ESCAE JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY STUDIES (EJMSS)

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ESCAE Journal of Management and Security Studies (EJMSS) is a journal of the Faculty of Social Sciences, ESCAE University, (Avotrou Campus) Cotonou, Republic of Benin. The journal accommodates original researches on contemporary social, management and security issues that provoke intellectual discourse and opinion. EJMSS is committed to promote deeper understanding of issues in Republic of Benin and the world at large through scholarly researches that permit cross breeding of ideas. One of the key objectives of EJMSS, is to gather and analyze data/information that are very significant to enrich scholarship, promote security and development in Benin and the entire world.

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Abstract

Conflict is indispensable in every social organization and tertiary institutions are not exempted. Conflict exists in tertiary education which is considered by many as a potential for lower productivity and hinder the attainment of educational goals. The paper discusses tertiary education conflict management strategies as an imperative for the attainment of educational goals in Nigeria. Conflict arises due to the mix of intellectual capacities of lecturers and students and their divergences in values, cultures, opinions and mismatches in tasks and job descriptions. The paper examines the various conflict management strategies that exist in tertiary education as collective bargaining which subsumed negotiation, mediation, and compromise among others. The study discusses factors that inhibit conflict management strategies such as the lack of trust and respect for parties, the inability to understand other people's perspectives and empathy among others. The paper suggests that for effective management of conflict in tertiary education and to reap the positive aspect of conflict, the manager of tertiary education should be trained in the skills and mechanism of managing conflict in tertiary education.

Keywords: Tertiary education, Conflict, Conflict management strategies, Goals.

Introduction

Conflict is no doubt part of human creatures all over the nations. Therefore, conflict is no longer avoidable among persons in any society; this is because human beings have so many differences in values, attitudes, level of reasoning, orientation and approach to issues. The university system, which is controlled by both internal and external forces, always has conflict with them. Internal conflict can occur between the management and staff or between management and students. The external conflict can also take place between the management of the university and the government or the host communities. Conflict can affect the university positively or negatively. Positive conflict in the university always ensures high goal attainment among other benefits, it creates mutual understanding among management staff and students but where it is in the negative it impacts negatively the performance of the university indeed it will be a threat to university goal attainment. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) provides some of the goals of tertiary education are to contribute to national

development through high-level manpower training and to promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service.

Tertiary education is the community of scholars from different educational backgrounds assembled to implement educational goals. Thus, consists of various caliber of people whose values and ideas must be congruent with the rules and regulations governing the university (Wordu, 2023a). Conflict becomes indispensable in the management of tertiary education if the conflicts are not well managed, it will bring about the breakdown of laws and orders in the university and undermine the attainment of educational goals. An understanding of conflict and why it happened is important to enable the managers to manage it properly (Ellis & Abbott, 2011) Conflict management is the process of limiting the negative aspects of conflicts while increasing the positive aspects (Rahim 2013). Conflict management therefore involves acquiring some specific skills related to conflict resolution such as self-awareness about conflict, conflict communication skills, and establishing a structure for resolving conflict in the environment (Abosede, Okon, & Charles, 2014).

The efficient management of the university system involves the application of all the management skills, values and effective resources towards the achievement of educational goals. Browanys and Price (2008), opined that the management strategies that could be used to resolve conflicts include: compromise, collaboration, accommodation, coercion, confrontation, reconciliation, control of rewards and climate of trust, formal authority, effective communication and avoidance. They believe in the principles of authority and unity of command to eliminate conflicts. They further believe that conflict can be eliminated or avoided by recruiting the right persons, proper descriptions of jobs, and establishing clear chains of command and rules and procedures to meet various contingencies. Conflict strategies are the methods adopted in the process of reducing the negative impact of conflict. It is, therefore, advised that tertiary education managers should be pragmatic in handling any conflict that arises from the institutions to achieve the desired goals. Conflict management strategies help the managers to improve on their managerial skills hence the school administrators and university management are grappling with issues that must be properly managed to allow a harmonious working relationship among university staff. It is worth noting that it is not all conflicts that can always be resolved, what conflict managers do is to manage and regulate it so that it does not worsen. Tertiary institutions are always affected by the conflict that sometimes leads to the breakdown of laws and orders in the school environment.

In spite of the importance of conflict management and various strategies adopted it appears that those techniques have not yielded the desired result. Hardly, the end of the academic year without one conflict or another resulting in the breakdown of laws and orders. The conflict is either between the federal government and the management, or students agitating for better facilities and the non-availabilities of learning resources. In all, these actions inhibit the attainment of educational goals. These bring to the fore whether the educational administrators are applying the right strategies in resolving those conflicts that arise in the university. Or is it due to the neglect on the part of leadership of tertiary education? It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to discuss the conflict management strategies that are adopted by tertiary education administrators to prefer solutions that will be of immense help to the administrator. Also, ensure that the administrators of tertiary education can make quality decisions and be aware of the right strategy for managing conflict in the educational system, especially in tertiary education. The paper, therefore is structured the introduction, the theoretical analysis, concepts clarification, causes of conflict in tertiary education, conflict management strategies in tertiary education, inhibitors of conflict management strategies in tertiary education, conclusion and suggestions.

Theoretical Analysis

The theory that guides this work is the structural-functional theory propounded by Pearson (1960). The theory postulates that an individual normally adjusts to a given structure in an organization; however, any change in the structure of the organization causes conflict and destabilizes the organization. Conflict should be minimized by minimizing the structural changes to maintain stability with both the individuals as well as the institutions. The structural theory presents conflict as a product of the tension that arises when groups compete for scarce resources. The main argument in sociological theory is that conflict is built into the particular ways societies are structured or arranged. It explains the condition of society and how such conditions or environments can create conflict. Structural conflict theory identifies such conditions as social exclusion, deprivation, class inequalities, injustice, political marginalization, gender imbalances, racial segregation, and economic exploitation that could result in conflict in society.

Structuralism maintains that conflict occurs because of the exploitative and unjust nature of human societies or because of the domination of one class by another. The theory with all its positive sides has some deficiencies in its one-sidedness of looking at causes of conflict. It does not consider the positive side of racial or ethnic diversity it only sees the flaws. The structural theory thus makes more sense only when conflicts are viewed from the broadest possible point of view, and only if the observer opts to ignore alternative causes of the conflict. Structural theory seems to look at conflict as evil but it is not so in all cases. Sometimes it could serve as a powerful tool for progress. This theory is relevant and useful to the topic of discussion because it tends to show that when there is a negative change in the existing structure of the university it tends to bring conflict among the students and staff. Thus structural conflict theory is useful in explaining conflict situations in universities. It also brought to the front burner some of the factors such as corruption, ethno-religious upheavals, and bad leadership that encourage and exacerbate conflicts in the university.

Concept of Tertiary Education

Tertiary education is education that is acquired after graduation from post-education and the individual has passed the prescribed examination and is willing to further academic pursuit. It consists of universities, inter-universities and other specialized institutions like colleges of education, schools of health, technology, agriculture, and teachers' training institutions. It is saddled with the onus tasks of transmission of skills and knowledge to the learners to ensure that the learners live a productive life and contribute to the development of society. (Wordu, 2023b). The National Policy on Education averred that the goals of tertiary education among others are to "promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community services, to reduce skill shortage through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the need of the labour market" (FRN, 2014p39). These laudable goals are achieved through teaching, learning and research. It is imperative to note that achieving these goals may lead to conflict among intellectuals whose onus task is the implementation of educational goals. The conflict may be a result of individual differences as a result of their belief, ideas, and values or when their role conflict with their personality role among others can hinder the attainment of education goals. So, to attain the educational goals the managers of tertiary education must be proactive to nip any misunderstanding on board before it snowballs into a conflict situation.

Conflict

It is unarguable that conflict is inevitable in any relationship between men and it becomes imperative that the management of conflict is important for the attainment of organizational goals. Conflict has elicited various definitions by various scholars and it beholds the researcher to look at the various

definitions in a bid to understand the meaning of conflict and its effects on the management of tertiary education. Conflict is viewed as a divergence of interest, opinions, friction and disagreement that manifests in destructive behaviours. (Yesuf & Ibrahim, 2019). The authors enumerated other destructive behaviours like protest, demonstration and aggression which are inimical to the achievement of organizational goals. In the same vein, Adeyemi & Ademilua (2012), averred that conflict is a result of differences of opinions or interest groups, and in tertiary education, it could be between the staff and management, or between students and the school authority. The hallmark of conflict in any organization is the inability of the employees to discharge their duties effectively. The resultant effects are the low productivity and non-attainment of organizational goals. Tertiary education is never exempted from conflict and also has the same negative effects like disruption of academic programmes, low productivity and other social vices that are associated with industrial strikes. Management of conflict becomes inevitable if tertiary education must achieve educational goals.

Causes of Conflicts in Tertiary Education

There is no denying the fact that the potential for conflicts is multifarious inside the tertiary educational system. Tertiary education as an institution is piqued by an excess of challenges that breeds conflicts and these challenges are as follows:

i. **Corruption** - most of the conflicts in the universities in Nigeria today are linked to corruption. This has negatively affected the ranking of Nigerian universities in Africa and in the world at large. In Nigeria today, corruption has become an endemic problem threatening every area of the country's socio-economic and political development (Ikyase, 2014).

ii. **Bad Governance** – Conflict in universities at times is a result of poor leadership which has negatively affected the development and attainment of educational goals. When there is bad leadership in the affairs of any institution, they are bound to have conflicts. Without good governance, the rule of law, predictability and ministration, legitimate power and responsible regulation- no amount of funding, no amount of charity will set the university on the path of peace and development. For tertiary education to be devoid of conflict there must be serious transformation of the quality of governance and this will go a long way to minimizing the various conflicts that are encountered in the ivory tower. Most of the conflicts in tertiary institutions arise due to the failure of leadership (Adeyemi & Ademilua, 2012).

iii. **Ethno-religion/nepotism conflict** one of the major challenges responsible for conflicts in the university is the resurgence of ethno-religious/nepotism conflict. In most state universities where the visitors have the power to influence or appoint a vice chancellor or the heads of various higher institutions within their states, they most times sacrifice good qualified people because of ethnic or nepotism sentiments. Also at times because of the political influence over the appointments of Vice-chancellors, square pegs are put in round holes. These categories of persons do not have the basic capacity to govern the institution and thereby cannot handle or manage conflict when it arises.

iv. **Lack of democratic tenets** most conflicts in tertiary education are clear manifestations of non-adherence to democratic tenets. The influence of electoral violence in our conventional politics has crippled our university's politics. The university elections are also characterized by certain behaviors that are inimical to the integrity of the system. For there to be peace in our universities there is a need to adhere strictly to the tenets of democracy as enshrined in the law.

v. **Wages/ salaries** – payment of wages has been the major reason why universities often go on strike. Before there is an increase in wages and salaries of staff in universities, there is usually industrial strike and protests by the staff. The ability of the federal and state governments to

implement the collective agreement reached between the various unions led to several strike actions in 2002, 2009,2010,2011,2012 and 2018. Conflicts in tertiary education continue due to the unfulfilled agreement.

vi. **Job role conflict**: - conflicts prevail in the offices as to who should do a particular thing in an office. This comes into play when roles are ambiguous for staff to cope with. Baridam and Nwibere (2008), opined that an individual's role in an institute can have a major effect on the conflict to which he is subjected. This is because staff believes that different pay is assigned to different jobs or positions. It can also happen when there are different categories of staff fighting for power and trying to assume the authority of the other staff. Conflict arises whenever perceived or real interest collides.

vii. **Conflicting goals**: - when the goals of the institution are vague, it can lead to disagreement among staff and management. Conflicting goals arise in tertiary education because of the disparity between the management and the faculty officers within the institute. Conflicts may also occur between heads of various departments whose policies, interests and priorities often differ, though collectively they are all geared towards corporate efficiency.

viii. **Competition for scarce resources**: - Ndum and Okey (2013), express the view that research, teaching, student amenities, staff pay and other welfare services all have their claims on the limited resources at the disposal of the university. Scarce resources in the university may pose a big challenge to the university management. Lecturers and students may be fighting over the few existing lecture rooms and offices. In tertiary education, conflict may arise because of scarce resources. Consequently, the allocation of resources may be a source of conflict if not well managed.

ix. **Leadership style**: - the management competency of the administrative head goes a long way to determining largely the severity of conflicts in the university environment. The administrator of tertiary education who has tendencies of authoritarianism and dogmatism are often prone to conflict. According to McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, Theory X's view is that man has an inherent dislike for work and will try to avoid it if it is possible. The theory went on to explain that man must be coerced, controlled or threatened with sanction to get him to put enough effort into his job. Managers who apply this theory are usually dictatorial and allow limited initiative and independence of their workers. Such leadership style may lead staff to gang up against the management and may start showing signs of insubordination from the workers which may lead to conflict. The leadership style of any manager will always determine the level of conflict in the institution.

x. **Ineffective communication**: Inadequate system of communication on educational institution policies, changes in working practices and introduction of new policies affecting the lives of staff lead to disputes, feelings of insecurity, confusion and resentment among staff (Akpoyor-Waire, 2013). Poor communication, poor perception, and ambiguity in communication can generate conflict in the university. When staff cannot decode the correct information passed across to them by the management, it can lead to different reactions. Communication enables management and staff to try to create a common understanding between them. Salolomo, and Don-Solomon (2016), state that in the absence of full and accurate information transmitted through normal channels, uncertainty and rumor may become widespread. Good communication can also reduce feelings of neglect, disempowerment and alienation by increasing a sense of belonging and importance.

Conflict Management

It is globally accepted that conflict is inevitable in any organization of humans and therefore an integrated part of any human interaction. Accepted as given, the onus is on the administrators of tertiary

education to seek to lessen the negative impact of conflict and see if there are positive influences that will enhance goal attainment. It becomes imperative that managers of tertiary education seek various ways to minimize the negative impact of conflict in the educational system to avoid leading to destructive behaviour. The process of reducing the negative effect of conflict in education to avoid protests, demonstrations or student unrest is called conflict management. Conflict management strategies are the methods adopted or used to manage conflict to enhance productivity in the educational system (Igbinola, Saau, Atolagbe and Joel, 2023). The essence of conflict management strategy is to adopt possible techniques that will help to nip the disagreement between humans and not allow it to degenerate into crisis and in the process disrupt academic activities. Conflict management strategies include negotiations, mediation, arbitration and reconciliation. Olaleye and Arogundade (2013), argued that different management strategies may lead to either desirable or undesirable outcomes depending on their effectiveness or ineffectiveness, respectively. Whenever an ineffective management strategy is used, undesirable outcomes such as strikes, demonstrations, destruction of property, and poor performance among others are the negative effects.

Conflict Management Strategies in Tertiary Education

Tertiary education is a conglomerate of intellectuals consisting of different personalities with different values, attitudes and philosophical orientations who are bound to disagree in the process of attaining educational goals. It becomes imperative to examine the strategies available to administrators of tertiary education in addition to alternative dispute resolution. It is instructive to note that conflict in tertiary education could be inter-parties conflict and intra-parties conflict. It is inter-parties when it is internal, between the students and the school authority, or management and staff. It intra-parties when it is between the school and external body. In all, there are underlying principles that enhance the effective management of conflict in tertiary education. Some of these are:

1. ensure the independence of the panel and their ability to manage bias and transparent discussion and avoid power influence- using a very powerful influencer to head the panel.
2. provide alternative options and conditions when the agreement may not be honoured.
3. respect confidentiality and refrain from harming
4. to separate the people from the problem focus on the problems at hand,
5. ensuring that the decisions are for the collective benefit and achievement of educational goals
6. finally focusing on the interest, not the position. (University of Miami, Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost).

Collective Bargaining

This is widely acknowledged as a veritable strategy in conflict resolution between the employer and employees. It is an informal dispute resolution mechanism that involves parties in disputes for mutual resolution of problems. The major instruments of collective bargaining are negotiation, agreement and compromise on the terms of employment and working conditions among others. According to Odoziobodo (2015), the mechanism for resolving conflict is subsumed into collaboration, communication and negotiation. Collaboration otherwise called a win-win- strategy is geared towards ensuring that the parties in dispute make certain compromises to ensure that peace is restored in the institution. Communication is the life wire of any organization because the superordinator must communicate with the subordinates for the effective attainment of organizational goals. When there is a breakdown in communication or ineffective communication usually leads to conflict. It is, therefore, incumbent on the leaders of tertiary education to effectively use the available procedures to communicate with teachers and students.

Dialogue

The etymology of the word "dialogue" is from the Greek "Dialogos; from dialegesthai; legein means to speak, while; logos, means word, meaning or reason for effective dialogue to take place it requires a degree of openness to the other party. Dialogue is an instrument for peace development in any organization as the objective is to understand the other party. Understanding the other through dialogue will contribute so much to building peace. Dialogue as an attitude toward life is something that can be cultivated by approaching people with curiosity and openness. The other party but any altitude that indicates superiority ownership of the truth or coherence will be a limitation in any dialogue.

Greek philosophers like Socrates and Plato are good examples that come to mind when thinking about dialogue because conflict managers emphasis communication and personal interaction, dialogue is mainly used as a tool within the psychosocial conflict transformation paradigm (Norbert, 2003). As the rules demand, the third parties initiate, organize and direct the dialogue section. The initiator of the process need not come from the institution, anybody from the same establishment who has the personality can spearhead the peace talk.

The most important dialogue-based undertakings are those that are meant to influence the management of the conflict at the leadership level. This is done mainly by holding conferences, seminars and workshops for the staff to enable the imitators to influence the participants with ideas. (Norbert, 2003). It is very important for university administrators to understand some communicative techniques as Wehrspann (2014), opined that a supervisor has to communicate effectively across cultures and treat others equitably; otherwise, differences in culture gender, styles or personality can result in communication breakdowns. The practice of dialogue as a means of conflict resolution has proven over time to be the best way to manage or resolve conflict in our tertiary institutions.

Mediation

Meditation is a voluntary, confidential and informal process in which a trained or untrained professional dispute resolver helps to facilitate negotiation, communication and understanding among disputing people and help those people get their own mutually acceptable resolution to their problems. Mediation persuades the parties to settle the dispute. Mediation allows all parties to completely remove the risk of an unacceptable outcome being imposed on them. This is because someone else does not impose the settlement upon the parties, the parties in the dispute always leave the dispute with a feeling of fairness. In this case, you do not have a winner or a loser. In mediation, the disputing parties are allowed to freely choose a very knowledgeable and skilled mediator. A good mediator must show actual absolute impartiality, patience and the ability to safeguard confidence. Finally, a good mediator must set an agreeable time and venue and ensure that are present during their meetings.

Negotiation

Negotiation is the process whereby two or more disputants are faced with a problem or conflict about some limited resources, or interest. Negotiation is designed to reach an agreement between the disputants' parties and the parties involved try to modify their interests to achieve a desirable goal (Nyamajiwa, 2000). In negotiation, there is a need for a third party to intervene and act as a middle person.

Negotiation parties are often advised to prepare their mind that there are often win-win solutions. The third-party who is helping to resolve the dispute will always create an alternative that will allow the other party to feel that he did not lose out. To intervene properly in any negotiation the third party need to understand the goals, needs, positions and interest of the parties involved (Nyamajiwa, 2000). It is

imperative to balance the issues so that the parties can mutually accept the outcome. Negotiation usually involves several steps, which include the exchange of proposals and counter-proposals. It is expected that the parties themselves should be open and free to make offers and concessions.

Some elements that affect Negotiation.

* Personality factors you must consider yourself as an important factor to the peaceful resolution of the problem.
* The venue: most of the time the place and the environment where the negotiation takes place have a special and important role to play.
* A comfortable venue where everybody can express their minds without any atom of fear or intimidation.
* Time factor: try to consider if the time factor will have any effect on the negotiation.

Conciliation

It is another alternative dispute resolution strategy that is used in the settlement of disputes between two parties. It is a voluntary, flexible resolution instrument that is used to settle disputes with the assistance of the conciliator. The primary purpose of a conciliator is not only to reduce tension among conflict parties but to improve communication, interpret issues and helps parties to find mutually accepted outcome. Wikipedia). The difference between conciliation and arbitration is that conciliators do not have the authority or legal standing to invite witnesses and therefore cannot make an award against any parties.

Adjudication

The Constitution of The Federal Republic of Nigeria established National Industrial Courts saddled with the power and authority to hear and determine cases related to employees and employers and make blinding decisions that are enforceable by the appropriate authority. Adjudication involves the use of the National Industrial Court to settle disputes emanating between employees and employers on welfare, salary or term of engagement. The Federal Government of Nigeria dragged the Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU to National Industrial Courts over the unpaid salary of ASUU during the strikes of February 14 to October 7 when the strike was called off. According to Channels, on May 30, 2023, the court upheld the 'no work no policy' of the Federal Government. It is important to note that the edict or law that empowered the establishment of universities also empowered the university to set committees to adjudicate matters that affect students' and lecturers' discipline. The committees are expected to safeguard the rights of students and members of the university community as well as maintain their integrity. In like manner, the committees are empowered to punish erring members of the university community.

Inhibitors of Conflict Management Strategy

The frequent industrial dispute and conflict in tertiary education is a testimony that various strategies adopted in the past have not yielded the desired result. It becomes incumbent for the researcher to enumerate the various factors that inhibit conflict management strategy in the attainment of educational goals. According to Leadership Article (2020), caution that in conflict resolution should avoid following pitfalls of reducing the topic as unimportant, jumping to conclusion about the issues without hearing from both sides and inability to empathize with others.

Considering the cosmopolitan nature of university community it is wrong for administrators to see conflict as a potential threat to the existence of the organization but rather as inevitable in any

organization and if well managed can lead to personal growth, innovation and development in the organization. Therefore, the managers of tertiary education must have listening ears understand other parties' perspectives, depersonalized and outlaw triangulation. (Similey, 2018). Also, avoid defensive, being defensive will hinder effective two-way communication. Again never underestimate the other party's feelings as unimportant, it is not about their wrong or right but how to eradicate the negative consequences of conflict in the attainment of educational goals. It is more important that parties remain calm, empathize with others and appreciate their perception, needs and emotions of the issues raised. Never jump to a conclusion, allow the parties involved to present their case. Jumping to a conclusion is like presenting the answer before the problems.

Another major inhibitor in resolving the perennial disagreement between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Academic Staff Union of Universities or other academic institutional organizations are lack of trust and respect between the two groups. It is in the public domain that the Federal Government on certain occasions has reneged on various agreements reached in the past. The inability of the federal government to implement previous agreements has made academic unions lose confidence in their conflict resolution techniques. Odoziobodo (2015), avers that lack of integrity and compliance with the previous agreement between the Academic Staff Union of Universities and Federal Government has led to a loss of integrity and trust by ASUU, thus inhibits effective dialogue between the union and government

Lack of resources to manage conflict situations. Management of conflict in tertiary education is cost-intensive and unfortunately, tertiary educational institutions do not have much time and resources. More importantly, they do not have expert skills in conflict resolution. Some of the administrators of tertiary education do not have the critical skills in conflict management but rose to the management cadre from long services, appointed by crones, or as political patronage to the power that be. Consequently putting square pegs in round holes**.**

Conclusion and Suggestions

Conflict is inevitable in any social organization in which tertiary education institutions are inclusive. Conflict arises in tertiary education as a result of divergent views and intellectual capacities of lecturers and students with various philosophical ideas, and cultures, and mismatch in works and job descriptions. It is incumbent on managers of tertiary educational institutions to see conflict not only as destructive potential but as a potential for staff development, innovation and organizational growth if well managed. There are various conflict management strategies managers of tertiary education can adopt to minimize the negative influence of conflict in tertiary institutions. The major strategy is collective bargaining which includes negotiation, mediation and compromise among others. The administrators of tertiary education are saddled with the responsibility of harnessing human and non-human resources for the attainment of educational goals and need to be equipped with skills for conflict resolution techniques. Thus, the effectiveness of tertiary education hinges on the ability to resolve conflict and ensure a good working relationship among staff to the attainment of educational goals. The paper, opined that no one approach or strategy is the best for all situation, therefore managers of tertiary education needs to acquaint themselves with various strategies that will mitigate the effect of conflict in tertiary institutions. .

Based on the factors inhibiting conflict management strategies the following suggestions are proffered.

1. The university administrators should be properly trained in conflict management skills in problem-solving through conferences, seminars and workshops.

2. Continuous training and retraining of management staff in leadership training in the strategies of managing conflict.
3. The institutional management cadre should eschew corruption and embrace democratic tenets in tertiary institutional management.

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Journalism Practice in Periods of Pandemic:
Influence of Covid-19 on Journalists Coverage of Events in Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined influence of Covid-19 on journalists' coverage of events in Edo State Nigeria. The main objective of the study is to ascertain ways the pandemic affected journalists' physical coverage of events during and after the pandemic in Edo State, Nigeria. Premised on the Protection Motivation Theory, the researcher employed survey research method for the study. All the 150 journalists/reporters randomly selected across print and broadcast media organizations in Edo state strongly agreed that the pandemic influenced their style of physical coverage of stories and also re-direct the road map for mass media contents, programmes and print writings. Finding therefore shows that Covid-19 influenced journalists' coverage of events in Edo State Nigeria. However, with the reduction in the number of losses, journalists' physical coverage of events no longer adheres to social distance. The study concluded that health challenges influence journalism operations and journalists' emphasis on events and their style of physical reportage. The researcher therefore recommended that journalists' should be accorded necessary support and motivation in period of pandemics to enable them carry out their duties effectively. Like their health related counterparts, journalists play important roles during pandemics and should be accorded the necessary support and motivation.

Keywords: Influence, Covid-19, Physical Coverage, Journalists, Nigeria

1. Introduction

The world has experienced various forms of pandemic. The pandemics range from the Asian flu (1956-1958), the Spanish flu (1918-1920), the Black death (1346-1354) and Antonin Plague (165AD) (Adewunmi, Akintelu, Oladele & Taiwo, 2021). There was also the Ebola, Lassa fever outbreak among others. In 2020, Covid-19 awaken the entire world to a state of confusion caused by lockdown and strict health orders such as regular hand washing, social distancing, use of facemasks and regular health checks. The pandemic obviously alter ways things were previously done. Coronavirus pandemic which started in Wuhan China is believed to be one of the diseases in human history which bring the world to a standstill. The disease exposed the vicissitudes of the human nature and fragility of mankind. As at the time of this research, it is estimated that more than ten million people died as a result of the outbreak (Hooking University). While educational institutions embark on online learning, health, legal and other professional maintain social distance while attending to patients and clients.

Apart from severity of the disease, the mode of transmission which is mainly from human to human, the lockdown associated with the pandemic, the economy effect that resulted from the lockdown is devastating. The mode of transmission through human droplets also make social gathering, congregational, and exchange of ideas, teaching and learning in classrooms, laboratories and other forms of physical contacts impossible. The pandemic also affected ways and manner some professional go about their businesses. For instance, doctors and care providers are made to wear protective clothes which make access to their skin impossible. It is also reported that the pandemic affected interpersonal

relationship even between very close family members. Thus, the pandemic affected every facets of human endeavors, operations, management, attitude and perception. It is assumed that mass media professionals including journalists' comply with the guidelines issued by World Health Organization (WHO) of regular hand washing, hand sanitizing, physical and social distancing, the use of facemask, general hygiene among others. It is against this backdrop and assumption, that the study examined the extent to which the coronavirus pandemic influence the ways and manner journalists physically covered events and the extent that the pandemic influenced media discourse, debate and writings in Edo State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The Covid-19 pandemic is one of the diseases that have ravished the world in recent times. From the continents of Asia, Europe, America and Africa, the disease displays a high sense of superiority that even the most advanced nations of the world could not gainsay. Schools and places of worships were shut down, the aviation industry was grounded, interpersonal relationships were reduced to a mere social media affairs with little contact, family tiers were put to a halt, family members could not pay their last respect to their loved ones who died as a result of the pandemic, the economy was greatly affected, socio-cultural activities were put to a halt, researchers and scientist had to engaged means of curtailing the virus through the recommendation of hand sanitizers, physical and social distancing, face-masks and frequent hand washing. The pandemic may have come and gone but its effect and influence is still been felt in many parts of the world. While many businesses may have fully recovered from the impact, others are groaning. This is as the pandemic also affected the practice of many professionals which may have altered the physical posture during engagement. The question is how do journalists physically cover stories during the pandemic and to what extent does the coronavirus pandemic influenced debate, discourse and positions in the mass media. These questions form the crux of the study.

Objectives of the Study

The study is designed to:

1. Determine the extent the Covid-19 pandemic affect ways journalists physically covered events during and after the pandemic.
2. Ascertain the influence of covid-19 on journalists' reportage of events during the pandemic.
3. Determine how journalists physically covered stories during the coronavirus pandemic
4. Find out the extent to which the pandemic influence mass media discourse and writings among journalists in Edo state, Nigeria.

The rest of the paper is structured in what follows: Section 2 presents the theoretical framework and relevant literature while section 3 describes the methodology of the the study. In section 4, analysis, results and discussions are presented to shed light on findings. Finally, section 5 features conclusion and recommendations.

2. Theoretical Framework and Review Literature

The study is hinged on the Protection Motivation Theory propounded by R. W. Rogers in 1976. According to Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso (2008), there are three key elements in the operation of fear appeal. These are the magnitude of noxiousness of a depicted event, the probability of that event's occurrence and the efficacy of a recommended response.

Each of these elements brings about the extent to which a particular communication and event stimulate fear to the extent of causing the amount of attitudinal change. This implies that when an audience member receives a fear appeal, they weigh it in their minds to ascertain the extent to which the event is horrible or harmless. This means that attitudinal change may be unlikely when the event is not believed or thought to unlikely happen. Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso (2008) are of the view that attitude change is said to be a function of the amount of protection motivation aroused by the cognitive appraisal that the audience member goes through. With the guidelines given for curtailing the transmission of coronavirus such as wearing of face masks, avoidance of physical contact, that is, maintaining physical and social distances, sneezing on the elbow and frequent hand washing, most individuals, for the fear of contacting the virus, after rational cognitive appraisal were motivated to protect themselves against and pandemic by adhering to the lockdown rules. The theory is relevant because it helps to explain the extent to which journalists, out of fear of contacting the disease, avoid physical contact during event coverage. Moreover, it helps to ascertain the extent in which the mass media prioritize the issue of the pandemic through discourses, debates and other journalistic writings.

There is dearth of literature on how Covid-19 pandemic affected ways that professionals engaged in their duties. However, literatures on the impact of the pandemic on various facet of human endeavors abound. Zizek (2020) posits that Journalism is one of the five social dominos where Covid-19 has impacted and has brought about radical social changes, increasing uncertainty and fragility.

In the United States, Casero-Ripolles (2021) citing the Pero Research center (2020) reported that 92% of citizens actively consumed news about the coronavirus with 32% increase from the beginning of the crisis. The traditional and digital media also co-existed effectively during the coronavirus pandemic (Chadwick, 2017) Casero-Ripolles, 2020)

During the pandemic, the public opted for a well-established, reliable news sources (Weldon, 2020). Covid-19 according to Castillo-Esparcla et Al, (2020) & Garcia-Santamaria et al, (2020) has had a remarkable impact on the relations between Journalism and politics as it is an event of social local point which led to a control dynamics of information by political actors. This is as Obadofin (2020) reported that the pandemic has caused media outlets in Nigeria to experience a significant decrease in revenue due to drop in sales and advertisement. Covid-19 pandemic is believed to have started in Wuhan China in December 2019 (Wokemezie, 2021) and gradually spread to the rest of the world like wild harmattan fire, resulting to a total lockdown of every aspect of human socio-economic and socio-cultural activities. The lockdown effect was seen on families especially among the low and middle income earners (Oguntayo et al, 2020). Onyebuchi, Nwagbara, David & Weluche (2021) reported that domestic violence increased significantly during the Covid-19 lockdown.

The impact of the disease is far - reaching as Udejinta (2021, p.250) reports that "The COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria has exposed the poor credibility of the central government as narratives in the media show that the citizenry does not believe the federal government information about COVID-19; as there is, a general apathy towards the coronavirus vaccination" This is as Ogenyi & Otebe (2023) assert on the challenges the disease brought to Nigeria, when they posited that "the COVID-19 Pandemic is a troubling situation globally with vaccines to protect the public against transmission introduced for public safety, but public response to the vaccines in Nigeria has been low due to perceptions".

There is no literature on how and ways the pandemic influences physical conducts when professionals carry out their duties. This is especially so among journalists. Thus, there is a dearth of literature. It is this gap of literature that the study intend to bridged. However, literature exist on impact and influence

of Covid-19 on journalism or mass media. Wokemezie (2021) asserts that the World Health Organization was on December, 31st, 2019 placed on an alert as result of several cases of pneumonia in Wuhan, Hubel Province of China. The virus was proclaimed to be different from other virus and raise a global concern and on the 7th, January, 2020, China confirmed the disease as coronavirus. The virus belong to the family of viruses that causes common cold and severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). The virus which was tagged 2019-n Cov or COVID-19 characteristically has fever, shortness of breath and cough as it's symptoms. Yong, Coa & Shuangli, (2020) report that the virus is spread through respiratory droplets when it find entrance into the oral and respiratory organs of human beings. The World Health Organization (WHO) on 11th March, 2020, declared COVID-19 as an international public health emergency. Wokemezie (2021) posits that the disease was declared a pandemic after ravaging over one hundred and forty (140) countries.

The disease find its way to Nigeria after an Italian man who came into the country on Thursday 27th February, 2020, on arriving in Lagos via Istanbul, Turkey went to Ogun state, where he took ill and admitted for malaria fever. The officials of the Nigeria Center for Disease Control later traced him, took sample for analysis and confirmed that he had contacted the disease. He was later taken back to Lagos where he was quarantined in an isolation center. Following this development and continuous spread of the disease even after several measures that were put in place, such as the use of facemask, social and physical distancing, frequent hand washing with running water with respite, a total lockdown was declared by the federal government. This is the introductive part of the study. The other part is made up of the methodology that discusses the research method that was used for the study, data presentation and analysis, discussion of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

3. Methodology

The researcher adopted the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Survey method of research for the study. The survey method is more suitable and appropriate because it is descriptive and can reveal respondents' attitude, perception, opinion and other psychological, interactive and physiological variables (Asemah et al, 2022, Tejumaiye, 2003, Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, Ezeah & Asogwa, 2013, Okoro & Ekwueme, 2013 and Okewechime, 2016). Thus, survey is employed by the researchers who want to find out respondent's opinion, perception etc. The survey research method was used by the researcher to find out the extent to which journalists were influenced by Covid-19 in their physical coverage of stories during the pandemic, while FGD was used to find out from selected mass media audience in Edo State the extent the pandemic influence media discourse, writing and presentation.

According to the Nigeria Union of Journalist, (NUJ) the official number of registered Journalists in Edo state, Nigeria is 264. This figure therefore constitutes the population of the study. However, the researcher purposively selected 200 journalists drawn from both print and electronic media as well as government and private media organizations. This figure is believed by the researcher to adequately represent the population of the study. This implies that the sample size is 200 respondents. The sampling technique adopted for the study was purposive while the instrument used was well structured and constructed five point Likert scale questionnaire of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) Disagree (D) and Not Sure (NS) the instrument was validated by senior researchers in the field of mass communication. A well-structured Focus Group questions was also constructed to find out the thought of audience about the subject of enquiry. In four designated areas of Benin City. A pilot test on 10 journalists in Benin city was conducted to ascertain the reliability of instrument. The instrument was administered faced to face as well as e-mails through the assistance of five (5) research assistants who are students of the researcher.

4. Analysis, Results and Discussion

Out of the 200 copies of the questionnaire administered to journalists in Edo state of Nigeria, 5 were invalid. This is because two of the questionnaire could not be retrieved, one was mutilated while two was not properly filled. This shows that the study was based on 150 respondents.

Table 1: Showing respondents' response on the extent which Covid-19 influences way of physical coverage of events during the pandemic.

Variables	SD	A	SD	D	NS			
		4	3	2	1	Total	X	Decision
Very large extent	245 97% 725	02 11% 8	03 2% 9			150 100% 242	4.9	Accepted
Large extent	140 94% 700	03 2% 12	02 1% 6	05 3% 10		150 100% 728	4.8	Accepted
Low extent	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Very low extent	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Not at all	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -

Source: Field survey, 2024

The data presented show that the pandemic influenced ways journalists physically covered events. This is because all the respondents said to a very large and large extent, Covid-19 influenced the physical posture when covering events.

Table 2: Showing ways journalist covered events during the pandemic

Variables	SA	A	SD	D	NS			
	5	4	3	2	1	Total	X	Decision
Physical contact	05 3.3% 25	05 3.3% 20	140 93.3% 420	- - -	- - -	150 100% 465/150	3.04	Rejected
Social and physical distances	140 93.3% 700	05 3.3% 20	05 3.3% 15	- - -	- - -	150 100% 735/150	4.9	Accepted
Normal distance	- - -	- - -	140 93.3% 420	05 3.3% 10	05 3.3% 05	150 100% 435/150	2.9	Rejected

Source: Field survey, 2024

Respondents (journalists) Strongly Agreed that they maintain social and physical distances when covering events during the pandemic. This implies that while the pandemic last, journalists do not have physical contact as they continually maintain social and physical distances.

Table 3: Showing extent journalists are influenced by Covid-19 after the pandemic

Variables	SA	A	SD	D	NS			
	5	4	3	2	1	Total	X	Decision
Covid-19 influences the way I physically distanced myself when covering events after the pandemic	120 88% 600	10 7% 40	15 10% 45	05 3% 10	- - -	150 100 695/150	4.6	Accepted
Covid-19 does not influence the way I physically distance myself during coverage of event after the pandemic	- - -	05 3% 20	130 87% 390	10 7% 20	05 3% 05	150 100% 435/150	2.9	Rejected
Sometimes, Covid-19 influences the way I physically distance myself during coverage of event after the pandemic	- - -	10 6.6% 20	120 80% 360	10 6.6% 20	10 06.6% 10	150 100% 420/150	2.8	Rejected

Source: Field survey, 2024

The data presented above shows that even after the pandemic, journalists are influenced by Covid-19 as they still maintain a social distance. All respondents are of the view that to a large extent the pandemic influences the physical distances during coverage of events. Even at work, they also maintain social and physical distances as they constantly wash their hands. Thus, the pandemic greatly influenced the way journalists relate with one another during working hours and in work places. However, some editors believe that after the pandemic journalist no longer strictly adhere to the guidelines recommended by (WHO) it was therefore observed that majority of Journalist no longer maintain physical and social distance when physically covering an event after the pandemic.

Table 4: Showing how journalists physically covered stories during the coronavirus pandemic

Ways of coverage	No of Responses	Percentage
Physical contact	Nil	Nil
Social and physical distances	150	100%
Total	150	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

All the journalists survey Strongly Agree (SD) that they all maintained social and physical distances when covering events during the pandemic. They avered that interviews were conducted at long range

of physical distances even with prominent personalities. This implies that covid-19 greatly influenced how journalists covered events during the pandemic. Covid-19 pandemic affected ways journalists physically covered events while it lasted. They maintain high degree of physical and social distances. The pandemic also affected the way journalists relate with one another in work places and the coverage given to the disease. The coverage is very high that it was reported in some quarters that journalists unduly pay more attention to the coronavirus pandemic.

The study examined influence of Covid-19 Pandemic on the physical coverage of events during and after the pandemic. Findings from the study revealed that the pandemic influenced the ways journalists physically covered stories during the outbreak. They maintained social and physical distances and observed all the prescribed precautionary measures. However, after the pandemic, they resorted to their normal ways of physical coverage. Though many of them claimed that they still maintain physical and social distance even after the pandemic, it has been observed that it is not so. This implies that pandemics have a way of influencing professionals' conduct/activities in the course of carrying out their responsibilities. The study shows that the pandemic did not only influenced ways health professionals physically conduct themselves by maintaining social/physical distance but also influenced ways journalists physically covered events/stories during the outbreak.

The study also influenced journalists' reportage of events in that most stories and analysis as well as commentaries during the outbreak revolved mainly on the pandemic especially numbers of death that were recorded, reportage of new Covid-19 variants, analysis of the effect of the disease on socio-cultural, socio-political, socio-spiritual and socio-technological lives of the people. Consequently, it is important to note that the pandemic greatly affected ways journalists physically covered stories/events. The study confirmed the work of other researchers such as Udejinta (2021), Oguntayo, Popoola, Opayemi, Faworaga & Olaseri, (2020) and Ogenyi & Otebe (2023) that the pandemic greatly influenced the society while it lasted. This is as it has also affected the ways journalists and editors conducted themselves in the physical coverage of events during the pandemic. Debate and media discourses were also influenced during the pandemic. Media commentaries, editorials, articles and news features are regular occurrences features of most media organization in Edo State.

The Study supported the work of Casero-Ripolles (2021) entitled "The impact of Covid-19 on journalism: A set of transformations in five domains" that Covid-19 impacted on news consumption, business model, journalistic companies and journalists' working conditions, disinformation and the circulation of fake news as well as relations between journalists and politicians. This is also supported by UNESCO, the 'world in times of Covid-19" when it is asserted that "all around the world, the Covid-19 pandemic has taken a considerable toil on the media industry. While most countries face different realities, many journalists are exposed to great sanitary risks when reporting on the health crisis and only a few ones receive safety guidelines or protective gear.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

There are professionals that should be considered important during health and other related crisis. The journalists are among them. This is especially obvious during the coronavirus pandemic. But while health workers were specially treated as more vulnerable due to their physical contact with covid-19 patients, the journalists were treated with levity despite their exposure to the outside world and as potential transmitter, and those who are mostly exposed to the virus. Thus, they were not properly treated and cater for compared to their health counterparts who received allowances and subventions. Journalists' role is important during such crisis because they educate and provide information from the

field that will enable other members of the public to take informed decisions that will safeguard them and generally improve their well-being. The study reveals that like their health counterparts, the pandemic also affected the way journalists operates and carry out their professional duties.

It is therefore imperative for policy-makers, owners of media channels and media proprietors as well as the government to dress media professionals in general and the journalists in particular in the right robe. This will motivate them to perform their duties with all sense of responsibility and seriousness especially when crisis arise.

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Monetary Policy and Citizens Socio-Economic Welfare in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of monetary policy on the socio-economic welfare of Nigerians between 1980 and 2021 from three perspectives: income, health and education. The assessed the short and long run effects of six monetary policy variables (lending rate, savings deposit rate, liquidity ratio, monetary policy rate, loan deposit ratio and private sector credit to gross domestic product ratio) and inflation (control variable on three different socio-economic welfare variables (gross domestic product per capita, child mortality rate and primary and secondary school enrolment) during the study period. Results of the auto-regressive distributed lag (ARDL) technique show that revealed interest rate, liquidity rate and private sector credit have negative and significant effect on per capita income while savings deposit rate, monetary policy rate, loan deposit rate and inflation have a positive and significant effect on per capita income. In the long run liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate have significant positive effect on income per capita while the ratio of private sector credit to GDP has a significant negative effect on it. Inflation has a positive but insignificant effect on per capita income. Furthermore, in the short run, all the selected monetary policy variables have significant effects on child mortality rate. While the effect of interest rate, liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate is negative, that of savings deposit rate, loan deposit ratio, private sector credit and inflation is positive. In the long run, interest rate, private sector credit and inflation have positive effect on child mortality but whereas the effect of interest rate is insignificant, the other two have significant effect. Regarding number of school enrolment, in the short run, interest rate has a negatively significant effect while liquidity ratio, loan deposit ratio and inflation have direct positive effect on it. Savings deposit rate has an insignificant positive effect on it while private sector credit has a negative insignificant effect on it. On the long run, interest rate, private sector credit and inflation have an insignificant positive effect on the number of primary and secondary school enrolment. Savings deposit rate, monetary policy rate and loan deposit ratio have insignificant negative effect on it. The effect of liquidity ratio is significantly positive. The study concluded that monetary policy has significant effect on the socio-economic welfare of Nigerians both in the short and long run. The study recommends the sustenance of the existing liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate due to their favourable effects on citizens' welfare.

Keywords: Monetary policy, Socio-economic welfare, ARDL

1. Introduction

The West African sub-region has depended largely on exportation of primary products over the years and has equally designed and implemented several policies to enhance the economy and people's welfare, including monetary policy. The countries in the sub-region have tried to achieve welfare goals including employment, better standard of living, sustainable environment and economic growth. However, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic had worsened an already precarious welfare gap among the people (Aslam et Al., 2021). Lakner (2020) reported that, sequel to several interventionist policies, the long-term notable decrease in the poverty level in Nigeria was reversed due to the pandemic. Although the situation is not peculiar to the West Africa sub-region, the World Bank (2022)

reported that more that 39 million of people fell into deep poverty in year 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic.

The welfare of a people is partly influenced by the effectiveness of monetary and fiscal policies put in place by the government to boost domestic production, increase employment and improve people's income (Landes, 1996). Legros (1998) argued that the economic wealth of the nation is not determined by the amount of   silver and gold it holds only but the standard of living of each citizen. Hence, programmes and policies that influence the welfare of citizens have always been the focus of researchers.

Foxton et al (2018) defined monetary policy as conscious actions of the monetary authorities such as the Central Banks to change the quantity and cost of money in an economy to achieve laid down goals. Monetary policy instruments are deliberate attempts by Central Banks aimed at improving the economic and social economic wellbeing of the citizens. these attempts include the manipulation of money market and exchange rates to achieve are low unemployment, high output growth rate, low inflation and stable exchange rate.

After the global economic crisis of 2007/2008, major advanced countries embarked on far-reaching easy monetary policies resulting in sharp rise in capital flows into emerging economies. This also spurred the latter to embark on varied monetary policy instruments to curtail inflationary trend that resulted from the inflows.

A major instrument of monetary policy in Nigeria is interest rate which was described by Sanusi (2002) as the price a borrower pays for using someone's else's money. This implies that interest rate determines the cost of credits such that low interest rate can make borrowers to borrow more and vice-versa. Economists believe that *ceteris paribus*, high interest rate will discourage investment, deplete gross domestic product (GDP) and ultimately adversely affect the welfare of the people (Sekuma, 2011). As noted by Oko et al (2016), several challenges are usually faced by monetary authorities in the implementation of monetary policies, including execution/operating cost, fiscal dominance, structural rigidities and external shocks.

As stated by Quirós et al (2018), the people's economic welfare is most times captured by present and future consumption and other resources such as wealth, income and households' endowments. The present consumption view captures economic welfare from immediate consumption perspective while the future lifetime consumption view captures it as welfare a future attainable consumption

El-Jahel et al (2020) noted that in attempt to promote wellbeing in countries, Central Banks enact specific legislations mainly in the form of monetary policy. The authors argued that modelling optimality in monetary policy is typically based on "social welfare loss function" which is expressed in terms of unemployment and inflation. These two macroeconomic variables reduce the wellbeing of the people as they directly impair income and prices. Monetary policy can have damaging effect on the economic and social welfare of the people, including increasing the poor-rich gap and poverty. Termed "regressive monetary policy", Mehar (2018) opined that such policies can reverse the trend of improvement and growth. For example, liberalization with high interest rate spread can cause regression in the anticipated effect of interest rate policy on productive economic sectors and citizens' welfare. The same scenario will characterize the effect of higher return rate and deposits. Higher returns, according to Mehar (2018), can also widen poverty and the rich-poor gap because only the rich few can wait for long period to earn high return on their deposits.

Doepke (2019) asserted that the view that expansionary monetary policy worsens poverty and inequality has become more popular after the global financial crisis although explicit analysis to confirm the specific "gainers" and "losers" of such policies has remained scarce. High interest rate can elicit cost-push inflation in countries where manufacturers usually obtain their working capital from banks. Producers, especially of products requiring seasoned based raw materials will have to inflate their prices to offset the effect of inflation. Interest rates on personal loans are usually higher than corporate loans because of the high probability of default. In many cases loan beneficiaries are lured to spend their future savings now even when they have to pay high interest rate because the present consumption may ordinarily not be affordable for them Mehar (2018).

Tischbirek (2014) summarized the conventional monetary policy tools as those designed for controlling the monetary base to achieve price stability/inflation control, economic growth and financial system stability. By lowering interest rates, banks try to spur the economy through credit availability to industries thereby ensuring closing the output/productive capacity gap as much as possible. However, monetary policy effectiveness is subject to cyclical fluctuations, shocks and other uncertainties (Zhang, 2019).

Poloz (2019), the Governor of the Bank of Canada, posited that interest rate, as the main monetary policy tool which can be used to promote improved economic welfare, is not a perfect tool. While it can be a tool to control inflation, it should not be the only target of monetary policy. Also, lowering interest rates, according to Poloz, can induce excessive borrowing that makes investment unprofitable. For example, after the global economic crash, lower interest rates have encouraged large borrowings that became risky to emerging economies. This is apart from the problem of lag between execution and effect of monetary policy. Empirical evidence abound that monetary policies affect people's welfare economically (Li. 2021; Kuang, 2019. Doepke, 2019).

How should a citizen's welfare be measured? The conventional measures of welfare (income or poverty reduction) have been criticized as inadequate. Esping-Anderson (2000) argued that the common welfare indicators by the United Nations, World Bank and OECD will never work due to its inability to provide information about individuals' behaviours. Information about the subjective feelings, biasness, values and other behavioural issues are essential for proper measurement of welfare. Esping-Anderson (2000) believed that a more reasonable measure of people's welfare should include economic metrics (income, wealth, savings, debt etc); health measures (illness, wellness, mortality, expectancy); education (educational levels, human capital development, enrolment in schools, dropouts etc); housing (house standard, recreation, neighbourhood, facilities access etc); family and social integration (networking, contacts, family size/members, friendships etc.); leisure time, employment/ workplace experience; personal security, political resources/power among others. Sen (1995) stated that "while mortality rate is not in itself an economic phenomenon, the influences that increase or reduce mortality often have distinctly economic causes. Consequently, there is a prima facie reason for not dismissing mortality as a test of economic performance". The assessment of mortality rate as economic welfare measure as it is affected by monetary policy provides the motivation for this study. The study examines the effect of monetary policies on the economic welfare of Nigerians from three (3) perspectives: per capita income, access to education and mortality rate.

In Nigeria, frantic efforts have been made by the Central Bank, in the last decade, to design monetary policies that will favour the welfare of citizens, especially in terms of their economy and income (Kayode & Adaramola, 2022). However, the extent to which this objective has been achieved over these years is the focus of this study.

2. Literature Review

According to the International Monetary Fund, IMF (2021), the discussion on the effect of monetary policy on citizens' welfare, inequality and poverty, especially in developing countries continues and that wealth and income inequality have increased in both developed and developing countries since the 1980s. The Fund stated that more attention has been placed on inequality versus government policies especially after the global economic crisis than on citizens' economic welfare. Added to this is the debilitating effect of the COVID-19 on income, employment and wealth.

The UNCTAD (2020) reported that authorities' projections on the possible effect of the shock resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic on the global economy have been varied. Nevertheless, there is consensus that the global economy will experience some degree of contraction due to the unexpected shutdown of economic activities that invariably caused losses in both service and manufacture. When added to the financial market distress, the effect of the pandemic on developed countries such as China and the USA is expected to be devastating. At the domestic level, prices of goods and services are expected to skyrocket while public debt would rise.

The UNCTAD noted that many countries have continued to announce packages to reduce the effect of the damage caused by the Covid-19 pandemic to the economic, health and social welfare of people. The packages included financial injections, government spending and transfer payments. If the steps undertaken by developed countries have not sufficiently addressed the welfare gap created by the Covid-19 pandemic, developing countries who were also ravaged by the pandemic couldn't have fared better.

Bonifacio (2021) in analyzing the path through which monetary policy announcements can affect income and wealth, assessed the "within-country inequality" in advanced economies before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was found that well-identified and evaluated monetary policy shocks result in reduction in income inequality among the people. This it does by reducing the rate of unemployment as confirmed by Furceri (2018) and Coibion et al. (2017). According to Ampudia et a. (2018), pre-Covid-19 studies have found mixed but negligible negative economic effect of expansionary monetary policy on people's welfare in terms of income inequality. The same scenario was found by Kaplan *et al;* (2018) and Auclert, (2019) whose results showed that easy monetary policy announcements reduced poverty and inequality. However, Andersen *et al* (2020) found that expansionary monetary policy in Denmark resulted in wealthy households benefiting more than low-income households because of the returns accruing to the former in terms of increased asset prices.

Oye, (2018) investigated the "welfare effect of fiscal and monetary policy on the Nigerian economy" using the 2nd order approximated technique of the "Dynamic Stochastic General Equilibrium Model (DSGE)" and the study found that monetary policy specifically contributed positively to welfare gains of the people. While examining the channels through which monetary policy affect wealth and income, Bonifacio, (2021) observed that as many Central Banks in the world embarked on easy and relaxed monetary policy in response to the COVID-19 pandemic shock, the possibility of widening the inequality gap has been the concern of researchers and policy makers.

Ha (2020) developed the new Keynesian model which incorporates Calvo price and wage to assess the effect of "shifting trend inflation" on welfare of the Vietnamese people. The authors used Simulated Method of Moment (SMM) to analyze selected economic data (data collected on real GDP, GDP per capita, consumer price index, interest rate yield, nominal interest rate, government expenditure, employment rate and private consumption) from 2005 and 2016 and found that continuous rise in trend

inflation played a crucial role in transmitting the effect of shifting inflation to the overall economy. In essence, the authors suggested that targeting a high inflation rate was unfavourable to the Vietnamese's welfare.

El-Jahel et al; (2021) pooled a sample of 1.5 million people drawn from 141 countries to examine how the welfare of respondents was affected by monetary policy between 2005 and 2019. The authors investigated this effect from two perspectives: 'the best possible life' and the "emotional quality of daily experience" They found that inflation and unemployment adversely impacted the welfare of the people, but the effect was greater on the 'the best possible life' than for "emotional quality of daily experience"

Doepke, (2019) quantitatively assessed the distributional impact of monetary policy in the United States using the life-cycle model and observed that interest rates generated by expected inflation significantly but mixed effects on the welfare of the people. It was discovered that monetary policy pronouncements by the Fed can potentially have sizeable effect on income redistribution and welfare of the people. The mechanism is such that when inflation is expected to rise, nominal interest rate will increase, depleting nominal positions values and then redistribute wealth from surplus to deficit units.

The question of how relevant monetary policy is to addressing welfare issues during pandemic was dealt with by Li, (2021) while studying five world economies: the United Kingdom, Brazil, Japan, China and India. Using event study with regression to examine how consumer price index and real gross domestic product are predicted by interest rates, the authors found that interest rate abnormal changes were significant in United Kingdom China and Brazil whereas they were insignificant in Japan and India.

Kuang et al; (2019) investigated how fiscal and financial policies affect poverty alleviation in selected 382 extremely poor counties in China. Using "panel smooth transition regression (PSTR) models" the study found that both policies positively and non-linearly influenced poverty reduction in the counties. Specifically, in both low and high poverty levels, fiscal policies effectively reduced poverty but in medium poverty level, financial policies were more effective in poverty reduction. Kuang, et al. (2019) advised that poverty levels should dictate the type of fiscal and financial policies that should be put in place. Fiscal policies should be used to reduce poverty when it is low or high while financial policies should be used when the poverty level is medium.

Boyce, (2018) studied how individuals' health respond to the Bank of England's (BOE) monetary policy announcements, especially with respect to interest rates changes. These authors observed that a strong link existed between people's indebtedness and their psychiatric morbidity because of the influence of interest rates on individual's ability to repay due debts. Using the structured "General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) to measure psychiatric morbidity and distress, the authors found that rising (falling) interest rates induced (reduced) the risk of having psychiatric morbidity among heavily indebted respondents respectively. In essence, rise in interest rates as stipulated by the BOE contributed to difficulty in debt repayment and unfavourable mental health state for individuals.

In Nigeria, studies have been conducted to examine the effect of monetary policy on economic growth and some other areas of the economic wellbeing of the people, including the capital market (Oye, 2018; Kayode & Adaramola, 2022; UNCTAD, 2016), which have yielded conflicting results. However, a single study that examine the effect of monetary policy on the socio-economic welfare of the people in an integrated manner is rare. Therefore, the present study examined the effect from three different perspectives that capture the economic (standard of living or income), health and education) which makes the study to differ from existing empirical literature.

3. Methodology

This study used historical data of monetary policy and welfare variables extracted from the Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletins for the different years covered. The dataset includes those of actual annual lending rate, savings deposit rate, monetary policy rate, liquidity ratio, loan-deposit ratio, private sector credit, inflation, gross domestic product per capita, child mortality rate and primary school enrolment for the period 1980 to 2021. The study model expresses the effect of selected monetary policy variables and inflation on economic, health and educational welfare of Nigerians from three perspectives in the following form:

Model   ECWF = f[(MPV INFR (control)]

But ECWR = (GDPC, MORT, PSCE)

MPV = f[(INTR, SITR, MPLR, LIQR, LODR, PCGD,],

$$GDPC = \alpha + \beta_1 INTR + \beta_2 SITR + \beta_3 MPLR + \beta_4 LIQR + \beta_5 LODR + \beta_6\ PCGD + \beta_7 INFR + \mathcal{E} \dots (i)$$

and

$$MORT = \alpha + \beta_1 INTR + \beta_2 SITR + \beta_3 MPLR + \beta_4 LIQR + \beta_5 LODR + \beta_6\ PCGD + \beta_7 INFR + \mathcal{E} \dots (ii)$$

$$PSCE = \alpha + \beta_1 INTR + \beta_2 SITR + \beta_3 MPLR + \beta_4 LIQR + \beta_5 LODR + \beta_6\ PCGD + \beta_7 INFR + \mathcal{E} \dots (iii)$$

where:

ECWA = Economic welfare

MPV = Monetary policy variables

INFR = inflation rate

GDPC = Gross domestic per capita

MORT = Child mortality rate

PSCE = Primary school enrolment

INTR = Interest rate (lending)

SITR = Savings interest rate

MPLR = Monetary policy rate

LIQR = Liquidity ratio

LODR = Loan deposit ratio

PCGD = Private sector credit to GDP

α = Intercept

$\beta_1 .. \beta_7$ = Regression coefficients

$\mathcal{E}$ = Stochastic error term

The descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients of all the selected variables were estimated and the Augmented Dickey Fuller stationarity test was employed to ascertain the order of stationarity of the variables. Further, we used the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) Bound co-integration to test for long-run association between the dependent and explanatory variables. Finally, we employed the ARDL long-run form and error correction mechanism (ECM) to examine the long and short run effects of monetary policy on the welfare of Nigerians. The general ARDL model if expressed as:

$$y_t = \sum_{i=1}^{J} a_i y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{k} b_i x_{t-i} + e_t \qquad \text{……………..} \qquad \text{(iv)}$$

y_t = dependent variables (GDPC; MORT; PSCE)

x_t = independent variables (INTR, SITR, MPLR, LIQR, LODR, PCGD, INFR)

a, b = ARDL Regression parameters

e_t = error term

In addition, we further subjected our results to post-estimation tests which include the Jarque-Bera (J-B) residual normality, serial correlation, and the heteroscedasticity tests.

4. Results and Discussion.

This section contains the results of the descriptive statistics, correlations, unit root and long-run co-integration tests. All the tests were carried out to ascertain the statistical properties and the behaviour of study variables with one another for the three models.

4.1 Preliminary Analyses

1. **Descriptive Statistics**

Appendix 1(a-c) contains descriptive statistics of the study variables. Relevant to the present study are the mean, skewness, kurtosis and the J-B statistics (and its probabilities). For the three models, the average (mean) values of GDPC, MORT, PSCE, INTR, LIQR, LODR, MPLR, PCGD, SITR and INFR are ₦1,473.961billion, 157.8448 million, 91.71243 million, 18.9440%, 48.52945%, 65.0234%, 13.5%, 10.518%, 11.21831% and 17.42241% respectively. All the variables are skewed to the right of the mean. GDPC, MORT, PSCE, INTR, LIQR, LODR, MPLR, PCGD, SITR and INFR have skewness coefficients 0.185763, 0.305851, 0.0014048, 1.655890, 0.579228, 0.55034, 0.916362, 1.040158, 0.931329 and 1.950712 respectively. These skewness coefficients are not far from the mean. GDPC, LIQR, LODR, PCGD, and SITR have kurtoses approximately 3, signifying that the variables are normally distributed; MORT and PSCE have are platykurtic with kurtoses less than 3 (2.355407 and 1.601611 respectively) and are normally distributed. However, INTR, MPLR and INFR are all leptokurtic as their kurtoses are all greater than 3. This scenario is further confirmed by the JB statistics and their respective probabilities. GDPC, MORT, PSCE, LIQR, LODR, PCGD and SITR are normally distributed with probabilities that are greater than the 5% level of significance (0.290024, 0.244752, 0.791582, 0.440683, 0.887439, 0.057053 and 0.445269 respectively) while INTR, MPLR and INFR are not normally distributed given their respective probabilities (0.000002, 0.003044 and 0.00000). There are 29 observations (years) in all.

2. Correlations Coefficients

Appendix 2 contains correlation coefficients among the study variables in the three models. However, our interest is in the correlation of GDPC, MORT and PSCE with other monetary policy variables. While INTR, MPLR, SITR and INFR have fairy high negative correlation with GDPC (-0.686857, -0.567549, -0.657242 and -0.571568 respectively). LIQR and LODR have low negative correlation with GDPC (-0.012660 and -0.076329 respectively). PCGD has a fairly high positive correlation with GDPC (0.698734).

INTR and INFR positively and highly correlate with MORT (0.71236916 and 0.6913995 respectively) while LIQR, LODR, MPLR, PCGD and SITR have negative correlation with MORT (-0.2345477, -0.02165631, 0.52836609 and 0.6704513 respectively). However, it is observed that the correlation of LODR (-0.02165631) and LIQR (-0.2345477) are low.

Unit Root Tests

To test for the stationarity of the research data, we subject the variables to the Augmented Dickey Fuller – Fisher unit root test and the results are summarized in table 1.

Two of the variables (MPLR and INFR) are stationary at level given their ADF-Fisher statistics and their probabilities [-3.054212 (0.0416<0.05) and -7.720494 (0.0000<0.05) respectively. However, GDPC, MORT, PSCE, INTR, SITR, LIQR, LODR and PCGD are all stationary at first difference given their ADF-Fisher statistics and their corresponding probabilities as revealed on table 2. These results, among other support the use of ARDL to analyze the data for inference purpose.

Table 1: Summary of Unit Root Tests Results

Null Hypothesis: Unit Root Exists					
Variable	At Level		At first Difference		Stationarity Order
	ADF- Fisher Statistics	Probability	ADF- Fisher Statistics	Probability	
GDPC	-0.924740	0.7657	-3.738248	0.0089	1(1)
MORT	-1.700089	0.0840	-3.622234	0.0387	1(1)
PSCE	-0.761425	0.3766	-3.448994	0.0014	1(1)
INTR	-2.495373	0.1269	-8.356116	0.0000	1(1)
SITR	-2.346383	0.1652	-7.098633	0.0000	1(1)
MPLR	-3.054212	0.0416	-	-	1(0)
LIQR	-2.753504	0.0775	-6.509694	0.0000	1(1)
LODR	-2.569009	0.1107	-5.040685	0.0003	1(1)
PCGD	-2.661465	0.0933	-4.635126	0.0011	1(1)
INFR	-7.720494	0.0000	-	-	1(0)

Source: Author (2023).

ARDL Bound Co-integration Tests.

We tested for the existence of long-run relationship between the explanatory and each of the dependent variables GDPG, MORT and PSCE) using the ARDL Bound test. Table 1 summarizes the results of the tests.

Table 2: ARDL Bound Test (Models 1-3)

Model 1: **Dependent Variable = GDPC**				
F – Bounds Test		Null Hypothesis: No Long-run Relationship		
Test Statistic	Value	Significant	1(0)	1(1)
F – Statistic	6.670415	10%	2.03	3.13
k	7	5%	2.34	3.5
		2.5%	2.6	3.84
		1%	2.96	4.26
Model 2: **Dependent Variable = MORT**				
F – Bounds Test		Null Hypothesis: No Long-run Relationship		
Test Statistic	Value	Significant	1(0)	1(1)
F – Statistic	33.09585	10%	2.03	3.13
k	7	5%	2.34	3.5
		2.5%	2.6	3.84
		1%	2.96	4.26
Model 3: **Dependent Variable = PSCE**				
F – Bounds Test		Null Hypothesis: No Long-run Relationship		
Test Statistic	Value	Significant	1(0)	1(1)
F – Statistic	2.732772	10%	2.03	3.13
k	7	5%	2.34	3.5
		2.5%	2.6	3.84
		1%	2.96	4.26

Source: Author (2023)

At k = 7 degree of freedom, the calculated F-Statistics of models 1, 2 and 3 are 6.670415, 33.09585 and 2.732772 respectively. While the calculated F-Statistics of model 1, 2 are greater than both the upper [1(1)] and lower [1(0)] critical bound values, that of the third model (2.732772) is greater than the lower critical bound value at 5% level of significance. These results imply that there is long-run relationship (co-integration) between the dependent and independent variables for all the research models.

4.2: Short and long-run Effects of Monetary Policy on the Economic Welfare of Nigerians

We used the ARDL technique to estimate the effect of monetary policy variables on the three welfare variables in the short- and on the long-run. The results of the ARDL short models are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Short and Long Run ARDL Results for Models 1 – 3

Short and Long-run Autoregressive Distributed Lag Results												
Variable	Short Run Effect						Long-Run Effect					
	Model 1: Dependent Variable = GDPC		Model 2: Dependent Variable = MORT		Model 3: Dependent Variable = PSCE		Model 1: Dependent Variable = GDPC		Model 2: Dependent Variable = MORT		Model 3: Dependent Variable = PSCE	
	Coeff.	Prob.	Coeff.	Prob.	Coeff.	Prob.	Coeff.	Prob.	Coeff.	Prob.	Coeff.	Prob.
INTR	-130.818	0.000	-0.08789	0.000	-1.1457	0.0244	-25.9176	0.590	0.00949	0.783	1.110402	0.104
SITR	87.43498	0.004	0.014874	0.013	0.30309	0.1455	14.68230	0.754	-0.1050	0.020	-0.38833	0.516
LIQR	-8.70875	0.007	-0.00807	0.000	0,50001	0.0055	14.00359	0.013	-0.0199	0.003	0.184210	0.031
MPLR	43.52915	0.002	-0.05497	0.000	-0.1030	0.4542	169.5705	0.000	-0.0656	0.020	-0.51194	0.163
LODR	10.04146	0.004	0.005114	0.001	0.14569	0.0188	-4.42430	0.261	-0.0130	0.002	-0.16087	0.502
PCGD	-127.842	0.000	0.052408	0.000	-0.5188	0.0605	-63.7758	0.036	0.07631	0.039	0.276891	0.569
INFL	6.927275	0.004	0.01565	0.000	0.35504	0.0066	0.693353	0.862	0.02254	0.003	0.006985	0.928
C	3327.074	0.000	2.031206	0.000	-115.85	0.0036	3327.014	0.007	2.03121	0.031	-8.04644	0.001
CointEq	-0.24352	0.000	-0.00499	0.000	0.34098	0.0036	-	-	-	-	-	-
R^2	0.889658		0.724321		0.78182		0.692716		0.69989		0.681821	
DW Sta	2.193262		2.19085		2.41911		2.193362		2.19085		2.089498	
F-Stat	10.99399		6330.05		49.6145		60.57227		6428.92		11.16677	
P(F-Sta)	0.00000		0.00000		0.00000		0.000001		0.00000		0.000445	

Source: Author's (2023).

The results in Table 3 are explained from the perspective of each of the welfare variables.

1. Effect of Monetary Policy on GDP Per Capita – Model 1

In the short run, while INTR, LIQR and PCGD exert significant declining effect on GDPG with coefficients (and probabilities) -130.818 (0.000), -8.70875 (0.007) and -127.842 (0.000) respectively, SITR, MPLR, LODR and INFL exert significant increasing (positive) effect on the GDPG with coefficients (and probabilities) 87.43498 (0.004), 43.52915 (0.002), 10.041146 (0.004) and 6.927275 (0.004) respectively. About 24.352% of the previous year's variations in the GDPG are corrected back to equilibrium in the present year. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.889658$) implies that about 89% of the variations in GDPG are explained by the monetary policy variables in the short-run in model 1. The remaining 11% are explained by other variables outside the model. The Durbin Watson Statistic of 2.193262 shows that the variables do not suffer autocorrelation problem. The F-Statistic (10.99399) and its corresponding probability (0.00000) reveal that the research model is not only significant but also reliable.

On the long run, whereas INTR, LODR and PCGD exert negative effect on GDPG with coefficients (and probabilities) -25.9176 (0.590), -4.42430 (0.261) and -63.7758 (0.036) respectively, This means that only the effect of PCGD on GDPG is significant among the three. On the other hand, SITR, LIQR, MPLR and INFL exert positive effect on the GDPG with coefficients (and probabilities) 14.68230 (0.754), 14.00359 (0.013), 169.5705 (0.000) and 0.693353 (0.862) respectively. Among the four, only the effects of LIQR and MPLR are significant. The $R^2 = 0.692716$ implies that about 69% of the variations in GDPG are explained by the monetary policy variables in the long-run in model 1. The remaining 31% are explained by other variables outside the model. Again, the Durbin Watson Statistic of 2.193262 shows that the variables do not suffer autocorrelation problem. The F-Statistic (60.57227) and its corresponding probability (0.0000) reveal that the research model is not only significant but also reliable.

2. **Effect of Monetary Policy on Child Mortality Rate – Model 2**

In the short run, three (3) of the study variables, INTR, LIQR and MPLR have significant negative effect on MORT with coefficients (and probabilities) -0.08789 (0.000), -0.00807 (0.000) and -0.05497 (0.000) respectively. On their parts, SITR, LODR, PCGD and INFL exert significant positive effect on MORT with coefficients (and probabilities) 0.014874 (0.013), 0.005114 (0.001), 0.052408 (0.000) and 0.01565 (0.000) respectively. Only about 0.499% of the previous year's variations in the MORT are corrected back to equilibrium in the present year. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.724321$) implies that about 73% of the variations in MORT are explained by the monetary policy variables in the short-run in model 2. The remaining 17% are explained by other variables outside the model. The Durbin Watson Statistic (2.19085) shows that the variables do not suffer autocorrelation problem. The F-Statistic 6330.05) and its corresponding probability (0.00000) reveal that the research model is not only significant but also reliable.

In the long run, whereas INTR, PCGD and INFL exert positive effect on MORT with coefficients (and probabilities) 0.00949 (0.780), 0.07631 (0.039) and 0.02254 (0.031) respectively, This implies that while the effect of INTR was not statistically significant, that of PCGD and INFL is significant given their p values that are less than the 0.05 level of significance. However, SITR, LIQR, MPLR and LODR all have significant negative effect on MORT given their coefficients (and probabilities) which are -0.1050 (0.020), -0.0199 (0.003), -0.0656 (0.020) and -0.0130 (0.002) respectively. The R^2 is 0.69989 which means that approximately 70% of the variations in MORT are explained by the

monetary policy variables in the long-run in model 2. The remaining 30% are explained by other variables outside the model. The Durbin Watson Statistic of 2.19085 shows that the variables do not suffer autocorrelation problem. The F-Statistic (6428.92) and its corresponding probability (0.0000) reveal that the second research model is not only significant but also reliable.

3. Effect of Monetary Policy on Primary and Secondary Schools' Enrolment – Model 3

In the short run, INTR, MPLR and PCGD exert negative effect on PSCE with coefficients (and probabilities) -1.1457 (0.0244), -0.1030 (0.0.4542) and -115.85 (0.0605) respectively. While the effects of MPLR and PCGD are insignificant given their p values (p.0.05), that of INTR is significant ($p<0.05$). SITR, LIQR, LODR and INFL exert positive effect on the PSCE with coefficients (and probabilities) 0.30309 (0.1455), 0.50001 (0.0055), 0.14569 (0.0188) and 0.35504 (0.0066) respectively. While LIQR, LODR and INFL have significant effect on PSCE, the effect of SITR is not significant. About 34.098% of the present year's variations in the PSCE will be corrected to equilibrium in the next year. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.78182$) implies that about 78% of the variations in PSCE are explained by the monetary policy variables in the short-run in model 3. The remaining 22% are explained by other variables outside the model. The Durbin Watson Statistic of 2.41911 shows that the variables do not suffer autocorrelation problem. The F-Statistic (49.6145) and its corresponding probability (0.00000) reveal that the model is not only significant but also reliable.

On the long run, whereas INTR, LIQR, PCGD and INFL have positive effect on PSCE with coefficients (and probabilities) 1.110402 (0.104), 0.184210 (0.031), 0.276891 (0569) AND 0.006985 (0.0928) respectively, SITR, MPLR and LODR have negative effect on PSCE with coefficients (probabilities) -0.38833 (0.163), -0.51194 (0.516) and -0.16087 (0.502) respectively. This means that only the positive effect of LIQR on PSCE is significant on the long run. The effect of the others are not significant. The $R^2 = 0.681821$ implies that about 68% of the variations in PSCE are explained by the monetary policy variables in the long-run in model 3. The remaining 32% are explained by other variables outside the model. The Durbin Watson Statistic of 2.089498 shows that the variables do not suffer autocorrelation problem while the F-Statistic (11.16677) and its corresponding probability (0.000445) reveal that the research model is not only significant but also reliable.

4.3 Post Estimation Tests

Our estimations are subjected to selected post-estimation diagnoses which include residual distribution, serial correlation and, heteroscedasticity tests for the three models.

Table 4 is the result of JB test that shows whether the residuals are normally distributed for the models.

Table 4: Jarque-Bera Normality Test Results (Models 1 – 3)

Model	Dependent Variable	JB Statistics	Prob. (JB Statistics)	Conclusion
1	GDPC	3.377583	0.184743	Normally distributed
2	MORT	2.659912	0.264489	Normally distributed
3	PSCE	38.70158	0.11211	Normally distributed

Source: Author's (2023)

A residual is said to be normally distributed when the probability of J-B statistics (*p*) is greater than level of significance (LOS) selected (usually 0.05 or 95%) and vice-versa. From Table 4.4 shows that the *p* of the models is 0.184743, 0.264489 and 0.11211 for GDPC, MORT and PSCE models respectively since they are greater than 0.05. In essence, the residuals for all the models are normally distributed.

Table 5 gives the results of the serial correlation (LM) and heteroscedasticity tests conducted on the models' residuals.

Table 5: Serial Correlation and Heteroscedasticity Tests

Test	Models	F-Statistics	Probability	Decision
Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM Test	Model 1	3.187768	0.0640	No serial correlation
	Model 2	3.267925	0.0603	No serial correlation
	Model 3	5.975378	0.0708	No serial correlation
Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey Test of Heteroscedasticity	Model 1	0.411925	0.8841	Heteroscedastic
	Model 2	0.294271	0.9486	Heteroscedastic
	Model 3	1.866143	0.1323	Heteroscedastic

Source: Author's (2023)

The decision rule in the Breusch-Godfrey serial correlation (LM) test is to accept the null hypothesis of no serial correlation if the *p* is greater than the 0.05 LOS and vice versa. As shown in Table 5, all the *p* values for the three models are greater than the LOS, hence, the variables do not suffer serial correlation problem (0.0640, 0.0603 and 0.0708 for model 1, 2 and 3 respectively). Also, the null hypothesis of residual heteroscedasticity cannot be rejected for all the models given their *p* values (>0.05 LOS),

4.4 Discussion of Findings

This study achieves a three-in-one objectives by examining the how Nigeria's monetary policy has affected the welfare of her people from three perspectives: economic wellbeing, health wellbeing and education. We captured economic wellbeing in terms of the gross domestic product per capita, health wellbeing in terms of child mortality rate and education in terms of primary and secondary school enrolment. The monetary policy variables analyzed include interest (lending) rate, savings deposit rate, monetary policy rate, liquidity ratio, loan deposit ratio, and private sector credit. The rate of inflation is used as a control variable in each of the three models expressed to address each of the three research models. The study covered a period of 29 years.

4.3.1 Effect of Monetary Policy on Gross Domestic Per Capita Income (GDPC)

With respect to the effect of monetary policy on the economic welfare of Nigerians (GDPC), findings from the results of the ARDL revealed that during the short run, interest rate, liquidity rate and private sector credit have negative and significant effect on the per capita income of the people. Among the three, the effect of private sector credit is unexpected theoretically. Usually, interest rate and liquidity ratio could have declining effect on the per capita income as increase in them could shrink available credits to the economy. However, as revealed by our results, it appears that increase in private sector

credit has not been productively deployed to spur real economic growth. One possible reason is that such increase might have been plugged into commerce or expenditures other rather than the real productive sector.

Secondly, the positive and significant effect of savings deposit, monetary policy rate, loan deposit rate and inflation on GDPC is also unexpected. These variables are theoretically expected to reduce investment and the GDP, but the reverse is the case here on the short run. However, as the results show, increases in these variables also significantly increased the GDPC. This agrees with the position of the quantity theory of money which infer that the negative effect of monetary policy variables (money market) may be offset by the positive effect of goods market such that the latter can even outstrips the former as the goods market grows.

On the long run, interest rate and loan deposit ratio have negative but insignificant effect on GDPC as theoretically predicted. Rising interest rate should naturally impair investment and income although the effect is not significant enough in this study. The effect of savings deposits' rate on GDPC is positive though insignificant, implying that returns on savings did not significantly improve the income of the people during the period. Liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate (as in short- run) have significant positive effect on GDPC, again contrary to the theoretical expectation. These results are a pointer to efficient management of the monetary policy variables to contribute to national income on the long run. On its part, the ratio of private sector credit to GDP has a significant negative effect on GDPC as it was in the short run. Inflation, similar to the short run, has a positive but insignificant effect on GDPC on the long run.

4.3.2 Effect of Monetary Policy on Health Welfare (MORT)

In the short run, all the monetary policy variables have significant effects on MORT. While the effect of interest rate, liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate are negative, that of savings deposit rate, loan deposit ratio, private sector credit and inflation is positive. The negative effect of interest rate, liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate on health welfare is expected as the higher these rates, the less the populace will have to take care of their health needs. The positive effect of the other variables on health welfare implies that savings deposit rate, loan deposit ratio, private sector credit and inflation have contributed to higher mortality (deaths) in Nigeria in the years under study.

On the long run, interest rate, private sector credit and inflation have positive effect on MORT but whereas the effect of interest rate is insignificant, the other two have significant effect. Savings deposit rate, liquidity ratio, monetary policy rate and loan deposit ratio have significant negative effect MORT. These effects are expected as their increases will reduce the mortality rate of the people.

4.3.2 Effect of Monetary Policy on Educational Welfare (PSCE)

In the short run, the higher the interest rate, the lower the number of primary and secondary school enrolment, the effect is significant. On the other hand, the higher the liquidity ratio, loan deposit ratio and inflation, the more the primary and secondary school enrolment. However, Savings deposit rate has an insignificant positive effect on PSCE while private sector credit has a negative insignificant effect on it.

On the long run, interest rate, private sector credit and inflation have an insignificant positive effect on PSCE while savings deposit rate, monetary policy rate and loan deposit ratio have insignificant negative effect PSCE. The effect of liquidity ratio is significantly positive. Comparatively, monetary

policy has more significant effect on mortality rate (health welfare) than income and school enrolment in Nigeria during the study years.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the effect of monetary policy on Nigerians' socio-economic welfare from three perspectives: per capita income (economic), mortality rate (health) and school enrolment (education). Three models were formulated for the purpose of analysis. First, in the short run, interest rate, liquidity rate and private sector credit have negative and significant effect on the per capita income. Furthermore, there is a positive and significant effect of savings deposit, monetary policy rate, loan deposit rate and inflation on per capita income. In the long run liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate have significant positive effect on income per capita while the ratio of private sector credit to GDP has a significant negative effect on it. Inflation has a positive but insignificant effect on per capita income.

Second, in the short run, all the monetary policy variables have significant effects on child mortality rate. While the effect of interest rate, liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate is negative, that of savings deposit rate, loan deposit ratio, private sector credit and inflation is positive. On the long run, interest rate, private sector credit and inflation have positive effect on child mortality but whereas the effect of interest rate is insignificant, the other two have significant effect

Finally, in the short run, interest rate has a negatively significant effect on the number of primary and secondary school enrolment while liquidity ratio, loan deposit ratio and inflation have direct positive effect on it. Savings deposit rate has an insignificant positive effect on it while private sector credit has a negative insignificant effect on it. On the long run, interest rate, private sector credit and inflation have an insignificant positive effect on the number of primary and secondary school enrolment. Savings deposit rate, monetary policy rate and loan deposit ratio have insignificant negative effect on it. The effect of liquidity ratio is significantly positive. Given these findings, we conclude that monetary policy significantly affects the socio-economic life of Nigerians in the directions and degrees already discussed both in the short and long run.

Our recommendations are broadly categorized into three, focusing on each of the research models. First, we recommend the sustenance of the liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate as they have been instrumental to increases in per capita income as shown in our results. Second, liquidity ratio and monetary policy rate also reduced mortality rate which further gives credence to the first recommendation. The "good" effect of liquidity rate is also reflected on the number of primary and secondary school enrolment.

Although the loan-deposit ratio reduced mortality rate, its effect on per capita income and school enrolment was not favourable, which should necessitate a re-appraisal and re-design of the loan-deposit ratio policy. In all the three models, the ratio of private sector credit, inflation and savings deposit rate (except in reducing mortality rate) do not have favourable effect signifying the need for effect appraisal and re-design of the policies on these variables so that they can achieve the desired purpose. Such re-design can take the form of type of welfare into consideration. This means that the policies can be designed on the basis of economic, health and educational needs.

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Cashless Economy and Entrepreneurship Development in Lagos State, Nigeria

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Abstract

In the global banking industry, the emergence of cashless economy services offers both potential and problems, especially in Nigeria where the expansion of entrepreneurship is crucial. Notwithstanding these advantages, Nigerians continue to use cashless solutions at a below-average rate because of things like inadequate technological penetration and regulatory barriers. The purpose of this study is to investigate how Lagos State, Nigeria's cashless economy is affecting the rise of entrepreneurship there. Data was gathered from 354 participants in Lagos State's entrepreneurial development programme using a descriptive study approach. The study used multiple regression analysis and other quantitative analytic techniques to look at the link between the rise of entrepreneurship and cashless economy factors including online banking, automated teller machines (ATM), and crowdfunding. Findings revealed that, online banking services have a major beneficial impact on the growth of entrepreneurship. This finding is consistent with previous research that shows online banking improves customer happiness and financial performance. Similarly, despite worries about ATM theft, it was shown that ATM services had a significant influence on the growth of entrepreneurial ventures. Furthermore, it was found that crowdfunding had a major role in the expansion of entrepreneurship. Some of the suggestions include to make electronic banking systems more user-friendly and secure, to optimize ATM services, and to leverage crowdfunding platforms to encourage entrepreneurship. All things considered, this study advances knowledge of the relationship between entrepreneurship and cashless economies in Nigeria, offering guidance to banking institutions and policymakers on how to support innovation and economic progress.

Keywords: Cashless economy, Entrepreneurial development, Crowdfunding, Electronic banking, innovation

1. Introduction

Cashless economy services are becoming more popular globally, posing both new possibilities and problems for the banking sector in the global banking market. Therefore, the pace at which new technology is adopted by entrepreneurial development will determine the efficacy of services related to the cashless economy. Global evolution has accelerated to such an extent that it affects all facets of human endeavour (Latifat and Alhassan, 2015). Information and communication technologies (ICTs)

are critical to development, and this is acknowledged by policymakers and development experts (Dutta & Mia, 2009). According to Tasmin, Abubakar, and Josu (2012), the world is currently becoming a global village due to the growth of corporate groups, the multifaceted nature of company portfolios, and the rise in decentralization that follows these developments. It makes sense that the variables impacting the growth of entrepreneurship should be of concern to policymakers (Shaukat & Zafarullah, 2010). Nigerian banks must adjust in order to meet the demands of the growth of entrepreneurship, given the swift changes in modern company operations that are marked by technical breakthroughs.

Solutions for the cashless economy are becoming more and more popular among business owners who see them as a remedy to the persistent problem of substandard service quality that many banks face (Dogarawa, 2005). Experts contend that despite this, Nigerians' adoption of these items is not up to par. According to research, this is caused by things like poor technology uptake, a weak legal system, and a lack of knowledge.

The main idea behind cashless economies is to reduce transaction tensions so that operations can go more smoothly without the need for actual currency (Woodford, 2003). When it functions well, cashless economy processes payments using any kind of payment methods other than cash. This includes wire transfers, checks, credit and debit cards, internet transactions, and mobile banking.

Statement of Problem

Banks compete fiercely to draw clients by providing services and goods that are acceptable, handy, and reachable. The advancement of a cashless economy through electronic services is a crucial component of this rivalry. It has significantly increased the distance between banks and customers while encouraging the growth of entrepreneurship (Kannabira & Narayan, 2015). To satisfy the changing needs of discriminating clients, the modern banking environment demands constant innovation. As a result, banks need to use cutting-edge technology to quickly and effectively launch new goods and services (Augusto, 2012). In addition to improving service delivery, the use of cashless transactions reduces traffic in banking halls permits versatile cash withdrawals, accepts payments and remittances from overseas, keeps track of individual banking transactions, allows online statement inquiries, and makes deposit transfers to third-party accounts easier.

These services have a significant effect on how well entrepreneurship development performs overall. In consequence, faster service delivery, less in-person bank visits, and less cash handling translate to higher turnover for entrepreneurs (Fagbuyi, 2003). The anticipated benefits of these developments in Nigeria's cashless economy, however, have not yet materialized. The mandate to obtain an ATM card, the inability of banks to accept Nigerian cards for international transactions, malfunctioning Automated Teller Machines (ATMs), complaints about online criminal activity, the lack of financial services, hidden costs related to electronic banking (such as Short Message Services for alerts), and network outages continue despite the efforts of banks to guarantee that customers benefit from electronic banking. Nigeria's cash economy presents a number of other difficulties, such as long wait times at banks or ATMs, network problems that impact online banking and crowdsourcing, the transmission of bacteria from handling actual cash, and high rates of crime, which include the illegal drug trade, terrorism, illegal immigration, human trafficking, and corruption.

Nigeria's cash-based economy has also made security issues more prevalent, with events like ATM and bank robberies presenting serious difficulties (Okafor, 2012). In light of these facts, the purpose of this study is to examine how the cashless economy has affected the growth of entrepreneurship in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

This study aim is to find out how a cashless economy affects the growth of entrepreneurship in Lagos State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To examine how internet banking has affected the growth of entrepreneurship in Lagos State.
- To analyze how the growth of entrepreneurship in Lagos State is impacted by automated teller machines (ATMs).
- To analyze the impact of crowdfunding on Lagos State's entrepreneurial growth.

Research Questions

The following research questions serve as a guide for the investigation:

- What effect does internet banking have on Lagos State's entrepreneurial growth?
- What role does the availability of automated teller machines (ATMs) have in the growth of entrepreneurship in Lagos State?
- How does crowdfunding affect the growth of entrepreneurship in Lagos State?

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses form the foundation of this investigation:

Ho_1: The growth of entrepreneurship is not significantly impacted by internet banking services in Lagos State.

Ho_2: The growth of entrepreneurship is not substantially impacted by the availability of automated teller machine services in Lagos State.

Ho_3: Crowdfunding services have no substantial impact on the growth of entrepreneurship in Lagos State.

This paper is in five sections. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: section 2 discusses the review of related literatures; section 3 describes the methodology used in the study; section 4 dealt with the data gathering and analysis; and section 5, the last section, concludes the study and make some recommendations

2. Review of Literature

Conceptual Review

Cashless Economy

From an intellectual perspective, a cashless economy is essentially one in which there is significantly less dependence on actual money to perform transactions. Rather, it places more emphasis on the electronic signals that are sent to banks in order to initiate and complete financial transactions on behalf of individuals. According to Yusuf, Adedina, and Egbekule (2015), this revolutionary idea anticipates limiting the amount of currency that is used for financial transactions - rather than advocating for its total elimination. Reducing the quantity of physical currency in circulation and increasing electronic-based transactions, such purchases for products, services, and transfers, are the cornerstones of the cashless economy.

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Beyond reduction, the cashless economy seeks to avert situations such as bank runs (Sloman 2006). People give up some control over their purchasing power in paper money when they adopt the cashless concept. The capacity to electronically hold money on a card is what Ejiofor and Rasaki (2012) define as a cashless system, which is a practice that is gradually becoming common in workplaces. Using saved cash, the electronic purse makes purchases at point-of-sale terminals and vending machines easier. Ajayi (2014), opined that a cashless economy creates an environment that reduces the usage of physical currency by offering substitute avenues for financial transactions, not the total eradication of cash.

Olaonipekun (2013), postulated that electronic transactions are essential for a cashless economy to succeed, highlighting their critical role in the setting up process. This paradigm shift is best shown by electronic currency, a system that enables people to purchase products or services without exchanging physical commodities. According to Osazevbaru and Yomere (2015), a cashless economy integrates aspects of e-banking and cash-based systems to decrease, rather than completely eradicate the amount of actual currency in use and promote electronic-based transactions.

The goal of a cashless economy's policy framework is to tackle the negative effects of using physical currency extensively, such as the high costs, dangers, assistance, informality, incompetence, and mismanagement that come with using cash (CBN, Website, 2011). A cashless economy, according to March (2013), is one in which financial transactions take place without the requirement for actual currency transfers between people. A cashless society is one in which electronic payment methods predominate and there are few physical currency transactions (Akindende, 2011).

As reported by Nweke (2012), a cashless economy, especially for developing nations, represents a shift away from a cash-based economic model towards a cashless one. It entails reducing the amount of actual currency in circulation and boosting the use of electronic-based payment systems. A cashless economy, then, is essentially one that seamlessly combines cash and electronic payment methods, with the latter being the more common.

Importantly, the shift to a cashless economy does not mean that cash will disappear entirely because it will still be used as a means of payment for products and services. Rather, it aims to establish a financial environment that reduces dependence on hard cash by providing effective and substitute payment methods (Ajayi 2014).

Entrepreneurship Development

The concept of entrepreneurship dates back to the 1930s, but it wasn't until the 1960s that it was seen as a critical element in the development of society and the economy (Timmons and Spinelli 2016). For more than ten years, the early investigations into entrepreneurship were limited to large-scale enterprises and sectors of the economy before progressively expanding to the small-scale industrial sector. According to Hill and Mac Gowon (2009), the emergence and growth of entrepreneurship are dependent entities that are impacted by social, political, economic, and psychological factors. These factors are frequently seen as favourable prerequisites for the growth of business and industry.

According to Nwafor (2017), entrepreneurship development is the best strategy for starting new businesses and bringing cutting-edge goods and services to the market. By strengthening the economic base and generating jobs, these entrepreneurial ventures have a big impact on how the economy is shaped. In order to take advantage of chances independent of external factors, one must be vigilant, mentally agile, competent, confident, creative, and disciplined (Nwafor 2017).

Ajagbe (2014) conceives an entrepreneur as someone who engages in innovations with financial and commercial acumen, with the goal of transforming inventions into economic commodities. According to him, entrepreneurs see challenges as prospects, take initiative to seek remedies, and locate clients prepared to pay for problem-solving. Entrepreneurial success is determined by one's capacity to recognize possibilities, initiate or capitalizes on change, and generates value via creative ideas.

Akanwa and Akpanabia (2012) defined entrepreneurship as an individual's willingness and aptitude to pursue investment possibilities and effectively develop and operate a business. According to Igwe (2013), entrepreneurship is a powerful engine pushing economic growth and wealth creation, which is especially good for developing nations in terms of increasing the quality, quantity, and variety of job prospects for the poor.

Soyibo (2016) defines entrepreneurship as the process of identifying a need-satisfying opportunity and translating it into a valued product or service. Entrepreneurs, according to this definition, engage in actions that focus on extracting value connected with business prospects, such as invention, the development of new goods or enhancements to current ones, and benefitting from these endeavours.

Akanwa and Agu (2015) discovered that entrepreneurs frequently start their firms as part-time activities in small communities before expanding into complete businesses in larger towns. Entrepreneurship comprises all productive tasks requiring non-routine human labour that are not instantly compensated by ordinary salaries, interest, or rent. It entails accepting the risks connected with founding and running a business.

Entrepreneurship encompasses more than just technological or organizational breakthroughs; it also involves any innovative organization of productive elements. It refers to both internal and external entrepreneurial activity including the adoption of new business formats, technology, and firms creating previously inaccessible items in a specific place (Nwankwo and Okeke 2016). As a result, nations, regions, and communities that actively foster entrepreneurial development outperforms those hampered by institutional, political, and cultural restraints in terms of growth rates and overall development.

Theoretical Framework

The study was founded on the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DIT), which has been studied for more than three decades. Rogers (1995) describes innovation as an idea, practice, or project viewed as novel by individuals or other adaptive units in his book "Diffusion of Innovation" (2003). Regardless of an innovation's possible durability, if people regard it as fresh, it keeps its inventive character. The uniqueness of an uptake is notably connected to the three stages of the innovation-choice process (information, persuasion, and judgement). Rogers also emphasized the scarcity of diffusion studies on technological hubs, characterizing a technology hub as components thought to be closely connected.

DIT elucidates people's interest in using technology to carry out traditional tasks. Relative benefit, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability are key characteristics impacting overall innovation adoption (Moga, 2010). Recognizing the benefits, several banks have integrated ICT into their business processes to improve performance. This entails creating websites and mobile apps to meet the demands of customers, allowing login to accounts from anywhere with internet connection.

DIT focuses on the transition of a technical idea or process from conception to application. It claims that technical innovation is conveyed through certain channels within a social system throughout time. Knowledge (exposure and understanding), persuasion (developing a favourable attitude), choice

(commitment to adoption), implementation (putting it into use), and confirmation (reinforcement based on positive outcomes) are the steps that an invention goes through (Arnaboldi & Claeys, 2008). Internet banking, for example, has developed as a result of cyber risks and fraud, with early users often being well educated, of higher social position, and open to new communication channels.

Decisions on innovation might be voluntary, collaborative, or based on authority. Managers, according to Barnes and Corbitt (2013), must understand the capabilities, advantages, costs, and constraints of technology while making choices. DIT emphasizes the importance of using technology in organisations, replacing traditional management methods and service delivery models, particularly in service-oriented industries. The theory is normative, attempting to construct structures, and it mainly depends on ICT in the context of electronic banking, allowing remote account access without the need for actual visits to the bank.

Empirical Review

Okereke (2016) investigated the influence of ATM transactions, point-of-sale terminals, online banking, and crowdfunding on Nigeria's economic growth. Secondary data from the CBN annual report and the federal office of statistics were used in the ordinary least-squares (OLS) approach of multiple regression analysis. According to the findings, only point-of-sale terminals contributed considerably to economic growth, whereas ATM transactions, crowdfunding, and online banking were judged minor. The report advised that the government and banking expand their efforts in infrastructure development and strong public awareness campaigns to alleviate customer illiteracy and improve product distribution.

Kirigano, Muturi, and Atandi (2016) investigated the influence of mobile phone transfer applications on the performance trends of micro and small businesses in Kitale town. Hairdressing, carpentry, and cloth-making businesses were included in the sample frame. Descriptive and statistical studies were carried out, with the Pearson product-moment correlation (r) calculated to identify correlations. The findings suggested that mobile phone transfer service improvements had a beneficial influence on corporate performance, implying higher customer engagement, time and cost savings, and increased revenues.

The study advocated a tax exemption on mobile phones and related paraphernalia to encourage more use in businesses, emphasizing the importance of well-researched entrepreneurship policies for long-term viability. Okeke (2017) also researched the impact of the cashless economy on the growth of entrepreneurship in Anambra State. Multiple regression analysis was used in the study to analyze the influence of automated teller machines, point-of-sale terminals, crowdfunding, and online banking on entrepreneurial development. The results showed that ATMs had a considerable effect, but point-of-sale had no effect. Internet banking and crowdfunding have a huge impact on entrepreneurial development as well. Recommendations included guaranteeing a constant power supply and enough communication linkages, assuring user-friendly features in financial systems, and raising knowledge about the benefits of a cashless economy for corporate growth and economic development.

Mpho (2017) assessed the influence of Nigeria's cashless arrangement on key macroeconomic indicators, including unemployment, GDP, corruption, transparency, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and money in circulation. The study compared patterns before and after the implementation of the cash policy in March 2012, finding that it had a favourable impact on GDP, unemployment, and money supply. It discovered that the cashless economy intended to accelerate development, advance payment technologies, and minimize banking expenses. The research, however, did not directly analyze the system's efficacy, but rather examined its positives and negative consequences on Nigeria's progress.

Ndugbu and Ochiabuto (2016) investigated the association between cashless economy predictions and a country's transition to a cashless economy. Data for the period 1981 to 2013 were obtained from the Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin and the Bureau of Statistics. The use of ordinary least squares analysis indicated favourable correlations between market discipline, financial inclusion, and the transition to a cashless economy. According to the study, market discipline, financial inclusion, and prior initiatives towards a cashless society affected the shift to a cashless economy positively.

Taiwo, Ayo, Afieroho, and Agwu (2016) investigated the evaluation and implementation of the cashless economy in the Nigerian financial system from its inception in 2012. Questionnaires were distributed to 120 respondents from First Bank, Zenith Bank, and United Bank for Africa to collect primary data. The research, which was carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), revealed that the creation of an innovative cashless economy has the ability to revolutionise economic activity and meet developmental goals. The research claimed that the cashless system, which is gaining popularity in Nigeria, might aid in the battle against corruption and money laundering.

3. Methodology

A descriptive research design was used to carry out this study in Lagos State. Sampled respondents of 2093 were drawn from staff members participating in the Lagos State entrepreneurship development programme. The sample size of 404 was calculated using Borg and Gall's (1973) statistical technique. The researcher gathered primary data via structured questionnaires that included both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Closed-ended questions sought respondents' opinions on how the cashless economy affects entrepreneurship, whereas open-ended questions sought specific facts. There were matrix questions with the Likert rating scale. Face and content validation were performed on the instrument, and its reliability was verified using the test-retest approach in a pilot research. The acquired data was analyzed using quantitative data analysis methodologies.

Tables were used to provide descriptive data such as mean and standard deviation. The coded questionnaire results were loaded into a computer and analyzed with the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 21), which provided means, standard deviations, and correlations for each independent and dependent variable. Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to analyze the overall influence of cashless economy on entrepreneurship development, and regression models were used to investigate the links between cashless economy and entrepreneurship development.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

The information obtained from entrepreneurs was presented, analysed, and interpreted. Four hundred and four questionnaires were distributed to participants, with three hundred and fifty-four of them being satisfactorily completed and judged relevant to the study. Notably, 34 surveys were filled out incorrectly, and 16 copies went missing. As a result, the analysis reported in this part is based on the 354 surveys that were judged relevant and correctly filled.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics give insights into the study's variables by showing essential metrics such as minimum and maximum values, mean, and standard deviation.

Test of Hypotheses

To test the hypotheses developed for the study, multiple regression analysis was used. The multiple regression result is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Summary of the Regression Results

Variable	T-Statistics	Probability Value
Internet Banking	11.655	0.000
Automated Teller Machine	1.395	0.164
Crowdfunding	2.795	0.006
R-squared	0.733	
Adjusted R-squared	0.726	
F-statistics	107.563	
Prob.	0.000	
Durbin Watson	1.677	

SPSS result

The regression analysis yielded a coefficient of determination (R2) of 0.733, indicating that 73.3% of the variations in the cashless economy can be accounted for or explained by the variations in the explanatory variables. This underscores the substantial explanatory power and strength of the independent variable. The adjusted R2 further supports this, with a value of 0.726, suggesting that 72.6% of the total variation in the dependent variable (cashless economy) is elucidated by the independent variables (regressors), reinforcing the assertion of their high and robust explanatory capacity. The F-statistic, crucial for assessing the overall significance of the estimated model, yielded a value of 107.563 with an f-probability of 0.000, indicating a good fit and statistical differentiation from zero. This implies a significant impact between the dependent and independent variables within the model, affirming that internet banking, automated teller machine, and Crowdfunding collectively exert a significant influence on entrepreneurship development. The Durbin-Watson (DW) statistic is observed to be 1.677, close to 2. This suggests an absence of autocorrelation among the variables in the model, affirming the reliability of the model for predictions.

Discussion of Findings

The influence of a cashless economy on entrepreneurial development in Lagos State was studied using a variety of analytical methodologies including as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that online banking services have a good and significant impact on the growth of entrepreneurship. This finding is consistent with Adeyemi, Ola, and Oyewole's (2014) observation that internet banking strongly predicts consumer happiness, as well as Ngungi's (2013) conclusion that online banking has a small but favourable effect on commercial banks' financial performance. Furthermore, the study found that automated teller machine (ATM) services had a good and significant impact on entrepreneurial growth. Despite worries about ATM fraud raised by Jegede (2014), this outcome is consistent with Ali and Emenike's (2016) results on the favourable impact

of ATM transactions on private sector demand deposits in Nigeria. Fatai, Olaleye, and Mudashiru's (2014) study also validated the importance of ATM usage for transactional and preventive reasons.

Furthermore, crowdfunding was found to have a considerable impact on entrepreneurial growth, refuting Faniran and Odumeru's (2015) claim that there is no association between gender and crowdfunding adoption. The findings of the study are consistent with Mutinda's (2014) discovery of a positive relationship between entrepreneurship development and aspects such as business growth, service delivery efficiency, access to information, and convenience and dependability. Similarly, Kirigano, Muturi, and Atandi's (2016) study found that mobile phone transfer services improve firm performance by drawing more consumers, conserving time and money, and increasing profits through higher investment.

Nevertheless, the following significant findings revealed by this study

- Internet banking services were regarded as having a favourable and significant impact on the growth of entrepreneurship.

- ATM services were discovered to have a good and considerable impact on entrepreneurial growth.

- Crowdfunding developed as a factor that has a good and substantial impact on the growth of entrepreneurship.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study looked at how the introduction of a cashless economy affects the growth of entrepreneurship in Lagos State. The numerous cashless transaction channels, such as online banking, automated teller machines (ATMs), and crowdfunding, were shown to have a significant and favourable impact on entrepreneurial growth. The transition to a cashless economy is not only necessary for survival, but it is also redefining global entrepreneurship development. Based on these data, it is stated that the use of cashless economy services has a large and favourable influence on the growth of entrepreneurship.

Drawing from the outcomes of this research, the following recommendations are put forth:

- Emphasizing electronic banking, banks should recognize it as a pivotal catalyst for the successful advancement of entrepreneurship. Continuous enhancement and fortification of the security measures of internet banking systems are imperative to mitigate potential security threats.

- Banks are requested to invest in user-friendly ATMs that ensure privacy, impose reasonable charges, and contribute to the facilitation of entrepreneurship development.

- Banking institutions' management should elevate the utilization of crowdfunding applications to amplify the scope of entrepreneurship development.

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Stimulating Equitable Management of Natural Resources for Livelihood Sustainability

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Abstract

This paper examines connection between natural resources management and sustainability of livelihood. It explores the dependency of livelihoods on natural resources, unveiling vulnerability that stems from resource scarcity and mismanagement. The paper adopts content analysis method. It highlights conflict-sensitive natural resource management practices as a pivotal strategy for preventing and resolving conflicts arising from resource allocation. The paper concludes that there exist opportunities for equitable resolution of resource management conflict. Understanding the intricate relationships allows for the development of context-specific interventions that address the root causes of conflicts to foster inclusive governance structures, and promote sustainable resource management practices. It recommends that the government should incorporate conflict sensitivity into natural resources management strategies.

Keywords: Natural Resources, Management, Conflict, Livelihood.

1. Introduction

The intricate interplay between natural resources management, conflict dynamics, and the sustainability of livelihoods has emerged as a critical area of study in the broader environmental and social sciences field. As societies grapple with the increasing pressures of population growth, climate change, and economic development, the management of natural resources becomes a pivotal factor influencing the well-being of communities worldwide (United Nations, 2021).

The bedrock of numerous communities' economies and subsistence strategies lies in natural resources, spanning water, land, minerals, and forests. Unfortunately, the utilization of these resources often involves elements of competition, unequal access, and occasionally outright conflict. The escalating global demand for resources, fueled by demographic shifts, heightens the probability of conflicts arising over their control and utilization (Homer-Dixon, 1999). Against this backdrop, comprehending the dynamics of conflicts linked to resources becomes paramount. Such understanding is essential for formulating sustainable strategies harmonising ecological integrity, social equity, and economic development. Balancing these elements is crucial in navigating the intricate landscape of resource utilization, ensuring that communities can thrive without compromising the environment or exacerbating social inequalities.

Natural resource-related conflicts are typically characterized by intricate socio-political, economic, and environmental dimensions. The competition for limited resources can generate tensions that

reverberate locally, nationally, and even internationally, shaping the stability of regions and impacting the livelihoods of those reliant on these resources (Hendrix & Salehyan, 2012). These conflicts can manifest in diverse ways, ranging from localized disputes over water rights to expansive confrontations stemming from the competition for precious minerals or arable land. The multifaceted nature of these conflicts underscores the need for comprehensive analyses and strategies that address not only the immediate issues at hand but also the broader systemic factors contributing to resource-related tensions.

Natural resource conflicts exhibit a spectrum of scales, ranging from community-level disputes to expansive geopolitical tensions. The quest for limited resources has the potential to spark or intensify ongoing conflicts, fostering a detrimental cycle of instability that jeopardizes the sustainability of livelihoods (Barnett et al., 2017). Simultaneously, the mishandling of natural resources can serve as both a catalyst and outcome of conflict, establishing a nuanced and dynamic feedback loop that necessitates thorough examination (Homer-Dixon, 2019). Recognizing the interconnectedness of these factors is imperative for devising effective strategies that address the root causes and consequences of conflicts over natural resources. The paper examines connection between natural resources management and sustainability of livelihood. The rest of the paper is structured into four parts. Part 2 is conceptual clarification and part 3 is insight into the connectedness between Natural Resources and livelihood. Part concludes with recommendations.

2. Conceptual Clarification

Natural Resources Management

Effective NRM involves the sustainable use, conservation, and governance of natural resources to ensure their availability for current and future generations. Natural Resource Management (NRM) practices hold a central position in shaping the allocation and utilization of natural resources within specific regions. Berkes (2007) emphasizes that sustainable resource use is crucial for preserving ecological balance and securing the longevity of livelihoods dependent on these resources. He highlights the pivotal role of NRM in balancing human needs with environmental sustainability, recognizing that responsible management is essential to ensure that resource-dependent livelihoods can persist over time without compromising the health of ecosystems. This perspective aligns with the broader goal of fostering harmony between human activities and the natural environment through effective and sustainable NRM practices.
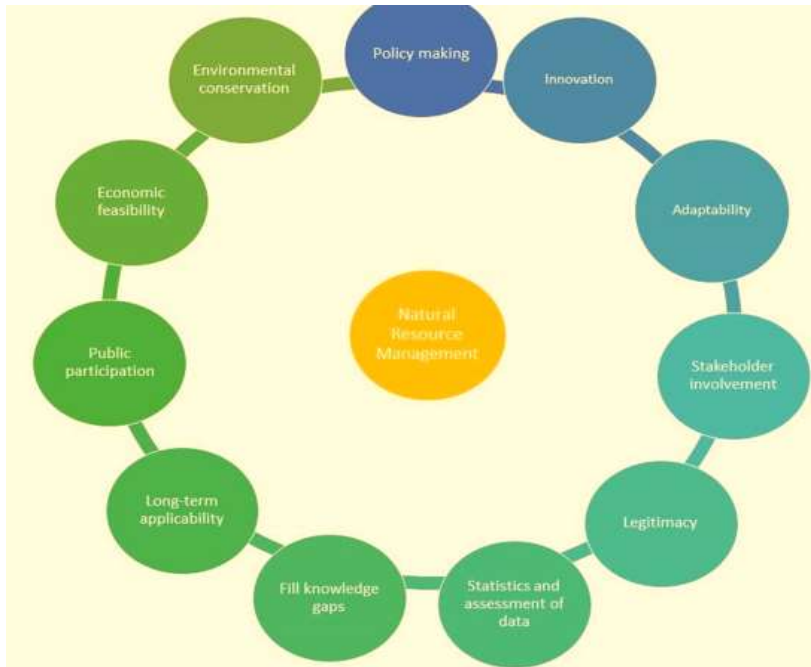
Figure 1: Environmental Economics Approach to Natural Resource Management
Source: 88 Guru

Natural resource scarcity often catalyzes conflict, especially in regions characterized by heightened competition. Homer-Dixon (1999) highlights the significance of comprehending how natural resource management (NRM) policies and practices either contribute to or alleviate conflicts related to resources. In areas where resources are limited, the potential for conflict escalation intensifies, making it imperative to navigate the intricacies of NRM to promote sustainable development. The relationship between resource scarcity and conflict underscores the pivotal role of effective NRM strategies in maintaining equilibrium and preventing social upheaval. A nuanced understanding of how NRM policies shape resource dynamics is essential for devising approaches that foster sustainable development, ensuring that finite resources are managed in a manner that benefits communities without exacerbating tensions or competition.

The efficacy of Natural Resource Management (NRM) hinges on the strength of governance structures and institutional frameworks. Ostrom (1990) asserts that a thorough examination of how institutions handle conflicts related to resource access and control offers valuable insights into the sustainability of livelihoods. The assertion highlights the critical role played by well-established governance mechanisms in navigating and resolving conflicts arising from resource management. Robust institutional frameworks are deemed essential for effective NRM, ensuring equitable distribution of resources and minimizing tensions.

The sustainable management of natural resources relies significantly on community involvement in NRM decisions. Reed (2008) emphasizes that analyzing the extent of community participation and the integration of local knowledge into NRM practices offers a valuable perspective for understanding livelihood sustainability. He highlights the crucial role played by communities in decision-making processes related to natural resource management, highlighting that their active engagement is vital for the success and longevity of such initiatives. Examining the degree of community participation and the

incorporation of indigenous knowledge provides a nuanced understanding of how NRM practices align with local needs and contribute to the resilience of livelihoods.

The challenges presented by climate change significantly impact Natural Resource Management (NRM) by disrupting the availability and distribution of natural resources. Klöck and Nunn (2019) highlight the importance of comprehending the connections between climate change, NRM strategies, and the consequent impacts on livelihoods. Climate change-induced alterations in resource availability pose intricate challenges to effective NRM, necessitating a nuanced understanding of the interplay between environmental shifts and resource management practices. The recognition of these links is imperative for fostering adaptive and resilient resource management approaches.

Natural Resource Management (NRM) practices play a pivotal role in shaping the possibilities for livelihood diversification, particularly in communities reliant on resources. Ellis (2000) emphasizes the significance of examining how NRM either facilitates or hinders livelihood diversification strategies, offering critical insights into adaptive capacities. The choices available for diversification in resource-dependent communities are intricately linked to the effectiveness of NRM initiatives. Understanding this relationship is essential for comprehending the adaptive capacities of these communities in the face of changing conditions

Livelihood

Livelihood encompasses the capabilities, assets, and activities essential for securing a means of living. It places strong emphasis on sustainability, vulnerability, and the dynamic interplay among various components. It acknowledges the diverse elements, including skills, resources, and actions, necessary for individuals or communities to sustain their way of life. By focusing on sustainability and vulnerability, this perspective aims to promote resilient livelihood that can withstand challenges and changes over time. The dynamic interaction between different components underscores the interconnected nature of factors influencing livelihoods within the broader socio-economic context.

According to Agrawal and Gibson (1999), livelihoods encompass a variety of strategies and practices undertaken by individuals and communities to ensure their well-being. This definition extends beyond mere economic activities, also incorporating social and cultural dimensions. It recognizes the multifaceted nature of endeavours that contribute to sustaining and improving the quality of life. By emphasizing the broader spectrum of livelihood activities, including social and cultural aspects, this perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of how individuals and communities secure their overall well-being.

Ellis (2000) defines livelihood as the ensemble of activities, resources, and assets employed by people to generate income and enhance their well-being. This definition places a specific emphasis on economic development and poverty reduction, highlighting the instrumental role of livelihoods in improving economic conditions and reducing poverty. The characterization underscores the practical and income-generating aspects of livelihoods, viewing them as a means for individuals to secure their financial stability and enhance their overall quality of life.

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1994), livelihood is considered a pivotal element of human security. It serves as the mechanism through which individuals and communities safeguard and improve their capabilities and well-being. This comprehensive perspective incorporates economic, social, and environmental dimensions, acknowledging the interconnected

nature of factors that contribute to human security. By recognizing the diverse aspects of livelihood, this definition underscores its role as a holistic strategy for individuals and communities to not only sustain themselves economically but also to thrive socially and environmentally.

3. Connectedness between Natural Resources and Livelihood

Human communities directly rely on natural resources for their livelihoods, engaging in activities such as agriculture, fishing, or forestry. The availability and sustainable management of these resources play a crucial role in supporting community well-being (Bebbington, 1999). This perspective underscores the fundamental connection between the health of natural ecosystems and the livelihoods of communities, emphasizing the pivotal role of sustainable resource management in ensuring the continued prosperity and welfare of these communities. Recognizing the dependency of livelihoods on the sustainable utilization of natural resources becomes essential for fostering resilience and long-term well-being in resource-dependent communities.
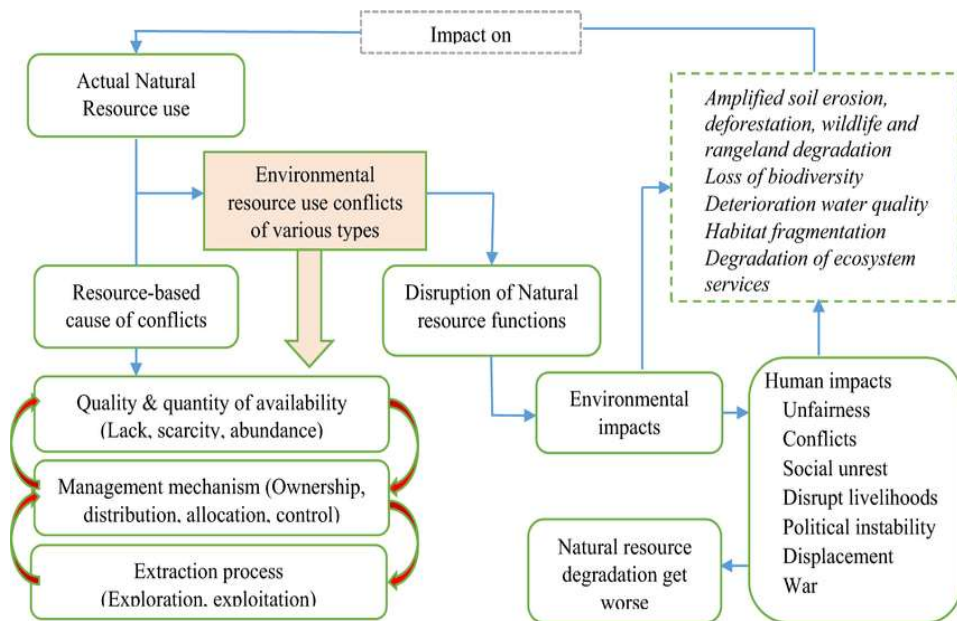
Figure 2: Natural resource use conflicts and the related impacts
Source: Research Gate

Resource scarcity or depletion can intensify competition among communities, thereby exacerbating conflicts. This vulnerability is especially pronounced in regions where livelihoods are heavily reliant on a limited set of natural resources (Homer-Dixon, 1999). The interplay between limited resource availability and heightened competition underscores the potential for conflicts to emerge, as communities contend for access to essential resources. This perspective highlights the critical need to address resource scarcity in regions heavily dependent on specific natural resources to mitigate the risk of conflicts and work towards sustainable solutions that support the well-being of communities.

Competition over valuable resources, such as oil or minerals, can escalate into conflicts, often referred to as resource wars. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) highlight that these conflicts not only jeopardize peace but also pose a significant threat to the sustainability of livelihoods in affected areas. The term "resource wars" underscores the link between resource competition and armed conflicts, emphasizing

the potential for these struggles to have far-reaching consequences on both the stability of regions and the well-being of communities.

Conflict can contribute to the degradation of natural resources through various means such as resource exploitation, displacement, or neglect of conservation practices. Jensen and Lonergan (2012) emphasize the importance of understanding how conflict influences resource management. This understanding is crucial for post-conflict recovery and sustainable development. The aftermath of conflicts often leaves ecosystems vulnerable to further degradation due to disruptions caused by resource exploitation or neglect.

In conflict zones, communities frequently develop adaptive livelihood strategies to cope with the impacts of conflict on natural resources. These strategies may encompass diversification, migration, or innovative approaches aimed at sustaining livelihoods (Watts, 2004). The challenges posed by conflict prompt communities to creatively adapt, exploring alternative means to secure their well-being. Diversifying livelihood activities, considering migration, or adopting innovative approaches are ways in which communities in conflict zones navigate resource-related challenges.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The relationships among natural resources management, conflict, and the sustainability of livelihoods are reciprocal, with each influencing and shaping the others in ways that vary across diverse socio-environmental contexts. Natural resources, essential for the sustenance of livelihoods, serve as the bedrock upon which communities build their economic, social, and cultural foundations. However, their scarcity, mismanagement, or competition over access often becomes a catalyst for conflicts that reverberate through societies, disrupting livelihoods and perpetuating cycles of vulnerability. Conflict, whether triggered by resource scarcity, unequal access, or geopolitical interests, profoundly impacts natural resource management and the sustainability of livelihoods. Its disruptive force fragments communities displaces populations, and inflicts lasting scars on both the environment and human well-being. The aftermath of conflicts leaves a legacy that challenges the very foundations of sustainable resource management and resilient livelihoods.

Despite challenges, there exist opportunities within this interplay. Understanding the intricate relationships allows for the development of nuanced, context-specific interventions that address the root causes of conflicts, foster inclusive governance structures, and promote sustainable resource management practices. Moreover, the adaptive strategies employed by communities in conflict zones offer valuable insights into resilience and innovation, showcasing the potential for transformative change.

Government should incorporate conflict sensitivity into natural resources management strategies and formulate policies based on research findings that promote sustainable natural resources management and equitable distribution. Similarly, prioritisation of community participation and engagement in the research process need be followed through. People participation would promote inclusion and a sense of belonging among the populace affected. From the perspective of research, researchers should employ an interdisciplinary approach that integrates insights from diverse fields such as environmental science, political ecology, sociology, economics, and conflict studies. This holistic approach enables a comprehensive understanding of the complex interactions and interdependence among users of natural resources.

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Nigeria's 2023 General Elections: Lessons Learnt From Democratic Sustenance in West African Countries: A Focus on Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire

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Abstract

The 2023 general elections in Nigeria marked a pivotal moment in the country's democratic journey, offering valuable insights for the broader West African region. Drawing on secondary data sources, this research examines the key lessons learned from Nigeria's electoral process and their implications for democratic sustainability in neighboring West African countries. Secondary sources were utilized in this paper. Thus, relevant online sources including journals, articles, newspapers, textbooks, and blogs were extracted. The research adopted the Elite Theory of Politics to analyze political party interest, electoral landscape, political dynamics, and institutional challenges in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing democratic governance in Nigeria, as well as other West African States. The findings highlight the effects of lack of credibility in elections, as well as the significance of effective electoral management and transparent processes in elections. Furthermore, the findings revealed that electoral malpractice in a country like Nigeria, which is influential in the region, can affect democracy in other countries in the region. Based on the findings, the research concluded that, there is the tendency that the upcoming elections in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire in 2024 and 2025, respectively, may experience electoral malpractices if lessons from the Nigerian situation are not learned. Thus, the research recommended that West African countries, particularly Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire, whose elections are scheduled for 2024 and 2025, learn from Nigeria's 2023 general elections and plan ahead of time to ensure credible elections in their own countries.

Keywords: Election, Democracy, Democratic Consolidation, West Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire

Introduction

The democratic landscape in Africa has witnessed both triumphs and challenges over the years, with Nigeria serving as a notable case study. Nigeria's democratic trajectory has been characterized by a series of elections that reflect the complexities of managing diverse ethnicities, cultures, and socio-economic conditions within its borders. The 2023 elections, in particular, were closely watched by international observers, as they unfolded against the backdrop of previous electoral challenges, including allegations of irregularities and concerns about the transparency of the electoral process (Erhunmwunse, 2023). The emergence of a new generation of political leaders, as well as the engagement of a tech-savvy electorate, showcased the evolving dynamics of Nigerian democracy.

Furthermore, the 2023 general elections in Nigeria marked a crucial juncture in the nation's democratic journey (Eze & Nwasogwa, 2023), offering valuable insights and lessons for West African countries,

particularly Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. As the most populous country on the continent and a key player in regional politics, Nigeria's electoral experiences often have reverberations across West Africa and beyond. Therefore, a meticulous examination of the 2023 elections is essential to distill pertinent lessons that can contribute to the enhancement of democratic sustenance in Western African nations.

Both Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire have grappled with political and social complexities, including issues related to governance, representation, and political stability (Musah, 2018; Erameh & Ologe, 2021). However, by analyzing the lessons learned from Nigeria's 2023 elections, this study seeks to shed light on potential strategies that Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire can employ to strengthen their democratic foundations. The examination of specific instances, such as the use of technology in voter registration and the management of electoral disputes, will serve as concrete examples to illustrate the relevance and applicability of the lessons drawn from Nigeria's experience. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on democratic governance in Africa, offering practical insights for countries in the region as they strive to build resilient and inclusive political systems.

Elections and Electoral Processes

The concept of election has been variably defined by scholars, each according to their own perspectives and preferences. Elections in democratic societies have a crucial function of guaranteeing the expression of the majority's desires and, thus, contribute to establishing the credibility of the political system and government (Sule, Adamu & Sambo, 2020). Elections, a customary mechanism employed by contemporary representative democracies since the 17th century, refer to a formal process of decision-making in which a population selects an individual to occupy public office in the legislature, executive, and various levels of government (Oluwasuji & Okajare, 2021). This procedure is likewise employed in numerous different private and business entities, ranging from clubs to voluntary groups and businesses.

Similarly, Oni (2016) defines elections as a widely used method in contemporary political systems to acquire governmental authority, when individuals vote for their favoured candidates or parties in a competitive manner. Through this procedure, he maintains that leaders are selected to serve as representatives of the population in both the legislative and executive branches of government at all tiers of administration within the nation. An election serves as a forum for discussion, convincing others, and establishing shared regulations for selecting individuals to serve as representatives in the executive, legislative, and other branches of government. Elections serve as a crucial method of resolving social conflicts by engaging in peaceful discussions and decision-making processes. During elections, political parties are expected to uphold their pre-election promises, while the losing party has the chance to offer constructive criticism as the opposition or wait until the next election cycle (Oni et al., 2017).

According to Chejbub & Sin (2020), an election is a method by which individuals select their leaders and express their preferences for policies and programmes. This process ultimately grants a government the power to govern. They view elections as a mechanism through which a society can structure itself and reach specific formal resolutions. They argue that in societies with free voting, elections serve both as a means to determine power dynamics and as a way to ensure political compliance while minimising the loss of individual freedom. An election is a formal process of

communal decision-making that takes place through a series of interconnected events and subsequent actions. They entail the involvement of individuals in the process of selecting their leaders and their active involvement in governing (Ezegwu & Osuagu, 2013).

Similarly, Okeke (2015) opined that elections are regarded as procedures by which individuals select their leaders and express their favoured public ideas and programmes by voting. It functions as a mechanism by which members of a particular society express their refusal to be governed by individuals they deem undesirable or leaders who have demonstrated poor governance. By means of elections, individuals select their delegates and articulate their political and socio-economic ambitions by casting their vote for a candidate or political party whose vision and programme most accurately align with their objectives. Elections, whether conducted under authoritarian or democratic systems, exhibit nearly identical characteristics. Elections and their preceding campaigns are momentous occasions characterised by vibrant rallies, prominent banners, eye-catching posters, attention-grabbing headlines, and extensive media coverage, all of which emphasise the significance of active engagement in the event. Candidates, political parties, and interest groups with varying interests and goals utilise the symbols of nationalism or patriotism, reform or revolution (Ukachikara & Elechi, 2019).

On the other hand, the electoral process refers to the procedure through which voters select amongst different options, typically during an election or a policy referendum. Additionally, it addresses the concept of legitimate voting and the process of tallying and combining votes to get a conclusive outcome (El-wakil & Cheneval, 2018). In the view of Farrell (2017), the electoral process is a multifaceted process that includes a range of actions starting from the declaration of the intention to have elections, up until the conclusion of the elections, whether they are won or lost. Also, the electoral process has a crucial role in determining the outcome of elections, shaping campaign strategies, defining the function of political parties, and ultimately deciding who holds political power. It is the fundamental activity inside the electoral process. Hence, any behaviour that poses a threat to the electoral process constitutes a violation of the people's sovereignty.

Thus, it can be rightly said that the electoral process encompasses all the actions and procedures associated with the selection of representatives by the voting population. It encompasses all the activities that occur before and after an election, which are essential for the election to have significance. These activities encompass the registration of political parties, examination of the voters' register, demarcation of constituencies, settlement of electoral conflicts, installation of elected representatives, and the administration of oaths to elected officials. Furthermore, electoral process involves several key components, including the establishment of the election management body, the formation and regulation of political parties, the demarcation of electoral constituencies, the registration of voters, the identification of voting centers/polling booths, election campaigns, the allocation and distribution of voter cards and ballot papers to polling booths on election day, the actual conduct of elections, and the resolution of election disputes through the election tribunals and appellate courts, all in accordance with electoral laws.

It is a multifaceted procedure that involves both positive intents and negative consequences of election administration, especially in developing democracies where general elections are frequently affected by culturally influenced electoral misconduct. In the context of Nigeria, it is undeniable that the electoral process is heavily marked by a prevalent culture of electoral malpractices.

Democratic Situation in the West African Region (2015-2022)

The democratic situation in West African region has been marked by a mix of progress and challenges. Several nations in the region have experienced political transitions, elections, and varying degrees of political stability. However, issues such as governance, corruption, and socio-economic disparities have always posed significant hurdles to the consolidation of democratic principles in the region (Idowu, 2020). One notable example of democratic progress is seen in Ghana, which held successful presidential and parliamentary elections in 2016 and 2020. These elections were widely praised for their transparency and fairness, reinforcing Ghana's reputation as a stable democracy in West Africa. The peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another demonstrates the maturation of democratic institutions and a commitment to the democratic process. However, Ghana also faces challenges related to corruption, and efforts to address this issue have been ongoing during this period (Abdulai & Sackeyfio, 2022).

Nigeria, the most populous country in West Africa, experienced a historic transition in 2015 when Muhammadu Buhari, from the opposition All Progressives Congress (APC), defeated the incumbent president. This marked a significant moment in Nigeria's democratic history, as it was the first time an opposition candidate had successfully defeated a sitting president through the ballot box (Ousmanou, 2023). But, the Buhari administration faced criticism for its handling of security challenges, economic issues, and allegations of human rights abuses (Abubakar & Umar, 2017). However, Nigerians elected a new president on February 25th, but the process did not meet the expectations and standards of the voters. The election, which resulted in Bola Tinubu, the candidate of the ruling All Progressives Congress party, becoming president, was widely criticised as being imperfect both within and beyond Nigeria. This criticism has raised concerns about the upcoming elections in other West African countries.

In contrast, the political landscape in countries like Mali and Burkina Faso was marred by instability and security concerns for some time. In fact, Mali faced a coup in 2020, raising questions about the country's democratic trajectory. The coup was driven by dissatisfaction with the government's handling of internal conflicts and security challenges (Adetuyi, 2021). Burkina Faso, on the other hand, grappled with political instability, terrorism, and a delicate democratic transition following the ousting of longtime leader Blaise Compaoré in 2014. However, a coup d'état took place in Burkina Faso on 30 September 2022, removing Interim President Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba over his alleged inability to deal with the country's Islamist insurgency. Damiba had come to power in a coup d'état eight months earlier. Captain Ibrahim Traoré took over as interim leader (Olukayode, 2022). Thus, both nations struggled to establish stable governance structures amid ongoing security threats.

Liberia, a country that emerged from a prolonged civil war in the early 2000s, experienced a democratic transition with the election of George Weah as president in 2017. Weah's victory was seen as a positive step in Liberia's democratic consolidation, but the nation faced challenges related to economic development and post-conflict reconciliation (Lee-Jones, 2019). However, in the Liberian 2023 elections, George Weah of Liberia lost presidential election and Joseph Boakai won.

Thus, while few West African countries witnessed positive democratic developments, many grappled with recurring challenges such as corruption, inadequate infrastructure, and socioeconomic disparities.

Economic factors also influenced the democratic situation in West Africa. High levels of poverty, unemployment, and inequality posed challenges to political stability and democratic governance. The inability of some governments to address these socio-economic issues contributed to public dissatisfaction and, in some cases, political unrest.

Conclusively, the democratic situation in West African countries between 2015 and 2023 was characterized by a mix of progress and challenges. While some nations experienced successful democratic transitions, transparent elections, and improvements in governance, others grappled with political instability, security concerns, and issues related to corruption.

Overview of Nigeria's 2023 General Elections

The 2023 general elections are the seventh uninterrupted general election in Nigeria since the nation's restoration of democratic governance in 1999. Nigeria has maintained an uninterrupted period of democracy for 25 years, which is the longest in its history. Nigerians participated in the electoral process on February 25 and March 18, 2023, in order to choose a new President, National Assembly Members, 28 State Governors, and members of 36 State Houses of Assembly (Dii, 2023). The election was noteworthy not just for its consistency but also for the novel advancements implemented in the electoral procedure. However, out of the 93.4 million registered voters, a mere 30 million individuals took part in the Presidential and National Assembly elections held on February 25 (Fourchard & Sikiru, 2023).

However, the 2023 elections encountered several obstacles, notably the occurrence of violence in the pre-election phase. In comparison to the 2019 cycle, there was a notable increase in both the number of fatalities and incidences of electoral violence, which occurred in a larger number of Local Government Areas (LGAs). The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) implemented specific measures to accommodate individuals with impairments and those residing in Internally Displaced Camps, thereby promoting inclusivity and safeguarding against voting disenfranchisement. The problem of rigging continues to be a recurring issue in Nigerian elections (Nwosu, 2023). Notwithstanding technical progress, instances of vote-buying, ballot stuffing, and manipulation of results continue. Political actors frequently manipulate weaknesses in the electoral process to obtain an unjust advantage. The 2023 elections were not an anomaly, as accusations of electoral manipulation emerged in multiple states. These actions subvert the credibility of the democratic process and corrode public confidence in institutions.

Also, voter intimidation poses a significant concern during the 2023 general elections. Throughout the pre-election phase, there were documented instances of armed factions intimidating voters, particularly in areas with a history of electoral unrest. Many qualified voters refrained from voting due to their apprehension of violence. In addition, several political figures utilised their authority to suppress others who opposed them, thereby establishing an environment characterised by intimidation and manipulation (Oyoru, 2023). In all, the 2023 elections experienced a concerning surge in violence in comparison to prior electoral cycles. Instances of confrontations between opposing political factions, assaults on voting centres, and aggression towards electoral personnel were prevalent. These actions caused disruptions in the voting procedures, posed a threat to life, and impeded the residents' ability to exercise their right to elect their representatives.

Implications of Nigeria's 2023 General Elections

Undoubtedly, Nigeria's elections carry immense importance in West Africa, considering Nigeria's position as the largest democracy in Africa and its crucial role in the region (Fatai, 2018). Thus, the result of Nigeria's 2023 general elections has important consequences for maintaining democracy in West African nations. However, the 2023 elections in Nigeria, characterised by irregularities such as electoral fraud, coercion of voters, and political unrest (Peter & Inokoba, 2023), may have substantial ramifications for the maintenance of democracy in West African nations. First and foremost, the reputation of Nigeria as a prominent democratic leader in the region might be undermined. Nigeria has always been regarded as a crucial actor in advancing stability and democratic government in the West African area (Ojakorotu & Adeleke, 2018). Nevertheless, an imperfect electoral procedure has the ability to undermine this perception, so diminishing the shared dedication to democratic principles across neighbouring nations.

Furthermore, the presence of anomalies in Nigeria's elections could establish an unfavourable example for neighbouring countries (Nworie, et al., 2020). Should Nigeria, a significant participant, fail to carry out elections that are both free and fair, it might communicate a disheartening signal to neighbouring nations regarding the effectiveness of democratic procedures. This has the potential to empower authoritarian rulers and weaken the endeavours of countries aiming to enhance their democratic establishments.

Furthermore, the possibility of political violence and instability following the elections is a risk to regional security (Mbaegbu, 2018). Due to Nigeria's substantial size and significant influence in West Africa, any internal turmoil within the country can potentially result in the spread of negative consequences to neighbouring nations. The potential consequences of political instability in Nigeria include heightened migration, the spread of weapons, and the emergence of transnational criminal operations, all of which have the potential to disrupt the stability of the area as a whole.

Furthermore, the gradual decline of popular confidence in democratic procedures within Nigeria has the potential to cause a widespread impact throughout West Africa. Diminishing voters' trust in the electoral system might result in reduced inclination to actively engage in democratic procedures within their own nations, hence causing deterioration in civic involvement and overall democratic fortitude. Again, the deficiencies in Nigeria's elections may have a detrimental effect on the international community's assessment of democratic advancements in West Africa. Foreign investors and aid organisations may exhibit reluctance to provide assistance for democratic activities in the region, thereby impacting economic progress and stability.

Thus, the consequences of the 2023 elections in Nigeria have the potential to escalate regional diplomatic tensions. Adjacent nations may voice apprehensions over the possible ramifications of political instability and may feel obligated to intervene or facilitate negotiations, thereby putting a strain on diplomatic relations and cooperation within the West African region. Therefore, the anomalies in Nigeria's 2023 elections may have significant consequences for the continuity of democracy in West African nations, impacting regional stability, diplomatic links, and the general advancement of democratic governance. It is imperative to tackle these problems, as it is vital for both Nigeria and the wider West African area to uphold and reinforce their dedication to democratic values. It is also important for other West African countries to learn lessons from Nigeria's 2023 general elections.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts the Elite Theory of politics. The elite theory, also called elitist theory, emerged in the early 20th century and became prominent via the contributions of theorists like Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, and Robert Michels (Damele & Campos, 2022). The proponents contended that nations are invariably governed by a small, privileged elite class that wields disproportionate power and influence. Thus, the theory posits that political power is centralized around a small group by economic, social, or institutional methods (Carlton, 2017).

However, the elite idea is based on three fundamental assumptions. It suggests that power is inherently centralized in society, with a select elite group controlling political decision-making. Secondly, it presumes that this elite group is united and works in its shared self-interest, frequently ignoring the interests of the wider public. It also states that the there is a propensity for elite control to continue because the elite have the resources to sustain and pass down their privileged status (Wedel, 2017).

Studying Nigeria's 2023 general elections through the lens of elite theory offers valuable understanding of political power dynamics. Within the purview of the theory, it reveals that political decisions and election results may be significantly influenced by a specific group, even though there is a democratic appearance. Furthermore, by comparing Nigeria to West African countries such as Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, where democracy has encountered difficulties, one might assume that the existence of elites in every society might also hinder fair electoral processes in these countries.

Consequently the significance of elite theory in the paper is interesting. The theory suggests that political systems in Nigeria might be structured to benefit the privileged class, perhaps weakening the democratic system. Also, corruption, electoral manipulation, and power concentration within a small group are important topics for analysis affecting free and fair elections in the country. However, despite its immense utility in this paper, the elite theory has been criticized for oversimplifying power relations and overlooking societal issues and grassroots movements, despite its significance.

Furthermore, critics contend that the theory presents a fixed view of society, neglecting the possibility of change and the impact of collective action in resisting elite control. Therefore, in relation to Nigeria's 2023 elections, depending only on the elite theory could result in an inadequate understanding of the many issues affecting democratic continuity. Despite these criticisms, the elite thesis provides a useful perspective for examining Nigeria's 2023 general elections, shedding light on the possible centralization of power and authority wielded by the elites.

Lessons Learnt from Nigeria's 2023 General Elections

The 2023 elections in Nigeria, although marking democratic progress in the country, characterised by irregularities, provide significant insights for West African nations with upcoming elections, especially Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire having their elections in 2024 and 2025 respectively. The most important need is to strengthen the institutional structures, by establishing independent and well-funded election commissions that are capable of conducting transparent processes. Uninterrupted election reforms are crucial for addressing vulnerabilities and improving accountability.

Again, promoting political discourse and inclusiveness cultivates a democratic ethos, prioritising transparent deliberations and the resolution of conflicts. The importance of foreign observers in guaranteeing legitimacy emphasises the necessity of working together with esteemed organisations.

Also, ensuring sufficient voter education is crucial, as it empowers individuals to comprehend their entitlements and the election procedure.

Furthermore, implementing proactive security measures is necessary in order to effectively mitigate political violence and intimidation. Prudent consideration should be given to the installation of technology, ensuring a progressive integration and the development of safeguards to mitigate vulnerabilities. Implementing strong post-election dispute resolution processes preserves public trust. Promoting active participation in civic affairs and ensuring that political figures are held responsible, in addition to exchanging knowledge across borders, jointly enhances the democratic advancement of the region.

West African nations should take note of these lessons in order to reinforce their democratic underpinnings and defend the values of equitable and open elections.

Conclusion

The 2023 general elections in Nigeria were a crucial turning point in the country's democratic evolution, presenting both advancements and obstacles. The intricacies of overseeing a wide range of ethnicities, cultures, and socio-economic circumstances inside Nigeria's territorial boundaries were apparent, mirroring the greater democratic panorama in Africa. The insights gained from Nigeria's 2023 elections are vital not just for the nation itself, but also for other West African countries grappling with their own democratic obstacles. Therefore, lessons learned from Nigeria's 2023 elections will provide valuable insights for West African nations seeking to strengthen their democratic foundations.

Furthermore, Nigeria's electoral experiences have significant ramifications for regional stability, diplomatic ties, and the general progress of democratic administration. Therefore, given that Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire are scheduled to hold their elections in 2024 and 2025 respectively, it would be prudent for them to draw lessons from Nigeria's experience and make proactive preparations towards having credible, free and fair elections in their countries.

Recommendations

Based on the above analysis, the following recommendations are put in place:

It is crucial for West African countries, such as Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, to give priority to the creation of autonomous and adequately financed electoral commissions that possess the capacity to carry out transparent procedures. Perpetual election reforms are crucial in order to tackle weaknesses and improve accountability.

Cultivating a democratic ethos by encouraging political discourse and inclusivity is crucial. Emphasising open and accountable discussions and the resolution of conflicts can enhance the overall democratic well-being of a country. Engaging in collaboration with international observers is essential to ensure the validity of elections. West African states should collaborate closely with reputable international organisations to guarantee the integrity and openness of their voting procedures.

Furthermore, it is crucial to provide adequate voter education to empower citizens with knowledge about their rights and the election processes. This can enhance the level of knowledge and engagement among voters, so bolstering the fundamental principles of democracy.

Also, implementing proactive security measures is essential for mitigating political violence and intimidation. Thus, utilizing technology and implementing safeguards can bolster the overall security of the electoral process.

Stimulating active involvement in civic matters and ensuring political people are held responsible are crucial for a flourishing democracy. Public engagement enhances the formation of a politically system that is both responsive and responsible.

Lastly, facilitating the transfer of knowledge between West African countries is crucial. By sharing experiences and best practices, these nations can learn from one another and together promote democratic progress throughout the region.

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Appraisal of Induced Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among Combatants in Frontline Conflict Operation in Nigeria

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Abstract

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is increasingly pervasive among military personnel engaged in frontline conflict operations. This paper explores the multifaceted nature of combat-induced PTSD, adopting an eclectic approach. Prevalence of PTSD varies, influenced by factors such as trauma nature, individual susceptibility, and support systems. In Nigeria, combatants face unique challenges, including exposure to violence, loss of comrades, extended stress periods, traumatic brain injuries, and insufficient support systems. Combat-induced PTSD leads to detrimental outcomes such as psychological distress, impaired relationships, and physical health challenges among others. A comprehensive approach is crucial, including early detection, accessible mental health resources, destigmatization of seeking help, and tailored interventions. Pre-deployment psychological preparation and ongoing mental health support are essential preventive measures. Acknowledging the multifactorial nature of combat-induced PTSD and implementing evidence-based strategies are vital to minimize adverse effects and foster a supportive environment for military personnel. This paper recommends increased attention, and targeted interventions to address combat-induced PTSD and ensure the well-being of those serving in frontline conflict operations.

Keywords: Appraisal, Post-traumatic stress, Disorder, Combatants, Frontline conflict

1. Introduction

Mental health issues including depression, and emotion-induced habits such as excessive drinking, and smoking are prevalent among veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), with symptoms often manifesting months after their return (Ramchand *et al.,* 2015; Ramchand *et al.,* 2010). These are presumed to be associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety condition that arises from exposure to traumatic events involving actual or threatened death or serious injury to self or others. PTSD is characterized by persistent re-experiencing of the traumatic event, lasting over four weeks with distressing recollections, recurrent dreams reflecting the trauma, sensations of reliving the experience, hallucinations, or flashbacks, as well as intense distress as reminders of the traumatic event.

Additional symptoms include persistent avoidance of trauma-associated stimuli, numbing of responsiveness, and heightened arousal, expressed through symptoms like insomnia, irritability, difficulty concentrating, hyper-vigilance, or an exaggerated startled response, formally known as traumatic neurosis (Phelps *et al.,* 2011; Lazarov *et al.,* 2020; Regier *et al.,* 2013; Sullivan & Elbogen, 2014).Studies indicate that the incidence of PTSD among OEF/OIF military personnel is influenced by factors such as the first combat experience (Dursa *et al.,* 2014). Although most people exposed to

stressful events do not develop PTSD, interpersonal violence increases the risk, particularly involving rape, sexual assault, kidnapping, physical abuse by an intimate partner, or childhood sexual abuse (Feldman & Vengrober, 2011). Complex PTSD may develop in survivors of prolonged trauma or severe domestic violence.

Combat PTSD, a type of post-traumatic stress disorder, affects soldiers during or after combat operations. Exposure to live fire or work as a support worker in a combat zone poses a risk of developing PTSD, characterized by direct knowledge, witnessing, or hearing about a traumatic incident, re-experiencing, avoidance of trauma-related stimuli, and negative thoughts and feelings regarding the occurrence (DSM-5). Returning veterans often display symptoms, including flashbacks, avoidance of war-related thoughts, and negative thoughts and feelings about the traumatic incident. Increased risks of PTSD and other mental health problems are associated with factors such as injury, death, exposure to high levels of battle stress, and the experience of the first combat operation (Armenta *et al.,* 2018; Khaylis *et al.,* 2011; Dursa *et al.,* 2014). The paper explores the multifaceted nature of combat-induced PTSD and its implications for the health of combat personnel.The paper is organised in four sections. In section 2 is conceptual clarification. Section 3 of the paper provides insight into risk and contributory factors. Section 4is the conclusion and recommendation.

2.1. Conceptual Clarification: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that can develop after an individual experiences or witnesses a traumatic event involving actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013). According to Haigin and Whitourne (2007), posttraumatic stress disorder is a psychiatric condition that occurs after witnessing or experiencing an event that is traumatic to which one responds with intense fear, apprehension or horror. Similarly, the latest version of diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (APA, 2013) describes PTSD as a "trauma stress-related" disorder resulting from exposure or witnessing of a potentially traumatic event such as actual or threatened death, exposure to accidents, natural disasters, combat events, etc., with symptom clusters of re-experiencing, avoidance, hyperarousal, negative alteration in cognition and mood. This definition clearly suggests that having experience of war trauma could increase PTSD vulnerability (Abel, 2018).

The development of PTSD is influenced by a combination of genetic, neurobiological, psychological, and environmental factors. Individual susceptibility, the severity of the trauma, lack of social support, and the presence of additional stressors can contribute to the likelihood of developing PTSD (Yehuda & LeDoux, 2007). PTSD is not a rare condition, and its prevalence varies depending on the nature of the trauma and other contributing factors. While many individuals experience traumatic events, not everyone develops PTSD. According to the National Comorbidity Survey, the lifetime prevalence of PTSD in the United States is approximately 6.8%, with women more likely to be affected than men (Kessler *et al.,* 2005).

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), PTSD is diagnosed based on specific criteria. The individual must have been exposed to a traumatic event, either by direct experience, witnessing, learning about a traumatic event involving a close relative or friend, or repeated exposure to aversive details of a traumatic event (APA, 2013). The DSM-5 outlines four clusters of symptoms that characterize PTSD: intrusion symptoms, avoidance, negative alterations in cognitions and mood, and alterations in arousal and reactivity (APA, 2013). Symptoms of PTSD are classified

into four clusters. Intrusion symptoms involve re-experiencing the traumatic event through distressing memories, nightmares, or flashbacks. Avoidance symptoms include efforts to avoid reminders of the trauma and emotional numbing. Negative alterations in cognitions and mood manifest as distorted beliefs about oneself or the world, and alterations in arousal and reactivity involve hypervigilance, irritability, and sleep disturbances (APA, 2013).

3.1. Risk Factors associated with PTSD among Combatants

Risk factors associated with PTSD in military personnel have been a subject of extensive research over the past few decades, with a focus on combat-related PTSD. Identified individual and societal risk factors include being younger at the time of the incident, female gender, belonging to a minority race, lower socioeconomic status, and social support deficits (Nemeroff *et al.,* 2006; Bremner *et al.,* 1995; Bremner *et al.,* 1993). Although demographic data are routinely collected in studies, there is less consensus on the evaluated risk factors and the techniques used for analysis (Brewin *et al.,* 2000), leading to inconsistency in measuring the severity of trauma over time. Research on veterans has gained momentum, addressing specific challenges; however, the lack of established measurements hinders cross-study comparisons (Xue *et al.,* 2015). Some studies, like the meta-analysis by Kaylor *et al.* focused on the overall psychological impact of military service, particularly in Vietnam (Weaver & Clum, 1995). Rubonis and Bickman (1991) utilized meta-analysis to establish positive correlations between traumatic experiences, pre-trauma vulnerability factors (e.g., family history of mental illness, gender), personality characteristics, early trauma, bad parenting experiences, and low educational attainment, all linked to PTSD.

Predictors of PTSD, as outlined by Brewin *et al.* (2000), encompass pre-trauma risk factors, with trauma severity and post-trauma risk factors exhibiting larger predictive effects. Lack of social support, life stress, traumatic event severity, childhood abuse, and adversity are significant predictors. Ozer *et al.* (2003) compared fixed predictors and concluded that peri-traumatic dissociation of PTSD, perceived threat to life, and reported lack of support were strong predictors. Another meta-analysis by Trickey *et al.* (2012) focused on civilian populations and identified subjective peri-trauma and post-event characteristics as significant factors in PTSD development in children and adolescents.

Studies from developed countries suggest that soldiers witnessing civilian or alliance member deaths or injuries often report mental health issues, including suicidal ideation, depression symptoms, and PTSD (Back *et al.,* 2019). Notably, these findings are derived from studies in settings where soldiers undergo psychological preparation before deployment. In Nigeria, the absence of mental health professionals and services in military formations results in soldiers being deployed to battlefields without psychological preparation, elevating the risk of combat-induced mental health problems.

3.2. Contributory Factors to Induced PTSD

Combatants engaged in frontline conflict operations are particularly vulnerable to the development of induced PTSD due to the unique stressors associated with warfare. Induced PTSD among combatants in frontline conflict operations is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Some of these factors contributing to induced PTSD among combatants includes, but not limited to the following:

Exposure to Violence and Trauma: Combatants often face prolonged exposure to intense violence and traumatic events, such as firefights, explosions, and casualties. Witnessing or participating in these events can overwhelm the individual's ability to cope, contributing significantly to the development of PTSD (Hoge *et al.,* 2004).

Loss of Comrades: The loss of fellow soldiers is a deeply impactful factor. Combat units often develop strong bonds, and the death of comrades can lead to feelings of guilt, grief, and survivor's guilt. These emotional burdens contribute to the development and exacerbation of PTSD symptoms (Sherman, 2018).

Extended Periods of Stress: Frontline conflict operations involve prolonged periods of stress, characterized by constant threat, fear, and the need for hyper-vigilance. The cumulative stress experienced during deployments can strain the mental resilience of combatants, making them susceptible to PTSD (Jones, 2019).

Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs): Combat-related incidents, including explosions and blasts, can result in traumatic brain injuries. The physical and neurological impact of TBIs can intertwine with the psychological aspects of PTSD, creating a complex interplay that contributes to the severity of symptoms (Vasterling *et al.,* 2018).

Lack of Adequate Support Systems: Inadequate support during and after combat operations is a critical factor. Combatants may lack access to mental health resources, face challenges in expressing their emotional struggles, and encounter societal stigmas. The absence of robust support systems amplifies the risk of developing PTSD (Greenberg *et al.,* 2017).

Pre-existing Mental Health Conditions: Combatants may enter service with pre-existing mental health conditions, which can be exacerbated by the stressors of frontline conflict. Conditions such as anxiety and depression can increase vulnerability to developing PTSD following traumatic experiences (Thomas *et al.,* 2015).

Occupational Demands and Expectations: The unique demands and expectations of military service, including adherence to strict discipline, exposure to moral injuries, and the necessity to carry out orders that may conflict with personal values, contribute to the psychological burden faced by combatants (Currier *et al.,* 2019).

Family and Social Dynamics: The impact of deployment on family relationships and the disruption of normal social dynamics can contribute to the development of PTSD. Combatants may experience feelings of isolation, difficulty in readjusting to family life, and challenges in maintaining relationships (Nash *et al.,* 2015).

Cumulative Nature of Trauma: The accumulation of multiple traumatic experiences over the course of a deployment or military career enhances the risk of developing PTSD. The cumulative nature of trauma can lead to a more severe and persistent manifestation of the disorder (Shay, 2018).

3.3. Impact of PTSD on Combatants in Nigeria

Combatants engaged in frontline conflict operations in Nigeria face unique challenges that contribute to the significant impact of PTSD on their mental well-being. These challenges by every stretch of the imagination, are extensive and complex. Some of the multifaceted consequences of PTSD on these individuals includes the following:

Psychological Distress: Combatants experiencing PTSD often suffer from persistent psychological distress. Symptoms include intrusive memories, nightmares, and flashbacks related to traumatic events. The psychological toll can lead to heightened anxiety, depression, and a sense of emotional numbness (Olff *et al.,* 2007).

Impaired Functioning and Relationships: PTSD can impair the overall functioning of combatants, affecting their ability to maintain relationships and fulfil daily responsibilities. Irritability, anger outbursts, and social withdrawal are common, straining both personal and professional relationships (Marmar *et al.,* 2015).

Impact on Physical Health: The stress associated with PTSD can have detrimental effects on physical health. Combatants may experience disruptions in sleep patterns, chronic fatigue, and increased vulnerability to illnesses. These physical health challenges further compromise their overall well-being (Pacella *et al.,* 2013).

Risk of Substance Abuse: Individuals with PTSD, including combatants, may turn to substance abuse as a coping mechanism. The self-medication with drugs or alcohol to alleviate symptoms can lead to a vicious cycle, exacerbating both the mental health and substance abuse issues (Jacobson *et al.,* 2008).

High Risk of Suicidal Ideation: PTSD is associated with a heightened risk of suicidal ideation and attempts. The intense emotional pain and feelings of hopelessness that accompany PTSD can contribute to a significantly increased risk of self-harm among combatants (Kimbrel *et al.,* 2014).

Challenges in Professional Life: The impact of PTSD on cognitive functioning and emotional stability can impede a combatant's professional life. Difficulties in concentration, memory lapses, and impaired decision-making may hinder their ability to carry out military duties effectively (Vasterling *et al.,* 2010).

Social Isolation and Stigmatization: The stigma associated with mental health issues, including PTSD, can lead to social isolation. Combatants may fear judgment or discrimination, causing them to avoid seeking help. Social isolation further exacerbates feelings of loneliness and distress (Hoge *et al.,* 2004).

Disrupted Sleep Patterns: Combatants with PTSD commonly experience nightmares, night sweats, and insomnia. Disrupted sleep patterns contribute to chronic fatigue and exacerbate other physical and psychological symptoms, creating a cycle of distress (Miller *et al.,* 2017).

Negative Impact on Family Life: PTSD affects not only the combatant but also their family. The strain of the condition on interpersonal relationships, combined with the challenges of readjustment, may lead to family breakdowns, affecting spouses and children (Galovski *et al.,* 2012).

Difficulty in Reintegration: Returning combatants with PTSD often face challenges in reintegrating into civilian life. Difficulties in adapting to non-combat environments, coupled with the stigma of mental health issues, can hinder a successful transition (Fontana & Rosenheck, 2008).

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) remains a complex and pervasive mental health condition that arises from exposure to or witnessing traumatic events, such as combat experiences among military personnel. The diagnostic criteria for PTSD, as outlined in the DSM-5, encompass a range of symptoms categorized into intrusion, avoidance, negative alterations in cognitions and mood, and alterations in arousal and reactivity. While the prevalence of PTSD varies, it is influenced by factors such as the nature of the trauma, individual susceptibility, and the presence of support systems. The impact of PTSD on combatants engaged in frontline conflict operations in Nigeria is profound, with numerous risk factors contributing to its development. Exposure to violence, loss of comrades, extended periods of stress, traumatic brain injuries, lack of support systems, pre-existing mental health conditions, and the cumulative nature of trauma are among the significant factors. These challenges not only affect combatants' psychological well-being but also have far-reaching consequences on their relationships and professional lives.

Combat-induced PTSD is associated with a range of detrimental outcomes, including psychological distress, impaired functioning and relationships, physical health challenges, substance abuse, suicidal ideation, professional difficulties, social isolation, disrupted sleep patterns, negative impacts on family life, and challenges in reintegration into civilian life. The cumulative effect of these consequences underscores the urgent need for comprehensive mental health support for military personnel engaged in frontline conflict operations.

Addressing combat-induced PTSD requires a multifaceted approach, including early detection, accessible mental health resources, destigmatization of seeking help, and tailored interventions that consider the unique challenges faced by combatants. Additionally, preventive measures, such as pre-deployment psychological preparation and ongoing mental health support during and after deployments, are crucial in mitigating the risk and impact of PTSD among military personnel. In summary, combat-induced PTSD is a critical issue that demands attention, understanding, and targeted interventions to ensure the well-being of those who serve in frontline conflict operations.

By acknowledging the multifactorial nature of PTSD and implementing evidence-based strategies, vulnerable individuals and military organisations can work towards minimizing adverse effects and foster a supportive environment for good mental health. Consequently, periodic clinical tests are recommended to monitor the biological as well as psychological health status of combatants. Similarly, the need to plan a programme of physical exercise and leisure activities is imperative. Such programmes, when followed with commitment improvement mental rehabilitation. However, such programmes must be institutional, and open to individual choices by combatant. Spiritual activities could also ameliorate the consequences of PTSD. Spiritual exercises will, however, require the faith and personal commitment of individuals.

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An Assessment of Human Capital Development and Governance Strategy in Nigeria from the Perspective of Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract

This paper examines the complex relationship between Nigerian governance strategies and the development of human capital, with a particular emphasis on how these strategies affect the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Driven by enduring obstacles to equitable development, we explore the relationship between governance inadequacies and deficiencies in the development of human capital. Our goal is to offer insights that guide focused interventions by looking at institutional frameworks, policies, and socioeconomic indicators. This study aims to provide policy recommendations for promoting a more sustainable development trajectory in Nigeria by means of a succinct analysis of the body of existing literature and empirical data. This paper also attempts to interrogate the implementation of SDG goal in Nigeria, focusing on three goals; Goal 2: Zero Hunger, Goal 3: Good health and Wellbeing and Goal 4 Quality Education. The study utilized secondary methods of collecting data. The study found out that about 133 million Nigerians have become multidimensional poor in the last eight years with another 1.7 million set to join them by the end of 2023 due to the failure of governance at all levels - eight years after the SDGs were launched in the country and seven years before the proposed end year (2030). The paper recommended that the government and stakeholders must tackle endemic systemic corruption in the country.

Keywords: Human Capital Development, Governance Strategy, Sustainable Development Goals, Nigeria

Introduction

The world is grappling with enormous and unprecedented crises including the massive destruction of the natural ecosystems resulting in considerable losses in biodiversity; soil, air and water contaminations; sizeable amounts of waste in the environment that neither can be assimilated by the biosphere nor managed by humans effectively; climate changes; extensive land degradation including catastrophic deforestation and desertification; and global food crisis (Peter, 2013).

Human Capital Development (HCD) emerged in the mid-20th century, emphasizing the significance of investing in people's education, skills, and health for economic and social progress. Pioneered by economists like Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker, HCD recognizes individuals as valuable assets and highlights the positive returns on such investments. Evolving beyond economic considerations, HCD now encompasses broader dimensions such as creativity and adaptability. In today's globalized and technologically-driven world, governments and organizations prioritize policies fostering education, healthcare, and lifelong learning, acknowledging the pivotal role of a skilled and healthy workforce in achieving sustainable development goals. Organizations and governments now rely heavily on governance strategies, which emphasize deliberate and methodical approaches to supervision and decision-making. Its focus widened to include issues in many industries after it was first connected to corporate governance. A governance strategy was necessary to ensure stakeholder engagement, risk management, accountability, and transparency as organizations faced more complex

and global dynamics. It has emphasized a holistic approach in recent years, embracing sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility.

At the dawn of the 20th century, the world has been confronted with developmental challenges like hunger, poverty, illiteracy, conflicts, environmental degradation and many other social issues, especially in developing nations. In order to address these challenges, in 2015, United Nations General Assembly proposed far reaching agreements and commitments for both developed and developing countries with goals and time limits to reach the goals.

These commitments are set of seventeen (17) development goals collectively called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The SDGs is an improvement on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) introduced as a means of completion of what the MDG was unable to achieve in 2015 (UN, 2015). The sustainable development goals cover all the development needs of the society and are expected to be achieved by 2030, hence the name "Agenda 2030". The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by UN Member States have been specifically proposed to address some of the main socio-environmental and economic problems affecting developed and developing countries. The agenda is to use the SDGs to frame the political and governance agenda of all UN member countries during a 15-year period; 2015 to 2030. Be it as it may, the Sustainable Development Goals are meant to improve the living standards of the people which extends from the present to the future generation. Therefore, it is a development template that may stand the test of time thereby serving beyond the generations that introduced it (Ugwu, 2021).

Meanwhile, since independence in 1960 Nigeria's economic performance and political governance has left so little to be desired. Nigeria being a member of the United Nations and the comity of nations is mandated to pursue the SDGs in her governmental activities, programmes and structure. This paper is an attempt to interrogate the implementation of SDG goal in Nigeria, focusing on three goals; Goal 2: Zero Hunger, Goal 3: Good health and Wellbeing and Goal 4 Quality Education. The paper is organized in five sections. Section 1 contains the Introduction, Section 2 focuses on Literature Review, Section 3 dwelled on the Theoretical Framework, Section 4 highlighted the Assessment of the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria, and Section 5 focuses on the Conclusion and Recommendation of the paper.

Literature Review

Governance Strategy

Governance strategy is a blueprint that organizations use to navigate decision-making and oversight. It involves intentionally structuring how decisions are made, defining roles, ensuring accountability, managing risks, and engaging stakeholders. This strategy aims to create clear processes, ethical standards, and mechanisms for continuous improvement, fostering an environment of transparency and resilience. In essence, governance strategy is a concise plan that guides organizations in effective governance, promoting efficiency, adaptability, and stakeholder trust.

Human Capital Development

Human Capital Development like all concepts in Social Sciences has been conceptualized based on the disposition of various authors. Accordingly, Ugwu (2021) referred to human capital development

as the process that relates to training, education and other professional initiatives in order to increase the level of knowledge, skills, abilities, values and social assets in the society. Others view human capital development as an effort to develop capabilities and competencies among employees as well as to create an organizational environment conducive to the employees' development. The main purpose of these efforts was geared towards increasing the skill and effectiveness in the society. Basically, the above established the fact that human capital development involves building an appropriate balance and critical mass of human resource reservoir and providing an enabling environment for all individuals to be fully engaged and contribute to national developmental effort. Therefore, the issue should not be regarded as a phenomenon that waste resources rather an investment that will transform the entire country and the most valuable assets that will pave way for greater achievements via innovativeness and creativity.

Ekanem and Opara (2020) posit that human capital development is all the capabilities and skills possessed by the people in a society. Human capital involves the abilities, knowledge, skill, personal talent, and behavior of individuals who make up the country's workforce (Eigbiremolen and Uchechi, 2014). Human capital development is the process of improving the knowledge, skills, values, and behavior of people to make them function effectively in the society. Consequently, Tende, Achebelema and Brownson (2018) opined that any effort to increase human knowledge, enhance skills, productivity and stimulate resourcefulness of employees is referred to as human capital development. Accordingly, Harry (2010) stated that human capital development is the totality of efforts aimed at developing and grooming human beings so as to present them fit and qualified to be productive to themselves, in particular, and the society in general. Asodike (2016) possess a similar view and assert that human capital is the reservoir of competencies, skills, knowledge, emotional intelligence, character, creativity and other abilities which the people of a nation value. All these features when applied make individuals employable and promote productivity which in turn increases the economy of the society.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinning of this paper is human capital theory**.** The main premise of human capital theory is that adequate investment in education and training of citizens will build up a stock of skills and abilities among the people which will serve as a veritable tool for economic growth and national development. The theory was first introduced by Theodore W. Schultz in 1961. The theory illustrates the significance of labor maximization and how an individual, organization or community can improve individuals' knowledge, skill, and ability which will, in turn, enhance their productivity (Wuttaphan, 2017). The theory dwelled on the Economic Growth aspect of Human capital theory which posits a direct link between investments in human capital and overall economic growth. A skilled and healthy workforce is considered a crucial factor in driving productivity, innovation, and sustained economic development. The theory is relevant to this discourse as it advocates for education and training for the development of the human resources. The theory argues that productivity will increase highly if the cognitive stock of human resources which handles other resources of production is high.

Adam Smith (1976) in his book, *The Wealth of Nations* formulated the basis of what later became the science of human capital. Becker opined that education and health care is the key to improving human capital and ultimately increasing the economic outputs of the nation (Becker 1996). While McClelland a psychologist equally propounded human motivation or three needs theory that influences people to a positive action which every person must be in need.

Ekanem (2021) listed the following as the premise of the human development theory:

1) Investment in human capital will lead to greater economic outputs. Especially for a country with potentials like Nigeria;

2) Formal education is highly instrumental and necessary to improve the productive capacity of a population. Nigeria should invest more on education;

3) Every person has one of three main driving motivators which are the need for achievement, affiliation or power; these motivators are not inherent: we develop them through our culture and life experiences.

The main tenet of the human capital theory lies in the argument that an educated population is a productive population. Hence, investment in human capital through education and health will motivate the citizen to make the country develop. This essentially shows the interconnectivity, interdependence and relationship between the three goals this paper intends to discuss.

Assessment of the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria

(i). Zero Hunger

According to Atima and Amusile (2023), "the world is currently grappling with a severe food crisis. In 2021, 2.3 billion people globally (over 30% of the world's population) were food insecure and the World Food Programme (WFP) expects this number to increase by 345.2 million in 2023". Zero hunger is the Sustainable Development Goal Number Two aimed at creating a world free of hunger by 2030. This goal is very important because since 2014, a year before the SDGs were launched, the number of people that are hungry and suffering from food insecurity has been rising (United Nations, 2022). The targets for SDG2 are: (i) end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round, (ii) end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons, (iii) double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm equipment, (iv) ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality, (v) by 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.

The Federal Government of Nigeria at different times has introduced several poverty alleviation programs such as National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Rural Infrastructures Development Scheme (RIDS), Social Welfare Services (SOWESS) and the National Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS) but they have not achieved

their objectives largely because of the corruption endemic in the country. State governments have also replicated these programmes in the states and initiated some of their own but hunger in the country is not decreasing. In 2017, the Nigerian Federal government launched a strategic plan christened "Synthesis Report of the Nigeria Zero Hunger Strategic Review" to articulate what the country needs to do to achieve the SDG2 goal by 2030. Nigeria also established a Nigeria Zero Hunger Forum whose responsibility is to ensure that recommendations contained in the Synthesis Report are implemented. But from Igumale in Benue State to Zuru in Kebbi State and from Oloibiri in Bayelsa to Ijesha in Osun State, it is very easy to see that hunger in Nigeria is increasing and not reducing per the goal and targets of SDG2 – and this is mainly due to the rising insecurity of lives and property in the country occasioned by the murderous activities of terrorist groups such as Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria's north-eastern states of Borno, Yobe, Adamawa and Taraba – and armed pastoralists in the north-central and southwestern states of Benue, Plateau, Kogi, Nasarawa, Ondo, Ekiti and Ogun and the marauding and vicious bandits and kidnappers operating with reckless abandon in the country's north-western region in states like Kaduna, Zamfara, Katsina and Kebbi.

The Eastern Security Network, ESN, and daredevils described as UGM; unknown gunmen are disrupting farming, economic and business activities in the south-eastern states of Ebonyi, Imo, Enugu, Anambra and Abia. Add to this Covid-19 pandemic's lockdown, social distancing and movement restrictions that took away the livelihoods of many artisan Nigerians and street vendors/hawkers; people who eke out a living from what they make on a daily basis. Nigerians love bread and the ongoing Russia and Ukraine war is disrupting the country's access to wheat and grains and her general food supply chain. According to the United Nations (2022), the war in Ukraine is creating the biggest food crisis the world has witnessed since the end of the Second World War – and this has implications on Nigeria. For example: before the war, a loaf of bread in most parts of the country was sold for N300 or N350 but today, it is between N700 and N1000 – and many households are unable to afford bread and this has negative nutritional implications on children. Bread; whether white or whole-wheat provides children with carbohydrates, calories, protein, fiber, folic acid, and thiamine – and reduces the risk of cancer for adults (National Bureau of Statistics).

In the 2022 Global Hunger Index, Nigeria was ranked 103 out of 121 countries and nothing else better shows that the SDG2 in the country is not faring well. In this report jointly published by Welthungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide, Nigeria scored 27.3 placing the country under the "serious category" – from other categories like low, moderate, alarming and extremely alarming. In 2021, Nigeria had the same score in the report and meaning that for the period 2021 and 2022, the SDG2 objective of achieving zero hunger in Nigeria was not achieved. In 2020, the country ranked 98 out of 107 countries (Adebowale-Tambe, 2022). A breakdown of the report further showed that 12.7% of Nigeria's estimated 220,000,000 people is undernourished just as 6.5% of under-five children are wasted, 31.5% of children under five are stunted and 11.4% of the country's children die before their fifth birthday (ibid). It is two years to the target of 2025 in this regard but the country keeps lagging far behind.

The report concludes by stating that since the war in Ukraine has increased global food, fuel and fertilizer prices, which is contributing to food shortages in 2023 and beyond, it is increasing becoming impossible to achieve the goal of zero hunger by 2030 as there are still hundreds of millions of people around the world experiencing hunger. This global state of hunger speaks of the reality in Nigeria where a 2021 UNICEF report titled "Fed to Fail' revealed that many children in Nigeria who are under the age of two are lacking the food and nutrients they need to grow well.

Per target three of the SDG2, agricultural productivity in Nigeria has not been doubled since 2015 because more than 70% of the country's farmers are still engaged in subsistence agriculture due mainly to lack of suitable farming inputs, low access to agricultural credit facilities, insufficient irrigation techniques, climate change and inadequate and poor storage facilities. Although most Nigerians are involved in agriculture, in 2021 the sector only contributed 22.35% to the nation's gross domestic product (UNICEF).

Table 1: Nigeria Hunger Statistics – Historical Data (2014 – 2020)

Year	% of Population	Annual Change
2020	12.70%	0.70%
2019	12.00%	1.60%
2018	10.40%	0.40%
2017	10.00%	0.60%
2016	9.40%	0.20%
2015	9.20%	0.00%

Source: Macrotrends (2020)

Figures from Table 1 shows that hunger in Nigeria has been on a steady increase since 2015 when the SGD2 was launched in the country. As the table indicates, the percentage of hunger to the population of the country was 9.20% in 2015 but increased to 9.40% the next year, 2016. Although this table does not contain the data for 2021 and 2022, other sources (like the data collected by Premium Times and cited by Adebowale-Tambe, 2022) show that hunger in Nigeria is not increasing nor reducing and this means that the 2030 objective of zero hunger remains a herculean task for the country.

(ii). Good Health and Wellbeing

Good health and wellbeing are the Sustainable Development Goal Number Three (UNICEF), SDG 3 "aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages. Health and well-being are important at every stage of one's life starting from the beginning. This goal addresses all major health priorities: reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, communicable and non-communicable diseases, universal health coverage, and access for all to safe, effective, quality and affordable medicines and vaccines."

To achieve these and others, SDG3 has the following nine targets; (i) reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births, (ii) end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under -5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1000 live births, (iiii) end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases, (iv) reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and wellbeing, (v) Strengthen the

prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol, (vi) halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents, (vii) ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes, (viii) Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all, and (ix) substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination. (UNICEF)

According to UNESCO, "good health concerns the care of the human body and everything that can be done to protect it from sickness and intoxication and enable access to care while well-being is a feeling of satisfaction with life, a state characterized by health, happiness and prosperity". The question to answer in this section is; what has been the state of good health and wellbeing in Nigeria since the SGD3 was launched in the country in September 2015? One only need to look at the country's health sector, the main source for the provision of good health and wellbeing to Nigerians, to find the right answer. The Nigerian health system has three tiers; primary, secondary and tertiary but each tier has not been able to deliver quality health care to Nigerians and this is the reason why many of the country's top politicians and wealthy private citizens regularly travel to Europe, America and India for their health care needs. Nwachukwu (2021) described Nigerian hospitals as a place where people (the masses) go to die because public healthcare in the country is characterized by shortage of drugs, equipment, medical specialists, absence of ambulance services or a toll-free number to call when there is a health emergency. The state of the health care sector in Nigeria is better understood when one knows that the immediate past president; Muhammadu Buhari visited London, UK more than 10 times for his medical needs in the eight years he was in office. The current president, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who took over on 29th May 2023 has already traveled to Paris, France for a health check.

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs SDG3 was launched in Nigeria in 2015 but its targets have obviously not been met in the eight years it has been running no government's ineptitude, white elephant projects and corruption. For example; the target to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases has not been successful eight years on because the cases of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in the country has been increasing instead of decreasing. According to Statista (2023), the number of Nigerians living with HIV in 2021 was 1.9 million with women being the most affected. For tuberculosis, the cases increased from 269,000 in 2020 to 467,000 in 2021 and figures show that every year, tuberculosis increases in the country.

Uduu (2023) explained that while the global tuberculosis cases reduced by 10%, it increased in Nigeria. Citing WHO data, Uduu explained that two-third of the global TB cases are found in eight countries and Nigeria is one of them with 4.4%. With malaria, the story is worse because Nigeria has the world's greatest malaria infections with approximately 51 million cases and 207,000 deaths every year; which is 30% of the total casualties in Africa (National Library of Medicine, 2016). Although in 2021, the Nigeria Malaria Indicator Survey Report showed that malaria prevalence in the country decreased by 23% in 2018 to 22% in 2021 – indicating that the country is making progress with its fight against malaria although the country "contributes 27% to the global malaria burden (one out of every four persons having malaria) and 32% to malaria deaths globally (about one out of every three deaths)" (Adejoro, 2022). The increasing levels of malaria in the country is attributed to poor access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) that contributes to high levels diarrhea-related deaths (UNICEF,

2022). These grim figures with malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis are an indication that the SGD3 in Nigeria has not been a success story and therefore the United Nations, the Nigerian government and concerned stakeholders have to change their strategy if they are serious about meeting this goal/target by 2030 which is only seven years away.

Table 2: Number of road traffic injuries and deaths in Nigeria Q4 2020 – Q4 2021

Year	Injured	Deaths
Q4 2021	10,171	1,652
Q3 2021	8,827	1,432
Q2 2021	9,018	1,453
Q1 2021	10,057	1,668
Q4 2020	9,018	1,453

Source: Statista (2021)

With regards to the target of SDG3 to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents, the 2021 record of road traffic casualties as seen in the table above shows improvements in the first, second and third quarters when compared to the fourth quarter of 2020. According to data by Statista (2023) in the first quarter of 2021, the injured through road accidents were 9,702 while those who died were 1,818 making a total of 11,725 cases. In the second quarter, there were 9,018 injuries from road crashes and 1,453 deaths bringing the total to 10,471; a reduction from the first quarter. In the third quarter, 10,171 injuries were recorded with 1,432 deaths which brought the total to 10,259 - another significant reduction in the total of road accidents.

However, in the fourth quarter, it increased to 10,171 injuries and 1,652 deaths totaling 11,823. This increase is not unconnected to the rush that is typical with the "ember" months in Nigeria when people are wont to travel to spend the Christmas holiday with their families, relatives and friends – which puts pressure on the few good roads in the country. This figure for 2021 is an improvement because in 2015 when the SDG3 was flagged off in the country, there were 12,077 road accidents that led to the death of 5,400 persons. Therefore, we see that for this target, Nigeria is making improvements and this must be connected to the construction of new roads and the dualization of old ones across the country in 2020 and 2021 by the immediate past president, Muhammadu Buhari. For example, the Abuja (FCT) to Makurdi (Benue State) 292.9 kilometers highway has been dualized and almost completed and this has reduced the incidences of road crashes caused by head-on collisions.

Per the objective to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under -5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1000 live births, Nigeria has not fared well when compared to other countries particularly those in western Africa. According to UNICEF (2023), the neonatal death in Nigeria is 110.0 per 1000 live births which is still more than the least mark and target of the SDG3.

In Ghana, the current neonatal mortality rate is 44.0 deaths per 1000 live births while for Senegal it is 38.6 deaths per 1000 live births. The high rate of deaths by 1000 live births in Nigeria is due to factors such as absence of care for acute respiratory infection and diarrhea and the unavailability of mosquito treated nets including the absence of vaccination against measles – and government policies and programmes are not been effectively directed to these areas. Although measures have been taken by some non-governmental organizations in the country to distribute mosquito treated nets to nursing mothers and Nigerian households for free, the practice where some government officials collude with traders to sell these donor-funded mosquito nets is still rampant and hindering the country's battle against malaria (Onyeji and Adebowale-Tambe, 2021). This also impacts on the wellbeing of the people since it is only a healthy person that is able to pursue other pleasures and passions of life.

Two of the major challenges confronting the Nigerian health sector are lack of adequate funding and brain drain. Per funding, the annual allocation to the health sector was 3.38% in 2020. In 2019, it was 2.99% of the annual budget, 3.09% in 2018 and 3.7% in 2017 (Sasu, 2023). In April 2001, the African Union, in what is now known as the 'Abuja Declaration' placed the least benchmark for African countries health sector at 15% of the annual budget but twenty-two years after this agreement, only seven countries in the continent; Rwanda, Botswana, Niger, Zambia, Malawi, Burkina Faso and Togo meet this target. Nigeria's highest annual budgetary allocation to health was 7% (Onyeji, 2020). Per brain drain, currently there are only 24,000 doctors in Nigeria with a ratio of one to 9,083 which is a far cry from the World Health Organization's recommended one doctor to 600 patients. According to Adebowale-Tambe (2022), the country needs an additional 363,000 doctors to close up this deficit but this is proving to be difficult owing to the number of Nigerian doctors who emigrate to other countries where their welfare is better catered for.

According to Uche Raymond, president of the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), 5,600 Nigerian doctors have emigrated to the United Kingdom in the last eight years. He painted the gloomy picture of the state of health care in Nigeria when he argued that "in some rural areas, patients have to travel more than 30 kilometers from their abodes to get medical attention where available thus making access to health care a rarity" (Adebowale-Tambe, 2022). The state of good health and wellbeing in Nigeria is terrible when one sees that there are only 39,914 operational public and private hospitals and clinics in the country across the three tiers of health care. Some of the states in the country with over a thousand health facilities are: Lagos 2,333, Katsina 1,943, Benue 1,837, Niger 1,565, Oyo 1490, Kaduna 1,419, Plateau 1,470, Kano 1,476, Nasarawa 1,337, Cross River 1,280, Kogi 1,235, Bauchi 1,212, Imo 1,197, Ogun 1,197, Abia 1,196, Anambra 1,166, Edo 1,042, Enugu 1,037 and Osun 1,070 (Taiwo, 2022). Many of these public health facilities are not well equipped and some have become mere consulting centers evidencing that the goal of SDG3 is not close to being realized halfway to 2030.

(iii). Quality Education

Quality education is Number Four on the seventeen-goal agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs set for 2030. This goal was included in the agenda 2030 because of the importance of inclusive and equitable quality education that promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all. The targets of SDG4 are: (i) free primary and secondary education, (ii) equal access to quality pre-primary education, (iii) equal access to affordable technical, vocational and higher education, (vi) increase the number of people with relevant skills for financial success, (v) eliminate all discrimination in education, (vi) universal literacy and numeracy, (vii) education for sustainable development and global citizenship, (viii) build and upgrade inclusive

and safe schools, (ix) expand higher education scholarships for developing countries and (x) increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries. The need for the SDG4 and its nine accompanying targets became necessary following a report by the Institute for Statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization that 56% of children enrolled in primary schools globally are not acquiring the basics of reading, writing, and mathematics skills (Adeniran, Onyekwena, Onubedo, Ishaku and Ekeruche, 2020). And according to the Institute for Statistics of UNESCO (2017), the situation where primary school children are not acquiring these skills is worse in sub-Sahara Africa with about 90% children affected. These figures are a grim indication that the quality of education and lifelong learning opportunities globally and in sub-Sahara Africa is falling hence the need for the inclusion of quality education in the interconnected seventeen Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030.

According to Asiyai and Oghuvbu (2009), quality education is a measure of how good or bad the products of higher institutions in Nigeria are in terms of academic performance and meeting established standards. But in this paper, the definition of what quality education means is not limited or restricted to higher education – so in this work and drawing from the above definition, quality education is defined as the measure of how good or bad the products of educational institutions in Nigeria is in terms of academic performance of school goers (primary, secondary and tertiary) and the meeting of established standards. Several scholars like Tseng and Nutley (2014), Barrett, Treves, Shmis and Ambasz (2019) have argued that the quality of education in a country has a connecting relationship with the quality of infrastructure in place. In Nigeria and although primary education is considered free and compulsory in most states, about 10.5 million children aged 5 – 14 years do not attend school – and this is why one in every five of the world's out-of-school children is in Nigeria (UNICEF, 2018).

In Nigeria, only 61% of children between the ages of 6 – 11 years regularly attend primary school and only 35% of 36 – 59 months old children receive early childhood education (ibid). These grim figures points to the rising levels of out-of-school children in the country which has a lot to do with the low quality of education tied to low budgetary allocation and governance strategy over the years by the different governments. In the 2022 Nigerian budget, the education sector received only 5.38% of the budget which is far less than the UNESCO recommended 15 or 20% benchmark. This means that in 2022, the country's budget for education was N923.79 billion out of a budget of N17.13 trillion (*Vanguard*, 2022) – so it is not surprising that the country's 2022 literacy level is 62.02% (World Bank, 2022) compared to Ghana's 80.38%, 79% in Uganda and Kenya's 82.62%.

It is this continuing low funding and poor investments in the education sector by the different Nigerian governments particularly since democracy was returned to the country in 1999 that is responsible for the incessant industrial strike actions embarked by members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU); the umbrella body of university lecturers in the country. The latest strike action by ASUU was in early February 2022 and it lasted for more than eight months with university students missing one session of the academic calendar. ASUU embarked on that strike due to different issues ranging from demands for the release of revitalization funds for universities, renegotiation of the 2009 Federal Government of Nigeria/ASUU agreement, release of earned allowances for university lecturers, deployment of the University Transparency and Accountability Solution (UTAS), constitution of visitation panels, twenty-six percent budgetary allocation to the education sector and half of that allocation to universities, among others. Key among these demands is the Union's call for

the Federal Government of Nigeria to honor the agreement it entered with it in 2009 and 2013 to, in six tranches, inject a total of N1.3 trillion into public universities beginning in 2013. Since this agreement, only N200 billion has been released by the government. The refusal of the Federal Government of Nigeria by former presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari to honor this agreement plus the dearth of infrastructure such as comfortable classrooms, offices, staff quarters and hostels are some of the governance issues contributing to the failure of SDG4 in the country since 2015 when it was launched.

The spiraling implication of this is that from the 68% of youths in the country in 2020 who received secondary school education, only 17% of them were able to pursue higher education (in universities, polytechnics and colleges of education) – and of this only 15% had completed primary education (Statista, 2020). Nigeria is a country with an estimated population of about 220,000 million people with 36 states, 774 local government councils and a federal capital territory but the country has only 170 universities with 79 of them being private universities, 43 being federal universities and 48 state universities – and this small number of public federal universities that are poorly managed is one of the reasons the country is not among the top 10 African countries with the best education system. In 2017, the World Economic Forum ranked Nigeria 124th out of 137 countries in terms of quality of primary education because the level of attendance of primary education in the country is very low, particularly in the northern region of the country where there is 53% net school attendance rate. In the north-west and north-east, 47.7% and 47.3% of female children respectively who are of school age are not in school. The reality is worse for children from Muslim families in the north-west and north-east where about 29% and 35% respectively attend only Quranic schools (UNICEF, 2018). The government's Universal Basic Education Commission established by the Olusegun Obasanjo government in 1999 is saddled with the responsibility for coordinating all aspects of universal basic education (pre-primary education, primary education and junior secondary education) programme implementation in the country but inadequate funding, inaccurate data for planning, inadequate supply of facilities and equipment, inadequate supply of competent teachers, poor monitoring and evaluation system, among others (Omotayo, 2011) are challenges facing the commission.

Apart from the poor funding of the education sector by the different governments in the country; federal, states and local governments since 2015, other factors that are militating against the achievement of the SDG4 in the country by 2030 are cultural practices where the boy child is preferred for getting an education than the girl child, 133 million Nigerians in multidimensional poverty, existence of economic barriers such as double taxation and the continuing insecurity of lives and property. According to the UNICEF (2021), 11,536 Nigerian schools were closed down after December 2020 owing to the rising spates of abductions and security issues that drove 1.3 million students across the country out of school, an indication that the SDG4 target of providing safe schools is not being met in the country. The meaning of this is that eight years after the launch of SDG4, the country is not in position to achieve this target in seven years to no thanks to the failure of government to tackle insecurity. With fewer young Nigerians, 17% in 2020 attending higher institutions, there are now fewer Nigerians available to become teachers at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. Some years ago in Edo State, south-south Nigeria, former governor Adams Oshiomhole sacked 836 teachers because they could not read, write or speak good English language. In another state Kaduna in north-west Nigeria, the immediate past governor Mallam Nasir Elrufai once sacked 2357 teachers because they did not pass the competency test conducted for them by the Kaduna State Universal Basic Education Board (KADSUBEB). The root cause of this can be traced to poor budgetary allocations to the educational sector in the country which has never exceeded 10% of the

national annual budget. In 2016, it was 7.9% but was reduced to 6.1% in 2017. In 2018, it increased to 7.1% but fell again to 6.5% in 2020. In 2021 and 2022, it became 5.7% and 5.4% respectively. In the 2023 budget, education got 8.2% (Ojo, 2023) - when the recommended UNESCO benchmark for member nations is four to six percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or 15% to 20% of public expenditure.

Table 3: Nigeria's Education Spending (2015 -2021)

Year	Education Spending (% of GDP)	Annual Change
2021	5.14%	0.07%
2020	5.13%	-0.72%
2019	5.86%	-0.09%
2018	5.94%	-0.18%
2017	6.12%	-0.53%
2016	6.65%	-2.60%
2015	9.26%	0.22%

Source: Macrotrends (2021)

SDG4 along with others was launched in Nigeria in September 2015 but eight years after it has not fared well in the country. These issues which has to do with the policies of different government militating against the delivery of quality education in Nigeria is preventing the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all Nigerians because most of these challenges are peculiar with government funded public schools across the different tiers of governance in the county. As opposed to the public schools, Nigerians who have the financial resources to attend private primary, secondary and tertiary owned and managed schools are those with access to quality education because the schools are better funded and administered. For example, in the 2023 JAMB examination, a yearly examination conducted for entrance into Nigerian universities, the student with the highest score; Miss Kamsiyochukwu Umeh and many of those with high scores are students of the Deeper Life High School owned and managed by the Deeper Life Bible Church. The SDG4 objective of quality education for all has not being achieved in Nigeria because quality education is not for the poor. This then determine the kind of job opportunities available to children from poor families that in the long term also negatively impacts on their socioeconomic and financial conditions – which makes access to quality education a vicious circle among the hundreds of millions of poor households in the country. In 2023 Nigeria, there are still gender based discriminations since most cultures and most families, particularly in the country's northwest and northeast states, prefer sending boys to schools than girls. In northern Nigeria, more than half of girls of schooling age are not in school. Access to scholarship for higher education in Nigeria is still very low because not many Nigerians are able to secure the few government scholarship opportunities because they are reserved for the children of those with political

affluence and influence. The primary level of education is the worst hit. In Nigeria, there are over 2000 primary schools with many of them, particularly those in the rural areas without buildings and classes are held under trees (Achi, 2003).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are meant to guide member countries on the key areas for government to focus on with the aim of improving human capital in fifteen years. However, seven years to the 2030 end year Nigeria is lagging behind in meeting the targets of these three goals. Nigeria has been blessed with human and natural resources so it has no business struggling with developmental issues save for bad and inept governance. When the country gets its leadership and governance priorities right, her potpourri of challenges will begin to go left – and the country shall begin to become developed as it should be.

Nigeria is a blessed country but it is failing to live up to its potentials no thanks to leadership and governance failure that does not rightly deploy the nation's human and material resources. This paper recommends the following:

i. Government and its agencies must become serious about tackling continuing systemic public corruption that sabotages the implementation of the SGDs goals and targets in the country - and other developmental policies and programmes. Systemic corruption jeopardizes Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and development efforts by misallocating resources, eroding public trust, hampering service delivery, distorting economic priorities, fueling social inequality, and weakening the rule of law. Addressing this challenge requires strengthening anti-corruption institutions, promoting transparency, engaging the public, and fostering international collaboration. A concerted effort to combat corruption is essential for creating an environment conducive to successful development, emphasizing transparency, accountability, and inclusivity.

ii. Citizens should ensure that only qualified, compassionate and patriotic politicians are elected into public offices. Citizens hold the key to electing effective leaders. Prioritize qualifications, compassion, and patriotism when choosing candidates. Stay informed, promote civic education, and actively participate in the electoral process. After elections, hold leaders accountable for their actions. By selecting leaders with the right qualities, citizens contribute to effective governance and sustainable development.

iii. Citizens should demand accountability from those in government. Citizens have the right and responsibility to demand accountability from those in government. This involves actively seeking transparency, questioning decisions, and holding elected officials responsible for their actions. By asserting this demand for accountability, citizens contribute to fostering a more transparent and responsible government that works in the best interest of the public.

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Assessment of Transparency and Accountability in Local Government Administration: Evidence from Ekiti State, Nigeria 2008-2018

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Abstract

Transparency and accountability form the bedrock of development in the global community. However, transparency and accountability remain among the most contested issues in the discourse of local governance in Nigeria. This study examined transparency and accountability in local government administration using Ekiti State as a case study. This study adopted a descriptive research design while data were collected from primary and secondary sources. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 358 for questionnaire administration. The study adopted structural functionalism theory as the theoretical framework. Findings of the study revealed that transparency and accountability prevent fraud and corruption, promote efficiency, and facilitate revenue generation. The study concluded that adherence to the principles of transparency and accountability would enhance good governance at the grassroots level. It was recommended among others that civil servants' remuneration should be reviewed in line with the present economic situation in Nigeria to prevent corrupt practices.

Keywords: Transparency, Accountability, Local Government Administration

1. Introduction

The legislative, executive, and administrative institutions of local government were designed to promote effective governance, decentralised power, national integration, and a sense of community at the local level. According to Enofe *et al*., (2015), local governments have long been regarded as the guardians and enablers of effective management, effective service delivery, and inclusive development. To position the local government in Nigeria for good governance, General Obasanjo's military rule implemented local government reform in 1976, and as a result, the administrative structure of the system became uniform. The reform resulted in the establishment of a single-tier, multipurpose local government organisation throughout the country (Osho, & Afolabi, 2014).

Local governments have undergone structural adjustments to improve their capacity to implement good governance since these reforms. For effective service delivery at the grassroots level, the

constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria empowers the local government to part take in federal allocation monthly, it also mandates the state government to give ten percent of its internally generated revenue to the local government. According to Aramide and Bashir (2015), the local council is expected to generate revenue within its jurisdiction, all these were put in place to ensure the provision of basic social amenities for the populace. However, the grassroots government has not engendered development in concrete terms. Some believe that the fundamental cause of Nigeria's public sector failure is a lack of fiscal transparency, accountability, and integrity in the handling of public funds by the federal, state, and local governments (Eke *et al.*, 2018).

In the opinion of Adeyemi (2012), the grassroots government is bedevilled with embezzlements of funds, corruption, lack of transparency and accountability from elected council officers, appointed, and civil servants has hindered the development of the third level of government in Nigeria. The lack of honesty, openness, and accountability at this level of government has a negative impact on the well-being of ordinary Nigerians. Stealing has become a popular interest and passion for Nigerians in positions of power. The pervasive national culture of corruption endangers grassroots development. It has greatly contributed to the general breakdown of local administration. It is also believed that lack of transparency and accountability has significant negative effects on the delivery of public goods to the rural populace. It is against this background that this study examined transparency and accountability in Ekiti State, Nigeria's local government administration, hence this study.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the paper is to assess the extent to which transparency and accountability characterize local government administration in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

The paper is structured into five sections. In what follows, section 1 introduction and objective, section 2 review of related literature and theoretical framework. Section 3 methodology, section 4 analysis and discussion of findings while section 5 concludes and recommends.

2. Literature Review

Transparency

Transparency is based on systems that allow information to flow freely. Institutions and information are easily accessible to individuals interested in them, and sufficient information is provided to comprehend and monitor them. The importance of transparency in the context of governance is shown by the openness of local government to outsiders regarding its choices and activities. When government organisations permit inside knowledge to reach outsiders, transparency occurs. These information flows make clear the government's actions or the lack of involvement. In reality, the ability of local governments to make information accessible depends on how transparent and open they are. According to Salako and Ajibade (2019), the availability and increased flow of timely, complete, pertinent, high-quality, and trustworthy information to the public at the grassroots on government activities have also been identified by many scholars as aspects of government transparency.

The essence of representative democracy is that individuals entrusted with the authority to represent the public and its interests are open to inspection and held accountable because it is unrealistic to have everyone actively involved in government matters all the time at the grassroots level. Abe and Omotoso (2021) stated that it is necessary to put in place organisations, procedures, and mechanisms to ensure

that officeholders' decisions and actions at the grassroots can be reviewed. Since citizens have a right to such transparency under the terms of their social contract with the state, transparency appears important in the interaction between the state and its citizens, particularly at the local government level (Akani, 2017).

Although transparency is a highly regarded democratic virtue, there are certain practical difficulties with it, and more and more governmental actors are lobbying for its elimination for various reasons. Whatever the case, accountability, and inclusivity, which disproportionately depend on it for their application, are additional fundamental values of governance that are equally as important and equally dependent on openness. For instance, it is almost impossible to hold an official responsible at the local government level without pertinent facts (Abdullahi & Ahmad, 2018). For individuals to effectively engage in public policy at the grassroots level, information must be properly disseminated through various media vehicles. The level of good governance will increase as the degree of transparency increases.

Accountability

This is a process by which decision-making and the results of such decisions are held up for the public to adjudge, scrutinise, and react through a feedback mechanism. Accountability is required from government institutions, the private sector, and civil society organisations. The public is entitled to know why and what decisions local authorities have made or not made. Although important, explanations alone won't make local leaders and politicians answerable. It is believed that actors will receive punishment for subpar work and rewards for success. Obisanya and Hassan (2022), suppose local governments don't face serious repercussions for their acts, or the effects of their behaviour without significant repercussions, responsibility is only a formal statement. Local governments are responsible for their actions. Local governments must hold themselves openly accountable for their actions, inactions, and results to be held accountable for their behaviour. According to Abanyam (2019), politicians and officials, in a broader sense, are responsible for accomplishing fundamental goals such as promoting social and economic development, upholding law and order, eradicating poverty and unemployment, guaranteeing impartiality and equal treatment, protecting citizens' rights, and ensuring justice and fairness.

The public's desire for responsibility and accountability from public employees at all levels of government is rising. This resulted from the increased embrace of democratic traditions and values at the grassroots worldwide. Making public officials responsible and accountable to the local government appears appealing. However, a closer examination reveals several challenges that demand discussion and policy proposals to operationalise the idea of public servant responsibility (Maama & Marimuthu, 2021). Government initiatives to raise the level of living at the grassroots frequently fail when there is insufficient accountability. However, the government is cognizant that effective accountability at the grassroots will result in the success of government programs and activities.

As a result, the audit alarm committee was created to guarantee effective accountability among local government officials under the supervision of the government. According to Mujennah *et al.* (2019), the 1976 Local Government Reform was meant to lay the groundwork for the operation of an efficient and effective local government in Nigeria, empirical evidence has shown that accountability and good governance have yet to be established at the grassroots level because the constitution establishing them does not permit the rural population to have control over or checks on the elected officials. The government at the grassroots are not answerable to the people they are supposed to represent, which

has resulted in poor governance at the grassroots. It is accurate to say that most of Nigeria's corruption crises, which are sustaining poverty at the grassroots level, may be linked to constitutional provisions (Alao *et al*., 2015). For instance, the constitution of Nigeria accords local governments with a distinct position as the third tier of government while also subordinating them to state governments. Who will the officials answer to in light of this? The involvement of state governors in local government affairs is possibly one of the biggest obstacles to local government administration and political accountability. The level of good governance will be higher the more accountability the public, particularly public officials at the local government level.

Public accountability can be divided into administrative and political accountability depending on the criteria or content of the accountability, the participants, and the accountability forum. Administrative accountability implies that local officials are held legally and professionally liable via the departmental organisational hierarchies. The higher local officials in the administrative chain are the forum here. According to Gaventa *et al*. (2023), a hierarchy with a distinct chain of command in which a lower-ranking officer is answerable to a higher one is referred to as administrative accountability. Public servants must respond regularly and take responsibility for their actions. Their behaviour should adhere to professional standards (administrative hierarchy, guidelines for professionals), legal requirements (rules, laws), and financial standards (financial requirements and procedures). Public accountability involves a desirable standard of professional, financial, and legal conduct for local government.

Local Government

It's imperative to note that the idea of grassroots administration has no universal meaning. Many authors interpret Local Government differently based on their viewpoints due to the fundamental responsibilities and purposes of government at the grassroots, which vary by country and environment. The United Nations Office describes local government for Public Administration as a political subdivision of a nation or (in a federal system) state, which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes, the governing body is elected or otherwise locally selected (Rhodes, 2018). Although the third level of government in Nigeria is a subset of other tiers of government governed by statute, the substantial regulation of local affairs required for its operation in the country has been taken over by the state government and rendered the grassroots administration incompetent.

Local administration is a territorial non-sovereign community with the legal rights and requisite organisation to administer its affairs. It also, the terrain, authorised by law and the opportunity to coordinate matters regarding its populace. In the view of Ola (2021), grassroots administration in the country has jurisdiction; however, issues of boundary challenges are envisaged across the state of the federation. Administration at the grassroots is an issue of the oversight and regulation of higher levels of administration. Anayochukwu and Ani (2021), stated that grassroots administration is an agency of government ruled by its people and receives its power from the central administration to enact rules and legislation with authority to generate revenue within its jurisdiction and to implement a variety of centrally determined policies. Grassroots administration is Nigeria's third level of administration, as recognised by the constitution. Furthermore, every state government of the federation must also promote and safeguard the management, funding, and makeup of local government in their different states. So, through government instrumentality at the local level, a national policy could also be enforced locally.

Grimmelikhuijsen and Feeney (2017), stated that local government is a political subdivision of national or regional government, which performs functions and derives its power from the national or regional government but possesses some degree of discretion in making decisions, with a measure of taxing power. In Nigeria, grassroots administration is a level of government below other levels of government, and they not only perform roles that other levels do, but they also have their statutory responsibilities visibly defined. Government at the grassroots is described broadly in the 1976 Local Government Reforms: Government at the local level is exercised through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas. These powers should give the council substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff and institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services and to determine and implement projects to complement the activities of the State and Federal government in their areas, and to ensure, through devolution of functions to these councils and the active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, local initiatives and responses to local needs and conditions are maximised (David & Adepoju, 2020).

According to David and Adepoju (2020), local government is an agency with a specific number of inhabitants occupying a particular territory, a locally recognised entity, and officers within a sovereign political area with the authority to deliver some social or civic amenities and a significant level of independence, as well as the legal authority to collect part of its revenue. In the words of Einstein *et al*. (2019), local government is described as an ancient institution with a concept of the administration having a direct bearing on the provision of services to local clients of the state. Grassroots administration is the foremost system of government that provides services in concrete terms. Grassroots administration means different things to different people (Ezike, 2018).

Local government is an essential instrument for the central government (Federal and state) to provide certain basic services that could be best provided locally on the intimate knowledge of their needs. As a result, grassroots administration performs imperative responsibilities by complementing other levels of government plans to the citizens at the grassroots, not just local government programs but also central administration policies enacted by the local government. The local government may also be described as an agent of other tiers of government with the legal backing to carry out democratic power via a representative assembly in a distinct geographic zone. The functions of the central government vary from that of the local council. According to Grant and Drew (2017), local governments are created and derive their power from the state government, which means they are derivative and not sovereign; and that they originate from the local community which they also represent. As a result, local government is closer to the populace than other levels of government.

Empirical Review

Osuebi *et al*. (2019) investigated local government administration and political accountability in Nigeria. The study's findings showed that the delivery of social services locally had been impacted by Nigeria's experience with local government administration and the elements working against achieving political accountability. Also, despite the 1976 local government reform, which was intended to restructure greater political participation and economic empowerment at the local government level, empirical evidence has demonstrated that accountability and good governance have yet to be firmly established at the grassroots level in Nigeria because the constitution establishing it does not permit the rural populace to have control or checks on elected officers.

Adiputra *et al*. (2018), examined local government transparency in Indonesia. The findings demonstrated that the political climate and the quality of financial reporting, as evidenced by the audit

opinion, have a considerable positive impact on the openness of local government in Indonesia. The study also showed that transparency and accountability promote efficiency in the local government. To prevent corruption and the misuse of public resources, which would cause disruption, there is an urgent need for increased openness in the context of oversight functions. The study concluded that local government is responsible for managing community finances; thus, how well local government agencies carry it out determines the extent to which the fund management initiative is either successful or unsuccessful.

Agwor and Akani (2017), investigated financial accountability and local government performance in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study's findings revealed that the financial accountability of the third tier of government in Nigeria is all about holding and ensuring that stewards with resources that are not theirs give an accurate and up-to-date account of what they have done with the resources. The study concluded that accountability is required since it contributes significantly to a country's development and offers pertinent data for wise decision-making at the grassroots level.

Osakede (2016), examined local government financial autonomy in Nigeria. The study found, among other things, that Nigeria's local government's lack of financial autonomy impedes the effective and efficient provision of services at the community level. The study also revealed that the citizens could make elected and appointed officials accountable to the populace at the grassroots. The study concluded that for effective administration at the grassroots financial autonomy is required. Amakihe *et al.* (2017), investigated citizens' participation in local government administration a comparative study of Nigeria and the United States America (USA). The study's findings revealed that if the citizens are permitted to use their democratic rights, it will ensure citizens' participation in democratic governance at the grassroots. However, the researchers discovered that in the US, the local government system involves citizens in local governance and instils a sense of responsibility in the elected government to be responsive, transparent, and responsible to the community. On the other hand, the local government employees in Nigeria performed their self-serving duties with no regard for others' loyalty, responsiveness, or accountability to local voters but to their godfathers and governors.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on structural functionalism theory. Proponents of the structural-functional theory include Gabriel Almond, David Apter, and William C. Mitchell. The pillars of the structural-functional theory are the fundamental concepts upon which structure and functions are founded. The rationale for the choice of this theory is that local governments have an existing financial memorandum (structure) in place that guides its functions to regulate financial operations. Using the human body as an example, structural parts such as the skeleton, muscles, and other internal organs all work separately to allow the entire organism to survive. Social structures work together to preserve society. The political and administrative structures as the drivers of grassroots administration should be able to function and drive well by embarking on the policy that will culminate in the development of the grassroots. Also, they should reciprocate it by discharging their statutory functions to the populace through transparency and accountability of their action and inaction. The citizens should also be aware of their right to demand accountability from public officers. These buttresses the idea of collectives of roles that help fulfil functions for society, and these roles can complement each other. Some roles are bound up in social structures and institutions, which assist society in functioning smoothly.

Structural functionalism also sets out to interpret society as a structure with interrelated parts, with each structure performing specific roles and functions in applying structural-functionalism for this study. The basic principle of this theory is that every system has some structures that perform some functions necessary for the system's survival. Local Government as a structure has mandatory and concurrent functions of delivering services to the citizens at the grassroots. These functions should be delivered in an ideal manner through transparency of public policies and accountability for public funds. However, their inability to perform the expected service delivery functions in a timely, adequate and satisfactory manner would lead to grassroots underdevelopment. Structural functionalism theory has relevant applicability in understanding and analysing the performance of local government in terms of the provision of essential social services in their various domains.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through the administration of a structured questionnaire and the conduct of interviews. An interview session was conducted with the chairman of three selected civil society organisations for triangulation. The population (3, 392) of the study consists of local government employees and members of selected civil society organisations in the three senatorial districts of the state. Due to the large size of the study population, Taro Yemane formula was used to get a sample size of (358) for questionnaire administration. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, mean value, and standard deviation.

4. Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This paper discusses the level of transparency and accountability in local government administration in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The respondents were asked to agree or disagree with seven variables designed to actualise this objective. The frequency and percentages, as well as the distribution of respondents on each of the statements discussing transparency and accountability in the study area, were revealed in Table 1, and their values/responses were structured using Likert scale measurements of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagreed. The investigated variables' mean value and standard deviation were also reported.

The respondents were first asked if transparency and accountability promote efficiency through monitoring. Reacting to this statement 149 (43.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the assertion, it was supported by 92 (26.9%) of the respondents who agreed to the assertion, 48 (14.1%) of the respondents disagreed with the assertion and supported by 52 (15.3%) of the respondents who strongly disagreed with the assertion. The analytical interpretation of the data showed that 241 (70.6%) of the respondents agreed that transparency and accountability promote efficiency and good governance in the study area. This assertion had a mean value and standard deviation of $(\bar{\chi} = 3.69, SD = 1.342)$.

The second assertion in Table 1 showed that 108 (38.1%) strongly agreed and 112 (32.8%) of the respondents agreed with the assertion that transparency and accountability foster ethical conduct at the grassroots level, 67 (19.6%) of the respondents disagreed on the assertion and 54 (15.8%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the assertion. The interpretation of the data distribution revealed that 220 (70.9%) of the respondents agreed that good governance had enhanced rural electrification in the study area. This assertion had a mean value and standard deviation of $(\bar{\chi} = 2.56, SD = 1.634)$.

However, transparency and accountability did not promote citizens' participation at the grassroots level in the study area on the third statement. As presented in Table 1. 106 (31.1%) of the respondents disagreed and 130 (38.1%) of the respondents also strongly disagreed with the assertion that transparency and accountability promote citizens' participation at the grassroots level, while 57 (16.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 48 (14.1%) of the respondents agreed with the assertion. Deductively, there was a high level of disagreement with 69.2% with the assertion that transparency and accountability promote citizens' participation at the grassroots level. This assertion had a mean value and standard deviation of ($\bar{\chi}$ = 2.44, SD = 1.752).

Transparency and accountability have significant effects on revenue generation at the grassroots. This statement was, however, subject to the opinions of the respondents. In their responses to this fourth assertion, 109 (27.7%) strongly agreed, and 126 (36.9%) agreed with this statement while it was conversely observed that 51 (14.9%) disagreed and 55 (16.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Since more respondents tended towards agreement than disagreement with mean value and standard deviation of ($\bar{\chi}$ = 3.76, SD = 1.265), this data showed that transparency and accountability significantly affect revenue generation at the grassroots.

Citizens can make elected, and appointed officials accountable to the public at the grassroots was presented to the respondents to either agree or disagree. Responding to the fifth assertion, 106 (31.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed and supported 127 (37.3%) who agreed with the statement, while 56 (16.4%) disagreed and 52 (15.2%) strongly disagreed with the statement. This assertion had a mean value and standard deviation of ($\bar{\chi}$ = 3.71, SD = 1.332). The analytical implication of the data distribution revealed that 233 (68.4%) of the respondents agreed that citizens could make elected and appointed officials accountable to the public at the grassroots in the study area.

Regarding the sixth assertion in Table 1, it was questioned whether citizens can hold the government accountable for the use of public funds at the grassroots. The reaction of the respondents was affirmative to the statement, with 136 (39.9%) strongly agreed and 121 (35.5%) agreed to the assertion, while 49 (14.4%) disagreed and 35 (10.2%) strongly agreed to the statement. This assertion had a mean value and standard deviation of ($\bar{\chi}$ = 3.57, SD = 1.243). The data representation showed that most of the respondents affirmed that citizens can hold the government accountable for using public funds in the study area.

Responding to this seventh assertion in Table 1, respondents were asked to either agree or disagree to the assertion that transparency and accountability prevent fraud and corruption at the grassroots, the agreement level was higher than the disagreement level as 145 (42.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement supported by 108 (31.7%) who agreed to the assertion; 52 (15.2%) of the respondents disagreed and 36 (10.6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed to the statement. This assertion had a mean value and standard deviation of ($\bar{\chi}$ = 3.42, SD = 1.351). The implication of the data revealed that transparency and accountability prevent fraud and corruption at the grassroots in the study area.

Table 1: Investigate the level of transparency and accountability in local government administration of Ekiti State, Nigeria

Variables	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	Descriptive Statistics N= 341	
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
Transparency and accountability promote efficiency through monitoring.	149(43.7%)	92(26.9%)	48(14.1%)	52(15.3%)	3.69	1.342
Transparency and accountability foster ethical conduct at the grassroots level.	108(31.8%)	112(32.8%)	67(19.6%)	54(15.8%)	2.56	1.634
Transparency and accountability promote citizens' participation at the grassroots level.	57(16.7%)	48(14.1%)	106(31.1%)	130(38.1%)	2.44	1.752
Transparency and accountability have significant effects on revenue generation at the grassroots.	109(27.7%)	126(36.9%)	51(14.9%)	55(16.3%)	3.76	1.265
Citizens can make Elected and Appointed Officials Accountable to the Public at the grassroots.	106(31.1%)	127(37.3%)	56(16.4%)	52(15.2%)	3.71	1.332
Citizens can hold the government accountable for the use of public funds	136(39.9%)	121(35.5%)	49(14.4%)	35(10.2%)	3.57	1.243
Transparency and accountability prevent fraud and corruption at the grassroots	145(42.5%)	108(31.7%)	52(15.2%)	36(10.6%)	3.42	1.351

Source: Field Survey, 2024

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

For the populace at the grassroots level of government to enjoy citizen centre governance, the principles of transparency and accountability must be adhered to by elected officials, appointed and career civil servants. Also, the citizens must be aware of their right to demand accountability for public officers' actions and inactions.

Based on the findings of the study, these policy recommendations were presented to enhance transparency and accountability in local government administration.

The study strongly recommended that sensitisation and enlightenment programmes should be carried out to educate the citizens about their right to demand transparency and accountability of public officers for their actions and inactions.

It is strongly recommended that the salary structure of the employees of the local government council be reviewed in line with the present economic condition of Nigeria. This will help reduce the rate of corruption of public officers at the grassroots level and improve their socio-economic well-being.

The study recommends that all the financial transactions of the local government should align with the laid down rules and regulations of the financial memorandum of the council. This will go a long way to forestalling financial misappropriations.

The study recommends that capital punishment should be enshrined in the local government by-laws for any public officers found guilty of financial corruption and embezzlement. This will serve as a deterrent to others.

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Interventionist Role of Non-governmental Organizations in Internal Displacement in Borno State, Nigeria: Need for Coordinated Policy

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Abstract

The main objective of this paper was to investigate the factors responsible for internal displacement in Borno state communities, and the role of the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in meeting the needs of the people through government coordinated policies. Relying on the qualitative research method of data collection by asking relevant questions from concerned stakeholders and selected informants about the role of the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Borno state IDP camp, findings show that the factors responsible for Internal Displacement in Borno State Communities Boko Haram Insurgency and Armed Banditry / Violence Conflict. Thus, the paper concludes that coordinated policy provision to access resources/credit, and technical assistance is one of the prominent roles provided the NGOs and government-assisted empowerment can help those leaving in IDP in Borno state. The paper recommend the provision of technical assistance to assist helping in IDP camps.

Keywords: Internally Displaced Persons, Non-government organisations; Policy options; Violence.

1. Introduction

Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) have achieved a lot of recognition because of their increased contribution towards the advancement of human livelihood in averting and settling disputes in recent years. While countries use military might and economic powers to achieve their goals without employing the avenue of diplomacy, NGOs serve as an intermediary to bring a lasting solution to conflicts using diplomatic means, even though they lack powers of the government, they possess power of civility in their NGO's capabilities. The NGOs provided talks on health and environmental issues relating to child rights and sex education and discouraged child labor and human trafficking among others NGOs are progressive partners and their activities were geared toward rural development (Omofonmwan, Odia, Omofonmwan, & Odia, 2017). In a report, it was postulated that, based on the level of destruction done to Northeastern Nigeria by the Boko Haram terrorists, more than 2.1 million people were seriously under the provision of the NGOs humanitarian services and about 1.7 million were IDPs and the rest were vulnerable that cannot be accounted for (Unicef, 2014). Baride, (2013) opines that to add value to government efforts, the NGOs in Nigeria in recent times actively

participated in the improvement of the rural areas through practical assistance and donations and human capital projects, engaging in empowerment in small-scale businesses in the areas of research, awareness campaign, protecting the poor and settlement of conflict or disputes. The reign of insecurity in many countries of the world has promoted the displacement of persons from their ancestral homes or residences to other locations outside one's country for safety.

However, the World estimates of 1999 on the number of IDPs are enormously high. According to the estimation of the U.S. Committee for Refugees, there were more than 20 million IDPs in the world. Sub-Saharan Africa with more than 10 million and in South America 1.9 million which were mainly in Colombia (Leus *et al.*, 2001). In Africa, internal displacement is so multifaced that people are displaced based on many factors, such as conflicts, floods, human and natural disasters, developmental encroachment, and urban renewal projects. Although the IDPs are higher in figures than refugees, however, the refugees receive more international attention (Ferris, 2012). In Nigeria, the city of Abuja being the capital of the republic witnessed migration of a large number of IDPs due to the sustained challenges caused by the activities of the insurgence in the Northeast in which Abuja was becoming an abode for the IDPs forgetting the challenges faced by its inhabitant as a result of urbanization and expansion of the city which resulted to force eviction by the government which in turn aggravated to housing insecurity in the city (Adewale 2016).

The spread of IDPs has escalated the programs and serious scholarly dispute on the responsibility of the state and the international commitment, where the state refuses to take care of the internally displaced, the international community is very selective in making decisions and it depends largely on the interest and the might of the contributing states (Ayata & Yükseker, 2005). In general, internally displaced persons frown on security threats, psychological trauma, lack of shelter, sexual abuse, gender discrimination, lack of communication with loved ones, and lack of humanitarian aid, which is a true reflection of Nigeria, particularly in the North East region of the country, where the destruction of lives and properties is the other of the day as a result of the emergence of Boko Haram insurgent which led to the displacement of persons from their homes and caused division among the community and disunity among the population in terms of faith.

Consequently, this paper is to examine what was responsible for internal displacement in Borno state communities, and the role of the NGOs in providing the needs of the people through government policies. The paper has six structures, starting with the introduction, literature review, social empowerment theory, factors responsible for internal displacement in Borno state communities, way forward through selected coordinated policies, and conclusion and recommendations.

2. Literature Review

Several studies have postulated a convergence between IDPs, and refugees who are forced to leave their homes in fear of attacks, freedom, and security (Ayata & Yükseker, 2005; Adewale, 2016; Mohammed, 2015). It has been demonstrated that a high intake of IDPs results in damage to the standard of living daily it is worrisome that they are not protected under existing international treaties and instruments which permit only refugees to cross international borders. Thus, Lee (1996) began to examine the use of the treatment given to refugees to challenge the historical ground, human rights ground, and practical terms. It is recommended, therefore, that internally displaced persons should be

allowed to cross international borders as a criterion by the systematic international protection and assistance given to people forcefully displaced from their original homes.

In Nigeria, the city of Abuja being the capital of the republic witnessed the migration of many IDPs due to the sustained challenges caused by the activities of the insurgence in the Northeast. Several recent studies investigating IDPs in Nigeria such as Adewale (2016) and Mohammed (2015) came up with the fact that Abuja was becoming an abode for the IDPs forgetting the challenges faced by its inhabitants because of urbanization and expansion of the city which resulted to force eviction by the government which in turn aggravated to housing insecurity in the city. The causes of IDPs in Nigeria have been widely investigated by Adewale (2016) and Mohammed (2015) revealed that, in his study of government and Non-governmental Organizations, international and relief agencies have failed in their duties of providing emergency to the children being displaced by the Boko haram terrorists in Adamawa State, Northeastern Nigeria. In previous studies on IDPs, different variables are related to IDPs was further stated that there was no provision of education to the displaced children, no standard curriculum, and the resources channeled for that purpose were not adequately utilized.

There is a consensus among social scientists in Nigeria that the IDPs situated in the Kaduna hajj camp were displaced because of the April 2011 post-election violence that resulted in many deaths and the destruction of properties. The authors here investigated the post-conflict depression of the female IDPs and found out that, the IDPs with definitive depression were retired and unemployed while those with probable depression were women that have been mobbed during the crisis and were further diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (Lateef et al., 2015). In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature supporting the position of previous scholars such as Ayata & Yükseker (2005), the spread of the international IDP regime has escalated the programs and serious scholarly dispute on the responsibility of the state and the international commitment. Furthermore, when the state refuses to take care of the internally displaced, the international community is very selective in making decisions and it depends largely on the interest and the might of the contributing states. More so, the practice by international humanitarian practice creates a dichotomy among displaced persons. It is generally believed that the internally displaced are frown to security threats, psychological trauma, lack of shelter, sexual abuse, gender discrimination, lack of communication with loved ones, and lack of humanitarian aid.

There is a relatively small body of literature that is concerned with Internal Displacement has been a major concern in the West African region. The literature on IDPs has highlighted several Adebayo & Tajudeen (2013) while there are recurrences of displacement of thousands of IDPs that have been relocated back to their original homes due to the winding up of attacks by the Boko Haram terrorist, however many of the returnees are in divesting condition. More recent attention has focused on the provision of Imasuen (2015) maintained that the lack of access to internally displaced persons by the humanitarian agencies to rural communities is further devastating the already deteriorating situation in Northeast Nigeria. The generalizability of much-published research on this issue is problematic as the view's humanitarian crisis is a condition of the internally displaced as a serious threat to life and the lack of good health and some basic needs that are not beyond the reach of an individual and the community. In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature such as Olukolajo, Ajayi, & Ogungbenro (2014) on the reason, internal displacement in Nigeria has been related to several unfortunate events, creating a lot of controversial assertions, and accusing ethnicity, political paradigm, underdevelopment, deprivation, racism, and much more.

The alarming issue currently being faced in Nigeria is how to bring relief from the criminal activities of the Boko Haram terrorist organization to the plight of the IDPs in northeastern Nigeria. Moreover, since the rise in popularity of this terrorist group in Northeastern Nigeria in 2009, many lives have been lost properties worth billions of Naira, and thousands of innocent civilians have been displaced (Itumo & Nwobashi, 2016). Eze-Uzoamaka & Oloidi, (2017) revealed that, in North Central Nigeria, the people of Nasarawa, Benue, and Taraba States have been facing a crisis of displacement as a result of the conflicts between the Fulani Herdsmen and the Farmers. In the same way, Lateef et al., (2015) illustrated that in Kaduna State violent internal conflict during the 2011 national elections in Nigeria also referred to as post-election violence led to the displacement and resettlement of those affected by the crisis in Kaduna Hajj camp.

Equally, Turshen, (2016) posits that, as a result of the religious conflict between Muslims and Christian Jos, of Plateau State as well as the 2008 election violence resulted in the displacement of humans to the neighboring State of Bauchi. It was estimated that more than 761 individuals lost their lives, and another 10,000 persons were internally displaced. In the same vein, *ThisDay* (2019) reported that, as a result of the Fulani herdsmen attack on Kajuru Local Government as well as the deadly attacks in Sanga Local Government of Kaduna State which led to the destruction of houses and human lives and displacement of more than 12,480 people in different IDP camps in Mararraban Kajuru and Kufana. Historically, research investigating the factors associated with IDPs from the international dimension with a focus on New Delhi, 10 April, (2019), reports that the armed banditry attacks in Zamfara State Northwest Nigeria, have resulted in the loss of thousands of lives and the sacking of villages as well as destructions of farms and farm products.. This was evident due to the motion raised by Senator Kabiru Marafa representing Zamfara State. The study shows that forcible expulsion and the consequent displacements brought a plethora of cultural, social, and psychological challenges to the women victims in the state of Badia Lagos, in which they were forced to formulate numerous ingenious tactics of sustainability and surviving persons. Oyefara & Alabi (2016) supported the previous conditions, that research discovered that people cope better socially and financially than men and concluded that extended family members are an essential pillar of support for the displaced.

Publications that concentrate on the economic implications of the IDPs and more frequently adopt a historical approach Suleiman & Umar (2018), in recent times, the intensity of conflicts between pastoralists and farmers has become disturbing. It had cost the economy a lot in terms of cultural-political and economic growth in which members of the community were internally displaced and the State's legal implementation is at risk. Supporting this position is Aluko (2017) the activities of Boko Haram which mainly affects Nigeria's Northeastern states have resulted in the loss of life and the devastation of livelihoods. It also resulted in a significant number of the communities affected being homeless; most of them sought shelter from danger with family and friends, while others were housed in internally displaced people's camps.

3. Social Empowerment Theory

The NGO's emphasis was on integrating the "disempowered," disadvantaged, and stigmatized. Empowerment is a process that involves and articulates three dimensions: individual, organizational, and political or social (Biewener & Bacqué, 2011). Social empowerment is a process through which individuals maintain control to express their own lives and influence the sequence of events around

them. The theory of social empowerment was drawn from the concept of social capital, by which social capital gives a clear picture of how people shape alliances, networks, and interactions across societies.

The theory of social empowerment has been implemented in many ways. Social capital is central, because of the limits of individual measures in the solution of these collective problems, to construct other forms of capital (human, financial, physical, environmental, cultural, and political). The theory of social capital and empowerment theory also stresses the role of civil society organizations. Social scientists recognize these social structures and interactions to be a form of capital (called social capital) that facilitates community collective action (Saegert & Winkel 2004). The impact of social capital on health and happiness, employment, and child welfare could directly affect human well-being (Putnam, 2000).

4. Factors Responsible for Internal Displacement in Borno State Communities

The particularly critical activities of the insurgency in Borno state. Concerns were expressed about the violent activities of the insurgency in the state which has resulted in a large population of internal displacement in Northeast and Borno state. Some of the factors that led to internal displacement in Borno state include:

Boko Haram Insurgency and Armed Banditry: Critics question the inability of the government to provide security and safety for the citizens was made clear in the activities of the insurgency which led to youth finding their way into IDP camps. A recurrent theme in the interviews was a sense amongst interviewees that the Boko haram insurgency was the major factor that led to the IDPs in Borno state. Despite, the United Nations' (UN) role in assisting the Nigerian government in combating the Boko Haram insurgency. The United Nations provided technical and financial assistance to the Nigerian government in the fight against the Boko Haram insurgency at various times. The UN assisted the Nigerian government through the provision of various forms of advice and valuable suggestions in the fight against the Boko Haram Insurgency in Northeastern Nigeria.

According to Bello (2021), meta-analysis has been subjected to considerable criticism of the government in his work titled "The Terror Campaign of Boko Haram: Its Transformation and Challenges to Nigeria's Security" also affirmed that Boko Haram activities are which is geared towards causing maximum demand to the population and rendering them homeless, the scholars also analyze the patterns and dynamics of the Boko Haram attacks and the challenges they caused to the country's security especially in the IDPs. Another interviewee, when asked about the factor that led to his presence at the IDP camp in Borno state stated how the inefficiency of the government has led to an increased attack of Boko haram insurgency made them leave their homes. According to Dunn (2018) children especially those of the level of privilege in society are mainly in the IDP camps because of the activities of the insurgency the Boko Haram whose operational base is in Borno state, thus, the high number of persons in the IDPs camps are as a result of these groups. A comparison of the findings with those of other studies confirms that the activities of the Boko haram insurgency group contributed to the increase in the number of IDPs in Borno state camp. The current research findings collaborate with the position of Nnachi, Nwigwe, & Ukoma (2013) more recent arguments against the government inaction have been summarized by the scholar when he shows that the problem of the continuous increase in the number of persons going to the IDPs in Northeast sections of the country is due to the Boko haram attack. The scholars believe the increase in the internal displacement of the citizens and residents of the Borno state is due to Boko haram activities and in fact, the Northeast in general cannot be unconnected to these terrorists (Nnachi, Nwigwe, & Ukoma, 2013).

Critics question the ability of the Nigerian government to critically end the activities of armed banditry that led to the displacement of its citizens. The mission of the armed banditry is to end killing in some cases their action which increasing led to an increase in IDPs in the Borno state and especially the young population had no option but to report them to the IDP camps to save their lives. Warner & Lizzo (2021) in their study of the activities of Boko Haram believe that they have gone beyond merely a methodological challenge, to more of an overcoming phenomenon with a real-world impact for addressing the violence perpetrated by these groups which has turned most of the population to IDPs within their state. These scholars' expositions show the unsatisfactory nature of these IDPs to the responses of the government to their plight hence the reasons for a high number of the people in IDP camps, among other issues related to factors responsible for the movement of the people to IDPs camp were asked.

Violence Conflict: The study by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center in collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council in the Central African Republic (CAR) (2015) shows violent conflict as a result of political transition has led to the country's first democratic elections heightened activities of army banditry, coup, insecurity and displacement of people increased dramatically as a result. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center researches that armed bandits remain one of the major factors why people move to the IDP camps in Borno state. The study by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center in collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council in the Central African Republic (CAR) (2015) further shows that armed groups didn't just send people to the IDP camps in the country, however, the record of human rights abuses, killings, massacres, looting and gender-based violence keeps increasing day in day out. The activities of Armed banditry insecurity and violence were the reasons why the IDP camps increased the number of people daily. Also, the paper supports the position of Okoli & Lenshie (2021) who opined armed banditry insurgency has presented an increasing number of peculiar theatres as a result of their unconventional warfare, which has led to the increasing number of persons in the IDP camps in Borno state. According to Okoli & Lenshie (2021), the dynamics of the belligerents of the armed banditry have oscillated between the asymmetries of hard and soft violence with serious complications in Borno state. Okoli & Lenshie (2021) that armed banditry and insurgents contribute to the increasing IDPs in Borno state. The psychological aspect of the theory supports the findings of this research when it states that due to psychological issues, people may be forced to vacate their place aboard for safety reasons.

A variety of perspectives were expressed by the informants on the factors that necessitated their movement to the IDP camp in Borno state key among them was the violent attack on them which some attributed to the clear act of inaction and efficiency on the part of the government. Muddiman, Warner, & Schumacher-Rutherford (2021) opined that political violence, violence rare, continues to be a warranted concern because of the implication it causes; violence conflict has in no small measure contributed to the increasing number of IDPs, which the IDPs critically and attributed to government inaction in the protection of their interest.

Consistent with the literature, this research finding is in line with the report of Scacco, Coe, and Harness (2018) opined that poorly management governance responsibility contributed to violent attacks and the research shows that violent attacks contributed greatly to the recurrent number of youth in the IDPs. The study by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center in collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council in the Central African Republic (CAR) (2015), shows that violent attack on the people most often makes the citizens and residents move to the IDP camps that are close or far

from them. The residents or citizens of Borno state moved to IDP camps because of the persistent violent attacks by the insurgent group operating in the area, in which they found themselves in a helpless situation due to the government's inaction over the years. The Norwegian Refugee Council in the Central African Republic (CAR) (2015) that the increasing number of in the displacement camps is due to threats to life, heighten insecurity particularly around those areas referred to as enclaves, which are often surrounded by the insurgent, mobs and armed militias.

Natural / Human Factors: Another interesting theme that emerged from the data analysis and the interviews conducted was natural and human factors contributing to the immigration of people to the IDP camps in Borno state. Critics have also argued that surveys provided on IDPs often neglect the impact of violation of human rights on the number of IDPs, this was shown in the current research when it found that violation of human rights led to some people to IDP camps in Borno state. Talking about this issue an interviewee stated that the failure of the government, local authorities and leaders, and the parents to protect their people from abuse sent some people to the camp and not necessarily because of the activities of the insurgents. This current research findings confirm the research of Adeyeri & Aluede (2021) stated that the outbreak of the Boko Haran insurgency and the continuous violation of human rights in the north-eastern part of Nigeria, especially in Bono state since the first decade of the twenty-first century. Jackson (2019) in his studies of the dynamics of conflict in Africa opined that violation of human rights contributes to IDPs. There are obvious difficulties in accepting the obvious neglect of human rights abuse by the government and concerned stakeholders.

According to Ajayi (2006) without the involvement of Non-Governmental Organizations, the violation of human rights would have been worse, thus human rights abuses remain one of the reasons for the growing number of people in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria. Human rights abuses contributed in no small measure to the displacement of people in the IDP camps. The overwhelming abuse of human rights contributed to some people's displacement and their subsequent stability in the IDP camps. To Salkida (2012), the major rationale behind the displacement of people is multifaceted, beginning with human rights violations to wars as well as insurgencies. According to Debbarma, Majumdar, & Bhattacharjee, (2021) in their study of internally displaced persons (IDPs) opined that persons or groups of persons who have been forced to leave respectively homes or places of habitual residence to avoid the great effect of armed conflict, and especially violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.

Farmers-herders Conflict: The farmers-herders conflict contributed to the movement of people especially those in the villages to camps. The continuous conflict between the farmer-herders across the country and in Borno state has led to an upsurge in the number of people seeking refuge in the IDP camp. The lack of adequate governmental response to this menace has led to people of the state leaving their homes to the IDPs in Borno state the research found. Madu & Nwankwo (2021) in their study concluded that farmers-herders conflict is often prompted by climate change, and it is the driver of conflicts in developing regions such as Nigeria, invariably contributing to the increasing number of IDPs in conflict-prone areas such as Borno state in Nigeria (Onimisi, 2018; Onimisi, et al, 2018). Akov (2017) opined conflict is a factor responsible for climate change and eventual conflict between the farmer-herders.

The position of Benjaminsen & Ba (2019) in a much more systematic approach would identify that the increase in IDPs can be because of factors such as conflict and the lack of adequate responses from the government and its offices. According to Mooney (2005), when there are situations like conflict,

persecution, and violence between two groups movement is bound to happen. The current research findings show that conflict between farmers-herders prompted the movement of a certain number of persons to the IDPs in Borno state, as they are forced from their homes for safety reasons. These current research findings corroborate the ideas of Oghuvbum& Oghuvbu (2021) believe that the conflict between farmers and herdsmen mainly applies to Nigeria and other countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Senegal, Cameroon, and Côte d'Ivoire often triggered by multi-causal factors, which includes scarce resources in the face of greater need, reprisal attacks, land, and climate change. The attacks from herders made some farmers leave the farmland for the IDP camp because the governments couldn't provide them the needed security, they are frequently in a more desperate situation than refugees.

5. Way Forward through Selected Coordinated Policies:

Provision of Access to Resources / Credit: It is important to note that the Nigerian government also plays a fundamental role in the provision of resources for the IDPs in Borno state through the provision of resources such as materials needed for their immediate needs and food. The Nigerian government sometimes provides cash to the youth in the IDP camps in the state. With regards to the role of NGOs in youth empowerment the access to adequate resources and provision of need credit by the IDPs are prominent features of the NGOs in their assistance to the IDPs. And in keeping with previous observational studies, Ngo, et. al (2021), their studies found that entrepreneurs who are of a younger generation, with relevant education and not benefiting from members of the social capitalist system can be assisted with credit.

The paper agrees with the findings of other studies such as Oyelude & Bamigbola (2012) who opined that women's access to resources and credit has affected the youth empowerment attempt schemes but the activities of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who have taken up the role of access to resources and credit intervention over time. The NGOs have provided access to resources and credit in the form of empowerment of the youth in the IDP camps in Borno state. The findings also show that providing access to resources assists the youth even after the camp to be self-reliant. According to Oyelude & Bamigbola (2012), NGOs have adopted various strategies aimed at empowering the youth, women, and girls using various means and methods, and one of them is resource information and resources, which collaborate with the findings of the current research which shows that the NGOs has provided and have continued to provide access to resources and credit assist to the youth in the IDPs camps in the form of empowerment.

Technical Assistance: Technical assistance is one of the prominent roles provided by the NGOs towards youth empowerment in Borno state IDPs. Technical assistance is core to youth empowerment, thus, the NGOs operating in the state provide this to the IDPs the result found. Another important finding from the data analysis is technical assistance often rendered by the NGOs towards youth empowerment in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria. Among the role of the NGOs in youth empowerment was giving technical assistance. Kanagat, et al (2021) stress the need for technical assistants and the importance of these assistants to the youth and youth generation. This study confirms the research of Oyelude & Bamigbola (2012) who focus on W-TEC a Non-governmental organization working for the socio-economic empowerment of youth, with a specific focus on young girls using tools such as information and communication technologies (ICTs) to provide technical assistance. Using the available statistical evidence from most African countries, about the youth's knowledge of

ICTs denying them of income-generating opportunities W-TEC steps in to bridge the gap. The position of Oyelude & Bamigbola (2012) supports the findings of the current research which shows that the NGOs have been engaging the youth in the IDP camp in Borno state with the technical assistance needed for the effective empowerment scheme.

Provision of Financial Support: The important role of NGOs towards youth empowerment in Borno state was the provision of financial support to the IDPs which analysis of the data shows. According to Samuel, Agwu, Ngozi, & Uzoma, (2021) who stated that adults are highly associated with disengagement and difficulties from income-generating activities, thus, they provide financial support. This study supports evidence from the research conducted by Adesua-Lincoln (2011) which states that many of the youth entrepreneurs (76.0%) lack information and financial support and for entrepreneurship schemes to thrive youth need to be supported financially. The NGOs have been effective in assisting the youth in the IDP camps in Borno state with various forms of financial support aimed at empowering them and making them self-reliant even after their stay in the camps. Access to finance which is a very serious constraint to youth and women entrepreneurs, has led to the NGOs taking up the role of providing financial support to the youth especially those in the IDP camps in the Borno state, Nigeria in various forms and ways, which providing certain amount to the youth on monthly or quarterly bases. The NGOs appear to have can prominent role in the provision of small-scale business to the youth in the IDP camps in Borno state when the government happens to have failed the citizens. Arum (2010) in the scholars' study of Women NGOs and Women Empowerment in Nigeria, suggested empowering rural young women by providing them with small-scale business assistance in achieving self-sufficiency.

Social Inclusion and Mobilization: According to Kutay (2021) civil society is an instrument for the promotion of the interests of powerful states through the youth via a decentered approach and technological power. To Sisaye (2021) the impact of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has on the evolution of the youth Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and its sustainability, pointing out the importance of inclusion. The NGOs have played a significant role in the lives of the IDPs in Borno state IDP camps through social inclusion and empowerment of young people in the state. Youth empowerment requires an improvement around social inclusion, especially in accessing the resources and transforming the beliefs, values, and attitudes of the youth. According to Golay & Malatesta (2014), various models suggest youth empowerment can be achieved through social inclusion which cooperates with the current research findings.

The NGO mobilization strategy of the youth in the IDPs was much more organized than any empowerment moves of the government both at the state and federal levels. It is important to note that mobilization for effective empowerment of the youth in the IDPs was an imperative role played by the NGOs in Borno state, which the government could not play. This position of this paper follows Sattanathan & Villi (2007) stated voluntary and international organizations contribute to the social mobilization of the youth towards important culture and social traditions that will help the youth in the empowerment program in any condition they may have found themselves. Mobilization of the youth in the IDP camps in Borno state and around the environment was critical to the role played by the NGOs towards youth empowerment. Sattanathan & Villi (2007), further state that non-governmental organizations have concentrated their efforts around social mobilization on contemporary issues especially as it concerns empowerment and implementation of governmental development programs. The NGOs are like social forces that facilitate collective action and people mobilization for youth

empowerment as well as to achieve the desired objectives. The NGOs often play the role of mobilizing the people, especially the youth towards empowerment and self-reliance.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The main thrust of the paper examines the factors responsible for internal displacement in Borno state communities, and the role of the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in meeting the needs of the people through government policies. The role of coordinated government policy concerning internal displacement and the play of the NGOs towards youth empowerment cannot be overemphasized. This paper opined that internal displacement in Borno State Communities was a result of the activities of the Boko Haram Insurgency and Armed Banditry / Violence Conflict. Thus, the paper recommended the policy periodic provision of access to resources/credit, and technical assistance is one of the prominent roles provided by the NGOs and government-assisted empowerment in Borno state IDPs. The paper conclude that technical assistance is core to helping those in IDP camps. The paper further concludes that through coordinated government policy, the NGOs can significantly contribute to reducing the plight of the Internal Displaced Persons in Borno State Communities.

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Manipulation of Artificial Intelligence System: A National Security Risk

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Abstract

Manipulation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) poses a grave threat to national security now and in future. Such manipulation encompasses dimensions such as misinformation campaigns, cyber-attacks, and the potential misuse of autonomous systems. This paper examines the multifaceted impact of AI manipulation on national security. The paper is an analysis of AI's multifaceted role in national security, exposing its application in advanced threat detection, autonomous surveillance systems, predictive analysis for strategic planning, cyber-security countermeasures, and integration within national security. The paper also raises ethical concerns about potential future manipulations. Further, it explores the positive and darker aspects of future AI manipulations. Risks associated with AI use across national space are identified for purposes of implications and policy attention. The identified risks include adversarial attacks, data poisoning, model inversion, explainability manipulation, deepfakes, AI-enhanced cyber-attacks, and biased algorithms influencing national security decisions. The implications of AI manipulations on national security are analysed, highlighting risks such as compromised intelligence, strategic disruption, and concerns about autonomous decision-making among others. The paper concludes with a set of mitigation strategies to address these risks.In recommendation, ethical guidelines and international collaboration are essential to establish a framework that prioritizes security and accountability.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, System, Security, Risk, Manipulation

1. Introduction

The relentless upsurge of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has ushered in an era of unprecedented capabilities, revolutionizing cyber operations, reshaping national security paradigms, and engendering a future fraught with ethical and security implications. At the intersection of these advancements lies a critical concern of potential manipulation of AI systems, which poses multifaceted risks to national security across countries. There is evidently an intricate relationship between future AI manipulation and the associated risks. The relationship is not devoid of key themes such as AI in cyber operations, AI in national security, ethical and security implications of future manipulation, potential risks and manipulation techniques, and the far-reaching implications for national security. It becomes evident that understanding and addressing the implications of future AI manipulation is paramount in safeguarding the foundations of national security frameworks.

The narrative unfolds against the backdrop of AI's historical involvement in cyber operations. From its early applications in expert systems for intrusion detection to the contemporary landscape of machine learning-driven cybersecurity measures, AI has been both a sentinel and a harbinger of evolving threats. Its adaptive algorithms have not only fortified defences but also, notably, empowered offensive

cyber strategies, ushering in a paradigm shift in the cyber threat landscape. Inextricably linked to the narrative is the role of AI as a transformative force in national security. Machine learning algorithms, natural language processing, and computer vision have endowed defence and intelligence agencies with capabilities ranging from advanced threat detection to predictive analysis. This surge in capabilities, however, comes with challenges, magnified by the looming spectre of future AI manipulation.

As the future approaches, the potential for manipulation of AI systems emerges as a double-edged sword. Ethical considerations envision positive advancements, such as enhanced decision-making processes and improved efficiency. Simultaneously, the dark underbelly of future manipulation raises concerns about malicious uses that could lead to cyber-attacks, misinformation campaigns, and unprecedented social engineering endeavors. Balancing the promises and perils of future AI manipulation becomes imperative for national security stakeholders. To navigate this delicate balance, an exploration of potential risks and manipulation techniques is paramount. Adversarial attacks, data poisoning, model inversion, explainability manipulation, deepfakes, and AI-enhanced cyber-attacks populate the landscape of risks. Each technique unveils a unique facet of vulnerability, showcasing the multifaceted challenges that must be met with comprehensive mitigation strategies.

The implications of AI manipulation for national security are woven into a precarious tapestry. Compromised intelligence, strategic disruption, concerns over autonomous decision-making, privacy issues, and erosion of public trust—each thread in this tapestry demands meticulous attention. The stakes are high, and the potential ramifications of unchecked AI manipulation could reverberate across the very foundations of national security frameworks. In the face of these challenges, the paper will present a spectrum of mitigation strategies. From adversarial training and adaptive security measures to transparent AI systems, regular security audits, human oversight, and the establishment of ethical guidelines, these strategies form a comprehensive arsenal. International collaboration on AI security emerges as a crucial pillar in fortifying the collective defences against manipulation in the realm of national security.

The interplay between technological advancement, ethical considerations, and strategic imperatives underscores the need for a nuanced and proactive approach. The subsequent sections will delve into each theme with precision, shedding light on the intricate dynamics that define the future landscape of AI and its implications for national security.The paper examines the multifaceted impact of AI manipulation on national security. Structured in four sections, section focuses on artificial intelligence and associated risks. Section 3 advances a case for mitigating strategies. In section 4 conclusion and recommendations are provided.

2.1. Artificial Intelligence in Cyber Operations

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has played a significant role in shaping the landscape of cyber operations throughout history. From its early applications in expert systems to the contemporary use of machine learning algorithms, AI has evolved to become a critical component of both defensive and offensive cybersecurity strategies. The roots of AI in cyber operations can be traced back to the 1980s when expert systems, a form of rule-based AI, were introduced. These systems aimed to emulate human decision-making processes in cybersecurity tasks, particularly in the realm of intrusion detection (Russell & Norvig, 2010). Expert systems provided an early framework for automating the identification of known threats and vulnerabilities. As cyber threats became more sophisticated, AI

found a crucial application in malware detection. Signature-based AI systems, which employed predefined patterns to identify known malicious code, marked a significant advancement. Machine learning techniques were integrated to enhance these systems' adaptability to new and evolving forms of malware (Scarfone *et al.,* 2009). This era marked the intersection of AI and traditional cybersecurity measures.

The emergence of Advanced Persistent Threats (APTs) in the late 20th century marked a turning point in cyber operations. APTs, often state-sponsored, demonstrated advanced levels of sophistication and persistence. AI, particularly in the form of adaptive algorithms, began to be employed to evade traditional cybersecurity measures (Rid, 2012). This adaptive nature allowed threat actors to dynamically adjust their tactics, making defence more challenging. In the 2010s, there was a noticeable shift in the application of AI from primarily defensive to offensive cyber operations. Threat actors began leveraging machine learning algorithms to automate and optimize their attacks. Tasks such as target selection, crafting personalized phishing campaigns, and social engineering were increasingly driven by AI (Cimpanu, 2019). This marked a significant paradigm shift in the cyber threat landscape. State-sponsored cyber espionage campaigns began incorporating AI for intelligence gathering and data exfiltration. AI algorithms were employed to analyse vast datasets efficiently, identify valuable information, and tailor attacks based on the specific vulnerabilities of the target (Centre for a New American Security, 2019). This marked a departure from traditional espionage methods, showcasing the potential of AI in information warfare.

2.2. Artificial Intelligence in National Security

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a cornerstone in reshaping national security paradigms, offering transformative capabilities in defence, intelligence, and strategic decision-making. As AI applications continue to advance, their integration into national security raises both opportunities and ethical considerations. The use of AI in national security has evolved rapidly, encompassing various domains such as cyber operations, intelligence analysis, autonomous systems, and decision support. Machine learning algorithms, natural language processing, and computer vision have empowered defence and intelligence agencies with enhanced capabilities for data analysis, threat detection, and decision-making (Arquilla, 2020). The benefits of AI in national security includes, but not limited to the following:

Advanced Threat Detection: AI algorithms excel at processing vast amounts of data to identify patterns and anomalies. In national security, this capability enhances the detection of cyber threats, potential terrorist activities, and emerging geopolitical risks (Briggs, 2021).

Autonomous Systems for Surveillance: AI-driven autonomous systems, including drones and surveillance cameras, provide real-time data for monitoring borders, critical infrastructure, and conflict zones. These systems augment traditional surveillance methods, improving situational awareness (Arquilla, 2020).

Predictive Analysis for Strategic Planning: AI enables predictive analysis by assessing historical data and identifying trends. In national security, this facilitates strategic planning, resource allocation, and proactive responses to potential threats (Floridi *et al.,* 2018).

Cyber-security and Information Warfare: AI enhances cybersecurity by identifying vulnerabilities, predicting cyber-attacks, and responding in real-time. Additionally, AI plays a role in countering information warfare by analysing online content for disinformation and propaganda (Briggs, 2021).

2.3. Future Manipulation of AI: Ethical and Security Implications

The future of Artificial Intelligence (AI) holds great promise for advancements in various fields, but it also raises concerns about the potential for manipulation. As AI systems become more sophisticated and pervasive, the ethical and security implications of future manipulation need careful consideration. This discussion delves into the possible ways AI could be manipulated in the future, examining the associated risks and proposing measures to mitigate them.

Future manipulations of AI hold the potential for positive advancements. Ethical considerations emphasize the use of AI to enhance decision-making processes, automate mundane tasks, and improve overall efficiency. Ethical AI enhancements may include refining algorithms to reduce biases, ensuring transparency in decision processes, and incorporating mechanisms for accountability (Floridi *et al.,* 2018). This positive manipulation aligns with the goal of creating AI systems that benefit society while minimizing unintended consequences.

On the darker side, future manipulations of AI raise concerns about malicious uses. Threat actors may exploit AI vulnerabilities to conduct cyber-attacks, spread misinformation, or conduct social engineering on a scale previously unseen. The malicious use of AI can result in deepfake technologies that manipulate audio and video content convincingly, leading to potential political, social, and economic ramifications (Brundage *et al.,* 2018). It is crucial to anticipate and address these negative manipulations to ensure the responsible development and deployment of AI technologies.

2.4. Potential Risks and Manipulation Techniques of AI

Adversarial Attacks: Adversarial attacks involve intentionally inputting misleading data into AI systems to manipulate their outputs (Goodfellow *et al.,* 2014). In the future, attackers may exploit vulnerabilities in machine learning models to deceive AI systems, leading to incorrect decisions in various applications such as image recognition, autonomous vehicles, and natural language processing.

Data Poisoning: Manipulating training data to introduce biases or malicious patterns is a growing concern. Future attackers might strategically inject poisoned data during the training phase, compromising the integrity and reliability of AI models (Biggio *et al.,* 2012).

Model Inversion: This technique involves reverse engineering an AI model to extract sensitive information used during the training process (Fredrikson *et al.,* 2015). Future manipulators could exploit model inversion to reveal proprietary algorithms, compromising intellectual property and potentially enabling more effective adversarial attacks.

Explainability Manipulation: As AI systems are increasingly required to provide explanations for their decisions, manipulators may attempt to deceive these interpretability mechanisms. Future attacks might focus on generating misleading explanations to hide malicious intent or to undermine the trustworthiness of AI systems (Liao *et al.,* 2016).

Deepfakes and Information Warfare: The rise of deepfake technology enables the creation of realistic, yet entirely fabricated, audio and video content. In the future, adversaries could use deepfakes for disinformation campaigns, manipulating public perception or deceiving intelligence systems (Farid, 2019).

AI-Enhanced Cyber Attacks: As AI is integrated into cybersecurity measures, malicious actors may spearhead AI-driven cyber-attacks with unprecedented speed and precision. Future manipulation could involve the exploitation of AI vulnerabilities to infiltrate critical infrastructure, disrupt communications, or compromise sensitive data (Briggs, 2021).

Biased AI Algorithms in Decision-Making: National security decisions often rely on AI algorithms for threat assessment and strategic planning. If these algorithms are manipulated or biased, it could lead to flawed decisions, misallocation of resources, or inadequate responses to emerging threats (Diakopoulos, 2016).

2.5. Implications for National Security

Future manipulations of AI also introduce new security challenges. AI systems may become targets for cyber-attacks aimed at manipulating their decision-making processes or extracting sensitive information. Moreover, AI can be employed as a tool for orchestrating sophisticated cyber-attacks, leveraging its ability to adapt and learn from new data. The security of AI systems becomes paramount to prevent unauthorized access, tampering, or manipulation by malicious actors (Goodfellow *et al.,* 2018). Robust cybersecurity measures are essential to safeguard AI technologies and the systems they operate within

Compromised Intelligence and Surveillance: Manipulation of AI in national security could undermine intelligence-gathering efforts and surveillance systems. Adversarial attacks may result in misinterpretation of data, obscuring actual threats and leaving vulnerabilities undetected (Arquilla, 2020).

Strategic Disruption and Destabilization: The intentional manipulation of AI to disrupt strategic decision-making processes poses a severe risk. Future adversaries may seek to exploit vulnerabilities in AI-driven command and control systems, leading to strategic miscalculations or destabilization of national security frameworks (Clarke & Knake, 2010).

Autonomous Systems and Decision-Making: The manipulation of AI systems raises concerns about their use in autonomous decision-making processes. In critical areas such as healthcare, finance, and criminal justice, biased or manipulated AI decisions could have severe consequences, affecting individuals and society at large (Diakopoulos, 2016).

Privacy Concerns: AI manipulation could compromise privacy by exploiting vulnerabilities in AI systems that process personal data. Future attackers may seek to manipulate facial recognition systems, voice recognition technologies, or other biometric applications, leading to unauthorized access or identification (Brundage *et al.,* 2018).

Impact on Trust and Adoption: Successful manipulation of AI systems could erode public trust in these technologies. If individuals and organizations lose confidence in AI systems due to security breaches or unethical manipulation, it may hinder the widespread adoption of beneficial AI applications (Floridi *et al.,* 2018).

3. Mitigation Strategies

On the premise of the discussed Potential Risks and Manipulation Techniques of AI, vis-à-vis its implication on national security, risk, the paper suggests the following mitigation strategies.

i.   **Adversarial Training:** Implementing adversarial training during the development of AI models can enhance their robustness against adversarial attacks (Goodfellow *et al.,* 2014). This involves exposing the model to intentionally manipulated data during training to improve its resistance to future manipulation.

ii.   **Adaptive AI Security Measures:** Developing adaptive security measures that can evolve alongside AI systems is crucial. Continuous monitoring, threat modelling, and the integration of advanced cybersecurity protocols can enhance resilience against adversarial attacks (Briggs, 2021).

iii.   **Transparent and Explainable AI:** Enhancing the transparency and explainability of AI systems can make it more difficult for manipulators to deceive these systems (Liao *et al.,* 2016). Clear explanations of AI decisions enable users to detect anomalies or malicious intent.

iv.   **Regular Security Audits:** Conducting regular security audits and assessments of AI systems can help identify vulnerabilities and potential manipulation attempts. This proactive approach is essential for maintaining the security and reliability of AI applications.

v.   **Human Oversight and Redundancy:** Introducing human oversight in critical decision-making processes and maintaining redundancy in national security systems can act as safeguards against AI manipulation. Humans can provide contextual understanding and intervene in cases of AI errors or manipulation attempts (Arquilla, 2020).

vi.   **Ethical Guidelines and Regulations:** Establishing comprehensive ethical guidelines and regulations for the development and deployment of AI systems is crucial. These guidelines can provide a framework for ethical AI practices, ensuring that developers and organizations prioritize security and accountability (Brundage *et al.,* 2018).

vii.   **International Collaboration on AI Security:** Given the global nature of cyber threats, fostering international collaboration on AI security is imperative. Sharing best practices, threat intelligence, and collaborative research can strengthen collective defences against manipulation in the realm of national security (Clarke & Knake, 2010).

4. Conclusionand Recommendations

The historical trajectory of Artificial Intelligence (AI) development, its role in cyber operations, and integration into national security underscore a transformative journey marked by milestones and challenges. From its conceptualization in ancient philosophy to the birth of AI as a formal field in the 20th century, the evolution has been relentless. In cyber operations, AI has transitioned from expert systems to adaptive algorithms, playing a pivotal role in both defensive and offensive strategies. The implications for national security are profound, offering advanced threat detection, autonomous surveillance, predictive analysis, and cybersecurity enhancements.

However, as the promises of AI are embraced, the spectre of future manipulation looms large, presenting ethical and security challenges. The potential risks, from adversarial attacks and data poisoning to deepfakes and biased decision-making, necessitate comprehensive mitigation strategies. Future manipulations could compromise intelligence, disrupt strategic decision-making, and erode public trust, impacting the very foundations of national security.

Mitigating these risks requires a multi-faceted approach. Adversarial training, adaptive security measures, and transparent AI systems can enhance resilience against manipulation. Regular security audits, human oversight, and redundancy mechanisms provide additional layers of protection. Ethical guidelines and international collaboration are therefore essential to establish a framework that prioritizes security and accountability.

The future of AI and its manipulation is a delicate balance between innovation and safeguarding national interests. As we navigate this path, the ethical and security implications demand constant vigilance, collaboration, and a commitment to ensuring that AI serves as a force for good rather than a tool for manipulation. In this evolving landscape, the responsible development and deployment of AI technologies will be pivotal in preserving the integrity of national security frameworks and upholding the values that underpin a secure and resilient society.

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Girl-Child Empowerment and Boy Child Neglect:

Implications for the Nigerian Society

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Abstract

While it is true that historically and socially there has been a need to support traditionally oppressed girls and women, focusing solely on their empowerment could unintentionally cause a blind spot for the particular problems encountered by males. This prompts worries about the possible repercussions of an unbalanced concentration, as the boy-child may experience a range of social, academic, and mental health problems as a result of this neglect. The main objective of this study is to delve into the underexplored territory of boy-child neglect amidst the emphasis on girl-child empowerment, shedding light on the consequences of such actions. The study adopts the secondary method of data collection and exploratory method. The study is hinged on the intersectionality theory. The study found that the emphasis on the girl child development while neglecting the boy child has resulted in the increase of crime, singlehood, school dropouts, bleak future for present youths, divorce, absentee father, lack of male role models, etc. in Nigeria. The study concludes that the neglect of the boy child in empowerment programmes while emphasis is on the girl child is a time bomb waiting to explode. The study thus recommended that government, business, and social partners should all support comprehensive affirmative action and gender equality programs.

Keywords: Boy child, Empowerment, Girl child, Initiatives and Neglect

3. **Introduction**

Over the last few decades, there has been a renewed focus on feminist jurisprudence across the globe. Global initiatives are focused on reducing gender inequality, advancing equality, and empowering and improving the position of females. Many international initiatives aimed at the emancipation and empowerment of women are the result of this passion. A long list of international and national laws aiming at defending and advancing women's rights have also been born out of this global feminist movement. In Nigeria, majority of the empowerment programs target young women and girls. Women are given preference for chances even in situations where both sexes are at risk, but there are no programs that target boys in the same way.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948, stated that all people are created equal and should have equal access to opportunities, respect, and recognition of their rights regardless of their gender, age, race, language, color, national or social origin, property, place of birth, or other status (Amnesty International, 2018). Subsequently, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women and held in Beijing, China on September 15, 1995,

refuted this. It placed special focus on the development of women and girls (Chege and Sifuna, 2006). Since girls are more susceptible than boys, many organizations empower them more, which in turn empowers women as a whole (United Nations, 1995). Boys have been marginalized as a result of girls' empowerment since they were perceived as less susceptible than girls (Bundi, 2018; Kiunacarol, 2015; Hamasi, 2013). The boy child has now turned to vices including drug and substance addiction, sexual abuse, and dropping out of school in an attempt to find his bearings, which is shown in his neglect (Kriel, 1991). Many marriages fail because of the boy child's neglect, which results in a high number of separations and divorces. Some males also choose not to get married because they lack empowerment (Baloyi, 2010; Reynolds, 2008).

While programs aimed at empowering girls are unquestionably important, worries about the unintended consequences of this emphasis on girl-child empowerment are beginning to surface. Concerns are rising that the focus on empowering girls may unintentionally overlook the demands and difficulties that boys confront. In the process, the boy-child is neglected, which presents a ticking time bomb for social harmony and growth that is balanced.

The goal of the global agenda for gender equality in recent years has been to break the chains of patriarchy and right past wrongs by empowering women and girls. The unequal distribution of gender-focused programs has resulted in an unequal distribution of resources and attention, with a primary focus on the empowerment of girls. The empowerment of girls and women has been the focus of many efforts and programs in recent years. Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically mentions the empowerment of girls and women without mentioning the empowerment of boys (Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2014). According to Mhlanga (2021), a growing number of young males are participating in illegal activities such as excessive consumption of drugs with some being recruited into drug cartels and addicts.

While it is true that historically and socially there has been a need to support traditionally oppressed girls and women, focusing solely on their empowerment could unintentionally cause a blind spot for the particular problems encountered by males. This prompts worries about the possible repercussions of an unbalanced concentration, as the boy-child's growth and well-being may be jeopardized, eventually affecting the fabric of society as a whole. The boy child may experience a range of social, academic, and mental health problems as a result of this neglect. The thrust of this paper is to delve into the underexplored territory of boy-child neglect amidst the emphasis on girl-child empowerment, shedding light on the consequences of such actions.

Objectives

1. To identify initiatives emphasizing girl-child empowerment and reasons for emphasis on girl child empowerment.
2. To identify and examine the educational and psychological consequences of neglecting the boy-child in the societal context.
3. To propose strategies and policy recommendations for a more inclusive and balanced approach to gender empowerment that considers the unique challenges faced by both girls and boys.

This paper is structured into four sections; section one is the introduction and statement of problem and methodology. Section two is the literature review and conceptual clarification; section three deals with the analysis while section four is the conclusion and recommendations.

4. **Methodology**

The study adopted the qualitative descriptive research approach because it allows for an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of unequal gender empowerment and challenges of the boy child in the face of emphasized girl child empowerment in Nigeria. By examining reports from international, National observers, as well as scrutinizing accounts from reputable national newspapers, this study gains a comprehensive understanding of the challenges inherent in emphasis on girl child empowerment, while neglecting the boy child in Nigeria.

5. **Literature Review**

Girl-Child Empowerment

The term 'girl child empowerment' describes programs, laws, and practices meant to enhance girls' standing, rights, and opportunities in a number of areas, such as socioeconomic advancement, education, and health. Most people agree that girl child empowerment is a transformational process that gives girls more influence over important life decisions. In order to accomplish this, girls' options are increased, their voices are amplified, and gender norms that restrict their autonomy over their bodies and futures are addressed (UNICEF 2020). As stated by UNICEF (2020), a girl is considered empowered if she has the knowledge, skills, and power to alter her reality and uses these resources to develop by choosing her own path, accumulating resources, and engaging in decision-making processes, then a girl is empowered". According to Meeme (2023), girl child empowerment refers to giving girls and women easy access to education and skills that would enable them to take charge of their own life, receive the assistance they need to be successful, have equal citizenship, and feel respected and confident in their communities.

In Nigeria's past, girl child empowerment has received a lot of attention, especially in light of issues like early marriage, restricted educational opportunities, and gender-based violence. Initiatives for the empowerment of girls as children frequently focus on issues like health, education, and economic empowerment in order to address the unique demands and difficulties that girls confront.

Numerous initiatives to protect women's rights have emerged since the massive campaign for women's and girls' rights began decades ago and gained more mainstream attention in the early 2000s. Additionally, a number of well-known international forums have included campaigns for women's and girls' rights (Davidson, McGrath, Meleis, Stern, DiGiacomo, Dharmendra, Correa-de-Araujo, Campbell, Hochleitner, and Messias, 2011). The United Nations-organized International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Cairo, 1994; the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, June 14–25, 1993, which sent a global message that "women rights are human rights" (Drinan, 1993); and the Beijing Conference, which took place in 1995 and focused on issues related to women's and girls' autonomy and empowerment (United Nation Population Fund [UNPFA] (2022). There was also the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (Winter, Thompson and Jeffreys, 2002) with the annual "Orange the World" (Annisa, 2021 and Ruane-McAteer, Amin, Hanratty, Lynn, van Willenswaard, Reid, Khosla and Lohan, 2019).

Amoo (2017) and Amoo et al (2018) highlight the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and advocates for the modification of all social and cultural conducts that may have adverse effects on the health and wellbeing of women and girls. In addition, there are the African Union Agenda 2063, the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the present initiatives included in the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2015). The abolition of forced marriage and girl child marriage, as well as the projects' support for women's empowerment—including free basic education for girls—are among their greatest features (Amoo et al., 2017; Adebowale, 2014; African Union Commission, 2015). The initiatives also included applying criminal laws to underage sex, child brides, and sex work, as well as legislation and regulations against the trafficking of women and girls (Chersich, Luchters, Ntaganira, Gerbase, Lo, Scorgie and Steen, 2013 and Fayokun, 2015).

Numerous organizations that prioritize the interests of women and girls are among those that work for gender equality. Plan International was founded in 1937 with the goal of promoting children's rights, promoting gender equality for girls, and opposing discrimination against them. The International Alliance of Women (IAW) has been tasked with advocating for women's and girls' human rights worldwide (Stohr, 2015). Among these organizations of note is Gender at Work, a feminist information network dedicated to eradicating discrimination against women and fostering inclusive environments.

One of the top organizations in the world for promoting gender equality and women's human rights, particularly those related to their sexual and reproductive health, is the Global Fund for Women, which was established in 1987. Additionally, there is the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), which aspires to a society in which equitable resource allocation and feminist realities thrive. Included in this is Womankind Worldwide, an organization that was established in 1989 with the goal of advancing women's rights protection and life transformation (Stohr, 2015).

In addition, Equality Now was established in 1992 with the goal of advancing and defending women's and girls' human rights through legal advocacy. This is based on the realization that laws that discriminate against women may be a major barrier to the realization of gender equality. The Women for Women International was founded in 1993 with the eye-catching motto "Bride and Not Girls." The organization assists women who are marginalized in nations that have experienced war and strife. Similarly, since 2009, the Rise Up group has worked to advance economic empowerment, equality, sexual and reproductive health, education, and women's rights (Stohr, 2015).

The UN Women, a 2010-founded organization dedicated to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, is also included on the list. The organization is committed to advancing global efforts to address the concerns of women. The United Nations Women advocates for laws, policies, and services that benefit women, particularly those related to their involvement and leadership in governance systems, their access to decent work and economic autonomy, and their liberation from all forms of violence (United Nations, 2014). The Time's Up organization, which was established in 2018, advocates for the development of secure, equitable, and respectable jobs for women in all fields (United Nations, 2014).

Together with Dosarat Multibiz Concept, a nongovernmental organization in Lagos, the Unic Foundation offers training to young women in Nigeria in areas such as ICT, energy, catering, agribusiness, fashion, entertainment, disaster preparedness, and security technology (Unic Foundation, 2010). In order to solve the difficulties Nigerian women have in the workplace, in businesses, in organizations, and in leadership roles, WIMBIZ was established in 2002 (Info Guide Nigeria, 2013). The Girls Power Initiative was established in 1993 by Grace Osakue and Bene Madunagu with the goal of assisting Nigerian adolescent girls by providing them with the knowledge, opportunities, and resources necessary to develop into successful young women through study, instruction, and action (Info Guide Nigeria, 2013).

Women Empowerment and Enlightenment, is a programme which addresses broad challenges that hinder Nigerian women, particularly those in rural areas, as well as gender injustice and poverty. They want to close the achievement gap between rural and urban women and to honor accomplished women who have excelled in a variety of fields (WEEP, 2012). Similar to this, the WAAW Foundation was established in 2007 by Tolulope Owajoba Adeyemo in Lagos, with an operational office in Texas, with the goal of advancing science and technology for women in Africa (WAAW, 2012). Similarly, Hasfat Abiola Costello established the Kudirat Abiola Initiative for Democracy in 2006 after her mother. It works together on initiatives that seek to eliminate violence against women and remove obstacles to their public engagement so that they can fully engage in Nigeria's social, economic, and political development (Info Guide Nigeria, 2013). The Mirabel Center is the first Sexual Assault Referral Center (SARC) in Nigeria and the second in West Africa. It was established in 2013 by Itoro Eze-Anaba. The Mirabel Center provides free legal, medical, forensic, and counseling services to women and children who have been sexually assaulted or raped, either lately or in the past to receive crisis support (Bellanaija, 2018).

She Can Nigeria is a movement that was started in 2017 by Ezinne R. Ezeani to help today's women reach their full potential and strengthen their capacity for success via teamwork and empowerment so they can take an active role in society. This movement aims to transform the way society views modern women and girls by providing them with strategic training, education support, mentoring, counseling, vocational skill acquisition, and community empowerment initiatives. The ultimate goal is to empower young girls and women and prepare them to become change agents in their respective communities and industries (SheCan, 2019).

While the list of organisations pursuing girls and women interests is inexhaustible, advocacies for boys and men are scanty in the literature. This has been noted as being a time bomb where the future female will be empowered and the males will be lazy and non-contributors to economic development.

Boy-Child Neglect

Boy child neglect is a term used to describe the dearth of resources, care, and attention given to the unique problems that boys confront. This can impede boys' overall development in areas like schooling, mental health, and social integration.

Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality theory was propounded by Kimberlé Crenshaw a civil rights advocate and scholar in 1989 highlights how various aspects of an individual's identity intersect and interact to shape their experiences of privilege and oppression (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality theory recognises the interconnected nature of various social identities, including gender, race, class and more. This approach acknowledges that empowerment effort should address the unique challenges faced by individuals based on their intersecting identities, without disadvantaging any particular group.

Intersectionality theory acknowledges that individuals experience oppression and privilege in complex and interconnected ways due to their intersecting social identities, such as race, gender, class, sexuality, ability and more. In relation to equal empowerment, intersectionality recognises that addressing one aspect of identity based oppression may not be sufficient to achieve true equality (Crenshaw, 1989). Instead, it emphasises the need to understand how different forms of oppression intersect and compound, leading to unique experiences of discrimination and disadvantage. Equal empowerment requires recognising and addressing these intersecting systems of power and privilege to create inclusive and equitable solutions that uplift all individuals, especially those who experience multiple forms of marginalization.

In the context of "girls empowerment and boys neglect" in Nigerian society, intersectionality can be applied to understand the multifaceted dynamics at play.

Gender: In Nigerian society, traditional gender roles often prioritize boys over girls, leading to neglect of boys' emotional and educational needs while emphasizing girls' empowerment in recent years (Osakwe, 2018). Intersectionality acknowledges that gender operates in complex ways, with both boys and girls experiencing different forms of oppression based on their gender identity.

Socioeconomic Status: Socioeconomic factors intersect with gender, with boys from lower-income families facing increased neglect compared to girls (Osakwe, 2018). Economic disparities further compound issues of neglect among boys, as resources for education and healthcare may be prioritized for girls, perpetuating cycles of poverty and marginalization.

Education: While efforts have been made to empower girls through education in Nigeria, boys from disadvantaged backgrounds may face neglect in accessing quality education. Intersectionality highlights how gender intersects with socioeconomic status to shape educational opportunities, with boys from marginalized communities facing additional barriers to academic achievement.

Culture and Tradition: Cultural norms and traditional practices in Nigeria often prioritize male inheritance and leadership, contributing to the neglect of boys' emotional and social development. Intersectionality recognizes how cultural factors intersect with gender to reinforce patterns of neglect among boys, perpetuating harmful stereotypes and expectations (Oduaran. & Oduaran, 2014).

Healthcare: In healthcare, girls' empowerment programs may receive more attention and resources, leaving boys without adequate support for their physical and mental health needs. Intersectionality emphasizes the interconnectedness of health outcomes with gender and socioeconomic status, highlighting disparities in access to healthcare services for boys.

Implications:

Inequitable Development: Focusing solely on girls' empowerment while neglecting boys' needs perpetuates gender inequalities and hinders overall societal development (Oduaran & Oduaran, 2014).

Marginalization of Boys: Neglecting boys' education, healthcare, and emotional well-being can lead to long-term consequences such as increased unemployment, involvement in crime, and mental health issues.

Reinforcement of Gender Stereotypes: Failure to address the intersecting factors contributing to boys' neglect reinforces traditional gender roles and perpetuates harmful stereotypes, ultimately hindering progress towards gender equality (Oduaran & Oduaran, 2014).

Reasons for emphases on girl child empowerment

When it comes to education and acquiring skills for independence and production, boys were prioritized in the 1950s and the late 1970s. The majority of girls became stay-at-home mothers as a result. It was normal for them to farm and take care of their family. Even though women produced the majority of the food, they were abused by their husbands and were left without a voice. Because a few women dared to speak out against their marginalization, human rights advocates took up the cause of women's and girls' rights. Globally, there has been a surge in movements, campaigns, and publications aimed at empowering women and girls (The Citizen, 2021).

Even while it is commonly established that serving boys more and better food than girls has negative nutritional effects, many homes do not view this as discrimination. It's just a means to get males ready

for demanding roles later in life. The foundation of community health program design and implementation is the underpayment of women and girls who provide care for others. (Mhlanga, 2021). The roles are reversed and boy child is experiencing neglect (Isabel, 2020).

Despite the obvious nutritional consequences, many homes do not consider the fact that males are provided more and better food than girls to be discriminatory. It's just a means of getting boys ready for demanding roles in the real world. Community health programs' conception and execution are predicated on the underpayment of women and girls who provide care for others (Mhlanga, 2021). When men turn to drinking, domestic abuse, and extramarital affairs for a combination of power and comfort in order to build their ego, women suffer the brunt of their disappointments (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo and Francis 2006).

About 22 million girls are married against their will; of these, 64% of all girls face the possibility of becoming child brides and are at a heightened risk of being victims of maternal and child mortality (Obaje *et al.*, 2020). It is concerning to see that 44% of females get married before turning 18 (Itumoh, 2020). The early marriage rate has only decreased by 1% in more than thirty years (Mobolaji, Fatusi, and Adedin, 2020). Despite the Child Rights Act's 2003 passage, which forbids marriage for anyone under the age of 18, certain Northern states have not yet put the Act into effect (Mobolaji, Fatusi and Adedin, 2020).

A girl's enrollment in school is heavily influenced by her traditional cultural customs in many nations, Nigeria included. The hierarchy of roles for men and women in rural areas is determined by the patriarchal system (Velez, 2018). One of the main causes of gender inequality is a system that views women as inherently inferior to males (Velez, 2018). It's a widely held misconception that girls should study and take care of household duties at home. Consequently, a lot of parents have a bad opinion of girls attending school (Velez, 2018). This preference stems from the custom that a son will inherit his father's role and provide for his family (Omoregie and Ihensekhien, 2009). Girls have little room for ideas of education and self-actualization because they are frequently brainwashed into such gendered roles (Omoregie and Ihensekhien, 2009). Because of the patrilineal system, which gives the male line inheritance rights, boy children are also frequently given precedence. Because of this, men predominate in Nigerian schools from preschool to tertiary levels (Omoregie and Ihensekhien, 2009).

In addition to the aforementioned misconceptions, parents in some parts of Nigeria are afraid to send their girls to school. This is typical in the Northeast, where the terrorist organization Boko Haram has frequently attacked schools and kidnapped female students. The gang kidnapped 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in Borno state in 2014. Widespread criticism and indignation were generated by this (International Crisis Group, 2018). Borno has been the most severely affected state in Nigeria, with over 512 schools destroyed and several young girls falling into the hands of kidnappers over the years (UNICEF, 2017). These have had a major impact on basic education access, furthermore, girls frequently have to walk a considerable distance to get to school, which increases their vulnerability to gender-based violence such as rape, sexual harassment, and exploitation (World Bank, 2021). Such forms of violence also increase the risk of teenage pregnancy and lead to a further decrease in girls attending school.

The analyses above and many more reasons have led to the increase in the rise of initiatives and programmes for the empowerment of the girl child globally and Nigeria in particular.

Consequences

A surge in young boys engaging in illegal activities such as drug abuse and some even being recruited to peddle these substances on the streets is a sign of policy and societal neglect of the boy child

(Mhlanga, 2021). Another factor contributing to males dropping out of school is the absence of protection and support for them as children. This could suggest that, in contrast to girls, guys receive less help to finish school. According to Ileyemi (2023) of the 1,613,733 admission seekers who sat for the 2023 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) 794,280 were males while 819,453 were females, representing 49.22 per cent and 50.78 per cent respectively.

The vulnerability of boy children has also increased due to community neglect and inadequate legal enforcement. Due to laws and practices defending girls' rights more than those of boys, the situation for boy children has gotten worse. Because these rules exclusively cover sexual harassment committed by male figures, the younger boys also confront the issue of having no legal protection when they fall prey to elder female sex predators. The lads are consequently still at risk from these sexual predators.Male child marginalization shows up as more legal disputes, illiteracy, crime, and low self-esteem among the populace. This has led to violence, truancy and drug abuse. This is the alternative way the boy child has resorted to payback to society. Thus violence has further led to failed marriages, dysfunctional families and gender-based violence, with women's rights being abused no matter what the government does to fight for them (The Star, 2021).

Parents in Nigeria are more worried about their daughters' whereabouts in the evening than they are about their boys. This is predicated on the idea that males are capable of caring for themselves. Boys have become involved in drug misuse and gang membership as a result of this. This demonstrates the degree of hypocrisy in the global and Nigerian societies' pursuit of gender parity (The Star, 2021).

The senseless murders of young men by themselves as a result of cult conflicts and activities support the idea that boys are naturally deviant during their formative years (Oludare, 2023 and Adejobi, 2023). Male youngsters whose hopes have been dashed by a careless society are flooding Nigeria's prisons and other penal facilities (Africa Check, 2023). Because betting destroys a boy child's self, it is a threat that is accepted in Nigeria (Okamgba, 2023). Due to society's neglect of boy child, there is a rise in baby mamas, singlehood, separation, and divorce (Adeojo, Egerson, Meyiwa and Edet, 2021 and Further Africa, 2022). Boy child do not feel empowered to assume their roles as heads of families later in life.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study examined the causes and consequences of the recent emphasis on girl child empowerment in Nigeria amidst neglect of the boy child. The study discovered that there are many empowerment programmes available for the girl child compared to the very minimal ones available to the boy child. The study found that the decades of neglect of the girl child in a patriarchal society has caused the upsurge in girl child empowerment initiatives globally. The study also found that the consequences of the empowerment of the girl child the neglect of the boy child include increase in crime, singlehood, school dropouts, bleak future for present youths, divorce, absentee father, and lack of male role models among others. The study thus concludes that the neglect of the boy child in empowerment programmes while emphasis is on the girl child is a time bomb waiting to explode.

To ameliorate the consequences of the emphases on girl child empowerment while neglecting the boy child, the study made the following recommendations:

To achieve balance, government, business, and social partners should all support comprehensive affirmative action and gender equality programs. Both boy and girl children should have equal protection under the law. Regardless of gender, parents should raise and treat their children equally.

Nigeria government should formulate policies that address specific needs and challenges faced by each gender while ensuring equal opportunities for all. This could include initiatives such as promoting girls' education and empowerment programs while also implementing programs to support boys' education, mental health and vocational training. By addressing the needs of both genders, the government can work towards achieving gender equality and inclusive development.

Men and women should view their positions as vital but not as superior, and every institution should be able to acknowledge each actor's part and provide them with the proper compensation and benefits in order for progress to be seamless and long-lasting.

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Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act 2022 and the Enthronement of Good Governance in Nigeria

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Abstract

The enactment of the Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act 2022 signifies a significant milestone in Nigeria's pursuit of good governance. This study examines the Act's pivotal role in promoting transparency, accountability, and integrity within the country's legal and socio-economic framework. By instituting transparent procedures and mechanisms for recovering illicit gains, the Act serves as a deterrent against corrupt behaviors. Furthermore, the study underscores the government's dedication to combating corruption and rebuilding public trust in its institutions, crucial for fostering good governance. The Act acts as a formidable deterrent against corruption by imposing harsh penalties on individuals engaged in illicit enrichment. This deterrent effect fosters a culture of integrity and ethical conduct across both public and private sectors, thereby fostering an environment conducive to good governance practices. However, this study uncovers challenges in effectively implementing the Act within Nigeria's context, including a cash-centric economy and limited investigative capabilities. Addressing these challenges necessitates collaborative efforts among law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to enhance expertise, allocate adequate resources, and streamline cooperation mechanisms. The research methodology adopted in this article is doctrinal, delving into legal principles and provisions to analyze the Act's implications for fostering good governance in Nigeria.

Keywords: Crime, Proceeds of Crime, Good Governance, Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act 2022, Nigeria

1.0 Introduction

Crime poses a significant challenge globally, particularly in developing nations where conditions such as poverty, unemployment, infringement of basic human rights, oppression, and nepotism are prevalent. This issue spans diverse domains, including politics, economics, religion, finance, agriculture, trade, and even sports, thereby ingraining itself as a pervasive obstacle to societal progress worldwide. Ibietan (2013) believes that crime is a worldwide problem and is not limited to any specific geographical area. (p. 42). In Nigeria, combating corruption stands out as one of the most formidable challenges confronting the nation (Olujobi & Yebisi 2023). Since the 1980s, various governments have endeavored to implement diverse strategies aimed at addressing this challenge by promoting good governance and fostering economic advancement in Nigeria (Olujobi & Yebisi, 2023). In an effort to attain this goal, the Nigerian government enacted several enabling Acts and established anti-graft agencies to enforce the law, with the objective of recovering proceeds of crime to deter corrupt activities and prosecute offenders (Obuah, 2010). The recovery of proceeds of crime serves as an anti-graft tool designed to mitigate the impact of corruption and act as a deterrent for others. According to the Section 20 and 21 of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act of 2004, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004, an individual sentenced under the Act is mandated to forfeit to the Federal Government all possessions and assets that are the subject of an interim order of attachment by the commission. The objective is to prevent individuals convicted of an offense from enjoying the

gains of their criminal activities. This work aims to consider the Proceeds of Crime Act 2022 and how it can enhance good governance in Nigeria

2.0 The Concept of Crime and Good Governance

2.1 Crime

Crime has been interpreted in various ways by different scholars, and there hasn't been a universally accepted definition. Crime, in essence, is a transgression against the societal value system (Omotor, 2009). It is harmful to both the state and society, with the only beneficiaries being the individuals engaging in criminal activities within the community (Rufus, Osimen & Aderemi, 2022). Crime encompasses actions that contravene federal, state, or local laws. When a law is breached, penalties are imposed, which may involve the loss of freedom, property, finances, and in extreme cases, even one's life. William holds the view that crime constitutes a legal wrongdoing, leading to potential criminal proceedings and subsequent punishment (Isiaka & Okaphor 2018). Gledhill (1963) characterized crime as human conduct that the state seeks to deter through the threat of punishment and legal proceedings. Cross and Jones (1972) conveyed the perspective that crime is a legal wrongdoing for which the state takes action to punish the offender.

In recent years, crime has posed a significant challenge to good governance within society. Its repercussions have prompted concerned individuals and government bodies to explore strategies for curtailing various criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, money laundering, oil theft, piracy, human trafficking, and arms trafficking. Organized crime, in particular, represents a grave threat to both national and global development and stability, crossing borders and undermining progress (Rufus, Osimen & Aderemi, 2022). As a result, governments, institutions, academics, and citizens worldwide have demonstrated heightened interest and alarm regarding the proliferation and impact of organized crime in different regions.

2.2 Good Governance

The concept of 'good governance' encompasses political, economic, and social objectives essential for fostering development (Nwogbo & Ighodalo, 2021). It entails the effective management of public affairs and resources by public institutions in a manner that upholds the rule of law and safeguards human rights across various dimension. Good governance involves the responsible exercise of political authority to administer national affairs (Marvelous & Monday, 2016). Its implementation relies on the presence of a robust democratic constitution that enables the government to efficiently govern the state while facilitating citizen participation in governance and ensuring governmental accountability (Nwankwo, 2021). The primary goal of good governance is to enhance service delivery and accountability through the establishment of standards, which can only be realized if the social structure functions effectively for the benefit of society as a whole (Nwankwo, 2021).

In the context of recovering proceeds of crime, the government plays a crucial role in ensuring good governance by enacting legislation aimed at combating corruption in Nigeria. However, merely having laws in place concerning the proceeds of crime is insufficient. If these laws are not effectively implemented or if their effectiveness is compromised due to the abuse of power by government or political entities, their impact is diminished.

Anti-corruption agencies, which operate on behalf of the government, must consistently act in the public interest in accordance with relevant legislation as well as government policies. This requires them to prioritize the welfare of Nigerian citizens and society as a whole, rather than pursuing self-

interest or organizational agendas. Acting in the public interest should lead to favorable outcomes for service users and other stakeholders.

It's important to recognize that the interest of the public encompasses a broad range of values cherished by individuals and society, including rights and entitlements such as property rights, access to governance, economic freedoms, and political empowerment (Nwogbo & Ighodalo, 2021). Therefore, ensuring good governance in the recovery of proceeds of crime involves not only enacting appropriate laws but also ensuring their effective implementation and adherence to principles that serve the best interests of Nigerian citizens and society as a whole.

3.0 State of Affairs on Proceeds of Crime in Nigeria

Proceeds of crime refer to money or assets obtained by individuals through illegal activities. In Nigeria, the recovery of proceeds of crime primarily involves offenses such as corruption, money laundering, drug trafficking, online fraud, and kidnapping, among others. Recovering these proceeds serves as a strategic tool in combating crime, as it deprives criminals of the financial resources needed to sustain their illicit activities. Additionally, it enables compensation or restitution for victims of crime and acts as a deterrent against future occurrences.

However, it is widely acknowledged that the pervasive issue of corruption, characterized by the rampant misappropriation of public funds, continues to hinder Nigeria's social and economic progress (Olujobi, 2021).

The handling of proceeds of crime presents a persistent challenge in Nigeria, as certain perpetrators deliberately conceal their ill-gotten gains by keeping them abroad. This practice makes it considerably challenging for authorities tasked with recovering such proceeds to repatriate them effectively (Chamberlain, 2002).

In 2000, Nigeria took steps to address corruption and the challenges associated with proceeds of crime by establishing two key agencies: the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) (Obuah, 2010). Initially, the ICPC focused on conducting reviews of public systems and investigating and prosecuting reported corrupt practices, while the EFCC was tasked with combating economic and financial crimes, including money laundering and proceeds of crime.

The creation of the EFCC aimed to enhance efforts in preventing, prosecuting, and investigating various financial and economic offenses within the region. However, despite these initiatives, individuals elected to powerful political positions often possess a greater understanding of legal loopholes and have been accused of exploiting their authority for personal gain, contributing to instances of corruption.

Efforts to combat corruption in Nigeria have encompassed a variety of strategies, ranging from legislative initiatives to personal campaigns undertaken by government officials, although the latter are often perceived as primarily aimed at enhancing reputation rather than effecting substantive change (Nwankwo, 2021). Legislative measures aimed at tightening anti-corruption laws have included the enactment of key statutes such as the Banks and Other Financial Institutions Act (1991), the Financial Malpractices in Banks Act (1994), the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act (1995), and the Nigerian Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act (2000), among others.

The primary perpetrators of corruption in the country are believed to be individuals seeking political office, public officials, and government representatives elected to various positions of authority (Aluko & Bagheri, 2012).

Regarding the challenges of money laundering and financial crime in Nigeria, Nwagbara (2010) sought to identify the underlying causes and effective strategies for mitigating crime and instability. He emphasized the critical need for ethical leadership models to be embedded within both government and organizations. Nwagbara (2010) pointed out that recent global corporate scandals, banking frauds, and instances of financial mismanagement, involving prominent institutional failures, have underscored the importance of corporate governance and ethical leadership within the banking sector. He highlighted how these alarming occurrences have sparked debates regarding the effectiveness of corporate governance frameworks in regulating the conduct of corporations, banks, and financial institutions, serving as a mechanism to curb their excesses (Nwagbara, 2012).

Aluko and Bagheri's (2012) research on money laundering trends in Nigeria confirms that money laundering, as part of financial and economic crimes, has significantly contributed to political instability and economic complexities. Aluko (2012) goes on to assert that corruption stands out as the foremost scourge afflicting the national society. The pervasive nature of corruption is such that a majority of citizens can be characterized as corrupt in varying degrees. This widespread corruption has led to a state of disorder within the nation, resulting in many social institutions adopting unethical practices.

Despite Nigeria's extensive efforts to combat corruption, it remains one of the most corrupt nations, Ezeoha (2009) contends that the leadership structure in Nigeria offers ample opportunities for corruption, perpetuating a culture of corruption. Criticisms of national leadership range from being weak and compromised to broken and overall failed. The country is accused of consistently compromising its financial industry, while corporate governance practices are also criticized for being inadequate.

Nigeria places significant emphasis on combating corruption but often neglects addressing the economic and public damage it causes. Corrective justice is essential for the recovery and management of proceeds of crime. This includes compensating victims of corruption, funding anti-corruption institutions, and investing in public projects beneficial to Nigerians, all aimed at rectifying the harm caused by corruption and maintaining the value of assets (Olujobi, 2021). However, there are instances where anti-corruption agencies lack the capacity to effectively manage and preserve such assets. The EFCC frequently appoints various asset directors to oversee saved assets. The process of tracking, seizing, and repatriating stolen assets to Nigeria is often challenging and lengthy, particularly when dealing with multiple jurisdictions and facing procedural, legal, or political obstacles. Therefore, Nigeria should consider establishing specific provisions for the administration of proceeds of corruption under its anti-corruption legislation.

4.0 Agencies Combating Proceeds of Crime in Nigeria

The government of Nigeria has established several agencies to address the issue of proceeds of crime in the country. These agencies are tasked with investigating, prosecuting, and preventing financial crimes and money laundering activities. Some of the key agencies involved include:

4.1 Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC): Established in 2003, the EFCC is Nigeria's primary anti-corruption agency responsible for investigating and prosecuting economic and financial crimes. This includes offenses such as fraud, bribery, money laundering, and embezzlement of public funds. The EFCC is specifically tasked with addressing economic and financial crimes, supported by the legal framework provided by the EFCC Act of 2004, granting it the authority to investigate and prosecute such offenses (s.13-25). Despite pursuing numerous high-profile cases involving political figures since its inception, the agency has secured only a limited number of

convictions. Notably, the EFCC has been known to promote plea bargains, wherein offenders offer a portion of embezzled funds in exchange for leniency. This suggests that the EFCC has not fully realized its objective of effectively prosecuting perpetrators, potentially influenced by political pressures emanating from government circles (Alamu, 2016).

4.2 Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC): The ICPC was established in 2000 to combat corruption in the public sector. It investigates and prosecutes cases of corruption, abuse of office, and related offenses committed by public officials and private individuals. The primary objective of the ICPC is to prevent and penalize corrupt practices and related offenses. Established under the ICPC Act of 2000, the commission's duties, as outlined in Section 6 of the Act, include receiving and investigating complaints of corrupt practices from the public, scrutinizing the practices of public bodies to identify and address corruption, providing guidance to government agencies on minimizing corruption, advising public body heads on procedural changes to deter corruption, educating the public on bribery and corruption, and mobilizing public support against corruption.

However, ICPC has faced criticism for its perceived ineffectiveness. While the commission has been active in receiving and investigating complaints, it has been less successful in ensuring justice for offenders. Many individuals accused of corrupt practices are charged but not adequately prosecuted, leading to a lack of accountability. Furthermore, ICPC has struggled to fulfill its other objectives, which are believed to be hindered by insufficient funding from the government.

4.3 Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU): The NFIU was established as an autonomous unit within the EFCC in 2004 and later became independent in 2018. It is responsible for gathering, analyzing, and disseminating financial intelligence to relevant law enforcement and regulatory agencies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing activities.

4.4 Nigerian Customs Service (NCS): The NCS is responsible for enforcing customs and excise laws, including the prevention and detection of smuggling and illicit cross-border financial transactions that could involve proceeds of crime.

4.5 Nigeria Police Force (NPF): While not specifically focused on financial crimes, the Nigeria Police Force plays a crucial role in investigating and prosecuting various criminal activities, including those related to the proceeds of crime.

4.6 The Judiciary: The judicial authority of the federation is vested in the courts as established by Section 6(1) of the CFRN. These courts possess the jurisdiction to resolve disputes between individuals and between individuals and the government, as well as to interpret the constitution. Ultimately, the decisions rendered by the courts, particularly the Supreme Court, are definitive and obligatory for all authorities. The Judiciary, particularly in cases of legal conflict, plays a crucial role in interpreting the various statutes governing the anti-corruption efforts. All levels of courts are engaged in enforcing anti-corruption laws, as they preside over trials of suspected offenders, which may result in convictions.

5.0 Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act 2022 and its Prospects

In an effort to address some of the aforementioned concerns, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria assented to the Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Bill on May 12, 2022. The Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act, 2022 (herein after referred to as PCA 2022) represents a significant legislative milestone in Nigeria. It is a comprehensive law that outlines

procedures for the seizure, confiscation, forfeiture, and management of properties obtained through unlawful activities.

5.1 Structure of the Act

The Act is structurally divided into 12 parts and 83 sections. The objectives of the PCA 2022 include providing an effective legal and institutional framework for the recovery and management of proceeds of crime, confiscation and forfeiture of property, strengthening criminal confiscation procedures, collaboration among relevant organizations, and provisions for the handover, management, and disposal of forfeited properties (PCA 2022, s.1).

The Act is specifically applicable to the detection, investigation, and recovery of assets and proceeds of unlawful activity, court orders to support recovery and preservation, confiscation orders, management of recovered assets, and training and certification of relevant personnel.

5.2 Prospects of the PCA 2022

The Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act 2022 in Nigeria presents several promising prospects for addressing the challenges related to the recovery and management of proceeds of crime in the country, some of which includes the following:

5.2.1. Enhanced Legal Framework: The legislation furnishes a thorough legal structure governing the seizure, confiscation, forfeiture, and administration of assets obtained through illicit means. This precision and detail in the law can enhance the efficacy of anti-corruption endeavors. Furthermore, the Act encompasses key legal provisions that support the fulfillment of its goals. These include; clarification of the burden of proof; procedures for staying legal proceedings; harmonization of the Act with other existing laws; limitations on executing judgments; requirements for providing pre-action notices; provision of indemnification for officers involved in implementing the Act.

5.2.2 Non-Conviction Based Recovery: The inclusion of provisions for non-conviction based recovery of proceeds of crime enables authorities to seize assets even in cases where securing criminal convictions proves challenging. This capability significantly bolsters the state's capacity to combat corruption and financial crimes. Internationally, non-conviction-based recovery is recognized as a crucial tool for seizing proceeds of corruption, allowing for the seizure and forfeiture of stolen assets without the necessity of a criminal conviction (Greenberg, 2009). This approach becomes essential in situations where the wrongdoer is deceased, has fled the jurisdiction, or is immune from prosecution. This aligns with Article 54(1)(c) of the United Nations Convention against Corruption(UNCC), which suggests that countries should consider measures to allow confiscation of such property without a criminal conviction in cases where prosecution is not feasible due to reasons such as death, flight, absence, or other appropriate circumstances (UNCC, 2005).

One of the Act's most contentious provisions stipulates that the validity of a forfeiture will not be influenced by the outcome of criminal proceedings or investigations related to an offense with which the property in question may be associated (CFRN 1999, s.44). Essentially, property suspected to be proceeds of crime and seized through non-conviction-based proceedings will continue to be confiscated even if the accused person is acquitted of the offense through which they allegedly acquired the property. Whether the courts will deem this practice compatible with constitutional protections of property rights is yet to be determined (CFRN 1999, s.35(8)).

5.2.3. Improved Cooperation and Collaboration: The Act underscores the importance of cooperation and collaboration among relevant organizations and other entities engaged in anti-corruption endeavors. This concerted effort can lead to improved coordination of resources and actions,

thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of anti-corruption measures. Furthermore, the Act defines 'Relevant Organization' to encompass a wide array of entities, including but not limited to the EFCC, Nigeria Police Force, Armed Forces, Department of State Services, Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission, among others.

Fundamentally, the Act confers authority upon the Relevant Organization to take action and make significant determinations concerning controlled property. Under this provision, the Act empowers the Relevant Organization to exercise the rights associated with any controlled property, including shares, securities, stocks, bonds, or debentures (PCA 2022, s. 4(b), 60 and 61).

5.2.4. Strengthened Investigative Powers: The Act, by outlining explicit provisions regarding the investigation, search, and seizure of property, bestows upon law enforcement agencies enhanced authority to conduct more efficient investigations and prosecutions of corruption and financial crimes. This capability can serve to bolster deterrence and accountability among potential offenders. Moreover, the Act delineates four distinct types of investigations that the Relevant Organization may undertake which includes; civil forfeiture investigation, confiscation investigation, detained cash investigation and civil recovery investigation (PCA 2022, s.64(3)).

Furthermore, the Act criminalizes certain actions that could undermine an investigation or search, such as falsifying, concealing, or destroying documents (PCA 2022, s. 55(2) and 57).

5.2.5. Transparent Management of Confiscated Assets: The establishment of procedures for the creation, disbursement, and auditing of confiscated and forfeited properties account serves to promote transparency and accountability in the management of recovered assets. This framework helps prevent mismanagement and ensures that seized assets are utilized appropriately for the public good. Moreover, the Act facilitates the confiscation of proceeds from the criminal activities of convicted individuals through confiscation proceedings against them (PCA 2022, s.33). This measure aims to prevent convicted persons from benefiting from their criminal acts by establishing an effective process for calculating and confiscating the total proceeds of their criminal activities.

5.2.6 Recovery of Cash
The Act authorizes a designated officer (PCA 2022, s. 26(2)(b)) to seize and detain any cash in the process of being moved within or outside Nigeria, if the designated officer has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the cash represents proceeds of unlawful activity, is intended to be an instrumentality of an offence, or exceeds the prescribed amount under the law and has not been declared to the appropriate authorities (PCA 2022, s.26(1)). Remarkably, the Act defines "cash" to include "jewelries and gold"(PCA 2022, s.26(2)(a)), thus extending the application of the Money Laundering Act, 2022, under which the requirement to declare relates only to cash and negotiable instruments. The "prescribed amount" remains USD10,000 or its equivalent (MLA 2022, s.3(3)).

Overall, the Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act 2022 holds significant promise for strengthening Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts and promoting transparency, accountability, and the rule of law in the country. However, its success will ultimately depend on effective implementation, enforcement, and ongoing efforts to address any challenges or shortcomings in its application.

6.0 The Proceeds of Crime Act 2022 and The Enthronement of Good Governance

The Proceeds of Crime Act 2022 plays a pivotal role in promoting good governance in Nigeria through several key mechanisms:

6.1. Enhanced Accountability and Transparency: The Act provides a robust legal framework for tracing, freezing, and confiscating proceeds of crime, particularly those obtained through corrupt

practices. By establishing clear procedures and mechanisms for recovering illicit assets, the Act strengthens accountability and transparency in financial transactions. This transparency helps deter corruption by making it more difficult for individuals to conceal or launder ill-gotten gains. The Act fosters transparency by ensuring that ill-gotten gains are seized and forfeited. This helps to restore public trust in institutions and reinforces the integrity of the government's efforts to combat corruption. When citizens see that action is being taken to recover stolen assets, they are more likely to believe in the sincerity of the government's commitment to good governance.

6.2. Effective Deterrence against Corruption: The Act serves as a powerful deterrent against corruption by imposing severe penalties for individuals found guilty of engaging in corrupt activities. It sends a clear message that illicit enrichment will not be tolerated, thereby discouraging corrupt practices among public officials and private individuals. Knowing that their assets can be seized and confiscated under the Act, corrupt individuals are less likely to engage in corrupt practices, thereby fostering a culture of integrity and ethical behavior within the public and private sectors. When individuals know that there are serious consequences for engaging in corrupt activities, they are less likely to engage in such behavior. This deterrence effect helps to create a culture of compliance with ethical standards and legal norms, thereby promoting good governance practices.

6.3. Recovery of Stolen Assets: The Act facilitates the recovery of stolen assets, both domestically and internationally. This includes assets held abroad by corrupt individuals or entities. By enabling the Nigerian government to repatriate stolen assets, the Act helps replenish public coffers, which can then be used for development projects and public services. The recovery of stolen assets also sends a strong message that corruption will not be tolerated and that perpetrators will face consequences for their actions.

6.4. Strengthening Law Enforcement and Judicial Capacity: The Act provides support for law enforcement agencies and the judiciary by equipping them with the necessary tools and resources to effectively investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate cases related to proceeds of crime. This includes training programs, capacity-building initiatives, and the establishment of specialized units dedicated to combating financial crimes. By strengthening the capacity of law enforcement and judicial institutions, the Act helps ensure that perpetrators of corruption are brought to justice and held accountable for their actions. The Act contributes to strengthening Nigeria's legal framework for combating financial crimes. By providing clear procedures for the seizure, forfeiture, and management of recovered assets, it improves the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies and the judicial system in prosecuting offenders. A well-functioning legal framework is essential for promoting the rule of law and ensuring equal access to justice for all citizens.

6.5. Promotion of International Cooperation: The Act promotes international cooperation and collaboration in the fight against corruption and organized crime. It establishes mechanisms for sharing information, exchanging intelligence, and coordinating efforts with foreign law enforcement agencies and international organizations. This international cooperation is crucial for combating transnational corruption and recovering stolen assets that may be hidden abroad. Implementing robust legislation like the Proceeds of Crime Act 2022 demonstrates Nigeria's commitment to combating financial crimes and upholding international standards of governance. This can enhance the country's reputation on the global stage and facilitate cooperation with other nations in the fight against transnational crime. Strong international partnerships can also provide technical assistance and support for capacity building in anti-corruption efforts.

6.6. Resource Mobilization for Development: Recovered proceeds of crime can be channeled back into development projects and public services, thereby contributing to socioeconomic development.

This can include investments in infrastructure, healthcare, education, and poverty alleviation programs. By redirecting illicit funds towards public goods, the Act helps to promote the welfare of citizens and address systemic inequalities.

Overall, the Proceeds of Crime Act 2022 serves as a linchpin in Nigeria's journey towards good governance, addressing corruption, promoting transparency and accountability, recovering stolen assets, strengthening law enforcement and judicial capabilities, fostering international cooperation, and mobilizing resources for sustainable development. By tackling the root causes of corruption and nurturing an environment conducive to ethical behavior and the rule of law, the Act lays the groundwork for facilitating prosperity in Nigeria.

7.0 Challenges and Recommendations on Improving the Efficacy of the PCA, 2022

The challenge in recovering proceeds of crime lies not solely in the legal framework itself, but rather in the effective and timely administration of justice, as well as the implementation and efficiency of the organizational structures responsible for enforcing the law (Liusha, & Alsaedi, 2020).

One significant issue is the low budget allocation to agencies tasked with recovering proceeds of crime, which hampers efforts in tracing, freezing, and recovering corrupt funds in Nigeria. The insufficient resources for investigating proceeds of crime pose a critical problem for Nigeria's anti-corruption agencies. This is especially true in cases where the assets are located abroad, as it entails high costs for hiring foreign lawyers, difficulties in prosecution, and maintaining frozen assets both domestically and internationally. The Federal Government should consider increasing budget allocations to these agencies to enhance their capacity for investigating corruption and recovering illicit proceeds. Furthermore, allowing these agencies to retain a specific portion of recovered proceeds for their investigative activities is also recommended (Ikpeze & Ofodile, 2022).

Accessing bank records of suspects during investigations in foreign jurisdictions is often challenging due to bank confidentiality regulations. Some countries refuse mutual legal assistance in proceeds of crime cases based on these confidentiality regulations, despite provisions in the United Nations Convention against Corruption prohibiting such refusals. Fast-track procedures should be established to enable anti-graft agencies to acquire bank records of suspects without the need for a court order, thereby streamlining the process and reducing bureaucratic delays (Ikpeze & Ofodile, 2023) (Okpara & Kalu, 2020).

There is also a lack of access to national databases by anti-graft agencies in Nigeria. Direct access to government repositories, such as immigration and the Corporate Affairs Commission, without formal requests would facilitate more efficient investigations. In countries like the United Kingdom and the United States, anti-graft agencies have direct access to centralized government databases without requiring a warrant. Uninterrupted access to government records without a court order would expedite the identification and tracking of corruption proceeds in Nigeria (Kaniki, 2022).

Plea bargaining is another issue to consider. While it can lead to speedier verdicts and the recovery of proceeds of crime, it may not be appropriate for serious corruption cases involving substantial amounts of money. Offenders should still face punishment, even if they agree to forfeit proceeds of crime through plea bargaining. The deterrent effect of plea bargaining is questionable when offenders avoid punishment after relinquishing ill-gotten gains (Ozuru & Nwajah, 2020).

Nigeria's anti-corruption agencies face challenges in investigating and prosecuting corruption suspects with dual citizenship, as they may flee to countries where they hold citizenship. Strict enforcement of provisions in the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which prohibit double corruption

from impeding cooperation between nations in recovering proceeds of corruption and other crimes, is necessary to address this issue (Sihite & Mustofa, 2021)

8.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has made a significant contribution by examining the Proceeds of Crime Act (PCA) 2022 and shedding light on the legal complexities and obstacles Nigeria faces in reclaiming proceeds of crime, thereby impeding the prospects of good governance. The recovery of illicit gains hinges on evidence, requiring the tracing of assets to their ultimate destination and establishing a causal link between the assets and criminal activities. This process is intricate, technical, and time-consuming, presenting distinct challenges for developing nations like Nigeria, characterized by a cash-centric economy and limited investigative capabilities. Illegally acquired assets are often obscured through various accounts and corporate entities, necessitating expertise, resources, and collaboration among multiple intelligence and law enforcement agencies, as well as prosecutors, for successful identification and tracing. In addition to existing legislation, such as the PCA 2002, effective collaboration between law enforcement agencies and prosecutors is vital to constructing robust cases consistently. To foster good governance under the current administration, governmental departments, agencies, and public officials at both federal and state levels must demonstrate transparency in their operations and engage stakeholders comprehensively, particularly in anti-corruption efforts and asset recovery. Essentially, anti-corruption agencies should prioritize transparency to ensure public trust in their actions at all times.

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Human Security as Driver of National Development: A Case for Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper explores the imperative of human security in shaping national development in Nigeria, providing insight into the imperative for strong human security. The paper employed thematic and contextual analyses to drive its objective, which is to underscore the imperative of human security for both human and state development in Nigeria's challenged geographical space. The paper delves into the seven dimensions of human security, elucidated by the United Nations Development Program. The interconnectedness of human security and national development is evident in education, gender equality, and social inclusion. The paper concludes by highlighting opportunities and policy implications for enhancing human security in Nigeria. Recommendations encompass economic diversification, job creation, healthcare strengthening, environmental sustainability, good governance, anti-corruption measures, inclusive education, and social inclusion.

Keywords: Human security, National development, Driver, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Human security has gained prominence as a pivotal framework in understanding the multifaceted challenges faced by individuals and societies. Human security diverges from conventional state-centric approaches, focusing on safeguarding individuals from various threats and fostering an environment conducive to personal well-being. In the context of Nigeria, a country marked by diverse socio-economic complexities, assessing the impact of human security on both national and social development becomes a critical endeavour. Human security, as articulated by the Commission on Human Security (CHS), is the protection of the vital core of human lives to enhance human freedoms and fulfilment (Adedoyin, 2013). This paradigm shift places individuals at the centre of security considerations, moving beyond traditional notions that prioritize state security. The belief underlying human security is that threats to individuals can have profound consequences on peace, stability, and development within and among states (Muyiwa, 2016).

Nigeria, as the most populous country in Africa, grapples with a spectrum of challenges that directly impact human security and, consequently, national and social development. Economic security concerns are characterized by issues such as persistent unemployment, economic inequality, and over-reliance on oil revenues (World Bank, 2020). These challenges pose significant threats to economic stability and social cohesion. In the realm of health security, Nigeria faces the daunting challenge of infectious diseases, including malaria, tuberculosis, and more recently, the global COVID-19 pandemic (WHO, 2020). The inadequacy of healthcare infrastructure further compounds health security concerns, limiting access to quality healthcare services (World Bank, 2018). Maternal and child health indicators in Nigeria reflect persistent challenges, hindering the full potential contribution

of women and children to the nation's socio-economic development (NPC & ICF, 2019). Environmental security in Nigeria is threatened by factors such as environmental degradation, climate change, and inadequate natural resource management (Oluwafemi, 2017). These challenges impact ecosystems, biodiversity, and the livelihoods of communities, posing significant risks to both the environment and human security.

Political security challenges, including corruption, ethnic tensions, and governance issues, present obstacles to political stability and hinder comprehensive development (Transparency International, 2021; Freedom House, 2021). Corruption, in particular, undermines public trust, erodes state resources, and poses a threat to political security. The intertwining of human security and social development is evident in dimensions such as education, gender equality, and social inclusion. Access to quality education is crucial for individual development and societal progress (UNESCO, 2020). Promoting gender equality through increased access to education for girls and women is fundamental for social development (UN Women, 2020). Additionally, social inclusion initiatives address ethnic and regional divides, contributing to societal stability (Onuoha, 2018).

While individual dimensions of human security in Nigeria have been extensively studied, there is a notable gap in research that comprehensively explores the collective impact of human security on both national and social development. Understanding the intricate interplay between economic, health, environmental, political, and social dimensions is essential for formulating effective policies and interventions. This paper seeks to address this research gap by conducting a case study that delves into the imperative analysis of human security on national and social development, using Nigeria as a focus point. The findings are expected to provide nuanced insights that can guide evidence-based policy decisions, contributing to a more secure and prosperous future for the nation. The paper discusses the seven dimensions of human security as outlined by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP): economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security. These dimensions serve as a framework for understanding the diverse challenges faced by individuals and communities. The rest of the paper is in four sections. Section 2 clarifies the concept of human security with focus on the UNDP dimensions and section 3 comprises conclusion while section 4 makes recommendations.

2.1. Clarification of Human Security

The concept of human security emanates from conventional security studies which centre on the security of the state. Its focus is individuals and its ultimate endpoint is the protection of people from traditional and non-traditional threats (Muyiwa, 2016). The Centre of this concept is the belief that human security deprivations can undercut peace and stability within and among states. The Commission on Human Security (CHS) in one of its works defines human security as:

> *The ability to protect the vital core of all human lives in such a way that it enhances human freedoms and human fulfilment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from serious and persistent threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity (Adedoyin, 2013:125).*

It is important to state that human security covers every area of human needs. This is why it serves as the basis of all forms and categories of security. Hubert gives the importance of the concept when he asserts that:

> *In essence, human security means the safety of people from violent and non - violent threats. It is a condition of being characterized by freedom from pervasive threat to people's rights, their ability or even their lives. It is an alternative way of seeing the world taking people as its point of reference rather than focusing exclusively on the security of the territory or government. Like other security concepts - national security, economic security, and food security - it is all about protection (Hubert, 1999:3).*

Since human security gives primacy to human beings and their complex social and economic interactions, it derives its convincing quality from the fact that is based on global concern and threats to human security are no longer secluded issues. It is pertinent to state that threats to human security are very easy to manage if preventive measures are taken at an appropriate time before it advances to a devastating state (Muyiwa, 2016).

2.2. National Development and Human Security

National development is encompassing and inclusive of the application of all forms of resources to create a positive change in the lives of people such that they can experience a good quality of life. In essence, the United Nations Development Program articulation of seven dimensions of human security succinctly captures the practical notion of national development even though it is from the human security perspective. National development is neither feasible nor sustainable without the security of lives and property.

Economic Security: This type of security requires an assured basic income for individuals mostly from productive and remunerative work or from a publicly financed safety net. In this sense, only about a quarter of the world's people are presently economically secure and the economic security problem may be more serious in third world countries. Major threats to economic security are poverty, unemployment, indebtedness, lack of income. It is germane to state that the aforementioned threats constitute pertinent factors causing political tensions and other forms of violence in developing countries (Muyiwa, 2016).

Food Security: Food security demands that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food. Major threats to this include hunger, famines and the lack of physical and economic access to basic food. Though United Nations maintain that the overall availability of food is not a problem; rather the problem often is the poor distribution of food and lack of money/purchasing power. In the past, food security problems have been dealt with at both national and global levels. However, their impacts are limited. According to the UN, the key is to tackle the problems relating to access to assets, work and assured income (related to economic security) (Muyiwa, 2016).

Environmental Security: The primary goal of this is to protect people from the short and long-term ravages of nature, man-made threats in nature, and deterioration of the natural environment. In third world countries, lack of access to clean water resources is one of the greatest environmental threats while the major threats in industrial countries are air pollution and global warming which are caused by the emission of greenhouse gases. Again, environmental degradation, natural disasters and resource depletion are general all over the world (Muyiwa, 2016).

Personal Security: This is all about the protection of individuals and people from physical violence either from the state or outside the state. It could be from violent individuals, sub-state actors and domestic abuse. Hence, the greater and the common threat to personal security from the state (torture), other states (war), groups of people (ethnic tension), individuals or gangs (crime), industrial, workplace or traffic accidents. The security threats and risks on persons and often families are many and vary from place to place and also from time to time. These include theft, armed robbery, burglary, food poisoning, electrocution, fire outbreak, home accident and a host of others (Muyiwa, 2016).

Community Security: Community security aims to protect people from the loss of traditional relationships, values, sectarian and ethnic violence. Traditional communities, particularly minority ethnic groups are often threatened. About half of the world's states have experienced some inter-ethnic rivalry. Threats to community security are usually from the group (oppressive practices), between groups (ethnic violence), from dominant groups (e.g., indigenous people's vulnerability). In 1993, the United Nations declared the Year of Indigenous People to highlight the continuing vulnerability of about 300 million aboriginal people in seventy countries as they face a widening spiral of violence. In Africa, many nation-states have witnessed ethnic clashes, land and boundary clashes, and intra-religious and inter-religious conflict all of which constitute threats (Muyiwa, 2016).

Political Security: This embraces the guarantee and protection of fundamental human rights of the citizenry. It is concerned with whether people live in a society that honours their basic freedoms. Some of the threats attached to these are political or state repression, including torture, disappearance, human rights violations, detention and imprisonment. The assessment of Amnesty International reveals that political repression, systematic torture, ill-treatment, hostage-taking and kidnapping are still being practised in about One Hundred and ten (110) countries. Human rights violations are frequent during periods of political unrest and by security agencies in third world countries (UNDP, 1994, Muyiwa, 2016).

2.2.3. Environmental Security and National Development in Nigeria

Environmental security is increasingly recognized as a vital component of national development, influencing various aspects of socio-economic well-being. Come of the environmental security challenges that possess a threat to the national development of Nigeria includes environmental degradation, climate change, and natural resource management. Nigeria faces significant challenges of environmental degradation, including deforestation, soil erosion, and pollution from industrial activities (Oluwafemi, 2017). These issues impact ecosystems, biodiversity, and the livelihoods of communities, posing threats to environmental security. The impacts of climate change, including erratic rainfall patterns, rising temperatures, and increased frequency of extreme weather events, pose substantial risks to agriculture, water resources, and infrastructure in Nigeria (Oluwafemi, 2017). Climate-related challenges exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and contribute to environmental insecurity. Furthermore, issues related to unsustainable natural resource exploitation, particularly in the oil and gas sector, contribute to environmental degradation and social conflicts (Oluwafemi, 2017; World Bank, 2019). Moreso, the challenge of poor natural resource management undermines the potential benefits of these resources for national development.

2.2.4. Political Security and National Development in Nigeria

Political security is a critical factor in shaping national development, influencing governance, stability, and the overall socio-economic progress of a nation. In Nigeria, a comprehensive analysis of political

security is imperative due to challenges related to corruption, ethnic tensions, and governance issues. Some of the challenges of political security challenges in Nigeria includes corruption, ethnic tensions, and governance issues. Corruption remains a pervasive challenge in Nigeria, impacting political institutions and hindering effective governance (Transparency International, 2021). Political corruption undermines public trust, erodes state resources, and poses a threat to political security.

Ethnic and regional tensions persist in Nigeria, with implications for political stability (Onuoha, 2018). Ethnic-based conflicts, if not addressed, can disrupt governance, impede development, and pose challenges to political security. Challenges related to governance, including ineffective public administration and insufficient rule of law, contribute to political insecurity in Nigeria (Freedom House, 2021). Weak governance structures can hinder the implementation of development policies and programs.

3. Conclusion

The concept of human security, shifting the focus from the traditional state-centric securityapproach to individual well-being, has profound implications for national and social development in Nigeria. Recognizing the interconnectedness of various dimensions of human security, including economic, health, environmental, political, and social security, is crucial for formulating comprehensive policies. The Commission on Human Security emphasizes the importance of protecting the vital core of all human lives to enhance human freedoms and fulfilment (Adedoyin, 2013). Human security, covering every area of human needs, serves as the foundation for all forms and categories of security (Hubert, 1999).

The seven dimensions of human security outlined by the UNDP provide a framework for understanding the challenges faced by individuals and communities in Nigeria. Economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security collectively shape the nation's development trajectory. In each dimension, Nigeria faces unique challenges that, if left unaddressed, can impede progress and stability.Economic security challenges, including unemployment, economic inequality, and oil dependency, demand strategic interventions for sustainable economic growth. Health security issues, such as infectious diseases, healthcare infrastructure deficits, and maternal and child health concerns, underscore the need for a robust healthcare system. Environmental security challenges, encompassing environmental degradation, climate change, and natural resource mismanagement, require urgent attention to ensure sustainable development. Political security challenges, including corruption, ethnic tensions, and governance issues, call for strengthened institutions and good governance practices.

The opportunities and policy implications of enhancing human security are vast. Economic policies promoting inclusive growth, healthcare policies focusing on disease prevention, environmental policies ensuring sustainable resource management, anti-corruption measures, and inclusive social development policies are essential. These policies, when implemented cohesively, can create a foundation for a resilient and prosperous future in Nigeria.

4. Recommendations

On the premise of the conclusions arrived at, the paper holds the position that Nigeria can navigate the challenges posed by human security dimensions and pave the way for sustainable national and social development by prioritizing the following policy recommendations:Economic agencies can, on the order of government, implement policies that diversify the economy, promote small and medium

enterprises (SMEs), and create job opportunities, particularly for the youth.Investment in healthcare infrastructure, disease prevention programs, and maternal and child health services is critical to ensure a healthy and productive population. For this reason, government all levels need to prioritise investment in healthcare to strengthen the sector.

There is need to develop and implement policies for sustainable resource management, renewable energy adoption, and climate change mitigation to address environmental challenges. There are appropriate regulatory bodies in Nigeria to handle these lines of action. However, political will and financial resources are required to activate these responsibilities.

Poor governance and corruption are issues which strong anti-corruption measures can address in Nigeria. But these can only be effectively addressed with strong institutions. Consequently, anti-corruption laws and personnel discipline should be enforced to improve transparency and enhance both political stability and trust in the country. Furthermore, inclusive education and social inclusion could be broadened to redress gender disparities, and foster society empowerment.

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Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Nigerian Students in the Republic of Benin: A Study of Bestower International University, Seme Kpodji

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of social media on the mental health of youths, particularly focusing on students at Bestower International University, Seme Kpodji, Republic of Benin, with additional attention to Nigerian students. The research addresses four main questions: (1) What are the prevalent patterns of social media usage among students? (2) What is the current mental health status of these students? (3) Is there a statistically significant correlation between social media usage patterns and mental health outcomes among Nigerian students? (4) What potential moderating or mediating factors exist in the relationship between social media use and mental health outcomes? Utilizing snowball sampling, the study delves into the social cognitive theory, uses and gratification theory, and technological determinism theory to frame its investigation. The findings highlight a pervasive trend of frequent social media usage among students, emphasizing its significant influence on their mental health. Consequently, the study advocates for targeted interventions, such as mental health support services and initiatives promoting positive online environments. Recommendations stemming from the study include initiatives to promote digital well-being, enhance existing support services, and foster positive online environments conducive to mental health. Addressing these issues is crucial for safeguarding the mental well-being of youths in an increasingly digital world.

Keywords: Impact, Mental health, Social media, Nigerian Students

Introduction

The pervasive use of social media has transformed the communication landscape, especially among the youth demographic. With the advent of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, social media has become an integral part of daily life, offering avenues for social interaction, information sharing, and self-expression. However, concerns have arisen regarding its potential impact on mental health, particularly among young individuals (Mayo Clinic, 2022). The mental health of youths is a critical aspect of their overall well-being, influencing academic performance, interpersonal relationships, and prospects (World Health Organization, 2020). Understanding the relationship between social media usage and mental health is paramount, especially in Nigeria, where a significant portion of the population comprises young individuals.

Social media refers to online platforms and technologies that enable users to create, share, and interact with content in a digital environment (Obar & Wildman, 2015; Ortiz-Ospina, 2019; Ben-Lutkevich, 2023). Initially introduced in 1994 within a digital media setting in Tokyo, known as Matisse (Bercovici, 2010), social media has witnessed a significant surge in both platforms and users over time, establishing it as one of the most crucial applications of the Internet (Aichner et al., 2021). From early text-based platforms to today's multimedia-rich environments, social media has evolved into an integral aspect of daily life, profoundly influencing how individuals connect and disseminate information (Kapoor et al., 2017).

Social media serves as a powerful tool for communication, allowing users to connect with others irrespective of geographical boundaries and share information rapidly (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2022). Despite its positive aspects, concerns have emerged regarding its potential negative impacts on mental health, especially among youth. Issues such as cyberbullying, social comparison, and excessive use have raised questions about potential negative consequences (Ágnes & Marc, 2023; Vítor & Alessandra, 2023; Open Access, 2023). Additionally, the use of social media before bedtime has been found to impair sleep quality, further affecting mental and physical health (Young et al., 2023). It is crucial to promote mindful and healthy use of social media to protect the well-being of individuals (Falimu, 2023).

While social media can enhance connection and self-esteem, it is essential to be aware of its potential negative impacts and strive for a balanced approach to its use. Further research is needed to understand the complex relationship between social media use and mental health outcomes, particularly among Nigerian youths. Limited research has focused on this demographic, especially within the university setting. This study seeks to fill that gap by providing context-specific insights and recommendations, particularly focusing on students at Bestower International University, Seme Kpodji, the Republic of Benin

Statement of the Problem

Despite the widespread use of social media, there is a dearth of research specifically examining its impact on the mental health of Nigerian youths, particularly university students. The concern arises from the increasing reports of mental health challenges among young people globally and the potential role that social media may play in exacerbating or alleviating these issues. To address this gap in the literature, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between social media use and the mental health status of students at Bestower International University, Seme Kpodji, the Republic of Benin.

Research Objectives: The measurable objectives of this study are as follows:

5To examine the patterns and extent of social media usage among Nigerian students at Bestower International University, Seme Kpodji, the Republic of Benin.

To assess the mental health status of these students.

To analyze the potential correlations between social media usage patterns and mental health outcomes.

To identify factors that may moderate or mediate the relationship between social media use and mental health outcomes among Nigerian students.

Research Questions

The following questions were addressed:

RQI: What are the prevalent patterns of social media usage among students at Bestower International University, Seme Kpodji, the Republic of Benin?

RQ2: What is the current mental health status of these students?

RQ3: Is there a statistically significant correlation between social media usage patterns and mental health outcomes among Nigerian students?

RQ4: What are the potential moderating or mediating factors in the relationship between social media use and mental health outcomes?

Literature Review

This section focuses on the conceptual, theoretical, and empirical review of related variables.

Conceptual Framework

- **Mental Health**

Mental health encompasses a state of well-being influenced by genetic and cultural factors, leading to sustained pleasure and reward (Nor, Shela, Saleh, 2021). Various stressors like genetic problems, personal issues, financial struggles, and workplace stress affect mental health (Hoyle, Leigh, 2010). Mental health issues can manifest as depression, emotional tension, personality disorders, and suicide risks (Pankajakshan, Vijayanthi, Indu, 2018). Elder abuse and domestic violence also impact mental health within families (Jack, Piachaud, 2007). Poor mental health has economic consequences, including lowered labour force participation and increased healthcare visits, especially among older individuals, women, and those with poor physical health (Christopher, M., Doran, Irina, Kinchin, 2020).

- **Psychological Well-being**

Psychological well-being encompasses emotional stability, resilience, and a positive self-perception (Khalil & El Karoui, 2022; Larisa et al., 2019; Abdonas et al., 2019). It includes indicators such as emotional resilience, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and positive affect (Albertus et al., 2022). Research emphasizes understanding the underlying dimensions of mental well-being, including eudaimonic versus hedonic well-being and existential relatedness versus Epicurean independence (Rumiko, Kakishima, Akashi, 2012). There's a significant association between psychological well-being and reduced mortality, particularly in predicting longevity and cardiovascular health outcomes (G., Adu, Kofi, Nkonkonya, Mpuangnan, 2022).

- **Emotional Regulation**

Emotional regulation involves managing emotions in various contexts and stressors (Yulia, Fitriani, 2023; Mohammed, Yunus, Pankaj, Chaudhary, 2023; Shigeru, Iwakabe, Kaori, Nakamura, Nathan, C., Thoma, 2023). It includes emotional awareness, coping mechanisms, stress management techniques, and healthy emotional expression. Effective emotional regulation is crucial for mental and physical

well-being, with therapists playing a significant role in facilitating patient emotion regulation through various methods.

- **Stress and Coping**

Stress results from individuals interpreting situations as overwhelming their resources, leading to disruptions in emotional, cognitive, biological, and behavioural domains (Open Access 2022). Coping strategies are crucial in managing stress, with adaptive strategies contributing to successful socialization and integration (Valentina, Makarova., V., Gure'va, 2023). Stress, anxiety, and depressive disorders are linked to chronic diseases, emphasizing the importance of effective coping mechanisms (Fasiha, Shah., Azlinda, Aznan., Paramjit, Singh, Jamir, Singh. 2023).

- **Social Support**

Social support refers to the feeling and reality of being cared for, having help from others, and belonging to a supportive social network (Vaux, 1988). It includes various forms of help such as emotional, informational, companionship, tangible, and intangible support (Vaux, 1988; Drennon-Gala 1987). Support can come from family, friends, pets, and more (Racino, 2006), and it is linked to benefits for physical and mental health. Different types and functions of social support have different health correlations, with emotional support notably significant for stress protection.

- **Technology and Social Media Impact**

Social media usage patterns have become an integral part of daily life, allowing people to connect, participate in events, and engage with online communities. Positive aspects include enhancing mental health by facilitating social connections and reducing stigmatization. Negative aspects include lower psychological well-being, body image dissatisfaction, addiction risk, cyberbullying involvement, and negative mood. Cyberbullying and online social comparison can have severe consequences for mental health (Azila & Reyes, 2023).

This conceptual framework integrates various aspects of mental health, providing a foundation for understanding the multidimensional nature of mental well-being among Nigerian students at Bestower International University, Seme Kpodji, the Republic of Benin Empirical Framework

Empirical Framework

This empirical review aims to synthesize relevant literature to understand the intricate relationship between social media usage patterns and mental health outcomes among youths, with a specific focus on students in Nigerian universities.

A study by Dorothy et al. (2017), provides insights into the prevalent patterns of social media usage among undergraduate students in Nigerian federal universities. It highlights the positive attitude toward social media for social activities but a negative perception regarding its academic utility. This is relevant to the present study as it sets the context for understanding the social media landscape among Nigerian university students. Another research by Brandi and Denise (2022), emphasizes the negative association between excessive digital media use and adolescent emotional health, particularly among vulnerable individuals with existing anxiety or depression. Understanding these negative associations is crucial for examining the potential impact of social media on the mental health of Nigerian university

students, especially considering the rising rates of anxiety and depression among adolescents. Deborah et al. (2019), found no significant association between social media usage and social media anxiety among students at the University of Nigeria, it underscores the complexity of the relationship. This highlights the need for nuanced exploration and emphasizes the relevance of considering contextual factors and individual differences in the present study.

The study by Shahnaz and Arif (2019), sheds light on the impact of social media use on the mental health of female students, suggesting a relationship between social media usage and mental health threats. This is pertinent to the present study as it highlights gender-specific considerations in understanding the effects of social media on mental well-being. Oberiri and Greg (2018), explore social media addiction among Nigerian students abroad, providing insights into excessive usage patterns and associated triggers. While the study found no direct negative influence on academic performance, it identified adverse effects on psychological well-being. Understanding the addictive nature of social media usage is crucial for assessing its potential impact on the mental health of Nigerian university students.

Conclusion: The synthesis of findings from the reviewed studies underscores the imperative of comprehensively understanding the relationship between social media usage and mental health outcomes among Nigerian university students. By addressing the four main questions posed by the research - prevalent patterns of social media usage, current mental health status, correlation between usage patterns and mental health outcomes, and potential moderating or mediating factors—this study aims to illuminate key aspects of this complex relationship. Understanding prevalent patterns of social media usage is crucial for contextualizing how students engage with online platforms and the potential impact on their mental well-being. Additionally, assessing the current mental health status of students provides essential baseline data to identify areas of concern and potential intervention strategies. Moreover, exploring the statistically significant correlation between social media usage patterns and mental health outcomes among Nigerian students is essential for identifying potential risk factors and protective factors. Ultimately, the findings of this study aim to contribute to the development of targeted interventions aimed at promoting positive online environments and safeguarding the mental well-being of Nigerian youths. By addressing these critical questions and shedding light on the complexities of social media usage about mental health outcomes, the study seeks to empower stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, and mental health practitioners, to implement evidence-based strategies to support the well-being of university students in Nigeria

Theoretical Framework

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986): Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, introduced in "Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory" (1986), emphasizes the role of observational learning, role modeling, and behavior acquisition. This theory posits that individuals learn by observing others in their social environment and that learning is a cognitive process involving attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. Additionally, it suggests that behavior can be shaped and modified through modeling. In the present study, this theory helps analyze how social media interactions serve as models for behavior, offers insights into the influence of role models on youths' social media behavior, and guides the examination of observational learning and its impact on mental health outcomes.

Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974): The Uses and Gratifications Theory, introduced by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch in "Utilization of Mass Communication by the Individual" (1974), suggests that individuals actively select media to satisfy specific needs. It posits that media consumption is goal-oriented and fulfills psychological and social needs and that audiences are not passive but actively engage with media for gratification. In the present study, this theory guides the investigation into the motivations behind social media use, offers a framework for understanding the psychological and social needs fulfilled through online interactions, and informs the analysis of how gratifications sought through social media may influence mental health outcomes.

Technological Determinism (McLuhan, 1964): Marshall McLuhan's Technological Determinism, introduced in "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man" (1964), proposes that technologies shape and influence societal norms and individual behavior. It suggests that the medium itself has a significant impact on shaping human experiences and that changes in communication technologies bring about social and cultural transformations. In this study, technological determinism encourages exploration into how the inherent characteristics of social media platforms impact mental health, provides a framework for understanding how the medium itself, beyond user behaviors, may contribute to mental health outcomes and informs the analysis of the broader societal implications of technology on the mental health of Nigerian youths.

Summary: The conceptual framework encompassed various dimensions of mental health, and theoretical frameworks, such as Social Cognitive Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, and Technological Determinism, were introduced to guide the examination of the relationship between social media use and mental health outcomes. These frameworks will inform the analysis of data and contribute to a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the mental health of Nigerian youths at Bestower International University.

Methodology

For this study, an Internet-based survey research design was adopted using Google Forms. Surveys are effective in gathering comprehensive data on the opinions, attitudes, and experiences of a large population, making them suitable for investigating the complex relationship between social media use and mental health outcomes among Nigerian students. The target population for this study comprises undergraduate students at Anglophone sections of universities in Benin. However, Bestower University was chosen using a purposive sampling technique due to its familiarity, time constraints, and cost considerations. Available Sampling Techniques and Snowball Sampling Techniques were then applied to elicit responses from respondents. A sample size of 120 respondents was targeted, representing available samples during the research period, as students were on holiday and could only be reached through links shared in their Bestower University WhatsApp group chats. Out of the 120 distributed Google Forms questionnaires, 111 were filled out and submitted, resulting in a response rate of 93%. Twelve copies of the questionnaire underwent a pretest among students to identify and correct any inconsistencies before the main survey. This process ensures the reliability and validity of the instrument for measuring the intended variables. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including tables, percentages, and charts. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and describe data characteristics, while percentages and charts were used to present findings in a clear and understandable format.

Analysis and Discussion

Research Question 1: Prevalent Patterns of Social Media Usage: The survey revealed that social media usage among students at Bestower International University is frequent, with 62.97% reporting frequent to very frequent usage. WhatsApp (31.37%) and Instagram (16.61%) were the most commonly used platforms. A significant portion of students (47.89%) reported engaging with social media all the time, indicating high levels of continuous exposure. The types of content most frequently posted or shared include photos (32.80%) and videos (27.96%), suggesting a preference for visual media.

Research Question 2: Current Mental Health Status: Regarding mental health status, a considerable number of students reported experiencing school-related stress (76.40%) and emotional impacts from social and interpersonal factors associated with social media use (78.24%). Lifestyle and behavioural indicators, such as unhealthy coping mechanisms or poor nutrition, were reported to influence mental health by 75.67% of students. Additionally, emotional and psychological factors, including persistent sadness or anxiety related to academic experiences, were reported by 84.90% of students.

Research Question 3: Correlation Between Social Media Usage and Mental Health: A notable proportion of students (75.68%) felt that excessive screen time or social media use influences their academic stress levels, indicating a perceived connection between social media usage and stress. Furthermore, 68.47% of students reported noticing a connection between their social media interactions and emotional and psychological factors like mood swings or low self-esteem. However, the impact of social media use on coping with stress was perceived as neutral by 45.95% of students.

Research Question 4: Potential Moderating or Mediating Factors: In terms of potential moderating or mediating factors, 78.38% of students reported that social media comparison contributes to feelings of hopelessness or despair to some extent. Additionally, 82.98% of students reported encountering cyberbullying or negative online interactions that affect their mental well-being, indicating the detrimental impact of online behaviour on mental health outcomes.

The findings suggest a complex relationship between social media usage patterns and mental health outcomes among Nigerian students at Bestower International University. While social media serves as a pervasive communication tool, its excessive use is associated with increased academic stress and negative emotional experiences. Factors such as social comparison and cyberbullying exacerbate these effects, highlighting the need for targeted interventions and support mechanisms to promote positive mental health outcomes among students.

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Summary: This section provides a concise overview, concluding insights, and actionable recommendations derived from the study "Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Youths: A Study of Nigerian Students at Bestower International University, Seme Kpodji, the Republic of Benin." The research tackled prevalent social media usage patterns among students, their mental health status, the correlation between social media usage patterns and mental health outcomes, and potential

moderating or mediating factors. The study revealed frequent social media use, particularly on platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram, with students reporting significant school-related stress and emotional impacts. Factors such as social comparison and cyberbullying emerged as contributors to negative mental health outcomes.

Conclusion:

The analysis emphasizes the profound influence of social media on youth mental health. While serving as a vital communication tool, excessive social media use correlates with heightened academic stress and negative emotions among students. Targeted interventions and support mechanisms are imperative to foster positive mental health outcomes amidst the digital landscape.

Recommendations:

Promoting Digital Well-being: Conduct educational campaigns and workshops to educate students on healthy social media use and stress management strategies.

Enhancing Support Services: Provide accessible mental health support and counseling services to assist students in navigating academic stress and online challenges.

Creating Positive Online Environments: Implement policies and initiatives to cultivate positive online interactions and combat cyberbullying within the university community.

Further Research: Undertake longitudinal studies and qualitative investigations to delve deeper into the intricate relationship between social media use and mental health across diverse cultural contexts.

These recommendations aim to address the identified issues and foster a conducive environment for the mental well-being of youths in today's digital age.

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National Integration and the Challenges of Citizens' Security in Nigerian Communities

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Abstract

The paper seeks to provide insight into the dynamics of national integration and human security challenges in Nigeria. It examines historical antecedents, contemporary challenges, and potential strategies, aiming to contribute to an understanding of the complexities in fostering a united and secure Nigeria. The study delves into the impact of national integration on human security, highlighting positive contributions such as social cohesion, conflict prevention, economic development, and political stability. However, it also addresses challenges, including identity-based conflicts, economic imbalances, and political instability, hindering effective national integration. In conclusion, the significance of human security and national integration in shaping societal well-being and stability is imperative. Despite critiques, the human security framework remains valuable, offering a paradigm shift in security discourse. National integration, crucial in diverse nations like Nigeria, fosters social cohesion and contributes to conflict prevention, economic development, and political stability. The study acknowledges Nigeria's challenges, recommends inclusive policies, educational programs, and economic reforms for effective national integration.

Keywords: Integration, Citizens, Challenges, Security, Communities.

1. Introduction

The dynamics of nation-building in Nigeria unfold against a backdrop of rich diversity, historical complexities, and persistent challenges. Nigeria, a country with over 250 ethnic groups, has a rich history marked by diverse cultural heritages and colonial legacies. The amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria by the British in 1914 laid the foundation for a nation with multifaceted identities. The post-colonial era witnessed efforts to forge a common national identity, yet challenges persist due to historical divisions and ethnic rivalries (Smith, 1999). National integration in Nigeria has been a persistent goal since gaining independence in 1960. The amalgamation was intended to create a united nation, but historical divisions, bitter ethno-religious rivalries, ethnic domination, protests against economic exclusion, and separatist movements have fractured the country, posing challenges against a cohesive national identity (Adeleye, 2002). Despite enduring political instability, coup d'états, and threats of secession, Nigeria remains a sovereign state. Yet, the foundation of the nation trembles under the weight of its ethnic configuration. The institutions designed to promote national integration such as the Federal Character Commission, National Boundary Commission, and National Orientation Agency have fallen short of their intended purpose. As a nation with a rich tapestry of ethnicities, languages, and cultures, Nigeria has long grappled with the imperative of national integration for sustainable development.

The imperative of national integration lies in its potential to unite a diverse populace under a shared vision, fostering social cohesion and collective progress. The paper recognizes that the pursuit of national integration in Nigeria is not devoid of challenges, and these challenges have profound implications for human security. Identity-based conflicts, economic disparities, and political instability emerge as potential threats to the well-being of individuals and communities (Ukiwo, 2015; Mason, 2013; Suberu, 2001). This paper seeks to provide insight into the dynamics of national integration and human security challenges in Nigeria. By examining historical antecedents, contemporary challenges, and potential strategies, the study aims to contribute to the renewed nationalism in fostering a united and secure Nigeria. The remainder of the paper is in three sections. Sections 2 and 3 focus essentially on national integration and security while section 4 concludes and provides some recommendations.

2. Historical Roots of Diversity in Nigeria

The historical roots of diversity in Nigeria are complex and deeply intertwined with the nation's pre-colonial, colonial, and post-independence eras. Understanding these historical foundations is crucial for comprehending the diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious landscape that characterizes the nation.

Pre-Colonial Diversity

Nigeria's pre-colonial history was marked by the existence of numerous ethnic groups and distinct kingdoms. The territory that is now Nigeria was home to diverse societies, each with its language, traditions, and governance structures (Falola, 1998). Notable kingdoms such as the Hausa states in the north, the Yoruba kingdoms in the southwest, and the Igbo societies in the southeast flourished independently, contributing to the rich cultural tapestry of the region (Falola, 1998).

Colonial Legacy

The imposition of British colonial rule in the late 19th and early 20th centuries significantly influenced the historical roots of diversity in Nigeria. The amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria in 1914 by Lord Lugard aimed to streamline administrative efficiency but had profound implications for the diverse groups within the nation (Falola, 1998). This amalgamation brought together disparate ethnicities, languages, and religions under a single political entity, laying the groundwork for future complexities. The colonial administration implemented policies that further accentuated existing differences among ethnic groups. The British adopted a divide-and-rule strategy, exploiting ethnic and religious divisions to maintain control (Falola, 1998). This manipulation of differences contributed to the shaping of group identities and laid the foundation for potential conflicts along ethnic and religious lines in the post-colonial era.

Post-Independence Era

Nigeria gained independence in 1960, but the historical roots of diversity continued to influence the nation's trajectory. The ethnic and religious divisions fostered during the colonial era persisted, contributing to a fragmented political landscape. Nigeria's historical experience with military coups, civil war, and subsequent political transitions further underscored the challenges arising from its diverse composition (Suberu, 2001). The post-independence era witnessed struggles for political power and resource allocation among different ethnic groups, resulting in tensions and periodic conflicts. The historical disparities and perceived marginalization of certain regions continued to shape political and economic dynamics, affecting the equitable development of the nation (Suberu, 2001).

In conclusion, the historical roots of diversity in Nigeria are deeply embedded in its pre-colonial, colonial, and post-independence experiences. The pre-colonial era laid the foundation for distinct ethnic groups and kingdoms, each contributing to the nation's rich cultural heritage. The colonial legacy, marked by amalgamation and divisive policies, exacerbated ethnic and religious differences, shaping the complexities of Nigeria's diverse society. The post-independence era has seen the continuation of historical disparities, influencing political, economic, and social dynamics.

2.1 National Integration

National integration is a multifaceted concept that involves creating a sense of cohesion, identity, and unity among diverse groups within a nation. It goes beyond mere political boundaries, encompassing shared values, beliefs, and a common vision for the future. National integration is often defined as the process of promoting unity, solidarity, and a shared sense of identity among individuals from diverse backgrounds within a nation (Adeleye, 2002). It involves the development of a collective consciousness that transcends ethnic, religious, linguistic, and regional differences. The dimensions of national integration are diverse. As a dimension, social integration involves the creation of a society where individuals from different social groups interact harmoniously, fostering a sense of mutual understanding and respect. Further, national integration seeks to unite diverse cultural elements within a nation, celebrating and preserving cultural diversity while promoting a common national identity (Smith, 1999). On the other hand, because economic disparities hinder national unity, the need for economic integration arises. Therefore, policies that address regional economic imbalances contribute to the economic dimension of national integration (Ojo, 2005). More significant is political integration without which no meaningful development can occur sustainably. This is exemplified by a unified political system that accommodates diverse interests and ensures equitable representation (Ekeh, 1975).

2.1.1 Challenges to National Integration

Despite its importance, national integration is still hindered by challenges rooted in historical, socio-economic, and political factors. Nigeria grapples with the challenge of integrating diverse religious and ethnic groups whose identities differ (Ukiwo, 2015). Evidently, colonial legacies and historical injustices might have contributed to feelings of marginalization as a hindrance towards integration (Mason, 2013). The structure of Nigeria's economy reveals economic disparities as evident in socio-economic inequalities between regions. These inequalities fuel resentment and hinder the economic dimension of national integration (Adeleye, 2002). The history of the country further shows that frequent changes in governance structures, corruption, and political instability tend to erode trust and impede political integration (Ojo, 2005).

2.2. Concept of Human Security

The concept of human security has evolved as a multidimensional approach to understanding and addressing the diverse threats and challenges faced by individuals in contemporary societies. Emerging in the late 20th century, the concept broadens the traditional focus on state-centric security to encompass the well-being and protection of individuals. Human security, as conceptualized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), encompasses a wide range of interconnected dimensions, emphasizing the protection and empowerment of individuals (UNDP, 1994). The key dimensions include:

- Economic Security: Ensuring access to resources, livelihoods, and economic opportunities to prevent poverty and deprivation (UNDP, 1994).

- Food Security: Guaranteeing access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet dietary needs for an active and healthy life (UNDP, 1994).

- Health Security: Ensuring access to healthcare services and disease prevention, addressing health-related threats and epidemics (UNDP, 1994).

- Environmental Security: Protecting individuals from environmental degradation, natural disasters, and the adverse impacts of climate change (UNDP, 1994).

- Personal Security: Safeguarding individuals from physical violence, human rights abuses, and threats to personal safety (UNDP, 1994).

- Community Security: Fostering stable and secure community environments that allow for social cohesion and resilience against conflicts (UNDP, 1994).

2.2.1. Key Principles of Human Security

The concept of human security is grounded in several key principles that emphasize the centrality of individuals and communities. Notable principles include:

People-Centric Approach: Human security places individuals at the core of security considerations, recognizing their intrinsic value and dignity (Paris, 2001).

Preventive Orientation: Human security emphasizes proactive measures to prevent threats and vulnerabilities, rather than reactive responses (Acharya, 2004).

Comprehensive Security: Human security considers a wide range of interconnected threats and vulnerabilities, acknowledging the complex and multifaceted nature of security challenges (UNDP, 1994).

Human Rights and Dignity: The concept of human security is closely linked to the promotion and protection of human rights, emphasizing the inherent dignity and worth of every individual (UNDP, 1994).

2.2.2. Implications of Human Security

The adoption of the human security framework has important implications for policy and governance. It encourages a shift in focus from military-centric security strategies to a more holistic and people-centered approach. However, the concept has faced critiques, including concerns about its potential to dilute state sovereignty and the challenge of measuring and prioritizing diverse security dimensions (Buzan, 2003).

In conclusion, the concept of human security represents a paradigm shift in understanding security, emphasizing the protection and empowerment of individuals in diverse dimensions. Its key principles, rooted in a people-centric approach and a comprehensive understanding of security, have implications for policy and governance. While facing critiques, the concept remains a valuable framework for addressing the complex challenges of the contemporary world and promoting the well-being and dignity of individuals.

3. Impact of National Integration

National integration plays a crucial role in shaping human security by fostering a sense of unity, shared identity, and social cohesion within a nation. In the context of Nigeria, a country marked by diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, the impact of national integration on human security is complex and faces significant challenges. This discussion explores both the positive impact and challenges associated with national integration in Nigeria. Some challenges can be shared as follows:

Social Cohesion and Stability

National integration contributes to social cohesion and stability by promoting a shared national identity that transcends ethnic and religious differences (Ukiwo, 2015). A cohesive society is less prone to internal conflicts, contributing to the overall security of individuals.

Conflict Prevention

A unified nation is better equipped to prevent inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts. National integration initiatives that promote understanding and tolerance reduce the likelihood of communal violence and enhance the security of communities (Suberu, 2001).

Economic Development

National integration positively impacts economic security by fostering a climate of collaboration and inclusivity. Economic disparities between regions are mitigated, leading to equitable development that enhances the overall well-being and security of the population (Ojo, 2005).

Political Stability

Political integration and the establishment of inclusive governance structures contribute to political stability. A united political system accommodates diverse interests, reducing the potential for political instability and enhancing the security of individuals (Ekeh, 1975).

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Human security and national integration are crucial components in shaping the well-being and stability of societies. The principles of human security, rooted in a people-centric approach, preventive orientation, comprehensive security, and respect for human rights and dignity, offer a paradigm shift in security discourse. Despite facing critiques, the human security framework remains valuable for addressing the complexities of contemporary challenges and promoting the overall well-being and dignity of individuals. On the other hand, national integration plays a pivotal role in influencing human security, particularly in a diverse nation like Nigeria. It fosters social cohesion, contributes to conflict prevention, positively impacts economic development, and enhances political stability. However, Nigeria grapples with challenges stemming from historical divisions, economic imbalances, and political instability, hindering effective national integration.

The significance of national integration lies in its potential to foster social cohesion, political stability, economic development, and peace and security. Strategies such as inclusive policies, educational initiatives, and economic reforms are essential for promoting national integration in Nigeria. In navigating these complexities, it is imperative for policymakers to recognize the interconnectedness of human security and national integration. A holistic approach that combines the principles of human security with targeted strategies for national integration is vital for building resilient, inclusive, and

secure societies. As nations strive to address the challenges and opportunities presented by diversity, the collaboration between these two concepts becomes indispensable for creating a harmonious and secure future.More importantly, inclusive policies, educational programs, and economic reforms should be given unhindered attention by all levels of government for effective national integration.

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Appraisal of Inter-Agency Collaboration in Combating Community Security Threat in Nigeria

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Abstract

Several agencies have been created in Nigeria for smooth public governance, but inter-agency collaboration is fraught with operational flaws. The paper is motivated by the need to improve efficiency of collaboration among public security agencies in a complex public sector. The paper therefore attempts to appraise the level of collaboration among selected public agencies in Nigeria.The paper adopts a contextual approach.This paper synthesizes findings from multiple studies investigating the performance of inter-agency collaboration in combating community security threats in Nigeria. It identifies factors militating against inter-agency collaborationsuch asjurisdictional conflicts and limited resources among others.Furthermore, it was found that hierarchy challenges and the absence of clear legal frameworks hinder effective collaboration. Insufficient training programs, differences in agency policies, and the lack of crisis management protocols further impede coordinated responses. In conclusion, addressing these multifaceted challenges is crucial to fostering resilient interagency collaboration to ensure effective community security in Nigeria. The findings underscore the necessity of a holistic approach at mitigating community insecurity in Nigeria.Among the recommendations, the personnel of all security agencies should be adequately exposed to modern security training and use of sophisticated weapons.

Keywords: Appraisal, Collaboration, Combating, Security, Threat.

1. Introduction

Over the years, governmental administrations have invested substantial resources, both human and non-human, to address human and environmental crises arising from various forms of insecurity intheNigerian society. Security is fundamentally tied to the value of life within a given community, encompassing factors that impact the quality of life, such as conflicts, scarcity of vital resources, environmental degradation, demographic pressures, and threats to human security (Dhirathiti, 2011). Issues ranging from poverty, unemployment, conflict, violence, diseases, environmental degradation, natural disasters, domestic violence, transnational crimes, and human rights abuses contribute to insecurity, potentially leading to the displacement of individuals from their habitual homes (Betts, 2006).

In Oladeji's view (2015), a significant symptom of human insecurity crises is the emergence of internally displaced persons (IDPs). According to the United Nations Guiding Principles, IDPs are individuals or groups forced or obliged to flee their homes due to armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, or natural or human-made disasters, without crossing an internationally recognized state border. Perrault *et al.* (2011) and Rothschild (2017) argue that collaboration among

security agencies is crucial in combating insecurities and related social issues, necessitating joint efforts for a more effective and formidable synergy. Collaboration establishes durable relationships that bring together previously separate organizations with a commitment to a commonly defined mission, structure, or planning effort. Through collaboration, security organizations can deliver services more effectively and excellently (Leung, 2013).

Despite the significance of inter-agency collaboration in addressing national insecurity and related antisocial behaviours, its introduction is yet to be fully appreciated in Nigeria (Prabhakaran, 2008). Inter-organizational collaboration, defined as any joint activity by two or more agencies working together to increase public value, constitutes benefits for all parties involved and involves well-defined relationships aimed at achieving common goals. However, the identification of conditions for inter-organizational collaboration poses a challenge, as each case requires unique considerations and elements. Well-formulated collaboration principles may not always yield anticipated outcomes, and possibilities and effects of collaboration may be constrained by factors such as opportunism, asymmetrical structures of dependencies, supervision systems, and increased centralized coordination (Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, 2014).

Establishing appropriate relations within inter-agency collaboration is a challenging process that demands continuous supervision and cultivation, influenced by numerous elements and determinants during the orchestration and execution of joint actions. This paper thus attempts to appraise the effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration in combating community security threat in Nigeria, using a desk survey approach.In what follows, section 2 dwells on conceptual review while section 3 appraisal of interagency collaboration. Section 4 concludes and recommends.

2. Conceptual Review

2.1. Interagency Collaboration

Although, the literature on interagency cooperation is sparse, there is no deficiency of related terms and definitions, which include: inter-organizational relations, intergovernmental cooperation, intra-governmental cooperation, inter-sectoral cooperation, and inter-organizational coordination (Marcella, 2008). According to Weiss (1987), interagency cooperation exists when two or more organizations that share a problem area agree to deal with the issue by establishing a link via a formal contract that provides for resources and for the adjusting of internal and/or external procedures to adequately support the new arrangements.

Interagency collaboration refers to the art and act of promoting active working relationship among multiple security agencies with a view to improving process outcomes at a reduced cost (Abiodun *et al.,* 2019).However, Frazier (2014) submitted diverging goals and operations can make policy implementation difficult and, therefore, a more formal cooperation process is required among the security agencies in a state. Intelligence cooperation becomes more inevitable when the statutory agencies such as armed forces, state security service, the police force, para-military operatives fail to unite in intelligence gathering to wage war against or containing insecurity in Nigeria (Abiodun, 2016).

The vast area known as the interagency cooperation is the process that makes the development and implementation of policy and strategy possible in a pluralistic decision-making system. Nigeria has a plural decision-making system and multilayer level of security agencies for both internal and external purposes (Mohammed *et al.,* 2019). Cooperative efforts can foster integration of multiagency

capabilities, but making this happen often becomes problematic. Multiple organizational goals and operational routines can make policy implementation difficult and, therefore, a more formal cooperation process is required. Interagency cooperation becomes necessary when a single agency cannot adequately address a policy objective, such as the fighting of crimes and maintenance of law and order (Innocent, 2018).

2.1.2. Security and National Security

According to Held (1998), security implies a situation where conditions are favourable to the protection of a nation, state and her citizens against existing or potential threats. Achumba *et al.* (2013) assert that security is the deployment and use of military force to achieve national goals. It cuts across many disciplines covering military protection, surveillance, protection of national values and human rights. It is also seen as the absence of threats to acquired values and the absence of fear that such values will be attacked. Baldwin (1997) conceptualizes security from the traditional perspective, where he notes that traditional security is equated to state's commitment to enhance its military in the defence of national core valves such as sovereignty and territorial integrity. Nwolise (2009) and Asobie (2007) notes that security involves the deployment and use of military resources by society to sustain its valves in the face of threats and challenges from both internal and external sources. Richmond (2012) sees the modern perspective of security as a shift from the state-centric to people-centric approach, where the human population are regarded as reference for security. He advocates efforts to neutralize threats to human security by ameliorating the effects of poverty, unemployment, armed conflicts (diseases, hunger, refugee debacles) and human rights violation on the population (Richmond, 2012).

In Nigeria, the constitution unequivocally spelt out a fundamental objective and directive principle of state policy that "the security and welfare of the people (of Nigeria) shall be the primary purpose of government" (Section 14 (2)(b) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity. No wonder national security has become an issue for government, prompting huge allocation of the national budget to security.The term "National security" in the last three decades has different meanings to different persons, groups and governments across the nations of the word. National security is the absence of coercions or capacity to instigate violence and disrupt the social orders and norms of the society (Thamos, 2008; Gupta, 2010). In the words of Nweze (2004), national security is the preservation, protection and the guarantee of the safety of life, property, wealth of the citizenry and measures to guard against threats to national sovereignty. Bassey (2004) argued alongside Nweze (2004) that it equally implies freedom from danger to life and property and people to pursue legitimate interest within the society.

2.1.3 Insecurity

The menace of ill outcomes of insecurity in our society is becoming alarming and it can never be overemphasized seeing that, it is the apprehension of those tendencies that could undermine internal cohesion and corporate existence of the nation (Pam Sha, 2005). Insecurity implies the presence or apprehension of danger to life and property, and the presence of a non-conducive atmosphere for the people to pursue their legitimate interests within the society. It embodies the presence, or apprehension of threats to, and or direct violation of security. It implies threat to individual security, state security and security of the environment (Igbuzor, 2011). Imobighe (2003) identified threats to internal security to be: religious/political intolerance is mismanagement of resources, subversion and sabotage, espionage, smuggling, alien influx, armed robbery, mutiny/coup d'état, civil unrest, revolutionary insurgency.

Nweze (2004) identified sources of security threats in Nigeria to include: militarism, and military experiences, ethnic/religious pluralism, unemployment, poverty and failure of governance, socio-economic inequalities and demographic factors, small arms and ammunition trafficking, migration and indigene question in Nigeria, Nigeria's socio-economic status in Africa and the illegal alien issues, globalization, porous security heritage and external influence. Iweze (1990) opine that it is necessary to distinguish between different causes as each may require different remedy. Like in other countries, the sources of insecurity in Nigeria can be traced to a number of factors. Beyond the external-internal dichotomy, sources of insecurity can equally be classified as either remote or proximate and immediate.

2.2. Theoretical underpinning

The paper is anchored on structural functionalism theory and the process theory of cooperation.

2.2.1. The Structural Functionalism Theory

According to Varma (1975), structural functional analysis revolves around certain concepts more important of which are concepts like functions and structures. In using structural functional analysis, three basic questions are usually asked, namely: (a) What basic functions are fulfilled in any given system, (b) By what structures? (c) Under what conditions? In the words of Merton (1949), "functions are those observed consequences which make for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system; and dysfunction, those observed consequences which lessen the adaptation or adjustment of the system.''

The implication of the above is that a system implies the idea of a group of objects or elements standing in some characteristic structural relationship to one another and interacting on the basis of certain characteristic processes (Varma, 1975). When action takes place in a given system, functional and/or dysfunctional consequences are usually produced. Varma (1975) further notes that beside the concept of function, another very important concept in structural functional analysis is structure. While function deals with the consequences, involving objectives as well as processes of pattern of actions, structure refers to those arrangements within the system which perform the functions. A single function may be fulfilled by a complex combination of structures, just as any given structural arrangement may perform functions which might have different kinds of consequences for the structure. Structural functionalism is employed as a theoretical framework so that possible ways of survival of a system can be discovered. The analysis is primarily directed towards the amount of change at the structural level that a system can accommodate without seriously hindering the fulfillment of its basic functional requisites.

In applying this theory in the analysis of inter-agency collaboration in combating community security threat in Nigeria, it is important to observe that inter-agency comprises many structures (military and para-military security outfits inclusive), all performing certain functions to make the system work. For any inter-agency to work, several activities need to be performed and certain institutions are created to perform some of these roles or functions for the society to keep the system going. Nigeria operates a security system that has different agencies tackling some specified social ills from society. Certain agencies are also created to perform certain roles or functions for the maintenance of the Nigerian society. For the Nigerian security to function according to model and specification in the fight against national insecurity, there is need for all the agencies to come together and form synergy; and for the inter-agency to operate there is need to have the leadership with jurisdiction. There is also a need to have the structure or institution charged with the role of tackling a specified crime. That institution in the case of Nigeria is the inter-agency.

2.2.2. Process Theory of Cooperation

The theory by Weiss(1987) fundamentally explains that local agencies must undergo a three-step process driven by external influences, systematic or random, to be encouraged to engage in the level of collaboration necessary to achieve the maximum implementation of an initiative (Daft, 2007). Cooperation among agencies is garnished with various merits; inter- agency collaboration is better suited than sole or individual security agencies to identify and accurately define the target problems of priority in a given community; they are more likely to include diverse perspectives on conflict and insecurity causation. It is ideally more result- oriented to developing creative targeted interventions because they include a diverse group of individuals representing a diverse group of organizations with different philosophies of interventions; joint and multiple interventions are more effective than single interventions; they hold the potential of increasing the total quality and/or better quality of the treatment (Weiss, 1987).

Three-point process, according to Dyer and Singh (1998), includes perceived problem must be shared across agencies; resources must be available to handle problem cooperatively; and institutional capacity has to be established ensure cooperation. So, goal congruence is an essential factor in encouraging inter-agency collaboration. It is important to investigate the similarity of agency goals, as exchange interactions between agencies are less likely to occur if agency goals are in high conflict. Meyers (2000) provided operational definition of goal congruence and explain the importance of operative goals. As they explain, goal congruence is the extent of agreement between (or among) the official or formal policy goals of political officials and the operative goals of the organizations or networks charged with delivering that policy.

3. Appraisal of Interagency Collaboration

Bola (2023) examined the impact of inter-agency collaboration and community policing on counter-terrorism in the North East of Nigeria. The population covers the three purposively selected States in the North East which comprised of Borno State, Taraba State and Yobe State and security personnel designated to these three States. The study found that inter-agency collaboration and community policing have significant positive impact on counter-terrorism in the North East of Nigeria. It concludes that effective community policing can be applied to stem the tides of terrorist threats, improves counter-terrorism operations and are excellent resource for gathering information on all kinds of potential threats and vulnerabilities of terrorism.

Ikeanyibe *et al.* (2020) examined inter-agency collaboration among key security agencies and how this has impacted the counter-insurgency campaign against Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. It concluded that despite the tendency towards conflict among the Nigerian security agencies, the initial failure of traditional approach of police and military brutality in quelling the insurrection led to a perception of a shared problem by the government and law enforcement agencies. However, resource and weak institutional capacity to mount collaboration largely explained why the counter-insurgency collaboration has not yielded the expected results.

Aina and Odiji (2019) examined the role of local vigilante organizations in assisting the State in her war against terror and other violent crimes such as rape and kidnapping. Information for this study was garnered from different sources which are largely primary. The civilian JTF as a vigilante organization has contributed positively to the ongoing war against terrorism being fought by the Federal Republic

of Nigeria. One cannot but applaud them for their various counter-insurgency activities which are responsible for the earlier feats recorded by the Nigerian side.

Audu (2016) engaged a qualitative approach to examine community policing by exploring the police/community relationship for crime control in Nigeria. The study adopted focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews. Findings of the study revealed that there was a relationship gap between the police and community in Nigeria caused by the mistrust in the police by the members of public who are of the opinion that the police are corrupt.

Ashaolu (2012) investigated the nexus between solving security challenges in Nigeria through intelligence gathering and surveillance. The findings of the study revealed that there is usually competition between the security agencies. Although they collaborate on many missions, they hoard information from one another. Also, the police are the ones benefitting more from the collaborations since they seem to have more power to take legal actions against crimes. However, due to their clumsiness, other agencies are not very keen on cooperating with them.

Ogbeide (2011) conducted a study on inter-agency cooperation in combating terrorism in Nigeria. The study employed exploratory research design. The study concludes that terrorism is a violent social phenomenon that can occur anytime and anywhere in the world. It involves bombing, shooting, bank robbery, kidnapping, hostage-taking and other violent activities that have resulted in the loss of lives and properties.

Daniel (2011) investigated the nexus between the Nigerian police and her policing strategies especially in relation to intelligence-information gathering since independence. Results from the study showed that despite modern and community policing trainings, policing still remained combative and reactive rather than proactive even as investment in policing dwindled in the face of continuous breakdown in law and order in major cities.

3.1. Factors Mitigating against Inter-Agency Collaboration

Interagency collaboration is a crucial aspect of managing complex security challenges in Nigeria, especially at the community level. Drawing on insights from a handful of scholars such as Sheehan (2005), Hakna (2013), this section sheds light on the complexities and challenges faced by various security forces and agencies, emphasizing the need for effective collaboration to tackle the persistent security concerns in Nigeria.

The diversity of personnel and agencies involved in combating security threats in Nigeria presents a significant challenge to effective collaboration. The varied skills, procedures, knowledge, and competencies within these entities often hinder seamless communication and coordination. For instance, different security agencies often use distinct communication protocols and technologies, making seamless information sharing difficult. More so, varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds among personnel can impede effective communication, leading to misunderstandings. Security agencies may operate independently, adhering to their internal protocols and hierarchies, leading to challenges in coordinating joint operations. Furthermore, absence of a unified command structure can result in difficulties in coordinating responses during security threats. Agencies often face conflicts over jurisdiction, especially in situations where the security threat spans multiple regions or areas of responsibility. Limited resources, including personnel, equipment, and funding, can lead to competition among agencies rather than collaboration.

Another factor mitigating against inter agency collaboration in the combating community security threat in Nigeria is the hierarchy challenges. Hakna (2013) emphasizes that struggles for seniority or superiority among security forces have no constitutional basis in Nigeria. The roles and powers of these forces, as defined by the constitution, do not delineate any hierarchy. Struggles for seniority and superiority among different security forces in Nigeria often hinder effective collaboration. This may result from a lack of a clear hierarchy or defined roles in certain situations.

The absence of clear legal frameworks outlining the roles, responsibilities, and limitations of each agency can lead to confusion and conflicts. More so, differences in agency policies and procedures can hinder coordination, as agencies may interpret and implement policies differently (Ammerdown Group, 2016). Furthermore, Insufficient training programs focusing on interagency collaboration may leave personnel unprepared for joint operations during security threats. Another militating factor, is the challenge of limited crisis management protocols. Majority of Nigerian security agencies lack established crisis management protocols, making it challenging to respond effectively to rapidly evolving situations (Hakna, 2013). Given the above challenges, a holistic approach that addresses the diverse dimensions is essential for fostering resilient and thriving interagency collaboration in ensuring security stability in communities.

4.   Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper highlights the critical role of inter-agency collaboration in addressing multifaceted security challenges in Nigeria. Investment of substantial resources by government administrative machinery reflects the recognition of security as intrinsically tied to the well-being of communities. However, emergence of internally displaced persons (IDPs) signals a significant crisis of human insecurity, necessitating collaborative efforts among security agencies. Despite the potential benefits of inter-agency collaboration, its full appreciation in Nigeria remains incomplete.Collaboration is significant as it fosters durable relationships, thus enhancing effectiveness and excellence of security organizations in the delivery of services.However, persistence of challenges such as communication disparities, jurisdictional conflicts, and hierarchy struggles, and insufficient training programs pose obstacles to seamless collaboration.

In order to enhance the performance effectiveness of security agencies in Nigeria, a holistic approach that addresses the diverse dimensions of interagency collaboration challenges is imperative. There ought to be regular roundtable review of inter-agency collaboration. Indeed, a scorecard of performance need be kept with supervising ministries. This should provide information and data for policy adjustment and regulation in response to current security challenges. In the present times, the personnel of all security agencies should be adequately exposed to modern security training and use of sophisticated weapons. Discipline is key to success. Consequently, the discipline of personnel should be regularly appraised in line with objectives and etiquettes of the service. Similarly, cross exchange of unhindered information is necessary and highly recommended for all collaborating security agencies in Nigeria. By standardizing communication, establishing clear legal frameworks, and implementing comprehensive training programs, Nigerian security agencies can foster resilient and thriving collaboration, ultimately ensuring security stability in local communities.

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Renewable Energy Technologies and Development Sustainability: Implications for Environmental Problems and Good Governance in Africa

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Abstract

Providing amiable solutions to environmental problems as real achievement concerning what is happening presently demands potential long-term actions for development sustainability which will eventually foster good governance in Africa. Within this context, a renewable energy resource seems to negate all other options and remain the most reliable, effective as well as efficient solutions. The more reason why there is an indepth connection between development sustainability and renewable energy. The methodology used in this paper was to interrogate primary and secondary sources which further centered on anticipated patterns of future energy use and consequent environmental impacts. It should be noted that the greatest challenges to development sustainability are environmental issues. For instance, in a region like Africa, issues like environment-related problems such as land degradation, water security, climate change, conflicts, deforestation, natural disasters, and urbanization are very important. Therefore, the paper discusses relations between renewable energy and development sustainability citing few cases with an illustrative example. Series of issues relating to environment, development sustainability as well as renewable energy, are examined from both current and future perspectives. The conclusions and recommendations of the paper offer potential solutions to present environmental problems as identified along with renewable energy technologies.

Keywords: Renewable Energy Technologies, Development Sustainability, Environmental Problems and Good Governance.

Introduction

Renewable energy is energy that is collected from natural sources that can't be depleted such as sunlight, wind, and hydropower. And since these natural sources aren't going anywhere anytime soon, using them to generate power is not only reliable but is eco-friendly, too. Plus, these types of alternative energy sources don't typically produce any negative byproducts like those produced when burning fossil fuels for energy, which causes serious harm to the environment. There is need for renewable energy because without it, people will run out of ways to power the world. While this may sound a bit dramatic, it's actually quite true. What motivated this concept is the fact that people are still using unsustainable methods hence there is need for sensitization so as to move away from unsustainable methods and start replacing. If people don't start to replace the unsustainable methods currently in use to generate electricity with more sustainable ones, the entire global world will run out.

Many experts estimate that the society could run out of fossil fuels within the next 100 years, and burning other materials for energy, such as people's own trash and trees, will only be able to take the society so far. Another reason why using renewable energy sources is so important is that all nonrenewable sources harm the planet when they're converted into energy, polluting the air and making the world a more difficult place to live for plants, animals, and humans alike. Air pollutants and smog

hanging over our cities cause allergies, symptoms of asthma, and even lung disease. Climate change, acid rain, and physical damage to the environment are also major negative impacts caused by our continued reliance on fossil fuels.

Confronting the people around the world as notable challenges in the 21st century has to do with climate change and global warming. This could be caused due to the burning of fossil fuels for the purpose of supplying energy. The renewable energies adoption will foster a greater role in the reduction of green-house gas emissions as well as renewable energy technologies are important for realizing sustainable development if we are to enhance proper governance in Africa. Beyond much argument, desirable governance in Africa's 21st century need to include effective participation in public decision-making and management by accountability, citizens, legitimacy, the rule of law, transparency, including an open and enabling environment for the sole aim of addressing problems under the socio-economic.

Further afield, the rule of law could be referred to as a legal framework that accentuates the supremacy of the law and maximize the public officials' discretionary power. In addition, the rule of law safeguards individual rights from the random interference of nongovernmental agents and government including agencies. Therefore, for democratic constitutionalism it provides the basis (Ogunniyi & Ilo, 2021).

On the other hand, in year 1972 sustainable development with the Founex report came to limelight in the public and political academic arena and in 1987 again with the publication of the World Commission on Environment and Development report Our Common Future - also known as the 'Brundtland Report'. The report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation follows the Brundtland definition that sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (UNESCO, 2016). However, as a result of the inability of bringing the beautiful concept into operation, many sustainable development competing frameworks since then have been put forward (UNESCO, 2014).

In 1992 the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil sought to stabilize atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at levels considered to be safe (Agenda 21 is the official document of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also called the Earth Summit, which was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This is a comprehensive blueprint for action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the UN, governments, and major groups).

Sustainability in the three-pillar model traditionally has been framed: Ecology, Economy, and Society are all mentioned to be relevant and interconnected for sustainability. Explicitly, the three-pillar model acknowledges the infusing nature of the concept of sustainability and permits a schematic categorization of sustainability issues. The United Nations General Assembly aims for action to elevate the integration of the three components of Sustainable Development - social development, economic development, including environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars (UNESCO, 2014). This view subscribes to an understanding where a certain set of actions such as substitution of fossil fuels with Renewable Energy sources can fulfill all three development goals one after the other.

The three-pillar model has been criticized for diluting a strong normative concept with vague categorization and replacing the need to protect natural capital with a methodological notion of trans-sectoral integration. Within another conceptual framework, Sustainable Development can be oriented along a continuum between the two paradigms of weak sustainability and strong sustainability. The two paradigms differ in assumptions about the substitutability of natural and human-made capital (Poul, 2020). Weak sustainability has been labelled the substitutability paradigm and is based on the idea that only the aggregate stock of capital needs to be conserved—natural capital can be substituted with man-made capital without compromising future well-being. As such, it can be interpreted as an extension of neoclassical welfare economics. For instance, one can argue that non-renewable resources, such as fossil fuels, can be substituted, for example, by renewable resources and technological progress as induced by market prices.

Weak sustainability also implies that environmental degradation can be compensated for with man-made capital such as more machinery, transport infrastructure, education and information technology. Whereas weak sustainability assumes that the economic system flexibly adapts to varying availability of forms of capital, strong sustainability starts from an ecological perspective with the intent of proposing guard- rails for socioeconomic pathways. Strong sustainability can be viewed as the non-substitutability paradigm, based on the belief that natural capital cannot be substituted, either for production purposes or for environmental provision of regulating, supporting and cultural services (Belaïd, 2019).

As an example, limited sinks such as the atmosphere's capacity to absorb GHG emissions may be better captured by applying the constraints of the strong sustainability concept. In one important interpretation, the physical stock of specific non-substitutable resources (so-called 'critical natural capital') must be preserved (not allowing for substitution between different types of natural capital).

Guardrails for remaining within the bounds of sustainability are often justified or motivated by nonlinearities, discontinuities, non-smoothness and non-convexities. As a typical correlate, natural scientists warn of and describe specific tipping points, critical thresholds at which a tiny perturbation can qualitatively alter the state or development of Earth systems. The precautionary principle argues for keeping a safe distance from guardrails, putting the burden of proof for the non-harmful character of natural capital reduction on those taking action. Renewable Energy can contribute to the development goals of the three-pillar model and can be assessed in terms of both weak and strong sustainability. Consumption of non-Renewable Energy sources, such as fossil fuels and uranium, reduces natural capital directly. Renewable Energy, in contrast, sustains natural capital as long as its resource use does not reduce the potential for future harvest (Esso & Keho, 2016).

For analytical convenience, the paper is divided into eight parts, Part one serves as the introduction; part two examines interaction between sustainable development and renewable energies; part three discusses renewable energies role's in advancing the overarching goal of sustainable development; part four deals with sustainable development goals for renewable energy and sustainable development indicators; part five highlights energy security; part six is based on social and economic development; part seven centre on energy and economic growth; while part eight of the paper offers the conclusion.

Sustainable Development and Renewable Energies Interactions

The relationship between Renewable Energy and sustainability can be viewed as a hierarchy of goals and constraints that involve both global and regional or local considerations. Far more importantly, a

starting point is that mitigation of dangerous anthropogenic climate change will be one strong driving force behind increased use of Renewable Energy technologies worldwide. To the extent that climate change stabilization levels (e.g., a maximum of 550 ppm CO_2 eq atmospheric GHG concentration or a maximum of 2°C temperature increase with respect to the pre-industrial global average) are accepted, there is an implicit acknowledgement of a strong sustainability principle. Renewable Energy is projected to play a central role in most GHG mitigation strategies which must be technically feasible and economically efficient so that any cost burdens are minimized (Østergaard, 2015).

Knowledge about technological capabilities and models for optimal mitigation pathways are therefore important. However, energy technologies, economic costs and benefits, and energy policies, as described, depend on the societies and natural environment within which they are embedded. Spatial and cultural variations are therefore another important factor in coherently addressing Sustainable Development. Sustainability challenges and solutions crucially depend on geographic setting (e.g., solar radiation), socio-economic conditions (e.g., inducing energy demand), inequalities within and across societies, fragmented institutions, and existing infrastructure (e.g., electric grids), but also on a varying normative understanding of the connotation of sustainability (Amri, 2017).

Analysts therefore call for a differentiation of analysis and solution strategies according to geographic locations and specific places and a pluralism of epistemological and normative perspectives of sustainability. These aspects underline the need to assess both the social and environmental impacts of Renewable Energy technologies to ensure that Renewable Energy deployment remains aligned with overall Sustainable Development goals. Indeed there might be an extent to which Renewable Energy technologies may have their own environmental impact and reduce natural capital, for example, by upstream GHG emissions, destroying forests, binding land that cannot be used otherwise and consuming water. Evaluating these impacts from the perspectives of the weak and strong sustainability paradigms elucidates potential tradeoffs between decarbonization and other sustainability goals (Amri, 2018).

Hence, efforts to ensure Sustainable Development can impose additional constraints or selection criteria on some mitigation pathways, and may in fact compel policymakers and citizens to accept trade-offs. For each additional boundary condition placed on the energy system, some development pathways are eliminated as being unsustainable, and some technically feasible scenarios for climate mitigation may not be viable for Sustainable Development matters.

Overarching Vision of Sustainable Development in advancing Renewable Energy's Role

This segment examines the role of Renewable Energy from a Sustainable Development perspective by comparing and reporting the Sustainable Development impacts of different energy technologies, by drawing on still limited insights from the scenario literature with respect to Sustainable Development goals, and by discussing barriers to and opportunities of Renewable Energy deployment towards good governance in Africa in relation to Sustainable Development. For a conclusive and comprehensive assessment of sustainable Renewable Energy deployment pathways, this aspect integrated information on each specific energy technology, including associated economic costs and benefits and existing energy policies. As a result, Sustainable Development opportunities associated with Renewable Energy deployment could be clearly outlined, informing policymakers about pathways and how to realize them while avoiding unintended side effects.

However, given the diverse range of possible opportunities and the limitations of current modelling capacities, such comprehensive integrated assessments are not yet practicable but still focus on:

• Social and economic development,

• Energy access,

• Energy security, and

• Climate change mitigation as well as reduction of environmental and health impacts (Ben, 2016).

This set of opportunities can be viewed as goals that should be achieved for Renewable Energy to contribute to Sustainable Development. Far more importantly, the potential of Renewable Energy to increase access to modern energy technologies can facilitate social and economic development. Energy access and social and economic development measures relate to current well-being and to some extent to intra-generational equity and sustainability, for example, through an emphasis on energy-related equity questions, including gender equity and empowerment (Ben, 2016). The potential contribution of Renewable Energy to security, climate change mitigation and the reduction of environmental impacts addresses more explicitly the inter-temporal and intergenerational well-being aspect inherent in sustainability.

Energy access, social and economic development and energy security concerns are very often considered under the weak sustainability paradigm, because trade-offs are taken into account allowing for a balance between these goals. Environmental impacts, on the other hand, are usually evaluated under the strong sustainability paradigm because they are very often understood as constraints for transformation pathways. To enable responsible decision making, it is crucial to understand the implications and possible trade-offs of Sustainable Development goals that result from alternative energy system choices.

Sustainable Development aspects that need to be included in future and more comprehensive assessments of potential development pathways are highlighted in a quantitative as well as in a qualitative and more narrative manner. On the other hand, aims to assess the interactions of future Renewable Energy deployment and Sustainable Development pathways in a more dynamic, top-down and integrated manner. Pathways are primarily understood as scenario results that attempt to address the complex interrelations among the different energy technologies at a global scale. Therefore suffice to mention that the global scenarios derived from large integrated models, which are also at the core of the analysis as previously discussed.

By and large, when evaluating Renewable Energy with respect to the multi-dimensional challenge of Sustainable Development, no single global answer is possible. Many solutions will depend strongly on local, regional and cultural conditions, and the approaches and emphases of developing and developed countries may also be different.

Sustainable Development Goals for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development Indicators

Energy indicators can assist countries in monitoring progress made in energy subsystems consistent with sustainability principles. Measurement and reporting of indicators not only gauges but also spurs the implementation of Sustainable Development and can have a pervasive effect on decision making (Le & Sarkodie, 2020). However, measuring energy sustainability is surrounded by a wide range of

conceptual and technical issue and may require updated methodologies. Over the past two decades, progress has been made towards developing a uniform set of energy indicators for sustainable development which relate to the broad themes of economy, society and environment (Elum & Momodu, 2017).

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all:

Lack of access to energy supplies and transformation systems is a constraint to human and economic development. The environment provides a series of renewable and non-renewable energy sources i.e. solar, wind, hydropower, geothermal, biofuels, natural gas, coal, petroleum, uranium. Increased use of fossil fuels without actions to mitigate greenhouse gases will have global climate change implications. Energy efficiency and increase use of renewables contribute to climate change mitigation and disaster risk reduction. Maintaining and protecting ecosystems allow using and further developing hydropower sources of electricity and bioenergy (Momodu, 2017).

Facts:

- 3 billion people rely on wood, coal, charcoal or animal waste for cooking and heating

- Energy is the dominant contributor to climate change, accounting for around 60 per cent of total global greenhouse gas emissions

- Since 1990, global emissions of CO2 have increased by more than 46 per cent.

- Hydropower is the largest single renewable electricity source today, providing 16% of world electricity at competitive prices. It dominates the electricity mix in several countries, developed, emerging or developing.

- Bioenergy is the single largest renewable energy source today, providing 10% of world primary energy supply (Le & Sarkodie, 2020).

For Renewable Energy technologies, quantitative indicators include price of generated electricity, GHG emissions during the full lifecycle of the technology, availability of renewable sources, and efficiency of energy conversion, land requirements including water consumption. Other approaches develop a figure of merit to compare the different Renewable Energy systems based upon their performance, net energy requirements, GHG emissions and other indicators. Due to the need to expand the notion of economic development beyond the ubiquitously used gross domestic product (GDP), a variety of Sustainable Development indicators have been suggested. Aggregate indicators of weak sustainability include green net national product, genuine savings (Oyewo, 2020), the index of sustainable economic welfare (ISEW) and the genuine progress indicator (GPI) with the ISEW and GPI proposed as intermediate steps by proponents of strong sustainability.

Notably, indicators that extend GDP, such as the latter two, tend to deviate qualitatively from the GDP since the 1970s or 1980s, stagnating in many Organizations for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries (Leimbach, 2018). Indicators more consistent with strong sustainability include carrying capacity, ecological footprint and resilience, sustainable national income and sustainability gaps. The use of aggregated indicators for economic development (e.g., the Human Development Index (HDI) or ISEW, however, poses significant challenges. Resulting values

are indexed with high uncertainty and are often challenged on methodological and epistemological grounds.

Rigorous justification for specific choices for weighting the components of aggregate indicators is difficult to make and as many indicators are proxies, they may also convey a message of false quantitative accuracy. Also, it is often difficult to obtain reliable and internationally consistent data series across components of the composite indicator. Aggregate indicators of sustainability integrate many aspects of social and economic development, and hence, are ignorant of the specific sustainability impact of Renewable Energy deployment. Sustainability assessment may instead require a well-identified dash- board of indicators.

It is instructive to note that Renewable Energy in terms of static bottom-up measures while being cognizant of their limitations. The four Sustainable Development goals, as earlier mentioned are used as guidelines to assess the contribution of Renewable Energy to Sustainable Development. Since sustainability is an open-boundary concept, and is confronted with tipping elements of unknown probability, doubts can be raised regarding the possibility of an ultimate coherent quantitative evaluation. Quantitative indicators, which might be adjusted as new challenges emerge and new data become available, reflect a suitable framework to assess the existing literature, but cannot close the considerable gaps in achieving a comprehensive and consistent measure of Sustainable Development (Momodu, 2017).

The energy sector has generally been perceived as key to economic development with a strong correlation between economic growth and expansion of energy consumption. Indicators such as GDP or per capita GDP have been used as proxies for economic development for several decades and the Human Development Index (HDI) has been shown to correlate well with per capita energy use. The Human Development Index is used to assess comparative levels of development in countries and includes purchasing power parity-adjusted income, literacy and life expectancy as its three main matrices. The Human Development Index is only one of many possible measures of the well-being of a society, but it can serve as a proxy indicator of development. However, a key point is that aggregate macroeconomic parameters (GDP), or even extended versions of these economic indicators (HDI), are insufficient for obtaining a complete picture of the sustainability of social and economic development.

A further indicator of technological development is decreasing energy intensity, that is, a decrease in the amount of energy needed to produce one dollar of GDP. Beyond indicators that describe the efficiency characteristics of an economy, additional macroeconomic benefits are potentially associated with Renewable Energy; for example, increased employment opportunities. Furthermore, under agreements such as that reached in Copenhagen in 2009, financial pledges have been made by wealthier nations to aid developing countries with climate change mitigation measures (Tiba, 2019c). Each of these latter points may have either positive or negative effects, depending on regional context and on the particular policies that are implemented.

Energy access to modern energy services, whether from renewable or non- renewable sources, is closely correlated with measures of development, particularly for those countries at earlier development stages. Indeed, the link between adequate energy services and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was defined explicitly in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation that emerged from the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. As emphasized by a number of studies, providing access to modern energy (such as electricity or natural gas) for the poorest members of society is crucial for the achievement of any single of the eight MDGs.

Over the past few centuries, industrialized societies have transformed their quality of life by exploiting non-renewable fossil energy sources, nuclear energy and large-scale hydroelectric power. However, in 2010 almost 20% of the world population, mostly in rural areas, still lacks access to electricity. Twice that percentage cook mainly with traditional biomass mostly gathered in an unsustainable manner. In the absence of a concerted effort to increase energy access, the absolute number of those without electricity and modern cooking possibilities is not expected to change substantially in the next few decades. Concrete indicators has to do with final energy consumption related to income, as well as breakdowns of electricity access (divided into rural and urban areas), and data for the number of those using coal or traditional biomass for cooking.

Implicit in discussions of energy access is a need for models that can assess the sustainability of future energy system pathways with respect to decreasing the wide disparity between rural and urban areas (e.g., in terms of energy forms and quantities used or infrastructure reliability) within countries or regions (Tiba, 2019c).

Energy Security

There is no commonly accepted definition of the term 'energy security' and its meaning is highly context-dependent. At a general level it can best be understood as robustness against (sudden) disruptions of energy supply. Thinking broadly across energy systems, one can distinguish between different aspects of security that operate at varying temporal and geographical scales. Two broad themes can be identified that are relevant to energy security, whether for current systems or for the planning of future Renewable Energy systems: availability and distribution of resources, and variability and reliability of energy supply. Given the interdependence of economic growth and energy consumption, access to a stable energy supply is a major political concern and a technical and economic challenge facing both developed and developing economies, since prolonged disruptions would create serious economic and basic functionality problems for most societies (Ben, 2016).

In the long term, the potential for fossil fuel scarcity and decreasing quality of fossil reserves represents an important reason for a transition to a sustainable worldwide Renewable Energy system. The issue of recoverable fossil fuel resource amounts is contentious, with optimists countered by more pessimistic views and cautious projections of lacking investments falling between the two poles. However, increased use of Renewable Energy permits countries to substitute away from the use of fossil fuels, such that existing reserves of fossil fuels are depleted less rapidly and the point at which these reserves will eventually be exhausted is shifted farther into the future. Concerns about limited availability and distribution of resources are also a critical component of energy security in the short term.

All things being equal, the more reliant an energy system is on a single energy source, the more susceptible the energy system is to serious disruptions. Examples include disruptions to oil supply, unexpectedly large and widespread periods of low wind or solar insolation (e.g., due to weather), or the emergence of unintended consequences of any supply source. Dependence on energy imports, whether of fossil fuels or the technology needed for implementation of Renewable Energy, represents a potential source of energy insecurity for both developing and industrialized countries. For example, the response of member states of the International Energy Agency (IEA; itself created in response to the first oil shock of the 1970s) to vulnerability to oil supply disruption has been to mandate that countries hold stocks of oil as reserves in the amount of 90 days of net imports.

Compared to fossil fuels, Renewable Energy resources are far more evenly distributed around the globe and in general less traded on the world market; increasing their share in a country's energy portfolio can thus diminish the dependence on actual energy imports. Hence, the extent to which Renewable Energy sources contribute to the diversification of the portfolio of supply options and reduce an economy's vulnerability to price volatility represent opportunities to enhance energy security at the global, the national as well as the local level. The introduction of renewable technologies that vary on different time scales, ranging from minutes to seasonal, adds a new concern to energy security. Not only will there be concerns about disruption of supplies by unfriendly agents, but also the vulnerability of energy supply to the vagaries of chance and nature (such as extreme events like drought) (Nathaniel, 2020a).

Put succinctly, Renewable Energy can also make a contribution to increasing the reliability of energy services, in particular in remote and rural areas that often suffer from insufficient grid access. Irrespective, a diverse portfolio of energy sources, together with good management and system design (for example, including geographical diversity of sources where appropriate) can help to enhance security. Specific indicators for security are difficult to identify. Based on the two broad themes described above, the indicators used to provide information about the energy security criterion of Sustainable Development are the magnitude of reserves, the reserves-to-production ratio, the share of imports in total primary energy consumption, the share of energy imports in total imports, as well as the share of variable and unpredictable Renewable Energy sources (Belaid & Youssef, 2017).

Climate change mitigation and reduction of environmental and health impacts reducing GHG emissions with the aim of mitigating climate change is one of the key driving forces behind a growing demand for Renewable Energy technologies. However, to evaluate the overall burden from the energy system on the environment, and to identify potential trade-offs, other impacts and categories have to be taken into account as well. Mass emissions to water and air, and usage of water, energy and land per unit of energy generated must be evaluated across technologies. Whereas some parameters can be rigorously quantified, for others comprehensive data or useful indicators may be lacking. In addition, deriving generic impacts on human health or biodiversity is a challenging task, as they are mostly specific to given sites, exposure pathways and circumstances, and often difficult to attribute to single sources (Oppong, 2019).

There are multiple methods to evaluate environmental impacts of projects, such as environmental impact statements/assessments and risk assessments. Most are site-specific, and often limited to direct environmental impacts associated with operation of the facility. To provide a clear framework for comparison, lifecycle assessment (LCA) may be cited as a bottom-up measure complemented by a comparative assessment of accident risks to account for burdens resulting from outside normal operation. Most published lifecycle assessment of energy supply technologies only assembles lifecycle inventories; quantifying emissions to the environment (or use of resources) rather than reporting effects (or impacts) on environmental quality.

A similar approach is followed as literature reporting lifecycle impacts or aggregate sustainability indicators is scarce. Partly, this is due to the incommensurability of different impact categories. Attempts to combine various types of indicators into one overall score (for example by joining their impact pathways into a common endpoint, or by monetization) have been made; however uncertainties associated with such scoring approaches are often so high that they preclude decision making. Nevertheless, social costs are based on monetization of impacts. Be that as it may, social,

environmental and economic impacts: global and regional assessment countries at different levels of development have different incentives to advance Renewable Energy (Momodu, 2017).

For developing countries enhancing good governance especially in the continent of Africa, the most likely reasons to adopt Renewable Energy technologies are providing access to energy which leads to creating employment opportunities in the formal (i.e., legally regulated and taxable) economy, and reducing the costs of energy imports (or, in the case of fossil energy exporters, prolong the lifetime of their natural resource base). For industrialized countries, the primary reasons to encourage Renewable Energy include reducing carbon emissions to mitigate climate change, enhancing energy security, and actively promoting structural change in the economy, such that job losses in declining manufacturing sectors are softened by new employment opportunities related to Renewable Energy (Østergaard, 2015).

Social and Economic Development

Due to the multi-dimensional nature of Sustainable Development neither a comprehensive assessment of all mitigation options nor a full accounting of all relevant costs can be performed. Rather, the following point identifies key issues and provides a framework to discuss the relative benefits and disadvantages of Renewable Energy and fossil fuels with respect to development.

Energy and Economic Growth

With the ability to control energy flows being a crucial factor for industrial production and socioeconomic development, industrial societies are frequently characterized as 'high-energy civilizations'. Globally, per capita incomes are positively correlated with per capita energy use and economic growth can be identified as the most relevant factor behind increasing energy consumption in the last decades. Nevertheless, there is no agreement on the direction of the causal relationship between energy use and increased macroeconomic output, as the results crucially depend on the empirical methodology employed as well as the region and time period under study. Industrialization brings about structural change in the economy and therefore affects energy demand.

As economic activity expands and diversifies, demands for more sophisticated and flexible energy sources arise: while societies that highly depend on agriculture derive a large part of primary energy consumption from traditional biomass, coal and liquid fuels - such as kerosene and liquid petroleum gas - gain in importance with rising income, and electricity, gas and oil dominate at high per capita incomes (Maji, 2015). From a sectoral perspective, countries at an early stage of development consume the largest part of total primary energy in the residential (and to a lesser extent agricultural) sector. In emerging economies the manufacturing sector dominates, while in fully industrialized countries services and transport account for steadily increasing shares. Furthermore, Maji (2015) pointed out that electricity - which offers higher quality and greater flexibility compared to other forms of energy—has been a driving force for the mechanization and automation of production in industrialized countries and a significant contributor to continued increases in productivity.

Despite the fact that as a group industrialized countries consume significantly higher amounts of energy per capita than developing ones, a considerable cross-sectional variation of energy use patterns across countries prevails: while some countries (such as, e.g., Japan) display high levels of per capita incomes at comparably low levels of energy use, others are relatively poor despite extensive energy consumption, especially countries abundantly endowed with fossil fuel resources, in which energy is

often heavily subsidized. It is often asserted that developing and transition economies can 'leapfrog', that is, adopt modern, highly efficient energy technologies, to embark on less energy- and carbon-intensive growth patterns compared to the now fully industrialized economies during their phase of industrialization.

For industrialized countries, one hypothesis suggests that economic growth can largely be decoupled from energy use by steady declines in energy intensity as structural change and efficiency improvements trigger the 'dematerialization' of economic activity. However, despite the decreasing energy intensities (i.e., energy consumption per unit of GDP) observed over time in almost all regions, declines in energy intensity historically often have been outpaced by economic growth and hence have proved insufficient to achieve actual reductions in energy use. In addition, it has been argued that decreases in energy intensity in industrialized countries can partially be explained by the fact that energy-intensive industries are increasingly moved to developing countries and, as observed energy.

Conclusion

Significant progress is found in the development of renewable energy systems from a technology side, resource assessment side, and from a systems' design perspective. The review has demonstrated that there are good resources of wind, wave and solar power to be exploited in hitherto largely unexploited areas in many countries in the continent of Africa for the purpose of enhancing proper governance. Far apart the fact that in term of natural resources, Africa is the world's richest continent. It has 50% of the world's gold, most of the world's diamonds and chromium, 90% of the cobalt, 40% of the world's potential hydroelectric power, 65% of the manganese, millions of acres of untilled farmland (Esso & Keho, 2016).

Discourses on the African predicament are usually dominated by the critical appraisal of the role of the state. More often than not, the far reaching conclusion is that the state is a major obstacle to development and governance in Africa. This is instructive given that the state is part of several mutually reinforcing factors and forces – hostile international political economy, foreign aid, scarcity of resources, resource curse, bad leadership and policies, poor policy execution, corruption, military rule, weak civil society, institutional, geographical, and cultural issues, central to explaining the African crises. More so, it is an affirmation that the state as the arena of political power and authority decision making is a catalytic force in the development and governance of society (Ogunniyi & Ilo, 2021).

By and large, in the absence of greater commitment generally by Africans to suitable governance, no Renewable Energy system put in place will serve such purpose. Therefore, prior to the seeking of Renewable Energy toward sustainability development as solutions to enhance proper governance, society of Africa and their leaders in this 21st century must be determined to have good governance.

Recommendations

1. Launching of public awareness campaigns among local investors particularly small-scale entrepreneurs and end users of RETs to highlight the importance and benefits of renewable, particularly solar, wind, and biomass energies.

2. Amendment of the encouragement of investment act, to include furthers concessions, facilities, tax holidays, and preferential treatment to attract national and foreign capital investment.

3. Allocation of a specific percentage of soft loans and grants obtained by governments to augment budgets of (R & D) related to manufacturing and commercialization of RETs.

4. Governments should give incentives to encourage the household sector to use renewable energy instead of conventional energy.

5. Execute joint investments between the private sector and the financing entities to disseminate the renewable with technical support from the research and development entities.

6. Availing of training opportunities to personnel at different levels in donor countries and other developing countries to make use of their wide experience in application and commercialization of RETs particularly renewable energy.

7. The governments should play a leading role in adopting renewable energy devices in public institutions, e.g., schools, hospitals, government departments, police stations, etc., for lighting, water pumping, water heating, communication and refrigeration.

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