

The changing of the administrative attitudes and behaviors of personnel so as not to see it as a business oriented venture rather service-oriented venture. The bureaucracy should be trained and retrained so as to imbibe the spirit of innovation, ingenuity, efficiency, achievement, prudent use of resources and to do away with all forms of waste that have characterized the public bureaucracies for many years past. There should be public education and enlightment in order to accelerate the performance of bureaucrats in their implementation of policy and programmes.

The government should muster enough political will to initiate reform programmes and carry them to a logical conclusion, including the privatization of public enterprise. The bureaucracy should imbibe with the spirit of transparency and accountability. Categorically,

both the elected officers and non-elected officers should act on behalf of one another of their delegates by ensuring openness and explicit in management and service delivery. There should be adequate monitoring of projects and programmes when necessary, redirect the activities of an agency or the subunits. The public bureaucracy with extreme high level of accountability and factual expertise will foster democratic system and efficiency in services. There should be mutual understanding between the bureaucrats and the political machineries, which will facilitate the actualization of the expected development. There should be a need for proper monitoring and control of the projects. The need for monitoring of projects, checks and balances in the course of administration will accelerate an effective performance of bureaucracy. To ensure an effective control, public bureaucracy should play an essential role towards ensuring effective implementation of policies and programmes. Such roles are advisory roles, effective implementation of policies and programmes, abiding by the rules and regulations. There should be an effective rationalization of the bureaucrats and the political agency.

There should be a proper adoption of necessary disciplinary measures against any officers that behave contrary to the laws. For these to be properly check, all the officers in public bureaucracy who are apprehend for alleged corrupt practices in contracts, torts, bribery, embezzlement of government funds, diversification of funds, mediocrity should be putting a severe stoppage and make provision for sanction of disciplinary measures against any staff.

There should be rationalization and representative of all the public bureaucracy inter-dependency with the elected representative. Rationalization is the necessity for incorporations of experts and information into agency for Policy implementation. Insufficient experts and lack of available knowledge militate against the consideration of all information's. To ensure an effective representativeness of bureaucracy, rationality should be mutually re-enforce and urgent broaden participation in decision making which may help in the acceleration of information and policy option available to decision makers.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Therefore, the summarization of the findings in this research are of paramount important and remain instruments of successful research work therefore, the summary of the finding are stated below;

i. From the findings and observation, 75% of the Nigeria, bureaucrats said with satisfactory remark that public bureaucracy is a veritable instrument of change and development in the country.

ii. Most of the bureaucrats agreed that, the bureaucratic system applying in the society have no standard but have structured establishment.

iii. Ensure education and enlightenment fosters effective development of Nigeria bureaucratic system in achieving capacity buildings in policies formulation and implementation.

iv. Merits should be advocated at the expense of mediocrity in the organization of public Administration.

v. Red tapism/excessive formality influence development of bureaucratic system.

vi. Training and retraining of bureaucrats facilitate their performance and development of capacity building in policy implementation.

vii. The adoption of due process procedure of old system of bureaucracy influence the new down administrative system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observation, this work have recorded several initiatives which are already on the way and could help the governments and governed to cope with changes and also to position them better to 2020.A greater analysis of these initiatives and a wider sharp of information of the outcomes of these initiatives are important. This is to say, that, the public bureaucrats need a Technical support to pilot and experiment with some of these new initiatives. It implies that, the bureaucrats and the life wire as far as government and governed is concerned. Therefore, the supposedly impact of the public bureaucracy are recommended. So, the recommendations of this work are as follows:

i. Much emphasis should be put on education and development of capacity building in services.

ii. Government should ensure the participation of the political leaders in the implementation of the policies through monitoring and supervision of the programs and projects..

iii. The problems of ethnicity, Tribalism and sectionalism in the recruitment of bureaucrats should be carefully address; possibly, there should be adoption of the federal character in the recruitment and promotion of the bureaucrats so as to ensure capacity building in Nigeria.

iv. Government should ensure total eradication of the corruption and other related problems in Nigeria by ensure effective scrutinization of EFCC and ICPC roles and also empowers them more towards ensuring zero corruption in the country.

v. Government should adopt a meritocratic approach in recruitments, awards (prize) and promotion of the public servant.

vi. Government should establish measures that will gradual reduce the instinct of red tapism in public service.

vii. There should be steady training and retraining of the bureaucrats so as to imbibed with them spirit of transparency, honesty, integrity, selfless services, accountability, rationality, effective representation and adoption of due process procedure in service.

viii. Bureaucracy in Nigeria should be dynamic, creative in order to achieve effective development.

ix. Government should institutionalize due process and ensure effective adoption of the system for better development.

x. There should be careful and effective institutionalization of policy implementation in order to achieve efficient bureaucratization in Nigeria. These points above will help in the propagation of resourceful system in Nigeria.

xi. In the recommendation, government should ensure effective In motivation of public bureaucracy and should endeavour to ensure effective implementation of policies and programmes to enhance government service delivery.

CONCLUSION

The findings and recommendations exactly touch the essential areas that will be capable of reviving the bureaucratic system in Nigeria. As a result of the quest for globalization and liberalization of the service in the organization, public bureaucracy have not met with its target, because of the political environment in which bureaucracy operate. These have been the cog on the wheal of achieving effective bureaucratization in the society. In order to achieve an effective public administration in the society, the bureaucrats in partnership with politicians should ensure rationality, representativeness, and adoption of due process procedure stipulated by law towards ensuring the achievement of designated target. There should be re-invention of bureaucrats and the Bureau in ensuring accountability and transparency in service, probity, fear of God, selfless service (patriotism) and creativity (Innovational). These will engender an effective partnership between the public sectors and private sectors towards engineering and re-engineering of the government and entrepreneurial management for the sake of development in the context for the socio-economic and political milieu in Nigeria.

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