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Submission of Articles Guidelines

* Papers should not be more than 18 pages and should be accompanied with an abstract of not more than 250 words.
* The following referencing styles are allowed-APA, MLA and Chicago.
* Articles should be typed in Times New Romans, font size 12 and 1.5 line spacing.

Note: Opinions expressed in the journal are not of the University Press and Editorial Team but are sure that of the authors.

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**CONTEXTUAL ISSUES AND EFFECTS OF MONEY LAUNDERING CRIMES WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**

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**Abstract**

The global fight against money laundering has been fierce against the backdrop of associated consequences. The paper was motivated by the perceived devastating impact of money laundering on national economies, particularly those of developing countries. As the world experiences economic globalization, economic and financial crimes are being spread across international borders and *modus operandi* has become sophisticated. This paper attempts to explore the gross effects of money laundering as crime within the context of International law. The study adopted a descriptive method of analysis and data were sourced from secondary sources. It was observed that money laundering destroys countries' socio-economic architecture in diverse ways among which are undermining the integrity of financial institutions and markets, loss of control of economic policy, increased criminality, loss of revenue, and economic tardiness among other implications. The study suggests that nations of the world should harmonize their anti-laundering strategies and adopt a common measure to dismantle syndicates or individuals that engages in money laundering. This could be achieved by resorting to aggressive enforcement of anti-laundering legal frameworks.

**Keywords:** Effects, Money, Laundering, Crime and International Law.

**Introduction**

Money laundering is the concealment of the source, nature, existence, location and disposition of money and/or property obtained illegally or from criminal activities such as embezzlement, drug trafficking, corruption and large scale crime. It is a process by which money generated by criminal activities is converted through legitimate business into assets that cannot be easily traced back to their illegal origins. In recent times, money laundering has gained high recognition as global trend. According to Steel (2006), money laundering is said to be what it is because it shows how illegal monies are put through a cycle of transactions. This means that the source of such funds is illegal.

The origin of money laundering could not be ascertained by anyone, but there are several opinions that it started several thousand years ago with Chinese merchants. In the words of silkscreen (1994) and Steel (2006) they claimed that it all started from Mafia Ownership of Laundromats in the United States where they needed to prove the genuine source for their monies, as they earned their cash from extortion, prostitution, gambling and bootleg liquor. Also according to silkscreen (1994), the development of money laundering was for trade and that Nigeria as a country is the centre of money laundering in Africa. Nigeria’s historical record of exploitation goes as far back as when her people were used as slaves under British colony and as an independent and a sovereign country experiencing transition from a military dictatorship to a democratic form of government after over 16years of military rule. Now, with the democratic form of government, money laundering is still on the increase. With this rate of scams in Nigeria financial sector, the law enforcement decided to come up with legislative act called the money laundering (prohibition) Act 2004, this was followed by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Anti-money laundering compliance manual guidelines from Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC, 2003), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission ICPC, 2000). All agencies were changed with the responsibility of fight against money laundering and enforcement of all laws dealing with economic and financial crimes in Nigeria.

Banks have realized that their legacy rule-based systems cannot effectively mitigate risks related to money laundering. Consequently, they have begun to embrace advanced technology that can effectively solve these problems. As a result, the illegal activity of money laundering is now recognized as potentially by individuals, small and large business, corrupt officials, members of organized crime or of cults, and even corrupt states or intelligence agencies, through a complex network of shell companies based in offshore tax haven.

**Conceptual Issues in Money Laundering**

**Money Laundering and Stages of Transactions**

Kama (2019 cited other scholars, critically explained stages of money laundering and directions of money laundering flows. Conceptually, money laundering is the criminal's way of disguising the origin of his illicit money) or financial assets so that detection and the risk of prosecution in its use could be avoided. Legally, it is defined as any attempt to engage in monetary transaction that involves criminally derived property (Bauer & Utmann, 2000). Anti- money-laundering, therefore, is an effort designed to prevent or limit the ability of criminals to use their ill-gotten gains (McDowell & Novis, 2001). It is important to emphasize that effective anti-money laundering policies support a variety of other good-governance policies that assist in sustaining economic development, particularly through the strengthening of the financial sector. Originally, the scope of money laundering activity was limited to proceeds from drug trafficking or proceeds from offences related to organized crime, but it has now been drastically expanded to cover other, if not all, types of proceeds of crimes.

The dynamics of money laundering involves transforming the proceeds of crime into usable form and disguising their illegal origins. After the illicit proceeds are introduced to the financial system, they are hidden, laundered through a variety of transactions and financial vehicles and, finally, invested in financial and related assets. These operations often involve international transactions as a way of obscuring the source of the funds. Indeed, money laundering is intrinsically global. If one country or jurisdiction tightens its regulations on money laundering, the activity will quickly shift to a less regulated environment. Money laundering generally involves a series of multiple transactions used to disguise the source of the ill-gotten assets. These transactions typically fall into three stages that sometimes overlap (Kama, 2019).

**Directions of Money Laundering Flows**

Five directions of money laundering flows could be evident in an economy and these include: (Kama, 2019).

(i) Domestic money laundering flows: This is a process by which illegal domestic funds arc laundered within the country's economy and reinvested or otherwise spent within the economy.

(ii) Returning laundered funds: Under this, laundered funds originating from a particular developing country formerly laundered partially or in full abroad arc returned for integration in the originating country.

(iii) Inbound funds: This is a case for which the predicate crime occurred abroad are either initially laundered (placed) abroad or within the country, and ultimately are integrated into the economy.

(iv) Outbound funds: These typically constitute illicit capital flight from the economy and do not return for integration in the original economy.

(v) Flow-through funds: These enter the country as part of the laundering process and largely depart for integration elsewhere, thus playing little or no role in the economy itself (although the 'fees' for money laundering activity may remain).

**Common Money Laundering Methods**

The classic methods of money laundering include:

1. The structuring of large amounts of money into multiple small transactions at banks (often called smurfing)

2. The use of foreign exchanges

3. Cash smugglers and wire transfers to move money across borders

4. Investing in high-value and movable commodities such as diamonds and gold

5. Discreetly buying and selling valuable assets such as real estate

6. Foreign bank accounts

7. Gambling and shell companies

These are all actively used tactics of money launderers. In addition to these, criminals are now making use of advanced technology and the expansive nature of the internet to obscure their presence and use their ill-gotten money at will.

Modern methods used by launderers to beat detection

**1. Online banking**

As banks are aware of the time and resources required to combat laundering activities in traditional banking, they oversee investments in these areas diligently. However, the loopholes of online banking are often undermined in the banking systems of many countries. This weakness proves to be a thriving ground for criminals who make use of these loose standards for money laundering and terror financing purposes. Online banking is currently the playground of many fraudsters who are using social engineering methods to access other people’s bank accounts in their favour. For money laundering purposes, a criminal may transfer money directly to such a victim’s account and trick the person into sharing sensitive information such as passwords or into getting remote access to the victim’s computer. Then, the criminal can make an unauthorised payment from the victim’s account (Tookitaki Online News, 2022).

**2. Business email compromise**

This is a systematic scam in which businesses working with foreign suppliers and doing regular wire transfers are targeted. Here, a criminal compromises legitimate business email accounts via social engineering or computer intrusion techniques to conduct unauthorised fund transfers. While the scheme is mostly used to defraud another out of money, it can also be an effective tool to layer and launder money with or without the knowledge of the victim (Tookitaki Online News, 2022).

**3. Synthetic identity**

Fake identity creation on the internet is an easy task nowadays. Criminals are using a combination of real and fabricated information to open accounts for credit cards, online deposits and loans. Providers of these digital accounts, including banks, normally do not undertake rigorous checks on customers, and the basic security checks they have can be easily circumvented by criminals. This crime is costing banks a lot of time and money along with reputation diminishment. They are spending countless hours chasing down people who actually don’t exist. They only realise there’s a problem when they notice some suspicious activity with these accounts. And when they try to take some action against these accounts, they often vanish suddenly, leaving no trace of the owners. (Tookitaki Online News, 2022).

**4. Anonymous online payment services**

Payment methods like prepaid gift cards, prepaid debit cards and prepaid credit cards can be purchased in a completely anonymous manner or with fictitious details. They can be purchased via cash payment as well. The value loaded in these cards can be redeemed online anywhere in the world without revealing the identity of the person.

**5. Virtual currencies**

Cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin, due to their inherent anonymity feature, are one the most convenient ways to wash money. These currencies are not connected to a person’s identity and only depend on the private key connected to an account. In addition, individuals, who use digital currencies, do not have to rely on intermediaries for value transfers. Digital currency platforms often do not carry out checks for the source of money, politically exposed persons (PEPs) and sanctions.

Experts are also of the opinion that an enormous but unreasonable surge in the prices of many cryptocurrencies may be because of their use by criminals to launder their illegal proceeds. Banks and financial institutions are concerned about the obvious association of cryptocurrencies with cybercrime and money laundering. As a growing number of people are trying to find their luck with cryptocurrency investments, the chances of using these currencies for illegal purposes are also rising. Many banking regulators have banned financial institutions from dealing with cryptocurrency exchanges, and banks have restricted customers transacting in virtual currencies. However, both these transactions are happening in many countries, and there is a mounting risk of financial crimes involved. Holding the general hostility of central banks towards cryptocurrencies apart, some prominent global banks have started active cooperation with cryptocurrencies (Tookitaki Online News, 2022).

**International Legal Framework on Money Laundering as an International Crime**

**The Vienna Convention**

As the international drug trafficking and the tremendous amounts of related money entering the bank system were very high, the United Nation, through the United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP) made the first move by an international agreement to combat drug trafficking and money laundering. This effort was seen in the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and psychotropic substances (Vienna Convention). The Convention came into force on November 11, 1990. The Vienna Convention, deals primarily with provisions to combat the illegal drug trades and related law enforcement issues. As of January 1, 2012, it was noticed at the UN Web Archive that there were 185 parties to the Convention. Although it does not use the term money laundering, the Convention defines the concept and call upon countries to criminalize the activity (Ahmad, 2013). Article 1 of The Vienna Convention explains definitions. It is stated that “any property derived from or obtained, directly or in directly, through the Commission of an offence established in accordance with Article 3, paragraph 1 where property means asset of every kind, whether corporeal or incorporeal, movable or immovable, tangible or intangible, and legal documents or instruments evidencing little to, or interest in, such assets.

Under Article 4 Paragraph 1 of the Convention money laundering was explained as conversion or transfer of property, knowing that such property is derived from any offence or offences for the purpose of concealing or disguising the illicit origin of the property or of assisting any person who involved in the commission of such an offence or offences to evade the consequences of his action. Further it is stated that the concealment or disguise of the true nature, source, location, disposition, movement, rights with respect to, or ownership of property, knowing that such property is derived from an offence or offences established in accordance with sub-paragraph a) of this paragraph or from an act of participation in such an offence or offences. The Convention defines proceeds with general definition because it strictly considers proceeds that derived from or obtained, directly or indirectly, from drug. This is limitation of it but it was established to fight against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and at the same time fighting against money laundering, exclusively, precedes that derived from drug but introduce new phrase to legislation and lawmakers.

By its terms, the Vienna Convention limits predicate offences to drug trafficking offences. As a consequence, other crimes, such as, kidnapping, fraud and theft do not amount to money laundering offences under the said Convention. However, the international community has developed the view that the offences for money laundering should go well beyond drug trafficking. Brown Alen had commented the same Convention in his book “Proceeds of Crime-Money Laundering, Confiscation and Forfeiture” (1996) that in general view, the Convention is accepted at international level as a fundamental document for fight against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs because it was first international Convention that include all proceeds from drug dealer as produce, transfer, sale, and prohibit money laundering derived from these activities, and make easily criminal international co-operation. With note into fundamental position this Convention, and with general considering other international documents that approved after the Vienna Convention, this is easily finding this point that all of these documents and Conventions have been inspired by the Vienna Convention. Therefore, European Commission, Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and other international instrument have expanded the Vienna Convention definition of predicate offences to include other serious crimes (Ahmad, 2013).

**Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**

The FATF is an inter-governmental body whose purpose is to establish international standards and develop and promote policies, both at national and international levels, to combat money laundering (ML) and terrorist financing (TF). The FATF is a policy-making body which works to generate the necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in these areas. The FATF also regularly examines methods, techniques and trends of money laundering and terrorist financing to ensure the continued relevance of its policies and standards. Since its inception, the FATF has operated under a finite life-span, requiring a specific decision of the Task Force to continue. The first task of the FATF was to establish the international standard for combating money laundering. The FATF issued its first set of international anti-money laundering standards in 1990 the forty recommendations on money laundering. These recommendations were revised in 1996 so as to take into account changes in money laundering methods, techniques and trends. Report from FATF shows that in October 2001, as a response to the September 11 attacks in the United States, the FATF expanded its mandate and issued Eight Special Recommendations to deal with the issue of terrorist financing. The continued evolution of money laundering techniques led the FATF to undertake a through updating of the FATF standards in June 2003. (Ahmad, 2013).

The US Government Accountability Office had published a report entitled “International Financial Crime: Treasury’s Roles and Responsibilities Relating to Selected Provisions of USA Patriot Act which was released on 12 June 2006. It has stated that in October 2004, the FATF published a Ninth Special Recommendation, making its overall standard as the 40+9 Recommendations which is a strong framework for governments to develop their domestic efforts against money laundering and terrorist financing. The FATF standards have been endorsed directly by more than 170 jurisdictions around the world, as well as by the Boards of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).

In July 2005, the United Nations (UN) Security Council in its Resolution 1617 stated that it “strongly urges all Member States to implement the comprehensive international standards embodied in the Financial Action Task Force’s (FATF) Forty Recommendations on Money Laundering and the FATF Nine Special Recommendations on Terrorist Financing.” Consistent with its mandate, today’s priority of the FATF is to ensure global action to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, and concrete implementation of its 40+9 Recommendations throughout the world. Starting with its own members, the FATF monitors countries progress in implementing AML/CFT measures, reviews money laundering and terrorist financing techniques and counter-measures, and promotes the adoption and implementation of the 40+9 Recommendations globally. In performing its work, the FATF collaborates closely with a number of partners, international and regional organizations that are involved in combating money laundering and terrorist financing. The FATF has developed strong partnership with these organizations in order to constitute a global network of organizations against money laundering and terrorist financing. Money laundering methods and techniques change in response to developing counter-measures. Mascian daro, Donato had written a book on Global Financing Crime: Terrorism, Money Laundering and Offshore Centers (2004) where he had acknowledged that in recent years, the FATF has noted increasingly sophisticated combinations of techniques, such as the increased use of legal persons to disguise the true ownership and control of illegal proceeds, and an increased use of professionals to provide advice and assistance in laundering criminal funds. These factors, combined with the experience gained through the FATF‟s Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories process, and a number of national and international initiatives, led the FATF to review and revise the Forty Recommendations into a new comprehensive framework for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

The FATF calls upon all countries to take the necessary step to bring their national systems for combating money laundering and terrorist financing into compliance with the new FATF recommendations, and to effectively implement these measures. The review process for revising the Forty Recommendations was an extensive one; it is open to FATF members, non-members, observers, financial and other affected sectors and interested parties. This consultation process provided a wide range of input, all of which was considered in the review process. The Recommendations therefore set minimum standards for action for countries to implement the detail according to their particular circumstances and constitutional frameworks. The Recommendations cover all measures that national systems should have in place within their criminal justice and regulatory systems; the preventive measures to be taken by financial institutions and certain other businesses and professions, and international co-operation.

In forty recommendations for fighting money laundering, FATF specifically incorporates the technical and legal definitions of money laundering set out in the Vienna and Palermo Conventions and lists 20 designed categories of offences that must be included as predicate offences for money laundering. In response to the growing concern about money laundering, the international community has acted on many fronts. The international response is, in large part, recognition of the fact that money laundering takes advantage of high-speed international transfer mechanisms, such as wire transfers, to accomplish their goals (Ahmad, 2013).

**The Palermo Convention**

In order to expand the effort to fight international organized crime, the UN adopted The International convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. This Convention contains a broad range of provisions to fight organized crime and commits countries that ratify this Convention to implement its provisions through passage of domestic laws. The Convention went into force on the 29th of September 2003, having been signed by 147 countries and ratified by 82 countries. The Palermo Convention is important because its AML provisions adopt the same approach previously adopted by the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) in its Forty Recommendations on Money Laundering (Ahmad, 2013).

The purpose of this Convention is to promote co-operation to prevent and combat transnational organized crime more effectively. The Convention includes 41 Articles and is most important international document that has special view to transnational organized crime. The Convention declare to parties that carry out their obligations under this Convention in a manner consistent with the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and that of non-intervention in the domestic affair of other States. The Convention discuss about money laundering in Article 6 and 7. This can be seen in Article 6 of Palermo Convention which defines money laundering as intentionally conversion or transfer of property knowing that such property is proceeds of crime, for the purpose of concealing or disguising the illicit origin of the property or of assisting any person who is involved in the commission of the predicate offence to evade the legal consequences of his actions. The concealment or disguise of the true nature, source, location, disposition, movement, rights with respect to, or ownership of, property, knowing that such property is the proceeds of crime; and subject to these constitutional principles and the basic concepts of its legal system. The acquisition, possession or use of property, knowing at the time of receipt, that such property is the proceeds of crime; by participation in, association or conspiracy to commit, attempts to commit and aiding, abetting, facilitating and counseling the commission of any at the offences established in accordance with this article. The Convention widely extent laundering offences in compare with Vienna Convention and include all of crime and not only drug crime. With consider Article 6 and 7 the Convention and compare with the Vienna Convention, this is easily finding progressive in this manner” (Ahmad, 2013).

**Legal Consequences of Money Laundering on Launders**

State and federal money laundering laws differ significantly in the potential penalties associated with them. Money laundering convictions typically result in fines, prison, probation, or a combination of penalties.

**Prison**: Money laundering is almost charged as a felony offense, but in some states, misdemeanor charges are possible. A misdemeanor money laundering conviction can result in a jail sentence up to a yearlong, while felony convictions have penalties of a year or more in prison. In some situations, such as when a person is a repeat offender, where the money laundering was a part of an ongoing criminal enterprise, or where the laundering was related to terrorist activities, prison sentences can last 35 years or more.

**Fines**: Money laundering fines can be steep. While misdemeanor convictions typically allow for fines up to no more than a few thousand dollars, a federal conviction for money laundering can result in fines of up to $500,000 or double the amount of money that was laundered, whichever is greater.

**Probation**: Probation sentences are possible for money laundering convictions. Courts impose probation sentences that last a specific amount of time, typically at least one year, but sometimes as long as three years or more. During the time you're on probation you have to meet specific probation conditions. Probation terms typically include regularly reporting to a probation officer, allowing the officer to conduct random home checks, taking random drug tests, and not committing other crimes. If you violate probation a court can revoke it and order you to serve a prison term, lengthen the probation period, impose additional fines, or impose other penalties.

**The Principle of *Nullum Crimen Sine Lege***

Given that the African Court would be the first international criminal court to exercise jurisdiction over money laundering, defense counsel can be expected to challenge the legality of the Court’s jurisdiction on the basis of the principle of *nullum crimen sine lege*. Defense counsel might argue, for example, that the African Court lacks jurisdiction over money laundering because the offence has not been criminalized under international law, customary or conventional. A number of international treaties include provisions on money laundering (e.g., the 1988 Vienna Convention and UNTOC), but these treaties do not enjoy universal participation among African states and cannot be viewed as evidence of custom, for reasons explained below. Moreover, these treaties also do not, by themselves, create international criminal responsibility, as they only require states to criminalize money laundering under domestic, as opposed to international law.

But prosecutors should be able to overcome jurisdictional challenges based on the principle of legality by arguing that Article 28Ibis not only sets out the Court’s subject matter jurisdiction, but also provides the applicable law. In other words, this provision is both jurisdictional and substantive. This would not be a novel legal argument. In fact, scholars have made the same arguments about Articles 6, 7, 8, and 8bis of the Rome Statute of the ICC, which respectively concern genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and aggression. These provisions do not entirely conform to customary international law. But because the articles themselves criminalize the crimes over which the Court enjoys jurisdiction and they only apply prospectively, the principle of *nullum crimen* *sine lege* does not pose problems. This approach to the Rome Statute is supported by Article 21 concerning applicable law. This provision requires the Court to apply the Statute ‘in the first place’, along with the Elements of Crimes and the Rules of Evidence, before applying ‘in the second place’ custom or treaty law. Unlike the Rome Statute, the Amended Protocol does not contain any provision on applicable law. But the absence of such a provision would not preclude arguments that the provisions on the international criminal jurisdiction of the African Court effectively conflate jurisdiction and applicable law.

Article 28Ibis of the Amended Protocol as a substantive provision is, in fact, the only workable approach to the offence of money laundering. If prosecuting money laundering at the African Court is to be viable in practice, then the provision itself must be understood as stating the applicable law because of the absence of any customary international law prohibiting money laundering. The existence of numerous treaty provisions that require the criminalization of money laundering does not evidence the existence of a parallel customary norm, despite the fact that some of these treaties enjoy high ratification levels. While state practice in criminalizing money laundering may be widespread, this practice appears to stem, at least in part, from states’ treaty obligations, and not from a freestanding sense of legal obligation to do so, which would be required for the requisite *opinio juris*. In addition, the 40 Recommendations on money laundering and terrorist financing issued by the FATF also cannot be taken as evidence of a customary norm prohibiting money laundering.

The FATF 40 Recommendations comprise a non-binding instrument. Compliance with the anti-money laundering norms set out in the Recommendations reveals nothing about whether states have a freestanding sense of legal obligation. Instead, FATF has brought about widespread implementation of anti-money laundering laws through political and economic pressure, and by encouraging states to comply with their existing treaty obligations under the 1988 Vienna Convention and UNTOC. The absence of a customary prohibition on money laundering is, in essence, irrelevant for the jurisdiction of the African Court. When drafting the constituent instrument of a judicial institution such as the African Court, states may vest it with whatever jurisdiction they choose, and they can also authorize it to apply any law of their choosing (subject to the principle of legality). The subject matter jurisdiction and applicable law of international courts and tribunals do not necessarily depend on existing customary or treaty law, but may be determined by the constituent instrument itself.

Nor must the subject matter jurisdiction of international criminal courts be limited to serious or grave crimes – a category into which offences like corruption and money laundering may or may not fall, depending partly on how we understand terms like serious and grave. While the ICC is indeed limited to ‘the most serious crimes of international concern,’ this may be understood as a policy decision made by the drafters of the Rome Statute, and not as the consequence of any legal requirement .As a result of the fact that the Amended Protocol not only establishes jurisdiction over money laundering but also sets forth the applicable law, it may be understood as a treaty that creates international legal obligations for individuals. While treaties that directly impose obligations on individuals or legal persons are relatively rare in the international legal system, they are not unheard of (see the 1949 Geneva Conventions).But in order to avoid binding individuals or legal persons in states that did not consent to the Amended Protocol, the jurisdictional scope of the money laundering provision would have to be limited in practice to offences that occurred on the territory of states parties, or offences committed by the nationals of states parties.

The exercise of jurisdiction over offences committed by non-nationals outside of the territory of states parties to the Amended Protocol would therefore run afoul of the principle of legality. This approach to the Amended Protocol, as a substantive as well as jurisdictional provision, is workable due to the fact that Article 28Ibis is relatively detailed. This provision closely resembles the money laundering provision in the 1988 Vienna Convention, which has formed the basis for all subsequent treaty provisions on money laundering. These treaty provisions are not necessarily less detailed than domestic statutory provisions on money laundering, and they could form a sufficient basis for giving individuals and legal entities notice of the *actus reus*, or the conduct that constitutes a criminal offence. This approach to Article 28Ibis is also viable because the temporal jurisdiction of the African Court is not retroactive. If the applicable law set out in Article 28Ibis could apply retroactively, then this would indeed pose a problem with respect to the principle of legality.

Finally, Article 28Ibis does, however, fail to stipulate a *mens rea* requirement in its chapeau, unlike the 1988 Vienna Convention, UNTOC, and UNCAC, which all require states parties to criminalize conduct that was ‘committed intentionally’. The omission of a *mens rea* requirement could prove problematic from the perspective of the principle of legality, unless prosecutors and judges at the African Court engage in some creative treaty interpretation. The use of the word ‘knowing’ in Article 28Ibis (i) and the phrase ‘with the knowledge’ in Article 28Ibis (ii) could, for instance, be taken as indications that the conduct set out in this provision must be committed intentionally. But if such arguments fail to persuade the judges, then this apparent drafting error – which also plagues the other transnational criminal law provisions – could indeed prevent the prosecution of money laundering, along with many other offences set out in the Amended Protocol

**Challenges of Implementing Anti-Monetary Laundery Laws**

Banks and financial institutions are facing some serious AML compliance challenges that can be typically attributed to faulty mitigation approaches. Firms that fail to prevent laundering tend to pay a heavy price in the form of declining revenues, customer dissatisfaction, huge penalties, loss of reputation, and fall in stock prices. To comply with AML regulations, banks around the world use various technology-based products and solutions. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an inter-governmental body with 37 members the world over, has framed a set of regulations that is recognized as an international framework of AML standards. These AML regulations help detect, report, and prevent suspicious activities at financial institutions. Banks face several challenges in managing risks involved in assessing the current AML status and identifying vulnerabilities. Disparate transactions and increasing complexities of fraud and cybercrimes compound the situation. To address these challenges, banks need to ensure data protection, detect fraud in time, and prioritize compliance with the FATF regulations.

*Some other challenges banks face include:*

Increased governance: Banks and financial institutions can find it difficult to manage cross-border and multi-jurisdictional AML-compliance requirements and ever- growing customer due diligence requirements. Identifying beneficial ownership and initiating remedial measures to address AML gaps uncovered by regulatory reviews also come with their own set of challenges.

Lack of skilled personnel: Getting skilled resources with in-depth knowledge of AML can be a challenge. Other issues include high on-boarding timelines and costs, and attrition. Organizations also need to invest considerable time and effort in keeping personnel abreast with changing regulatory requirements.

Complicated processes and technology: AML compliance requires banks to put in place a multiplicity of processes and technology solutions that will consolidate KYC data and systems in a single repository. They also need to create infrastructure for cross-channel detection of suspicious activities, improve data quality, and standardize data to enable centralized analysis of fraud and financial crimes.

The risk level assigned during on-boarding varies according to the transactions undertaken by the customer. This means that banks have to assess the risks dynamically for each customer, and change risk levels accordingly, to prevent false positives. This necessitates continual transaction monitoring for each customer, which is a mammoth task.

**Effects of Money Laundering**

Money laundering has negative effects on economic development. Money laundering constitutes a serious threat to national economies and respective governments. The infiltration and sometimes saturation of dirty money into legitimate financial sectors and nations accounts can threaten economic and political stability. Economic crimes have a devastating effect on a national economy since potential victims of such crimes are far more numerous than those in other forms of crime. Economic crimes also have the potential of adversely affecting people who do not prima-facie, seem to be the victims of the crime. For example, tax evasion results in loss of government revenue, thus affecting the potential of the government to spend on development schemes thereby affecting a large section of the population who could have benefited from such government expenditure.

A company fraud not only results in cheating of the people who have invested in that company but may also adversely affects investors’ confidence and eventually the growth of the economy.

The negative economic effects of money laundering on economic development are difficult to quantify, yet it is clear that such activity damages the financial-sector institutions that are critical to economic growth, reduces productivity in the economy’s real sector by diverting resources and encouraging crime and corruption, which slow economic growth, and can distort the economy’s external sector international trade and capital flows to the detriment of long-term economic development.

Developing countries’ (Developmental States) strategies to establish offshore financial center (hereinafter OFCS) as vehicles for economic development are also impaired by significant money laundering activity through OFC channels. The negative effects of money laundering activities may be on financial sector, real sector of formal agents such as state, financial institutions and banking sector.

**The Financial Sector**

Financial sector may get negative effects of money laundering especially financial institutions including banking and non –banking financial institutions (NBFIs), and equity markets- may directly or indirectly be affected. Basically, these institutions facilitate concentration of capital resources from domestic savings and funds from abroad. These institutions provide impetus to furtherance of investment prospects by providing conducive environment and efficient allocation of these resources to investment projects which contributes substantially to long run economic growth. Money Laundering impairs the sustainability and development of financial institutions in two ways:

1. Firstly the financial institutions are weakened directly through money laundering as there seems to be a correlation between money laundering and fraudulent activities undertaken by employees of the institutions. Similarly, with the increase in money laundering activities, major parts of financial institutions of a state are vulnerable to crime by criminal elements. This strengthens the criminals and other parallel system of money laundering channels. This may lead to the eviction of less equipped competitors & giving rise to monopoly.

2. Customer trust is fundamental to the growth of sound financial institutions, and the perceived risk to the growth of sound financial institutions, and the perceived risk to depositors and investors from fraud and corruption is an obstacle to such trust.

**The Real Sector**

Money laundering adversely affects economic growth through the real sector by diverting less productive activities and by facilitating domestic corruption and crime. ‘‘The less expensive the money laundering input to crime is, as a result of lax anti-money laundering policies, the more productive (active) the criminal will be’’. Money laundering carried out through the channels other than financial institutions includes more “sterile” investments such as real estate, art, antiques, jewelry and luxury automobiles, or investments of the type that gives lower marginal productivity in an economy. These sub optimal allocations of resource give lower level of economic growth which is a serious detriment to economic growth for developing countries. Criminals reinvest their proceeds in companies and real estate with the purpose to make further profits, legal or illegal. Most of these investments are in sectors that are familiar to the criminal, such as bar, restaurant, prostitution. The real estate sector is the largest and most vulnerable sector for money laundering. Real estate is important for money laundering, because it is a non-transparent market where the values of the objects are often difficult to estimate and where big value increases can happen and is an efficient method to place large amounts of money. The price increase in real estate is profitable and the annual profits on real business create a legal basis for income. The real estate has the following features, which make it attractive for criminal to launder money: a safe investment in the objective value is difficult to assess, it allows to realize “white” returns.

**The External Sector**

Money laundering activities may impair any country’s economy through the trade and international capital flows. Excessive illicit capital flight from a state may be facilitated by either domestic financial institutions or by foreign financial institutions. That illicit capital flight drains scarce resources specially from developing economies; so, by that way economic growth of respective economy is adversely affected. Money laundering negatively affects trust of local citizens in their own domestic financial institutions as well as trust of foreign investors and financial institutions in a state’s financial institution which ultimately contributes to economic growth. Money laundering channels may also be associated with distortions of a country’s’ imports and exports. As with the involvement of criminal elements on the import side they may use illicit proceeds to purchase imported luxury goods, either with laundered funds or as part of the process of laundering such funds. Such imports do not generate domestic economic activity or employment, and in some cases can artificially depress domestic prices, thus reducing the profitability of domestic enterprises. The integrity of the banking and financial services market place depends heavily on the perception that it functions within a framework of high legal, professional and ethical standards. A reputation for integrity is the one of the most valuable assets of a financial institution. Dangers for the reputation can occur when a country deliberately declares to want to attract ‘criminal money. If funds from criminal activity can be easily processed through a particular institution-either because its employees or directors have been bribed or because the institution turns a blind eye to the criminal nature of such funds-the institution could be drawn into active complicity with criminals and become part of the criminal network itself. Evidence of such complicity will have a damaging effect on the attitudes of other financial intermediaries and of regulatory authorities as well as ordinary customers. Money laundering not only threatens the financial system of a country by taking away command of the economic policy from the government, but also deteriorates the moral and social standing of the society by exposing it to activities such as drug trafficking, smuggling, corruption and other criminal activities.

**The Global Sector**

Money Laundering has become a global problem. Criminals target foreign jurisdiction with liberal bank secrecy laws and weak anti-money laundering regulatory regimes as they transfer illicit funds through domestic and international financial institutions often with the speed and ease of faceless internet transactions. This easy and vast infiltration of Criminal proceeds into world market can be stabilize them and can have a corrupting effect on those who work within the market system. The penetration of criminals into the legitimate markets can also shift the balance of economic power from responsible and responsive entities to rogue agents who have no political or social accountability. In short, when criminal enterprises are able to enjoy the fruits of the criminal ventures, the world market can be destabilized, leaving some countries vulnerable to persuasion and interference by corrupt organization.

**Causes of Money Laundering**

Several factors give rise to money laundering, and they may be present within a country or state, or might operate transnationally. Some of the most prominent factors that lead to money laundering are discussed below.

**1. Tax evasion**

Tax evasion leads to the hiding of financial assets owned by a person or company—to evade taxes, people hide their assets and the sources of their earnings Generally, the rationale behind avoiding paying taxes is accumulating wealth. Moreover, some people do not give a portion of their wealth to the government, particularly if they feel that their tax money would not benefit their well-being or if they have no concern for the public good.

Tax evaders might also perform manipulations of their tax forms by not reporting the correct amount of income that they get from different sources. Upon fearing that the authorities might track their concealed monetary and nonmonetary assets and earnings, they either transfer their money to foreign banks, or invest in property ventures furtively by hiding their identities and reassigning ownership of their nonmonetary assets and property into someone else’s name, usually that of a family member without the will or capacity to control that asset independently. This constitutes tax evasion if the transferred property is not shown on income tax returns and can lead to money laundering if the cash or property is transferred to foreigners’ accounts surreptitiously. This type of laundering is also performed by politicians, especially those who are in or seeking power. They hide their monetary and nonmonetary wealth assets or transfer them to foreign lands to avoid scrutiny by tax authorities. Hence, this crime is performed by the “will” of politically powerful elites, whose influence surpasses the authority of A.M.L. authorities and, thus, the practice continues until they lose their political influence or power.

**2. Weak financial regulations**

Another cause of money laundering is the weakness and inadequacy of financial regulations and relevant authorities within a country. For instance, if the tax department is not strong enough to question the politicians, elites, and general public about their earnings and “monetary and nonmonetary” assets, then it is not difficult for people to hide taxes and perform money laundering by buying property in relatively more stable but offshore economies. Money laundering and tax evasion are crimes which need to be curbed by the financial regulatory authorities and institutions. The financial transferring of property among family members is a potential income tax nightmare. Regulatory authorities in each country need to re-examine their policies and financial regulatory principles to check if they can be implemented effectively or if there are any loopholes that might allow politicians and the elite classes to conceal the details and sources of their assets, as well as destinations of money that they receive or transfer to foreign regions at any given time.

**3. Bribery**

Bribery is also linked to weak financial regulations as financial regulatory authorities or airport officials might be bribed by money launderers to allow them to transfer funds abroad without paying the applicable taxes and by not tracking down the sources or destinations of the money. This paves the way for secured money laundering facilitated by the officials of airport authorities. As a consequence, the money illegally moves out of the country.

**4. Corruption**

Corruption is unethical conduct aimed at gaining personal benefits by using either authority or bribery. Politicians, statesmen, ministers, etc. hide the monetary and nonmonetary assets that they earn illegitimately, i.e., through means of corruption. For instance, they might take bribes and would prefer to transfer the bribe money into foreign banks or other investments. They would thus avoid transferring it to local or personal bank accounts so that local financial auditing authorities do not discover the bribe amount. Hence, their corruption causes a flow of cash to foreign banks or causes them to hide their financial assets as well as the sources of earning, which leads to money laundering. It is of paramount importance we curb corruption in order to prevent this form of crime

**5. Failure of banks in detecting laundered money**

Another reason for the untracked facilitation of money laundering is the failure of banks to detect and report the money in their reserves that is being laundered. Huge sums of money are transferred by money launderers to foreign banks, and some accept without carrying out any effective inspection as to their source. Unfortunately, there is no automated mechanism devised worldwide to accurately track down the source of money; neither do most banks usually pay any attention to it because of the costs associated with it. Furthermore, there is no incentive to use resources to investigate the money that has been placed in their financial reserves. Therefore, the issue remains untouched and unrestrained, and causes banks not to perform sufficient scrutiny over the funds that reach their branches through wire transfers or any other means, which consequently encourages money launderers to transfer funds to foreign banks without any threat of being accountable for the actual source of the money. For example, in 2010 H.S.B.C. was convicted of being involved in money laundering as it did not scrutinize the movement of laundered cash that its different branches worldwide were receiving and transacting. Consequently, the bank was fined $1.9 billion by the international financial regulatory and A.M.L. authorities.

**6. Nature of borders**

Online financial transactions and the smuggling of cash through airports are not the only means of laundering money. Cash is also smuggled physically through borders, particularly in those countries where there is weak or no Fight against Money Laundering, vigilance over cross-border trafficking. For instance, this practice is more common across the international borders of countries where the border area is either mountainous or too long to control and monitor strictly and continuously, e.g., across the Mexico–U.S. border or the Afghanistan– Pakistan border. The money launderers, in such a case, act as smugglers and either cross the border themselves or assign the chore to their loyal followers. Drug lords prefer to launder money by smuggling cash in return for drugs and vice versa. This is the quickest and safest mode of money laundering for them as they do not have to create any bank accounts and never have to show their identity during online transactions. They remain undercover and get money through furtive sources of money laundering. This issue has affected the peace of the countries where the smuggling of cash and weapons is taking place across borders. There have been reported in Both, the Mexico–USA and the Pakistan–Afghanistan borders are spread across mountainous regions and they are very difficult to fully track and continuously monitor by the border security forces. For instance, in Mexico and Afghanistan, smugglers and money launderers smuggle large sums of money as well as large quantities of drugs across international borders, because, here, Mexico and Afghanistan are the leading manufacturers and traffickers of illicit narcotic drugs. The drug dealers and manufacturers in these countries earn money through smuggling drugs to other countries and laundering cash profits in return. The Mexican drug dealers have the aim of smuggling drugs through the U.S. border in order to gain a higher return in U.S. currency by surreptitiously selling drugs there and to launder the earned dollar currency in Mexico. Similarly, the Afghan drugs manufacturers get laundered cash money by trafficking the drugs across the international borders of Afghanistan to the Balkan states, Iran, Central Asian republics, and through Pakistan to the Golden Triangle (Burma–Thailand–Laos), which is the center of drugs trafficking to East Asia, Australia, Canada, and Europe. The border with Pakistan becomes the gateway for Afghan drugs manufacturers for receiving of large sums of cash, which they earn from the Golden Triangle region’s traffickers of drugs. Hence, the cash surreptitiously flows in the region in parallel to the clandestine drugs trafficking. For instance, in certain states of the US, gun permit laws are in effect that legalize the sale and carrying of guns. The drug dealers, money launderers, smugglers, and criminals from Mexico acquire guns from these states and surreptitiously smuggle them to Mexico. In this way, the guns and weapons are being trafficked to Mexico. Arturo Santa Cruz and Brian Bow further elucidate in their book that drugs trafficking organizations (DTOs) earn money by acquiring weapons from U.S. firearms traders and selling the weapons to other criminal organizations in Mexico or in other regions. The money earned by these DTOs is, in fact, black money that they receive through laundering of cash cases in which the smuggled currency has been used for illegitimate purposes, i.e., mostly for financing terrorist and anti-state activities in these countries.

Despite being illegal, money laundering doesn't lose its popularity. Besides, the advancement in technology has further added to the cause of money laundering by reducing its chances of detection to minimum. There is a need for significant change in method and approach to combat money laundering. There are established control processes for prevention of money laundering. However, money launderers manage to adapt and find a way past such control processes. There is a need for constant adaptation. The steps required to stop money laundering at brick-and-mortar level of banking are picking up speed. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has successfully established coordination, laws, regulations, and enforcement on a global basis. What remains is determining the impact of money laundering activities despite the improvements.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The issues of money laundering extend across the globe as a highly condemned crime with severe legal repercussions, having adverse effects on economy and political stability of a country, especially in developing countries. Money laundering serves as a root for the possible proliferation and gives muscle to other crimes such as terrorism, organized crimes, drug trafficking etc. Nations of the world must join hands and adopt measures to dismantle syndicates engaged in money laundering by resorting to aggressive enforcement of law. This paper has attempted to explain the concept, significance, impact and consequences on launders, international legal framework in addressing laundering. In order to prevent or control the crime, a number of actions need to be taken as highlighted hereunder.

It is increasingly difficult to separate serious potential threats from the many false positives turning up in searches. Technology should be used to track individuals and groups involved in money laundering. For example, Artificial Intelligence can be used to conduct constant searches to reduce the burden for anti-money laundering officials. There are a great number of alerts that have to be looked at in order to lay a net over all collaborating accounts. By having regular meetings, banks and law enforcement can keep each other up to date, verify any suspicions, identify possible networks, and enhance the public-private partnership, creating a united front against money launderers. Banks are typically seeing these schemes before they reach law enforcement units.

Anti-money laundering officials recognize questionable patterns. They can develop client models to track potential risks. Finding individuals with multiple PINs or with connections to tax fraud are among the many factors that could trigger further investigations. As many banks have grown via acquisitions of rivals, they’ve often pieced together a network of legacy computer systems. Some divisions may use spreadsheets, others may use ledgers. This disparity of systems can hinder antifraud efforts, preventing various branches from effectively communicating with each other. Its why more financial institutions are moving into a fully digital environment, expanding

Anti-Money laundering officials need to know what to look for. TCF has three dedicated officials—a trainer, a developer, and a facilitator – responsible for nothing but new employee orientation and training. These trainers also provide remedial training for officials to bring everyone back up to speed and routinely put the entire bank through its paces.

Training front-end staff to look for suspicious actions is critical. While the back-end staff might not realize anything suspicious at first, a client services representative could raise concerns that an account holder seems unaware of actions being taken in their name. All financial institutions, from large banks to small credit unions, need to watch out for money launderers. By integrating due diligence technology with people training and a robust partnership with law enforcement and banks can more effectively combat the increasingly sophisticated modes of operation engaged by money launderers across the world.

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**IDENTIFYING THE EFFECTS OF NON-COMPLIANCE TO ANTI-RETROVIRAL THERAPY AMONG PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS: A CASE STUDY OF LAGOS STATE TEACHING HOSPITAL**

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**Abstract**

***Background:*** *Non-compliance to medication is often characterized by increased morbidity, premature death and economic loss. However, for communicable diseases like HIV/AIDS, in addition to the problems earlier mentioned, there is increased risk of treatment failure; emergence of drug resistance, loss of therapeutic options which threatens already achieved success in HIV control. The researcher aimed to determine the level of knowledge and acceptance of Anti-Retroviral Therapy in the management of diseases among people living with HIV in LASUTH. Also, this study became necessary to explore economically, socio-culturally and patient-related factors that influence adherence and to identify locally available strategies of improving it. It is also expected to identify the effects of non-adherence to anti-retroviral therapy among HIV patients in Nigeria.*

***Method:*** *A cross-sectional study was performed from January to April 2023. The population of study was of 300 seropositive HIV/AIDS patients attending ART clinic of Lagos State teaching Hospital. Participants were drawn from the PLHIV ART patients list who consecutively attended the clinic for their follow up to receive ART and/or counselling after asking to participate in the research. To complement the questionnaire, some treatment-related information was extracted through the review of medical records with patients’ informed consent.*

***Result:*** *The findings of the study revealed that 162 (54.0%) missed medications in the last 4-30 days, while 138 (46%) adhered fully to the drugs. The Duration on ART result revealed that 85 (28.3%) of respondents have been on ART for less than 1 year, 132 (44.0%) indicated that they have been on ART between 1 to 3 years, while 83 (27.7%) indicted that they have been on ART for more than 3 years. Also, there was significant difference between the CD4 count values on entry and by recent records.*

***Conclusion:*** *The level of non compliance to ART is higher than compliance. The following factors are responsible for non-compliance: side effects of the medications, financial constraints, stigmatization of the community members, larger size of tablets, too many pills, and religious culture. Awareness should be created to the community members on stigmatization of HIV/AIDs patients. Government should make available free drugs in clinics and hospitals close to the community to reduce the non-adherence of the patients to the drugs due to lack of transportation and lack of money to get the drugs.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

HIV (Human Immune Deficiency Virus) infection is one of the major health concerns in the world. HIV infection has spread over the last 30years, having a great impact on health, welfare, employment and criminal justice sectors. This affect all social and ethnic groups throughout the world. In recent epidemiological data, it was indicated that HIV remains a public health issue that persistently drains our economic sector having claimed more than 25million lives over the last three decades (WHO, 2014). The estimated overall number of People Living with HIV (PLWHIV) by the end of 2014 was approximately 36.9 (34.3–41.4) million and Sub-Saharan Africa was the most affected region, having 25.8 (24.0–28.7) million PLWHIV and 66% of all people with HIV infection living in the region (Sheet, 2015).

In the year 2021, 1.9 million people in Nigeria were living with HIV, as the total number of individuals in thousands was given as 1,900, with Female Adults having 1,100, Male – 630, and Children – 170. HIV (Human immune deficiency virus) is a virus that attacks the body’s immune system. If HIV is not treated, it can lead to AIDS (Acquired immune deficiency syndrome). There is currently no effective cure. Once people get HIV, they have its for life. But with proper medical care, HIV can be controlled. People who get HIV treatment can live long, healthy lives and protect their partners.

AIDS is the latest stage of HIV infection that occurs when the body immune system is badly damaged because of the virus. In the U.S., most people with HIV do not develop AIDS because taking HIV medicine as prescribed stops the progression of the disease.

The introduction of Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART)or Highly Active Anti-Retroviral therapy (HAART) has substantially improved the survival of persons infected with HIV. Other types of Anti-Retroviral Drugs include: Abacavir (Ziagen), Emtricitabine (Emtriva), Iamivudine (Epivir), Tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (viread), zidovudine (Retrovir).

This, alongside issues of toxicity, side effects, disruptions to patient’s daily life and difficulties in returning for scheduled follow-up consultations, often makes maintaining adherence over the long-term challenging. Yet the individual and public health benefits of ART are adherence dependent. Inadequate adherence and non-compliance to ART results in Anti-Retroviral agents not being maintained at sufficient concentrations to suppress HIV replication in infected cells to lower the plasma viral load. In addition, suboptimal adherence concelebrates development of drug-resistant HIV and mitigate ART’s role in reducing HIV incidence and transmission.

Promoting adherence is especially important as the set treatments become increasingly available and affordable for people living with HIV (PLHIV) in developing countries where viral load monitoring is not usually possible (christ,2009). Consequently, more attention is being focused on issues related to ART adherence. The importance of ART adherence makes accurate compliance assessment essential for effective and efficient therapy and evaluation of treatment regimens (Paterson ,2000). Skipping Anti-Retroviral Therapy allows HIV to multiply, which increases the risk of drug resistance and HIV treatment failure. Statistics show that a rate of adherence of approximately 90% - 95% is required to avoid development of drug resistance and treatment failure. Poor adherence to and HIV treatment regimen also allow HIV to destroy the immune system, as a damaged immune system makes it hard for the body to fight off infections and certain cancers. In addition, health-damaging behaviors are major contributors to the leading chronic diseases.

The Federal Government of Nigeria initiated the national ARV program in January 2002 as part of an expanded response to care and support for PLWHA. Under this program, 10,000 adults and 5,000 children were treated with a 3-drug ARV combination; 2NRTI (lamivudine+stavudine) and 1NNRT (nevirapine). The program began in February 2002 involving 25 treatment centers across the 6 geopolitical zones of the country and was subsidize data cost of $10 a month for each patient (Idigbe et al., 2005).

Unfortunately, in 2004, the program suffered a major setback when it was hit by a shortage of $3.5 million worth of drugs imported from India. During this time, many patients were of drugs for up to 3months, which created a structurally-induced non-adherence problem in the national ARV drug program. Eventually, the program was resumed when another 3.8 million worth of drugs was ordered and received.

Another program was started in 2006 with the goal of providing ARV drugs at no cost to about 250,000 HIV-positive patients. Although, a total of 74 treatments were participating in this program by the end of 2006 (Lambo, 2006), only about 15% of PLWHA needing ARV drugs in Nigeria had access to this treatment (WHO, 2007).

Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy (HAART) is the gold standard in the management of HIV/AIDS. HAART is the combination of three or more drugs from at least two different classes of anti-retroviral (ARV) therapy belonging to nucleoside analogue ever transcriptase inhibitors, non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors and protease inhibitors. Anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs have to be taken as a lifelong therapy and their success relies on continual adherence to the medication regimen (Manjok et al., 2010). Adherence is dynamic, changing over time with significant proportions of patients not reaching good/high level of adherence.

A rate of adherence of approximately 95% is required to avoid rapid development of drug resistance and treatment failure (Sulivan et al., 2007). Patients with clinical AIDS who discontinue ART will likely die within short time. The commonest reasons for missing doses were forgetfulness, traveling far away from home, being too busy, and unclear dosage instructions. Other reasons for missing doses were patients ‘education of HIV and ART, marital problems, Socio-demographic characteristics, HIV status disclosure, substance abuse and drug side-effects, missing of clinic day due to lack of transport fare (Falang et al., 2012). Strategies used to increase ART adherence include: use of social support intervention, reminders, availability of ART services, home based care and patients’ education. (Coetzee et al, 2004).

Some of the most common reasons for non-adherence in other studies were: running out of medicines, and the inability to purchase more due to non-availability and inaccessibility to medications and financial constraints. Some of these findings are consistent with those found in Kano, Nigeria (Iliyasu et al., 2005; Mukhtar-Yola, 2006).

Access to medication at the treatment centers is of great concern and one of the predictors of non-adherence. The frequent ARV drug stock-outs at several facilities in Nigeria have raised serious concerns about the sustainability of the national ARV program and issues of non-adherence. For some time in 2004 and 2005, the ARV treatment program suffered a major setback when it was hit by as shortage of drugs.

HIV drugs have improved over the years, and serious side effects are less likely than they used to be. However, HIV drugs can still cause side effects. Some are mild, while others are more severe or even life threatening. A side effect can also get worse the longer a drug is taken. It’s possible for other medications to interact with HIV drugs, causing side effects. Other health conditions can also make the side effects from HIV drugs worse. For these reasons, when starting any new drug, people with HIV should talk with a healthcare professional and pharmacist about all the other medications, supplements, or herbs they are taking. Side effects from antiretroviral HIV drugs can include appetite loss, diarrhea, fatigue, and mood changes. However, not sticking to a treatment plan can cause the virus to become resistant to drugs and harder to treat.

Even in the context of free drugs, the cost of transportation to obtain ARVs as a reason given for non-adherence. A finding has also been reported in another study (Yu et. al., 2007). Not having money to pay for drugs and the tendency to sell own drugs because the money needed for something else; also contributed to non-adherence. It has been noted elsewhere that making patients in poor countries contribute towards the cost of their anti-retroviral treatment is one of the major causes of non-adherence to treatment (Keith, 2004). Charges for treatment are wide spread in resource-limited settings and some degree of user fee funding of healthcare has been advocated by the World Bank as or thodoxy over the past 15 years.

Fear of someone knowing one’s HIV status is another contributor to non-adherence. In such cases, patients are likely to have frequent treatment interruptions since their tablets must be hidden and therefore not taken in the presence of others for fear of being stigmatized.

Patients also complained of too many and too large tablets as contributors to non-adherence. Studies have verified that the best improvement in adherence comes with the reduction of dosing frequency from three to two times per day (Cheevers, 2000; Saag, 2000). Patients are often concerned that taking medication may accidentally reveal their HIV status to, for example, work colleagues. Therefore, once-daily dosing is an important advance in improving adherence (Moyle, 2005).

Another way suggested for delivering ART and dealing with the non-adherence issue is the directly observed treatment short course (DOTS) strategy, developed to monitor treatment for tuberculosis, though this has had limited success for tuberculosis in much of Africa. However, the use of directly observed therapy of ART (DOT-ART), supervised by a family member or other social support, has been reported to be successful in some settings (Farmer et. al., 2001; Nachega et. al., 2005; Severe et. al., 2005).

In another study, males were more likely to say they were adherent to ARV medications, while females, those less than 35years, unmarried Respondents and those with formal education were less likely to report adherence to ARVs. It is not clear why those aged over 35 would adhere more to ARV drugs. It is possible that because they may be married, there will be pressure from their spouse to adhere to the drugs. Also, they may have children and therefore have greater reason to stay alive. For those under 35years, non-adherence could be a result of low economic power as they may be unemployed and also unmarried. Several studies analyzed overall healthcare costs, pharmacy costs, and cost savings among people living with HIV relative to level of ART adherence.

Generally, adherence to ART appears to predict levels of healthcare utilization, with studies reporting that poorer adherence to ART results in increased utilization and better adherence results in decreased utilization. Suboptimal adherence to ART appears to contribute to a higher risk of mortality. Poor adherence to ART in pediatric HIV care may continue into adulthood and in some cases, can contribute to mortality. Acquired HIV drug resistance can occur when an individual living with HIV has poor adherence to ART though this can vary, depending on the class of antiretrovirals in the prescribed regimen.

**METHODS**

**Setting:** study was carried out among HIV/AIDS patients attending Lagos State teaching Hospital, in Lagos. Lagos has an estimated population of 20 million and covers an area of approximately 1,171 km2.

**Population:** This study population is made up of seropositive HIV/AIDS patients attending ART clinic of Lagos State teaching Hospital, in Lagos State. The cross-sectional study was performed from January to April 2023. The study population included HIV-infected adults ≥18 years of age who were confirmed to be HIV positive and currently taking ART for at least three months at the outpatient clinic. The patients who met the inclusion criteria were invited to participate in the research where they received an explanation of the purpose of the study and were asked for informed consent. Participants were drawn from the PLHIV ART patients list who consecutively attended the clinic for their follow up to receive ART and/or counselling after asking to participate in the research. To complement the questionnaire, some treatment-related information was extracted through the review of medical records with patients informed consent.

**Sample size calculation:** Samplesize was determined by the use of the formula:

Z2. p(1-p).e2 / 1+(Z2. p(1-p).e2N

The participants were selected by consecutive sampling. 300 participants were recruited based on the inclusion criteria.

**Sample methodology:** Adult AIDS Clinical Trials Group (AACTG) adherence instrument and 30 days’ visual analogue scale (VAS) were used to assess adherence. AACTG is four days recall method for measuring adherence that also assesses reasons of non-adherence (Chesney MA, 2000). VAS adherence assessment is the Medication Self-report Inventory that can be used to assess adherence to a single antiretroviral medication (Maneesriwongul WL, 2006). It is a self-reported ART measure that is simple to use and has been most extensively used (Chesney, 2000). The subjects are requested to place a mark at the point on a horizontal scale answering to the subject’s best estimation of the proportion of medication doses taken with examples of 0, 50%, and 100% adherence over the past 90 days.

Adherence was assessed by self-report adherence methods to categorize the study population in two outcome groups namely “adherence” and “non-adherence”. VAS measures overall adherence for a longer time interval and wide assessment coverage. Adherence refers to the PLHIV took ≥95% of doses taken over the past 30 days. On the other hand, patients with <95% of doses taken over the past 30 days, were defined as non-adherence. The life Windows Information-Motivation-Behavioral Skill ART Adherence questionnaire (LW-IMB-AAQ) was used to assess adherence barriers. Each LW-IMB-AAQ item represents a barrier falling within the I (Information), M (Motivation), or B (Behavioral Skills) constructs.

**Study variables:** Social support questionnaires; Three items were drawn from the Social Support Questionnaire (Brock DM, 1996) to assess perceived social support. These items were responded to on 4-point scales,1 = completely true, to 4= completely false, and summed to a score with a range of 3-12. Internalized AIDS stigma will be assessed with a 7-item AIDS-Related Stigma Scale. Items were responded to from 1 = strongly agree to 4 = strongly disagree. Strongly agree and agree were converted to “1” and strongly disagree and disagree to “0”, scale scores and represent total sum score was range 0-7.

HIV status disclosure was assessed with two questions,

1. “Did you disclose your HIV status to your partner? “and

2. “Did you disclose your HIV status to others such as other relatives or friends?”

(b) The Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)(Kroenke, 2001) was utilized to screen patients suffering from depression. This 9-item questionnaire asked the patient how emotional problems impacted on daily life. The 4-option response format allowed scores of 0, 1, 2 and 3 to the response categories of “not at all”, “several days” “more than half the days” and “nearly every day” respectively. The total PHQ-9 score for the nine items ranged from 0 to 27and scores of 5, 10, 15, and 20 represent cut points for mild, moderate, moderately severe, and severe depression respectively. In this study the cut-point of ≥10 scores was used to identify moderate to severe depression. Adherence information was assessed with nine items. Adherence-related motivation is composed with two factors of personal motivation and social motivation to adhere to one’s regimen. Personal motivation is represented as attitudes on treatment and beliefs about medications. Adherence motivation was assessed with ten items. Behavioral skills (adherence ‘self-efficacy’ i.e patient’s perceived ability to follow medication regimen) was assessed with 14 items. Response options to the information motivation questions ranged from “1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree”. Response to items of behavioral skills includes 1 = very hard to 5 = very easy. A scoring instruction, the direction of ‘correct’ was assigned a value of one, while other response options were scored zero in all items of IMB constructs (Emamzadeh-Fard S, 2012).

According to this instruction, for each participant score ‘1’ for each item indicates a response towards adherence and score ‘0’ indicates the item as a barrier. Scores for each domain of IMB (Information-Motivation-Behavioral skills) was split into three levels - low, moderate and high and the percentage of patients in each level will calculate.

**Study instrument:** Human resources, Principal investigators and Statistician. The inclusive criteria involved seropositive HIV/AIDS positive patients who attended the ART clinic of the hospital for more than one month. Those who were yet unregistered for at least one month in the clinic were excluded.

**Data collection:** Questionnaires, consent form, information sheet.Pens, pencils, calculator, eraser. Responses on the questionnaire were recorded.

**Data analysis:** A laptop top with typing software notably Microsoft Office Word 2013, and Statistical software installed: the software statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. USB flash drive was the storage device. The data was analyzed usung chi square and presented using frequency tables and odds ratio used to compare variables where necessary.

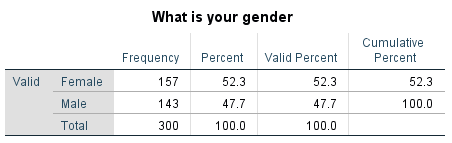
**Ethical permission:** Ethical Clearance was obtained from hospital’s Ethical Committee. Verbal consent was obtained from the patients involved.

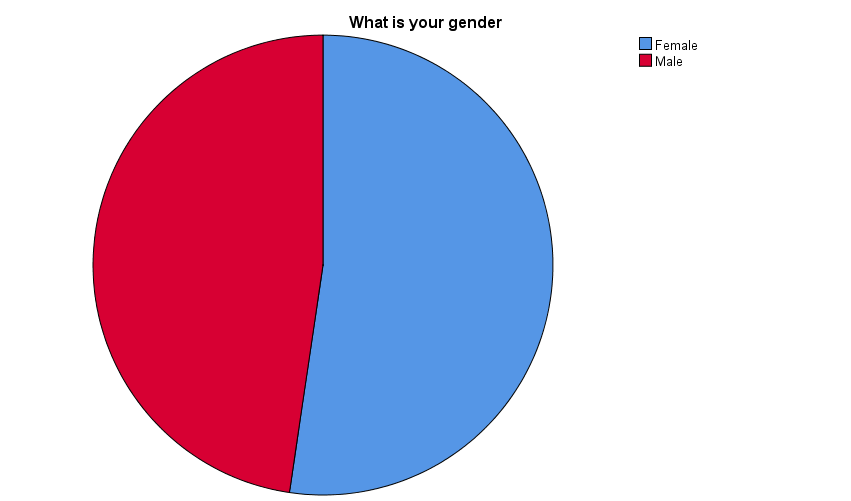
**RESULTS**

# SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

This information includes the respondent's socioeconomic factors. The data acquired for this study, particularly those collected through the distribution of questionnaires among people of the study region, was evaluated and presented by means of descriptive statistics such as frequency tables, charts, and diagrams.

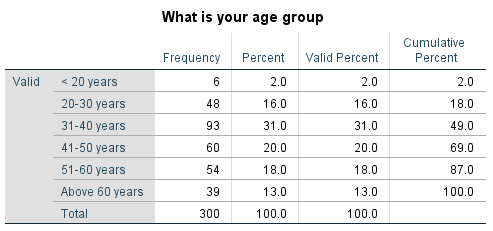
The section covers respondents’ information such as gender, age, respondent's highest level of education, respondents’ occupation, monthly income, marital status among others.

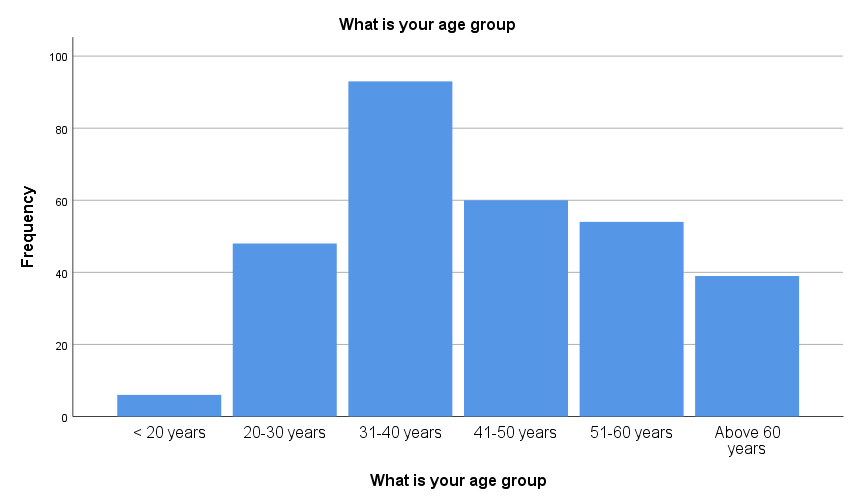




**Figure 1: Gender of respondents**

The table above depicts respondent gender. A total of 300 responses was received. Females account for 52.3% percent (157) of respondents, while Male account for 47.7 percent (143). The result shows that females made up the majority of the responders.





**Figure 2: Age of respondents**

Figure 2 presents the results for the age distribution of respondents. According to the results, 2% of the respondents were less than 20 years, 16% were between the ages of 20 to 30 years, 31% were between the ages of 31 to 40 years, 20% were between the ages of 41 to 50 years, 18%% were between the ages of 51 to 60 years while 13% are above 60 years.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **What is your higher educational level** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | High School | 111 | 37.0 | 37.0 | 37.0 |
| Diploma | 71 | 23.7 | 23.7 | 60.7 |
| Undergraduate degree | 78 | 26.0 | 26.0 | 86.7 |
| Postgraduate degree | 40 | 13.3 | 13.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Figure 3: Level of Education**

Figure 3 presents the highest educational level of respondents. According to the results, 71 respondents had Diploma/Higher National Diploma, 78 had undergraduate degrees, 40 had postgraduate degrees, 111 had High school.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **What is your occupation** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Student | 49 | 16.3 | 16.3 | 16.3 |
| Unemployed | 58 | 19.3 | 19.3 | 35.7 |
| Private Sector Employee | 57 | 19.0 | 19.0 | 54.7 |
| Government Sector Employee | 49 | 16.3 | 16.3 | 71.0 |
| Entrepreneur | 38 | 12.7 | 12.7 | 83.7 |
| Pensioner | 49 | 16.3 | 16.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

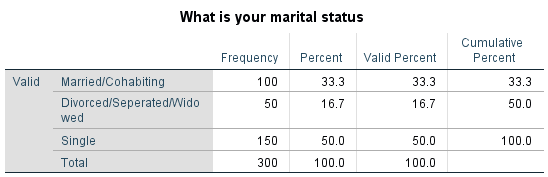
**Figure 4: Occupation of respondents**

Figure 4 presents the occupation of respondents. According to the results, 49 (16.3%) were students, 58 (19.3%) were unemployed, 57(19.0%) were private-sector employees, 49 (16.3%) respondents were government sector employees, 38 (12.7%) were entrepreneurs, 49 (16.3%) respondents for pensioners.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **What is your monthly income** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | <#1000 | 57 | 19.0 | 19.0 | 19.0 |
| #1000-#10,000 | 92 | 30.7 | 30.7 | 49.7 |
| #10,000-#40,000 | 94 | 31.3 | 31.3 | 81.0 |
| #40,000 | 57 | 19.0 | 19.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Figure 5: Monthly income of respondents**

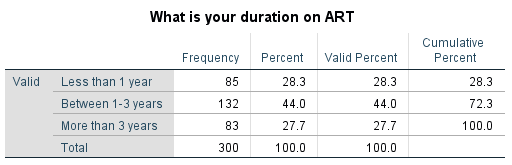
According to the results, 57 of respondents earn less than #1,000. The results show that 92 earn between #1,000 to #10,000, 94 earn between #10,000 to #40,000, while 57 respondents earn above #40,000.

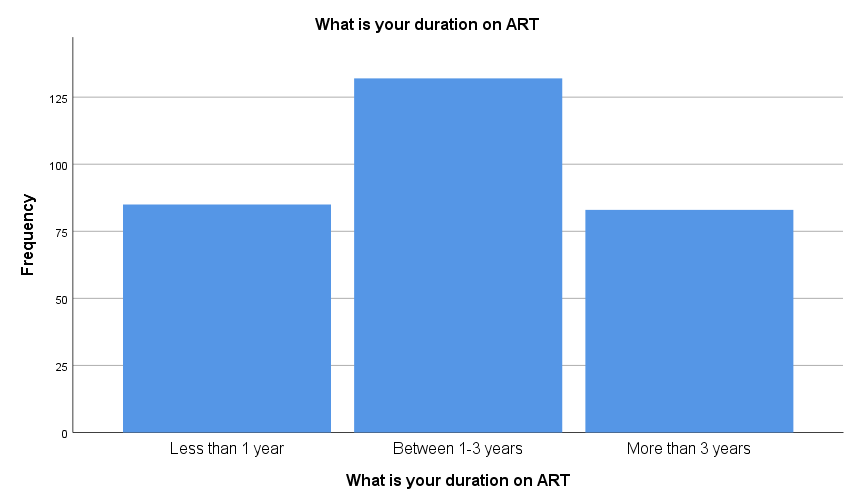


**Figure 6: Respondents’ Marital Status**

The result revealed that 100 of respondents are either married/cohabiting, 50 indicated that they are divorced/separated/Widowed, 150 indicated that they are single.

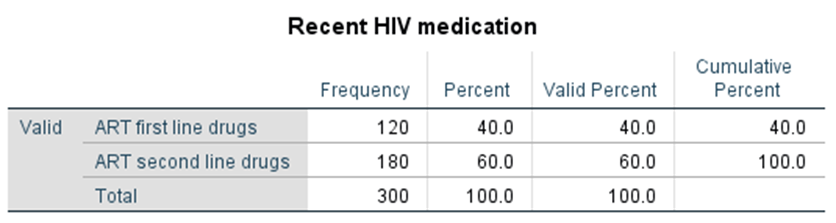
**HEALTH STATUS AND BEHAVIOUR VARIABLES**



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**Figure 7: Duration on ART**

The result revealed that 85 (28.3%) of respondents have been on ART for less than 1 year, 132 (44.0%) indicated that they have been on ART between 1 to 3 years, while 83 (27.7%) indicated that they have been on ART for more than 3 years.

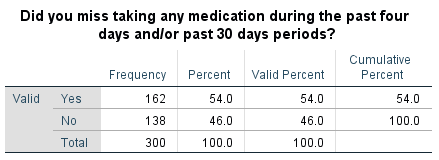


**Figure 8: Most prevalent HIV regiment**

The result revealed that 120 (40.0%) of respondents are on the first line of ART drugs while 180 (60%) are on the ART second line of drugs.

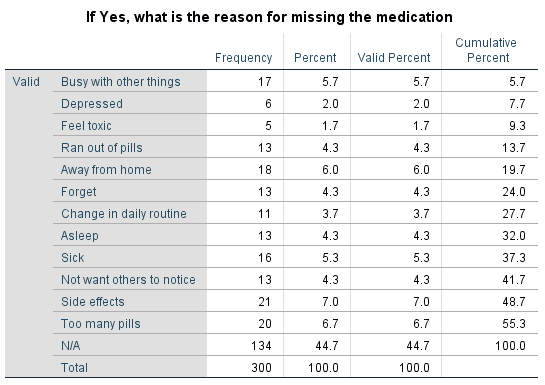
**DESCRIPTIVES OF ART ADHERENCE**

Subjects were asked about the description of their adherence to ART drugs. A closed ended question was asked as to why they miss medication during the past four days or within the last 30 days periods, preceded by a question “Did you miss taking any medication during the past four days and/or past 30 days periods”?

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**Figure 9: Missed Medication in the last four days.**

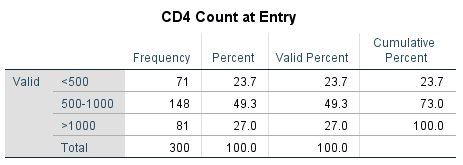
162 (54.0%) revealed that they missed medication in the last 4-30 days while 138 (46%) adhered fully to the drugs.



**Figure 10: Reason for Missed medications.**

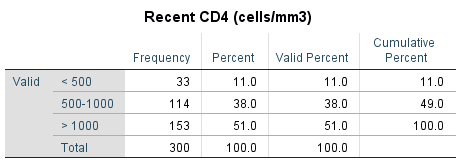
Reasons such as Busy, depressed, feel toxic, ran out of pills and way from home among others are the reason stated for missing drugs in the last 4-30 days.

**COMPLICATIONS/EFFECTS OF NON-COMPLAINACE TO ART ( this information was obtained from the patient’s file and from their treating physician)**

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**Figure 11: CD4 Count on Entry**

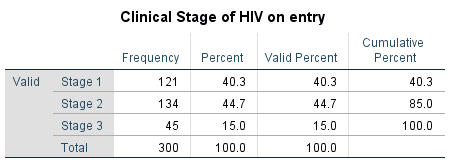
The result revealed that 71 (23.7%) of respondents have a CD4 count of less than 500cells/mm3, 148 (49.3%) have a CD4 count ranging between 500-1000 cells/mm3, while CD4 count of more than 1000 cells/mm3 was 81 (27.0%).

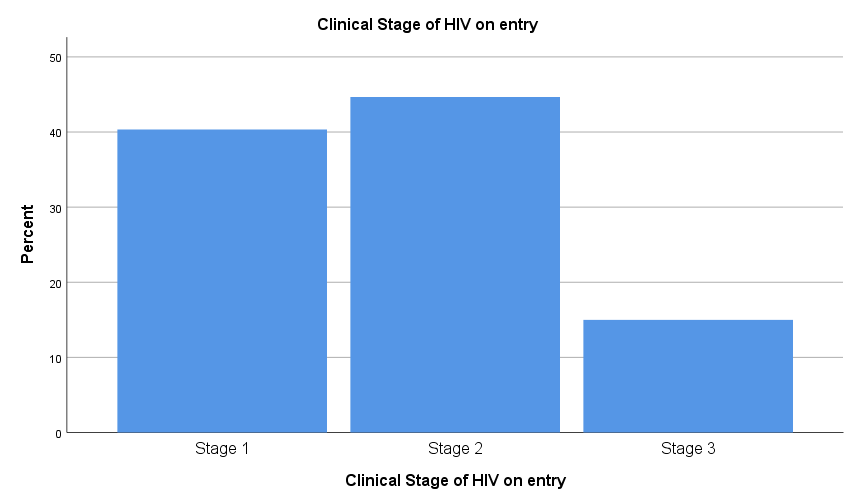
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**Figure 12: Recent CD4 Count (cells/mm3)**

The result revealed that 33 (11.0%) of respondents have a CD4 count of less than 500cells/mm3, 114 (38.0%) have a CD4 count ranging between 500-1000 cells/mm3, while CD4 count of more than 1000 cells/mm3 was 153 (51.0%).

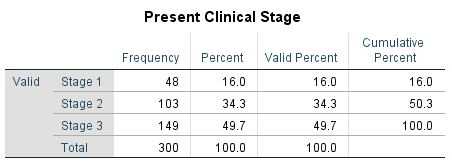
Cross tabulation of CD4 count on entry and recent CD4 count gave chi square *X*2 to be higher (40.46) than the critical value (5.991) for p value of 0.05, at df 2. Therefore null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative was accepted. That is, there is significant difference between the CD4 count values on entry and by recent records.

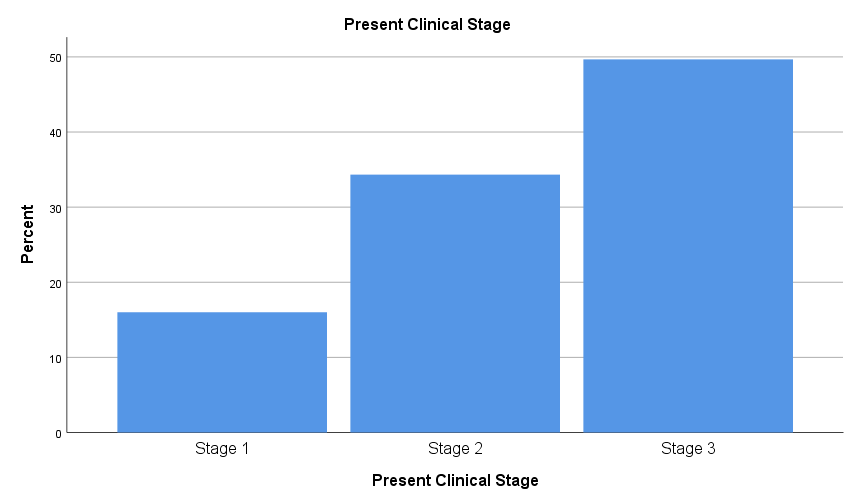
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**Figure 13: HIV Clinical Stage on entry**

121(40.3%) respondents at the point of entry are at HIV clinical stage 1 while 134 (44.7%) are on stage 2 and 45 (15%) are at stage 3.

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**Figure 14: HIV Present Clinical Stage**

48 (16.0%) recorded stage 1 HIV clinical stage while 103 (34.3%) are on stage 2. 149 (49.7%) are recorded for Stage 3 clinical stage.

**DISCUSSION**

In this study, of the 300 participants, 138 (46%) patients reported adherence of <95%. 162 (54.0%) revealed that they missed medication in the last 4-30 days while 138 (46%) revealed that they adhered fully to the drugs. Using the CD4 count as predicator of adherence; this current study show that there was significant difference between the CD4 count values on entry and by recent records. Also, using chi square test for the descriptive of ART adherence (fig. 9); the result showed no significant difference between the group that missed medication in the last 4-30 days and those who did not.

Adherence is a major issue in management of chronic diseases. In a meta-analysis of 569 studies, 24.8% of subjects were non-adherent (DiMatteo, 2004). In HIV, studies indicate that high levels of adherence are necessary for viral suppression, prevention of resistance, and disease progression (Bangsberg et. al., 2001). A meta-analysis of studies on ART adherence found that 77% of patients in Africa achieved adequate adherence of 95% compared to just 55% of patients in North America (Mills et. al., 2006). Studies from India have reported adherence rates of 76-93% (Lal et. al, 2010; Safren et. al., 2005 and Sarna et. al., 2008).

The reasons for low adherence in this study were indicated to be due to medication side effects to ART (7%), taking too many pills(6.7%), being away from home(6%), being busy with other things (5.7%), sickness(5.3%), running out of pills(4.3%), not wanting others to notice (4.3%), sleep(4.3%). Studies from India have shown that financial problems, lack of family care, substance abuse, depression, social stigma, and side effects are barriers to adherence to ART. Majority of patients (78%) report more than one barrier to ART adherence (Jagleka et. al, 2011). Wanchu et al.,(2007) have shown that the major reasons for non-adherence was financial constraints, forgetting to take the medication, drug toxicity, lack of access to drug, fear of getting immune to the benefit of the drug, and to avoid side effects. Not having money to travel to ART centre and forgetting to take the medication were the major reasons for non-adherence in the African setting (Kebede and Wabe, 2012). Batavia et al.,(2012)] have concluded that providing free ART improves adherence.

The result of HIV clinical stage on entry of respondents show that 121(40.3%) respondents at the point of entry were at HIV clinical stage 1 while 134 (44.7%) were on stage 2 and 45 (15%) were at stage 3. At later HIV Clinical Stage, 48 (16.0%) respondents were recorded at stage 1 HIV clinical stage while 103 (34.3%) respondents were on stage 2 and 149 (49.7%) was recorded for Stage 3 clinical stage. This show downward improvement in the health status of respondents. Most respondents’ state of health deteriorated into stage 3 (from 15% to 49.7).

The CD4 counts report of this study revealed that 71 (23.7%) of respondents who had CD4 count of less than 500cells/mm3 at entry had it reduced to 33 (11%) at latter time. The respondents of CD4 count ranging between 500-1000 cells/mm3 at entry 148(49.3%) had it reduced to 114(38%) while the respondents with CD4 count of more than 1000 cells/mm3 81 (27.0%), got it increased to 153(51%); at a latter time. Statistical analysis of significance was not carried out in this study to substantiate the level of significance of adherence in relation to CD4 counts.

The trend of non adherence may be due to depression as it has been reported by Sarna et. al., 2008. According to the repoert, depression has been shown to be an independent predictor for poor adherence and had been found to be strongly associated with lower adherence (Chandra et. al., 2005); in addition, depression is reported to be common among HIV infected persons. Early identification and management of depression is essential to improve adherence. A meta-analysis has shown that individuals who consumed alcohol had reduced adherence (Handershot et. al., 2009). Another meta-analysis reported that adherence is 1.74 times higher in patients from cohesive families (DaMatteo, 2004). Kleeberger et. al., 2001 suggested that educated people show better adherence. Wasti et. al., 2012 further suggested that education may impact adherence in several ways including facilitating communication with health care providers (Safren et. al., 2005). Our study however, did not show this.

**CONCLUSION**

Most of the respondents have been on ART for 1 years some for 1-3 years and other for more than 3years, over 54% of the respondent adhere to their ART while 46 do not adhere to their ART. Most of the people that are not adhering to their ART gave some reasons such as drugs, side-effect of the drugs, financial constrain of the patients, stigmatization of the community members or people in the working place and treatment regimen in which Patients complained of too many and too large tablets as contributors to non-adherence.

Religious and traditional leaders also have a significant and massive role to play in correcting and stopping people from stigmatizing the HIV/AIDS patient by enabling them to know that shaking hand, or talking with HIV/AIDS patients cannot become infection.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the analysis of statistical data collected for the study, the following recommendations were made to improve the health status of HIV**/**AIDSpatients.

1. It is recommended that health workers should create awareness on the effect of non-compliance to anti-retroviral therapy
2. It is recommended that monitoring program should be introduced to patients with HIV/AIDs to monitor their drugs intake, and also monitor their immune system weither their body system is resistance to the drugs or not.
3. Awareness should be created to the community members on stigmatization of HIV/AIDs patients.
4. Government should make available free drugs in clinics and hospitals close to the community to reduce the non-adherence of the patient to the drugs in time of transportation and lack of money to get the drugs.
5. More research work is needed in the following areas:

* Stigmatization of HIV/AIDs patients.
* Knowledge and attitude of people toward HIV/AIDs patient in the community.

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**A ‘SEASON OF ANOMY’: GLIMPSES OF EXPLOITATION, GREED AND INSENSITIVITY**

**IN KOLA EKE’S COVID-19 AND OTHER POEMS**

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**Abstract**

*The Coronavirus global pandemic occurred amidst unprecedented threat to human existence. The severity of the phenomenon created uncertainty and anxiety worldwide. It also resulted in strange ailments and uncountable deaths as well as disruption of daily activities in the spheres of education, corporate governance, business, recreation and religious observances. This paper examines the poetry of a Nigerian writer, Kola Eke, in his Covid-19 and Other Poems, against the backdrop of the poet’s exposition of the underbelly of corruption in many African countries, even amidst the apprehension of possible estimation of mankind. The objective is to bring to the fore how Eke acts as the conscience of his society by revealing the unusual actions of people who are propelled by the love of money to perpetrate malevolence in a most troubling circumstance of a pandemic. By adopting the qualitative research methodology, the paper engages the text and secondary sources while the theory of phenomenology is deployed in analysing and explicating incidents of duplicity as ‘lived in experiences of the people’. The lockdown imposed during the pandemic necessitated a recourse to technology as an alternative way of accomplishing tasks. The researcher discovers that the poems point to deliberate acts of deceit and exploitation of the vulnerable by government officials and other citizens. This paper also demonstrates that corruption, which is fueled by greed and insensitivity, is so entrenched in governance in many African societies that not even the fear of annihilation, posed by coronavirus, deterred people from taking advantage of others.*

**Key words**: Anomaly, corruption, Covid-19, Exploitation, Greed.

**1.0 Introduction**

Coronavirus, one of the deadliest infections which resulted in a global shut-down of human activities continues to confound the world. The magnitude of the occurrence and what humanity made of the experience still engage the attention of people including writers and other scholars. This research interrogates, closely, some anomalies that were witnessed during the period as captured by the Nigerian writer, Kola Eke, in his collection of poems titled *Covid-19 and Other Poems*.

It is indeed anomalous and against the grains of human ethics and empathy for privileged people to subject the needy to various forms of exploitation at a time when the world was grappling with survival. The level of exploitation that the author brings to light in his collection of poems is reminiscent of the anomalous perpetration of corruption that Wole Soyinka captures in his second novel, *Season of Anomy*. In Soyinka’s novel, corruption is portrayed as a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the Nigerian society. It has assumed such a dangerous dimension even with a global occurrence as Covid-19, which should ordinarily engender empathy and sober reflection. Due to the entrenchment of corruption, COVID-19 becomes an avenue for exploiting and oppressing the weak by the strong and those in positions of authority.

The qualitative methodology of research is adopted as the paper engages in-text analyses of the poems, choosing randomly from the primary text. A lot of inspiration is drawn also from the poet’s conscious efforts to blend subject-matter with “aesthetic poetic language to embellish his thematic preoccupation” (Eke 7). The focus of this research is on the poems with the relevant motifs of corruption, exploitation and insensitivity.

**1.1 Theoretical Framework: Phenomenology**

To put this paper in proper perspective, the poems are examined against the theoretical background of phenomenology which is concerned with the structure of experience. In particular, attention is paid to “the consciousness, the imagination, relations with other persons, and the situatedness of the human subject in society and history” (Armstrong n.p.). Armstrong states further that phenomenology, which is a philosophy of experience, could also be viewed as the ultimate source of all meaning and value as well as the lived experience of human beings (n.p.).

Roman Ingarden had earlier dwelt on the cognition of the works of art as contributing to solving the issues of what is real and ideal. Latter day scholar, Edmund Husseri, finds a congruence between phenomenology and existentialism. He focuses a lot of attention on the belief that ‘understanding is always ahead of itself’, by projecting the argument that interpretations make things clearer. Husseri also opines that a major focus of phenomenology is the existence of a ‘forestructure’ around which assumptions and beliefs that guide interpretations revolve (289). This is the premise on which the theory could be deployed to explicate what Kola Eke projects in his poems on Covid-19. The ‘forestructure’ of corruption in the Nigerian society and other African countries serves as a platform for the exploitation of the masses by the privileged few in positions of authority. The matter is made worse by the docility of the exploited and the tendency to give up instead of resistance. This is so because of the assumption or belief that everyone who has an opportunity to exploit others do so unchecked. Therefore, corruption and exploitation become a vicious cycle that is not helped by the complacency of the majority of the people. This supports the views of phenomenologists that the experiences of the people are often “intentional and unified”. That is why this paper is anchored on the premise that the people who exploit others and those that are exploited do so as willful acts.

**1.2 Review of Related Scholarship**

Published in 2021, Kola Eke’s *Covid-19 and Other Poems* has not been subjected to much scholarly evaluation specifically. However, there is a gamut of literature on the Covid-19 phenomenon. Writing on the effect of culture on e-book popularity during the Covid-19 pandemic, Rodrigo Fernandes Malaquias avers that the pandemic has altered the way ‘people live, interact and communicate with others’ (n.p.). He goes on to point out the less dependence on physical and social activities by people while information technologically-driven interaction between them became the new norm. According to the scholar, during the nearly two years that the pandemic raged (2020 to 2022), the lockdowns around the world necessitated devising new ways of doing things by both the governments and individuals. Information communication technology became a ready tool because of its capacity to facilitate activities and make interactions in educational, economic and other sub-sectors seamless.

The views by Malaquias are germane to the whole essence of Covid-19 and the resort to technology. The assertion that the existing culture of advanced information communication technology in some climes or societies made such climes more amenable and disposed to the inevitable migration from physical interaction to virtual interaction is in tune with reality. For example, the popularity of e-books (which is the focus of the scholar) in African countries cannot be said to be on equal pedestal with the advanced countries of Europe, Asia and America.

Efosa Legemah undertakes a linguistic analysis of text messages to Nigerians during the Covid-19 epidemic by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC); the agency of the Federal Government charged with monitoring and informing the people about the pandemic. He points out the rapport management strategies deployed by the Centre to sensitise the citizenry. Legemah states further that the strategies of direct speech act and mitigating supportive movers helped to engender the right confidence by the people. There is no doubt that the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control lived up to its responsibility of providing daily information on the character and dimension of the Covid-19 pandemic while it lasted. This enabled the citizens, as Legemah points out, to be well informed about the precautionary measures to mitigate the impact of the epidemic. Legemah’s views are robust. However, the television appearances and text messaging by the NCDC could not have been said to achieve maximum coverage because of the medium which excluded the less privileged who are without access to electricity and data. Another scholar, Sunday Adebisi, explores the coronavirus pandemic from a sociological perspective. He describes Covid-19 as ‘a large family of viruses that cause not only common colds but more serious respiratory illness. He showcases his statistical survey of household affectations by the virus, giving details of the disease transmission, symptoms, deaths and possible prevention. Adebisi’s submission also involves the fact about the resurgence of the pandemic at moments when it was thought to be over. The scholar attributes the resurgence to his belief that many people began to flout the guidelines by health officials and the government. He supports his assertion with a statistical analysis that the number of infected people dropped at weekends since fewer people went to work and other public places during the weekends. Adebisi’s analysis is in congruence with public knowledge as the imposition and enforcement of physical distancing ensured that public spaces, including recreational centres and churches, were patronised less at weekends which ordinarily are the peak periods of such public places.

On his part, Igor Calzada engages the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic to the inter-connectivity of states’ borders. He states that the ‘social and economic effects of the pandemic are profound and pervasive for an emerging regime of citizenship’ (n/p). This scholar’s perspective captures the fear and subsequent restriction of movements in order to minimize the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic across states, regions and countries. There is no doubt that the action by governments helped greatly to contain the dreaded disease. Calzada’s postulation is, therefore, well thought-out and realistic. Many states in Nigeria, as part of the regime of lockdown, also imposed a type of curfew whereby state boundaries were no go areas for visitors from other states.

The unusual occurrences of forced “stay-at-home”, physical distancing of even close relations and the compulsory use of face masks by non-medical people caught the attention of Benedicta Ehanire and Andrew Ehanire. The authors in their memoir on the COVID-19 phenomenon draw attention to the debilitating effects of the pandemic and the extent to which the global community was literally brought on its knees (175). Ehanire and Ehanire’s narratives are factual and a reflection of happenings during the pandemic. Their perspectives serve as a documentation of history.

Another scholar, Nandini Sen, embarks on a historical review of pandemics from the medieval period through to the Spanish flu of 1918 to Aids of 1980, Ebola of 2013 to 2016 and the recent Covid-19 contagious disease. He states that Covid-19 pandemic created situations whereby people responded in various ways and degrees. There was an initial philosophical reaction followed by inquisitiveness and interrogation. The stoic posture of the world citizens, in the view of Sen, leads them to the ‘grim acceptance of the situation’ thus, the ‘people and the media responded by spreading rumours and false information’ about the disease (n.p.). Sen’s view aligns with that of this researcher who believes that the novelty of the pandemic caused a lot of panic among people. Different theories and stories flew literally without control. The existence of social media made the unchecked information flow worse as there was no mechanism by which the rumours and stories could be ascertained.

The above views aptly capture what transpired during the period of approximately twenty-two months that Covid-19 ravaged the world and threatened human existence. The pandemic, from the above review by scholars, has been examined from the perspective of health, disruption of social and economic activities and how it affected interpersonal relationships. The shenanigans that occurred during the period of what threatened human existence have not, to the best of knowledge of this researcher, been examined. This paper, therefore, navigates the uncharted course of the aberrations and crass corruption that went on in Nigeria even as the deadly disease raged. It is discovered as the collection of poems under focus points to, that in spite of the pain of the phenomenon, the exploitation of the weak by the privileged few and other corrupt practices were fueled mainly by greed and insensitivity.

**2.1 Analyses**

**Covid-19: A Season of Greed and Exploitation of the Masses**

The Covid-19 global occurrence took the world by surprise and created so much anxieties and uncertainties. In spite of that state of affairs and the hardship brought upon the people by the pandemic, exploitation of the mass of the people thrived in many facets of the Nigerian society. Not only did government officials take advantage of the people by misappropriating palliatives meant to bring succor to them, the masses, even those at the lowest rung of society themselves, also used the period to make gains from their fellow impoverished people. These are the pictures that Eke creates in his collection of poems under examination. For example, in the poem on despicable behaviours, the poet writes:

Covid-19 cow

Set aside as palliatives

For vulnerable members

Butchered

Set aside by

The Commission

And Directors hijacked the Hump

Set aside for

The poor

And leaders looted the Rump… (15)

In the excerpt above, cow is a metaphor for food and provisions ‘set aside’ by the federal and state governments as well as public spirited persons but which are diverted by ‘Directors’ who ‘hijacked the Hump’. The poem goes on further in the parts not quoted to identify other exploiters such as ‘politicians’, ‘contractors’, community leaders, ‘legislators’ and ‘Board members’. These highly placed officials in the Nigerian socio/political space are what phenomenologist, Husseri regards as the ‘forestructure’ around which things revolve (290). The ‘forestructure’ are the so-called high and mighty. They control happenings in society and it is unfortunate that not even a serious and fatal occurrence as Covid-19 could touch their hearts to act differently from the culture of corruption and exploitation of the poor that is associated with them. The metaphor of cow which is in other words, palliatives expected to bring relief to the people, become meat for fattening the rich further.

Eke paints this image of pervasive acts of exploitation and greed in another poem when he, ironically, uses coronavirus as a symbol of how deep-rooted corruption is in the Nigerian society. According to the writer:

Coronavirus has over-run

Our global farmland…

The wicked virus

Multiplying from seeds of legumes

Broken stolons and Rhizomes (13)

The use of images of agriculture is deliberate as food is an object of sustenance but of which the people are deprived. The excerpt describes how widespread coronavirus has been, and by extension, corruption. The virus is personified and described as ‘wicked’ to underscore the evil that corruption portends for society and for people. Extending the motif of plants and crops to another poem, the disruption and destruction of human activities are put in the following expressions:

Covid-19

like army worm

has consumed the grain

crops of academic activities…

like ear worm

has eaten into the

cobs of factories

And the people call on the

gods they serve

To free them from

Mandibles and maxillae of the virus (14)

Coronavirus, just as the two first stanzas demonstrate, has acted like corruption perpetrated by man to exploit situations in the world of academics and in the industries. In the last stanza of the poem, the people, who are the oppressed, cry out ironically to ‘the gods they serve’ – their oppressors – for freedom. The shutting down of the education and economic sectors were seen as avenues for those in administrative positions of authority to ‘milk’ the poor and the vulnerable.

In the above extract, the poet deploys series of similes to liken Covid-19 to African leaders who are the real virus ravaging their weak and vulnerable citizens. In another poem, he draws the similarity between the virus and the leaders in the following lines:

Virus like a scarecrow

Virus like a mirage

Virus like a scam

A good long cry

And Museni

Dissects the virus

To his entire tribe

A good long cry

From Museveni

Virus like the

Plague of darkness (26)

The poet uses Yuweri Museveni, President of Uganda – an African country, to represent other African leaders who deceived and exploited the people; perpetrating various scams to keep the majority of their ‘tribe’ in darkness. When phenomenologists refer to ‘the ambiguities of the lived world’ (n.p.) the action to confuse the citizens for self aggrandisement comes to mind. The leaders’ dubiousness in creating ambiguities in order to exploit the people is what led them to vote billions of money to provide palliatives for the people but end up diverting most of the money for their personal use.

As a way of cushioning the effects of Covid-19 on the citizenry, governments at various levels introduced palliatives. This, however, turns out to be a hoax. In “Poisonous Palliatives” the poet states that:

Bombs of Palliatives

Set aside

To cushion the wounds of pandemic…

counterfeiters of fake food

As palliatives…

Expired food item,

Like bomb

To explode when it

Hits the target (60)

The above expressions capture succinctly the actions of government officials who, instead of deploying the money voted for the purpose to bring genuine succor to the people, misappropriate such funds. Instead they go for cheap, fake and expired food items which pose more danger to the people than the Covid-19 pandemic itself. Ironically, therefore, the deceitful measure taken is actually to exterminate the people. This picture of duplicity painted is in sync with Husseri’s postulation that the lived in experiences of people also involves ‘the inescapability of social and political entanglements’ (n.p.). The mindset of corruption in Nigeria and many African countries makes this evitable.

The poem states further that the palliatives are “for the weak”, Harbinger of death and disease (60). The poem emphasises the high level of corruption of many government officials in Nigeria who feed fat on the sufferings of the masses. The expression of “expired food item” exploding when it hits the target, this time the poor masses, captures the intensity of the greed. The expression also aligns with the view of phenomenologists that there is a mediation between the consciousness of the author and that of the reader (n.p), because just as the author intends it to be, the reader’s imagination of the impact of the actions described as ‘harbingers of death’ is made more lucid to the mind’s eye.

The fake products for which the privileged few preyed on the vulnerable are not limited to palliatives. Even in the health sector which was at the core of the pandemic, suffered abuse by unscrupulous officials. Another poem, “Pity Poor Patients”, rendered in innuendoes and sarcasm, talks about Covid-19 victims “jumping in and swimming in the pool of oxygen racketeering” (129). It was common knowledge during the pandemic that victims of Covid-19 were required to be put on oxygen to resuscitate their failing health. The dependence on oxygen became an avenue for the ‘sales of oxygen at black market rate’ (129). The poem, laden with ample poetic licence of deliberate flouting of grammar rules of capitalisation, is a reflection of the extent to which human lives and the survival of humanity meant nothing to people who would do anything to flout ethical behaviours in order to make money. Corruption, during the Covid-19 pandemic was not only fueled by greed in Nigeria and some other African countries, the phenomenon was also marked by insensitivity of people who were put in charge of the material resources or the commonwealth of the people. pervasive insensitivity during the Covid-19 pandemic is what the next segment of this paper examines.

**2.2 Covid-19: A Season of Insensitivity**

Insensitivity refers to the coldness of heart of an individual to a situation where empathy or sympathy is required. In Eke’s *Covid-19 and Other Poems*, there are indications that the attitude of insensitivity was rife among citizens even as the pandemic raged.

First, it is the poet’s description of the phenomenon itself as a ‘plague’ and “No respecter of persons” (17). In a personification of Covid-19, the pandemic is, in the view of the poet, an “Ambassador plenipotentiary of Death” which ‘strikes with the first born plague’…. The virus, like a buzzard, feeds on the vulnerable (17). The poem under focus reminds the reader of the universality of Covid-19 and the fact that the pandemic was insensitive to colour, class or status or creed. The pandemic, in its global occurrence, transcended countries and regions, visiting pain and doom on people:

No respecter of persons

Boris Johnson and Prince Charles

Have fallen into the

Cesspool of this virus

Ambassador of pains

And woes

Knitting the cardigan of

Death and destruction. (17)

Boris Johnson, the former British Prime Minister and Prince Charles, now King of England, were reported by the media to have contracted the coronavirus. The poem, therefore, stresses the coldness or imperviousness of the disease to the high and mighty even in advanced societies. The pandemic did not ‘select’ its victims as all were vulnerable. It defied technology, spirituality and even economic comfort of countries. The occurrences during Covid-19 were not what in garden, in another instance, described as ‘mere figments or private dream-images’ (n.p.). They were real and the presence of the media helped to bring the happenings to the consciousness of the people.

The motifs of ‘bombs’ and ‘bullets’ to describe the devastating effects of the pandemic are also deployed in this poem to convey the message. The insensitivity of the citizenry to one another’s plight and to the protocols is captured in another poem, ‘Scam’. In the particular poem, various conspiracy theories or stories about Covid-19 lead to so much doubt and unbelief:

Many unbelieving ears

Many unbelieving hands

Many unbelieving fingers

Uganda and elsewhere…

Virus vehement vows

To live long

As long as the people

Continue to disobey the protocols (26)

As disruptive and rife as the pandemic was, many people chose not to believe that the disease was real. Characteristically of the careless and insensitive attitude of many Africans, not just Nigerians, protocols of prevention and containment of the virus, such as compulsory wearing of facemasks and regular hand sanitisation were flouted. This is believed to have led to the persistence of the pandemic for nearly two years.

The poet, in another poem pokes fun at the youths as a class of people who are in the habit of trivialising things. He points out how young people took insensitivity to a ridiculous extent during the pandemic for he states that: “Many young people loosely hang facemasks on their chins… variegated colours of facemasks to tally with shoes, trousers and shirts” (49). These young people do these even in the face of the seriousness of the deadly disease. At critical moments, in large crowds and even at hospitals they do not bother to wear facemasks just as officials in government hospitals were insensitive to the health risks of personnel and failed to provide protective apparels for them. The insensitivity of Health Administrators was responsible for the high number of health workers who fell to the disease.

Lastly, the poet takes a swipe at many people in society who were insensitive to the pains of the pandemic, yet, meted more hardship on the people:

Tales of quit notices

Here and there

Mass killing of

Tenancy obligations

Castration of jobs

Amputation of salaries

Tales of quit notices

Casualties of Covid-19....

Victims of job depletion

Victims of salary demolition

Victims of coronavirus

Victims of total lockdown (62)

The people are victims of an insensitive system and leaders who do not take into account the attendant negative effects of their actions. Landlords issue out quit notices to their tenants who have lost their jobs due to the Covid-19 lockdown. Jobs are castrated and there is ‘Amputation of salaries’. It is a bleak situation and the leaders do not care because their actions are subject to ‘attitudes and interests’ (n.p). This time, it is self-interest.

**3.0 Conclusion**

The Covid-19 era was indeed a ‘Season of anomy.’ This was especially manifest in Nigeria and many other African countries where greed and exploitation of the people were commonplace and these caused discontent among the citizens. Greed, exploitation and insensitivity are some offshoots of corruption, and corruption has been the bane of African societies. Eke, in his poetry, assumes the role of a social crusader to draw attention to these ills, questioning the humanity in people who take advantage of dire situations to inflict more pain on them. The poems are artistically woven by the poet’s deployment of poetic devices including, simile, personification and metaphor to interrogate the tendency for persons in positions of authority and influence to abuse such privileges. Eke establishes in this collection of poems that the admixture of greed and insensitivity, even amidst the fear and pain associated with the Covid-19 era is an experience that no society should tolerate.

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**SOCIO-ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND THE NIGERIAN CHURCH: AN ETHICAL APPRAISAL**

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**Abstract**

*The privilege to serve as member of some school’s management board granted me the opportunity of knowing the complaints of some staff. Some who expressed their early work experiences doing recruitment exercise have yearned for improvement as they stay more years in service. The paper gears towards evaluating the pragmatic effort of the church in Nigeria in promoting socio-economic justice as in her dealing with the community in cases of social contract, distributive justice and the reified social relations. The church is assessed on her integrity in respect to efficiency and justness, balance and moderation and how much she is void of racism and circular reasoning. Utilizing a historical and phenomenological method with simple sampling technique, thirty (30) churches were selected from the mainline denominations who are self supportive. The mstruments used for data collection were mainly oral interview and previous minutes from church-in-conference. The results about the perception of church members on the socio-economic justice in the Nigeria were collected while the ethical appraisal was sourced from nonchurch members. The results were collected and analyzed with simple percentage. The findings revealed that love for money ranked highest among the factors that eluded the 21st century church. This was as a result of the notion that a Christian’s well-being is measured by material ‘possessions. Hence, everyone strives to get it irrespective of the means. The study reveals that women are anxious about socio-economic justice. Hence, they are more desperate than the men counterparts. The responses of the non-church member show that the church is rated equal with the secular politicians in their attitude to socio-economic justice. The church has joined the wagon of the survival of the fittest. John Rawls and Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s social contract theory sums up the high correlation between justice and national unity. Hence, when a society is void of fairness and equity, the most affected members usually turn to become socio-paths, making the environment insecure. The study recommends that the church in Nigeria should have self evaluation of her organizational structure; leadership appointment, economic distributions and personnel development. The church should also be more pragmatic in sustaining her missionary mandate. The socio-religious activities and economic establishments of the church should be wholistic and inclusive in affecting all and sundry positively.*

**Key words:** Socio-economic, Justice, Church and Ethics*.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Specific amount could be agreed for monthly salary but some allowances that could serve as incentives to boost the workers moral are not usually given. In human history, occasions have demanded political actions where an individual or group of individuals have cried out: enough is enough.” They could be expressing their inward feelings of rejection, marginalization and the kinds. The early Church accounts are occasions when there were protests by individuals who felt neglected or dehumanized either within or without and how the church intervened which credited her as change agent.

However, the twenty-first century Church in Nigeria is faced with socio-economic issues that cry for her attention. The thrust of the work is on social injustice as it affects ways and accountability. It evaluates the pragmatic effort of the church in prompting socio-economic justice. The Church is also assessed on her integrity in respect of efficiency and justice, balance and moderation andhow much void of racism and secular reasoning.

According to Jayakuma Christian, the social system reinforces the powerlessness of the power by exclusion and exploitation.[[1]](#footnote-1) The non-poor understand themselves superior, necessary and anointed to rule. They succumb to the temptation, to play God in the lives of the poor, using religious system, mass media, the law, government policies and people occupying positions of power. These people create the narratives, structure and systems that justify and rationalize their privileged positions. The result is that the poor become captives to the god-complexes of the non-poor. The non-poor express their god-complexes by seeking to absolutize themselves in the lives of the poor, influencing areas of life that are beyond their scope of influence, claiming immutability for their power over the poor.

In other words, this captivity finds its concrete expression in the interactive working of the social, political, economic, religious and cultural systems resulting in web of lies and deceit that mediate power often with no need of force. The god-complexes, especially at the level of systems and structures have an ideological centre, an inner realitythat governs and holds together the structures,systems andpeoplewho inhabit them. Moreso, this inner reality provides the inner logic which claims influence he interpretation for ultimate values of life land events justifying the idea of selfishness and systematic injustice.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Aghawenu describes the African situation today as a replica of the days of the Minor Prophets. He notes the moral decadence ranging from oppression of the poor to lawlessness and injustice during the time of Hosea. Leaders in authority in African countries are religious but pagan inpractice, who deny the rights of their citizens with the intent of feathering their own nests.[[3]](#footnote-3) And there are political upheavals as a result of struggles to have access to rational treasury for self-enrichment.

For Oduyoye, developing Africa for Africans was central in the struggle to become politically independent of Europe. However, the orientation of commerce that came with Christianisation succeeded in keeping Africans in Africa in order ot slave for Europe.[[4]](#footnote-4) In another development, Oduyoye noted the role of the church in many tumoils that African encounters and struggles to surmount, not only the direct involvement but the teaching and preaching that shape the response of Christians taking political action. Nevertheless, the church has often been guilty of social injustice in her attitude to leadership. She observed that the concept of leadership put out by word and practice that empower the strong to behave with impunity towards the weak,, may be found in the church itself, where ‘head’ means no longer ‘source of life but boss, master whose comfort is the duty of the people he heads: ‘monkey de work baboon de chop.’[[5]](#footnote-5)

**Political Action**

Understanding of everyorganisation or nation has always depended on the reactions the few to bring about change. These active few are usually given such as revolutionist, socio-path, etc. However, their struggles occasionally are for the benefit of the greatest number of the populace whom they are willing to sacrifice their life for the sustenance.

Some political actions that emerged over decades ago were produced by a number of factors. For Kotler, using incomes and education levels, the advancing complexity of technology and marketing and advancing exploitation of the environment resulted to such things as inflation, the Vietnam war, the racial crisis, discontent over shady products and dishonest business practices all joined to place strain on economic and political structures of society.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Bruce Birch,[[7]](#footnote-7) Jorge Pixley[[8]](#footnote-8) andClodorisBoff observed that the eighth century prophets; Amos, Micah, Hosea and Isaiah who lived at a time f prosperity both Judah and Israel which lasted till the Syrian invasions in 734, strongly condemned the height of injustice in the land. Justice was perverted and rights of the poor were damned. In Amos (swindling traders lowered the business, ruined the shekel, swindled and tampered with the sales) evil gains were made by lowering the bushel, raising the shekel while Hosea denounced the way religion was used as a deceitful cloak for the accumulation of riches (Hosea 2:18). The poor were physically and economically marginalized in the society. They suffered economic oppressions (Amos 8:4), unjust treatment in legal decisions (Isa. 32:7) and victimized through deceptions (Isa. 30:7).

**The Government’s Efforts**

H. Lawal outlined some of the government programmes to deal with poverty as: Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure, Better Life for Rural Women and Family Economic Advancement Programme. Others include Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and Investment Led Poverty Reducing Employment.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Gboyega noted that the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (IcPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission were created for effective delivery of the programmes. Unfortunately, all these policies, rather than helping to savage the economy, instead tend to exacerbate mass poverty.

Finlator suggests that when solutions to socio-economic issues are beyond the capacity of the individuals and the local church, the minister must have the courage to call for political action. This courage will include the willingness to convince the congregation that since so much of the injustice and inequity of society has been brought about politically it can only be removed politically.[[10]](#footnote-10) He further posits that economic injustice will not be addressed by the church unless the minister, in spite of the current emphasis on enabling, facilitating conflict resolution and pastoral counselling, is willing to become involved in the arena; in other words, the minister cannot wait until the time when ‘like a mighty army moves the church of God.’[[11]](#footnote-11)

Finlator cites Karl Bath that the preacher should stand in the pulpit with the Bible in one hand and the morning newspaper in the other, which suggests that the minister should make the congregation aware of how wages, ill housing, deficient nutrition, medical indigence and economic injustice and how these things came to be.

**The Church and Political Action**

P. Paris reveals that a night after the September 11th attack on America, the Presidennt of Ghana, Kwame Bediako responded by urging the citizenry to do what our ancestors taught us always to do in such a situation ‘to pray, not as a at of resignation or defeatism, but as an active attempt to understand, to probe for meaningful and to seek God’s guidance in the midst of our battlement and in the aftermath of the destruction.[[12]](#footnote-12)

**Churches in Nigeria and Social Justice**

Paris asserts further that black churches or organizations not fully owned and controlled by blacks, whether in Caribbean,, the United States or Canada, rarely enjoy strong prophetic, political and national leadership. He claimed further that whenever the government of black churches has been under the jurisdiction of white denominational judicatories, or whenever black churches have been dependent on white denominations for financial supports, such conditions greatly hindered them from exercising their independent judgment on social justice. In other words, lackof economic freedom jeopardizes the zest for social justice. When a church is financially independent and self-sufficient, she becomes self-determined to fight every cause to social justice.

Paris further observed that the fight for freedom in the new world was championed by freed blacks whose activities were usually centred in churches that were independently owned and controlled by blacks themselves, constituting the so-called Independent Black Church Movement. He pointed out that the eighteenth century established church: African Methodist Episcopal and African Methodist Episcopal Zion and the nineteenth century National Baptist Church, USA, the National Baptist Churches, America and the Church of God in Christ were the chief training grounds for both pastoral and prophetic leadership.[[13]](#footnote-13)

Most importantly, the political actions of these prophetic leaders were viewed by the church as blessed by God and hence, in alliance with God.with this courageous type of leadership, they demanded the ends of all forms of racism and colonialism. Among those freed blacks who fought this cause were Martin Luther King Jr. For Downing, King’s battle, wage against American tribalism and pseudo speciation, was nothing less than an effort to remake the national psycho-social identity so that blacks could be treated with a full share of ‘somebodiness.[[14]](#footnote-14)’ He quoted King’s reflection on the movement as: ‘I think the greatest victory of this period was not in terms of an external factor or external development, but it was internal. The real victory was what this period did to the psyche of the black man . . . we earned ourselves with dignity and self respect . . . we straightened our backs up and a can’t vide your back unless it is bent.’[[15]](#footnote-15)

**The Role of the Church**

The claim that the church is an agent of culture change since inception remains indisputable. Her role in initiating culture change has been seriously misunderstood, however, in different ways by the church leadership, faithful and her critics.

Some critics of the church have grossly exaggerated the church’s influence on some national policies and the entire constitution. For William Smalley, the church is a group of believers within its own society, working a chemical change within the society to pieces as the Judaizers would. In other worlds, the church is instituted for the society and should not be separated from the socio-economic activities to serve as pacesetter.[[16]](#footnote-16) Alfred Muli posits that the primary role of the church of Christ in Africa’s political development is to be ‘the voice of Yahweh on earth.’[[17]](#footnote-17) The role, he further claimed, could be ‘the voice of Yahweh through preaching, teaching and writing about biblical instruction concerning different parties involved in a country’s politics.’[[18]](#footnote-18)

Simmons attempts to encourage the church’s interaction in social actions has strongly opposed the dichotomy between evangelism and social action. He viewed evangelization as itself a social process, touching people in public sector and meeting needs related to social life. Therefore, evangelism rightly recognizes that people experience the destructive effects of powerful social pressures. For him,

. . . the threat of nuclear war contributes to the pervasive anxiety people experience. All humanity lives under the shadow of the mushroom cloud. Citizens of the Soviet Union and the United States alike are held hostage by the threat of massive retaliation. The ugly remnants of racism still stalk the streets of America, dehumanizing both the racist and the person scorned and discriminated against. The destructive effect of poverty and malnourishment on bodily and mental development still leaves millions of people maimed for life. Economic distress from unemployment has direct correlation with the incidence of violence in the home . . .[[19]](#footnote-19)

For every one percent in unemployment, reported incidences of spouse or child abuse will triple. The personal problems of the disabled and the elderly are also exacerbated by a lack of social sensitivity to their special circumstances. Their lack of power also underscores their needs for advocates in the cause of justice.

In other words, there is a cry from different circles which the church by its calling and vocation has a prerogative. The argument here, redefines the common knowledge of the separation of church and state. It makes it imperative that the church should never isolate herself from socio-political matters. As part of the citizenry, even her spiritual services should target making the socio-political endeaours of the country more meaningful and touching to the entire society.

**Balance and Moderation**

To refute the anti socio-political arguments, Hope described their claim as a head-in sound religion. He assists that the scripture nowhere indicates that God approves the excesses of wicked rulers. Rather, Christians are called to be agents of change who could replace a regime that neglects basic human needs. He further opines that improving society is not worldliness, but love. Hence, refusal to become involved in public affairs is a breach of the second commandment which also contradicts the words of Jesus to his disciples as ‘salts of the earth.’ Finally, he comments that the Christian community is under obligation to enhance those around here by presenting justice and equality for all humankind.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Inevitably the church so entangled in the fabric of society tended to lose contact with the needs of the people and thus to eliminate even its own. Powerful social movements arise in protest not only of the society’s but also f the church’s role in oppression and injustice. In 1155 A. D. Arnold of Brescia insisted that the church surrender worldly power and possession and become the church of poor and that of the clergy subsist on tithe and voluntary offering.[[21]](#footnote-21) Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons, sought counsel of his priest after a leading citizen of the city died suddenly in 1176. The priest advised him to follow Christ’s injunction to the rich young ruler. He did living two priests to translate the gospel into the vernacular and getting followers who would go out in pairs to preach. What could we say of today’s church?

**Secular Reasoning**

Ingram and Jennifer A. Park described secular reasoning is that already decided judgment, the correctness of certain statement. ‘Prisoners are getting what they deserve when the face the death penalty.’ Conclusions are already made before investing reasons for the action if we conclude that criminals have the right to life that equally justifies the argument that it is wrong to kill them.[[22]](#footnote-22)

**Distributive Justice**

For socio-economic justice, the individual’s right to life and the right to benefit from the available resources in the given society, has a preferential consideration. And the resources are equitably distributed according to the needs and the individual’s input to the generality of the society[[23]](#footnote-23). The principle of social contract demands fair response to services in reciprocating the staff according to the amount of services rendered. The pay also requires fair distribution without favoritism. The value of services measured in the payment.[[24]](#footnote-24)

Smah in his fight against maginalizationdecries the attitude of some middle belt elites who perpetuate all forms of corruption and injustice in alliance with their so-called oppressors who control mining, crude and other extractive resources against the wellbeing of the larger collection minorities. He opines that the failure of the minority elite classes to effectively conceive and address the development challenges facing their people is a reflection of the unfair national redistributive justice system.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Smah in another development, observed that ethnicity and religion formed the cardinal grand basis for the pre and post independent marginalisation of the many distinct ethnic nationalities and multiplicity of people with diverse religious orientations by powerful oligarchies.[[26]](#footnote-26) Nevertheless, the more veritable and tenable conception, explanation and understanding of the myriads of challenges frustrating economic empowerment, national integration and overall development of te contemporary middle belt area as well so the pervasive powerlessness of vast majority of the people can best be located n the greed and corruption of their political leaders at all levels of governance who find option of collusion with their oppressors better than sacrificing for the advancement of their respective communities and the nation at large.

According to Ritzer, Homans revised edition of the law of distribution just goes beyond the distribution of rewards and cost in fairness. It suggests that :the more to a man’s disadvantage the ruleof distribution justice fails of realisation,, the more likely he is to display the emotional behavior we cal anger.(Hamon, 1961:750). In other words, the major source of anger and aggression could be traced to unfair distribution of thwarts and cost among individuals involved in the society.[[27]](#footnote-27)

**Wage Differential**

For Andre, when union members earned 25 percent more than non-union members in comparable jobs, the increment is referred to as the wage differential. Organization culture of accountability is the employee appraisals based on performance or favourtism. Here, one could deduce the logic in the attitude of some employers towards the remuneration of the workers’ wage. Despite the qualification which could be the same, some are treated differently with or without favour.[[28]](#footnote-28)

In social contrasts, Jean-Jacques Rousseau viewed the society as a living thing in which even the smallest part is essential to the wellbeing of the whole organisation. Because each of us is equally important and in contributing to the social good, we must guarantee that our social contracts are as beneficial to the least wealthy and powerful.

For Ingram and Jennifer A. Parks, one part of the society is neglected, the other parts eventually feel it too. Hence, social contrast theory advocates the wholistic well-being of an entire society.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Similarly, John Ranol’s view is cited by Ingram and Parks that th society must be set up to minimize the effects of injustice and unfair treatment of average citizenry. Rawl claims that in a truly fair society, each person would have an equal opportunity to succeed, as far as he or she can, no matter what kind of life he r she was born into.[[30]](#footnote-30)

For Harbin, the Old Testament institution of Jubilee can only be applicable today when connected with the emphasis on social justice. He argues that contemporary Christians should respond to the Jubilee Principles of calling ‘each of you to return to his own property’ which underlies redistribution of wealth. As much as slavery could be a just penalty for one that defaults in the payment of the short term loan, the Sabbath year sets everyone free and grants him all rights and privileges that is due to every citizen.[[31]](#footnote-31) In other words, no national should be regarded as second hand citizen or denied of any socio-political and economic rights no matter the individual’s status and designation in the society.

**Efficiency and Justness**

Among the seven deadly sins as quoted by Overstreet, H. A.Titus sees sloth, the sixth as that which refuses to make appropriate return efforts.[[32]](#footnote-32) It worths to take things to oneself, effortlessly, to reap without sowing. Several reports reveal that labour, cultural and social assessment to the appropriate wage for average labour. Recently, argument or the national minimum wage caused some schism among politicians at both national and state levels. The pathetic conscious are what is the appropriate measure to determine wages and what justifies the dawn of the legislations for their personal wages. In what is good for the gender good for the geese?

The data collected from 30 churches who are self-supporting with established economic venture shows high rate of injustice ranging from lack of distribution justice in secular reasoning. The proprietors are rated high above average while the staff are treated as things| with great injustice.

The 30 churches interviewed operate a multi-staff ministry which serve the administrative and auxiliary units for business enterprise. These churches were assessed on their criteria for recruitment of staff, wage differential and accountability. For recruitment, the following were rated: age, gender, marital statues, denomination, qualification and ethnicity. On wage differential diversion of service, experience and qualification were evaluated while accountability were queried whether appraisal is based on performance of favouritism.

Two types of data were elicited for the study, i.e. secondary and primary data include all official published information and other relevant documents contained in books, journals, minutes of meetings and reports among others.While primary data include all information generated for the purpose of the study through oral/indepth interview with principal officers of the churches and heads of the auxiliary units.

**Results**

Out of the 30 churches all have multi-staff ministry with nursery primary schools at their auxiliary units. 11 have secondary schools, while 2 have guest houses. 10 rated denominational affiliation highest to recruitment requirement and ethnicity dearest. 7 ranked qualification while 9 for gender/marital statues on specific career. For age, 18 years was the minimum age allowed for service by all the churches. In the case of wage differential, 10 churches based their scheme of service on the qualification while 20 considered years of service coupled with experience.

However, none of these institutions paid their workers anything more than least minimum wage, which is less than the first grade level. The federal government approved minimum wage is regarded as inappropriate to private sector wage. The proprietors gave more credence to the rate at which profit is made. Their net profit is viewed as determinant to the well-being of the establishment while the workers are regarded sacrificial lambs who are to live for the benefit of the institutions. All their life should be on sacrifice. The managements are more interested in the development of their institutions rather than thinking of the well-being of their employees.

**Discussion**

The agreed minimum wage as approved by the Federal Government of Nigeria and by some missionary agencies. In 2011, the Governors’ Forum adopted and endorsed into law the national minimum wage of N18,000.00. Most private employers especially the church established agencies, are yet t adhere to the verdict. Among these agencies, the proprietors are noted for flamboyant and luxurious lifestyle. They boast of how much investment and amount of money they have in the bank to the detriment of the staff.

**Recommendations**

To some, the society and the church from the effect socio-economic injustice, the Nigerian church should strive to do the following:

1. Ensure to have self evaluation of her organizational structure, leadership appointment should be based on merit.
2. The economic distribution of their resources should be based on meeting the necessary challenges that are result oriented with ever sense of fairness.
3. Personal development should be geared towards sustenance of the society and the church in particular.
4. The church should also be more pragmatic in sustaining her missionary mandate of remaining focused on achieving the mind of Christ for mankind which is soul-aiming.
5. The socio-religious ultimate and economic establishment of the church should be wholistic and inclusive in affecting all and sundry positively.

**Conclusion**

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the church should exhibit a higher sense of understanding where it comes to people’s welfare and respect to fundamental human rights. She should set the pace for secular institutions to emulate. On matters of fair wages, these churches treated their staff with less consideration of the economic situation and market prices. The counterparts with same qualification in the labour market receive better enumeration from their employers. The churches demanded more quality services with less pay and superficially spiritualized their staff expectations with “divine rewards”

The church in Nigeria should be celebrated as change agent with a messianic focus. The church should be devoid of injustice, rather a living example and model for good governance. It is expected of the church to be the light which should outshine darkness.

However, the reverse is the case where the secular employees now enjoy better benefits. This paper, therefore recommends that the definition of a living wage should not be strange to the church as much as she propagates the message of justice, equity and fairness. Her renumeration to workers should be a step to war against poverty.

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**L’Intégration ouest-africaine et la libre circulation dans l’espace communautaire de la Communauté Economique des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest, le bilan.**

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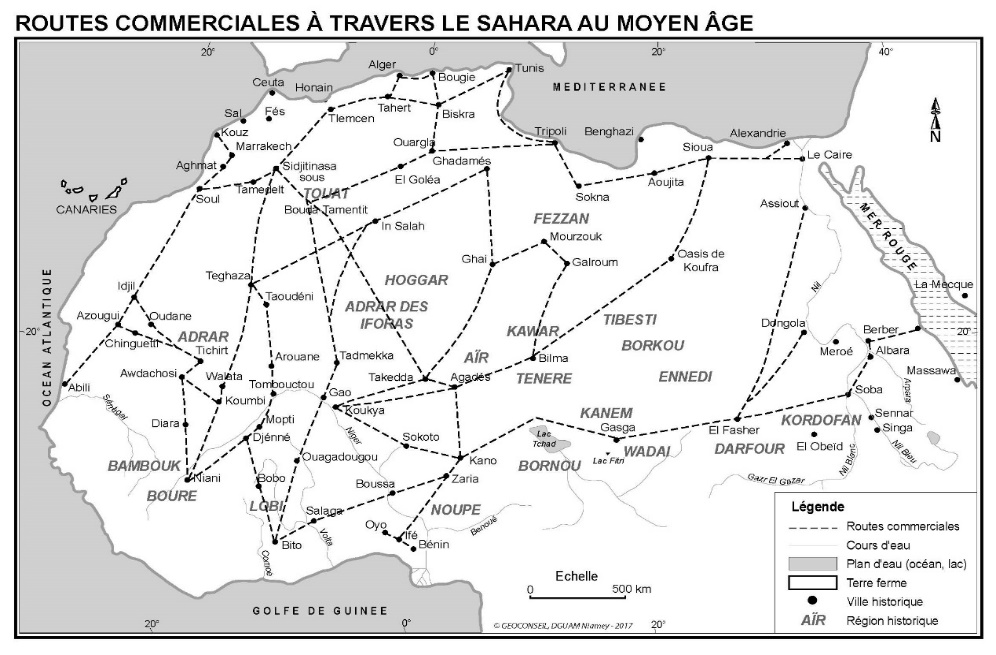
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**Résume**

*La Communauté Economique des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (CEDEAO) est une organisation sous régionale dont la mission principale est la création d’un Etat nation supranational dans lequel, les citoyens jouiront le plein droit de circuler et de s’installer dans l’espace et le temps de leur choix. L’intégration régionale n’est pas nouvelle à l’Afrique de l’Ouest qui a joué un rôle indispensable dans le commerce transsaharien. Le fleurissement des royaumes tels que le Ghana, le Mali, le Kanem/Borno ou le Kasar Hausa a facilité la circulation des personnes et des biens entre l’Afrique subsaharienne, le Maghreb, le Moyen-Orient et une partie de l’Europe. La libre circulation inscrite par la CEDEAO aurait, du moins, reflété le succès enregistré en Afrique de l’Ouest précoloniale. Après 48 ans de pratique, certains citoyens méconnaissent leur droit de circuler librement dans les 15 Etats de la CEDEAO. Certains Etats membres ne respectent pas leur engagement à promouvoir la libre circulation dans l’espace communautaire. Cet article évalue la mise en œuvre de la libre circulation dans l’espace communautaire CEDEAO en se référant à la théorie de l’intégration.*

**Introduction**

La région ouest africaine a connu l’apogée des institutions politiques dans le passé. Les empires et royaumes tels que le Nok, le Benin, le Ghana, le Songhaï, le Mali, le Kanem/ Bornu, le Kasar Hausa etc, ont fait la fierté du continent. Cette réputation s’étend aussi à l’économie du contient. Dès le Moyen Age, d’important réseau routier qui relie l’Afrique de l’Est au Maghreb et d’autres continents, sillonne cette partie du continent. L’Afrique de l’ouest a été la pièce-maitresse du commerce transsaharien comme l’illustre la carte ci-dessous :



Carte produite par le Géo-conseil, Université Abdou Moumouni, Niamey

Le relief de l’Afrique de l’ouest qui présente moins d’obstacles, avec des rares chaines de montagnes et moins des forêts danses, a permis au colonisateur, notamment la France de regrouper ses colonies en un block : l’Afrique Occidentale Française (AOF). Les ex-colonies françaises, à leur indépendance respective, ont aussi opté, à la formation d’une communauté ouest africaine à base d’identité coloniale sans tenir compte des réalités socio-économiques, héritages ancestraux qui les lient aux autres Etats non colonisés par la France.

La politique coloniale française vis-à-vis de ses colonies en Afrique a atteint son objectif d’assimiler le peuple africain. Avec l’accès facile à la citoyenneté française et l’éducation de la métropole, les dirigeants des pays africains francophones se sentent solidaires et fraternels entre eux par rapport aux autres dirigeants des anciennes colonies européennes.

Des négociations, par les Chefs d’Etats francophones, pour la création d’une *Communauté Economique de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (CEAO)* destinée à remplacer l’*Union Douanière des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (UDEAO),* ont eu lieu en 1970. Le Niger s’oppose fermement à l’idée que l’union soit sur la base linguistique : *« La CEAO, insiste le Président nigérien, ne peut pas être d’architecture purement sentimentale, ni linguistique. Elle doit être géographique, donc englober nécessairement tous les pays de la région, même si par suite d’accidents historiques, certains d’entre eux se trouvent artificiellement plus ou moins isolés de leurs voisins »* (Baulin, 1986 : 33)*.* Cette intervention visait à inclure le Nigeria et les autres pays non francophones dans la CEAO. Le Niger n’accepte pas qu’une communauté soit formée en Afrique de l’Ouest sans que le Nigéria ne soit membre.

L’intervention du Niger finit par porter fruits. Après des manœuvres diplomatiques entre les Etats de la sous-région, une communauté est formée englobant tous les pays. L’ancien Président nigérian Yakubu Gowon note ceci : *« Après la guerre civile, nous avons constaté que quelque chose devrait être faite en ce qui concerne l’économie et le bien-être de la sous-région. Il (Diori) a convaincu presque tous les leaders de l’Afrique de l’Ouest francophone à accepter que nous formions une nouvelle organisation, la Communauté Economique des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest. Le seul regret que j’ai eu, est qu’il n’était pas au pouvoir au moment où la convention est signée, le 28 mai 1975 »* (Umate, 2021 :106)

L’objectif primordial et principale de la CEDEAO, selon le Traité du 28 mai 1975, Article 2, consiste à *«* promouvoir la coopération et le développement dans tous les domaines dc l'activité économique, particulièrement dans les domaines dc 1'industrie, des transports, des télécommunications, dc l'énergie, dc l'agriculture, des ressources naturelles, du commerce, des questions monétaires et financières et dans le domaine des affaires sociales et culturelles avec pour objectif d’élever le niveau de vie de ses peuples, d'accroitre et de maintenir la stabilité économique, de renforcer les relations entre ses membres et de contribuer au progrès et au développement du continent africain*»* (CEDEAO, 1993 :7)

Cet objectif d’intégration visant à créer un espace commun, *«* espace CEDEAO *»*, est reformulé dans la convention révisée de 1993 comme suit *« La Communauté vise à promouvoir la coopération et l'intégration dans la perspective d'une Union économique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest… » (CEDEAO, 1993 :5).* En d’autres termes, les leaders politiques de CEDEAO visent à créer un Etat supranational au détriment des Etats nations postcoloniaux. La formation d’une ‘Union économique’ n’est possible qu’à travers la circulation des personnes et des biens, l’Article 59, portant sur l’Immigration fait le droit d’entrée, de résidence et d’établissement des citoyens de l’espace CEDEAO une obligation que chaque Etat membre doit protéger (CEDEAO, 1993 :36).

Cette approche d’intégration régionale trouve bien ses racines chez les spécialistes du fonctionnalisme qui soulignent que les besoins matériels, techniques et technologiques rendent les populations de différents Etats dépendantes les unes des autres (Mitrany, 1948 : 356). Les besoins des populations au niveau d’un Etat sont souvent directement liés aux besoins économiques et vont au-delà de leurs frontières nationales. Les relations fonctionnelles se mettent ainsi en place sans aucune atteinte à la souveraineté de l’Etat (Mitrany, 1948 :357).

Le comportement des populations permet de mettre en place une organisation fonctionnelle nettement différente de l’organisation politique (Mitrany, 1948 : 361). Dans ‘l’espace CEDEAO’ malgré son inclusion dans les textes, la notion de la libre circulation reste ambiguë. Rares sont des citoyens de l’espace commun reconnaissent l’existence. Parfois, cette libre circulation se veut un privilège alors qu’elle est un droit. La libre circulation dans les Etats de la CEDEAO est-elle réellement en vigueur ? Est-elle reconnue par les Etats membres au niveau national ? Existe-t-il des forces majeures qui empêchent la pleine jouissance de droit de libre circulation aux citoyens de ‘l’espace CEDEAO’ ? Ces interrogations vont nous permettre d’évaluer la mise en œuvre de la libration circulation dans ‘l’espace CEDEAO’.

Cet article qui évalue la mise en œuvre de la politique de ‘libre circulation’ de la CEDEAO est subdivisé en trois : (i) la Politique interne et le nationalisme, (ii) l’Insécurité et la libre circulation dans l’espace CEDEAOet (iii) L’Intégration dans l’Intégration, la double-citoyenneté communautaire.

1. **La Politique interne et le nationalisme**

La bonne gestion de l’Etat est la première promesse faite par les leaders politiques à leur prise de pouvoir. Qu’il soit militaire ou civil, le Chef d’Etat cherche toujours à résoudre la crise que vit son pays. Et parfois il procède par prendre des décisions non relatives à la réalité de la politique interne. Tel a été le cas du Chef de l’Etat nigérian, Président Shehu Shagari dans les années 1979 à 1983. Les autorités nigérianes, au lieu de chercher de solutions concrètes à la crise économique, ont opté expulser les citoyens de la CEDEAO. La violation du principe de la ‘citoyenneté CEDEAO’ n’ait été possible que grâce à un soulèvement d’une secte religieuse, *Maitatsine,* que le gouvernement a exploité.

**Echec des politiques internes et expulsion des citoyens de la CEDEAO**

Le *Maitatsine* est un mouvement islamique qui ne reconnait pas les enseignements du Prophète Mohammed. Fondé par Muhammadu Marwa, un citoyen camerounais en exile à Kano, le groupe se réfère uniquement au Coran qu’il interprète à sa manière pour les enseignements islamiques, or, l’Islam est fondé sur le Coran et la *Sunna* qui est l’ensemble des enseignements de son prophète.

Marwa le fondateur du groupe se fait aussi considérer comme un *« prophète »* de l’Islam. Ayant acquis un nombre considérable d’adeptes à travers le Nord du Nigeria, *Maitatsine* se crée une république dans une république où ses adeptes rejettent l’autorité du Gouvernement fédéral. Le groupe se heurte à une résistance de la part de la police voulant imposer l’ordre[[33]](#footnote-33).

Les forces armées nigérianes sont mandatées pour mettre fin aux confrontations entre *Maitatsine* et la police d’une part et d’autre part entre le groupe et le reste de la population musulmane. A la fin des opérations, 4.177 morts ont été enregistrés à Kano en décembre 1980. Deux ans plus tard, 3,350 morts sont enregistrés à Maiduguri dans le même scenario[[34]](#footnote-34).

Ayant constaté que le fondateur du groupe *Maitatsine* ainsi qu’une bonne partie de ses adeptes sont les citoyens des pays voisins, l’expulsion des migrants illégaux a été proposé comme solution. Des milliers d`étrangers africains sont renvoyés chez eux. Les pays les plus affectés sont le Ghana dont les citoyens sont au Sud du Nigeria et le Niger avec les siens dans le Nord. Les villes de Kano et de Maiduguri abritent un grand nombre des Nigériens. Plusieurs d’entre eux ont été arbitrairement arrêtés lors des combats opposant les Forces de Défense et de Sécurité (FDS) et le groupe *Maitatsine.*

Le Niger reçoit deux catégories de ses citoyens, les migrants illégaux rapatriés et les prisonniers transférés aux autorités compétentes, car sur les 449 membres du groupe *Maitatsine* détenus à la prison centrale en 1980, 135 sont de nationalité nigérienne[[35]](#footnote-35). Si les migrants sont reçus en tant que citoyens libres, les prisonniers sont accueillis dans les geôles.

Interviewé sur la violation du principe de citoyenneté de la CEDEAO, car la majorité des expulsés sont des citoyens des pays membres de cette organisation régionale, le Président Shehu Shagari justifie l’action de son Gouvernement par la nécessité d’assurer la sécurité nationale. Il argumente que les rapports sur la révolte de *Maitatsine* à Kano ont démontré qu’un grand nombre des révoltés sont des étrangers (Liman, 2016 :148). Selon le Président nigérian, l’expulsion ne ciblait pas le Niger ou autre pays particulier, c’était juste pour des questions sécuritaires (Liman, 2016 :148).

Si l’expulsion des étrangers du pays est basée sur les questions sécuritaires relatives au mouvement de *Maitatsine* au nord du pays, fallait-il aussi expulser ceux qui se trouvent au sud ? En réalité, l’expulsion de plus de trois millions de personnes en deux semaines (Dauda, 2006 : 43) est plutôt liée à la sévère crise économique connue par le Nigeria au début des années 1980. La sécurité n’a été qu’un alibi pour les autorités nigérianes.

L’expulsion des étrangers illégaux du Nigeria est plus d’ordre économique que politique. Selon les statistiques, la projection du taux de croissement de 7,2% de 1981-1985 par le Gouvernement de Shagari est tombée à 2% en 1981 et à 1 % en 1982 (Dauda, 2006 : 49). L’expulsion des étrangers a été proposée au gouvernement comme solution d’améliorer l’économie (Dauda, 2006 : 50).

L`expulsion des citoyens des pays membres la CEDEAO traduit les conséquences du nationalisme sur les textes régionaux. Ce clash entre le régionalisme et le nationalisme pose bien un défi majeur à relever si la CEDEAO veut atteindre sa mission d’intégration.

**L’Impact du nationalisme sur la notion de ‘libre circulation’**

Arrivé au pouvoir le 31 décembre 1983, le Général Muhammadu Buhari, entame des réformes draconiennes dans le but de sauver l’économie nigériane et mettre fin au problèmes sécuritaires.

Le nouveau chef de la junte annonce qu`il est inadmissible que le Nigeria, avec ses énormes ressources naturelles, s’endette et dépende de l’aide internationale (Liman, 2016 :149) pour nourrir sa population. Il s’engage immédiatement à faire des reformes et accorde une place importante à la politique étrangère.

Les leaders politiques, au lieu de prendre en compte la signification morale de leur action et d’élaborer la politique extérieure sur la base des circonstances réelles dans le temps et l’espace (Vasquez, 1986 ; 39), se font prendre par les théories et parfois l’influence de certains Etats. Dans le cas du régime de Buhari, les liens fraternels et sociopolitiques précoloniaux n’ont pas eu d’effets sur le dirigeant qui a agi selon le besoin réel de son peuple. Il n’hésite pas â fermer les frontières de son pays.

**Le protectionnisme nigérian sous le Président Muhammadu Buhari**

L’insécurité héritée du régime de Shehu Shagari suite au soulèvement de *Maitatsine* pousse le nouveau Président à prendre des mesures draconiennes dont la fermeture des frontières terrestres. Cependant, la fermeture des frontières est plus d’ordre économique que politique. Le choix du terme protectionnisme pour décrire le nationalisme du Président Buhari, dans sa conduite des relations interétatiques, nous permet de saisir l’orientation de la politique étrangère du Nigéria pendant le régime de ce Général réformateur.

Le protectionnisme est une doctrine économique qui préconise un ensemble de mesures favorisant les activités nationales au détriment de la concurrence étrangère (Dalloz, 2011 : 448). La libéralisation du marché par l’Etat ou son contrôle, anime au jour le jour, le débat chez les spécialistes de la politique économique internationale.

Depuis la fin de la Seconde guerre mondiale et le lancement de la reconstruction de l’Europe en 1945, à travers la Banque Internationale pour la Reconstruction et le Développement (BIRD), plus connue sous l’appellation, Banque Mondiale, la libéralisation de l’économie devient la priorité des pays riches dans leurs relations avec leurs homologues en voie de développement.

Un agenda est mis en place et les autres pays n’ont pour seul choix que de s’y inscrire, s’ils veulent se développer économiquement. Les Etats Unis et ses alliés, grâce aux institutions de Bretton Woods, la BM et le FMI, imposent la dévaluation de la monnaie nationale des pays et des décisions unilatérales en matière de l’économie politique (Chang, 2009 : 13).

La CEDEAO étant bâti sur la théorie *« néolibérale »* se veut un espace commun aux quinze pays qui la constituent. La Convention qui l’établit contient des provisions de libres mouvements des capitaux et libre circulation des personnes et des biens. Nonobstant, l’Etat qui abrite le siège de la CEDEAO, le Nigéria, a été le premier à refouler la notion de ‘libre circulation’ menacent ainsi l’établissement ‘d’espace commun’ comme le souligne Roufai : *« la région peine toujours à parachever la création de son espace communautaire et à concrétiser son intégration. Au surplus, mêmes certains acquis considérés jusqu’à là comme définitifs, sont menacés par les velléités de remises en cause à la fois de la part des eux-mêmes et de la population à la base…*  *»* [[36]](#footnote-36).  Le Nigéria de Buhari n’hésite pas à s’isoler du système « néolibéral» ouest-africainson développer économique individuel au détriment de l’espèce économique communautaire.

La région ouest africaine, bien que faisant partie de la liste de priorités de la politique extérieure du régime de Buhari, a été victime que bénéficiaire de cette politique. Le gouvernement ordonne la fermeture de ses frontières nationales le 23 avril 1984 (Dauda, 2006 : 55). Dès le 25 avril, il a introduit une réforme monétaire. Les différentes dénominations duNaira, la monnaie nationale, connaissent un changement de couleur et un délai de 10 jours (du 25 avril au 6 mai 1984) est accordé à ceux qui les détiennent pour échanger les anciens billets avec les nouveaux (Dauda, 2006 : 55).

La fermeture des frontières et la substitution des billets de banque visent à mettre fin au sabotage économique perpétré par et à travers les pays voisins et ceux de la CEDEAO. Le changement de la monnaie vise à empêcher le retour, sur le territoire national, des grosses sommes d’argent acquises illégalement (Dauda, 2006 : 55).

En fermant ses frontières, le Nigéria compte réduire ses dépenses sur ses importations à travers les échanges de la devise nationale en monnaie internationale. Le dollar étant la monnaie internationale, les importations doivent coûter les frais d’échange à tout pays importateur. Les pays voisins, ainsi que certains de la CEDEAO, avec des économies faibles se ravitaillent quotidiennement en produits dont la plupart sont importés du Nigeria. Ce ravitaillement des pays voisins augmente les charges bancaires relatives au changement de devises au Nigeria. Le manque d’accès au marché nigérian signifie la fin du ravitaillement en produits pour ces pays voisins.

Les Chefs d’Etats des pays de l’Afrique de l’Ouest se rendent ou envoient des délégations à Lagos pour plaider auprès des autorités nigérianes (Dauda, 2006 : 55). Les pays enclavés de la CEDEAO tels que le Niger, le Mali ou le Burkina Faso, lourdement dépendants des importations du Nigeria, parfois illégales, ont été les plus touchés parmi les victimes du protectionnisme nigérian.

L’histoire de la fermeture des frontières terrestres au Nigeria s’est répétée en 2019. Arrivé à la magistrature suprême pour la seconde fois en 2015 par les élections, le Président Muhammadu Buhari entame une fois de plus des réformes économiques parmi lesquelles la fermeture des frontières terrestres. Cette fermeture, du 20 aout 2019 au 16 décembre 2020, visait à mettre fin aux trafics des produits importés et à améliorer la sécurité interne car selon les autorités les armes à feu illégales proviennent par les pays voisins.

La fermeture des frontières nationales de la première puissance économique africaine, avec 441,54 milliards de Dollar en 2021[[37]](#footnote-37), et qui détient autour de ¾ de produit interne brute de l’Afrique de l’Ouest a eu d’impacts négatifs tant sur l’économie nationale que sur les autres économies africaines notamment celles des pays de la CEDEAO. Le secteur formel et informel ont été conjointement touchés. Des camions chargés des marchandises, avec certaines périssables, ont été immobilisés sur les frontières. Des professionnels, des commerçants, des travailleurs clandestins ne pouvaient faire la navette entre leurs lieux de travail et leurs résidences. Certains citoyens de l’espace cédéao, commencent à persécuter des Nigérians vivant sur leur territoire national. Ils ont eu le soutien de leur gouvernement.

**Des législations hostiles à la libre circulation : cas du Ghana**.

Certaines provisions des textes nationaux de pays membres de la CEDEAO vont à l’encontre de la notion de libre circulation au sein de l’espace cédéao. La considération de ses nationaux dans le secteur public par un Etat membre de la CEDEAO est tolérable. Cependant, par idéale, le secteur privé de l’économie de chaque Etat devrait être ouverte à tout citoyen de l’espace communautaire. Le Ghana, deuxième puissance économique de la CEDEAO, avec le PIB de 77,59 milliards de Dollar en 2021[[38]](#footnote-38), a vu renvoyer ses citoyens par le Nigeria dans les années 1980 sans aucune réaction.

La fermeture des frontières nationales nigérianes en 2019 a déclenché la xénophobie chez les Ghanéens, particulièrement les commerçants. Des commerces de nigerians sont fermées par les Associations des commerçants ghanéens sous prétextes qu’elles sont illégales[[39]](#footnote-39). Face à cette situation, le Gouvernement ghanéen soutient ses nationaux, en conflit avec les autres citoyens de l’espace CEDEAO.

Selon les autorités d’Accra, certains commerçants nigérians ont violé les provisions de ***“section 27 of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) Act 865”***[[40]](#footnote-40)***.*** Ce texte stipule que : la vente des marchandises et service aux marchés, s’engager dans des petits commerces, des marchands ambulants… sont strictement réservés aux citoyens ghanéens. Cette législation va à l’encontre de la provision des textes de la CEDEAO sur la libre circulation des personnes et des biens.

Les frontières nationales sont plus que des lignes imaginaires qui définissent l’étendue d’une superficie nationale des pays. Elles jouent un rôle important dans le processus d’intégration dans un espace communautaire et impactent sur la vie des citoyens. Les activités criminelles transfrontalières et l’émergence des mouvements islamistes qui cherchent à établir des califats ou états islamiques font partie des défis à l’intégration régionale, notamment à la libre circulation des personnes et des biens dans l’espace CEDEAO.

1. **L’Insécurité et la libre circulation**

La libre circulation des personnes et des biens ne peut exister que dans un environnement serein et sécurisé. L’émergence des groupes jihadistes dans le Sahel et l’explosion des activités de pirates dans le golfe de Guinée ont négativement impacté sur la libre circulation dans l’espace CEDEAO.

**L’Absence de l’État dans les portions du territoire national et la libre circulation**

La stabilité et la prospérité d’une société sont étroitement liées à sa gestion par le pouvoir politique. L’Etat qui est la personne morale est censé être omniprésent sur toute l’étendue du territoire national, soit directement par ses agents sur le terrain soit à travers le secteur privé qu’il mobilise, organise et supervise.

Les responsabilités régaliennes de l’Etat sont entre autres, la sécurité, l’éducation, la santé, la provision en eau potable et l’énergie et, la création des conditions favorables aux citoyens pour exploiter les potentiels économiques et profiter de la croissance. L’absence du gouvernement sur une partie du territoire favorise souvent l’émergence des groupes armés qui peuvent parfois être organisés. Ces groupes deviennent maitres de l’espace sous leur contrôle en remplaçant l’autorité de l’Etat.

Le manque d`infrastructures et de services dans les domaines socioéconomiques sont des éléments à prendre en compte pour évaluer la présence du gouvernement. Raleigh et Dowd (2013) établissent, dans un article sur la « Gouvernance et le conflit dans le Sahel », un lien entre l’absence de l’Etat sur une partie de son territoire, *« espace non gouverné »,* et le conflit.

Cette hypothèse fait aussi écho chez le Commandant d’*US Africa Command* (AFRICOM), le Directeur du *Central Intelligence Agency* (CIA) et le discours du Premier Ministre Britannique, David Cameron. Ces personnalités politiques et militaires, considèrent pour cause majeure du terrorisme au nord du Mali, l’absence de l`Etat malien dans la zone (Raleigh et Dowd, 2013 **:** 1).

Le chaos d’après Kadhafi a ouvert un marché d’armes d’où se ravitaillent les jihadistes. Selon le *« Rapport des Nations Unies sur l’impact de la guerre civile en Libye sur les pays saharo-sahéliens, parmi lesquels, le Burkina Faso, le Mali, le Nigeria, le Niger… »[[41]](#footnote-41).* Les groupes Jihadistes en particuliers, l’Al-Qaïda au Maghreb (Aqmi), Ansari-din, Boko Haram et la Province de l’Etat Islamique en Afrique de l’Ouest, ayant reçu des grandes quantités d’armes libyennes*[[42]](#footnote-42)* se sont lancés à conquérir les portions des Etats nations sans aucun regard aux frontières nationales. Ils forment ainsi des califats ou Etats islamiques et imposent la Sharia/système de gouvernance islamique. Ce nouveau système ainsi imposée renie l’existence des pays de la CEDEAO et les citoyens de cet espace communautaire doivent se plier aux nouvelles lois. La libre circulation cesse d’exister.

1. La portion nationale nigérienne du Bassin du Lac Tchad et une partie de celle du Nigeria avaient été conquises par les groupes Boko Haram et Province de l’Etat Islamique en Afrique de l’Ouest ;
2. La portion, Nord-ouest du Nigeria qui fait frontière avec le Sud-est du Niger est menacée par les activités transfrontières des bandits ;
3. La Zone de trois (3) frontières que forment les portions nationales des Etats de Burkina Faso, du Niger et du Mali, est presque sous le contrôle des différents groupes jihadistes qui imposent les ‘lois islamiques’,
4. Une portion Sud-ouest du Niger et une grande partie du Nord du Mali ne sont plus sous le contrôles des Etats respectifs. La circulation des personnes et des biens est presqu’absente.
5. Le Parc W dont l’étendue est partagée par la République du Benin, le Burkina et le Niger enregistre depuis un certain temps la présence des groupes jihadistes et des bandits armés. La libre circulation, notamment des pastoraux est menacée. A cela s’ajoute aussi la destruction des couloirs de passage des bétails par les Etats eux-mêmes.
6. Les frontières Burkina Faso – Côte d’Ivoire et Burkina Faso – Mali présentent d’énormes risques aux citoyens de l’espace communautaire à cause de la présence des jihadistes.

Les risques et les dangers à la libre circulation ne se limitent pas seulement aux frontières terrestres. Les portions nationales des eaux marines des pays de la CEDEAO en connaissent aussi.

**Les eaux maritimes et la libre circulation**

Les pays côtiers de l’espace CEDEAO se partagent dans le golfe de Guinée avec certains pays de l’Afrique centrale. Depuis les indépendances, peu sont les investissements faits par les Etats de la CEDEAO dans le transport maritime. Et pourtant, ce secteur est très important pour la circulation des personnes et des biens au sein de l’espace communautaire car sur les 15 pays qui constituent la CEDEAO seuls les 3, le Burkina Faso, le Mali et le Niger sont enclavés. Et même ces trois pays peuvent jouir de transport maritime par le complément de la navigation sur le fleuve du Niger, de Port-Harcourt à Bamako via le Niamey.

La piraterie dans le golfe de Guinée ne pose pas seulement danger à la libre circulation des personnes et des biens dans l’espace CEDEAO mais perturbe aussi le transit des bateaux pétroliers. Les efforts de l’Etat du Nigeria à combattre l’insécurité maritime ont produit des résultats appréciables. La marine nigériane, avec la participation des autres Etats, arrivent déjà à assurer la libre circulation dans les eaux maritimes de l’espace communautaire CEDEAO. L’histoire coloniale ne manque pas, de sa part, à impacter sur la libre circulation de l’espace CEDEAO.

**L’Intégration dans l’Intégration, la double-citoyenneté communautaire**

Le système de l’administration coloniale française ‘assimilation’ a continué à hanter les citoyens des ex-colonies à l’indépendance. Dès la lueur des indépendances, les leaders politiques n’hésitent pas à former des organisations sur la base d’appartenance à l’histoire coloniale. Ces organisations ainsi formées ne cessent pas à influencer sur le processus d’intégration au sein de la CEDEAO.

Certaines anciennes colonies de l’Afrique Occidentale Française (AOF) se regroupent en une organisation commune avant même la déclaration de leur indépendance respective promise. Le 29 mai 1959, le Dahomey (Bénin), la Haute Volta (Burkina Faso), la Côte d’Ivoire et le Niger signent à Abidjan une convention établissant le Conseil de l’Entente*[[43]](#footnote-43)*, le Togo y devient membre en 1966*[[44]](#footnote-44)*.

Le Conseil de l’Entente limite ses activités d’intégration rien qu’au pays membres de la sous-région. Par exemple, le chemin de fer, dénommé Boucle ferroviaire, est un projet qui relie les cinq pays membres du Conseil. Certes, ce projet n’impacte pas explicitement sur le projet d’intégration de la CEDEAO mais il crée le sentiment d’appartenance à un autre espace autre que celui de CEDEAO : espace Conseil de l’Entente. Ce sentiment d’appartenance à un autre espace est plus visible au niveau de l’espace Union économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine.

Créée le 10 janvier 1994 à Dakar, l’Union économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA) a pour objectif essentiel, l’édification, en Afrique de l’Ouest, d’un espace économique harmonisé et intégré, au sein duquel est assurée une totale liberté de circulation des personnes, des capitaux, des biens, des services et des facteurs de production, ainsi que la jouissance effective du droit d’exercice et d’établissement pour les professions libérales, de résidence pour les citoyens sur l’ensemble du territoire communautaire*[[45]](#footnote-45)*. Les huit pays, le Bénin, le Burkina, la Côte d’Ivoire, la Guinée-Bissau, le Mali, le Niger, le Sénégal et le Togo qui forment cette organisation sont liés par l’usage commun de la monnaie, le Franc CFA.

L’UEMOA comme la CEDEAO s’appuient sur l’économie pour leur intégration. Les activités de deux organisations distinctes sont similaires. Les citoyens à double nationalité ‘communautaire’ – espace UEMOA et espace CEDEAO, ont plus de privilèges que ceux qui n’en ont qu’une. En réalité, les citoyens UEMOA perçoivent des concessions monétaires dans leur espace au détriment des autres citoyens CEDEAO. Par exemple, les frais d’inscription universitaire dans un établissement public sont les mêmes pour les étudiants UEMOA alors que les autres étudiants CEDEAO doivent payer 4 à 5 fois plus cher*[[46]](#footnote-46)*. En se limitant uniquement aux pays membres dans ses activités, l’UEMOA divise les citoyens de la CEDEAO en deux catégories. En plus des privilèges de la CEDEAO, les citoyens de l’UEMOA en perçoivent d’autres à la marge. Ce privilège accordé aux citoyens UEMOA affecte la libre circulation prônée par la CEDEAO.

**Conclusion et recommandations**

Créée le 26 mai 1975, la Communauté Économique des États de l’Afrique de l’Ouest a pour objectif principal l’intégration des 15 pays en un seul espace commun où le nationalisme devrait céder la place au régionalisme. Autrement dit, tous les citoyens de la CEDEAO devront avoir les mêmes droits particulièrement s’agissant de libre circulation.

Certains États membres ne manquent pas cependant d’enfreindre la libre circulation inscrite dans les textes de la CEDEAO qu’ils sont signés et fait ratifier par leurs Assemblés Nationales respectives. Le nationalisme et le protectionnisme de certains États ont conduit à l’expulsion des citoyens CEDEAO n’étant pas sur la portion nationale de l’espace communautaire. Les frontières nationales ont été souvent fermées aux ressortissants des autres pays.

Au niveau régional, certains États ayant en commun l’histoire coloniale n’hésitent pas à former des organisations avec presque les mêmes missions que celles de la CEDEAO. Certaines activités de ces communautés rivales vont à l’encontre de la notion de libre circulation de l’espace CEDEAO. Heureusement, le secteur privé de la République du Niger est en train de renverser la tendance par ses efforts de réintégrer les communautaires parallèles de l’Afrique de l’|Ouest. Des variantes compagnies de transport et de transfert d’argent nigériennes fort la fierté des citoyens de l’Afrique de l’Ouest.

Voici nos recommandations pour la considération des États de la CEDEAO

* La CEDEAO peut collaborer avec les institutions bilatérales, telle que la Commission Mixte Nigéro-Nigériane pour la Coopération, **conformément à son Article 83,** pour améliorer les infrastructures routières et ferroviaires.
* Les États de la CEDEAO peuvent exécuter conjointement des projets transfrontaliers au niveau bilatéral, comme le cas de la Guinée et du Mali, pour la construction du Barrage de Foumi.
* Soutenir le secteur privé qui souhaitent étendre leurs opérations à travers l’espace CEDEAO notamment dans les domaines aérien et terrestre.
* Rendre les cartes d’identité nationales valables dans tous les États comme le cas des passeports.

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**Exploring Nutritional Culture in Africa**

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**Abstract**

***Background:*** *The need for balanced and diverse food choices, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and proteins; are essential to ensure optimal nutrition and well-being. The African populations have challenges and transitions faced by them which influence their changing lifestyle and dietary patterns. Such impact include urbanization and globalization. As a result, non-communicable diseases like obesity and diabetes in some African countries; are on the rise. This research was carried out to give insight to the significance and impact of African cultures on nutrition.*

***Method:*** *This work was carried out by reviewing published and unpublished literatures, articles and books of related studies.*

***Result:*** *The outcome showed that the relationship between culture, food, and nutrition in Africa is complex. Traditional diets, group meals, and the cultural significance of food; play a vital role in the food culture and dietary habits of African nations. Beyond providing sustenance, Africa's nutritional culture plays a crucial role in social interactions and identity. Dietary therapies employing particular foods or herbs to address health conditions is frequently used as a holistic approach to wellbeing; reflected in traditional healing techniques.*

***Conclusion:*** *Utilizing the potential of nutritional culture to improve health, well-being, and cultural identity across the continent is feasible by embracing the rich tradition of African cuisine, promoting regional agriculture, and empowering local communities. It is recommended that more efforts to promote sustainable nutrition and improvement of traditional dietary practices should be accelerated; they include supporting local agriculture, promoting indigenous food knowledge, and improving nutrition education.*

**Introduction**

Africa is a vast and diverse continent known for its rich cultural heritage and remarkable biodiversity. When it comes to discussions about nutrition, it is essential to recognize the existence of a wide array of dietary practices and culinary traditions across different regions of Africa. This diversity reflects the continent's varied climates, landscapes, and local agricultural resources. While it may be challenging to generalize about nutritional culture in Africa as a whole, there are certainly common threads that can be explored.

Optimal nutrition, achieved through a well-balanced diet and regular physical activity, is fundamental for maintaining good health. On the other hand, poor nutrition can compromise the immune system, increase susceptibility to diseases, hinder physical and mental development, and reduce productivity. An organism's diet is determined by the availability, processing, and palatability of foods. A healthy diet involves food preparation and storage methods that preserve nutrients and minimize the risk of foodborne illnesses.

This paper provides an overview of African dietary practices and cultural influences on food choices. It highlights the importance of socio-cultural and economic factors in shaping eating habits in Africa. It also discusses the traditional diets and local food resources, the cultural significance of food in African societies, indigenous knowledge and healing traditions, challenges and transitions in dietary patterns, efforts to promote sustainable nutrition, and the definition of a healthy diet according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Food nutrients can be classified into seven major categories: carbohydrates, fats, fiber, minerals, protein, vitamins, and water. These nutrients can be further categorized as follows: Macro-nutrients: These are required in larger quantities and include carbohydrates, fats, fiber, proteins, and water. Micro-nutrients: These are needed in smaller quantities and comprise minerals and vitamins.

Except for fiber and water, macro-nutrients provide energy, which is measured in joules or kilocalories (often referred to as Calories). Carbohydrates and proteins yield 17 kJ (4 kcal) of energy per gram, while fats provide 37 kJ (9 kcal) per gram. On the other hand, vitamins, minerals, fiber, and water do not provide energy but are essential for other bodily functions1.

Carbohydrates serve as the primary source of energy for our bodies. Major sources of carbohydrates include sugars, cereal grains (such as corn, millet, wheat, rice, guinea corn, and acha), legumes (beans, soybeans, groundnuts), dried fruits, tubers, and vegetables. Carbohydrates perform the following functions: Supply energy to fuel internal and external bodily activities, spare protein from being used as an energy source, provide glucose, particularly to the brain, assist in burning body fat, enhance the flavor of our diet and contribute to the formation of genetic materials, such as Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and Ribonucleic acid (RNA)2.

Since carbohydrate is a universally available, there is no basis for the formulation of dietary allowance for carbohydrate. However, it should be noted that carbohydrate and fats are suppliers of energy. Energy requirement is increased during pregnancy, lactation and infancy2.

The word “protein’ simply means, to come first. This nutrient is the most indispensable nutrient that supplies essential and non-essential amino acids. These essential amino acids are necessary for body building and tissue repairs. The food sources of animal proteins include fish, crayfish, eggs, milk, goat meat, pork, chicken, turkey, crab, breast milk etc. The major plant protein sources are cowpea seeds, soybeans, groundnuts, locust beans, pinto beans, red kidney beans and lima beans. Grains such as rice, wheat, maize, guinea corn, acha, millet are also fair sources of protein.

The chief functions of protein are to: provide amino acids for the body to build new tissues, and normal growth of infants, help to maintain body tissue and replacement of damaged or worn out tissues in both adults and children, help in the formation of hormones, enzymes and antibodies, serve as source of energy in the absence of carbohydrate2.

For adult men and women 18 to 35 years of age, the recommended daily dietary allowance is one gram per kilogram of body weight. It is also recommended that the dietary allowance for infants should be increased as they grow up, while adult men and women should decrease their allowances as they add years. Extra protein needs are needed by pregnant women, lactating mothers, and early adolescents, individuals under stress and post-surgery patients.

The term lipid is a descriptive rather than a chemical name such as carbohydrates or proteins. The term refers to fats or fat like substances. Lipids are classified into two groups, simple and compound lipids. Simple lipids are the esters of fatty acids and alcohol. Examples of ester of fatty acids include animal and vegetable fats. Rich sources of oils are available in plants, such as corn oil, groundnut oil, melon oil, soybean oil and palm oil. Palm oil contains a lot of palmitic acid which is made up of saturated fatty acids. Rich sources of fats are mainly from animal food sources such as pork, meat, whole milk and cheese.

One of the chief functions of fats is to supply energy. Fat helps the body to transport fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K). It helps in protecting the internal organs of the body by serving as cushion pad, for example the kidney Oils provide the essential fatty acids which help in preventing excessive loss of water. It gives taste and feeling of satisfaction in a meal. Without fats food will be too dry to eat. Dietary fat stored as adipose tissue in man helps man to survive without food for some weeks. Fat is used by food manufacturers for smoothness and tenderness2.

Generally, minerals are inorganic elements, organic compounds; they cannot be changed during digestion. Once they are in the body, they are there until they are excreted. Majorly, minerals function in two important roles as building and regulatory substances. Specifically, the functions of minerals are: They are building parts in the hard tissues of the body (bones and teeth), give rigidity to bones, teeth and the whole body, they are part of soft tissues (muscle, protein and nervous tissues are made up of sulfur and phosphorous), they are components of essential hormones that contribute to healthy body system, for example, iodine is present in thyroxin and zinc is in insulin and contribute to the body fluids and tissues as electrolytes

Some minerals may act as catalysts in the enzyme system, or as integral parts of organic compounds in the body such as: ¾ Iron in hemoglobin, ¾ Iodine, ¾ Cobalt in vitamin B12, ¾ Zinc in insulin and ¾ Sulfur in thiamine2.

Vitamins are organic compounds that are required by the body but in very small amounts, could be hundred of grams. They may serve as catalysts for some reactions in our body. **V**itamins are essential nutrients that are required by humans in small amounts. This is why they are known as micronutrients. Vitamins are vital for life, aiding normal growth and healthy bodily functions such as cardiovascular, cognitive and eye health.They are needed for processes that create or use energy, such as the metabolism of proteins and fats, the digestion of food and absorption of nutrients, growth and development, physical performance, and regulation of cell function, with each vitamin having important and specific functions within the body. Aside from vitamin D3, vitamins are not produced by the human body and must therefore be obtained via the diet.

Being complex organisms, humans have a host of nutritional needs. In order to maintain healthy lives, it is vital that we consume the correct nutrients through our diet to maintain normal body function. The different types of nutrients that we need can be split into two categories: macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins and fats) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). While micronutrients, such as vitamins, are not required in the same quantities as macronutrients, they are equally as important for our bodies, as both work together to maintain overall health. Vitamin basics16.

Water is an essential nutrient. Without it human life cannot survive. Water deprivation kills faster than lack of any other nutrient. If water is something you rarely think about, you are not alone. It is seldom thought of as a nutrient. Many people do not realize the important part water plays in major body functions. Water serves as the body’s transportation system. It is the medium by which other nutrients and essential elements are distributed throughout the body. Without this transport of supplies the body factory would stop. Water also works as the transport for body waste removal. Water is a lubricant. The presence of water in and around body tissues helps defend the body against shock. The brain, eyes, and spinal cord are among the sensitive structures that depend on a protective water layer. Water is present in the mucous and salivary juices of our digestive systems. This is especially important for moving food through the digestive tract. Those who experience reduced salivary output soon will realize that foods taste differently and are harder to swallow. As a lubricant, water also is helpful for smooth movement of bone joints. Water participates in the body’s biochemical reactions. The digestion of protein and carbohydrates to usable and absorbable forms depends on water as part of the chemical reaction. Water regulates body temperature. Our health and well-being are dependent on keeping body temperature within a very narrow range. The human body, which is made of 60 to 75 percent water, serves this function quite well. Water itself changes temperature slowly and helps regulate body temperature by serving as a good heat storage material3. Evaporation of water from body surfaces also helps cool the body. Sweat loss that is barely noticeable occurs every day and night. Individuals may lose up to a pint of water each day in this manner. In hot, humid weather or during exercise, increased sweating and losses of water are more visible.

Unlike many of the nutrients, there isn’t a specific daily recommendation for water intake. Part of the reason is the variability in individuals related to the climate in which they live, physical activity, age, state of health, and body size. Under typical circumstances, adults may replenish up to six or eight cups of fluid each day. Typical water output is two quarts or more of water each day. Water losses in urine account for about three-fourths of daily losses. Remaining losses come from sweat, as tiny water droplets in the air we exhale, and through feces. Infrequent urination or dark yellow urine may indicate you could use more fluid intake each day. Food nutrients are essential substances found in the foods we consume that provide energy, promote growth and development, and maintain overall health. They include macronutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, which are needed in larger quantities, as well as micronutrients like vitamins and minerals, required in smaller amounts. Carbohydrates provide energy, proteins are building blocks for tissues and enzymes, fats provide energy and support cell function, while vitamins and minerals play crucial roles in various bodily processes. A balanced diet that incorporates a variety of nutrient-rich foods is essential to ensure optimal nutrition and well-being3.

**MethodS**

This is a narrative review article in which peer-reviewed published research articles were reviewed. The following databases were used: Google, Google Scholar and PubMed. The key search term includes nutrition, food and culture, cultural diversity, nutrition pattern, dietary practices, the current trends. The articles were screened based on the title, abstract and full-text articles. 60 citations were screened of which 46 were excluded after the title and abstract were screened. 43 articles were then retrieved for reading and after reading through, 25 articles were found to be relevant to the critical review process of this study.

Review articles, editorials, letters to the editor, and commentaries were all excluded. A review on the diverse food and nutritional cultures in Africa and the importance of dietary diversity in addressing micronutrient deficiencies was carried out.

**RESULTS**

What African communities eat can be viewed in the context of different sociocultural and economic environments. The food you can eat is not the same everywhere, but there are some striking similarities 15.

Higher incomes and higher education lead almost directly to improved nutritional habits. In general, Africans eat more grains, but most people eat less than one cup of fruit in her day. In general, locally available staples form the basis of a diet, but when staples are eaten with relishes, soups (consisting of beans and peanuts, vegetables, fats and oils, spices and seasonings), and fruits, the diet becomes more nutritious. high and flavorful. In most African communities people depend on one or two staple foods. The most common are maize, teff, cassava, yams, sweet potatoes, plantains and ensett. These plants make up the bulk of a household member's energy intake. To balance their diets, consumers supplement staple foods with legumes and animal foods high in protein and fats/oils15.

In addition to animal products, most of the ingredients for making West African soups and other side dishes are various vegetables such as beans, lentils, peanuts, and green leafy vegetables. With a few exceptions, the cuisine of all sub-Saharan peoples is based on the basic principle of eating starchy foods with gravies and dips, which may or may not be spicy. Main courses are prepared from grains (maize, millet, sorghum, teff), roots and tubers (cassava, coconut, yam), green bananas or plantains. Malnutrition can occur when staple foods lack certain nutrients.

Depending on the region of the continent, garnishes called relishes, sauces, or soups may consist of vegetable dishes (green leafy vegetables, if available), or legumes, meat, or fish dishes.

Main courses are also prepared with a combination of grains and legumes or seeds. For example, corn can be eaten with beans, cowpeas, bambara nuts, or peanuts. Rice can be eaten with cowpeas, beans and melon seeds. Only a minority of the population is adding leafy green vegetables to grain and legume dishes. Nomads generally do not grow crops. Their traditional diet is based primarily on animal foods, supplemented with a variety of wild-foraged foods seasonally. Grain products such as sorghum and millet are also part of their diet15.

In the humid regions of East and Central Africa, abundant green bananas and plantains are used as the base for main courses. Main courses can be served with pumpkin, peas, or cassava leaves, seasoned with peanut sauce or red palm oil. The nutritional value of meals made from a mixture of grains and legumes can be enhanced by adding flavored fruits, especially fruits that are a good source of vitamins A and C. The main dishes commonly eaten in different parts of Africa are: Fufu, ugali (also called ngsima, meelypapu, saza and tuwo in various parts of the continent), cassava and cowpea stew, pumpkin puree and peanut butter, matoke, giteri, mukimo, nutkoy, honey-steamed pumpkin and yam balls.

Relishes or accompaniments include: groundnut/ peanut butter soup, green leaves with peanut sauce, vegetable stew, cassava stew with coconut milk, jute leaves, cassava leaves with groundnuts, chickpea with flour cakes. Snacks and sauces include: fried plantain, stewed sweet potatoes, stewed green bananas, nettle and barley sauce, akara and cotton seed sauce. Other examples include: - fura/fula da nono, a millet meal mixed with cloves, ginger, peppercorn and rolled in millet flour into a ball; - it is consumed in West Africa especially in Ghana and Nigeria; - gari water, a cereal like food made from grated and dry-roasted cassava; - akara, a snack eaten along the West African coast - it is essentially a snack or mini-meal, depending on the richness of the ingredients used - it is made from black eye beans; - jollof rice, commonly consumed among the West African communities; - mtori, a nutritious dish from Tanzania, is usually prepared for invalids or nursing mothers; - steamed pumpkin and honey, a dish from Zimbabwe; - yam balls, a popular West African dish - it can be eaten on its own as a snack or with sauce; - groundnut/peanut butter soup, a nutritious soup eaten all over sub-Saharan Africa; - egusi/palauer sauce, popular in Nigeria, Benin, Togo and Ghana - it is basically a spinach sauce with egusi (milled pumpkin seeds)15.Socio-cultural beliefs and customs have a significant influence on family nutritional wellbeing. When it comes to food choices, some foods are more valuable than others and no meal is complete until they are included. If root vegetables and tubers are their favorite food, children are at the greatest disadvantage because root vegetable- and tuber-based baby foods are bulky and have low nutrient density unless they are supplemented with additional foods such as fats, oils, fruits and vegetables. Unfortunately, cultural eating habits and taboos are often associated with foods of animal origin, especially affecting women and children. Cultural influences may also include attitudes toward certain foods, meal preparation, breastfeeding, and infant feeding. It can also affect the system of food sharing and distribution within the family. The distribution of food within the family often depends on a hierarchical position, with the head of the family having priority over food and the share of family food received by mothers and children relative to their own needs; is only a little15.

In 2006, Kamla-raj18 published a report on Puoane et al19. They conducted a study on sociocultural factors that influence the food consumption behavior of black African populations in urban communities in South Africa. A qualitative exploratory study reported on general perceptions of food among different age groups of participants. A subgroup of men and women participated in a cross-sectional study. The aim was to collect data on the prevalence and risk factors for cardiovascular disease in the black population of Khayelitsha District, South Africa over her 5 years. Here is an insight of the outcome of the research:

Older Women:

Women’s perceptions about food are centered on satisfaction of family needs. Women see themselves as food providers. Even when food is scarce they see it as their responsibility to make sure that all family members have something to eat.

"If I want to please my husband I prepare his favourite meal (food), which usually includes meat".

My husband will never eat food if there is no meat in the plate".

Ihave to feed my family to make them happy. Even if there is nothing to eat I have to make some means to get food somewhere.

Older men:

Men relied on women to prepare meals, but they consider themselves responsible for the provision of their families. Men loved good food and felt that no meal was complete without meat, especially red meat. I don't decide what to eat. Just to find you invited to your table and your food prepared.

Since I am a man, I have to eat meat every day.

Eating fish or chicken is like an appetizer for men.

Young women:

Some of the young women seemed to be weight conscious and were therefore very careful about their diet.

"Girls our age want to be thin. We always try to eat fat-reducing foods. I don't have time to go to the gym, so I have to eat less".

"We girls are conscious of our bodies, so we don't want to eat too much because if we eat too much, we'll get fat".

"I don't want to eat a lot because thin people are seen as cute in the media. Because then you'll get fat, go without clothes, and even without a boyfriend".

Not all young women felt the need to restrict their diet. Some people felt they had no other choice because of their poor diet.

"I eat a lot. I eat even when I'm fat. I still have clothes that I can wear, and I don't care because I'm a part of society, but I don't have freedom to eat".

"As humans, sometimes we don't eat to stay healthy. For example, eating fatty foods can lead to cardiovascular disease. You should eat a low-fat diet".

Young men:

Young men thought food was happiness. They enjoyed a delicious meal prepared for them. They felt they could eat anything without limits, and as long as there was food, it was a party for them every day. Eating delicious food makes me happy.

"Our moms cook delicious food".

"Food makes us happy".

"We like to go to parties because there is so much to eat there ".

The findings of the above study reflect the perceptions of food by various communities in Africa (Vhushavhelo, 2023). Most communities have developed ways to address health and nutrition challenges and seasonal food shortages, leaving certain nutritious foods exclusively for newborns and nursing mothers.

For instance, finger millet, Eleusin korakana, is a grain of choice for breastfeeding women in some communities in Kenya. Traditionally, sprouting and fermentation are used in the preparation of porridge15.

Hoover5 cites Whyte’s6 definition of Indigenous food systems as “specific collective capacities of particular Indigenous peoples to cultivate and tend, produce, distribute, and consume their own foods, recirculate refuse, and acquire trusted foods and ingredients from other populations”. Additionally, our relationships to food systems and the cultural restoration that is necessitated by relationship building is imperative for Indigenous food sovereignty5. Traditional foods are more biologically diverse and more nutrient dense7. Food is profoundly meaningful and symbolizes the reciprocal caring relationship that Indigenous Peoples hold with the natural world.

One significant aspect of nutritional culture in Africa is the reliance on traditional diets that have been passed down through generations. These diets often center around locally available food resources, which vary depending on the geographical location. For instance, in coastal areas, seafood plays a prominent role in the diet, while inland regions emphasize grains, legumes, tubers, and vegetables. Traditional diets are often diverse, incorporating a wide range of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and proteins from both plant and animal sources8.

Food holds immense cultural significance in African societies. Meals are often seen as communal events, bringing families and communities together. Traditional ceremonies, festivals, and social gatherings often revolve around the preparation and sharing of food. Specific foods may also hold symbolic meaning, representing fertility, prosperity, or ancestral connections. In this way, nutritional culture in Africa goes beyond mere sustenance and forms an integral part of social interactions and identity18.

Indigenous knowledge systems in Africa have long recognized the health benefits of various plants, herbs, and natural remedies. Local communities possess a wealth of knowledge about the nutritional and medicinal properties of indigenous food sources. Traditional healing practices often incorporate dietary interventions, using specific foods or herbs to address health concerns. These practices not only nourish the body but also reflect a holistic approach to well-being deeply rooted in cultural beliefs11.

It is crucial to acknowledge that Africa, like other regions, has experienced shifts in dietary patterns due to urbanization, globalization, and socioeconomic changes. Increased access to processed foods, changing lifestyles, and the influence of Western diets have led to the adoption of new eating habits, sometimes at the expense of traditional dietary practices9. These transitions can have implications for health, as the prevalence of non-communicable diseases, such as obesity and diabetes, rises in some African countries12,14, 18.

Efforts to promote sustainable nutrition in Africa are gaining momentum. Organizations, governments, and communities are working together to preserve and promote traditional dietary practices while addressing contemporary challenges. Initiatives include supporting local agriculture, promoting indigenous food knowledge, improving nutrition education, and encouraging the consumption of nutritious, locally sourced foods. These efforts recognize the importance of maintaining cultural heritage while fostering healthier communities14, 25.

Broadly, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines a healthy diet as one that protects against malnutrition in all its forms, as well as non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as diabetes, chronic heart disease, stroke and cancer.

Healthy diets should contain a balanced, diverse and appropriate selection of foods eaten over a period of time which meet a person’s needs for macronutrients (proteins, fats and carbohydrates including dietary fibres) and essential micronutrients (vitamins and minerals), specific to their gender, age, physical activity level and physiological state. Healthy diets include less than 30 percent of total energy intake from fats, with a shift in fat consumption away from saturated fats to unsaturated fats and the elimination of industrial trans fats, less than 10 percent of total energy intake from free sugars (preferably less than 5 percent), consumption of at least 400 g of fruits and vegetables per day, and not more than 5 g per day of salt (to be iodized). While the exact make up of a healthy diet varies depending on these individual characteristics as well as cultural context, locally available foods and dietary customs, the following list demonstrates common, basic and shared principles that constitute a healthy diet: starts early in life with early initiation of breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding until six months of age, and continued breastfeeding until two years and beyond, combined with appropriate complementary feeding} is based on a great variety of unprocessed or minimally processed foods, balanced across food groups, while restricting highly processed food and drink products} includes whole grains, legumes, nuts and an abundance and variety of fruits and vegetables} can include moderate amounts of eggs, dairy, poultry and fish; and small amounts of red meat} includes safe and clean drinking water as the fluid of choice} is adequate (i.e. reaching but not exceeding needs) in energy and nutrients for growth and development, and to meet the needs for an active and healthy life across the lifecycle; is consistent with WHO guidelines to reduce the risk of diet-related NCDs, and ensures health and wellbeing for the general population; contains minimal levels, or none if possible, of pathogens, toxins and other agents that can cause foodborne disease22, 24, 25.Diets are a key driver of nutrition outcomes, and the broad food production, import and consumption patterns outlined in the previous section are reflected in the nutrition outcomes described in this section, again structured. This is not only consistent with the previous section, but also aligned with studies that show that the quality of diets and nutrition outcomes are strongly influenced by economic status, family hierarchy and indigenous culture of African communities. Dietary diversity is an essential part of healthy diets13, 15, 18.

In Africa, broadly; diets lack diversity and the intake of fruit and vegetables and animal-source foods are low, while the intake of energy-dense foods of minimal nutritional value are relatively high. Diets that lack variety and do not include sufficient nutritious foods, together with the lack of knowledge of optimal dietary practices, malabsorption, as well as a high incidence of infectious diseases, are the main causes of micronutrient deficiencies.

Dietary diversity has been shown to be an important factor in determining the nutritional status and health of individuals. For example, dietary diversity, independently of the prevailing socioeconomic factors, is positively correlated with the nutritional status of children in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, urban Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

**DISCUSSION**

Nutritional culture in Africa is a complex and diverse tapestry woven from traditional diets, cultural practices, and indigenous knowledge. While contemporary challenges pose threats to traditional dietary patterns, there is a growing recognition of the need to preserve and promote sustainable nutrition in the continent. By embracing the rich heritage of African cuisine, supporting local agriculture, and empowering communities, it is possible to harness the potential of nutritional culture to enhance health, well-being, and cultural identity across the continent. Good nutrition is vital to good health, disease prevention, and essential for healthy growth and development of children and adolescents25.

The perceptions of food in African communities vary across different groups across different cultures across regions in the continent. Traditional diets and local food resources play a significant role in African nutrition culture. Indigenous food systems are essential for cultivating, distributing, and consuming local foods.

Traditional diets incorporate a wide range of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and proteins from both plant and animal sources, variations based on geographical location. Food holds cultural significance, being central to communal events, ceremonies, and social interactions. Indigenous knowledge systems recognize the health benefits of native plants, herbs, and natural remedies15, 18.

Challenges that arise from shifts in dietary patterns due to urbanization, globalization, and socioeconomic changes; have increased access to processed foods and the influence of Western diets which have led to the adoption of new eating habits, potentially affecting health. However, efforts are being made to promote sustainable nutrition in Africa. Initiatives focusing on supporting local agriculture, preserving traditional dietary practices, improving nutrition education, and encouraging the consumption of locally sourced, nutritious foods; are on the rise2, 8.

In Africa, nutrition outcomes are influenced by dietary patterns. Diets often lack diversity, with low intake of fruits, vegetables, and animal-source foods, while energy-dense foods of minimal nutritional value are consumed in relatively high quantities. This lack of variety, along with inadequate knowledge of optimal dietary practices, malabsorption, and high incidence of infectious diseases, contribute to micronutrient deficiencies25, 15, 23.

Overall, promoting sustainable nutrition in Africa involves preserving traditional diets, supporting local food systems, addressing dietary challenges, and ensuring access to diverse and nutritious foods while considering cultural contexts and individual needs.

**CONCLUSION**

The necessity of preserving and advancing sustainable nutrition on the continent is becoming more widely acknowledged. Africans should be educated on the importance of optimal dietary practices, encouraged to imbibe varieties of nutrients in their diets in order to reduce malabsorption, high incidence of infectious diseases and reduce micronutrient deficiencies. Utilizing the potential of nutritional culture to improve health, well-being, and cultural identity across the continent is feasible by embracing the rich tradition of African cuisine, promoting regional agriculture, and empowering local communities.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that more effort to increase the programs and policies that support regional agriculture, safeguard traditional eating habits, enhance nutrition education, and promote the use of locally sourced, healthy foods; should be put together and implemented by government, community leaders, NGOs and other stakeholders.

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**LIKE FELA, LIKE FALZ: AN INTERTEXTUAL STUDY OF NIGERIAN CRITICAL SOCIO-POLITICAL SONGS**

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**Abstract**

*For language users, meanings and perceptions of texts and discourses are facilitated on different levels. One of such levels is the intertextual interpretation of the text or discourse, which emanates from an investigation of ancestor texts and discourses similar to the one being interpreted. However, many studies have not been carried out on how intertextuality applies to musical lyrics composed many years apart. On this basis, this study investigates Falz’s critical socio-political songs in the context of its ability to lean on the existing critical socio-political songs of Fela. This study is done to further advance the argument that present texts rely on ancestor texts in different ways. The study sampled three songs from Fela (shuffering and shimilling, Teacher no Teach me Nonsense, and Army Arrangement) and two songs from Falz (This is Nigeria and Talk). These songs were selected from both artistes based on their critical stands on the state of the Nigerian nation at different times. Selected extracts were analysed on their intertextual levels and it was found out that there is a great thematic intertextual link between Falz and Fela in thematic mappings, style and lexical selection. The similarities between the two singers also exist in the lampooning of government, religious and ethnic leaders in Nigeria and the fact that they align with the masses. The study observes that the style and currency of issues being discussed by the two singers are not the same. In most cases, while Fela uses the third person pronoun form to speak for the masses, Falz uses the first person pronoun for inclusion as part of the masses. This in the end proves that, though the lyrics were created about 20 years apart, the socio-political situations that motivated the first sets of lyrics by Fela still exist in Nigeria and enabled creation of a similar text on an intertextual level by Falz.*

**KEYWORDS:** Intertextuality; Fela; Falz; Discourse; Socio-Critical; Artistes.

**Introduction**

In most cases, texts and discourse may have no original interpretation outside the meaning generated by earlier texts and discourses in the genre. In the opinion of Bakthin, there is a tendency for a text to harbour another text. He refers to this as heteroglossia. When language users do this, they usually use the harboured text as an implicit authority voice to back up their claim. Bakthin observed that the speech genre has a dialogical property which makes it a text where the idea in a text is explicitly or implicitly ‘in dialogue with other texts (existing or anticipated) which constitutes its ‘intertexts’ or genre. Also, using insights from Bakhtin, Bauman defines a “genre” as “a constellation of systemically related, co-occurring formal features and structures that serve as a convenserveized (*sic*) orienting framework for the production and reception of discourse” (84). That is to say, any text is a link in a chain of texts, reacting to, drawing in, and transforming other texts (cf. Brewer and Morreale, 2013; Varriale, 2012; Hardy, 2011). Based on the above, the current study focuses on the similar features existing between the socio-political songs of Fela and Falz that may qualify both as a genre of politically critical songs in Nigeria.

Fela (also popularly known as Fela Anikulapo-Kuti) was a Nigerianmusician and activist who propelled a modern style of [music](https://www.britannica.com/art/music) called Afro-beat, which fused American jazz, [blues](https://www.britannica.com/art/blues-music) and [funk](https://www.britannica.com/art/funk) with traditional [Yoruba](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Yoruba) music. He was born October 15, 1938, in [Abeokuta](https://www.britannica.com/place/Abeokuta), Nigeria, and died on [August](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/August) 2, 1997, in Lagos, from an undisclosed illness. While at the peak of his musical career, Fela was in and out of ‘troubles’ with the various military regimes in Nigeria for his continuous critical songs. However, he left memorable songs which are still relevant to the social and political situation in Nigeria. More than 23 years after the death of Fela, Falz, another Nigerian musical artiste seems to have taken over the baton in the production of socio-political songs. Falz (Folarin Falana) was born on October 27, 1990. He is a lawyer turned musician who has taken the Nigerian musical industry by storm through his critical and sometimes, funny rendition of the Nigerian situation.

The connection or relationship between these two Nigerian international artistes has not been established though it may be easy to say on the surface that they both produced songs that call to question the Nigerian government and the people themselves. It is on this basis that this study intends to investigate the linguistic relationship that exists between the two artistes from the framework of discourse intertextuality. The main aim of this investigation is to further prove that texts do share genre features among earlier texts in the genre. In the opinion of Halliday and Hasan, a text can be defined as “any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole… a unit of language in use not a grammatical unit, like a clause or a sentence; and it is not defined by its size (24). If one is to follow this idea, one needs to understand that for different instances of language use to be considered as texts, there are some characteristics they would share. One of such characteristics is intertextuality.

In the opinion of Van Zoonen, intertextuality is a concept to show that all texts, (written or spoken), with different stylistic or artistic patterns, are in some ways related to each other (20). The idea here is that no text exists without an ‘ancestral’ or contemporary link to other texts of similar orientation or theme. This is also related to an earlier postulation by Bakthin who sees language use in form of speech utterances or sequences where there is usually a form of similarity between an utterance/speech and other utterances/speeches that have been in existence (12). On this basis, though each speech is different as special text creation, however, no speech in itself is radically too different from the others that existed before it which makes it part of the language genre.

**Intertextuality**

Intertextuality is a textual discourse approach that offers the investigation of language use by paying attention to the texts, interactions and interrelationships with previous or earlier texts. Intertextuality seeks to uncover the relationship that exists between a text and other earlier related texts in order to establish the link and mark their related genre features. The idea is that many texts usually lean on existing texts for ratification and extension of their meaning. According to Thibault, all texts, spoken and written, are constructed and have the meanings which text-users assign to them in and through their relations with other texts in some social formation (51). The term intertextuality was first used by Kristeva mainly as a coinage from Bakhtin’s work on the nature of speeches.

The term was coined by Kristeva to describe the dynamic and heterogeneous existence of communicative materials that collide in textual development. Text, for her, is a type of ‘productivity' in which different semiotic codes, genres, and meaning relationships are combined and transformed. Kristeva divides texts into two axes: a horizontal axis that connects the text's author and reader, and a vertical axis that links the text to other texts (69). Also, Fairclough sees intertextuality as a pointer to how texts can turn prior texts and restructure current conventions (genres, discourses) to create new ones (17). It covers how texts are created concerning previous texts, and how texts aid in the construction of current conventions in the creation of new texts. This is a study of discourse representation, as well as a generic study of discourse forms and a study of discourses in texts (Fairclough, 17). Discourse representation, according to Fairclough is a form of intertextuality in which sections of specific texts are inserted into a text and are typical, though not always, specifically marked with devices like quotation marks and reporting clauses ((Fairclough, 11).

Intertextuality can be studied from three main perspectives: sequential, mixed and the embedded intertextuality (Fairclough, 21). In the opinion of Perham, intertextuality is in a sequential mode when different types of texts or discourses alternate within a text (34). This occurs when a text leans on different texts and its interpretation can be traced to multiple sources. However, parts of the text would be easily discernible to their source texts especially if it is organised in sections and clear sequences in such a way that each section or sequence can be traced to a source as different from the others. To investigate the sequential intertextuality would involve an eclectic selection of texts to help in establishing relationships between texts.

The opposite of the sequential intertextuality is the mixed intertextuality. This intertextual relationship applies to situations where different types of text or discourse are combined in a more nuanced fashion and are not easily separable. In the mixed intertext relationship, it is easier to identify the genre texts, which a text may share some features with rather than a specific one. Intertextuality is in an embedded mode when one discourse type is found within the matrix of another type. This works well as it creates a one-to-one situation of text matching. This is the type of intertextuality deployed as a tool in the present study as songs selected from both Fela and Falz have a high level of relationships in such a way that Fala’s lyrics are like the foundational notes for that of Falz. Based on the above, the present study argues that the language troupe and themes deployed by Falz are related to that of Fela on different levels. The songs are socio-political critical songs that highlight the ills in the Nigerian government, the political space, and the social and ethnoreligious sentiments/problems.

**Methodology**

This study is descriptive as the features and characteristics of the selected songs from Fela and Falz are investigated to establish the relationships that exist on an intertextual level and their related genre features. The songs of Fela and that of Falz serve as the primary data for the study. Three songs from Fela (*shuffering and shimilling, Teacher no Teach me Nonsense and Army Arrangement*) are used to compare two of Falz’s songs (*This is Nigeria and Talk*). These songs were selected from both artistes based on their critical stands on the state of the nation at different times. Extracts in form of lyrics were purposely selected from the songs based on their similarities; that is the relationship that of Falz has with the earlier ones from Fela. The extracts were then analysed to unravel their levels of relationship in the context of the socio-political criticism of Nigeria and Nigerians.

**Intertextuality in the Socio-political Critical Songs of Falz and Fela**

Two songs from Falz are investigated in this section based on their intertextuality with earlier songs from Fela. The first song is entitled ‘This is Nigeria’ while the second song is entitled ‘Talk.’ The song ‘This is Nigeria’ is a remix of Childish Gambino’s song, ‘this is America’ and ordinarily would have provided a good intertextual ground for comparison. However, while the original version by Gambino is a criticism of the distractions that come with pop culture in America, that of Falz is a criticism of the political, religious, social, and ethnic problems in Nigeria. This divergence in content and focus between Falz and Gambino is not in tandem with the purview of this study.

The attempt here is to unravel the link between the song (the text) and other similar texts and how they enable language users to interpret the song better. The major argument is that Falz, in the selected political critical songs leans on the tradition of earlier political songs of Fela Anikpoula Kuti on one hand and that of other Nigerian political analysts and critics on the other hand. This endears the audience to the songs and makes it easier for the Nigerian audience to follow because as it were, they are not meeting entirely new creativity.

The first verse of the song from Falz starts on a note that highlights the poor nature of Nigerians and the high level of corruption in the nation. In it, Falz says:

*Extremely poor. The medical facilities are poor. We operate a predatory, neocolonial capitalist system, which is founded on fraud and exploitation, and therefore, you are bound to have corruption. Many criminal cases are settled in police stations*

These are not entirely new descriptions of Nigeria by Nigerians. That of Falz as seen above seems to be a continuation of the previous description of the ugly situations Nigerians find themselves in because it starts with an adjectival phrase that acts as either an introduction to the current text or a conclusion to earlier discussions by others in similar contexts. In an earlier song by Fela in 1977 entitled ‘’Shuffring and Shmiling’, specific instances of the poor nature of Nigerians are stressed. In the song, Fela says:

*Every day my people dey inside bus*

*Every day my people dey inside bus*

*Forty-nine sitting, ninety-nine standing*

*Them go pack themselves in like sardine*

*Them dey faint, them dey wake like cock*

*Them go reach house, water no dey*

*Them go reach bed, power no dey*

While the lyrics of Falz can be seen as not mentioning specific instances of the poor nature of Nigerians amid plenty, it amplifies in many ways, the image Fela creates. It is fraudulent and exploitative to live a life of stress in a nation that has so much wealth; where the transportation system is not efficient. The government to a large extent is in charge of providing good and efficient transportation systems for the comfort of the teeming population which Nigeria has. Other basic amenities such as power and health facilities are also in short supply.

On that basis, Falz lyrics in the chorus that says: *‘This is Nigeria/Look how I’m living now/everybody be criminal’* can be seen as summarizing the poor nature of a life lived by Nigerians as captured in the two songs. In the instance of the two songs, the use of ‘everybody be criminal’ captures the effect of depriving Nigerians of many basic rights by the government. It can only lead to corrupt tendencies from the populace to provide the facilities for themselves.  Both Fela and Falz in style identifies with the masses though the linguistic tool differs. While Fela uses ‘my people’, Falz says ‘everybody.’ Falz is part of the suffering group, Fela is not but speaking on their behalf.

Going further in verse two of the song, ‘this is Nigeria’ by Falz, there is an allusion to an instance of corruption where a certain woman, who claimed that an animal swallowed the money in her office. Falz captures this in:  *Wey that Madam Philomena/Money Vanish from your office/36 mili you talk say na animal.*The ideas in this part of the lyrics have some intertextuality link with a one-time popular news item in Nigeria in 2018 where a lady that works with the accounts department of the Joint Admission Matriculation Board claimed that about 36 Million Naira was swallowed by a snake in her office. Hence, she could not account for it when a group of auditors visited the office (<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/258344-jamb-reacts-money-swallowing-snake-report.html>). This drew lots of criticisms from Nigerians both in Nigeria and abroad and further underscored the high level of corruption by government officials. In the opinion of Caleb Onyenso, a social media commentator on Vanguard Newspaper, the incident is a shame to the entire nation because it happened at the time when the administration of President Buhari claimed to have been fighting corruption headlong. According to him: Last year before the present JAMB administration, it was reported that the board had never remitted more than Three Million Naira to the nation’s consolidated revenue coffers but then a new administration came in and remitted 8 billion Naira, so who is fooling who? (<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/02/snake-allegedly-swallows-n36-million-jamb-office-vault-nigerians-react/>).

On how the scandal was resolved, the Federal Government set up an enquiry, which investigated and announced that unlike the rumours in the news, no money was missing or swallowed by a snake in the JAMB office. This is also captured in some lines in Fela’s ‘Army Arrangement’,’ which says:

*Oil money is missing*

*Them set up inquiry*

*Them say money no lost e oh*

*Them dabaru everybody*

*Supervisor Obasanjo*

*Them say make him no talk e oh*

*"Money no lost, " them shout again*

*Inquiry come close e oh*

About 20 years in between, it seems much has not changed as regards people and government officials paying for the crimes of looting.

Also, the song from Falz and the act of calling those perceived to be corrupt seem to be a rather old tradition among Nigerians and earlier songs. For example, Fela calls out Obasanjo and Abiola for cases of alleged corruption in the song titled ‘ITT-International Thief Thief’ released in the year, 1980. Below, is an excerpt from the lyrics of Fela’s song:

*Start start to steal money*

*Like Obasanjo and Abiola*

*International thief thief*

*I.T.T.*

*International rogue*

*International thief*

*We go fight them, well, well*

*Well, well*

*Well, well*

When it gets to name-calling, using perceived public opinions, Falz leans on the existing tradition of the genre in Nigeria to create a link with the audience. Fela was known to have been a critique of government and private officials making astronomical wealth whereas most of the people in their immediate environment remained poor.

Another area that Falz and Fela criticize and which can be relatable on an intertextual level is the religious exploitation of Nigerians by both Christian and Moslem leaders. Nigeria is a very religious nation and this has pushed many innocent Nigerians to fall into the hands of many deceptive gimmicks of pastors and imams. Also, politicians have had to use the religious sentiments of most Nigerians for their gain such that making yourself known as someone that fears God or someone subject to the supreme power of God can endear you to most Nigerians whether Christians or Muslims. In the opinion of Sampson, ‘since its independence in 1960, Nigeria has struggled unsuccessfully to clearly articulate the relationship between religion and the state (311). These underlining religious issues are captured by Falz in:

[*My brothers and sisters, I want you to put your hands up right now, because your miracle is coming this week. If you believe, let me hear you say Amen!*](https://genius.com/14677915/Falz-this-is-nigeria/My-brothers-and-sisters-i-want-you-to-put-your-hands-up-right-now-because-your-miracle-is-coming-this-week-if-you-believe-let-me-hear-you-say-amen)

[*This is Nigeria*](https://genius.com/14677946/Falz-this-is-nigeria/This-is-nigeria-praise-and-worship-we-singing-now-pastor-put-his-hands-on-the-breast-of-his-members-hes-pulling-the-demons-out)

[*Praise and worship we singing now*](https://genius.com/14677946/Falz-this-is-nigeria/This-is-nigeria-praise-and-worship-we-singing-now-pastor-put-his-hands-on-the-breast-of-his-members-hes-pulling-the-demons-out)

[*Pastor put his hands on the breast of his members*](https://genius.com/14677946/Falz-this-is-nigeria/This-is-nigeria-praise-and-worship-we-singing-now-pastor-put-his-hands-on-the-breast-of-his-members-hes-pulling-the-demons-out)

[*He's pulling the demons out*](https://genius.com/14677946/Falz-this-is-nigeria/This-is-nigeria-praise-and-worship-we-singing-now-pastor-put-his-hands-on-the-breast-of-his-members-hes-pulling-the-demons-out)

First of all, some innocent Nigerians are seemingly deceived by some fake pastors in assuring them of miracles that they usually predict would happen to members of the church. This, in most cases, does not come to pass but the hope that it would come keeps the congregation loyal and perpetually subservient to the pastors. Some pastors also take the gullibility to a whole new level of sexual harassment where their hands are dipped into the clothes of women, touching their breasts and buttocks in the guise of ‘deliverance from demonic attacks. Fela also captured these sharp practices of pastors in:

*Waka many village anywhere in Africa*

*I waka many village anywhere in Africa*

*Pastor's house na him dey fine pass*

*My people them dey stay for poor surroundings*

*Pastor's dress na him dey clean pass*

*E hard for my people for them to buy soap*

*Pastor na him them give respect pass*

*And them do bad bad bad bad bad bad things*

In the case of Fela, Pastors get the best of treatments from members who are usually so poor that they cannot afford to buy bathing soups for themselves whereas their gullible pastors enjoy lavishly. The irony of it all is that pastors themselves are not spiritual as they claim to be as captured in: *And them do bad bad bad bad bad bad things*. However, on the basis of style, there is a slightly different approach between Fela and Falz. While Falz performs a pretentious inclusive reference using the first person pronoun, Fela distances himself from the fake religious leaders in the third person form, though both talk about religious deceits.

Falz goes on to criticise contemporary issues such as the lack of electricity, the wanton killings, and destructions by Fulani Herdsmen, the activities of internet fraudsters also known as Yahoo Yahoo, and the continuous harassment by the now-defunct Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Nigeria Police. These issues may be new and do not necessarily receive attention in the context of Fela. However, Fela also addresses contemporary problems of his time in songs. These include operation *wet,*the killing of his mum, the incursion of the military into government, and other issues. This helps buttress the argument that there is a connection in the socio-political critical songs of Falz and Fela and that Falz follows the laid down tradition of Fela, which include the lampooning of government, religious and ethnic leaders in the country and aligning with the masses. This however, does not include the fact that the style and currency of issues being discussed by the two singers are the same.

We now turn our attention to the second song by Falz and its intertextual concatenations with earlier songs of Fela. The second song entitled ‘Talk’ is a song built on a repetitive conversation to ridicule contemporary socio-political issues in Nigeria. The song opens up with an intro of a voice saying:

*There is a dire need for us to redefine the concept of humanity and morality. There is a pressing need for re-education and re-orientation of the people. For this is the only way we can restore sanity*.

The use of high sounding words (high sounding words in this context refers mainly to flowery expletives, mostly deployed by some Nigerian politicians on radio and television interviews in order to sound important and impressive) to mock the situation of Nigeria can also be found in Fela’s Song, entitled *Techer no Teach me Nonsense:*

*Problems of inflation*

*Problems of corruption*

*Of mismanagement*

*Stealing by government*

*Nothing we dey carry*

*All over Afrika*

*Na de latest one*

*Na him dey make me laugh*

*AUSTERITY (\*after each line)*

*Austeri-*

*Austeri-*

*Na him dey latest one*

*Na him dey make me laugh*

*Why I dey laugh?*

*Man no fit cry?*

These high-sounding words used by both Falz and Fela are used to mock in the first instance the way most Nigerian government officials try to put serious problems facing the nation through their kind of narratives using English words that are hardly relatable to many Nigerians. Many Nigerian socio-political critics also do this regularly. Just as it was captured in a song by Fela, Falz also recreates it.

Moving on with extracts from ‘Talk’ by Falz, the attention shifts to the frequent travels abroad by Nigerian politicians and the propensity for corruption in these travels. Also, politicians after episodes of corruption scandals, especially at the law-making arm, go on to physical fights and end it up with commissions of inquiries who would come out and say everything has been fine just a misunderstanding. Falz captures this in:

[*Four year tenure, three year holiday*](https://genius.com/16222628/Falz-talk/Four-year-tenure-three-year-holiday-eh-eh-three-year-holiday)

[*Eh Eh, three year holiday*](https://genius.com/16222628/Falz-talk/Four-year-tenure-three-year-holiday-eh-eh-three-year-holiday)

[*Our senator, don dey fight, Kung-fu again*](https://genius.com/16222656/Falz-talk/Our-senator-don-dey-fight-kung-fu-again-eh-eh-fight-kung-fu-again)

[Eh eh, fight Kung-fu again](https://genius.com/16222656/Falz-talk/Our-senator-don-dey-fight-kung-fu-again-eh-eh-fight-kung-fu-again)

*Shey dem never tire, They wan continue the race?*

*Eh eh, they wan continue the race*

[*We buy your story, but you no give us change*](https://genius.com/16222699/Falz-talk/We-buy-your-story-but-you-no-give-us-change-eh-eh-you-no-give-us-change)

[Eh eh, you no give us change](https://genius.com/16222699/Falz-talk/We-buy-your-story-but-you-no-give-us-change-eh-eh-you-no-give-us-change)

A look into Fela’s song entitled *Army Arrangement* shows that he seems to have captured the act of politicians travelling abroad to hide stolen money in banks and later accuse one another of corruption; an accusation which later ends in a press statement. Fela captures his in the lyrics below:

*Foreign money for oversea*

*Nigeria get the money*

*Foreign money for oversea*

*Announcement start to happen*

*Newspaper carry them paper*

*Radio dey shout for studio*

*Obasanjo turn vocalist*

*Yar'Adua road manager*

*Every government statement*

*Seven billion naira missing*

*Missing from oversea*

*Foreign currency scandal*

*Them start to arrest everybody o…*

*Them say make him no talk o*

*"Money no lost," them shout again*

*Inquiry come close o*

First, the two singers talk about the frequent travels by government officials abroad for holidays which is also more evident in the cartoonised music video by Falz. These travels are mostly avenues for stealing and starching away Nigeria’s fortune abroad. In the end, most of these episodes end in scandals which Fela says: Seven Billion Naira missing and then, they accuse someone or a group; the group then fights back which Falz captures as [*Our senator, don dey fight, Kung-fu again/Eh eh, fight Kung-fu again*](https://genius.com/16222656/Falz-talk/Our-senator-don-dey-fight-kung-fu-again-eh-eh-fight-kung-fu-again)*.* In the end, all the noises drop because the body in charge of the investigation and enquiries would say no money was missing. Just as Fela says: *Them say make him no talk o/"Money no lost," them shout again/Inquiry come close o.*That is the story Falz refers to in the last line of his own lyrics in: [*We buy your story, but you no give us change/ Eh eh, you no give us change. Story, here is used to represent the new narrative that everything is fine but the idea change in Nigerian Pidgin is aimed at narratives that are aimed at deceiving the people.*](https://genius.com/16222699/Falz-talk/We-buy-your-story-but-you-no-give-us-change-eh-eh-you-no-give-us-change)

Another social problem that received the attention of both Fela and Falz is the problem of ethnicity and tribalism either based on where one comes from or the religion. The attention has text connectivity where the latter (Falz) feeds from the former (Fela). In the lyrics below, Falz mirrors tribalism as the basis for consideration by politicians when he says:

*Shey I no be person*

*Cause no be your tribe I come from?*

*Eh eh, Cause no be your tribe I come from*

This reaffirms the present situation of Nigeria where jobs, contracts, and business deals are given or signed based on where one comes from. That is to say if one is Yoruba and in charge of taking job engagement decisions; there is a high tendency for one to choose the Yorubas first before considering other tribes. In an earlier song, Fela captures the act of using religion as the basis for tribalism or nepotism when he says:

*Anywhere the Muslims them they reign*

*Na Senior Alhaji na him be Director*

*Anywhere the Christians them they reign*

*Na the best friend to Bishop na him be Director*

Fela uses the word ‘reign’ which in the context of Nigerian Pidgin means ‘important and influential The Christians in an organisation are usually the most important sets of persons in an organisation whose leader is a Christian; the same can be said for Muslims. The idea of importance has an intertextual connection with Falz’s Shey *I no be person*which also refers to not having relevance, because of ethnic or religious affiliations. The difference in style is however evident in Fela deploying the third person narrative technique, while Falz deploys the dramatic first person.

Lastly in this analysis, we study on an intertextual level, the criticism of both Fela and Falz on the inability of Nigerians to react to bad government policies and instances of human rights abuses. On this, Falz says:

*We dey suffer, we dey smile*

*We dey fear to talk*

*My people no get chop, my people no get work*

The above captures the attitude of most Nigerians who constantly leave in fear as they are too scared to criticise the bad governance in the nation. Many Nigerians hide their fears, hunger, and sufferings in their smiles. The concept of suffering and smiling had been earlier used by Fela in a song entitled: ‘Shuffering and Shmiling’ where he says:

*Suffering and smiling!*

*Every day my people dey inside bus*

*Suffering and smiling*

*Forty-nine sitting, ninety-nine standing*

*Suffering and smiling*

*Them go pack themselves in like sardine*

*Suffering and smiling*

From the two lyrics, we see a somewhat striking resemblance. Fela unlike Falz captures different scenarios as the entire track is dedicated to the concept of suffering and smiling by helpless Nigerians. However, like other extracts examined above, it helps in validating the fact that no text is fully independent as newer texts rely on ‘ancestor’ texts as the building background for new productions. On the basis of theme, the two texts are related but the style and manner of delivery could be seen as somewhat different; while Falz sings alone in form of a monologue, Fela sings with the suffering and smiling being chorused at the end of every line.

**Conclusion**

The argument canvassed in this study has been that there is a thematic and stylistic connectivity that exists between similar texts produced at different times. In this context, we argue that Falz as a socio-political critique has an intertextual connection with an earlier Nigerian socio-political critique in the person of Fela. The study drew textual evidence from the lyrics of both musicians to validate this point. In all, it is noted that though newer texts may differ based on time, and personal creativity, a text is also similar in many ways to related texts that have been created in time past. The similarities between the two singers exist in the lampooning of government, religious and ethnic leaders in Nigeria and the fact that they aligning with the masses. This however, does not say that there are no differences. The study finds out that the style and currency of issues being discussed by the two singers are not the same. In most cases, while Fela uses the third person pronoun form to speak for the masses, Falz uses the first person pronoun for inclusion as part of the masses.

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**TERROR-POLITICSIN NIGERIA: INTERROGATING THE POLITICS OF TERRORISM IN A FAILING AFRICAN STATE**

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**Abstract**

*Terrorism in Nigeria is precipitated by state failure. Bad governance and the resultant crisis of confidence in the leadership are factors fanning the embers of terrorism. Aggrieved victims of state highhandedness are increasingly using terrorism as a weapon in pursuit of social justice. In another dimension, terrorism in Nigeria is a calculated means to a political end. It is a comeback stratagem disgruntled politicians consciously utilise to heat-up the polity and re-launch themselves to the corridors of power. Since Nigeria’s first republic, premeditated terror and violence have largely been one of the arsenals of politicians across party lines. It is against this backdrop that this paper examines terror-politics in Nigeria. The study problematises terrorism as the grease that oils do-or-die politics in Nigeria; and as a protest weapon of last resort for disgruntled Nigerians. Using the historical and qualitative research methodology, the study interrogates the phenomenon of jungle politics in Nigeria. It relied essentially on secondary materials and observations. The study found that Nigeria’s political elites partnering with, sponsoring, and funding terrorists to achieve and defend their political interests exemplifies terror-politics. Boko Haram terrorism activities are also symptomatic of terror-politics because they are partly ignited by political failure. Therefore, the study concludes that military counter-terrorism measures aimed at ending Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria are needless art of state terrorism that at best impregnate the problem. Sanitisation of Nigeria’s body politics holds the key to eliminating terrorists both in the corridors of power and in ungoverned spaces.*

**Keywords:** Terror-politics, Nigeria, State failure, State terrorism, Boko Haram.

**Introduction**

Politics exists in almost all aspects of human life.1 It is stronger in areas where there is wide inequality and a perpetual struggle for scarce resources. In this wise, politics becomes not only a means to gain access to the power to control scarce resources and determine who get what, when and how; but also a means of addressing imbalances and redistributing scare resources. In the home, community and state where contestations over resource distribution and injustices are rife, politics is usually the melting pot. Consequently, constituted authorities such as the family and community heads, and political leadership constitutionally charged with the responsibility of distributing resources2 and maintaining social order are commonly lobbied or coerced by interest groups with unmet demands.At the state level,these interest groups such as terrorist organisations emerge more in societies where there is a breach in the social contract. The resultant social pressures, grievances and frustrations social contract breaches cause in failing African states such as Nigeria are usually the lifeblood of what this study conceptualises as terror-politics. This refers to the causal relationships between politics and Boko Haram terrorism.

The politics of terrorism in Nigeria also interrogates the financial sponsorship of terrorist organisations by political actors for their political gains. This factor complements dysfunctional politics as core political drivers of terrorism. Understandably, this study conceives terrorism as a critical means to an end in Nigeria that is not restricted to terrorist organisations. Its exploitation by state actors, displaced political elites and disgruntled elements in Nigeria widens the spheres of the weaponisation and usage of terrorism in Nigeria. More so, the fact that violence as a medium of protest and attention-seeking is a premeditated choice selected by aggrieved people out of other possible alternative dispute resolution strategies speaks volume of the political nature of terrorism. This is because decision making is an intrinsic aspect of politics. Hence, the calculated decision to use terror to create fear and coerce others into carrying out expected actions is more or less a political decision.

Therefore, terrorism as a course of action is arguably neither fanned by bloodlust nor is it a spur of the moment decision; it is a carefully crafted Machiavellian strategy. It is an integral part of pre-elections and post-elections political orchestrations and socio-economic justice movements. In a terrorist organisation, the decision to carry out a suicide bombing, hijacking, hostage-taking and killing among others are not usually taken by the terrorists who carry out the attacks; but by the political hierarchy of the group. Alfred de Grazia in his study “*Political Behaviour*” observed that politics at the end of the day refers to all the events that happen around and within the decision making centres of government, group or institution.3 It is against this backdrop that, this study would interrogate the political undertones of, and overtures fanning the embers of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. It will examine politics and terrorism as overlapping means to an end; terrorism as a rational political choice; political foundation/sponsorship of terrorism; political dysfunctionalism and terrorism; and the nexus between terrorism and political instability in Nigeria. Its contribution to the existing body of knowledge on terror-politics is that terrorism is precipitated by state failure.

**Politics and Terrorism as Means to an End**

Politics and terrorism are first and foremost strategically linked as means to an end. R.F. Ola portrays politics in this light when he noted that politics is the management of power.4 He explained that: “He who has power has the ability to impose some loss deprivation, some negative impact on someone subordinate to him for non-obedience to, or non-compliance with what he directs.”5 Politics as a means to an end also enables political officer holders to use the machinery of state, legitimate force if necessary, to coerce, repel, and deter people in order to achieve certain objectives. When the legitimate instruments of force such as the military and the police force that the political elites control are abused it breeds state terrorism. And this brings politics and terrorism into their closest relationship as means to end, or perhaps as two sides of the same coin.

Terrorism, in its strategic linkage with politics, is the illegitimate use of legitimate state power to coerce or compel government agencies, international bodies, and the general population to carry out or abstain from doing any act. In this wise, terrorism enables the perpetrators of state terrorism to hold on to power autocratically and to use state power for unconstitutional purposes. In most cases, the attendant effects of this abuse of political power are the deaths of innocent civilians, the destruction of properties, and the undermining of national and international peace and security.6 These points were made clear by the United Nations Security Council report of January 30, 2004 that was adopted at its 4908th meetings. The lessons that informed the UN position were learnt from the incidence of terrorism in the United States of America on September 11, 2001, when terrorists under the auspices of the Al-Qaeda network attacked the World Trade Centre in New York and Pentagon. The apparent objective of these attacks was to coerce the American Government and scare it away from meddling in the politics of the Middle East. Consequently, the American Heritage Dictionary asserts that terrorism is a means to an end. It defined it as the unlawful use of violence or the threat of violence especially against civilians in the pursuit of political goals.7

Another area of linkage between politics and terrorism of pragmatic importance is their control over human behavior. Regarding politics as control A. Appadorai observed that,

*When we observe the life of men around us, we cannot fail to be struck by two facts... Every man desires to have his own way and to think and act as he likes. Everyone cannot have his own way because he lives in a society. (Because) one man’s desires conflict with those of another, the relations of the individual members of society with one another, therefore, need regulation by government.*8

Therefore, it can be deduced from the foregoing that politics, as a means to an end is useful for maintaining law and order. It achieves this through rules and regulations that are used to enforce obedience, subjection and good behaviour among the populace. On the other hand, terrorism as an instrument of control over humans uses fear and terror to shackle people’s minds making them live in bondage. Terrorists use brute force and violence to force people into cooperation and subordination in their sphere of influence. These linkages provide the ideological foundation the politics of terrorism. They also lend credence to the fact that while terrorism is not politics and politics is not terrorism, they nonetheless have a symbiotic meeting point that is engendering and sustaining the politics of terrorism.

**Terrorism as a Rational Political Choice**

The fact that terrorism is a rational course of action selected from other alternatives heightens its political applicability. Hence, the rational choice theory becomes the most suitable and valid theoretical framework for explaining the recourse to terrorism in politics and social decision making processes. According to Science Direct, the basic assumptions of the rationale choice theory are that humans have a coherent set of preferences, gather the necessary information to reach an informed decision, evaluate alternative actions and choose actions that are optimally related to their beliefs and values.9 *Encyclopedia Britannica* explains that to rationale choice theorists, history and culture have little or no significance to understanding political behavior.10 This implies that at any given point in time and under any given circumstances, humans take decisions they best conceive as rational.

Hence, the rational choice theory as an ideological framework for understanding politics lends itself well for the understanding of terrorism. This implies that terrorism as a course of action is not chosen based on religion, culture, customs and traditions and territorial affinity, but on calculations that have taken into consideration the pros and cons of the action. Terrorism is decided upon, just like any other political decisions, after deep thinking and at times after due consultations. The strength and the weaknesses of the perceived enemy vis-à-vis the strength and weaknesses of the terrorist group are rationally weighed before terrorism is selected as a means to an end. In the study of politics, the rational choice theory was developed by William Riker in 1962, when he combined the economics and game theories to develop a complex mathematic models of politics, that explained why and how politician form alliances.11 And the explanation for this was that it was a rational choice. Political decisions being a rational choice implies that politicians like terrorists are endlessly opportunistic people; and that like political decisions, terrorists decisions also need some form of institutional setting to take place.12 The fact that rational choice in decision making is more or less an economic decision informed the view that,

*Individuals use rational calculations to make rational choices and achieve outcomes that are aligned with their own personal objectives… Rational choice theory is expected to result in outcomes that provide people with the greatest benefit and satisfaction given the limited options they have available.*13

This connotes that terrorism in Nigeria as elsewhere is a rational political choice with great economic benefits to the user. It is problem solving, cost cutting, inequality equalising, and a damage control mechanism to the outmanned, outgunned and outnumbered user of terrorism.

**Political Foundation / Sponsorship of Terrorism in Nigeria**

It is a fact that terrorism is neither a senseless sentimental nor spontaneous use of violence; but a premeditated rational use of terror towards achieving political ends. This reality gives ideological insight into what is described as the political foundation of terrorism in Nigeria. Political sponsorship of terrorism in the country is observably and on and off election activity. However, state sponsorship of terrorism in Nigeria usually reaches its peak during election seasons. During pre-election, election, and post-election periods, the top political gladiators in the country committed to the do-or-die politics, that is fighting dirty, are usually inseparable from the reign of terror that end up colouring the political landscape. The use of political thugs and other unknown gunmen in Nigeria to unleash mayhem, terror and violence, before, during and after elections is unrivaled in Africa. Political sponsored terrorist activities in the nation include attack on the buildings and properties of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), ballot box snatching, and sporadic shooting at polling stations to scare away voters and attack on political opponents. Political killings during Nigeria’s election circle and other malpractices perpetrated through terrorism are rational choices.

Desperate, die-hard and do-or-die politicians in Nigeria, observably conceive terrorism as a shortcut and the safest route to the corridors of power. It is also conceived as veritable means of consolidating and elongating their stay in the helms of political affairs. Consequently, state actors, that is, political office holders or aspirants in collaboration with incumbent office holder in Nigeria have built an intricate working relationship with non-state terrorist actors. These armed men whether organised or unorganised are usually called “Boys”. They usually represent the armed unit and the backup plan of politicians who seek to win political power or return to office at all cost. Their activities mirror the delicate balance between war and diplomacy in Nigeria’s electioneering processes. This means that, when power cannot be won at the ballot, Nigeria’s political elites are ready and committed to continuing their search for power through arms (violence). Since the formation of radical Boko Haram in 2010 under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, political sponsorship and patronage of terrorism has grown exponentially. The grievances the group harbours against the Nigerian state for the brutal killing of its former leader, Muhammed Yusuf, in 2009 were what arguably opened up terror-politics investment opportunities for displaced and disgruntled Nigerian politicians.

Political sponsorship and financing of Boko Haram terrorism had enabled Boko Haram not only scale up its operations, but also escape the wrath of the law. Political elites collaborating with Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria is responsible for the group gaining vital intelligence on the Nigerian military operations. The group is often pre-equipped with military strategies, plan of attack, its itinerancy and mobilisation that are useful to it in evading and inflicting deadly blows on the Nigerian military. Evidence to buttress political sponsorship of terrorism in Nigeria abounds in the assertions and testimonies of prominent political elites in the country. In 2012, during a church service at the National Ecumenical Centre, the then President of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan, revealed that the extremist Boko Haram sect have succeeded in infiltrating his government, planting its members in government agencies and security outfits.14 This in actuality implied that Boko Haram terrorist group had sympathisers in government, National Assembly, Nigeria Military and Police force.15 And this development ex-president Jonathan observed has made the Boko Haram terrorism worse than the Nigerian Civil War.16 Specifically, the BBC reported Goodluck Jonathan’s statement on the degree of threat Boko Haram poses to Nigeria thus,

*Some of them (Political sponsors of Boko Haram) are in the executive arm of government, some of them are in the legislative arm of government, while some of them are even in the judiciary; some are also in the armed forces, the police and other security agencies*.17

Political patronage of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria has made the group not only powerful, but also elusive and evasive. To the extent, in the early days of Boko Haram terrorism the Nigerian government conceived the group to be a faceless body. Despite the problem this poses, ex-President Jonathan was asserted that Boko Haram and its political sponsors would never be able to stop Nigeria from working.18 In another dimension, the politics of terrorism in Nigeria, particularly political sponsorship, manifested in Muhammadu Buhari’s assertion in 2012 that,

*God’s willing, by 2015, something will happen. They either conduct a free and fair election or they go a very disgraceful way. If what happened in 2011 (alleged rigging) should again happen in 2015, by the grace of God, the dog and the baboon would all be soaked in blood*.19

Regardless of the connotations and interpretations given to this statement by either apologists or critics of Muhammadu Buhari, one truth that is however discernible from it is the fact that, political personae in Nigeria have no qualms resorting to terrorism as a rational alternative means of capturing state power. Buhari’s statement in 2012 was arguably inspired by Alhaji Lawal Kaita’s statement in 2011 that Nigeria would be made ungovernable should Goodluck Jonathan be elected into office.20 It also confirmed that pre-election and post-election political violence and mayhem in Nigeria do not take place without the knowledge and consent of the political elites of the country. In 2021, political actors’ complicity in terrorist activities in Nigeria were arguably the underlying reasons why the president Buhari administration refused to publish the names of sponsor of the Boko Haram terrorist group21 released by the American CIA. The political foundation of terrorism under the regime was also concretised by policies such as the “Operation Safe Corridor” that gives repentant Boko Haram terrorists a safe and comfortable landing and re-integration in Nigeria after the heinous crime they have committed.

**Political Dysfunctionalism and Terrorism in Nigeria**

There is no gain saying the fact that terrorism in Nigeria moves on two wheels. The first wheel is politics and the second is economics. Politics as a driver of terrorism among the population is more certain when it is dysfunctional. This implies that breaches in the social contract as a result of political highhandedness, maladministration and other extra-judicial and *ultra vires* actions by elected representatives create distrust, anger, frustrations and disaffections that are usually expressed through terrorism. The 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Right and Duties of State provides the legal framework for understanding this reality. Its article 10 stated the: “The primary interest of sates is the conservation of peace.”23 This duty of the state is both to its citizenry and the international community. Domestically, the conservation of peace entails good governance, constitutionalism, service delivery, and the respect and protection of the human rights of the population.

Hence, in Nigeria the extant grundnorm of the country, the 1999 Constitution provides that the economic objectives of the Nigerian state are to:

*Harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and… control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity*.24

Without doubt, the socio-economic well-being of Nigerians is an essential ingredient of peace across the country. To this end, Chapter II paragraph 16(2) of the 1999 constitution stated that, the Nigerian state will direct its policies toward ensuring the promotion of a planned and balanced economic development.25 It could be deduced from this constitutional provisions that good governance and nationalistic formulation and implementation of socio-economic policies that ensure the delivery of the dividends of democracy to all citizens are the hallmarks of a functional politics.

However, since the start of Nigeria’s fourth Republic in 1999, the biggest threats to good governance and socio-economic justice are the cankerous trio of ethnicity, regionalism and prebendalism in its body politics. These three behemoths that have been amalgamated into Nigeria’s political system and rechristened as the principle of zoning ensure the handpicking of leaders by a privilege few (political godfathers). This implies that access to political and electoral contestations for power are not free, fair, open, and competitive in the truest sense. Political candidates are regionally selected along ethnic and religious lines by political cabals who expect them to capture state power for their benefit as patrons; and for the benefit of their regions and tribesmen. The zoning principle came into official existence in 1999 along with the Peoples Democratic Party when its top elites unanimously decided to zone the Presidency to the Southwest to placate the region over the annulment of the 1993 Presidential election believed to have been won by Chief M.K.O. Abiola. And President Olusegun Obasanjo emerged as the first beneficiary of the arrangement.26 It set in motion the wheels of rotational Presidency that was designed assure and secure the interest of political elites across the all the regions of the country in the Presidency. This engendered bad governance in Nigeria because instead of enabling the incumbent government to thrive through constructive criticism of its policies; elites in other regions would rather queue on the waiting list of the zoning formula, patiently sitting-out the tenures of incumbent leaderships until their turn to rule comes.

Thus, in Nigeria’s fourth Republic power had been consistently zoned from one region or zone of the country to another; and this had hindered the emergence of a truly national President chosen by the people. The politics of regionalism reached a new height in the fourth Republic when the zoning principle that consolidated PDP hold on power triggered inter-regional political cooperation to challenge it. This occurred on February 6, 2013 when the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), and the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) came together to form the All Progressives Congress (APC) to wrestle power from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). However, instead of sanitising Nigeria’s body politics and promoting peace through equitable access to economic resources, national politicking, and unity in diversity; this new political merger strengthened the invisible hands of new political god-fathers to afflict minorities with more pain. When the APC successfully captured power in 2015, minorities still found themselves left behind by the state in terms of receiving the dividends of democracy due to the centrifugal forces of ethnic politics, regional politics and the patron-client politics. They caused the Nigerian state to violate and abuse the rights of its people more than it protected them; and they positioned the Nigerian state as a terrorist organization of some sort. Okwudiba Nnoli traced the rise of ethnicity as a cancerous cell in Nigeria to the rise of urban settlements in colonial Nigeria.27 In this new urban centres, people and tribals from different parts of the country bonded in an uneven social existence and relations. Subsequently, Nnoli argued that the desire to advance and protect the interest of one tribal member over others in the urban spaces was what sowed the seed of ethnic politics in Nigeria.28

Without doubt, in Nigeria’s fourth Republic, ethnicity had engendered political dysfunctionalism. This political malfunction is partly responsible for the formulation and implementation of lopsided economic policies that favour the majority tribes to the detriment of the minorities. Closely following this is the politics of regionalism that shifted the attention of leadership to the development of regions where elected representatives hail from instead of the whole nation. This problem was inherited from Nigeria’s first Republic where three regional political parties reigned supreme. The Northern People’s Congress (NPC) representing the interest of northerners, the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) representing the interest of the easterners, and the Action Group (AG) representing the interest of the westerners. In development terms, regional politics meant that access to scarce resources and enjoyment of the dividend of democracy cannot be even. This is because the people of the region where Nigeria’s political elites hail from end up getting more attention than other less privileged Nigerians politically disconnected from the centre. These people are conveniently ignored by government in the distribution of scarce resources and in the provision of social amenities.

In Nigeria’s fourth Republic, this was the experience of the Igbo tribe during the post 2015 politics and governance. The southeastern region in the build up to the 2015 election that was hotly contested by the Peoples’ Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) gave their full support to the PDP candidate in the person of Goodluck Jonathan. Igbos traders and businesses and ethnic elite group such as Ohaneze Ndigbo demonstrated their support for the PDP in words and deeds. They made heavy cash investment in the Presidential ambition of Jonathan and took the lead in promoting his Transformation Agenda. Consequently, when the APC eventually clinched the people’s mandate to govern Nigeria the new leadership was by political default wired to ignore the southeast. The resultant exclusionism and political marginalisation of the Igbos fanned the embers of acrimony and revived the spirit of Biafra that saw the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB) threatening the peace in the country through sit-at-home orders on Monday that was violently enforced. Ochereome Nnana captured the plight of the Igbos that the APC will politically marginalise the Igbos by not zoning any political office to the Southeast thus,

*…By putting all their eggs in one basket, (the Igbos) have voted themselves out of contention. For the first time in our political history, no Igbo person will be President, Vice President, Senate President, Deputy Senate President, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Deputy Speaker… blind following of President Jonathan has rendered (the Igbos) irrelevant in the new APC dispensation…*29

Jideofor Adibe providing insight into this treatment of the southeast region wrote that, it was reflective of the emerging political trend of triumphalism and chop-chop politics which is the tendency to pick on others for their apparent lack of political foresight, miscalculations or political illiteracy.30 This point dovetails into the third obstacle to functional politics in Nigeria, which is the politics of prebendalism. Richard Joseph in his study “*Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria*” describes this problem as a patron-client politicking. This implies that people or group that wishes to quickly move up the socio-economic ladder in Nigeria must look for and form political ties with a patron (political office holder or aspirant). The clients support the patron in this political relationship by investing time, energy and resources in the political ambition of politicians. They are also expected to vote for and canvass for vote for the politician to ensure his victory at the polls. When this is done and the mandate secured, it becomes the turn of the patrons to reward their clients (supporters) with government contracts, provision of social amenities, infrastructural development, employment, concessions, land and political protection among others.31 The cumulative effects of prebendal politics is the entrenchment of godfatherism and the politics of entitlement to power (*Emilokan* in Yoruba language) in Nigeria’s fourth Republic and its attendant menace.

Therefore, the political cost of ethnicity, regionalism and prebendal politics is the neglect of Nigeria’s responsibility to its citizenry. And the cost of sectional governance, that is, the opportunity cost of satisfying the developmental interests of regional majorities (political zones of political officeholders) and servicing the needs of their elites, and that of the dominant political godfathers is the underdevelopment and neglect of minorities in Nigeria. This implies that resources cannot get to the minorities because they have been used to cater for the needs of the privileged few. Consequently, dysfunctional politics is at the root of the rising poverty and hunger, anger and frustration, disillusionment and disenchantment in northern Nigeria where the rate of illiteracy is very high. And this has turned out to be some of the major triggers of terrorism against the Nigerian state. This also partly explains the rise of radical groups in the southeast such as IPOB and other criminal elements bent on unleashing terror on the people of the region such as the “Unknown Gunmen”.

**Terrorism and Political Instability in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, terrorism observably originates from two main sources. These are the corridors of power and ungoverned spaces. Terrorists in the country find safe haven in either of these domain because of the secret working relationship between state actors and other terrorism oriented non-state actors; or because of the fact that some terrorists have found their way into the corridors of power. Thus, terrorism and politics in Nigeria are arguably mutually enforcing events. But their interface undermines public peace and internal political stability. It had been demonstrated in this study that politics at times gives breathe of life to terrorism as a rational means to an end. De jure acquisition of power through violence erodes public confidence in such government; and paradoxically challenges of politics itself. This is because terrorism begets terrorism. After the use of terrorism to silence opposition and public agitations such as civil protests, casualties are caused and bitter memories are left in the minds of the victims and survivors of state terrorism. Some lost loved ones and suffer severe bodily injury due to military and police highhandedness and brutality. The resultant desire for revenge is usually so strong and insatiable that it threatens the whole politics and governance of Nigeria.

In Nigeria, this is the exact problem bedeviling the polity. The 2009 state terrorism unleashed against the Boko Haram sect that led to the extra-judicial killing of its leader, Muhammed Yusuf in police custody, was the act of terror that begot the radical Boko Haram terrorist group in 2010. Ab-initio, the Boko Haram also known as Nigeria Mujahideen or Nigerian Taliban was a group of people committed to the propagation of prophet’s Muhammed’s teaching, jihad, and to the opposition of Western education.32 But under the new leadership of Abubakar Shekau the group experienced a significant ideological shift in its effort to avenge the killing of its founding leader. Guided by the spirit of vindictiveness, and the desire to get its pound of flesh from the Nigerian state, the Boko Haram group resorted to terrorism and guerilla warfare against the Nigerian state since it was outmanned and outgunned by its opponent. Consequently, since 2010, Nigeria’s fourth Republic had never been in peace. It had experienced one form of terrorist motivated political instability or the other. Boko Haram has compounded the political woes of Nigeria’s fourth Republic by seeking to establish an Islamic State in Nigeria under Shariah law.33

To this end, the terrorist group engaged in dastardly activities that made the Northeast of Nigeria almost ungovernable. According to the Mackenzie Institute, from 2010 to 2012 Boko Haram carried out more than 300 attacks which claimed the lives of 1000 people.34 On August 2011, the group carried out a suicide bomb attack against the United Nations compound in Abuja killing 23 people; on January 2012, it carried out waves of bomb attacks in Kano that killed more than 180 people. On March 2013, Boko Haram attacked prisons in Gwoza and Adamawa and freed about of its members; and in September 2013, it attacked a school building in Mamudo killing 65 students. And in December 2013, Boko Haram carried out an audacious attack on one of Nigeria’s military bases and killed 20 military personnel and destroyed military equipment and two helipcopters.35 By far one of the most politically destablising attacks of Boko Haram was its attack on the Federal Government Girls College Chibok on April 2014; where the group abducted some 276 female students.36 The attack brought the Nigerian government politics to the eyes of the world; and through the resultant hashtag campaign (#Bring Back Our Girls) put a lot of domestic and international pressure on Nigeria’s political system.

On January 2015, Boko Haram assaulted the town of Baga and killed about 900 people and displaced 2000 Baga residents. The attack also destroyed 16 surrounding towns and displaced additional 35, 000 people. On February 1, 2016, Boko Haram carried out deadly assault on villages in Nigeria’s Northeast. Its members opened fire on civilians, firebombed residences that claimed the lives of about 86 children.37 It is instructive to note that, the Nigerian state watched on almost helplessness as Boko Haram recorded one success after the other. Hence, the efforts Nigeria made to contain the spate of Boko Haram terrorist attacks could be regarded as baby steps forward and a slap on the back of the palm. They culminated in the imposition of a state of emergency on Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa that were the hotbeds of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. However, the Attorney General of Borno, Kaka Lawan, considered this measure to be “a failed experiment” on the grounds that it violated the rights of the affected states.38 These measures were first introduced on May 16, 2013; and when it expired on November 2013, it was extended for another six months.39 Reacting to this development, Lawan observed that:

*The first declaration of state of emergency was actually an experiment which Nigerians thought it would (end terrorism) at the end of the day’s work. But after six months, I turned out not very successful. We thought there was going to be a change of strategy, to get the desired result; unfortunately, there was no change of strategy, rather we experienced extension*.40

Another dimension of terrorism begetting terrorism and destabilising politics and governance in Nigeria was experienced in the southeast. The use of military force by the Nigerian state to suppress civil protest and agitations such as” Operation *Egwu Eke*” that is. “Operation Python Dance” in Igboland; and the eventual prohibition and caging of IPOB as a terrorist organisation. The exercise first began in all the five eastern states on November 26, 2016 to December 27, 2017 was geared towards nipping criminal activities in the bud in Enugu, Ebonyi, Abia, Anambra and Imo.41 Nigeria’s political instability was heightened when the Nigerian military attacked the home of Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of IPOB on Sunday night of, September 9, 2017 and killed about 5 people and injuring 30 others.42 This event and the later arrest and imprisonment of Kanu made IPOB more aggrieved, radical and committed to terrorism. Members of the group in solidarity with their leader continue to forcefully enforce sit-at-home in the southeast and to unleash terror on security agencies and other members of the population who dare defy IPOB’s sit-at-home orders. It was in this circumstance that it could be rightly said that military use of force in the southeast created more terror than it resolved.

**Conclusion**

The politics of terrorism in Nigeria is multidimensional. It is first the interface between politics and terrorism as means to an end; and then the recourse to terrorism in Nigeria’s domestic politics as a well thought-out political comeback strategy. The politics of terrorism also explores the nexus between political dysfunctionalism and terrorism. The study found that failed politics and bad governance are some of the leading causations of terrorism. Dysfunctional politics also engenders abuse of political power that promote state terrorism; which in turn begot non-state terrorist activities. The study found that the rebirth of Boko Haram as a radical terrorist group in 2009 has been responsible for producing more political instabilities than any other group. It had locked horns with the Nigerian state in an unending battle of attrition at the expense of internal peace and security. This study concludes that military counter-terrorism measures directed at ending terrorism is a needless art of state terrorism that at best impregnated the problem and precipitated terrorism. The sanitisation of Nigeria’s body politics holds the key to eliminating terrorists both in the corridors of power and in ungoverned spaces.

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**GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*Nigeria is a federal state that thrives on democracy yet, this system of governance seems not to have influenced community development; perhaps due to the weak structure in governance that exist in the country. Therefore, this study investigated the impact of governance on community development in Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions and anchored on the organizational theory because it effectively explained the relationship between governance and community development. This study adopted a desk-top method of data collection because; the study made use of secondary sources of data collection. The data derived from this study were however, analysed using the thematic method of data analysis. Findings revealed that, governance has failed to influence community development due to bad governance. It was reviewed that the challenges of governance in community development are poverty, inadequate financial resources, inadequate use of grassroots institutions, autonomy, corruption, lack of participation by community members and priority misplacement. Based on these findings, it was recommended that corruption be tackled in the country by enforcing strict penalties against corruption. It was also recommended that the local government be financially independent and autonomous so as to ensure community development.*

**Key words:** Community Development, Democracy, Governance, Local Government,

Federalism

**Introduction**

Nigeria is a sovereign state; practicing democracy and federalism. This system of governance decentralizes power and ensures that governance transcends to the grass root and allows for equal participation and representation of citizens in the country. The United Nations (1955) refers to governance as, managing a country’s affairs by exercising political and administrative authority. This comprises of the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.

Governance creates an inclusive and responsive political process. It is concerned with institutions of governance, including public administration and management and equal distribution of public services and aspects of democracy and the rule of law. The World Bank has identified three distinct aspects of governance as; the form of political regime, the process by which authority is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development and the capacity of governments to design, formulate and implement policies and discharge functions (World Bank, 1994).

It denotes the use of political authority to exercise control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development (OECD, 1995) and involves a sum total of ways individuals and institutions; public and private, manage their common affairs. Commission on Global Governance (1995) asserted that governance is a continuing process through which diverse interests are accommodated and co-operative actions taken especially, on communal problems to ensure community development. Akande (2010) and Nseabasi (2012) explained that community development is a process by which community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. According to them, this process and practice entails the inclusion and participation of different interest groups, stakeholders and actors including the people whose livelihood projects are geared at improving their living condition; government and non-governmental bodies, funding organizations, project experts and executors who are aimed at improving the productivity of the people and enabling them participate socially, politically and economically (Abugu,2014).

Ojo & Ako (2021) opined that community development is a process whereby those who are marginalised are enabled to participate in productive activities and bring about changes in their community. Hamilton (1992) further defined community development as a planned and organized effort to assist individuals to acquire the attitudes, skills and concepts required for the democratic participation in solving communal problems.

Orapin (1996) argued that one essential approach to effective community development is giving the main actors (members of the community) an equal opportunity to participate in decision making as it affects them. This underpins the need for good governance in order to harness the individual’s resources towards the development of their community. Sharman, Sadana and Kaur (2013) stated that good governance establishes the rule of law, enforces contracts and agreement between the individuals, maintain law and order, guarantees security to the people, economizes cost and resources, protects the government and properly delivers services to the society. In a similar context, Fagbadebo (2007) opined that, good governance is accomplished when the operation of governance is in line with the prevailing legal and ethical principles of the political community unlike bad governance which is a symptom of institutional and leadership failures, explicitly manifested by its long list of dictatorial leadership.

Good governance is characterised by participation, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, equitable distribution of resources, adherence to the rule of law and the total eradication of corruption and is synonymous to democracy. In affirmation, Gambari (2001) and Omemma (2017) stated that democracy is a broad model of government that is epitomized by good governance, the rule of law, security, and protection of individual rights, vibrant civil society and shared economic prosperity. In view of this, it is important to investigate the extent to which governance in Nigeria has influenced community development.

**Statement of the problem**

Democracy is synonymous to good governance because, it allows for the rule of law and does not give room for dictatorship. It ensures even participation and representation of all citizens in governance especially on matters that affects them; which is the core of community development. But, despite the fact that Nigeria is practicing democracy and a federal system of government which allows governance to transcend to the grass root by dividing power into; federal, state and local government, most local government areas seem not to have experienced the impact of governance and have thus, remained underdeveloped over the years.

This is likely because of the seemingly weak governance structure that exists in the country. While the federal government is charged with the responsibility of handling governance at the federal level, the state and local government are charged with the responsibility of handling development at the state and local government respectively. Thus, resources are allocated to aid these tiers of government discharge their duties. However, when these resources are allocated, the state government seem to release little or nothing to the local government.

In some cases, the state government seem to have interfered with most of the function of the local government. In other cases, the local government may have been completely dismantled thereby, depriving local government areas the even participation and representation which federalism and democracy supports. Based on this, local government areas in Nigeria tend to have continued to experience underdevelopment overtime even as successive government takes over and leaves power.

In view of this, the study was guided by the following research questions. They are;

1. To what extent has the system of governance in Nigeria influenced community development?
2. What are the challenges facing governance in ensuring community development in Nigeria?
3. How can governance be effectively carried out to ensure community development in Nigeria?

**Literature review**

**An overview of governance**

The World Bank defined governance as the use of power to manage a nation’s affair and the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development (World Bank, 1992). It is the formation and stewardship of the formal and informal rules that regulate the public realm; the arena in which state as well as economic and social actors interact to make decisions (Hyden and Court, 2002).

Ogundiya (2010) opined that, governance is the process that is employed to achieve the noble end of the state. Thus, this implies the art of governing a people within a given territory or a state. It consists of two essential elements of the state, namely the structure of the state and the procedures of the legislative, judicial and those of the executive and administrative bodies at all the tiers of government. According to Fagbadebo (2007), it is referred to as the development and implementation of public policy through a broader range of private and public agencies than those traditionally associated with government.

Governance could employ good and bad methods which are defined based whether public resources and problems are managed effectively, efficiently and in response to the critical needs of all members of the society. UNDP (1997) stated that, a system of governance is good when it is participatory, legitimate and acceptable to the people, transparent and accountable, promotes equity and equality, operates by the rule of law and is impartially enforced and is responsive to the needs of the people. In affirmation, Nwanegbo, Umara and Ikyase (2017) added that, good governance is a function of effective, visionary, transparent, trustworthy and credible political leadership whose driving force is an improvement in the collective well- being of the citizens through well-conceived, effectively implemented economic policies and human development programmes.

On the other hand, Coker and George-Genyi (2014) stated that, bad governance is a symptom of institutional and leadership failures, explicitly manifested by its long list of dictatorial leaders, not free media and undemocratic elections. Among its features is the failure to make a clear separation between what is public and private, hence a tendency to divert public resources for private gain and the failure to establish a predictable framework for law and government behavior in a manner that is conducive to development resulting in a misallocation of resources and excessively non-transparency decision-making.

In line with this, Wael (2013) posits that factors such as acute corruption and absence of accountability, the lack of effective institutional control, predatory coalition between the ruling party and business sector, lack of transparency of rules, laws and processes and lack of leadership by example are the major features of bad governance. This becomes more pronounced when a state fails to meet the needs of majority of its citizens and thus, creates a hostile environment for development.

In view of this, there is no gainsay that, governance goes beyond governing a group of people within a given area and developing policies. The core of governance lies in the ability of those in government to effectively manage the state’s resources and provide the basic necessities for its citizenry. This to a large extent determines if governance is bad or good.

**Introduction to community development**

The United Nations (1955) defined community development as a process whereby members of a community come together to take collective action and generate solutions to their common problems. According to Vadevello & Singaravelloo (2013), it is a process whereby citizens of a particular community actively get involved in community affairs to enhance the social, economic and environmental situation of the people.

In a similar context, Onyenemezu (2014) observed that it is a significant process that combines the efforts of the citizens, government and voluntary organisations for the single purpose of improving the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of the community. Moreland and Lovett (1997) stated that, it is a learning process that involves the learning of ways to enhance the capacity for self-directed activity and destiny.

Community development is built on certain elements that make it to thrive especially at the local level (Dobson, 2010). Abugu (2014) added that, community development occurs when the citizens are fully involved in the development of their community; from the identification of a need or problem to the ways and means they will want to solve it.

It is aimed at providing information on resources, inputs and infrastructure; deploying technical assistance; skills acquisition and development; increasing literacy levels; improving productivity and productive systems; adapting appropriate technology in agriculture; sensitizing potential volunteers and donors among other things. Ideally, most community development programmes in developing nations focus on peoples’ felt needs and basic amenities such as the provision of good roads, electricity, health clinics, markets, school buildings, and farm settlements among others. These goals can only be achieved through the combined and collective efforts of all those who share the conviction that the community development must be accorded a high priority in the drive for poverty alleviation and national self-sufficiency (Onodugo and Itodo, 2016).

Thus, the goal of community development is to improve people’s productivity and enable them to participate in their social, political and economic life into the future. This gives them more confidence in managing their own affairs and help to protect their environment. But, it is morally binding on the local government managers to do everything possible to achieve the goals (Abugu,2014).

Thus, for community development to take place there should be a communal effort (involving the community member and the government or non-government organization), a communal problem and a communal solution. Its sole aim is to provide the indices of development to community members and help them to improve their living condition. Therefore, while community development relies on the collective effort of community member, the sole responsibility of managing the community members and community resources lies with the local government. In view of this, the role of the local government cannot be overemphasized.

**Challenges facing governance in community development**

Onodugo and Itodo (2016) outlined the problems affecting governance in community development as, poverty, inadequate financial resources, inadequate use of grassroots institutions, autonomy and priority misplacement. In affirmation, Odo (2014) added that, even though one of the criteria for creating local governments as provided by the 1976 local government reform guidelines was the issue of viability, most local governments created since then have come to be solely dependent on their statutory allocations from the federation account to run their affairs . Although the revenue accruing to the local governments from the federation account has been increasing over time, the cash flow has not been correspondingly constant. This is because the federal government revenue is dependent on the sale of crude oil at the international market. Since most of the local governments depend entirely on federal allocations to run their affairs, the fluctuations in the country’s earning from oil has adversely affected their performance in service delivery to the people at the community level.

He stated that corruption is one of the factors affecting the ability of governance to actualize community development. According to him, most government official sees official positions in and outside government as an avenue for self-enrichment. Thus, divert all the resources meant for the execution of their official duty to personal use, inflate contracts and in most cases, perpetuate underdevelopment in communities.

According to Odo (2014), the local governments suffer from constant whittling down of their powers by the state governments. The excessive control of some local governments by the state has reduced them to local administration or local arms of state administration. This has greatly impeded the performance of the local government in community development as they have to work according to the dictates of the state governments. This practice contravenes the spirit and the letter of the 1976 local government reforms, which stipulated in its guidelines that local governments should do precisely what the word government implies that is, governing at the local level (FRN , 1976).

Odo (2012) opined that, many development projects in the local governments failed due to non-involvement of the local communities in the conception, design and implementation of such projects. According to him, when development marginalizes the contributions of the primary beneficiaries, it could hardly make serious impact on the lives of the people due to the lack of continuity and sustainability.

In view of this, the major challenge facing governance in community development revolves around corruption and the lack of local government autonomy.

**Solutions to the challenges facing governance in community development**

Onodugo and Itodo (2016) stated that, the local government is the focus of government efforts at promoting community development. Thus, to ensure effective community development, the people must be adequately mobilized and ensure a purposeful combination of the local (peoples) effort/energies with that of government with the aim of improving socio-economic conditions and encouraging political participation.

In support of this assertion, Orapin (1996) opined that, one approach in creating sustainable community development is through giving the main actors (villagers living in the community) an equal opportunity to participate; think and plan their own future. This collaborate the need for effective leadership at the local level of government in order to harness the efforts of the community members towards their own development. Odo (2014) further stated the need for local government autonomy, adequate financial resources at the local level and adequate community participation if the challenges of governance encountered in community development are to be solved. Therefore, there is need to ensure autonomy and adequate participation and representation of community members in governance.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study anchored on the organizational theory because it effectively explained the relationship between governance and community development. This theory was propounded by James Gardner March. It has to do with organization (government) and their environment (the society) and how the organization (governance) affects the distribution of privileges in the society. Based on this theory, it is evident that governance influences the allocation of privileges in the society and thus, development.

Therefore, there is likelihood that a community will develop in the face of good governance because; privileges are more likely to be distributed evenly. But, when a community experiences bad governance there is likelihood that the community will be underdeveloped due to the unequal distribution of privileges.

Having taken this into cognizance, government was divided into three tiers; federal, state and local government; each taking charge of development in its jurisdiction, to ensure that governance gets to the every part of the country. The inability of each tier of government to manage governance at its level affects the entire system of governance and in most cases manifests in the lack of basic social amenities, poverty and other features of underdevelopment. Similarly, the inability of the local government to meet the needs of members of its populace hinders the participation of the people in governance and does not allow them to reap the dividends of democracy and good governance.

**Research Methodology**

Nigeria is the most populous country and one of the largest oil producers in the world. It is a federal state that thrives on democracy. This system of governance divides legislative power into central and regional government and ensures that governance reaches every part of the country. It also, allows the participation and representation of citizens in governance so as to effective identify and meet the basic needs of citizens; irrespective of ethnic group, tribe and geographical location.

However, while in some countries this system of government have succeeded in ensuring that governance reaches all parts of the country, in Nigeria the extent to which governance has influenced development in every part of the country calls for a thorough investigation. Thus, this study focused on examining the impact of governance to community development in Nigeria. Its analysis revolved around Nigeria; as a federal state whose legislative power is divided between the center and regional components, to allow every part of the country to benefit from governance.

This study adopted a desk-top method of data collection because; the study made use of secondary sources of data collection like; journals and internet materials. The data derived from this study were however, analysed using the thematic method of data analysis.

**Key findings**

**The extent to which the system of governance in Nigeria have influenced community development.**

The World Bank explains that the core of governance is the use of power to manage a nation’s affair and the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development.

Governance is good or bad. UNDP (1997) stated that, a system of governance is good when it is participatory, legitimate and acceptable to the people, transparent and accountable, promotes equity and equality, operates by the rule of law and is impartially enforced and is responsive to the needs of the people. This type of governance fosters community development as its driving force is an improvement in the collective well- being of the citizens through well-conceived, effectively implemented economic policies and human development programmes (Nwanegbo, Umara and Ikyase, 2017). However, anything short of this is known as bad governance and demeans community development. Based on this, Nigeria lack the characteristics of good governance but, has exhibited the characteristics of bad governance as opined by Wael.

**Challenges of governance in community development**

The challenges of governance in community development are poverty, inadequate financial resources, inadequate use of grassroots institutions, autonomy, corruption, lack of participation by community members and priority misplacement.

**Solutions to the challenges of governance in community development**

The establishment of local government autonomy, adequate financial resources at the local level and adequate community participation are solutions to the challenges of governance in community development.

**Discussion of findings**

Governance has to do with the manner in which power is used to manage the social and economic resources of a nation as well as the entire national affair to ensure the development of the nation. It is an art of governing a people within a given territory. This art could be bad or good; depending on its ability to uphold the rule of law, respond to the people’s needs and ensure transparency and accountability in the discharge of its duties.

Governance in Nigeria has been organized to respond to the people’s needs irrespective of their geographical location within the country by allocating power to the central and also, to the regional government. However in reality, Nigeria possesses all the indices of bad governance. These indices which include corruption, the lack of rule of law and local government autonomy etc. all of which manifests into a weak governance structure has failed to allow governance to extend its reach to every part of the country and ensure community development.

This has created a need to strengthen governance in the country by ensuring the autonomy and financial dependence of each tier of government especially, the local government. Also, there is need to eradicate corruption in every sphere of the country especially, the polity so as to ensure community development in the state.

**Conclusion/Recommendation**

Governance is the art of governing. It could be good or bad but, one significant feature that determines if it is good or bad is the government’s ability to respond to the people’s needs. Thus, the government of Nigeria is divided into, federal, state and local government; to ensure that governance transcends into communities; and communities are adequate represented and participate equally in governance.

By establishing the local government, government is narrowed down to the grass root and the needs of those in the grass root are identified and tackled. However, the most local government lack financial independence and thus, the autonomy to attend to the needs of the local government areas. In most cases, most decisions in the local government is influenced by the state government while in other cases, the local government is totally handicapped or completely scrapped thereby, frustrating the goal of establishment.

There is no doubt that corruption is endemic in the society but, the corruption in Nigeria’s polity has triggered the assumption that public offices are goldmines. Therefore, when individuals occupy these offices, they do little or nothing for the development of the community they represent but, divert numerous allocations meant for development to their personal purse.

In view of this, it is recommended that;

1. Corruption should be tackled in the country by enforcing strict penalties against corruption and orienting Nigerians on the duties of public office holders and the implications of corruption.
2. There is need for the financial independence of the local government. Allocations should be given directly to the local government so as to reduce and possibly, eliminate the dependence on state government.

The local government should explore ways of being autonomous and generating revenue internally within their local government area. This will help to eliminate the problem of financial dependence and grant the local government area autonomy.

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**ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS TOWARDS PEACEFUL**

**CO-EXISTENCE IN SITUATIONS OF RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE**

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**Abstract**

*Violence in the contemporary time is what any sound mind will prevent from erupting because of its unpalatable outcomes. In other words, religious violence which is a common problem to several nations of the world is expanding and governments of several nations are finding solution to its rise and are combating religious extremists every day. A great portion of the treasury is allotted to fighting terrorism especially in Nigeria but there is no empirical evidence to show decline nor hope of eradication. Apart from mainline terrorist organisations threatening the existence of individuals and society, Muslim-Christian clashes have erupted from different quarters in Nigeria. These situations are pathetic, and religious leaders need to play significant roles in forestalling the menace in the society since Christians and Muslims are interested in bringing these clashes to an end. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to expantiate on the ethical responsibilities of religious leaders to reduce interreligious and intrareligious crises in Nigeria. Hence, it is the thesis of this paper that if religious leaders rise to their ethical responsibilities as the spiritual leaders in the mosques, churches and communities, they can help broker longstanding peace in their communities and in the nation at large.*

**Keywords:** Ethics, Religious leaders, Religious violence, Peaceful Coexistence

**Introduction**

Religious violence is a global phenomenon in the contemporary time which has caused great pain in many hearts. The world is going through wars of different types with even advanced countries having their own shares, especially of terrorist attacks. These are not just terrorists but people who are referred to as religious fundamentalists with more being Islamic Terrorists.[[47]](#footnote-47) Nigeria as an African country is not exempted from religious violence which has been in existence for more than a century. Prominent among different types of religious violence is the Muslim-Christian violence which had been ongoing in the shape of terrorism directly and indirectly.[[48]](#footnote-48) In a direct way, terrorist organisations have been wreaking havocs on Nigerians in order to take control of the Nigerian nation and indirectly, different riots and clamours or injustices and have made concerns to arise from people with the Fulani herdsmen militia wreaking havocs with impunity on Nigerians and going unchecked in different geo-political zones of the country.[[49]](#footnote-49) This is a subtle way of making people who own the land to vacate their premises and farms for them to rule over them.

As these attacks have been on the rise till the time of writing this paper, Christians and some Muslims in several places have thought of the solution to bring the violence to an end but it has been escalating daily. It is important to mention that the Nigerian government have not done anything effective to stop the menace in the Nation. Therefore, there is need for religious leaders, especially Christian leaders to respond in a way that will broker peace among people of two major public religions in Nigeria. This researcher proposes that engaging in their ethical responsibilities in religious violence situation will forestall the negative aftermath of violence and cause peaceful coexistence in the nation. Therefore, this researcher will discuss the ethical responsibilities of religious leaders in religious violence situation by defining the concept of religious violence, causes of religious violence, ethical responsibilities of religious and leaders and give conclusion with recommendation.

**Concept of Religious Violence as a Social *cum* Ethical Issue**

Religious violence is a term that covers phenomena where religion is either the subject or the object of violent behaviour. Religious violence is violence that is motivated by, or in reaction to, religious precepts, texts, or the doctrines of a target or an attacker. It includes violence against religious institutions, people, objects, or events. Religious violence does not exclusively include acts which are committed by religious groups, instead, it includes acts which are committed against religious groups.[[50]](#footnote-50)

It is imperative to mention that in the Nigerian situation; the nature of religious violence has been ethno-religious. For many years now, ethno-religious violence has caused destruction of some Nigerian communities. It is believed by some scholars that the multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-linguistic and multi-cultural nature of the Nigerian society may also be serving as catalyst for the frequent occurrence of violence. According to IDEA, “Ethnic culture is one of the important ways people conceive of themselves, and culture and identity are closely intertwined.”[[51]](#footnote-51) This ought to be means of showcasing the beauty of God’s creation but reverse is the case with the unique cultures of the Nigerian ethnic groups. Nigerians wrongly exploited ethnic cultures to brand the country with tribalism, and manipulation of religious sentiments, and this, in addition to the perennial social tension and political instability as a result of ethnic sectarianism, has left a trail of destructive violence and even threatened the territorial integrity of Nigeria.[[52]](#footnote-52)

Over a decade now, the violence is in another form as the Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) insurgence that started their activities since its formation in Maiduguri. The challenges of violence in Nigeria has snowballed into a pattern that posed great danger to the corporate existence of the country as the country now seems to be left shaking at the edge of a sheer drop. Death tolls from these groups and other isolated attacks in different parts of the country is unbearable, and these attacks are reducing the economic strength of the nation on a daily basis. Recently, the Fulani-Herdsmen have joined these ethno-religious violence claiming lots of lives daily.[[53]](#footnote-53)

**Causes of Religious Violence**

There are many causes of religious violence in Nigeria, these causes will be examined in this section as:

1. Agitation for the Implementation of Sharia: Muslims have always agitated for complete implementation of Sharia in Nigeria. Some Muslims have lamented that many other Muslims have lost their cultural self-confidence due to Western influence. According to Boer, they decry that many of them find it difficult today to avoid thinking in Western terms of state and nation and to think in Islamic terms instead. They further complained that many Muslims blindly follow Western patterns of thought in the naive belief that everything which comes from the West must be more current than anything which Muslims could produce out themselves, and this conviction leads them to an irresponsible application of Western political concepts. [[54]](#footnote-54)

The conservative Muslims who hold this maintain traditional forms and stated that some Muslim’s practices are based not so much on the real values of Islam as on the social conventions and had over the centuries breed decadence. They hold that it is an “assumption” that Islam and the conventions of Muslim society are one and the same thing. They hold that conventions evolved in the course of Islamic history, both with regard to social habits and approach to the problem of state and government. This kind of assumption to them goes against Islam. Therefore, it would be the duty of an Islamic state to give permanence and legal sanction to all the social forms in which at present Muslims are living in. [[55]](#footnote-55)

In other words, these conservative Muslims agitate that the survival of Islam depends on the maintenance of the very conditions because the sterile rigidity of the Nigerian system and the ways some Muslims profess Islam now make it impossible for Muslins to live in accordance with the true tenets of Islam. Their unwillingness to concede the necessity of any change in Islamic social concepts and habits drives countless Muslims to a helpless imitation of the West. Their insistence that a modern Islamic state would have to be an exact replica of the historic precedents of Islamic past is apt to bring the very idea of the Islamic state into discredit and ridicule. Therefore, the sharia task is seen as formidable, and replacing common law with sharia involves a total overhaul of society and its structures.[[56]](#footnote-56)

They insist on the total application of sharia. It is not reducible, nor can it be compartmentalised. They hold that Muslims must stand firm and resist to the last man this effort of non-Muslims to suppress Muslims and eliminate sharia. They must be prepared to “lay down their lives and oppose all opponents of Allah.”[[57]](#footnote-57) They must also “reject any form of compromise. Muslims who oppose sharia in the Constitutional Amendments (CA)[[58]](#footnote-58) must take full responsibility for putting the entire nation to chaos.”[[59]](#footnote-59)

For accurate understanding of the Sharia debate, Onaiyekan gave this interpretation of Constitutional Amendments of 1977 at the NIREC Conference in 2000: The dispute was not whether the sharia should feature in the Constitution. The draft constitution, taking note of the existing situation, did make provisions for the sharia. The debate was more on the extent and scope of the sharia in the constitution. The supporters of the sharia wanted it to be parallel law to the laws of the land with jurisdiction right up to the Supreme Court level. Others, mainly Christians, felt that there should be just one law in the nation and that the sharia should have status which the draft constitution also allowed for the native law and customs courts. In between these two positions, the great debate disorganised and almost stalled the proceedings of the conference as members walked out of the conference. Eventually, in a typical Nigerian way a compromise was arrived at.[[60]](#footnote-60)

2. Ethnic-Turned Religious Violence: The nexus between religion and violence is evident through the key stakeholders’ involvement in conflicts. In Plateau State for example, the two main groups involved in conflicts are the Berom-Afizere-Anaguta (BAA), who deem themselves as the indigenes of Plateau State and practice Christianity, and the Hausa/Fulani, who are identified as settlers and are mainly Muslims. There is a notion (real or perceived) by the latter that they are on an unequal footing, as they are subjected to discriminatory acts and excluded from opportunities, including access to land, educational benefits and participation in the political institutions controlled by the ‘indigenous’ state governments.[[61]](#footnote-61) The role of religious actors and institutions in contributing to conflict is a strong indicator of how religion has been used to cause division in communities and encourage groups to engage in religious attack.

At the Catholic Bishops Conference in 2002, it was noted that religion, just like ethnicity, has been used by both religious and ethnic leaders to achieve self-centred and self-seeking agendas.[[62]](#footnote-62) The Conference noted that: Some religious leaders control the minds of their adherents who are often ignorant and needy, exploiting them for selfish advantage. The God preached by some religious leaders seems not to be the God of justice and love, but an intolerant God who fosters hatred and division.[[63]](#footnote-63) In his report in Plateau State in 2009, Ostien noted the view that pastors informed church members not to vote for Muslim candidates during the local government elections of 2008.[[64]](#footnote-64) Furthermore, there have been reports of ‘religious militancy’ by both Muslims and Christians in the State as mosques and churches have been used to store weapons.[[65]](#footnote-65)[[66]](#footnote-66)

3. The Presence of long-standing root causes: The politically and economically imbalanced systems have remained a major limitation to successful conflict management and longer term conflict transformation efforts. These are deep-rooted issues that have created despair and dissatisfaction and fuelled deep grievances easily triggered by violence and more exclusionary acts. As Sisk notes, Nigeria as a whole now needs to move from a place of “religious balancing in its state-society relations and address more effectively the underlying causes of media insensitivities, marginalisation, and managing disputes over resources and development.”[[67]](#footnote-67) In the specific case of Plateau State, there are underlying feeling of inequality, favouritism, injustice and uneven development which are making religious actors and institutions deal merely with surface problems and only put a temporary lid on conflict triggers and escalation.

4. Attempt to Spread Islam through Jihad: In Arabic “*jihad*” means to struggle, strive, exert, or fight, depending on context. The original religious meaning was to “struggle against one's evil inclinations” or “an exertion to convert unbelievers.” Since the days of Muhammad, Muslims have struggled to improve the Islamic community and to bring all people into Islam (submission to God). Surah 22:78 states: “And strive hard in (the way of) Allah, (such) a striving is due to him... Therefore, keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and hold fast by Allah” (SHAKIR).

Furthermore, the following Surahs delineates the instruction of Allah: “The (true) believers are those only who believe in Allah and his Messenger and afterward doubt not, but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allah. Such are the sincere” (Sura 49:15, PICKTHALL), “Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth not aggressors. And slay them wherever ye find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter” (Sura 2:190-91a, PICKTHALL),[[68]](#footnote-68) “Fight those who believe not in Allah, nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and his Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued” (Sura 9:29, YUSUF ALI).

Moreover, a Muslim who dies performing jihad is guaranteed salvation and instant entrance into Paradise. These martyrs do not have to wait for the Day of Judgment to hear if their good works outweigh their bad. The Quran states that: “And (as for) those who are slain in the way of Allah, he will by no means allow their deeds to perish. He will guide them and improve their condition. And cause them to enter the garden which he has made known to them (Sura 47:4-6, SHAKIR).

**Ethical Responsibilities of Religious Leaders**

The problem of religious violence is a social problem that the church and other religious leaders must not shy away from but must be combatted for peaceful co-existence. Since it is a social problem, a social ethical approach is germane to respond to such issue in the contemporary world, especially in the Nation Nigeria. Social ethics is the systematic reflection on the moral dimensions of social structures, systems, issues, and communities. Social ethics can be thought of as a branch of ‘applied ethics,’ the application of ethical reasoning to social problems.[[69]](#footnote-69) Individuals, especially religious leaders are accountable for fulfilling their civic duty, as their actions will benefit the whole of society.[[70]](#footnote-70) After reflecting on multifaceted causes of religious violence especially in Nigeria, the researcher will give logical roles that are ethically right for religious leaders to engage in for peace to be established because the role of religion for national development can never be underestimated. Religious leaders should therefore:

1. Help create synergy between religious institutions and faith-based organisations. In a discourse about religious institutions and their roles in crises management, a distinction then must be made between religious institutions (churches and mosques) and autonomous Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs). Principally, religious institutions focus on providing teaching, encouragement, and preaching the message of faith, divine purpose, reconciliation and forgiveness. Religious leaders are important stakeholders because they are trusted by the people. Also, they shape the views and actions of their members, raise awareness on various political and social issues, and challenge their followers, which of course includes political leaders. They also represent their religious groups at peacebuilding meetings and are involved in peace work in their respective congregations and communities.

It is equally important to note the role of religious leaders and institutions in broader relief and support efforts. For instance, more churches should be involved in distributing first aid, household goods, medication, food and clothing to displaced persons. Church leaders should further provide counselling to victims who have lost relatives, houses, and businesses. Churches with large premises should volunteer them as camps while others can donate resources to various local NGOs.[[71]](#footnote-71)

Congregations through their leaders should also provide psychological, spiritual and material support to victims of violence, particularly to fellow members. Similarly, mosques can distribute clothing, provided sanctuary for displaced people, distribute food and other relief materials, pay for the medical treatment of victims, use sermons to pacify victims of violence, and sponsor the carrying out of search and rescue missions. Without any doubt, religious leaders and institutions have become and should continue to be a central component of peacebuilding and conflict management efforts. While inter-religious tensions and violence exist in the country, positive working relations between both Muslims and Christians play out through creating a synergy between religious institutions and faith-based organisations.[[72]](#footnote-72)

2. Avoid discord amongst religious leaders and religious institutions. The lack of unity between Christian and Muslim leaders has, on many occasions, impeded conflict management efforts. For example, as reported by Smock, during the work of the Inter-Faith Mediation Centre (IMC) in Nigeria, the initial interactions between leaders of both warring communities were tense and confrontational, making it harder to resolve the underlying issues. By the third day, both Muslim and Christian leaders apologised and sought the forgiveness of each other. Linked to this is the disharmony and rift within religions. For example, in April 2010, Pandang Yamsat (President of COCIN) observed that the crisis in Plateau State lingered on because of a lack of consensus among Christian leaders.[[73]](#footnote-73) This statement was made in light of the contradictory public statements made by many Christian leaders. Ashafa and Wuye also noted issues like intolerance, ignorance, lack of true love, denominational differences, sectionalism, leadership tussles, and a lack of unity among Christian and Muslim communities as contributing to the slow pace of peacebuilding efforts in the country.[[74]](#footnote-74)

3. Organise formal dialogue. Formal dialogue has become a recognised feature of Christian-Muslin relations, particularly since Vatican II and the establishment of the Secretariat for non-Christians, the Unit on Faith and Witness Dialogue with people of Living Faiths in the World Council of Churches and the Islam in Africa Project (proposed name from 1987 Project for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa). This type of dialogue has taken place at different levels with varying results. A variety of types or categories are discernible. For example, in 2001, the state government set up an inter-religious council made up of ten Christians and ten Muslims involved in peacebuilding initiatives across Plateau State. This body remains active and continues to contribute to interreligious dialogue between adherents of the two dominant religions in the state. This is an effort towards achieving a peaceful coexistence in the state and the country at large.[[75]](#footnote-75)

4. Organise interreligious debates. Organising public friendly religious debates is a right step if properly managed by religious leaders in the country. In contrast to the opinion of Von Sicard that, “the least constructive, if not downright destructive relationships have been those consisting of open debates. It is questionable if they can be included under the term dialogue,”[[76]](#footnote-76)this researcher opines that open debates with friendly rules will create a good ground for freedom to analyse beliefs and make people decide. These debates are above all symbolised by apologetic and polemic exchanges. The debates give room for explanation of misquoted and misunderstood sacred scriptures of Muslims and Christians. They do attract both public and media attention and not always do proponents and participants pursue a monological line of approach. They are primarily intent on making their own point, and though they hardly ever hear what the other is saying as opined by Von Sicard.[[77]](#footnote-77) Therefore, a debate with good and friendly conditions have always ended well.[[78]](#footnote-78)

5. Form local groups for interreligious understanding. Much more fruitful have been the many dialogue groups that have sprung up locally around the continent. Some of them have evolved in crisis situations where a group of Christians and Muslims have had to get together to tackle natural or other disasters. Others have come into being through the initiatives of some dedicated Christians or Muslims who discerned the potential value to people of faith to face challenges by sharing their respective religious insights through dialogue. Such groups meet on a fairly regular basıs, usually once a month or once a quarter to discuss and share their respective insights regarding an agreed topic. Most of them have discovered the need to begin with topics relating to economic, educational, political or social issues. Once the participants have come to know and trust one another, they move on to religious and theological issues.[[79]](#footnote-79)

Many Christians and Muslims are not yet ready to discuss theological questions with one another in an open, prejudiced way. At the same time, it should be remembered that particularly in Africa, theological issues and questions are an integral part of life. Not to discuss these would be unnatural. As men and women of faith, Christians and Muslims are longing to share at this deeper level. At a different level, but also local are, the dialogue groups which have evolved in intellectual and academic circles. These are often, but not always, the result of study and research in comparative religion and mutual desire by Christians and Muslims to discuss aspects of their respective faiths.

6. Organising Conferences. Conferences to be organised fall into various categories depending on whether they are local, regional or continental, and whether they have been arranged through local or international efforts. Sometimes, these conferences are ad hoc, one off events. At other times, they evolve into a series. It is important to distinguish such conferences of Christians and Muslims from those which have also been held in Africa but only for adherents of one of the traditions.

**a) Local and regional conferences**

In the forefront of these conferences are those which have been the outcome of the efforts of a religious organisation in Northern Nigeria, where through local efforts they have become a tradition. A similar tradition is evolving in other countries.[[80]](#footnote-80)

**b) International conferences**

Under this category comes: 1) those conferences which have been arranged by the World Council of Churches such as the one in Legon, Ghana in July 1974, which had as its theme, “The Unity of God and the Community of Mankind. Cooperation between African Muslims and African Christians in work and witness.” Or the one in Porto Novo in Benin in March 1986 which had as its theme “Religion and Responsibility”. 2) those conferences which have been arranged by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation such as the one in Yaounde, Cameroun in February 1983, which had as its theme “Development and Solidarity: Joint responsibility of Muslims and Christians.” Or the one in Mohammedia, Morocco in April 1985, which had as its theme “Education and Value Systems,” those conferences which have been arranged by the Centre of Economic Studies and Research at the University of Tunis, Tunisia such as the one in Tunis, Tunisia in November 1974, which had as its theme “Muslim and Christian conscience in the face of development problems.”[[81]](#footnote-81)

**Conclusion**

This paper has expounded the ethical responsibilities of religious leaders in religious crisis situation for peaceful coexistence by explaining the concept of religious violence, enumerating the causes of religious violence and listing and explaining different ethical roles that religious leaders must play in forestalling or settling crises which are religious. Since violence or crisis does not yield any positive result, it is important that every effort be made to forestall it so that peace can reign in the nation Nigeria and the world at large. Life is better lived in peace than in chaos. Therefore, Christian leaders especially should emphasise peace on every ground or at any opportunity given while other Muslim leaders cooperate to ensure the humanity of individuals are not violated in the name of religion. This can practically be done through organisation of interreligious leaders’ meeting within embattled communities to work on solutions together. It is the opinion of this writer that Christians and Muslims can live in peace only if the two parties engage in dialogue determinedly.

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**INTERROGATING NGUGI’S MANIFESTO FOR RENASCENT AFRICA IN THE 21st CENTURY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION**

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**Abstract**

*This paper will examine how Ngugi Wa Thiong'o effectively deploys his literary and stylistic manifestos to fight western colonisation, exploitation, imperialism and other forms of socio-political hindrances that inhibit Africa’s sustainable development and transformation. In the 21st century, Africa still struggles with multifaceted existentialist and fundamental crises that present urgent needs for critical engagements. The realities at the core of Africa's growth and development dilemma garner intellectual interrogations and activism linked to her problems of identity, culture and sustainable development. These crucial issues as stated above are linked to the problems of colonisation, capitalism, religion, culture, exploitation and the language question, all of which hinder Africa’s development and transformation agenda. Consequently, there is need to interrogate these issues because they engender poverty amidst plenty; induced by endemic corruption and exploitation manipulated by self-serving political elites who are less concerned about the public interest or national progress. Africa’s development conundrum is complicated by the political and cultural dependence of the colonised on the colonisers. Using the qualitative descriptive approach and drawing on the postcolonial literary theory as a parameter, this paper anchors its contextual paradigm on Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's artistic thoughts, whose Pan-African intellectual ideal as portrayed in his works continues to elicit discourse on the need for Africa’s socio-political and cultural emancipation. The paper concludes by echoing Achebe's advocacy that the African writer must see literature as a fundamental tool for articulating contemporary realities for positive change and the way out of the present socio-economic perversions that afflict Africa.*

**Keywords**: Ngugi's Manifesto, sustainable development, transformation, cultural

emancipation, corruption, exploitation, 21st century Africa

**Introduction**

Contemporary African society is bedevilled by huge unresolved problems of poverty, foreign-dominated economy, urbanisation, disintegration, inequalities, violent conflicts, colonisation, neo-colonisation and political instabilities. Plagued by these crises, the continent tends to play second fiddle and occupies a subservient position in the comity of nations and global relevance. Ngugi Wa Thiong'O, like other Pan-African scholars, such as Marcus Garvey, Cheikh Anta Diop, Web Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and Biodun Jeyifo, among others, have continued to powerfully resonate their voices with defiant outrage by engaging these issues and condemning Western domination, colonialisation, neo-colonialism and cultural imperialism that have kept Africa in bondage. They criticise white supremacy, dominance, oppression, human rights violation, loss of identity and dignity of majority of Africans as well as the wanton looting of natural and human resources that lead to the stagnation of development in Africa.

African writers utilise literature as a dissident tenor in confronting and dissipating their venomous anger against bad leadership, moral decay, inequity, violence, poverty, colonialism and exploitation. As prophets of their people and the conscience of society, African writers stand against oppression by lending their voices in disrupting deadly venom against forms of cannibalistic comprador bourgeoisie and their cohorts. Consequently, Niyi Osundare affirms that African literature is "martyrdom"; that its fire illuminates the ambience of change and transformation (2007:8). Drawing on Osundare, Chinua Achebe further contends that Africa imbibes foreign standards foist on her by the West due to colonial experience. This makes her lose touch with African culture. Hence, the value of self-rule got by her independence erodes her. This makes it difficult for the continent to fully actualize her potentials in terms human and natural resources even after many years of independence. He opines that Western writers promote their cultural values while they nullify or down grade other people’s literatures and values (1965, 1977). Disillusioned African writers are compelled to use their literature inspired by contemporary issues to condemn social vices, Western intrusive syndrome, white domination, stereotyped image and imagining of Africa and her citizens as second class. In this realism, Ngũgĩ' Wa Thiong'o's writings serve as a rhythm of change against unacceptable social practices. Hence his cultural dynamism, social and political stance right from the inception of his literary career make it imperative for him to pursue Africa's interests because colonialism, neo-colonialism and Western capitalism serve as catalysts to the growth and development of Africa.

Ngugi, for instance, condemns oppression, exploitation, colonialism, capitalism, and all forms of Western intrusiveness that hinder Africa’s development. This paper seeks a re-modelling of African thought in line with Ngugist socio-political, economic, cultural and stylistic paradigm towards enunciating as well as sharpening a revolutionary path to true independence; to bring about sustainable development as envisioned by Ngugi. In the course of his career, Ngugi tends to become overtly unapologetic, stringent, dogmatic, ideologically and revolutionary more committed, as he progresses from being an advocate of cultural renaissance to a revolutionary icon. Ojaide acknowledges the importance of literature in Africa of the contemporary experience. He writes that literature has been in the vanguard of liberation of African contemporary society and negative forces that plagued the continent and that it remains a vibrant form of opposition against the excesses of political leaders (2007:ix)). Considering Ngugi’s radical stance on issues that affect Africa, there is need to critically examine his growth, progression, development, activism, concerns, ideology and literary preoccupation from his earlier works to the later; using some of his works as textual references. This paper therefore examines how Ngugi Wa Thiong'o uses his literary and stylistic manifestos to pursue Africa's development agenda in fighting imperialism, colonialism and other forms of hindrances to Africa’s sustainable development. This paper will therefore look at how effectively Ngugi manipulates and deploys his literary praxis to project, pursue and advance his vision and ideals. His vision, the content of his works, policies and strategies which he projects, applies and embodies in his quest for what he believes in are what this paper refers to as the “Ngugi's manifesto". They are concretised in the polarisation of the whites and the blacks, the haves and the have-nots, the rich and the poor individuals and nations, the colonisers and the colonised, the capitalists and the masses and the class differences that exist particularly in Africa, and generally in the world today. Thus, his works constantly mirror the synergy and the nexus that exists between history, literature, culture and Africa’s contemporary realities.

**Conceptual Framing: Literature, Development and Transformation.**

This paper will conceptually examine the social disparity, gross human rights violations, exploitation, power tussles, as well as the theme of self-image and imagining of roles or class differences, consciousness, identity issues and all that are fundamental to development in the contemporary society. The reality in Africa today calls for literature of praxis, which reflects the prevailing circumstances where there seems to be no place for art for art's sake or literature for entertainment. Art should interrogate and chronicle events beyond a display of esthetics to anchor awareness for positive change in the society. In this vein, Ngugi Wa Thiong’O, a leading light in the argument contends that literature does not grow in a vacuum. He see art as giving impetus, shape, direction and even areas of concern by social, political and economic realities in a given society. Today, the relationship between literature and these other forces cannot be ignored in Africa (1982: xv-xvi). Hence, African writers use their literature to express their aspirations, disillusionment and unfortunate historical circumstances.

Postcolonial literary theory critically examines historical realities of colonial rule and imperialism in the former colonies. Ashcroft et al. (1989:2) recognises the intersection of race, ethnicity and nationality in literature in developing societies. They argue that many people who live in the world today are shaped by their colonial experiences and that culture is important in issues of development (qtd in Chris Barker: 2008:275).Chris Barker a post-colonial scholar also believes that colonialism still exists up till today since its impacts are still being felt on the colonised, despite years of political independence (2008:275). Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin refer to the term as the practice of imperialism right from the beginning of colonisation to date because of the colonial occupation of the colonised (1989:2). Postcolonial discourse therefore includes works produced in countries that are colonised by other countries and written mainly by writers of colonised territories.

Ngugi's manifesto reflects his ethnocentric views. As a non-conformist and pan-African protest writer, his primary objective is to decolonise and transform Africa for the better. Social transformation, integration and the development of Africa must go hand in hand with human rights, well-being, self-respect, self-esteem, revival of African cultural values to tackle colonial mentality and domination. Hence, quite early in his writing career he called on African writers to denounce English language as a medium of expression. He vowed to publish in his Gikuyu language, because he believes that language is intrinsically tied to the mind, culture, domination and development (Ngugi, 1986:4-16). Language is perceived as a weapon of exploitation. The continuous use of the English language by African writers represents an endless practice of imperialism and other forms of domination by the former colonies because there are negative psychological, cultural and physical impacts inflicted on the victims through the use of English language. The novelist, therefore points out that as long as global capitalism remains unchecked, peace, justice, fairness and equity which make for progress and development will continue to elude Africa and her to remain socio-politically and economically stagnated and as well as culturally annihilated.

**Ngugi and Cultural Liberation**

Ngugi works towards cultural revival and the synthesis of the indigenous African language and its English counterpart. He believes that the greatest weapon of destruction directed at the Africans by the imperialists is the cultural missiles unleashed on them to annihilate their traditional values and identities (1986: 3-7). This tendency runs through the gamut of his fictional works. His first novel *Weep Not Child* focuses on family, colonial domination, indigenous cultures, and the appropriation of Kenyan land by the Europeans. These necessitated the emergence of the Mau Mau insurrection. The novel captures the stratification of the Kenyans who were brutally balkanised and deprived of their ancestral homes in the nineteen fifties. At the onset of his career, Ngugi's language was directed at liberating the Kenyans populist who were kept in a form of captivity by the Europeans. He believes that the liberation of Kenyans or any other African for that matter, would be incomplete without language freedom because language and development are intrinsically interwoven and mutually exclusive. At the early stage of Ngugi's writing, he reflected on colonization and saw that there was an urgent need to free Africa from western domination and to initiate cultural revival while valorising the Africans, their art and civilisation. This was the period when Europe stole African arts, sculptures, crafts and treasures to enrich their museums, national galleries and beautify their homes and environments. At this stage, Ngugu's works draw on a special signification and connotation because they touch on the need to revive the dignity of Africans, their culture and aesthetics if meaningful development will take place in the continent.

*The* *River Between* captures the crises and community rivalry that took place between the Kikuyus of Kenya and the missionaries in early post-independence Kenya. The text narrates the sordid tale of the exploitation of Africans by Whites and the negative effects it has on African culture. The Honia River, which separates the two communities signifies the difference in the doctrines of the Makuyu and the Kameno communities. While Kameno upholds and imbibes the traditional religion, the Makuyu embrace Christianity which was newly introduced by the missionaries. Thus, the novel reflects the different values which exist between the people. *The Black Hermit* is structured to restore African dignity, culture and aesthetics. This novel is replete with simplicity and clarity of expression without obscurity because of the urgent need to reach out to the people, considering the exigencies of the time and to revive the African renaissance in line with the need for development and transformation. Consequently, he deploys the simple English language resources and rich African linguistic features, modes and mannerisms of expression in form of hybridity to make his point. The technique of simplicity of expression manifests and corresponds to his age, as a young writer and the level of his growth, maturity and development of the novelist as a fictional writer.

This also is reflected in the simplicity, naivety and innocence of some of the narrators/characters like Njeroge and Waiyaki in *Weep Not* *Child,* which indicates and corresponds to the young writer's mastery of language and creativity. This is appropriate because the tenet and dictum of literary decorum, propriety, literary theory and criticism stipulate that the level of style in a work of art should be suitable and tally to the age of the speaker, the occasion and the dignity of the literary genre. Ngugi's style is exemplified in both Njeroge and Waiyaki in *Weep Not Child*. Here his age, growth and development as a fictional writer match the naivety and innocence of the characters and the author's level of linguistic proficiency, which symbolises Ngugi's literary formation, ability and growth. His use of language goes beyond this to mirror the locality and the setting in which the work of art is placed; mirroring the East African environment of the colonial era and time. His diction, phrases and sentence structures imitate a childlike expression and character. Also, the influence of oral tradition is displayed as he calls up the people's creation myth and prophetic legends in his assertion that the land is given to them to rule and till (28). Ngugi further authenticates African wisdom, tradition and mythology by delving into his people's creation myth: "This land I give to you, o man and woman. It is yours to rule and till, you and your posterity" (2). This is a linguistic transliteration from his Gikiyu native tongue. Swahili words such as "Uhuru" and "Harambee" are also utilised in *A Grain of Wheat*. They authenticate and reflect the setting and environment where the work of art is placed, reflecting the environment and setting the tone for anti-colonial revolution. The use of African rhythm and melody is also deployed. Here the narrative is straightforward with short sentence structures concentrated on core linguistic devices which are further developed in his later works.

His exploration of traditional linguistics, grammatical modes and the correctness of the English language is not overlooked even in the shortest sentences. For example, in *Secret Lives,* he dolves into same linguistic capacity and mastery. He writes: "I found her huddled in a dark corner while the drying embers of a few pieces of wood in the fireplace flickered" (*SL*, 16). Drawing from his background he displays the rich value and essence of traditional African womanhood: "Alhata! A barren woman" (*SL,* 4). This shows that barrenness is not accepted and that it is frowned at in traditional African society. Thus, Alhata is known and addressed as the barren woman. His novels at this stage are built with both short and long sentences, but short and straight simple sentences are in the mainstream. To achieve clarity of expression he deploys a variety of English language structure with direct speech patterns and effective dialogue. In *Weep Not, Child*, the dialectical East African English Language variety readily comes into play derived from its rich African proverbs: "The Kikuyus said, "We shall not give the hyena twice", but the white man has reversed the tribal law" which is "A tooth for a tooth" (30). Here he exploits cultural forms and superstition which comes into play: "A man should not be too happy in the morning, it's an ill omen" (28). This is also true of *The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat*. In *A Grain of* *Wheat,* the novelist portrays different levels of betrayals and makes use of sentence structures which tend to be longer and the dialectical grammar drops as he imbibes more creative competence and easy and mastery command of the language for communicative exigencies.

*Petals of Blood* intersects with different historical experiences to depict capitalist exploitation of the proletariat, cultural imperialism, racial discrimination and the role of religion in the African people's struggle for independence. It condemns the sad reality of the disintegration and disillusionment of African society brought about by modern civilisation through the instrumentality of Western education, politics and religion as tools of colonialism. Education and religion play a great role in Western civilisation, not just in Kenya but also in other parts of Africa during the colonial period. *Petals of Blood* and *Devil on The Cross* mark Ngugi's paradigm shift in artistic accomplishment, almost with a striking contrast and difference from his earlier novels to meet the exigencies of contemporary East African society. As a humanist, his linguistic expression portrays these tendencies and instincts. In these novels, he subtly takes over the narration and sometimes uses his major characters to take over the storytelling. He uses for example, Munira, in *Petals of Blood* and the traditional narrator in *Devil on the Cross* through characters like Wariinga and Gatuira to narrate their own experiences and stories. The novelist injects his authorial voice for an outburst of explicit and stringent social protest by developing his characters as mouthpieces for revolutionary upheavals: "They called themselves wakombozi, or the society of one world liberation and they say its Stanley Mathenge… returned from Ethiopia to complete the war he and Kimathi started" (*Petals,* 344).

In *Petals,* Ngugi makes consistent dramatic and incisive references to revolts and revolutionary groups, personages, freedom fighters and warriors: "New Mathenges, new Koitalels…New Kimathis…New Piny Owachas …these were born every day among the people" (344). In *Devil on the Cross*, the novelist's quest to effect revolutionary ethos is not only utilised, it is also dramatised for effectiveness in engendering revolts: “Warringa left the room. People gave way before her…she felt an anger she had not felt as she killed Kihaaki and Gitutu …Wariinga walked on, without once looking back. But she knew...that the hardest struggle of her life's journey lay ahead” (254) for change to take place. This is targeted at inciting the public to revolt against the exploiters, colonial domination and forced labour that undermine and subjugate Africans. He uses Wariinga as a symbol to signal the war: “I shall save many other people, whose lives (she represents) will not be ruined by words of honey and perfume” (253). Frantz Fanon, just like Ngugi sometimes advocates violent revolutionary phenomenon and tendencies to bring about changes in the society (95-100). The above references are meant to pave way for liberation, revolution, African renaissance and the restoration of statehood and unity of the African nation for development and transformation.

At this stage of his development, the novelist presents his story in a chronological order, unlike his later works where he deploys effective techniques of forward and backward narrative movements found in both *Petals of Blood* and *A Grain of Wheat* to tell his stories. The *Devil on the Cross* is written with a lot of flashbacks. Ngugi's use of Kikuyu and Swahili words, praise worship, transliteration and sentence structure in these later works do not just reflect his background, it also justifies his humanistic and nationalistic nuances because people's thoughts and psyche can be controlled by the language they use. Hence Ngugi rejects the English language for the "African language", in form of linguistic hybridity and thought pattern because he believes that as long as the former language bestrides the latter, colonialists will exert consistent authority, tyranny and exploitation on the Africans. With this, he tries to "decolonise" his English language to achieve something new.

**Ngugi on Mental Liberation and Decolonisation of Africa**

*Devil on the Cross* is a metaphor for Ngugi's cultural and linguistic manifesto. It is a paradigm shift in his stylistic preoccupation aimed at evolving cultural nationalism and Pan-Africanist approach to decolonise African from cultural imperialism, neo-colonialism, global capitalism and religious bigotry. Using abundant satire and criticism, Ngugi impresses on his readers that Christianity and capitalism are tools for exploitation and oppression. He ridicules and lampoons *'colomentality*' and radiates an epic heroic quality and a composition of sophisticated craftsmanship in a deliberate attempt to imitate African narrative form. To this end, he uses a lot of irony, sarcasm, allegory, parable, satire, description, flashback, dialogue and drama to persuade his readers to accept his view points. He also makes use of extensive songs and proverbs to tell his story. *I Will Marry When I Want*, *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* and *Petals of* *Blood* largely exploit these oral forms targeted at stirring up protests to decolonise his readers and bring about revolution. Kimathi, the protagonist in *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* addresses his audience aimed at stirring up arms to upturn oppression and exploitation so that Africa will utilise her human and natural resources for development. Ngugi injects his authorial voice to urge the people to revolt. In this regards he admonishes them to "go; / organise in your homes/ organise in the mountains …kindred blood is he/who is in the struggle. /Kenyan masses shall be free" (83-84). Kimathi is portrayed as a symbol of a reflective revolutionary leader characterized by defiance, courage and boldness. Kimathi also represents an image of Ngugi's visionary leader and freedom fighter.

His use of symbolism and imagery is meant for representation, connotation, repression and contrasts. In *The River Between*, for example, he uses these literary devices to connote struggle, conflicts, characterisation and to represent old and new values as evident in his earlier novels where Kameno and Makuyu are symbolic. Honia also represents the river of life. But in his later works, Ngugi uses symbolism and abundant imagery to satirise, protest and polarize. This is targeted at stirring up rebellion. In *Devil on* *the Cross*, the dramatic feast which took place at the cave ridicules exploiters whom he portrays as thieves and robbers. He achieves this epic style by engaging in the use of exaggerated exploits of satire and sarcasm, especially in portraying the psyche of the exploiters which also shows the depth of corruption, moral depravity and selfishness displayed by this group of people. To make them look more despicable, the thieves/robbers are made to speak in obscene and demoniac languages to portray that they are morally bankrupt. The mockery of an international organisation as a syndicate and cohort of thieves and robbers is satirised in Ndaaya Wa Kahuiria's statement: “a thief is a thief. There should be no thieves with special privileges” (95). To show that they are morally empty, he writes using obscene language, "A cunt is not salt or soap that will dissolve or disappear after use" (110). The use of African didacticism, proverbs and rhetorical questions are present in much of Ngugi's works. This is intensified and elaborate in his later works which are effective in stimulating the critical faculties of the workers, laborers and the oppressed to help convey his political intent and to bring about change.

The great journey to the city and the dramatic encounter with the community of the rich people in the Blue Hills area in *Devil on the Cross* is laced with ironies, contradictions and vices which expose the whole event for laughter as a form of criticism. First, it is the familiar denial, "no works" and the rich priest leaves the starving to feed on the bread and fish of Jesus. Next is the rich who fainted at the sight of seeing the hungry villagers and they have to pursue them with gunshots. Wanja is forced to submit to Kimeria's dehumanisation once again (103). Ngugi exposes this capitalist tendencies to disparage the negative side of Christianity which he sees as akin to capitalism. This is because Christian ethics are used by some privileged church leaders to penetrate the human mind and brainwash the masses for perpetual exploitation and oppression. In *Petals of* *Blood*, Kenya is divided into dichotomies. The rich capitalists are captured as thieves, predators, greedy, callous and conniving. The peasant victims represented by Wanja, Abdulla, Krega and Nyakinyua on the other hand are depicted as individuals who fall prey to a modern capitalist world they cannot change.

When the capitalist bourgeois exploiters, Mzigo, Chui and Kimeria were murdered in Wanja's brothel, Ngugi was vivid in capturing the irony. The police investigator who represents the establishment, sympathises with the assassination and the newspapers captured the news thus:

*A man, believed to be a trade union agitator has been held after a leading Industrialist and two educationists, well-known as the African Directors of the internationally famous Theng'eta Breweries were last night burnt to death in Ilmorog*. (*Petals,* 5).

This is a public indignation of the suppression of legitimate aspirants. With this irony, Ngugi presents the exploiters for laughter as legitimate aspirants are suppressed by the public, but ironically, it is the other way round. Ngugi’s castigation portrays the nature of society, where exploiters and their cohorts are exonerated by forces of the law and the state. The Kenyans who are in position of authority and the Western capitalist business bourgeoisie connive to exploit Kenyan peasants and traders. Chui, Mzigo and Kimeria represent this group. The capitalists seize their ancestral lands which is their heirloom and force them out of business.

Ngugi's ironical twist of the Christian belief and mythology mocks the faith. The Christians pervert the ethics of the religion for exploitation and selfish reasons. This satire is loud, clear, demeaning and deafening. In *Devil on the Cross*, the deployment of bible parables is intended to ridicule Christian concepts and deceit of good and bad, virtue and vice, God and the devil, as preached by the faithful. The biblical mythology of the parable of the talent and the ironic reference to the crucifixion myth is used by Ngugi to impress on his readers that Christianity, as practiced by the West, is pretentious, fake and exploitative. He displays a constant scorn and laughable jab thrown at the biblical devil and God and the concept of the good and the bad in this novel. This irony captures Ngugi's disgust against social disparities that come with Christianity. The oppressors and traitors are portrayed as insensitive, callous and inhuman. This exposition captures some of the ungodly ethics epitomised in the religion. This is why Ngugi creates characters and personages who represent the hypocrisy of the faith. In *Petals of Blood*, Rev. Jerrod Brown and Kioi, and Ndugiri in *I Will Marry When I Want* are types portrayed in this light.

This is evident in the entire spectrum of his fictional works, but there is a departure in intensity and tone from his earlier to his later works. In his earlier works, there seems to be a mere denunciation and use of sarcasm to condemn the faith and maybe with a touch of sympathy. For example, in *Weep Not* *Child,* Njoroge's faith in Christianity could not save him. In a subtle satire, Ngugi asserts laughably, "but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (102). The narrator as a youth is naïve, immature and innocent. This blurs his real critical perception of the religion. On the other hand, in his later novels, he deploys Christian irony to convey the impression that he has lost sympathy with the faith and so his condemnation of Christianity is high and unreserved. To convey this effectively, he makes use of ironical statements. Ndugire in *I Will Marry* *When I want* recounts how "good" the Lord has been nice to him: "Now you see I did not take out even a cent from my pocket and yet I am milling cows, harvesting tea, and praising the Lord" (46). Jezebel acknowledges that the “tractor driver is very mature /…He does not argue back/… He just believes in hard work/praising God all the time" (*I Will Marry*, 169). This is a kind of oganised robbery where they exploit the people and the state and claim that it is the fruit of their labour.

In *Devil on the Cross*, characters are stereotyped to ridicule the church. Thus, Boss Kihara in *Devil on the Cross*, Kioi, Jezebel and Kuwanditika in *I Will Marry When I Want* are stereotypes. Humour and laughter as means of caricature are extensively used in *Devil on the Cross*. Describing the physique of a robber or thief who represents the exploiters, Ngugi states:

Kihaahu was a tall, slim fellow: he had *long legs, long arms, long fingers,a long neck and a long mouth. His mouth was shaped like the beak of the kingstock: long, thin and sharp. His chin, his face, and his head formed a cone. Everything about him indicated leanness and sharp cunning. That day, Kihaahu was dressed in black-and-grey striped trousers, a black tailcoat, a white shirt and a black tie. Standing on the platform, he looked like a 6-feet praying mantis or mosquito (108).*

With effective despicable and derogatory animal imagery, humour and contrasts, the exploiters are captured as robbers, thieves or predators who peck on their prey. This is evident in *I Will* *Marry When I Want* when Kiguuda, a Mau Mau loyalist who, after independence acquires one and a half acres of land which was later snatched from him by Kioi. This narrative depicts a dramatic contrast between the exploited and the exploiters. Ndugire too is presented as a hypocritical ex-home guard who acquired a tiny garden of about a hundred acres (46) as one of his grubbing assets. Ngugi's techniques creates contrast that explains his point of view and assists in effecting revolts and emphasises the dichotomy between the rich and the poor in Kenya.

Lastly, *Wizard of the Crow* is Ngugi’s prison experience in Kenya. He critiques capitalist exploitation of postcolonial Kenya; and by extension, most African countries. Using sarcasm and humour, as literary tools. Ngugi mocks the Kenyan government by depicting the Ruler Free Republic of Aburiria and his ministers as fake. They are portrayed as desperate, tyrannical and power drunk who can go to length to perpetrate their evil ambition. They are so intoxicated with power that they can stop at nothing, including enlarging their body parts in pretense of furthering democracy just to remain in power and to satisfy the very power tasty leader who also wants to remain perpetually in power. Machokalis, Sikiokuus, Kaniurus and Tajirikas are types who represent political characters that are seen in contemporary African societies. The Ruler pretends to be a democrat yet he is just the opposite of what he professes. This novel depicts political, economic and social intricacies that plague postcolonial African States which have consequently derailed real development in the continent. The novel hurls serious aspersions in satirical mode on the internal political build-up and the collaboration of the West in the impoverishment of the African masses. This captures with great efforts the roles of sycophants in the destruction of African States (Ugwuanyi: 2014: 74)

The novel is set in the twenty-first-century African society of an imaginary people’s Free Republic of Aburiria. The themes in the novel are interwoven with love, greed, poverty, feminism, race, identity, religion and technology among others. As usual, the novelist draws on oral tradition to tell of exploitation of postcolonial African society using Aburiria as a platform. Investing in humour and laughter, readers are made to see the vices in greed, selfishness, and desperate politicians and the evil that takes place in governance and leadership in post-colonial Africa. It is however pleasing to note that the story ends in positivism. The novelist proffers positive outcome where freedom will come at last for Africa. He proposes that if the people work together and unite, that they will overcome tyranny and corruption. This reflects Ngugi's vision and perception of the 21st-century African society. He envisages that there will be light at the end of the tunnel.

**Ngugi and the Nexus with Contemporary African Writers**

Ngugi, like Chinua Achebe, does not only recreate history, he chronicles cultural, socio-economic and political data; using old and ancient personages, names, events and scenes. This device places his works in a realistic setting and home environment. Thus, Ngugi exhibits his craftsmanship in recreating historical materials. Consequently, the theme of the pre-colonial era, the Mau Mau upheavals, colonialism and post-independent issues run throughout his works. Also, like Frantz Fanon (1965: 95-100), Ngugi preaches that Africa’s liberation and decolonization, should be achieved even if it means through violent revolution. Critics find Ngugi as posing polemical endings, a dilemma in which difficult choices have to be made (Nicholas Brown: 1999, Ian Glenn, 1981). This paper however evaluates him as optimistic. What confers humanity on Ngugi is his stance on a positive rejuvenation of Kenyans, Africans, the oppressed and on what he antagonises, which is anything that is against humanity and the development of Africa. Thus, he repudiates the cynical individualism and obscurity of Wole Soyinka and the philosophical pessimism of Armah, while embracing Achebe’s Africanism and the positive social vision and the rejuvenation of the third generation of African writers which Niyi Osundare, Tanure Ojaide and others imbibe to achieve liberation and unity of the African continent.

Is it then surprising that in *Weep Not Child*, Njoroge realises his weakness and limitations and develops as a heroic character in Ngugi's later novels? That *A Grain of Wheat,* despite the elements of disillusionment which it portrays on the eve of independence, poses a bright future and hope at the end? That Kariega, Kimathi and Wariinga take a deep peep into the future for a possible rejuvenation of humanity and development of Africa? Ngugi's works, Africa, the black diaspora and humanity as a whole will exonerate his literary vision, ideology and his literary contribution to the body of African literature to enrich and develop Africa.

**Conclusion**

This paper has demonstrated that Ngugi Wa Thion'go is an African protest and revolutionary literary writer who believes that an African writer is a watchdog of his society. He is not only committed to the cause of Kenyans, the society, Africa, and its literature; he has also sacrificed a great deal, including risking his life to pursue the welfare and development of the deprived, the underprivileged and the proletariat who constitute the majority in his society, Africa. His revolutionary tendencies have made him insecure even in his home town and earned him imprisonment and exile. Critically examining his works, one sees him as a literary giant and an African icon who has moved ahead of other African literary gurus to pursue the cause of Africa and the black race as a whole. He is also an African in outlook who fuels his drive for the creation of a positive and egalitarian society for his people. Ngugi's theoretical manifesto is thus, a celebration of the African unification, integration and worldview in elements of style and vision for the development and structural transformation of Africa. In the light of the discussion presented above, this paper recommends that the new generation of African writers should continue to write in the interest of the populace and humanity. They should as a matter of obligation and necessity, faithfully engage historical, economic and socio-political realities; such as corrupt practices, environmental degradation, problems of irresponsible leaders, insecurity, feminist and gender disparities and issues, . This will show that they are socially conscious and politically active in capturing new challenges that pose problems of development in the 21st century African society.

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**THE HOUSE SYSTEM OF OPOBO KINGDOM IN THE EASTERN NIGER DELTA OF NIGERIA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONTINUITIES AND CHANGES**

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**Abstract**

*The thrust of this paper is on the continuities and changes experienced over the years by the twenty-two war canoe houses that began Opobo kingdom after the arbitration treaty of 1873. These war canoe houses constituted the fourteen sections of the kingdom. The study used secondary and primary sources of data to generate the required data for the work, and the qualitative approach to data analysis was used in the analysis. The study aims at documenting the historical origins of the War Canoe House system of the Opobo Kingdom and notes the changes and continuities the House System experienced in the pre-colonial and colonial eras. The study observes that some of the war canoe houses had undergone several changes in structure, name and size and some also had maintained a degree of continuity. The study equally reveals that although number of the war canoe houses later increased to 67, there were changes that affected all of them due to British conquest and colonization of the area. In spite of attacks from colonization, the war canoe houses maintained a substantial degree of continuity in their original state. The study concludes that the changes witnessed, particularly in some of the founding war canoe houses, contributed to their sustainability, as the death of their founders and succession challenges weakened the houses, thus, the need for some of the changes for their survival, and this guarded against the demise of any of the war canoe houses as experienced in Bonny before their secession in 1869.*

**KEYWORDS:** War Canoe, Ibani, Eastern Niger Delta, Bonny and Opobo

**Introduction**

It is unknown, when Duowari Houses in Bonny began to metamorphose to War Canoe Houses, but according to Cookey, King Perekule (Pepple), established separate War Canoe Houses for his sons; Fubara Manilla Pepple War Canoe House, Ibulu War Canoe House and Opubo Annie Pepple War Canoe House (Cookey, 1974:30). However, Ogolo’s (2020:26) assertion that “Captain Pepple instituted the first princely War Canoe House and chieftaincy War Canoe House in 1740…” lends credence to Cookey’s observation. Their claims tend to suggest that the origin of War Canoe House in Bonny began during the reign of king Pepple, 1703-1754 (Ogolo, 2020:25).

This is not to suggest that the origin of war canoe in Bonny began during King Pepple. The aborigines of Bonny were originally sea dwellers and the idea of war canoe was there ingenuity necessitated by their environment, aimed at serving their commercial and military purposes. Before the 18th century, the trade relationship between the people of Bonny, the Europeans and hinterland communities had advanced, hence the need for the war canoe for the protection of the territorial integrity of the kingdom, the trading canoes and market places. According to Alagoa and Fombo, before the 18th century, the people of Bonny had waged war with her neighbours such as Andoni, Okrika and Kalabari, and they further noted that it was based on the circumstances of war that Pepple succeeded Awuse (Halliday) as the king of Bonny (Alagoa & Fombo, 1972:9-10).

The fact in this instance here is that Bonny waged these wars with war canoe and so, war canoe existed before King Pepple’s emergence as the Amanyanabo of Bonny and the war canoe was owned by the kingdom, under the custody of the king. Probably, the circumstances that led to the emergence of Pepple as king of Bonny and the volatile tensed nature of the area at that period contributed why King Pepple established his personal war canoe, thus, the origin of proliferation of war canoes in Bonny and the beginning of War Canoe Houses. A War Canoe House is a compound that established her own war canoe under the custody of the funder (compound chief). However, a war canoe is a very big dugout canoe that will contain about 150 warriors, cannons other arms and ammunitions and “Ekerefari (a set of seven wooden gungs of different sizes and base. It is used because it is good in speaking the drum language. The lead drummer used it to communicate with the warriors, eulogize them and motivate them as they go to war) (Ogolo, 2020:15).

The proliferation of war canoes as a result of the multiplication of War Canoe Houses made Opobo kingdom and other Ijo communities of Eastern Niger Delta to have fleet of war canoes which they use to intimidate and occasionally over run their enemies. This development contributed to their stronger participation and dominance in the European’s trading activities in the Niger Delta area in the pre-colonial time and subsequent rise in development and prominence.

According to Dike, (1956:34), “the pivot of Delta social organization was the house system.” The house was a co-operative trading unit and a local government institution, and this was in the pre-colonial time. The house system is organized in hierarchy of the major War Canoe Houses, Minor War Canoe Houses and subordinate houses. Major War Canoe House is either a Duowari that metamorphosed into a War Canoe House, and through it, minor War Canoe Houses were established or a War Canoe House that pioneered the establishment of many other minor War Canoe Houses. Accordingly, a group of War Canoe Houses under a major War Canoe House constitute a polo or section, with the major War Canoe House superintending over the section.

Consequently, War Canoe Houses are an integral part of a section, and this suggests that, no War Canoe House exist independent of a section (Oko-Jaja, 2020). However, a subordinate house is a house that did not establish a war canoe. This assertion did not apply to the war canoe houses established in Opobo Kingdom after the 1888/1889 disarmament exercise in the kingdom by the British conquistadors (Oko-Jaja, 2020). This is because some scholars are of the view that disarmament exercise, decimated the War Canoe House system, and as such, all the War Canoe Houses established after that period did not establish a war canoe as its theoretical stipulation suggested, hence began the era of ceremonial war canoe house system in the kingdom (Brown, 2019).

In establishing a War Canoe House, the funder, which later known as a War Canoe House chief (Alabo), must be an astute trader with reasonable wealth, must have acquired so much domestic slaves under his subordinate house and equipped and manned a war canoe with requisite armament and warriors. According to Oko-Jaja (2020), the warriors must be domestic slaves and responsible in manning the war canoe during the parade exercise in the process of the confirmation of the chief elect. This is to say here that, acquisition of domestic slaves played a major role in the establishment of War Canoe Houses in Opobo kingdom. The repeal of the colonial government House Rule Ordinance in 1915 (Wariboko, 2014:195) marked the end of domestic slavery activities in the kingdom, and this no doubt, impacted negatively on the establishment of War Canoe Houses. Since the acquisition of domestic slaves is outlawed by the repeal, it was then difficult to get the warriors to man war canoe especially during war canoe parade exercise for the confirmation process of a chief elect. In no doubt, this development marked a water-shade in the history of war canoe house establishment in Opobo kingdom, as the number of the war canoe houses ever since, only increased by a little, just by recognition of those chief elects who had earlier launched a ceremonial war canoe. During a ceremonial war canoes parade (gig regatta) exercise involving the whole kingdom in 1920 (Epelle, 1970 and Oko-Jaja, 2020).

A War Canoe House possesses paraphernalia such as, war canoe with warriors to man it at the time of peace and war, arms and ammunition, flag with house logo and name, gwula (a house where the chief host meetings with his seniapu (elders) and other dignitaries), two different sets of Ekere fari, two gateways and Ngelenge (Xylophone). It also has features like Burusu, burial ground for the house chiefs, drum name, water side and eponymous name of the founder. Presently, in the kingdom there are 14 sections with 67 War Canoe Houses. The sections and the War Canoe Houses are as follows;

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sections** | **War Canoe Houses** |
| Jaja | King Jaja, Sam Annie Pepple, Saturday Jaja, Sunday Jaja, Mac Pepple, Thomas Jaja, Akara Sam Annie Pepple, Oko-Jaja, Patesi Oko-Jaja, Aaron Jaja, Bruce Jaja, Accra Jaja, Omubo Pepple and Jim Jaja |
| Biriye | Shoo Peterside and Dodd Peterside |
| Fubarakworo | How Strongface and Yellow Strongface |
| Adibie | Sunju Minima (Okpukpo Minima) & Oko-Sunju Minima |
| Epelle | Sam Oko Epelle, Minini Oko Epelle and George Oko Epelle |
| Dappa Ye Amakiri | Agbaye Fubara, Jungo Manilia, Finebone, Agbaye Bupo (Nengia), Gogo, Ogolo Fubara & Ogbonna Fubara |
| Owujie | John-Africa & Dick John-Africa |
| Kiepirima | Annie Stewart, Toby, Sam Toby and William Toby |
| Diepiri | Ogolo, Ubani, Damingo-Ubani, Daminabo Ogolo, Atabara Ogolo & Joseph Ogolo |
| Ukonu | Wariso, Cookey-Gam, George Cookey-Gam, Apiafia Goodhead, & Nzekwe |
| Kala-Omuso | John Tom Brown, Yellow John Tom Brown, Cockeye Brown, peter Cockeye Brown & Afonya Brown |
| Tolofari | Jack Tolofari, Ikpo Diri & Diri Tolofari |
| Dapu | Wogu Dappa, Opusunju Dappa, Kalasunju Dappa, Brown Agent Dappa, Doctor Dappa, Branga Dappa, Tilibo Dappa and Ada Tom Pepple |
| Iroanya | Captain Uranta, Waribo Uranta, Ichie Captain Uranta and small Ichie Captain Uranta |

Source: (Pepple, K. & Oko-Jaja, T. (ed), 2005).

However, the study will examine the changes that had been experienced among the War Canoe Houses in the course of their existence and the aspect they have maintained continuity particularly among the founding War Canoe Houses. The study will equally examine the causes of the changes and the impact it had on the War Canoe House system and the kingdom in general.

Nevertheless, the subject matter of the study is discussed chronologically with sub-titles such as, introduction, the changes, the continuities and conclusion. The introduction highlights the background to the study while in the changes the study discussed several challenges that besieged some War Canoe Houses and the kingdom. It equally x-rays how the challenges caused changes in affected Houses and the House system of Opobo in ground.

**The Changes**

Having noted the paraphernalia and features of a War Canoe House in Opobo kingdom, it is important we stress that many War Canoe Houses that established in Bonny with eponymous name of their founders, eluded Bonny in 1869 under the supervision of the chiefs that succeeded the founders and established Opobo kingdom in 1870. And some of them were, Opubo War Canoe House under the leadership of Chief Jaja Opubo Annie Pepple, Iroanya War Canoe House under the leadership of Chief Captain Uranta Annie Pepple, Agbaye Fubara War Canoe House led by Chief Black Fubara, Jungo War Canoe House led by Chief Manila Jungo, Kurubo War Canoe House led by Chief John Kurubo Africa, Dapu War Canoe House under the leadership of Chief Wogu Dapu Annie Pepple, a section of Omuso or Brown War Canoe House was move to establish Opobo under the leadership of Chief Tom Brown, Diepiri War Canoe House under the leadership of Chief Ubani and later Chief Ogolo, Epelle War Canoe House under the leadership of Chief Oko-Epelle and Fubarakworo War Canoe House under the leadership of Chief How Strongface (Oko-Jaja, 2020).

Other War Canoe Houses that eluded Bonny to established Opobo are Wariso under Chief Wariso, Finebone under Chief Finebone, Cookey-Gam under Chief Cookey-Gam, a section of Peterside under the leadership of Ada Sunju Peterside and later his son Chief Shoo Peterside, Kiepirima or Annie Stewart under Chief Annie Stewart, Tolofari with two house under the leadership of chiefs Jack Tolofari and Diri Tolofari, Toby under Chief Toby (recognized as a War Canoe Chief at their temporary settlement site at Olom Nkoro in about 1869), Sunju minima (recognized also at Nkoro), Ubani War Canoe House (also recognized at Nkoro), Bupo War Canoe House left Bonny under the headship of Senibo Nengia Bupo but recognized as a Chief of the house at Nkoro and Sam Annie Pepple War Canoe House (also recognized as a War Canoe Chief at Nkoro) (Epelle, 1970 and Oko-Jaja, 2020).

However, many of these War Canoe Houses changed their names shortly after they established Opobo kingdom due to one reason or the other. Like the Opubo War Canoe House, established by Chief Opubo Annie Pepple, son of king Perekule (Pepple), (later King Opubo Annie Pepple) in about 1790 (Finapiri, 2001:38), became one of the powerful group of houses in Bonny in the 19th century and by 1863, Jaja who came to Bonny in the 1830s as an adopted son into the Opubo War Canoe House (Dike, 1956:183) and Cookey, 1974:27), was elected a chief of the house, thus, became one of the greatest chiefs that ruled the house after the founder, and eluded with the War Canoe House alongside other chiefs to the east fringe of Eastern Niger Delta, and shortly after naming a site where they re-located to, at the estuary of Imo River, Opubo Ama, later corrupted to Opobo, in honour of King Opubo Pepple, Chief Jaja, who immediately elected king of the Opubo Ama, changed the name of Opubo War Canoe House to King Jaja War Canoe House, hence, Opubo War Canoe House became King Jaja’s personal War Canoe House as well as the domicile of his palace. According to Dike, (1956:196) Chief Jaja named the kingdom OpuboAma so as to gain the loyalty of the other chiefs that followed him to found the kingdom as well making them believe that he was the heir to king Opubo, as they viewed Opobo to be Bonny in new surroundings.

These actions of Jaja, inadvertently bequeathed the leadership of the kingdom to his descendants that later formed the Jaja section, as the other descendants of King Opubo Annie Pepple in the area, scattered and formed distinct groups that also metamorphosed into different sections, such as Fubarakworo, Adibie, Kiepirima, Dapu and Iroanya. The Iroanya War Canoe House also had it name changed in Opobo. The house in Bonny, after the death of the founder, Chief Iroanya, was succeeded by Chief Captain Uranta (Obomanu), an adopted son of Chief Iroanya (Obomanu, 2015). Chief Uranta was an astute and influential trader in Bonny. He ruled the house and made it famous in Bonny under Opubo group of houses, and this is because Chief Iroanya was a foster son of King Opubo Annie Pepple and he established his War Canoe House under the Opubo War Canoe House (Obomanu, 2015, and Oko-Jaja, 2020).

However, due to Chief Uranta’s influence in Opubo group of War Canoe House, he was among those chiefs looked up to, when Chief Opubo chieftaincy stool was vacant in about 1861 after the death of Chief Iloni, to relinquish his position as a chief of a minor War Canoe House and take up the bigger responsibility as chief of the major War Canoe House, but his decline, alongside others paved the way for the election of Jaja (Dike, 1956). Chief Uranta was a strong supporter of Chief Jaja on his administration of Opubo War Canoe House and Opubo group of War Canoe Houses in Bonny. During the 1869 fratricidal Civil War, Chief Uranta moved Iroanya descendants in Iroanya war canoe and joined Chief Jaja and others out of Bonny and established Opobo. It is unknown when chief Uranta changed Iroanya War Canoe House to chief Captain Uranta War Canoe House at Opobo. Probably, it might be during the delineation of Opobo into the 14 polo or sections (Ngekiri Fage), upon which the ancient Ibani (Bonny) kingdom was founded by the founding fathers for administrative, military and spiritual needs (Ogolo, 2020:7-8). However, all that remains about Chief Iroanya in Opobo is the naming of their polo after him, and Chief Capitan Uranta War Canoe House superintend over the section.

In the same vein, chief Dapu War Canoe House suffered the same fate in Opobo. Chief Prince Dapu was the first biological son of King Opubo Annie Pepple; his father established a War Canoe House for him (Jones, 1963:123). Unfortunately, he died very early, but before his death, he had a biological son, Fubara (Dapuye Fubara), (Alagoa and Fombo, 1972:21; Finapiri, 2001:61; Oko-Jaja, 2020) and many adopted children such as, Wogu Dapu (Dappa). However, after his death, Fubara Dapu or Dappa succeeded his father on the chieftaincy stool. His reign on Dapu chieftaincy house was remarkable, such that, when his uncle, King William Dappa Pepple was exiled by the British Consular Authorities in agreement with Bonny chiefs, he relinquished the chieftaincy stool of his father to Wogu Dappa and ascended the throne as King of Bonny (Oko-Jaja, 2020). Chief Wogu Dappa reigned on the chieftaincy stool of Dapu Opubo Annie Pepple and during the 1869 crisis in Bonny, he moved Dapu descendants in Dapu War Canoe and joined Chief Jaja and others to elude Bonny and established Opobo. It is also unknown when and why Chief Wogu Dappa changed Dapu War Canoe House to Wogu Dappa War Canoe House at Opobo. However, Dapu was immortalized as a polo name in Opobo where Wogu Dappa War Canoe House superintends as a major house.

Also, Fubarakworo War Canoe House was affected in the changes experienced by some War Canoe Houses at Opobo. Chief Fubarakworo was a son of King Opubo Annie Pepple he established his war canoe in Bonny in about 1820 (Finebone, 1995:90). However, after his demise one of his children, How Strongeface Fubarakworo Pepple succeeded the chieftaincy stool. How Strongeface ruled the War Canoe House in Bonny till the 1869 Civil War between the Opubo Annie Pepple group of War Canoe Houses and Fubara Manilla Pepple group of War Canoe Houses, and he led Fubarakworo descendants in the Fubarakworo War Canoe to elude Bonny with Chief Jaja and others to establish Opobo. It is equally not clear when the name of the house was changed to How Strongeface War Canoe House in Opobo, but the fact today in Opobo is that Fubarakworo only exist as a polo name, superintend by How Strongeface War Canoe House as a major house.

Diepiri War Canoe House equally suffered the same fate. Chief Diepiri was the son of Kala Igoni, a descendant of Queen Kambasa by Biriye. He inherited the Duowari of his father and transformed it into a War Canoe House during the reign of King Perekule his cousin (Oko-Jaja, 2020). When Chief Diepiri died, a member of the house Ayana succeeded him. Chief Diepiri had a daughter who begot a son named Ogbulu, corrupted to Ogolo, and the boy was a minor when chief Ayana died. Consequently, Chief Ayana was succeeded by one of his adopted child Ubani, who reigned on the chieftaincy stool of Diepiri War Canoe House till the period Jaja assumed leadership of chief Opubo War Canoe House. During the 1869 Bonny Civil War, Chief Ubani led other descendants of Chief Diepiri in Diepiri War Canoe and joined Chief Jaja and others to elude Bonny and established Opobo (Oko-Jaja, 2020). According to Epelle, (1970:6), at their temporary site at Olom Nkoro, Chief Jaja recognized Ogolo as a chief of Diepiri War Canoe House, and in view of that development, Chief Ubani launched his personal War Canoe House. It is also unknown why and when the name of the house was changed, but it might be during the delineation of Opobo into 14 sections that Chief Ogolo usurped his grandfather’s War Canoe House as Chief Ogolo War Canoe House and immortalized him by naming him after the section which he superintends.

In the case of Agbaye Bupo War Canoe House, the same fate befell the house. Chief Bupo or Duke Norfolk was the first son of Chief Agba, a younger brother to King Opu Dappa (Oko-Jaja, 2020). It is unknown when he established his War Canoe House in Bonny, but according to the genealogy tree of the house by Chief Godwin Bupo, the house had been led by many members of the house and prominent among them was Chief Tilibo also known as Gogo Fubara, who reign between 1854 to 1870 (Oko-Jaja, 2020). However, according to Epelle (1970), Bupo descendants that eluded Bonny with Chief Jaja and others in 1869 left without a Chief and a war canoe and as such, Chief Jaja and his Council of Chiefs, at their temporary site at Olorn Nkoro, recognized and reconstituted members of the house into a War Canoe House, consequently, Senibo Nengia Bupo, a grandson of Chief Gogo Fubara was installed as a chief of the house in 1872. Chief Nengia Bupo reigned on that chieftaincy stool for many years, and it is unknown when and why the name of the house was changed to Nengia War Canoe House, but in the recent time, a move had been made through the present chief of the house to return back the name to Bupo War Canoe House.

Sunju Minima War Canoe House was also confronted with similar development. The War Canoe House was established by Sunju Minima at their temporary site, Olom Nkoro in 1869. Unfortunately, Chief Sunju Minima died at Olom Nkoro shortly after the development, but, he was succeeded by Oko-Sunju Minima an enterprising member of the War Canoe House, who with the support of other members of the house moved the house successfully into their new kingdom. However, in about 1887 Chief Oko-Sunju Minima established his own personal War Canoe House, Oko-Sunju War Canoe House and Sunju Minima War Canoe House was succeeded by Chief Okpukpo Sunju Minima (Pepple and Oko-Jaja, 2015: 33-34). Probably, upon this development, Sunju Minima War Canoe House was changed to Okpukpo War Canoe House, and it is unknown the reasons behind the development.

Furthermore, there are other changes experienced in the War Canoe House system of Opobo, such as in the process of establishing a War Canoe House. Unlike what was applicable in Bonny and early period in Opobo, as noted, after the 1888/1889 disarmament exercise, the establishment of War Canoe House was loosed from the rigid condition of equipping and manning a War Canoe by a prospective chief. However, the succeeding trajectory as a result of colonization was the development of a Gig Regatta system. Under this system, a prospective chief will acquire also many adopted children, particularly the male gender that will man a regatta and parade it within the Opobo River with the chief elect on board. However, this trend continued till the repeal of the House Rule Ordinance in 1915, thus, ended the establishment of more War Canoe House in the kingdom.

Nevertheless, the Gig Regatta parade became a new vista that replaced the War Canoe even among the houses that were established with War Canoe, and became a trending development that is being used till date as part of the exercise for coronating a king and installing a new chief on a War Canoe House, as well as welcoming dignitary to the kingdom and celebrating a remarkable date in the existence of the area.

**Continuities**

In spite of the changes noted on the names of some War Canoe Houses, many others had maintained the original names of their founders. Although, some experienced minimal changes that did not obliterate their founders name completely such as, Chief Sam-Oko-Epelle War Canoe House, Jungo-Manilla War Canoe House and Waribo Uranta War Canoe House. For Sam-Oko-Epelle house, the house was founded in Bonny by chief Epelle, he died in Bonny and was succeeded by one of his adopted child, Oko-Epelle, who reigned on Epelle chieftaincy stool and took the house to an enviable height in Bonny throughout the periods of Jaja’s reign in Opubo chieftaincy stool. However, during the Opubo group of houses exodus from Bonny, Chief Oko-Epelle and other Epelle households did not join the movement but they left Bonny to join Opobo in 1873 after the Arbitration Treaty between Bonny and Opobo (Epelle, 1970). Furthermore, Chief Oko-Epelle died on the transit and was succeed by one of his adopted child, Chief Sam-Oko-Epelle, and who finally established the house in Opobo. Inessence, Chief Epelle’s name was not alienated completely from his house as applicable in some houses earlier noted, but two of his successors planted their names in the War Canoe House, thus, making them parts of the founder of the house following their failure to consider the founder’s name as sacrosanct.

In the same vein, Chief Jungo-Manilla War Canoe House experienced similar fate in Opobo. Chief Jungo was an adopted son of King Amakiri, son of King Opu Dappa. King Amakiri had a Duowari in Bonny which was converted late into a War Canoe House. It is unknown when the Duowari was converted to a War Canoe House and the Chief that first ruled the War Canoe House in Bonny. It is a fact that Chief Jungo ruled the house in Bonny and the fact that his name appeared as part of the eponymous name of the house suggest that he might be the founder of the War Canoe House in Bonny from the Duowari of King Amakiri. The Jungo War Canoe House as the name ought to be, was ruled by Chief Jungo in Bonny till the early parts of 1869 as Jones (1963:223), assertion on the signing of Bonny preservation of peace treaty suggested. It is unknown if Chief Jungo was a life and equally led his house to join chief Jaja and others as they left Bonny in the later part of 1869. But Epelle, (1970) observation that, Manilla Jungo, an adopted son of Chief Jungo was the signatory to the alleged Minima agreement on the 13th October 1869 at Bonny, suggests that Chief Jungo might be indisposed at the time the make or mar meeting of the chiefs in sympathy with Opubo house was held at Minima (a Bonny satellite community) paving the way for the signing of the alleged agreement and their departure from Bonny, hence, Manilla Jungo led the house out of Bonny and later succeeded the chieftaincy stool at the demise of Chief Jungo. However, chief Manilla reigned on Jungo War Canoe House at Opobo and contributed immensely to the establishment of the house in the kingdom and its subsequent development to an enviable height among the committee of houses at the area at that time, and these probably contributed to the inclusion of his name as a co-founder of the house, thereby denied Chief Jungo his right as sole founder of the War Canoe House.

Similarly, Chief Waribo Uranta War Canoe House was entangled with the same challenge. The house was founded by Chief Waribo Ironaya, second son of chief Ironaya at Opobo in about 1887. Waribo was very young in Bonny with his elder brother Igoni when their father Iroanya died, and their father’s adopted son, Uranta (Obomanu), took care of them when he succeeded the chieftaincy stool of chief Iroanya. Having successfully moved Chief Iroanya’s households out of Bonny and resettled at Opobo, Iroanya’s biological children, who at the time had come of age, started nursing ambition over their father’s chieftaincy stool, particularly Waribo whose mother was then still alife, and instrumental to her son’s ambition (Obomanu, 2015; Oko-Jaja, 2020). Also, according to Oko-Jaja (2020), the shenanigans of Waribo contributed to the crisis Chief Captain Uranta faced in Opobo town that made him elude Opuama (Opobo town) to Kala Ama area (satellite area) and established Queni Ama (Queens town) in about 1887.

Interestingly, according to Oboamnu (2015), it was after Chief Captain Uranta’s exit from Opobo town that Waribo established his War Canoe House at Opobo town with the appellation Chief Waribo War Canoe House. However, it is unknown why and when the name of the house was changed to Chief Waribo Uranta War Canoe House, and this development had caused Waribo’s households bearing Uranta as their surname instead of Waribo, thus, alienating Chief Waribo of the sole eponymous name of his house.

**Conclusion**

It is obvious from the foregoing that since the War Canoe Houses under the Opubo Annie Pepple War Canoe House faction fled grand Bonny and established Opobo kingdom, a degree of continuities and changes had been observed in the structure and features of the War Canoe Houses that fled Bonny and the ones established in the kingdom. However, it is a fact that some of the changes observed contributed to the sustainability of those houses affected especially among the founding War Canoe Houses, as it is a fact that no War Canoe House went into extinction or moribund, then re-aligned with another house, as witnessed in Bonny before 1869 exodus of Opubo group and among such houses were, Tom Taylor House, Callanadasa (Kala-Adasa) House and Young Trader House (Jones, 1963; Opubowatch newspaper, 2018).

Furthermore, the introduction of the Gig Regatta system after British colonization and the disarmament exercise on the kingdom, contributed to enhance the introduction of new War Canoe Houses in the area till the repeal of the House Rule Ordnance in 1915, that ended the acquisition of domestic slaves, and failure to provide alternative on the role of the slaves, as seen in the case of the War Canoe, ended the establishment of new more War Canoe Houses in the house system of Opobo, thus, Alabo (chief) is only coronated on the existing war canoe house. However, this was not the case in some Eastern Niger Delta Ijo communities that operated the House system, such as the Kalabari were Igbiki Alabo House System was introduced to give the wealthy class a sense of belonging in the traditional administration of the kingdom. Under this system, according to Idoniboye (2023), the wealthy people buy themselves chieftaincy status, though not superintending over any War Canoe House, but are members of the Council of Chiefs of the kingdom that oversees the affairs of the area. Inessence, this system encourages hardwork and contributed to the development of the area.

Nevertheless, the changes in the names of some War Canoe Houses against the founders translate to abysmal regards accorded to them by the master minders because the eponymous name of the houses are borne as surnames by members of the house and the development immortalized whoever his name appears as eponymous name of the house as the founder, from generation to generation.

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**TRADE UNION LEADERSHIP AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS’ MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*Industrial organisations globally were made up of notable actors: the government represented by agencies, employer represented by management and employees represented by trade union. However, the game is majorly in between the management and the union particularly in the public organisations where the presence of employer may not be visible. Management and the leadership of trade union contribute in no small measure to success or failure of public organisation hence the need for these actors to realise their importance in ensuring peace, progress and stability in industrial organisations in the public sector in Nigeria. While the leadership of trade unions have several lapses leading to jeopadising the interest of their union members like ideological differences, greediness and so on, management were also found of lackadaisical and undemocratic attitudes to mention few toward the union. This paper therefore examines trade union leadership and industrial organisation’s management in the public sector in Nigeria. It is therefore suggested among others that both management and union leaders should cooperate, understand and respect each other for peace to reign in their organisations.*

**Key words:** Trade union, leadership, management, public sector

**Introduction**

A trade union (TU) is a group of workers from the same or different trades who come together to bargain with their employer(s) for better working conditions and employment terms using a recognised procedure called collective bargaining. A trade union, according to Akinkunmi (2020), is a group of workers who have banded together to demand better pay and benefits, favourable working conditions, safety, and job security. To reach agreements on pay, workplace rules, complaint procedures, employee hiring, firing, and promotion policies, benefits, workplace safety, and other issues, trade unions must negotiate with employers on behalf of union members. It is an organisation of employees established primarily to preserve or improve the working conditions for its members.

Trade unions have a long history of being activist organisations that defend employee rights and make sure they are not violated. TUs undoubtedly act as catalysts for social, political, and economic change by empowering workers to establish their own governments and protect themselves from exploitation. Trade unions were created as a result of the workers' concerted efforts to collectively improve their working conditions. According to Omole (1999), trade unionism was started by employees as a permanent, ongoing organisation for their own protection at work, to improve working conditions through collective bargaining, try to improve living conditions of their members, and as a way to voice their opinions on societal issues.

This implies that the only time a trade union can be discussed is when the workers have banded together as a result of specific events or circumstances. This suggests that group activities involving employees have always played a significant role in the workplace. As a result, trade unions are crucial to modern society for a variety of reasons. For instance, while executive compensation is frequently high, unions work to close the wage and representational gap between labour and management. Therefore, a trade union can only be discussed after the employees have come together as a result of specific actions or circumstances. This showed that participation in collective work activities by employees has always played a crucial role in the workplace; as a result, trade unions are extremely significant in modern society for a number of reasons.

Furthermore, unions work to raise worker wages and close the representational gap between labour and management, despite the fact that executive officers' salaries are frequently high. According to Akinkunmi (2020), a trade union is a group of employees that regulates relations between workers and employers in order to protect workers from unfair treatment by employers and to ensure that workers are willing to act in a way that promotes high morale and overall organisational effectiveness. However, a strong, unified, and well-known syndication achieved through unionism is a requirement for industrial peace and rapid economic development in any country. Ojedokun (2021) goes on to explain that the trade union is a reaction to the administration's use of its decision-making authority in ways that are obviously unfriendly or unacceptable, primarily to employees.

Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that the worker's association was founded to support the priorities of its members with regard to compensation, benefits, and working conditions. According to the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU, 2009), a labour union is an organisation of workers who have joined forces through collective action to advance their shared interests, such as upholding the integrity of their company, securing fair wages and benefits, and improving working conditions. A trade union is an organisation made up of members who work in a variety of trades, professions, and occupations. Its main goal is to represent its members at their places of employment and in society at large. It aims to advance its interests, in particular, through the rule-making and collective bargaining processes.

In addition to helping their members (employees) by defending and advancing their socioeconomic and political interests, trade unions also benefit employers by fostering open communication between labour and management, which benefits the community as a whole. In promoting and defending the terms and conditions of employment, Akinkunmi (2020) elaborates further that the union is better positioned and stronger than the individual worker, both financially and in other ways. It is important to remember that the level of trust and confidence each potential member has in the union's ability to help them achieve their desired goals determines the rate at which new members join the organisation.

Base on this, Fajana (2002) asserted that trade unions anticipate and step up efforts to improve the socio-economic welfare of their members, provide psychological and political services through group interactions with employers, and challenge management prerogatives to allow rank-and-file members to participate in corporate decision-making. It is further explained that trade union goals can be broadly divided into two categories: economic and non-economic goals. The economic goals include the following:

1. Ensure fair compensation
2. Ensure better and ancillary benefits
3. Ensure better working conditions
4. Protect the safety of employees' jobs
5. Ensure opportunities for development and growth
6. Look for opportunities for advancement, training, and the like

The non-economic goals include, but are not limited to:

1. Developing a sense of responsibility in its members;
2. Promoting community development;
3. National integration;
4. Civic engagement;
5. Political empowerment of employees; and
6. Influencing socio-economic policies.

It is worthy to emphasise that Nigeria like many advanced countries of the world has four major types of trade unions according to Onuegbu (2013) amongst are: crafts union, general union, industrial union and national (federation and confederation) union. This union would include workers from various trades.

**Craft union-** this type of union is also called horizontal union. It comprises of workers in the same craft or same category of job. It is an organisation of wage-earners engaged in a single craft or occupation. It is obvious that as this category of workers form a group to protect their interest, they usually face similar challenges or problems, it is mostly for those at non-managerial level for example, union of carpenters, mechanics, plumbers, drivers in a university system.

**General union**- A general union is one whose membership covers workers employed in different industries and crafts.

**Industrial union**- An industrial union is organised on the basis of an industry rather than a craft. For instance, if the work forces of a cotton textile factory decide to from a union consisting of workers of different crafts, the union will be called an industrial union.

**National union-** This is the central or mother union under which all other unions in a state hide. Every registered and recognised union in the country must affiliate to a national union. The union normally represents the general employees at the national level, deal with the federal government and subsequently relate to other unions on issues that concerned the general. It is the highest umbrella of workers in the country. In Nigeria today, we have two of these unions; Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC).

According to the World Bank as of July 2022, members of trade union consist of all working people like you and me; 64,479,317 of them are members of trade unions in Nigeria and perform a variety of jobs. In addition to academics, they also include nurses, hospital cleaners, school lunch workers, professional football players, office and teaching assistants, drivers, engineers, social workers, and apprentices among others. Moreover, it did affect those who work in our essential public services, such as health, education, and local council services, which protect our children and provide for the weaker members of society. However, those who are not unionise cannot be regarded as union member although many working class citizen associate themselves as association.

According to Ojedokun (2023) asserted that trade unions in Nigeria despite all challenges confronting it have recorded great successes in recent years among these are:

* a national minimum wage
* improved parental leave provisions
* equality legislation laws on reasonable working hours
* minimum holiday and sickness entitlements
* health and safety in the workplace
* pension provision as well as many thousands of local agreements on issues affecting particular workplaces.

**Reasons for joining a trade union**

It is important to understand that employees don't just sign up for trade unions out of the blue; rather, they choose to be members because of the security and strength that come from solving problems as a group. It is based on the likelihood that they will receive assistance when necessary. Additionally, employees will have access to a variety of assistance and benefits at work, including but not limited to:

* legal services for members at work
* financial assistance and debt advice in times of need
* assessable helpline for members at all times
* compensation for accidents and injuries at work
* palliatives and member discounts on consumable items
* education, training and other advancement supports
* campaign and lobby to persuade the public or government of their point of view

There must be set goals for the union to be achieved which firstly, the union members must agree on before commencing action. This could involve discussing wage payments, workplace harassment, working hours, or raising issues with an employer's unfairness and excess. Union representatives gather proof regarding the problem and present it to their employer. To come to a resolution, they bargain the situation with the employer. Union members can broaden their campaign to garner more support at work if the employer will not agree to negotiate. This could involve the general public, the national government, or as a last resort, going on strike. Additionally, trade unions offer workers legal representation so that they can obtain compensation in the event of an accident or injury at work. A lot of trade unions also offer additional benefits, which may not be mentioned in this article.

Akinkunmi (2020) states that trade unions, whether in the public sector or private industry, hold the following four fundamental beliefs:

We may all be unique, but despite our differences, we should all be treated equally and with respect. We should all have a voice, treat everyone equally, and treat everyone unfairly. This will encourage the union members' fidelity, self-assurance, and understanding of one another.

**Solidarity:** We support one another at work and in the community; a strike against one union member is a strike against all union members. Each and every member must embrace and support one another in times of need as well as rally around the union executives to accomplish the union's predetermined goals because "collectively we stand and divided we fall."

**Democracy**: union members have the right to decide how their union will be run. Individual opinions must be strongly guided, respected, and given due consideration. Submissions from the majority of members constitute collective decisions.

**Participation:** In order to build a stronger union, members of the union should try to share their talents, dedication, and creativity. The ability of union members to participate in almost all union activities will strengthen and solidify the union as an organisation of workers.

While Nigerian trade unions still face challenges in catching up to their counterparts in developed nations, they are progressing, carrying out important work, and meeting a long-felt need. It is noteworthy that a strong trade union is a promise of industrial harmony and stability in business. Akinkunmi and Ojedokun (2022) posit that any decision reached collectively by employees must be obeyed and respected by the entire workforce, and employers cannot afford to treat such decisions lightly. They not only result in better working conditions, employment opportunities, and pay for employees, but they also boost employee productivity and give them a sense of self-worth and assurance.

Furthermore, they assist workers who are receiving sickness and accident benefits and provide them with support when they are out of work or engaged in a strike or other form of industrial action. In addition to taking many welfare measures for their members, such as running schools for the education of children, having their own library or reading rooms, or offering a variety of indoor and outdoor games and other recreational facilities, they also arrange for legal assistance for workers when necessary. Some trade unions even go so far as to launch housing initiatives for their members and start publishing periodicals or journals.

**Leadership**

A leader according to Akinkunmi (2023) is someone who rises to a position of authority through active participation and the ability to guide the group's efforts in achieving its objectives. A leader must actually have certain qualities that are appropriate for the position they hold, including intelligence, sensitivity to the needs of others, task comprehension, initiative and tenacity in problem-solving, self-assurance, and the desire to accept responsibility and hold a position of dominance and control. Hammed (2018) asserts that a leader is someone who knows the way, travels the way, exemplifies the way, and motivates followers to follow the way. According to Kester (2012), leadership is an identifiable set of abilities, concepts, innovations, and attitudes that are accessible to everyone in society not just a select group of charismatic men and women.

Additionally, according to Green (2018), leadership is the process of persuading others to take certain specific actions in order to achieve specific goals. This is done by using symbolic representations of power and the ability to manage and control human desires and emotions. It is impossible to overstate the significance of leadership in an organisation because, as is obvious, it is the driving force behind every successful or unsuccessful enterprise. Leadership, according to Akinkunmi (2021), is the aptitude and capacity to persuade and influence others to take actions that they might not normally take in order to further the objectives of an organisation. Thus, leadership is viewed as a subtle process of shared influence that affects thought, feeling, and action to produce a collaborative effort in support of the goals and values shared by the leadership and followers.

Stogdill (1948) succinctly explained leadership as a process where one person persuades other group members to fight for the accomplishment of predetermined goals. He further expatiated that a dynamic process occurs in a group when one person persuades the others to voluntarily contribute to the accomplishment of group goals in a particular circumstance. Both work and social life require leadership. In fact, a leader may be needed in any circumstance where a group of people want to achieve a common objective. Almost all formal and informal social settings call for leadership behaviour.

Some sort of leadership behaviour happens even in informal settings like a group of friends, where one person typically takes the lead in most group activities. Thus, interpersonal influence that is exercised in a situation and directed toward the achievement of a specific goal or goals can be characterised as leadership. This has been accomplished by applying the knowledge and abilities of leadership. According to Akinkunmi (2020), whoever holds this position of leadership must actually be adaptable, receptive to change, and also understand the need to change in accordance with the circumstances at hand.

**Leadership skills**

The abilities to inspire and guide others as well as the ability to support others in developing their skills are collectively referred to as leadership skills. It goes without saying that the most effective leaders inspire others to achieve their own success. This heavily depends on the leader’s skill. Akinkunmi (2023) therefore, sees leadership skills as the ability of a person to carry out a task while utilising their knowledge, education, skills, and experience is known as leadership competence. Human skills, conceptual skills, technical skills, emotional intelligence skills, and industry knowledge skills are all necessary to successfully lead an organisation; however, they are all centered on and support leadership competencies. The following categories were used by Moore and Rudd (2004) to classify the skills:

**Human skills**

1. Relationship builder
2. Open approachable
3. Team member/player
4. People evaluation
5. Team leader
6. Cultural awareness diversity
7. Identity talent
8. Mentoring
9. Leadership development
10. Coaching
11. Understanding social problems

**Conceptual skills**

1. Vision
2. Strategic sequential planning
3. Decision making
4. Critical creative thinking
5. Goals (set and achieve)
6. Organisational change

**Technical skills**

1. Budgeting
2. Finance/fund raising
3. Computer skills
4. Internet skills
5. Competent (technical area)

**Emotional intelligence skill**

1. Positive attitude
2. Empathy/respect
3. Stability
4. Integrity/honesty
5. flexibility

**Communication skills**

1. Listening skills
2. Speaking skills
3. Communication setting
4. Reading skills
5. Electronic communication
6. Media interaction
7. Written communication

**Industry knowledge skills**

1. Administrative skills
2. Decision making skills
3. Assertiveness skills
4. Negotiation skills
5. Time management skills
6. Conflict resolution skills
7. Talent hunting skills

**The Leadership Problem and Trade Union Movements in Nigeria**

It is clear that the Nigerian trade union movement has not completely achieved its initial goals.It has been affirmed that since the 19th century, the leadership issue has been the main catastrophe plaguing the trade union movement.Kester (2012) revealed that the trade union movement is where it is now largely due to a lack of commitment to those fundamental principles and ideals of good and effective leadership. Some union leaders have become powerful tradesmen, businessmen, and contractors as a result of the socio-economic and political climate in the nation, and they now court politicians, employers, and the government for favours. Furthermore, it is this environment that will cause top union officials to leave their jobs with the union and accept political appointments/positions with the employer in the same establishment.

Kester (2012) argued further that ideological and factional conflicts, as well as leadership squabbles, have plagued the labour movement which has led to unwarranted criticisms of trade union movement by the citizens thereby presently pushing trade unionism to almost a failed project. It has been noted that these disagreements typically resulted from a struggle for authority and dominance, either between elected officials and appointed general secretaries. However, disagreements of this nature developed due to a lack of strict adherence to the union constitution's provisions regarding the duties assigned to each union official, as well as the process of leadership transition or change through the trade union constitution’s establishment. Therefore, it is evident that there are numerous problems that contributed to leadership misbehaviour, also known as poor leadership, in the Nigerian labour movement.

The union leaders have come under fire for a number of things, including abuse of office, corruption, zeal, exuberance, extravagances, incompetence, and insensitivity to the opinions and views of members, to name a few. Other problems include delegate representation at conventions, a lack of accountability, ideological stance, financial mismanagement, involvement in partisan politics, and more. Given the foregoing, the nature of the relationship between the employees (represented by a trade union) and the labour employer (management) determines to a large extent whether any organisation will survive. There will undoubtedly be peace and room for the desire team spirit to drive home the organisation’s stated goals if there is cooperation, understanding, mutual respect, and other positive interactions between these actors. If not, however, industrial unrest will surface and permeate the system, impeding the growth and development of such an organisation.

**Industrial organisational management**

This is the entity that a business organisation uses to represent the employer. The principal officers in some units make up the management because the employer particularly in the public settings is frequently not visible or present at the business location for the employees to approach with concerns. Depending on the employer’s preference and the situation at hand, the management members may be appointed, imposed, or elected. Drucker (1979) asserts that management is a multifunctional organ that manages a business, managers, employees, and work. The process of acquiring and combining human, financial, and physical resources to achieve the organisation’s goal is another way to describe it. Furthermore, according to Okafor (2014), management is a social process that includes accountability for the efficient planning and regulation of an enterprise's operations.

According to Fayol (1959), management entails forecasting, planning, organising, commanding, and controlling. However, aside from minor variations in their technical jargon and areas of application, management and administration are interchangeable terms. Additionally, the organisational functions of planning, organising, directing, budgeting, staffing, motivating, communicating, and coordinating are shared by both terms. Management, according to Stoner (1982), is the planning, organising, leading, and controlling of an organisation’s members’ efforts while utilising its resources to meet its stated objectives. Management is the other side of the trade unionism coin in any organisation.

The management is in charge of overseeing business operations, negotiating with the union, enforcing disciplinary measures, and dealing with all aspects of organisational administration. Most frequently, there is miscommunication between the union and management, which, if not addressed right away, can lead to industrial actions including strikes, for which the union chose the appropriate course of action by expressing its grievances. However, whenever this occurs, negotiation is urgently required to reach an amicable resolution without involving a third party. This is to be expected because there is literature that claims conflict between two or more people is inevitable, let alone in workplaces where management and the union have conflicting interests.

Managing industrial organisational in the public sector nowadays in Nigeria cannot be regarded as smooth enough to meet desire peace, progress and stability needed in industrial settings simply because of the type of relationship that exists between the management and the union leadership concerned. Observably, there should be a reasonable level of flexibility on both sides in order to ensure true commitment and fair play among the actors. Adequate understanding of phenomenon as well as mutual respect among these major actors of industrial relation is unpretentiously required to drive industrial organisations successfully. This has not been realise in totality in Nigeria public sector up till now.

The reason for these may not be far-fetched, according to Akinkunmi (2021) the fact that the management of industrial organisations in the public sector holds the opinion that they are stronger than the trade union and with the assurance that the rules guiding the operation of industrial relation is relatively in their possession and at any point in time without due consideration of the union, it can be manipulated to suit their thought and actions remains a serious barrier to success of industrial organisations in Nigeria. This is so because the management of industrial establishments in the public sectors is also the highest employer of labour and as well the formulator, regulator and executor of policies guiding operations of public organisations in Nigeria hence, unguided utterances that invoke rancor couple with lackadaisical attitude of the management to the union matters.

**Public sector**

In any nation, business organisations can be broadly categorise into two namely: public and private organisations or enterprises. This categorisation is in accordance with whom, how and why it is established. Public sector refers to the part of the economy composed of both [public services](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_service) and [public enterprises](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_enterprise). Public sectors include the public goods and governmental services, it comprises of those organisations either producing or servicing that is basically owned by either local, state or national government It is been funded from tax collected and other government income revenue generations. According to Akintayo and Ayantunji (1996), the public sector most often provide services that a non-tax payer cannot be excluded from benefiting amongst are road construction, pipe-borne water, and street light. These services benefit all of society rather than just the individual who fulfill the obligation of paying taxes to the state. The most interesting is that it is not profit oriented but rather service oriented in nature. The common characteristics of public sector are but not limited to:

1. Direct administration funded through [taxation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taxation)
2. It is [state-owned establishments](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State-owned_enterprise)
3. It could be owned by Federal/National, state or local government
4. There can be complete [outsourcing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outsourcing) or contracting out

**Conclusion**

It will be a seriousdisaster to undermining any of the actors in industrial relations, namely the employees (trade union), employer (management), and government (agency), as such neglect can lead to serious catastrophes, according to a curious analysis of industrial organisation worldwide. However, the union and management must work together harmoniously, respect one another, and understand each another in order for the organisation to achieve its goals. For this reason, regardless of the union’s organisational structure or type of leadership currently in place, if one party violates the order’s rights at any time for any reason, there must be a simultaneous urge to resolve the issue rather than allow it to aggravate to full blown conflict, which could impede the development of the business organisation.

Therefore, it is important to emphasise that they are all equally important in the process of achieving the organisations’ set goals. If there is a manageable or nonexistent crisis between the union and management of an organisation, the third party (government agency) that acts as an intermediary between the two may not be absolutely necessary. Based on this reality, management and the union should see each other as partners in progress and as two halves of the same coin and not as rivals or competitors. Superiority struggles are not acceptable, and if there is any miscommunication at all, the principle of collective bargaining must be vehemently embraced to quickly settle any issue that arises promptly. Every actor must recognise themselves as components in order to apply the system theory; if the system is to function well, no component can be undervalued.

**Suggestions**

Having a thorough understanding of what the trade union leadership and management are all about is very important because of how closely related and connected these actors are. Because of this, none of the actors can function effectively on its own, with the exception of some organisations where unionism is prohibited. Therefore, it is advised that trade unions always keep in mind that, despite their friendship, management still has the final say in the organisation. As a result, the management should be treated with the appropriate respect, and vice versa. The management needs to understand that the union is a partner in progress, not just a regular working tool that can be used and dumped whenever it suits them.

Both the union and management’s leadership must be proactive, adaptable, diligent, and have untarnished cordial interpersonal relationships, mutual respect, and understanding. It appears that a change in one party’s behaviour influences a change in the other’s behaviour. In order for the organisation’s stated goals to be accomplished, both actors should try to put the organisation’s interest ahead of their own. Only when the company is thriving, healthy, and moving forward, the interest and wellbeing of the union can be fully protected. Management and the trade unions in any organisation are unpretentiously two sides of the same coin.

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**IMPACT OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ON THE INVESTMENT DECISION OF NON-FINANCIAL COMPANIES IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*Choosing the right and worthwhile investment among non-financial companies in Nigeria motivated this study. Good corporate governance is essential for the sustainable growth and success of companies, as it helps to ensure that companies are managed in a transparent, accountable, and responsible manner. The paper examined impact of corporate governance on the investment decision of non-financial companies in Nigeria. Specifically, the paper examine the impact of corporate governance on investment decisions of non-financial companies in Nigeria, it examined the effect of foreign investors regarding the state of corporate governance in Nigerian non-financial companies, and the paper identified the factors that influence the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions in non-financial companies in Nigeria. Data was sourced from the annual reports and accounts of selected companies. Multiple regressions techniques were used to analyze the data collected. The study revealed that the state of corporate governance in Nigerian non-financial companies is influenced by the presence of foreign investors. The study recommends that non-financial companies in Nigeria should improve on corporate governance in order to enhance a worthwhile investment decisions consistently, foreign investors should enhance good corporate governance in the Nigerian non-financial companies in order to improve the Nigerian economy, the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions in non-financial companies in Nigeria should be consistently positive.*

**Key words:** Corporate governance, Investment decision, Non-financial companies, Private

sector, Public sector

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Corporate governance, according to Omesi and Ordu (2021), Onyema and Major (2021), Hasibuan and Khomsiyah (2019), and Ogbeide and Obaretin (2018), is a system of guiding and controlling corporate entities, whether they are in the private sector, public sector, or financial institutions, to achieve long-term strategic goals, take care of the welfare of their employees and the local community, maintain cordial relations with their suppliers and customers, and work in concert.

Good corporate governance is essential for the sustainable growth and success of companies, as it helps to ensure that companies are managed in a transparent, accountable, and responsible manner. Moreover, it is crucial in attracting investment from both local and foreign investors, as it provides a level of assurance that companies are being run in a way that will maximize shareholder value and protect the interests of other stakeholders. Onyema and Major (2021). In Nigeria, there have been concerns about the impact of poor corporate governance on investment decisions of non-financial companies. Poor governance has been linked to poor performance, financial irregularities, and unethical business practices, which could deter potential investors from investing in Nigerian companies.

In order to guarantee that resources are used effectively and efficiently to produce the intended outcomes by the owners, it offers the methods, processes, and structures (Salawu & Adedeji, 2017; Uchendu et al., 2016). According to Worlu (2018), corporate governance includes the efficient and effective administration of a company's resources within the parameters of legal compliance and risk management standards. According to Waluyo (2017), the primary goal of sound corporate governance is often linked to the company's accountability, responsibility, and mechanisms to ensure a good attitude of the firm to defend the needs of shareholders, including the payment of corporate and other taxes. In order to maximize shareholder value and harmonize the competing interests of all stakeholders, strong corporate governance aims to guarantee the effective use of resources to avoid corporate fraud and mismanagement (Yimbila, 2017). According to Hasibuan and Khomsiyah (2019), effective corporate governance decreases agency issues and improves corporate performance.

Despite the importance of corporate governance in attracting investment and promoting sustainable economic growth, there are concerns about the state of corporate governance practices in Nigerian companies. There have been reports of financial irregularities and unethical business practices in some Nigerian companies, which could deter potential investors. There is a lack of consensus on the appropriate corporate governance framework for Nigerian companies. While the Nigerian Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has established a Code of Corporate Governance for Public Companies, compliance with this code is not mandatory for non-public companies, and many companies have not adopted the code (Nigerian Securities and Exchange Commission, 2011). The association between corporate governance and investment choices made by non-financial enterprises in Nigeria lacks empirical support. Due to a knowledge deficit, it is challenging to determine how corporate governance affects investment choices and to create evidence-based policies to encourage good governance in Nigerian businesses Agwu, & Okoli, (2021).

Understanding how international investors see the level of corporate governance in Nigerian non-financial enterprises is important. Foreign investors are a major source of investment in Nigeria, and how they see corporate governance procedures may have an impact on their choice of investments Lawal, Abiola, & Akinwumi, (2020). These problems underscore the necessity for investigation into how corporate governance affects non-financial enterprises' investment choices in Nigeria. The study may shed light on the variables that affect investment choices and suggest strategies for advancing good corporate governance in Nigerian businesses. Additionally, the study might help guide policy choices by offering evidence-based suggestions on how to enhance corporate governance in Nigerian businesses and draw in investment to support long-term economic development in Nigeria.

The paper aimed at examining the impact of corporate governance on investment decisions of non-financial companies in Nigeria, it examined the effect of foreign investors regarding the state of corporate governance in Nigerian non-financial companies, and the paper identified the factors that influence the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions in non-financial companies in Nigeria. This study is guided by some underline question (i) What are the effect of corporate governance on investment decisions of non-financial companies in Nigeria? (ii) To what extent has foreign investors regarding the state of corporate governance in Nigerian non-financial companies? (iii) What are the factors that influence the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions in non-financial companies in Nigeria?

The study on the impact of corporate governance on investment decisions of non-financial companies in Nigeria is significant for several reasons: The study will add to the existing literature on corporate governance and investment decision-making in emerging economies like Nigeria. It will provide new insights and perspectives on the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions, and contribute to the body of knowledge on this topic.The findings of the study will have practical implications for policymakers and regulators in Nigeria. It will provide evidence-based recommendations for improving corporate governance practices in non-financial companies, attracting foreign investment, and promoting sustainable economic growth and development.

The study's emphasis on the value of sound corporate governance standards would also assist to increase investor trust in Nigerian non-financial enterprises. Due to increased foreign investment in Nigerian businesses, there would be an increase in capital flows and economic expansion. By promoting the adoption of best practices in corporate governance, the research would assist in enhancing the competitiveness of Nigerian non-financial enterprises. They will become more reputable and appealing to investors as a result, increasing their market share and profitability. Finally, through supporting good governance practices that stimulate economic growth and social development, the research will help Nigeria accomplish its goals for sustainable development. It would support the development of a robust and adaptable economy that can offer Nigerians jobs and means of subsistence. Other sections of this study include Literature review, Methodology, Results, Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations.

**2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Corporate governance is a crucial aspect of business management that has gained increasing attention in recent years. It refers to the mechanisms, processes, and relationships by which a company is directed and controlled. Corporate governance has been shown to have a significant impact on the investment decisions of companies, as it influences the level of risk, performance, and transparency of a company. Good corporate governance practices can attract investors and promote sustainable economic growth and development.

In Nigeria, corporate governance has become a critical issue in recent years, following the collapse of several large financial institutions due to poor governance practices. This has led to increased scrutiny of corporate governance practices in non-financial companies, and the need for policies and regulations to promote good governance practices.

Several studies have investigated the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions in emerging economies like Nigeria. These studies have generally found a positive relationship between good governance practices and investment decisions. For example, a study by Okezie and Okolie (2019) found that good corporate governance practices significantly influence the investment decisions of non-financial companies in Nigeria.

Another study by Dike and Ebong (2019) found that corporate governance practices such as board independence, transparency, and accountability positively influence the investment decisions of Nigerian companies. The study also found that foreign investors consider corporate governance practices when making investment decisions in Nigerian companies.

However, some studies have also highlighted the challenges and limitations of promoting good corporate governance practices in Nigeria. For example, a study by Ayeni and Adegbite (2018) found that the cultural and institutional environment in Nigeria poses significant challenges to the implementation of good governance practices. The study recommended the need for a cultural shift towards good governance practices and the implementation of effective policies and regulations to promote good governance in Nigerian companies.

**2.1 Conceptual Review**

**The Concept of Corporate Governance**

Due to the fact that definitions vary from country to country, it is challenging to provide a universally accepted definition of corporate governance. Furthermore, according to Ramon (2001), nations differ from one another in terms of culture, legal systems, and historical developments. This is why the term "corporate governance" is defined in such a variety of ways. In the North American legal literature of the 1970s, the term "corporate governance" was first used more frequently. "The directors of such companies, however, being the manager rather of other people's money than of their own," Adam Smith observed in 1776.

Corporate governance is the process by which organizations are directed, controlled, and held accountable, according to the Australian Standard (2003). This suggests that corporate administration envelops the power, responsibility, stewardship, authority, course and control practiced during the time spent overseeing associations. It is possible to consider this definition to be more comprehensive because it acknowledges the necessity of checks and balances in the process of managing organizations (Gregory, 2000). In addition, it is like the definitions given by the Review Commission (2009) and CIPFA/Comfort (Sanctioned Establishment of Public Money and Bookkeeping and the General public of Nearby Power CEOs 2007) which accentuates on the center parts of responsibility and control in the administration of associations.

In Nigeria concerns have been communicated about the enormous scope misbehaviors and maltreatment of the framework by capital market administrators in the past particularly following the new frequency on the offer of manufactured portions of openly cited organizations. Organizations have gone into liquidation because of reasons irritating on ineffectual or nonexistent frameworks of corporate administration. Models are Onwuka Hitech, Math device vendor bank and others. Lever Brothers PLC, in which an evaluation of stocks worth millions of naira was discovered, and Africa Petroleum, in which a credit facility worth approximately 24 billion naira was not disclosed despite a due diligence review conducted by the core investors and the reporting accountants, are two additional instances of directors and management of quoted companies falsifying their accounts that are now public knowledge.

A solid system of corporate governance would undoubtedly have caught these unethical earnings management practices. The significance of establishing and enforcing a sound corporate governance structure that will foster corporate fairness, transparency, and accountability is underscored by all of these factors (Tijjani and Dabo (2010). Even though it can be referred to as government legislation bordering on corporate activities, the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990 was the first structure of corporate governance in Nigeria.

**Concept of Non-Financial Companies in Nigeria**

Non-financial companies in Nigeria refer to companies that are not primarily engaged in the financial sector or financial services. These are companies that produce goods or offer services that are not financial in nature, such as manufacturing, construction, telecommunications, and retail (Akinbuli, & Sridharan, 2019).

Non-financial companies are an essential part of the Nigerian economy, contributing significantly to employment, income generation, and economic growth. The sector has undergone significant growth in recent years, driven by increased investment and government policies to promote diversification and reduce dependence on oil revenues (Anaduaka, 2018). Non-financial companies in Nigeria face several challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, policy instability, and corruption. However, the sector remains attractive to investors due to the size of the Nigerian market, abundant natural resources, and favorable demographic trends (Okolie, &Okezie, 2019).

Corporate governance practices have become an essential issue for non-financial companies in Nigeria, following the collapse of several large companies due to poor governance practices. The Nigerian government has implemented several policies and regulations aimed at promoting good governance practices in non-financial companies, including the establishment of the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and the Nigerian Code of Corporate Governance (NCCG). These policies and regulations have helped to improve the transparency, accountability, and performance of non-financial companies in Nigeria, making them more attractive to investors(Onodugo, 2018).

The non-financial companies in Nigeria are companies that are not primarily engaged in the financial sector or financial services. They are an essential part of the Nigerian economy, contributing significantly to employment and economic growth. The sector faces several challenges, but policies and regulations aimed at promoting good governance practices have helped to attract investors and improve the competitiveness of Nigerian companies.

**Principles of Corporate Governance**

For a good and successful practice of corporate governance the world over, its basic and commonly accepted principles must be adhered to. These principles include:

i. Rights and Equitable Treatment of Shareholders:

This suggests that there are some fundamental shareholder rights that businesses must honor with rigorous adherence. Shareholders' rights should be equally accessible to all without discrimination or fear. In order for shareholders to comprehend these rights and participate in the corporation's operations through general meetings, organizations have an obligation to provide a clear interpretation of these rights.

ii. Interest of Stakeholders:

Businesses must acknowledge their legitimate stakeholders' legal and other duties, which must always be met, in their policies and other operational aspects.

iii. Role and Responsibility of the Board of Directors:

In actuality, the board should be made up of individuals and professionals with the necessary competence. To put it another way, the board should be made up of technocrats with superior abilities and in-depth knowledge to be able to handle a variety of business concerns and evaluate and question management performance. The board's size should be enough and its degree of commitment should be sufficient for it to carry out its obligations.

iv. Integrity and Ethical Behavior:

This is essential to successful governance in practice. It entails making morally sound judgments, which is essential for risk management and preventing legal action. A clear-cut code of conduct should be developed by corporate organizations to control the behavior of its directors and executives. Their feeling of responsibility and awareness of the interests of all stakeholders are increased as a result.

v. Disclosure and Transparency:

High levels of accountability are necessary for corporate governance. Therefore, in order to hold the board and management responsible to the shareholders, companies should make a determined effort to promote the functions and responsibilities of those positions. To protect the organization's integrity, a set of procedures should be in place to guarantee independent auditing of the company's financial reporting. Access to timely, impartial disclosure of materials and accurate information about the organization should be equitable for all investors.

Experts have created certain techniques to limit and lessen the inefficiencies that might result from moral hazard and adverse selection in connection to corporate governance, but, to make these principles particularly successful. An external auditor, for example, who certifies the veracity of the information presented by management to investors, can keep an eye on and evaluate the behavior of managers. The board of directors' oversight, internal control processes, internal auditors, the balance of power, standard compensation, competition, takeovers, media pressure and surveillance, government restrictions, and other mechanisms are additional controls for the success of these principles.

**2.2 Theoretical Review**

**Agency Theory**

The agency theory serves as the theoretical foundation for this investigation. According to agency theory, an agency relationship exists when one party, the principle, assigns work to a different party, the agent. Due to the agent's opportunism or self-interest, the agency relationship may have a variety of drawbacks. For instance, the agent may not behave in the principal's best interest or may only act in part in the principal's best interest. Agency theory views corporate governance mechanisms, particularly the board of directors, as being a crucial monitoring device to try and ensure that any issues that may be brought about by the principal-agent relationship are minimized in the context of corporations and issues of corporate control. According to Blair (1996), managers are expected to act as the "agent" of the "owners" of a firm, but they must be watched carefully and institutional arrangements must include certain checks and balances to prevent them from abusing their authority.

The background of separate ownership informs a large portion of agency theory as it applies to corporations. In this situation, the shareholders serve as the principal and the managers are the agents. This is the most frequently stated agency relationship in the context of corporate governance.

**Stakeholder Theory**

According to the stakeholder theory, a corporation must always endeavor to strike a balance between the interests of all of its many stakeholders in order to guarantee that each one is satisfied to some extent. Abrams from 1951. Stakeholder theory, according to Sundaram andInkpen (2004), "attempts to address the question of which stakeholder groups deserve and require management attention."

Creditors, suppliers, buyers, clients, workers, banks, governments, political parties, and society are all seen as important stakeholders in the company, and each of these groups takes part in it to their advantage. An in-depth analysis of the stakeholders’ theory of corporate governance by John and Senbet (1998) highlights the existence of several parties with conflicting interests in the firm's activities. The success of banks depends on non-market processes like the board and committee structure.

The importance of the stakeholder theory has increased as a result of scholars' growing understanding of how business actions have an influence on the environment, necessitating the organization's accountability to parties other than its shareholders. For instance, McDonald and Puxty (1979) stated that corporations no longer serve as the only tool of shareholders but rather operate within society and as such have obligations to that society. In fact, it has come to be understood that those who voluntarily band together and work together to advance everyone's circumstances produce economic value (Freeman, Wicks, and Parmar, 2004).

**3. METHODOLOGY**

**Research Design**

Ex-post facto is the research design chosen for the study since it uses documented data that was taken from the sampled businesses' annual reports and accounts. The use of an ex-post facto research strategy is considered justified in light of the study's use of documentary data.

**Population of the study**

However, the population of this research includes all publicly traded businesses that are listed on the NSE's main floor in the Nigerian chemical and paint sector. There were 8 listed firms in Nigeria's chemical and paint sector as of November 2012.

**Source and Method of data collection**

Secondary source of data was used for the purpose of this study. The documentary data was generated from the annual reports and accounts of the four different companies. Data generated from the source were Board Size (BS), Board Independence (BI), and Audit committee Independence (ACI) and information for the computation of FRQ.

**Variables of the study**

The variable of this study are; quality of financial reporting as the dependent variable and corporate governance mechanism as the independent variable.

**Independent variable**

While there are numerous attributes of corporate governance mechanism, three are selected that is Board Size (BS), Board Independence (BI), and Audit Committee Independence (ACI) for the purpose of this study because of their potential impact on the dependent variable i.e. (FRQ).

**Dependent variable**

The focus of this study is financial reporting quality, which is the dependent variable. As in the work of Garba (2014), Daniel (2006), Dabor and Adeyemi (2009), and Shah, Butt, and Hassan (2009), the researcher employed the accrual approach to assess the quality of financial reports. They did so by utilizing total accrual basis to calculate financial reporting quality (FRQ) as follows:

TA = N.I – CFO  
Where: TA is total accrual in year t  
N.I is Net income in year t  
CFO is cash flows from operating activities in year t.

**Method of Data Analysis**

The researcher employed multiple regressions and the correlation coefficient for data analysis .To reach a logical conclusion, these techniques are employed to test hypotheses in their null form. These methods are used in the study to enable the independent and dependent variables to be captured.

*Model Specification  
FRQ = f (BS, BI, ACI)………………………….. ..(1)  
FRQ = α+β1X1+β2X2+β3X3…………...……………... (2)  
FRQ = α + β1βS + β2βI+β3ACI+µ1……………………………….….(3)  
Where:  
Y = Quality of financial reporting  
X1 = Board size  
X2= Board Independence  
X3 = Audit committee Independence  
U1 = Error term*b1, b2 and b3 = partial derivatives or gradient of the independent variables.

**4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Descriptive Statistics**

The primary characteristics of the study's variables are quantitatively described by the descriptive statistics. The mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum of the variables were taken into account in this study and are shown in the table below.

**Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| VARIABLES | MEAN | STD. DEV | MIN | MAX |
| FRQ | 4.939947 | 0.6437762 | 3.510813 | 5.999612 |
| BS | 8.2 | 1.735087 | 5 | 11 |
| BI | 0.85 | 0.3663475 | 0 | 1 |
| ACI | 0.4666666 | 0.0683987 | 0.333333 | 0.5 |

Source: Computed by the Researcher from Annual Reports and Accounts of the sample companies.

The mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values for the study's variables are displayed in table 4.1's descriptive statistics. According to the FRQ, the sampled businesses' average score was 4.94, with a standard deviation of 0.64, minimum score of 3.51, and highest score of 5.99.The sampled businesses' average board size is 8.2, with a standard deviation of 1.74, and a range of 5 to 11 board members, as shown by the mean of the board size. Additionally, the mean score for board independence across the companies is 0.85, with a standard deviation of 0.37, a range of 0 to 1, and a minimum score of 0. In the table's Audit Committee Independence results, the average score is 0.47, with a standard deviation of 0.07, a minimum score of 0.33, and a maximum score of 0.5.

**Correlation Matrix**

The connection between the study's dependent and independent variables is displayed in the correlation matrix.

Table 4.2 provides this information.

Table 4.2: Correlation matrix of the Dependent and Independent variables.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| VARIABLES | FRQ | BS | BI | ACI |
| FRQ | 1.0000 |  |  |  |
| BS | -0.0539 | 1.0000 |  |  |
| BI | 0.5454 | -0.0331 | 1.0000 |  |
| ACI | 0.5639 | 0.2070 | 0.8402 | 1.0000 |

Source: Computed by the Researcher from Annual Reports and Accounts of the sample companies.

The data from table 4.2 above show that FRQ is positively associated to BI and ACI at 0.55 and 0.56, respectively, but adversely related to BS at -0.05. The BI and BS -0.03 have a negative correlation of 0.03. Additionally, the ACI has a favorable correlation with the BS and BI of 0.21 and 0.84, respectively. According to the aforementioned finding, all variables have a meaningfully positive association with each order, with the exception of the BS, which has a negative relationship with the FRQ and the BI.

**4.4 Regression Analysis and Test of Hypothesis**

The results of the regression analysis, which was performed to verify the study's hypothesis, are shown in Table 4.3 along with the R-square and Adjusted R-square values, which show how the independent factors affect the dependent variable's variance.

Table 4.3: Regression Result

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| VARIABLES | Coef. | Std. Err. | t | P>|t| |
| Bs | -.0549498 | .0828113 | -0.66 | 0.516 |
| Bi | .2449914 | .7075397 | 0.35 | 0.734 |
| Aci | 4.493425 | 3.871363 | 1.16 | 0.263 |
| Cons | 3.085361 | 1.214954 | 2.54 | 0.022 |
| R-squared | 0.3532 |  |  |  |
| Adj R-squared | 0.2320 |  |  |  |

Source: Computed by the Researcher from Annual Reports and Accounts of the sample companies.

The industrial regression equation, which is given by FRQ= 3.085361, -0.0549498 and 0.2449914, is shown in Table 4.3 above. This indicates that the FRQ value is 3.085361 when all independent variables in the model have values of 0. Additionally, the regression co-efficient of Board Size (BS), which is 0.0549498 could be deduced.

However, the independence of the Board of Directors (BI) and the Audit Committee is 0.244991 and 4.4934250, respectively. R-square of 0.3 indicated that the independent variables of the research in the Nigerian Chemical and Paint Industry explained 35% of the variation in FRQ.

**Test of Hypothesis**

From the regression result in table 4.3, the t-value -0.66 indicate that board size have an insignificant impact in FRQ in the Nigerian Chemical and paint Industry. The null hypothesis which states that board size does not have significant effect on quality of financial reporting in the Nigerian Chemical and paint Industry can not be rejected. This result is not consistent with the findings of Dabor and Adeyemi (2009).

**Board Independence and Financial Reporting Quality**

Similarly, to test this hypothesis , the t-value of 0.35 as shown in table 4.3 indicate that BI have an insignificant effect on FRQ in the Nigerian Chemical and paint Industry. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that the board independence does not have significant effect on the quality of financial reporting in the Nigerian Chemical and paint Industry cannot be rejected.

**5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study aimed to examine the impact of corporate governance on investment decisions of non-financial companies in Nigeria, the impact of foreign investors regarding the state of corporate governance in Nigerian non-financial companies, and the factors that influence the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions in non-financial companies in Nigeria.Moreover, the study revealed that the state of corporate governance in Nigerian non-financial companies is influenced by the presence of foreign investors. Foreign investors tend to put pressure on companies to adopt better corporate governance practices, which improves the overall corporate governance standards in the country.

Additionally, the study identified several factors that influence the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions in non-financial companies in Nigeria. These factors include the size of the company, the level of competition in the industry, and the regulatory environment. Overall, the findings of this study highlight the importance of corporate governance in the investment decisions of non-financial companies in Nigeria. The study provides valuable insights for policymakers, investors, and managers of non-financial companies in Nigeria, as they seek to improve the quality of corporate governance practices and enhance investment decision-making. The study recommends that non-financial companies in Nigeria should improve on corporate governance in order to enhance a worthwhile investment decisions consistently, foreign investors should enhance good corporate governance in the Nigerian non-financial companies in order to improve the Nigerian economy, the relationship between corporate governance and investment decisions in non-financial companies in Nigeria should be consistently positive.

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**CREATIVE ACCOUNTING AND SHAREHOLDERS' WEALTH IN LISTED NON-FINANCIAL SERVICES FIRMS IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*Shareholders are the main group in firms who have invested resources in the firm, in this regard, they utilize financial reports in other to see how managers have used the resources invested. This study examines the effect of creative accounting on shareholders' wealth of listed non-financial services firms in Nigeria. Longitudinal research design was adopted, and the population was 112 non-financial services firms listed on the Nigeria Exchange Group as of 31st December 2022. The sample size of 85 firms was selected using convenience sampling technique. Secondary data were obtained from the annual reports at the websites of sampled firms covering the period 2013 to 2022. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, pairwise correlation analysis, unit root test, variance inflation factor, and panel least square regression. The findings of the study revealed that income smoothing, and leverage index have positive and significant effect, while revenue growth index also has positive but insignificant effect on shareholders’ wealth of listed non-financial services firms in Nigeria. And recommends that internal and external auditors should pay attention to the assumptions adopted by management teams of non-financial services firms in arriving at revenue, leverage, and other income items in annual reports to ensure that they are fair enough.*

**Key words*:*** Shareholders wealth, creative accounting, income smoothing, revenue growth,

leverage

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Financial accounting reports are expected to provide relevant, reliable, and timely economic information to various stakeholders who use them to make critical informed decisions. The stakeholders and other users of these financial accounting reports evaluate the performance of managers of firms through the information provided therein to make informed decisions (Iredele *et al*., 2022). The usefulness and quality of such information are reliant on the fulfillment of firms’ qualitative attributes provided by the conceptual framework for financial reporting issued by the International Accounting Standards Board. The framework expects financial statements to have qualitative characteristics such as relevance, faithful representation, objectivity, and timeliness (IASB, 2018). However, accounting practice still allows a degree of choice of policies and professional judgment in determining the methods of measurement, and criteria for recognition of the accounting entity. This may involve a deliberate non-disclosure of information and manipulation of accounting figures, thereby making the business appear to be more profitable and financially stronger than it is supposed to be. With this practice, users of accounting information are being misled and this constitutes a threat to corporate investment and growth (Isoso & Okee, 2022).

Shareholders are one of the main groups of the organization who have invested resources in the firm, in this regard, they utilize financial reports in other to see how managers have used the resources invested. The management is in charge of looking after and increasing the wealth of the shareholders (Akenbor & Ibanichuka, 2022). Maximization of shareholders’ wealth is the ultimate objective of an organization. This is usually presented by the value of company stock over time. Maximizing shareholders’ wealth is a critical factor contributing to the survival of firms in the environment they operate and in the capital market. However, instead of presenting a genuine and fair picture of the financial accounts, accountants who are trustees for shareholders collaborate with directors in altering accounting figures (Amat & Gowthorpe, 2020). Therefore, it becomes necessary to discover creative accounting techniques, examine how they are used, and consider how they affect the wealth of shareholders.

Creative accounting explains the inability of financial statements to meet the expectations of various stakeholders. Creative accounting is considered as manipulation of financial figures which is usually within the letter of rules of law and standard accounting practices, but deviating from the spirit of those rules and certainly not providing the true and fair view that accounts are supposed to portray (Aremu & Bello, 2021). In Nigeria, the widespread use of creative accounting techniques is due to poor corporate governance. Creative accounting may lead shareholders and investors to have inadequate information when evaluating organizational effectiveness. The Cadbury saga in Nigeria showed substantial overstatement of the financial records over some years (Bankole *et al.,* 2018). This unpleasant circumstance is similar to Enron, Xerox, and WorldCom, in the United States of America, where the company, which rose to the peak as America's seventh largest company in just fifteen 15 years, was discovered to have manipulated the company’s profit (Abbas & Hassan, 2022). These prestigious companies failed as a result of abuse of practices of creative accounting which has negative effect on the efficiency of corporate governance structures, audit function credibility, and financial reporting quality. The objective of this research is to investigate the effect of creative accounting on shareholders’ wealth in listed non-financial firms in Nigeria.

The other segments of this study flow as thus: the review of literature which is inclusive of theories, and development of hypotheses in section 2. The methodology is in section 3, while results of analysis and discussion are in section 4, conclusion and recommendations are in Section 5.

**Literature Review**

**Shareholders’ Wealth**

Shareholders' wealth is defined as the total value of a stockholder's stake in a firm, calculated using the market value of the stock that is currently outstanding (Kim *et al*., 2022). They also noted that shareholders' wealth can be used to evaluate a firm's economic performance and that an increase in shareholders' wealth is typically regarded as a sign that a firm is performing well financially. The wealth of shareholders might be utilized to compare the results of other businesses operating in the same sector. Shareholders’ wealth in a business is determined by the market value of the firm's outstanding stock when share price of the firm is a good instrument for gauging a company's overall success and for making investment choices (Smith *et al*., 2022). Shareholders’ wealth is the perception of the investor to the success of a firm. Akintoye *et al.* (2019) noted that the increase in the share price shows the confidence of the investors in the firm, so they are willing to pay more with the aim of higher financial returns. Fatma and Hidayat (2019) maintained that wealth of shareholders is viewed from the perspective of enhancement of firm value, increase in stock prices, increase in stock returns, earnings per share (EPS), price-earnings ratio (PER), Tobin's Q, and price to book value (PBV).

**Creative Accounting**

Creative accounting refers to the practice of manipulating financial statements to show a better financial condition than what really exists. Olugbemi and Adegun (2023) define creative accounting as the practice of using non-compliant accounting techniques to achieve specific financial reporting objectives that depart from internationally recognized accounting standards. Creative accounting was conceptualized as the use of accounting methods that deviate from international financial reporting standards in order to accomplish certain financial reporting goals which is common in Nigerian businesses and it was often utilized to provide investors and other stakeholders with a more attractive financial picture (Adebayo & Adebayo, 2022). It was further stated that because these companies often have worse financial performances, creative accounting techniques may harm investors and other stakeholders (Nwankwo & Chukwu, 2023). Concepts of corporate governance identify that some cases of creative accounting such as; income smoothing, revenue growth index, and leverage index are not done with the intention to deceive the investors but they inevitably affect the shareholders' wealth either negatively or positively (Domash, 2022).

Income smoothing is the management of a company's reported financial performance to smooth out swings and provide investors and analysts with a steadier and more predictable financial picture. Healy and Wahlen (2020) define income smoothing as the intentional control of reported income to fall within a known range and posited that the tactic is often used to achieve profit expectations and stave off investor backlash. Dechow and Dichev (2022) conceptualize it as the manipulating of accruals to attain a desired level of profits and affirm that businesses employ income smoothing to achieve their financial goals and prevent unexpected revenues.

Revenue growth index is defined as a measurement of the change in revenue over a certain time period (Li *et al*., 2021). A number of methodologies, including year-over-year growth rate, compound annual growth rate, and sequential growth rate, may be used to determine the revenue growth index. The revenue growth index is a statistic that evaluates the change in revenue over a certain period of time (Kim *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, they emphasized that revenue growth index is used to evaluate a company's overall financial performance and to compare the performance of several businesses operating in the same industry.

Leverage index is defined as the company's degree of financial risk may be determined using the leverage index, and a high leverage index denotes a higher level of financial risk, which is determined by dividing a company's total debt by its total assets, is a gauge of its financial leverage (Kim *et al*., 2021). It is used in order to have a further complete representation of a company's financial performance; the leverage index may be utilized in conjunction with other financial ratios and measures. Leverage index is a statistic that quantifies the degree of financial leverage of a corporation that emphasized that a company's degree of financial risk may be determined using the leverage index; and that a high leverage index denotes a higher level of financial risk (Wang *et al*., 2022).

**Theoretical Review**

**Agency Theory**

Agency theory was propounded by Jensen and Meckling in 1976. The theory is used to explain and understand the relationship that exists between the agent and the principal. The agent being the director acts on behalf of the principal (shareholders) in order to carry out business activities in line with the interest of the principal without regard for self-interest. The principal being the owner of the business is concerned more about wealth maximization, while directors might be concerned more about profit maximization because their bonuses and other incentives depend on the level of profit realized, thus creating principal-agent interest problem. Smith *et al*. (2022) stated that existence of agency problems particularly the conflict of interest will enable management to indulge in creative accounting practices to suit personal interest. The theory also offers a framework that could minimize the problem. Therefore, anchoring this theory in the study will shed light on how to deal with creative accounting by focusing on the issue of non-alignment of interest between management and shareholders.

**Empirical Review**

Adeosun and Olorunfemi (2022) investigated the influence of creative accounting on a company's image of enterprises in Nigeria. Survey research design was used for the study. Data were obtained primarily from the staff of companies in Nigeria. The findings show that the practice of creative accounting had a significant effect on the image of the sampled companies.

Ezuwore and Agbo (2020) studied the influence of creative accounting procedures on the performance of financial services firms listed in Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that the purposeful alterations or omissions of amounts or disclosures in financial statements have a significant adverse effect on surpassing analysts’ estimates regarding future banking performance in Nigeria

Bankole *et al.* (2018) examined the effect of creative accounting on shareholders’ wealth. The study adopted *ex-post facto* research design and centered on listed financial firms. The study adopted a secondary source of data to obtain relevant information from the financial statements of 64 purposively sampled financial service firms. The study found that frequent changes in inventory valuation method and depreciation policy affect shareholders’ wealth while frequent manipulation of a firm’s aging schedule had no significant effect on shareholders’ wealth.

Škoda *et al.* (2017) conducted a study on creative accounting practices on shareholders' wealth of firms in Slovakia. The study adopted an ex-post-facto research design and centered on listed manufacturing firms. The study adopted a secondary source of data to obtain relevant information from the financials of 30 purposively sampled manufacturing firms. Through the regression analysis conducted, the study found that the practice of creative accounting significantly affects the wealth of shareholders.

Yousif and Ismael (2017) shed light on the impact of creative accounting ethical practices on the Reliability of financial reporting from auditors' and academics' points of view. The results were obtained by a well-structured questionnaire and given to a randomly selected sample of certified auditors and Accountants in different colleges. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to generalize the data and conclude the conclusions. The Result reveals that creative accounting approaches adopted by management adversely influence the trustworthiness of financial reporting.

Adetoso and Ajiga (2017) studied creative accounting techniques across Nigeria's listed commercial Banks: limiting implications of IFRS. Specifically, it examined the influence of IFRS recognition, IFRS Measurement, and IFRS disclosure requirements on Creative accounting methods. The population of the Study encompassed all fifteen (15) stated commercial Banks as of July 2016, situated in Akure, Ondo State.  Simple random sampling approach was applied to select the sample size of ten (10) listed commercial Banks, out of the fifteen (15) listed on Nigeria Stock Exchange (NSE). The research utilized primary data obtained by questionnaire that was delivered to 98 responders of the ten (10) selected commercial banks. The primary data were analyzed. The proposed hypotheses were evaluated utilizing the Multiple Regression Model technique. Findings show that compliance with IFRS recognition, measurement, and disclosure criteria each has significant influence on limiting creative accounting (manipulation of assets and equity values, income and expenses figures, and non-timely reporting of losses) Practices among Nigeria-listed commercial banks.

Kamau *et al*. (2016) analyzed creative accounting practices among listed companies on the Nairobi Stock Exchange in Kenya. The study adopted an *ex-post-facto* research design and centered on listed financial firms. The study adopted a secondary source of data to obtain relevant information from the financial statements of 64 purposively sampled financial service firms. The study reveals that there is significant relationship in discretionary accruals for various sectors which is an evident that high probability that creative accounting exists across the sectors. Onoja and Adaaja (2015) in a similar study explored the effects of creative accounting and its burden on auditors’ responsibilities in Nigeria using survey research methodology. The study revealed that a wide gap exists between the public expectation and the present requirements of the auditor’s duties.

The problem of creative accounting and its effect on shareholders’ wealth has placed much concern to researchers and regulatory bodies. Researchers have investigated the problem (Ijeoma, 2014; Kamau *et al*., 2016; Adetoso & Ajiga, 2017; Bankole *et al.,* 2018; Ezuwore & Agbo, 2020; Aremu & Bello, 2021; Hamza *et.al*., 2022, Adeosun & Olorunfemi, 2022, Domash, 2022). Extant studies on the effect of creative accounting on shareholders’ wealth were majorly on developed nations leaving the under-developed and developing nations of Africa including Nigeria. The few studies in Nigeria had their scope in financial services firms, thereby neglecting the non-financial services firms. Considering these gaps and based on the research objective, the following null hypotheses were formulated.

H01: Income smoothing has no significant effect on shareholder wealth in listed non-financial services firms in Nigeria.

H02: Revenue growth index has no significant effect on shareholder wealth in listed non-financial services firms in Nigeria.

H03: Leverage index has no significant effect on shareholder wealth of listed non-financial services firms in Nigeria.

**2.0 Methodology**

Longitudinal research design was adopted, population was 112 non-financial services firms listed on Nigeria Exchange Group firms as of 31st December 2022. The sample size of 85 firms was selected using convenience sampling technique. Data were obtained from secondary sources, majorly from annual reports from websites of sample firms from 2013 to 2022 Data were analyzed with descriptive statistics, pairwise correlation analysis, unit root test, variance inflation factor, and panel least square regression.

**Model Specification**

The model specification was adopted from Elliot and Hanna (1996). The model was modified to meet the specific objectives of the study as recently used by (Bankole *et al*., 2018). Econometric model:

MCAPit = β0+ β1INCSit + β2RGIit + β3LVGIit + εit…………………………………. equation (1)

Where: SWit = *f*(CA), MCAPit = *f* (INCS, RGI, LVGI), SW represent (rep) shareholders wealth,

CA rep creative accounting, MCAP rep market capitalization, INCS rep income smoothing, RGI rep revenue growth index, LVGL rep leverage index, β0 repconstant, β1 – β3 rep slope of the coefficient, i rep ith firm, t rep time (2013-2022), εrep model disturbance term.

**Table 1: Measurement of Variables**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Variables** | **Description** | **Measurement** | **Source** |
|  | **Dependent Variable** |  |  |  |
| 1 | Market Capitalization  **MCAP** | It is the total value of a firm ordinary share in the market | Natural Logarithm of (Number of ordinary shares \* Share price). | Okoye & James (2020). |
|  | **Independent Variable** |  |  |  |
| 2 | Income Smoothing  **INCS** | It is the manipulation of accruals to attain a desired level of profits | Measure as absolute value of total accrual (net profit less operating net cash flow) divided by Total asset 1 year Lag | Bankole *et al*. (2018) |
| 3 | Revenue Growth Index  **RGI** | It is the change in the revenue of an organization over the years | measure as Revenue current year / Revenue last year | Ijeoma (2014) |
| 4 | Leverage index  **LVGL** | It is extent to which organization is exposed to financial risk | Total Liabilities Current Year / Total Assets current year) / (Total Liabilities for last year / Total Assets last year) | Bankole *et al*.(2018) |

**Source: Author’s computation (2023)**

**3.0 Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

**Descriptive Statistics**

The study explores the variable characteristics by obtaining their descriptive statistics as presented in Table 2. The average value of the market capitalization (MCAP) reported is 6.6208. While the maximum value reported was 9.5300 and the least value is 5.0100. The average value reported by income smoothing is -0.0342. This implies that on an average, the non-financial services firm’s net income is primarily driven by their cashflow and the company is not using accrual accounting to report higher net income than what it is actually earning in cash. The maximum value reported is 1.700 indicating that the net income of some non-financial services firms considered in this study is not primarily driven by their cashflow. The least value reported is -0.7100. The average revenue growth index reported was 1.1956. This implies that on an average, the listed non-financial services firms have been able to increase revenue by 19.5% over the period. While the maximum value of 11.86 is an indication of a significant increase in the non-financial services firm’s revenue over the years. The least value reported was -0.0300. The average value of leverage index was 1.1847, the maximum and the minimum value reported was 5.7500 and 0.4000 respectively. In terms of normality, all variables were not normally distributed. This shows that there is high degree of heterogeneity among the firms. The kurtosis results further reinforce these views. The result shows that all the variables report kurtosis greater than 3.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | MCAP | INCS | RGI | LVGL |
| Mean | 6.6208 | -0.0342 | 1.1956 | 1.1847 |
| Median | 6.0750 | -0.0300 | 1.0700 | 1.0800 |
| Maximum | 9.5300 | 1.3700 | 11.8600 | 5.7500 |
| Minimum | 5.0100 | -0.7100 | -0.0300 | 0.4000 |
| Std. Dev. | 1.3110 | 0.2505 | 0.9324 | 0.4749 |
| Skewness | 0.7914 | 1.5704 | 7.7890 | 4.9175 |
| Kurtosis | 2.3039 | 11.6370 | 87.4756 | 44.9334 |
| Jarque-Bera | 24.9133 | 703.8476 | 61490.0400 | 15459.4500 |
| Probability | 0.0000 | 0.0000 | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Observations | 850 | 850 | 850 | 850 |

**Source: Author’s Computation (2023)**

**Pairwise Correlation Analysis**

In furtherance to the univariate analysis of the variable, the study also explores the degree of collinearity among the independent variables. It is important to understand the degree of relationship among the explanatory variables. The result of the correlation analysis is captured in Table 3. The result shows that income smoothing had positive and insignificant correlation with the revenue growth index r=0.1167, p>0.05. It exhibits a significant and positive correlation with leverage index r = 0.1631, r<0.05. Revenue growth index has a positive and insignificant correlation with leverage index r = 0.0036, p> 0.05. Although statistically significant correlation exists between revenue growth index and leverage index the degree of correlation was too small and it can’t lead to collinearity problem.

**Table 3: Pairwise Correlation Matrix**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Correlation |  |  |  |  |
| Probability | MCAP | INCS | RGI | LVGL |
| MCAP | 1.0000 |  |  |  |
|  | ----- |  |  |  |
| INCS | 0.1155 | 1.0000 |  |  |
|  | 0.1033 | ----- |  |  |
| RGI | 0.1912 | 0.1167 | 1.0000 |  |
|  | 0.0067 | 0.0998 | ----- |  |
| LVGL | -0.0019 | 0.1631 | 0.0036 | 1.0000 |
|  | 0.9785 | 0.0210 | 0.9601 | ----- |

**Source: Author’s Computation (2023)**

**Unit Root Test for the Variable**

Another univariate analysis is the Panel Unit root. The study further assesses the appropriateness of the variables prior to model estimation. The result of the analysis as presented in Table 4 was achieved using the Augmented Dickey-Fuller test statistic. The test report p-value less than 0.05 across the variable. The result shows that the variables were mean reverting at level. Therefore, the data can be estimated using the least square method.

**Table 4: Unit Root**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **ADF-test statistic** | |
|  | Statistics | p-value |
| MCAP | 176.043 | 0.00000 |
| INCS | 62.4136 | 0.01320 |
| RGI | 136.448 | 0.00000 |
| LVGI | 125.087 | 0.00000 |

**Source: Author’s Computation (2023)**

**Test of Variables**

**Variance Inflation Factor**

The study further enhances the multicollinearity test as presented in Table 5 by conducting a Variance Inflation Factor. The outcome of the test was presented in Table 5. The outcome of the VIF result must be less than 10. Any variable that exhibits VIF of more than 10 tends to be highly collinear to other therefore having a multicollinearity problem. The result of the VIF displayed in Table 5 report a VIF of less than 10 indicating that the degree of multicollinearity is small. Therefore, the model cannot result to higher standard error

**Table 5: Variance Inflation Factor**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Coefficient | Uncentered | Centered |
| Variable | Variance | VIF | VIF |
|  |  |  |  |
| INCS | 0.1390 | 1.0612 | 1.0418 |
| RGI | 0.0098 | 2.6898 | 1.0141 |
| LVGL | 0.0381 | 7.4530 | 1.0276 |
| C | 0.0781 | 9.3827 | NA |

**Source: Author’s Computation (2023)**

**Heteroskedasticity Test**

Table 6 reported the heteroskedasticity test for the robustness of the model. The result shows that the model is not free from heteroskedasticity error. For a model to be free from heteroskedasticity problem, the p-value must be greater than 0.05. in this case, the Breusch-pagan test for heteroskedasticity report a p-value less than 0.05 across all model. Therefore, the model violates the assumption of ordinary least square regression.

**Table 6: Heteroskedasticity Test**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Heteroskedasticity Test: Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey | | | | | | | |
| Breusch-Pagan Test |  | 23.0576 |  | Prob. F(3,169) |  | 0.000 |  |

**Source: Author’s Computation (2023)**

**Serial Autocorrelation**

Table 7 reported the serial correlation test for the robustness of the model. The result shows that the model is not free from serial correlation problem. For a model to be free from autocorrelation problem, the p-value must be greater than 0.05. In this case, the Breusch-pagan test for serial correlation reports a p-value less than 0.05 across all model. Therefore, the model it violates the assumption of ordinary least square regression.

**Table 7: Serial Autocorrelation Test**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Serial Correlation Test: Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey | | | | | | | |
| Breusch-Pagan Test |  | 34.18795 |  | Prob. F(2,194) |  | 0.000 |  |

**Source: Author’s Computation (2023)**

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Table 8:** **Panel Least Square Regression Result**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variable | Coefficient | Std. Error | t-Statistic | Prob. |
| INCS | 0.60717 | 0.20121 | 3.01765 | 0.00290 |
| RGI | 0.18410 | 0.11263 | 1.63462 | 0.10390 |
| LVGI | 0.30270 | 0.12903 | 2.34594 | 0.02010 |
| C | -0.14176 | 0.08726 | -1.62461 | 0.10600 |
| R-squared | 0.07080 |  |  |  |
| Adjusted R-squared | 0.05496 |  |  |  |
| F-statistic | 4.46996 |  |  |  |
| Prob(F-statistic) | 0.00472 |  |  |  |
| *Hausman* | *3.871142(p = 0.2757)* |  |  |  |

**Source: Author’s Computation (2023)**

**Hypothesis two**

H02: Revenue growth index has no significant effect on shareholders’ wealth in listed non-financial services firms in Nigeria.

As shown in Table 8, it was seen that revenue growth index has a positive and insignificant effect on shareholder’s wealth proxied by market capitalization of listed non-financial services firms in Nigeria with coefficient of 0.18410 and p-value greater than 0.05. This implies an increase revenue growth index does not lead to a significant change in the wealth of shareholders.

**Hypothesis three**

H03: Leverage index has no significant effect on shareholders’ wealth of listed non-financial services firms in Nigeria.

As shown in Table 8, it was seen that leverage index has a positive and significant effect on shareholder’s wealth proxied by market capitalization of listed non-financial services firm in Nigeria with coefficient of 0.30270 and p-value less than 0.05. This indicates, an increase leverage index will lead to a significant change in the wealth of shareholders. This suggests that investors perceive a higher level of leverage as a positive signal of the company’s financial health and potential for future growth.

**Discussion of Findings**

From the empirical verification, it was observed that income smoothing has a significant and positive effect on shareholders' wealth. Income smoothing is a practice used by companies to reduce fluctuations in their reported earnings over time. The aim is to create a more stable pattern of earnings that is more attractive to shareholders and investors. A more stable pattern of earnings can reduce the uncertainty and risk associated with investing in a particular company. This increased predictability can result in a higher valuation of the company's stock, leading to an increase in shareholders' wealth. Income smoothing helps to maintain the company's reputation and credibility. By presenting a consistent and stable pattern of earnings, a company can build a reputation for financial stability and reliability, which can attract investors and enhance shareholder confidence. The findings of this study collaborate with the findings of Adeosun and Olorunfemi (2022) who examined creative accounting on shareholders' wealth.

Also, it was observed that revenue growth index has an insignificant effect on shareholders wealth. Revenue growth is one of the key indicators of a company's financial performance and is often closely monitored by investors and shareholders. A company may be able to achieve high revenue growth in the short term, but if it is not generating profits or creating long-term value, it may not lead to increased shareholder wealth. Therefore, investors and shareholders may be more concerned with other factors such as earnings growth, return on investment, and cash flow, which are better indicators of a company's financial health and potential for long-term growth. Revenue growth may be affected by factors outside of the company's control, such as market trends, industry competition, and global economic conditions. In such cases, even if a company is performing well, its revenue growth may not lead to a significant increase in shareholder wealth due to external factors. The study is collaborated with the findings of Ezuwore and Agbo (2020) who examined creative accounting on shareholders’ wealth.

Furthermore, it was observed that leverage index has a significant and positive effect on shareholders' wealth. This indicates an increased leverage index will lead to a significant change in the wealth of shareholders. This suggests that investors perceive a higher level of leverage as a positive signal of the company’s financial health and potential for future growth. The findings support the broad submission of Bankole *et al.* (2018) who examined the effect of creative accounting on shareholders’ wealth.

**4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study has revealed that income smoothing has a positive and significant effect on shareholders wealth, revenue growth index has insignificant effect while leverage index has a positive and significant effect. This study concluded that creative accounting is one of the practices that has significant influence on the wealth of shareholders. The use of creative accounting practices can lead to an increase in shareholder wealth in the short term, but can also have negative long-term consequences. While creative accounting may be able to artificially inflate financial results and create a positive image of a company, it can also lead to a loss of trust among investors if the true financial health of the company is not accurately reflected.

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

1. Internal and external auditors should pay attention to the assumptions adopted by management teams of non-financial services firms in arriving at revenue, leverage, and other income items in annual reports to ensure that they are fair enough. This includes carefully managing their use of financial strategies such as income smoothing and leverage, as well as focusing on key financial indicators such as profitability, return on investment, and cash flow.
2. Management of non-financial services should also be transparent and honest in their financial reporting, avoiding the use of manipulative or misleading tactics that can erode shareholder trust and lead to significant losses.
3. Management of Non-financial services firms should consider the specific characteristics of their industry and market conditions when making financial decisions. For instance, industries that are more focused on revenue growth may require different financial strategies than those that prioritize profitability and return on investment.

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**CORPORATE GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS AND THE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF QUOTED FIRMS IN NIGERIA’S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR**

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**Abstract**

*The financial performance level of Agricultural Firms in Nigeria has been very low and on a continuous decline resulting to the collapsed of many vibrant Agricultural Firms in the past. This study examined corporate governance mechanisms and the financial performance* *of quoted firms in Nigeria’s agricultural sector, analysing the relationship between the board size, board independence, audit committee independence and board meeting frequency and the financial performance of quoted firms in Nigeria’s agricultural sector. This study adopts expo-facto research design. The population of the study constitutes all five (5) quoted agricultural firms in the Nigerian Exchange Group. Secondary method of data was obtained from the published annual reports and statement of accounts covering the period of ten (10) years (2012-2021). The sample size is made up of the five (5) quoted agricultural firms in Nigeria and the study used census sampling technique to select the sample size from the target population and analysis of data was carried out using descriptive statistics, correlation statistics were used in testing the hypothesis postulated. The investigation revealed that a significant positive linear relationship exists between corporate governance mechanism and the financial performance of quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study concludes that corporate governance has positive and significant effect on the financial performance of the listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. The study recommends among other things, that Nigerian agricultural firms should embrace effective corporate governance practice as a panacea for firm growth and survival.*

**Keywords:** Corporate governance, Financial performance, Board size, Board Independent,

Board meetings

**Introduction**

Corporate governance is designed in going concerns to distinguish between ownership and control in an attempt to improve shareholders’ equity (Mayowa, Olusola & Olaiya, 2021). Corporate governance is a system of structuring, operating, and controlling the activities of a company with a view to achieving long-term strategic goals of satisfying its shareholders, creditors, employees, customers and suppliers (Das, 2017). Frank and Sundgren (2012) stated that it is also a process, influenced by the board of directors or management and other personnel assigned to provide reasonable assurance and achievement of objectives in effectiveness and efficiency in all operations, reliability of financial reporting and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

According to PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) (2019) the benefits of corporate governance in an organization include enhanced performance and decision-making, strategic/competitive advantage, all stakeholder confidence and trust, cost efficiency and improved return on investment, market value and reputation, increased enterprise resilience and compliance/transparency. Similarly, Bhatt and Bhatt, (2017) opined that if implemented, corporate governance legislation and guidelines issued by government agencies and international bodies will support firms and countries to attract foreign investments.

Ndwenze and Kariuki (2017) identify that all these corporate failures have been attributed to meager corporate governance practices. Since good governance of listed companies has become a priority and the pillar on which it rest are contained in the laws and regulations, regulations around the world have devoted significant time and resources to the development of legislations and policies related to corporate governance.

Boards are also thought to contribute to the development of better organizational strategies and it is argued that effective boards allow top managers to tap the breadth of knowledge possessed by outside directors to complement the depth of firm-specific knowledge of executives. Using a collaborative approach, boards are given the ability to advise, deliver feedback, and enhance strategy formulation (Sundaramurthy and Lewis, 2003).

At present, the financial performance is still low at about 42% of the GDP, rising from the abnormal level of less than 30% in the last two decades. The poor performance can be seen in the precarious food situation with apparent failure of the sector to ensure food security and the outrageously high food import bill. The low yield of agricultural production is compounded by a variety of other problems such as poor access to modern inputs and credit, poor infrastructure, inadequate access to markets, land and environmental degradation and inadequate research and extension services (Manyong, 2016). The financial performance level of Agricultural Firms in Nigeria has been very low and on a continuous decline resulting to the collapsed of many vibrant Agricultural Firms in the past. Some of the reasons stated for these corporate failures are the lack of vigilant oversight functions by the board of directors, the board relinquishing control to corporate managers who pursue their own self-interest and the board being remiss in its accountability to stakeholders. The shareholders thus, become the highest losers where corporate governance lost to corporate manipulations, corporate expropriations, lack of adequate control, weak board, and lack of probity, transparency, integrity and accountability

There are still inequality and poverty particularly in the rural areas, there are a lot of public complaints on the underdevelopment situation that constitutes a threat to the Quoted Agricultural sector in Nigeria. Some of these problems are; use of manual farm tools instead of using some affordable modern agricultural techniques/simple machines that could increase the level of productivity, lack of roads, water, electricity, lack of food storage or processing facilities, lack of a scientific and technological know-how, disorganization and unaccountability, mismanagements, lack of good leadership, corruption and embezzlement of public funds by the government officials, number and quality of extension staff; inadequate number of trained agricultural staff, welfarism of staffs, persistent increase in the general prices of food (farm products) and this is where corporate governance sets in.

Good corporate governance should be focusing on the organization’s purpose and on the outcomes on the citizen and the end users; corporate governance should also focus on developing the capacity and the capability of the governing bodies to be effective. With 80 million hectares of land for agriculture, but currently only 30 million actively used, Nigeria’s agricultural potential is enormous (Manukaji 2020). But to seize this opportunity, the government must leverage new technologies and sustainable methods of farming. Not only will this strengthen the economy, it will also help empower the labour force, lift more people out of poverty and support local farmers build their capacity. The broad objective of the study is to examine corporate governance mechanisms and the financial performance of quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to: analyse the relationship between the board size and the financial performance of the quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria; determine the board independent influence on the financial performance of the quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria; to examine the relationship between the audit committee independence and the financial performance of the quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria; and to investigate the relationship between board meeting frequency and the financial performance of the quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria.

This study focuses on the corporate governance mechanism and financial performance of quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria, this study used two basic research variables: financial performance (dependent variable) and corporate governance mechanism (independent variables). The dependent variables or the financial performance of banks was proxy by Return on asset (ROA). Corporate governance mechanism is the independent variable with the following proxies: Board Size, Board Independence, Audit Committee and Board Meeting Frequency. The study however will be carried out on all five (5) quoted agricultural firms in the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) now Nigerian Exchange Group as at 31st may 2021.The study relied on historic accounting data sourced from the financial statements and accounts of quoted agricultural sector on the Nigerian Exchange Group for the period of ten years (2011-2021). The paper is organised in five sections, section two contains literature review and hypotheses development, section three presents the methodology, section four shows the empirical results and discussions, and section five concludes and offers recommendations.

**Literature Review**

**2.1 Conceptual Review**

Corporate governance has become the heart-beat of world economies and as such, almost all the developed countries and the developing economies have enacted one regulatory structure or the other concerning it (Nwonyuku, 2016). These regulations according to Nwonyuku (2016) are reflections of global trends emphasizing regulatory compliance and improved disclosure in the wake of significant destruction of shareholders value through a failure to adopt sound corporate governance practices. Policymakers and regulators alike recognised the need for a body of rules and practices that will reconcile the interests of shareholders, management and the board of directors of corporations following the agency problem that led to continuous collapse of companies.

**2.1.2 Corporate Governance mechanisms**

Corporate governance, which can be defined as the system of effective internal control, as well as effective internal checks and control of power or governance from within (Obigbemi, Mukoro, Adetula & Owolabi, 2016) has received a great attention in the last few years from all sectors and countries of the world. The effectiveness of a corporate governance system depends on the implementation of certain measures or mechanisms based on the requirements of a relevant code(s) of corporate governance. Corporate governance mechanisms are controls, policies and guidelines implemented based on an existing code(s) of corporate governance which ensure that a company is properly directed and controlled and which drive the company towards its objectives while satisfying the needs of stakeholders.

**Board Size**

Board size refers to the total number of directors on the board in a firm, i.e., the size of the board, of any corporate organization (Ogbechie & Koufopoulos, 2010; Pilos, 2017). The board is responsible for verifying financial reliability and its compliance with the laws and regulations; more so, via its role reduces information asymmetry between shareholders and managers (Egbunike, Gunardi, Ugochukwu & Hermawan, 2021). The board is considered to be important corporate governance mechanisms because decisions reached by the board are implemented by the management. These decisions affect only the performance of the entity, but also have significant effect on the survival of the business, Kajola, onaolapo & Adelowotan (2017). Ali & Khan (2016) established that a large number of directors on corporate boards bring experience of diverse backgrounds which will affect the level of corporate performance.

**Board Independence**

Board independence is another attribute of an effective corporate governance system. To be effective in discharging their responsibilities, the directors should be independent of executive management and also of fellow directors. Directors should show independence of character; be able to reach their own views and judgements, and should be able to express their personal opinions with conviction; hence, independence means reaching opinions, expressing them and not necessarily agreeing with everything that fellow directors say (Emile Wolf International, 2013).The Nigerian Code of Corporate Governance provides that non‐executive directors be selected on the basis of their wide experience, knowledge and personal qualities; and should not be involved in the day‐to‐day operations of the Company (Egunike et al., 2021).

**Board Meetings**

One of the aspects of the Stewardship theory, linked to corporate government and economic performance is the intensity of board activity, measured by the amount of board meetings. Vafeas (1999) was one of the first authors that argued that board meetings frequency is an important attribute of good practices of corporate government and may have important implications in the firm economic performance. Lipton & Lorsch (1992) suggested that a greater frequency of meetings will probably result in a superior performance, since board meetings can be considered as a measure of supervision effectiveness or efficacy, and must therefore, influence firm results.

**Audit Committee Independence**

The Board of Director of companies are expected to establish an audit committee of at least three non-executive directors written terms of reference, which deal clearly with its authority and duties (Obigbemi, Mukoro & Owolabi 2016). Exchange Group requires that the audit committee for the listed companies be made up of three members. However, Company and Allied Matters Act (CAMA, 2004) section 359 specifies the audit committee shall consist of an equal number of directors and representative of the shareholders of the company (subject to a maximum number of six members) and shall examine the auditor’s report and make recommendations thereon to annual general meeting. Bedard, Chtourou and Courteau (2004) have argued that when the audit committee is large, the control and oversight functions over the accounting and financial processes increase (Ikue-John, 2019).

**Financial Performance**

This is a measure a firm’s ability to use assets for revenue generation. According to Adams (2003), financial performance is a subjective measure of the accountability of an entity for the results of its policies, operations, and activities quantified for an identified period in financial terms. It is an act of implementing, performing, fulfilling, and achieving of the given tasks that need to be measured against defined sets of precision (Farah, Farrukh & Faizan, 2016). Financial performance in the public sector is a function of what the public sector entity is held responsible for achieving in profit making within a specified period. Financial performance is an independent measure of the accountability of an entity for the results of its policies, operations, and activities quantified for a recognized period of time in financial terms. Financial performance in the corporate governance arena has been measured in several ways using accounting.

**Return on Asset**

Return on Asset (ROA) is used as a proxy for financial performance ratio. It is commonly defined as net income dividend by total assets. Net income is derived from the income statement of the company and is the profit after taxes. ROA measurement includes a business’s entire asset, those which arise out of liabilities to creditors as well capital paid in by investors (Sathyamoorthi, Baliyan, Dzimiri & Wally-Dina, 2017). It is used internally by companies to track asset-use over time, to monitor the company’s performance in light of industry performance, and to look at different operations or divisions by comparing them one to the other.

**Corporate Governance and Financial Performance**

The questions about why corporate failures occur, re-occurrence prevention in future, and restoring investor confidence are all linked to practices employed by Corporate Governance. There are several merits of effective Corporate Governance. It helps management to ensure appropriate and adequate controls to safeguard assets, checking powers and influence of dominant individuals. It defines the relationship between the company management, the board of directors, shareholders, and other stakeholders. It aims at ensure that the company is managed in the finest interests of the shareholders and other stakeholders. It inspires accountability and transparency that investors are increasingly looking for in the companies (Padachi, 2016).

**Theoretical review**

**Agency Theory**

The Agency theory having its roots in economic theory was developed by Jensen and Meckling in (1976). This study is anchored on agency theory. This was selected because of its relevance to the composition of the hierarchy of corporation and the functions of the directors, with respect to good corporate governance. The Agency theory is defined as the relationship between the principals, such as shareholders and agents such as the company executives and managers. This suggests that the governance of a company is based on the conflicts of interest between the company’s owners, shareholders, its manager and major providers of debts finance, each of these groups has different interest and objective.

The shareholder wants to increase their income and wealth, their interest is with the returns that the company will provide in the form of dividends and also in the value of their shares, the value of their shares depends on the long-term financial prospect of the company. Shareholders are therefore concerned about dividends but they are even more concerned about long term profitability and financial prospect, because these affect the value of their shares. The management are employed to run the company on behalf of the shareholders, they have no direct interest in future returns for shareholders or in the value of the shares, managers have an employment contract and earn a salary, unless they own shares or unless their remuneration is linked to profit or share values their main interest are likely to be the size of their remuneration package and their status as company managers. The owners expect the agents to act in the best interest of the owner. The contract between the owner and the managers should ensure that the managers always act in the interest of the owners, thereby the study is anchored on this theory.

**2.3 Empirical Review**

Aluoch (2021) examines the relationship between corporate governance, financial characteristics, macroeconomic factors and financial performance of agricultural firms listed at the Nairobi securities exchange, Kenya. It finds that corporate governance had significant effect on financial performance of listed agricultural firms in Kenya; the intervening effect of financial characteristics on the relationship between corporate governance and financial performance was not determined; the moderating effect of macroeconomic factors on the relationship between corporate governance and financial performance was confirmed.

Manukaji (2020) examines the effect of corporate governance on the productivity of quoted agricultural firms and also examines the effect of director’s remuneration on the productivity of agricultural firms in Nigeria. The findings reveal that corporate governance has positive effect on the productivity (sales growth) of Agricultural companies in Nigeria stock exchange, such that about 46 percent in productivity of agricultural firms can be attributed to the corporate governance. The study also reveals that directors remuneration and board size has positive and significant effect on productivity of agricultural firms in Nigeria.

Sohel *et al*. (2020) aims to examine the level of agricultural credit by commercial banks and the determinants that influence the commercial banks to increased level of agricultural credit through the pressures of the institutional environment. The study selects 17 samples of commercial bank following the market capitalization method and investigates using secondary data a total of 85 annual reports during the period from 2013 to 2017. The finding indicates that the average of agricultural credits to total credit is 2.25% among the sample commercial banks, it also finds a positive significant association between board gender diversity, foreign director, management team and agricultural credit.

Johnson & Umar (2020) determines the relationship between board independence and return on asset [ROA] of health care companies in Nigeria. To examine the relationship between board size and return on asset [ROA] of care companies in Nigeria. To evaluate the relationship between gender diversity and ROA of health care companies in Nigeria. It shows that board independence is significantly related to ROA. However, the board size and gender diversity are not significantly related to ROA.

Ikue-John & Leyira (2019) examines the relationship between corporate governance structure and profitability of quoted Agricultural firms in Nigeria. The study analysed corporate governance structure in the dimension of board size, board meetings and audit committee members while profitability was analysed in the perspective of return on asset and gross profit ratio. The study used relevant cross sectional secondary data obtained from Nigeria exchange group from 2007 to 2016.

There are few studies on the corporate governance mechanisms and the financial performance of quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria, thereby the study tends to fill the following gap: inequality and poverty particularly in the rural areas; with a lot of public complaints on the underdevelopment situation that constitutes a threat to the Quoted Agricultural sector in Nigeria. Some of these problems are; use of manual farm tools instead of using some affordable modern agricultural techniques/simple machines that could increase the level of productivity, lack of roads, water, electricity, lack of food storage or processing facilities, lack of good leadership, corruption and embezzlement of public funds by the government officials, number and quality of extension staff; inadequate number of trained agricultural staff, welfarism of staffs, persistent increase in the general prices of food (farm products) and this is where corporate governance sets in.

**3.0 Methodology**

The study adopted ex-post facto research design. Secondary methods of data were used to obtain data from the published annual reports and statement of accounts of quoted companies on Nigeria Exchange Group covering a period of ten years (2012-2021). The population of the study constitutes all five (5) quoted agricultural firms in the Nigerian Exchange Group as of 2021 which are: Ellah Lakes Plc (MRF), FTN Cocoa Processors Plc, Livestock Feeds Plc., Okomu Oil Palm Plc, Presco Plc. The sample size is made up of the five (5) quoted agricultural firms in Nigeria. The study used census sampling technique to select the sample size from the target population. Diagnostic and specification test that were used in the study includes Normality Test, Hausman Specification and LM Test, Test for Heteroscedasticity and Auto-Correlation, Multicollinearity Test.

**Model Specification**

Corporate governance which is the independent variable is proxied by board size (BS), board meeting frequency (BMF), board independence (BDI) and audit committee independence (ACI) **Functional form of the model:**   
ROA = f (BS, BMF, BDI, ACI) ………………………….. (1)

Where; ROA = Return on Assets

BS, BMF, BDI, ACI = Board Size, Board Meetings frequency, Board independence and Audit Committee Independence respectively.

**Measurement of Variables**

The measurement of independent, dependent and control variables are summarized in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **VARIABLES** | **DESCRIPTION** | **MEASUREMENT** | **SOURCES OF MEASUREMENT** |
| 1 | Financial performance: Return on Asset (ROA) | Dependent Variable | Ratio of Profit After Tax to Total Asset | Sathyamorthi, Baliyan, and Wally-Dina, 2017. |
| 2 | Board Size (BS) | Independent Variable | Total no of Directors on the Board. | Akpan and Amran, 2014. |
| 3 | Board Meeting Frequency (BMF) | Independent Variable | No of Board meeting in a year. | Sathyamorthi, Baliyan, and Wally-Dina, 2017. |
| 4 | Board Independence (BDI) | Independent Variable | Proportion of Non-Executive Director Independent Directors to Total Number of Directors on the Board. | Akpan and Amran, 2014. |
| 5 | Audit Committee Independence (ACI) | Independent Variable | Proportion of Independent Audit committee to Total No of Audit Committee. | Basakkwace and babuga 2019. |

**Source: Researcher’s Computation (2023)**.

**Data Analysis Techniques**

The nature and type of data influences the Correlation Analysis was adopted. This study involves a test of relationship; therefore, multi-collinearity was adopted because they are the most suitable to test both relationship variables and the level of influence of independent variables on dependent variables.

**4.0 Discussion of Results**

The result of the descriptive statistics is reported in table 1 indicated Returns on Assets (ROA) across the firms is in average of -.628391 and firm with the least ROA having a value of -5.809 and firm with the highest returns on assets have 3.1398. ROA have standard deviation of 2.0531 indicating that there is high variation of returns on assets across the listed cross-border banks with over 300 percent of coefficient of variation. The data for the variable is moderately skewed and the kurtosis is moderately peaked with the value of -.08424 and 2.64339 respectively. Board size (BSZ) have average value of 8.62 with standard deviation of 2.165 indicating that the board size of the listed agricultural firms highly varies from each other. Listed agricultural firms board sizes ranges from 3 to 12 and the skewness showing-.597472 and kurtosis value of 2.588626 indicating that data for the variable is normally distributed. Also, the board independence (BID) of the firm is 62.71 percent with standard deviation of 10.50709 indicating that the level of board independence of listed agricultural firms moderately varies ranging between 33.3 percent and 85.7 percent with skewness of .1919566 and kurtosis value of 3.83328 implying that the data is moderately skewed and normally distributed.

Furthermore, table 1 shows that an average no of meetings held by the agricultural firms’ board of directors is 4 with standard deviation of 2.03 which imply a high variation of the numbers of meetings of board of directors across the industry with coefficient of variation amounting to 56 percent with maximum no of meetings to be 8. The data is negatively skewed and have normal distribution. And lastly from the table, audit committee independence has an average of 47.672 with standard deviation of 5.667452 which indicate a moderate deviation as proved by the coefficient of variation showing 11.88 percent. The minimum audit committee independence is 33.3 and the maximum is 57.1 percent. The data for audit committee is negatively skewed having -1.733 and a leptokurtic distribution having kurtosis above 3.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics**

Variables ROA BSZ BDI BDM ACI

OBS 50 50 50 50 50

Mean .6283918 8.62 62.71 3.58 47.672

S.D 2.053195 2.165499 10.50709 2.031286 5.667452

C.V -3.26738 .251218 .1675504 .5673983 .1188843

Min -5.809143 3 33.3 0 33.3

Max 3.139833 12 85.7 8 57.1

Skewness -.0842425 -.597472 .1919566 -.0062692 -1.733427

Kurtosis 2.643397 2.588626 3.83328 2.543224 4.768825

**Source: Researcher’s Computation (2023)**

**4.2 Correlation Matrix of Dependent and Independent Variables**

The correlation co-efficient represents the linear association or relationship between the dependent and explanatory variables and also show symptoms of multi-collinearity. The result in table 2 showing the relationship between financial performance and corporate governance mechanisms. The relationship between returns on assets and board size (BSZ) shows that an increase in the number of board size will improve financial performance by 57.60 percent also from the table the relationship between board independence (BDI) and financial performance (FP) is positive but not significant having a coefficient of 0.1228 implying that one increase in corporate governance will increase returns on assets by 12.28 percent.

Likewise, the relationship between board meeting (BDM) and financial performance is positive with coefficient value of 0.1444 implying that an increase in board meetings will improve returns on assets by 14.44 percent. Furthermore, the relationship between the audit committee independence and returns on assets is positive having coefficient of 0.1769 which is insignificant at 5 percent. This imply that an increase in corporate governance will improve returns on assets by 17.69 percent.

**Table 2. Correlation Analysis of Study Variables**

**Relationship between Corporate governance and financial performance**

**ROA** BSZ BDI BDM ACI

ROA 1.0000

BSZ 0.5760\* 1.0000

0.0000

BDI 0.1228 0.0128 1.0000

0.3955 0.9296

BDM 0.1444 0.2274 0.3942\* 1.0000

0.3171 0.1122 0.0046

ACI 0.1769 0.6483\* 0.0637 0.1918 1.0000

0.2191 0.0000 0.6603 0.1820

**Source: Researcher’s Computation (2023)**

**Effect of corporate governance mechanisms on financial performance of quoted firms in Nigeria’s Agricultural sector**

The regressed result showing how corporate governance measures affect financial performance of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria after meeting the basis for a Best Linear Un-bias Estimate (BLUE) is shown in table 3. The Hausman specification test conducted produced p-value of 0.0000, which is significant at 5%. This implies that the variation across entities is assumed to be fixed with the independent variables included in the model. As a result of this, the result of the fixed effect model was considered suitable for the analysis of hypothesis one to three, Moreso, the result of auto-correlation test in table 3 showed that there was constant variance among the independent variables for model one. It also indicates that the error across the entities was homoscedastic for the models. The basis of judgment used is the Z-statistics and P-Value.

The result obtained shows a R-square of 0.3087 which implies that the model jointly explains 30.87 percent of the variation in the dependent variable with other variables captured by the error term representing about 70 percent of the variables not covered by this model. The P-value of the model 0.0001shows that the model is statistically significant at 5%.The result further shows that board size (BSZ) has a Z-statistics of -3.74 as indicated from table 3. This implies that, board size has negative relationship with financial performance and significant as indicated by p-value of 0.000, which is lesser than 5%. The implication is that the board size of the listed agricultural firms is relatively small to make succinctly decision that will cause a positive improvement in the financial performance of the companies.

The Z-statistics of board independence (BDI) is 1.96, it means that, there was positive relationship between board independence and financial performance which is significant at 5% as indicated by p-value of 0.052. This imply that the board of directors’ composition shows a great independence that can foster positive financial performance. Likewise, the result also shows that there board meetings have positive and significant effect on financial performance as indicated by the z-statistics of 2.45 and p-value of 0.015, which was significant at 5%. The findings of the study can be linked to the fact that frequency of their meetings will enable the board of directors to meet and ensures quality of financial decision approved that will improve the financial performance of the listed agricultural companies. Lastly from the table, the effect of audit committee independence on the financial performance is negative and insignificant having Z-statistics of -0.62 and probability value of 0.538. The implication of the result shows that the audit committee independence of these firms is not strong enough to instil the confidence of the public for positive outcome on the financial performance. Therefore, based on the findings, the study concludes that corporate governance has positive and significant effect on the financial performance of the listed agricultural firms in Nigeria.

**Table 3. Regression Results**

**ROA Coef. Std. Err. t P>t**

**Board Size** -.3031292 .0809425 -3.74 0.000

Board Independence .0151529 .0077435 1.96 0.052

Board Meetings .1776949 .0724033 2.45 0.015

Audit Comm. Indep -.0090751 .0146854 -0.62 0.538

\_cons 1.289536 .7530972 1.71 0.089

**Source: Author’s Computation (2023)**

**5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation**

Based on the findings, the study concludes that corporate governance has positive and significant effect on the financial performance of the listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. Board size and audit committee independence has negative relationship with financial performance and significant. There was positive relationship between board independence, board meeting and financial performance which is significant. It is concluded that the financial performance of quoted agricultural sector in Nigeria understand the need for an effective corporate governance system given the mechanisms they have implemented as identified in this study. The study recommended that: Reduction of board sizes will be critical to the success and survival of corporate listed firms in Nigerian while firms should also increase their size through increase in liquidity and put these to efficient use in order to enjoy economies of scale; Firms should make appointment of independent directors to dominate the appointment of inside executive directors so as to enable the firms to maximally reap the benefits of board independence; Attendance of board at various meetings should be scrutinized to determine the level of commitment of the board, strategic and informed decisions that will improve the performance of quoted firms are expected to be made in the board meetings. Board meetings should be scheduled in such a way that it will be convenient enough for all the board members to be in attendance; and the member of audit committee independence should be given more opportunity to discharge their duties effectively without undue influence in order to enhance a higher financial performance.

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**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: A TOOL FOR PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN AGATU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA (LGA) OF BENUE STATE**

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**Abstract**

*The conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria, have resulted in crop destruction, loss of lives and property, displacement of people, and increased tensions. These conflicts arise from competition over grazing land and water resources, exacerbated by cultural and religious differences. Despite ongoing efforts to address the conflicts, they continue to hinder peace, stability, and development. This paper aims to examine the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria, and explore the potential of a joint economic development project as a tool for promoting lasting peace and sustainable development in the area. The objective is to address the ongoing conflicts and their detrimental effects, and propose a viable solution that fosters cooperation and economic progress. The study adopts a qualitative methodology, conducting a comprehensive review of academic and non-academic literature and utilizing thematic analysis to extract relevant insights. The research identifies various stakeholders involved in peacebuilding and conflict resolution efforts in Agatu LGA and highlights the potential of joint economic development projects to address the conflicts and promote sustainable peace and development. The study recommends the adoption and implementation of joint economic development projects, emphasizing the importance of stakeholder cooperation, sufficient funding, and effective project management.*

**Keywords:** Fulani herdsmen, Farmers, Conflicts, Agatu community, Joint economic

development project

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The conflicts in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria, date back to the 1990s and are between farmers (predominantly Agatu ethnic group) and nomadic herdsmen (mostly Fulani) competing for resources, especially grazing land and water resources (Ogbette & Attama, 2018). Encroachment of the herdsmen on the farmers' land leads to crop destruction, tensions, and clashes, which are aggravated by cultural and religious differences, as the farmers are predominantly Christian while the herdsmen are mostly Muslim (Mohammed & Baba, 2018; Aliyu *et al*., 2018). The clashes are often sparked by incidents of theft, vandalism, and retaliation, which further escalate the tensions between the two groups (Nwankwo, 2021; Usman, 2019). The conflicts have led to significant consequences such as loss of lives and property, displacement of people, and a reduction in food production (Oche *et al*., 2021; Bassey *et al*., 2021). The government has implemented policies aimed at addressing the root causes of the conflicts, including the establishment of ranches and grazing reserves, and has established a committee to investigate and recommend solutions (Mohammed *et al*., 2018). Civil society organizations and other stakeholders have also been involved in mediation efforts. The paper objectives are as follows: However, the conflicts persist and escalate despite these efforts (Nwangwu *et al.*, 2020). The paper objectives are as follows: [1. Identify the key stakeholders involved in the Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict in Agatu LGA and analyze their interests in peace and conflict resolution. 2. Examine the potential of a joint economic development project as a tool for resolving the conflict and promoting sustainable peace and development in Agatu LGA.]. The study is guided by two principal research questions stated below:

1. Who are the key stakeholders in the conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State, and what are their interests in peace and conflict resolution?
2. Can a joint economic development project be an effective tool for promoting lasting peace and sustainable development in Agatu LGA?

This paper has been structured into four sections namely, Literature Review, Methodology and Area of Study, Findings and Discussion, and Conclusion and Recommendations sections. The “Literature Review” section provides an overview of the Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict in Agatu LGA and highlights the limited focus on sustainable solutions for peace and development. It discusses the root causes of the conflict, its economic implications, and the need for a joint economic development project as a potential solution. This section also defines and clarifies key concepts related to peace, conflict resolution, and joint economic development projects. It explains the importance of peace, conflict resolution processes, and the potential benefits of joint economic development projects in Agatu LGA. The “Methodology and Area of Study” section describes the location and characteristics of Agatu LGA and explains the methodology used for conducting the research. It includes details about the literature search, selection criteria, and data synthesis methods. The “Findings and Discussion” section presents the findings of the study and discusses the involvement of various stakeholders in promoting peace and conflict resolution in Agatu LGA. It highlights the economic setbacks caused by the conflict and emphasizes the potential of a joint economic development project to address the issues. The “Conclusion and Recommendations” section summarizes the key findings and offers recommendations based on the study.

**2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Nigeria's North Central geopolitical zone has been hindered in its economic and social progress by the Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict in the Agatu Local Government Area (LGA) of Benue State (Ojedokun *et al*., 2018; Osuchukwu & Enemuoh, 2020). The conflict has had serious consequences, and while researchers have explored its causes and economic implications, there has been limited focus on developing sustainable solutions for peace and development in affected areas (Soomiyol & Fadairo, 2020; Oli *et al*., 2018). The Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict in Nigeria's North Central region has multiple root causes, including the effects of climatic change on the grazing pattern of Fulani herdsmen, leading to conflicts with farmers (Soomiyol & Fadairo, 2020; Oli *et al*., 2018). Additionally, the expansion of farming pastures has resulted in crop invasions by cattle, exacerbating the hostilities between herdsmen and farmers (Osuchukwu & Enemuoh, 2020). The conflict has also been fueled by ethnic stereotyping, which has created deep-seated mistrust and animosity between Fulani herdsmen and local farmers (Duke & Agbaji, 2020).

The Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict in the North Central region of Nigeria has caused significant economic setbacks, including decreased agricultural productivity, food shortages, and inflation (Nnaji *et al*., 2022; Duke & Agbaji, 2020). Additionally, the conflict has led to displacement of people, loss of lives, and destruction of property (Ndubuisi, 2018), and poses a serious threat to the security and unity of Nigeria, as it has fueled sectarian tensions and risks of ethno-religious conflicts in the region (Onwudiwe & Raufu, 2021; Ajibo *et al*., 2018). A joint economic development project has been proposed as a solution to the ongoing Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict in Agatu LGA of Benue State (Jacob & Tanko, 2021). The project aims to establish mutually beneficial relationships between farming and herding communities, reduce competition for natural resources, and promote sustainable peace and development (Audu & Yakubu, 2022; Mbaeze, 2021).

**Conceptual Clarification**

**Peace:** Peace is a state of tranquility and harmony where individuals or groups coexist without any form of conflict or violence (Eliasa *et al*., 2019). In the context of Aguta local government area of Benue State, Nigeria, peace has been elusive due to conflicts between farmers and herdsmen, resulting in loss of life, property, and economic losses (Osuchukwu & Enemuoh, 2020). Studies identify root causes, including land disputes and political factors (Omokhoa & Okuchukwu, 2018). The government mediates and negotiates, but lasting peace remains a challenge (Sayedi & Ndagi, 2019). The economic cost of conflicts in Aguta is significant, with losses of billions of Naira (Yikwabs *et al*., 2020). Sustainable peace is crucial for social cohesion and economic development (Ajibo *et al*., 2018).

**Conflict Resolution:** Conflict resolution refers to the process of resolving or managing disputes and disagreements between two or more parties (Einarsen *et al*., 2018). Conflict resolution is a crucial aspect of the joint economic development project proposed for Agatu LGA. The project seeks to resolve the Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict by identifying the root causes of the conflict and devising strategies to address and manage the conflict in a constructive and peaceful manner (Usman & Mohammed, 2022). The conflict resolution process may involve negotiation, mediation, or arbitration, with the aim of promoting sustainable peace and development in the region (Kazanský & Andrassy, 2019).

**Joint Economic Development Project:** Joint Economic Development Projects (JEDPs) aim to foster economic development and cooperation in conflict zones (Bhattarai *et al*., 2021). The Israeli-Palestinian Joint Economic Development Project (Handelman, 2019), the Cross-Border Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities Project in South Sudan and Uganda (Vancluysen, 2022), and the Integrated Livelihood Support Project in Myanmar (Meehan, 2021), demonstrate the potential for JEDPs to create jobs and increase economic opportunities, despite challenges such as political tensions and conflict (Bhattarai *et al*., 2021). A joint economic development project proposed for Agatu LGA aims to foster coexistence and improve the livelihoods of farming and herding communities through mutually beneficial relationships (Audu & Yakubu, 2022). This collaborative effort is seen as a potential solution to the Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict, as it promotes sustainable agriculture, reduces competition for natural resources, and improves overall economic and social development in the region (Atelhe & Ogayi, 2018).

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the concepts of conflict resolution and joint economic development project. The study draws on the following theories:

**Social Identity Theory**

Social Identity Theory (SIT) suggests that individuals derive their sense of identity and self-esteem from the groups to which they belong (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019). The theory posits that people tend to view themselves and their in-group members more positively than they view out-group members (Laffan, 2021). The theory suggests that intergroup conflict arises when there is a perceived threat to the in-group's identity, status, or resources (Cooper *et al*., 2021). This study draws on SIT to explore the role of ethnic stereotyping in the Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict in Agatu LGA and the potential impact of joint economic development projects in promoting intergroup cooperation (Jabi, 2019).

**Contact Theory**

Contact Theory proposes that intergroup contact between individuals from different groups can reduce prejudice and promote positive intergroup attitudes (Christ & Kauff, 2019). The theory suggests that positive contact between groups can lead to increased empathy, reduced anxiety, and increased cooperation (MacInnis & Hodson, 2019). This study draws on Contact Theory to explore the potential of joint economic development projects as a means of promoting intergroup contact and cooperation between the Fulani herdsmen and the local farmers in Agatu LGA (Okpeh *et al*., 2021).

**Conflict Transformation Theory**

Conflict Transformation Theory suggests that conflicts can be transformed into opportunities for positive change (Jeong, 2019). The theory proposes that conflict transformation involves a shift from a win-lose mentality to a win-win mentality (Echavarría Alvarez & Koppensteiner, 2018). This study draws on Conflict Transformation Theory to explore the potential of joint economic development projects as a tool for transforming the Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict into an opportunity for positive change, by fostering cooperation, interdependence, and mutual benefit (Agunyai *et al*., 2022).

**3. METHODOLOGY AND AREA OF STUDY**

Agatu LGA is located in the North-Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria in Benue State and covers about 4,375 square kilometers, with a geographic location of 7.9°N 7.9°E (Omoraka *et al*., 2022). It has its headquarters in the town of Obagaji, created from Apa LGA in 1996 (Omachonu & Musa, 2018). The area is predominantly inhabited by the Idoma people who are predominantly farmers (Adikwuoyi, 2023), and boasts of rich cultural heritage (Oli *et al.,* 2018). A comprehensive search of academic and non-academic literature was conducted online to identify relevant studies, reports, and other publications related to the research question (Cooper *et al*., 2018). The search was conducted using relevant keywords and phrases, and thematic analysis approach was used to review the literature to identify key themes and issues related to economic development, peace, and conflict resolution in Agatu LGA of Benue State (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Renz *et al*., 2018). To ensure the reliability and validity of the research, inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to guide the selection of studies and publications for analysis. Inclusion criteria included studies and publications that were relevant to the research questions, while exclusion criteria included studies and publications that were not relevant to the research questions, of poor quality, or lacked sufficient data or information (Vindrola-Padros & Johnson, 2020). Finally, relevant data and information from the selected studies and publications were extracted and synthesized to provide a comprehensive overview of the joint economic development project as a tool for peace and conflict resolution in Agatu LGA of Benue State (Wagner *et al*., 2019).

**4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In recent years, various stakeholders have become involved in promoting peace and conflict resolution in Agatu Local Government Area, Benue State, Nigeria. Federal Government of Nigeria is responsible for maintaining law and order and protecting citizens' lives and property (Obarisiagbon & Akintoye, 2019). They aim to restore peace in affected communities and prevent conflict escalation (Madubuike-Ekwe & Obayemi, 2018). However, their slow response to the Agatu conflict resulted in significant loss of lives and property (Aliyu *et al*., 2018). Benue State Government is responsible for administration and management, focusing on peaceful conflict resolution and the return of affected communities to normalcy (Akujuru & Ogele, 2022). The government set up a committee to investigate the conflict and make recommendations, but incomplete implementation led to renewed violence (Vanger & Nwosu, 2020). The Agatu Community has experienced significant direct impact from the conflicts, including loss of lives, property, and livelihoods (Soomiyol & Fadairo, 2020). Studies highlight the devastating consequences of the conflict on the community, leading to displacement and property loss (Oli *et al*., 2018). Recommendations emphasize the active involvement of the community in peacebuilding efforts, ensuring their needs and rights are considered (Nkwede *et al*., 2018). The Fulani herders are often accused of being responsible for the conflicts, driven by resource competition with farmers (Oli *et al*., 2018; Nwakanma & Boroh, 2019). They also suffer losses, such as cattle during conflicts (Awotokun *et al*., 2020). Assistance from the government and encouragement for adopting modern farming techniques have been recommended (Oli *et al*., 2018; Okafor & Chikalipah, 2021). Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria represents the interests of Fulani pastoralists, engaging in peace and conflict resolution efforts (Ajala, 2020; Chukwuma, 2020). The organization's interest in peace and conflict resolution in Agatu LGA is tied to its mandate to protect the rights and interests of its members and promote sustainable economic development (Sule, 2021). The farmers who have been affected by the conflicts have suffered the loss of their crops, livestock, and property (Nwakanma & Boroh, 2019). The conflict has led to food insecurity in the affected communities (Ojelade, 2019). Assistance from the government and the promotion of alternative livelihoods have been recommended (Ajibo *et al*., 2018).

The Idoma Initiative is a community-based organization that has been actively involved in promoting peace and conflict resolution in Agatu LGA (Olúbọ̀dé-Sàwẹ, 2020). Its interest in peace and conflict resolution in the area is rooted in its commitment to promoting sustainable economic development and social justice (Uwazuruike, 2020). The organization engages in activities like dialogues, meetings, and advocacy campaigns (Danlami, 2020). Traditional rulers play a crucial role as mediators, utilizing conflict resolution mechanisms (Ojelade, 2019; Udemezue & Kanu, 2019). Collaboration with the government has been recommended (Ajibo *et al*., 2018). There are several NGOs involved in peacebuilding efforts and supporting affected communities, including International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Search for Common Ground (SFCG), Mercy Corps, Oxfam, Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) and Global Rights (Dakyen *et al*., 2020). These NGOs provide humanitarian assistance and promote peacebuilding and conflict resolution programs (Vahyala, 2021; Dakyen *et al*., 2020). The security agencies have been involved in maintaining peace and order in Agatu LGA through the deployment of troops and the establishment of Operation Whirl Stroke (Aremu & Stanislas, 2019; Akpan & Ebenezer, 2018; Aliyu *et al*., 2018). However, studies have shown that their approach has been ineffective and adoption of a community policing approach has been suggested (Ndubuisi, 2018; Ogbette & Attama, 2018). Religious leaders in the affected area play a crucial role in promoting peace and reconciliation (Tanimu & Akujuru, 2018). Christian and Muslim leaders in Benue State have collaborated to foster peace and unity among their followers (Nana, 2019). Their shared interest lies in restoring peace, harmony, and fostering tolerance and understanding among different religious groups (Nana, 2019; Tanimu & Akujuru, 2018). The media has been instrumental in highlighting the Agatu conflicts and drawing attention to the plight of affected communities (Demarest & Langer, 2021; Babale & Nasidi, 2019). They highlight the conflicts, raise awareness, and hold stakeholders accountable (Abubakar & Qaribu, 2019; Aja *et al*., 2022).

The conflict between herdsmen and the farming community in Agatu LGA has been a long-standing issue that has resulted in loss of lives and destruction of property. However, research suggests that a joint economic development project has the potential to promote lasting peace and resolve this conflict (Vancluysen, 2022; Bhattarai *et al*., 2021; Handelman, 2019). Grazing reserves offer designated areas for herders to graze their cattle, reducing conflicts with farmers (Usman & Nichol, 2022). Establishing such reserves through a joint economic development project can promote peaceful coexistence (Chukwuemeka *et al*., 2018). Conflict resolution training, focusing on negotiation, mediation, and communication, can equip herdsmen and farmers with skills to prevent violence (Mbih, 2020; Allison, 2019; Saleh, 2022). Facilitating dialogue through meetings, gatherings, or mobile apps fosters mutual understanding and trust (Nwofor, 2018; Ugbudu, 2021; Amupitan & Peter, 2021). Supporting community policing in Agatu LGA aids early conflict detection and resolution, ensuring peace and security (Skogan & Hartnett, 2019; Vahyala, 2021; Egbuta, 2018). The project could support alternative livelihoods for herdsmen, such as fish farming or beekeeping, reducing conflicts with farmers (Nzegbule *et al*., 2019; He & Jiao, 2023). This would foster cooperation between farmers and herdsmen (Setrana, 2022). Investment in infrastructure like roads, schools, and healthcare facilities would promote economic development and peaceful coexistence (Prus & Sikora, 2021; Thacker *et al*., 2019; Njoku, 2021). For example, building a health clinic would benefit both communities (Wenjun & Yupei, 2021). To harness tourism's potential, Agatu LGA requires infrastructure investment (Khan *et al*., 2020; Ilim *et al*., 2021). A collaborative economic project could fund roads, hotels, and promote local attractions (Manaf *et al*., 2018). This could create employment opportunities and boost the local economy (Saner & Filadoro, 2019). In Agatu LGA, the majority lacks access to the national power grid, relying on costly and unsustainable energy sources like kerosene and generators (Jeon, 2022). A joint economic project could promote renewable energy adoption, utilizing solar, wind, and biogas from cattle ranching (Lu *et al*., 2019). This would reduce energy costs, improve living standards, and foster sustainable development (Yumashev *et al*., 2020). Small-scale businesses in the area face challenges accessing markets and financing (Soomiyol & Fadairo, 2020). Establishing cooperatives through a joint economic project would enable resource pooling, access to new markets, and better price negotiations (Kaminski *et al*., 2020). Such efforts would promote inclusive economic growth and enhance the livelihoods of small-scale entrepreneurs (Futemma *et al*., 2020).

**5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Agatu LGA of Benue State have been in conflict for decades, causing loss of life, displacement, and reduced food production. Government efforts to resolve the conflicts have been ineffective. A stakeholder analysis revealed various groups promoting peace, with joint economic development as a potential solution. Success will require stakeholder commitment, adequate funding, and effective management. Involving the community in planning and implementation is crucial for the project's success. Based on the findings of the study, we recommend the adoption and implementation of joint economic development projects as a tool for promoting peace and conflict resolution in Agatu LGA of Benue State. The government and relevant stakeholders should collaborate and commit to establishing grazing reserves, providing conflict resolution training, promoting inter-ethnic dialogue, establishing community policing, promoting alternative livelihoods, encouraging investment in infrastructure, developing tourism, promoting renewable energy, and establishing cooperatives. Local communities should be involved in the planning and implementation stages to ensure the projects meet their needs and priorities. The government should also provide adequate funding and resources for the successful implementation of the projects. Lastly, effective project management strategies should be employed to ensure the projects' sustainability and impact.

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**ANALYSIS OF FIRST RESPONDENTS’ PREFERENCE TO TAKE VIDEOS AND PHOTOGRAPHS INSTEAD OF FIRST HELPING ACCIDENT VICTIMS: A SURVEY OF LAGOS STATE**

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**Abstract**

*The topic of first respondents or bystanders taking videos/photograph instead of helping accident victim is becoming the new trend around the world and of course very disheartening. A lot of victims have lost their lives as a result of late attendance to~~.~~ This study was carried out to analyze the reason which may be due to lack of empathy why first respondents take videos or photographs instead of first helping accident victims. The trend has attracted much criticism, public discussions and generated comedy sketches. Many people find it inhumane to leave accident victims unattended to in the first few moments of accident occurrence. Using online survey method, the knowledge, perception and attitude of Lagos state residents were evaluated. Findings showed that many Lagos state residents have high level knowledge of the issue and are dissatisfied about it. Most of them faulted technology and the social media as the main reason for the inhumane attention. This study recommends banning use of first instance video coverage and photographing at accident spots by law. Among others, anyone who violates the law should be prosecuted accordingly. Also, organisations and individuals should carry out campaigns that enlighten the public on the consequence and damage done by taking videos instead of extending first instance help to accident victims.*

**Keywords:** First respondents, Accident victims, Videos, Photographs, Online survey.

**Introduction**

In the modern society and the world at large, people fail to understand where to draw the line when it comes to use of technology. They simply remain glued to it, even at the expense of another person's safety. The issue of first respondents taking videos/photographs instead of stepping in to help accident victims has become a trend which is overlooked but has become a public problem. A lot of victims especially in the case of accident and crime scenes have died as a result of late treatment. The question is why do people film accident victims instead of actually helping? Some experts say this problem is a relatively new one and this phenomenon rose as a result of the advent of smartphone.

According to some experts, there may be a connection between publishing on social media and kids’ desire for wider attention—they want to know how many clicks and viewers they receive. What would prompt someone to record a violent encounter rather than intervene. Teens frequently struggle with moral dilemmas because, as it was later stated, “Adolescent brains are still developing things like impulse control and moral development, and sometimes, they may not even think what’s happening is real” (Melissa, 2019). This does not, however, excuse the horrific things we witness and hear about on a daily basis in the news and on social media.

This behaviour is related to "bystander apathy," according to consultant clinical forensic psychologist Mike Berry. Specifically, when there is a diffusion of responsibility and a person assumes or expects others to accept responsibility or act in the situation on their behalf. People do nothing because they believe someone else will assist them, notwithstanding what he says. They refrain from participating in part out of reluctance to get involved and in part out of fear of embarrassment or ridicule. A woman named Catherine 'Kitty' Genovese, for instance, was attacked and stabbed repeatedly by a serial killer by the name of Winston Moseley despite yelling for help in the courtyard of her apartment. She was allegedly murdered in front of 38 witnesses, but none of them intervened to save her (Simone, 2021). In a series of experiments conducted in 1969, Darley and Latané discovered that people frequently feel compelled to assist a distressed person if they believe they are the only observers. However, people are substantially less likely to feel the need to step in if they are surrounded by others.

Another example is that of a 14-year-old who was filmed by Canadian teens in the throes of a drug overdose at a skate park and left him to die. Also, In August 2017 five Florida teens filmed and mocked a man drowning to death in a pond instead of calling for help as reported by the New York Times (2019). A more recent example is that of an old man who jumped from third mainland bridge into the water and died. Many videos showing how this man jumped into the water were circulated but none actually showed anyone trying to help him or stop him from jumping, rather than doing this all the bystanders present at the scene took out their phones and started filming. The man jumped into the water in their presence and no help was given to him.

The majority of bystanders are still heartless enough to capture the footage and publish it on social media rather than rushing to aid the victim when an accident, assault, or crime occurs anyplace. It appears that responding to actual events is overvalued, and that gaining likes and attention on social media has taken precedence over helping an accident victim. Such events demonstrate that humanity has no place in modern society. Nobody is prepared to safeguard or take care of others. have become brutal due to the common people’s obsession with becoming famous on social media. Today, there is a preoccupation with posting images or videos of any incident (Tribune, 2017).

Nothing could be more callous than to fail to assist a victim of an accident who is in severe pain and instead begin recording films. It demonstrates how insensitive society is to human beings. Not only is it terrible, but the practise of posting images and video from accident scenes demonstrates a lack of concern for the victims. How can someone prioritise socialising before helping the seriously injured victims? This is a crucial issue that has made most people start to doubt their humanity.

Giving all of these above, this research work aims to find out the reason why first-hand respondents prefer to take videos/photographs of accident victims instead of helping them among Lagos state residents.

The result of this research will benefit and enlighten individuals living within and outside Nigeria. It will give an account to why people tend to make videos of accident victims instead of actually helping them. It would also reveal the damages inflicted on accident victims when first respondents take photographs instead of helping them. It will help broadcast media figure out the type of coverage to be done, level of awareness to be raised, how to respondents ought to react and equally tell the damages caused in the process of making videos than helping. It will add to the existing body of knowledge for similar research works that would be carried out by other researchers.

**Statement of the Problem**

The subject of first respondents and bystanders taking videos/photographs instead of helping victims is very disheartening. Many victims have lost their lives as a result of late attendance and response to them. In the world we live today technology and social media has occupied and taken over the lives of so many people that they can’t even distinguish between reality and drama. This is very disturbing as we see videos each day of people filming victims instead of actually stepping in to help. Several scholars have given meaning to this act and have come up with some reasons why this happen but still doesn’t solve the inhumane act going on. In regards to this, this study is aimed at finding out among Lagos state residents the reason why first respondents film victims instead of helping them or calling out for aid for them.

**Research Objectives**

1. To ascertain the knowledge of Lagos state resident on the reason why first respondent take videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims
2. To determine the perception Lagos state resident, have towards first respondent taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims
3. To find out the attitude of Lagos state residents in regards to first respondents taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims
4. To know the level of damage first respondents, inflict while they take videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims.

**Research Questions**

1. What is the knowledge level of Lagos state resident on the reason why first respondent take videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims?
2. What is the perception of Lagos state residents towards first respondent taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims?
3. What is the attitude of Lagos state residents in regards to first respondents taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims?
4. What is the level of damage first respondents inflict while taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims?

This study is centered on the analysis of Why First Respondents Prefer to Take Videos/ Photograph Instead of Helping Accident Victims: Lagos State Online Survey.

Mention the structure of this paper. That is, how is the paper organized? How many sections made up the paper and what does each section attempt to cover? This can be captured in four sentences to give readers some insight.

**Review of Related Studies**

In their study titled “Fear to Retaliation: The Most Frequent Reason for Not Helping Victims of Gender Violence using second order of sexual harassment (SOSH) as a case study” Patricia, Gemma, Ranon and Marta (2021) discovered that 40% of people who did not offer help in the case of gender-based violence did not do so for reasons that correspond to SOSH. They concluded that the fear of suffering SOSH can condition victims of violence receiving help so people who are witnesses would rather film. Furthermore, Brad, Bushman and Craig (2009) conducted a research on “Comfortably Numb Desensitizing Effects of Violent Media on Helping Others”. Using two to check if exposure to violent media reduces aid offered to people in pain, the findings from both studies shows that violent media actually make people numb to the pain and suffering of other people and are not concerned whatsoever.

Similarly, Robert Thornberg (2007) carried out a study entitled “Classmate in distress: school children as bystanders and their reasons for how they act”. The study presented a qualitative case study with an emphasis on students' own justifications for not assisting a classmate in need when other kids are there for the emergency situation in the actual classroom instance analysed. The data were analysed using grounded theory techniques. As they recalled and discussed the classroom incident, the students' individual chats revealed a diversity of meanings of the particular distress situation.

An evaluation: The empirical data was used to construct and ground seven concepts of definitions associated with passive or non-intervention bystander behaviour: trivialization, dissociation, embarrassment association, busy working priority, compliance with a competitive norm, audience modelling, and responsibility transfer. Analysis was also done on the relationships between these definitional concepts. However, this study is only the first stage and first report in a larger investigation on schoolchildren’s roles as bystanders and helpers.

Logical Distance on People’s Willingness to Help Accident Victims: Discrepancies between Implicit and Explicit Inferences was done by Yuri and Tomoko (2021). The study explored how a sense of psychological distance from an accident influences people’s willingness to help victims. The results showed that the greater the distance perceived by participants from the accident, the more likely they were to infer negative traits about the victim at an implicit level. However, the more they inferred negative traits at an implicit level, the more likely they were to attribute the cause of the accident to external situational factors, at an explicit level.

Finally, explicit external causal attribution aroused greater sympathy for the victim, resulting in an increased willingness to help. This discrepancy between implicit and explicit inferences was discussed in terms of cognitive elaboration, in which people engage in helping behaviors when they feel responsible for the fate of the victim.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study made use of the social psychological theory called bystander effect or diffusion of responsibility which was proposed by Latané and Darley in 1970. This theory stipulated that an individual’s likelihood of helping decreases when passive bystanders are present in an emergency situation. The tendency to subjectively divide personal responsibility to help depends on the number of bystanders present (Udochi, 2023). Bystanders are less likely to intervene in emergency situations as the size of the group increases, and they feel less personal responsibility. The implication of this is that people tend to help victims when they are alone than in a group and would back out in high-danger situations due to the presence of other bystanders. This explains that people would rather take videos/photographs when other people are present instead of helping because they feel other people will help in their stead.

Latané and Darley (1970) explained that there are few things that may cause bystander effect or bring in diffusion of responsibility. Assume responsibility or assume that others will do this, know what to do or not have the skills necessary to help, decide to help or worry about danger, legislation, embarrassment. Another theory in relation this study is the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) a cognitive theory. Propounded by Azjen (1985) the theory proposes that an individual’s decision to engage in a specific behavior, such as gambling or stopping gambling, can be predicated by their intention to engage in that behavior (Elisabeth, 2023).

“Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior. As a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely should be its performance” Ajzen (1991) cited in Elisabeth (2023). According to TPB, intentions are determined by three variables: Personal attitudes, Subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Relating TPB to the reason why first respondent take videos instead of helping, it means that the decision to help victims is dependent on the intention to do so. The intention of an individual would determine if he or she is going to help or go ahead to take photographs/videos.

**Methodology**

The survey method was used for this study. Survey method is the practice of gathering data or information for a study by asking people questions related to your research. This research technique is appropriate for this study because it allows for the assessment of Lagos state residents’ knowledge, perception and attitude about the reason first respondents would rather take videos/photographs than help the victims. The population of this research work consist of Lagos state residents, which is projected to be 16,259,958 in 2023 according to the NBC. The sample size is made up of 384 Lagos state residents using the Taro Yamane formula For the purpose of this study, the Census sampling was used. Census sampling allows all elements in a given population to be studied and also eliminate every form of bias as all elements are studied. Hence, all 384 residents given by the sample size were considered.

**Data Analysis**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1: Respondents' frequency of the videos seen regarding first respondent taking videos/photographs instead of helping** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Always | 120 | 45.5 | 45.5 | 18.9 |
| Often | 50 | 18.9 | 18.9 | 64.4 |
| Moderately | 65 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 89.0 |
| Sometimes | 20 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 96.6 |
| Rarely | 5 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 98.5 |
| Can't Say | 4 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 264 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

The data above show that 64.4% of Lagos state resident see the news and circulation of first respondents taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims almost every day.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 2: Respondents' knowledge on the issue of first respondents taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Very high | 50 | 18.9 | 18.9 | 18.9 |
| High | 120 | 45.5 | 45.5 | 64.4 |
| Moderate | 85 | 32.2 | 32.2 | 96.6 |
| Very low | 5 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 98.5 |
| Can't say | 4 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 264 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

This data indicates that majority of Lagos state resident agreed that they have high knowledge of the issue of first respondents taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims. 120 (45.5%) and 85 (32.2%).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 3: Respondents' reason to the likely cause of first respondents taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Digitalization | 40 | 15.2 | 15.2 | 15.2 |
| To have proof of been at the accident scene | 30 | 11.4 | 11.4 | 26.5 |
| For fun | 10 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 30.3 |
| Do not see any reason to help the victims | 20 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 37.9 |
| To post on social media | 80 | 30.3 | 30.3 | 68.2 |
| Because other people are doing it | 35 | 13.3 | 13.3 | 81.4 |
| All of the above | 45 | 17.0 | 17.0 | 98.5 |
| Can't say | 4 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 264 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

The above data shows that 30.3% of Lagos state residents believe that posting on social media is the major reason why first respondents take videos/photographs instead of helping. 17.0% agree that all the reason listed above is to be blamed.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 4: Respondents' response to if taking videos/photographs at an accident scene instead of helping victims is good?** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Strongly agree | 15 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 5.7 |
| Agree | 20 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 13.3 |
| Undecided | 9 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 16.7 |
| Disagree | 131 | 49.6 | 49.6 | 66.3 |
| Strongly disagree | 89 | 33.7 | 33.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 264 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

Table 4 indicates that majority of Lagos state resident despise the act of filming instead of helping and doesn’t see it as a good thing. 131 (49.6) and 89 (33.7).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 5: Respondents' response to first respondents not taking videos/photographs of accident victims on purpose?** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Strongly agree | 15 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 5.7 |
| Agree | 20 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 13.3 |
| Undecided | 9 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 16.7 |
| Disagree | 131 | 49.6 | 49.6 | 66.3 |
| Strongly disagree | 89 | 33.7 | 33.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 264 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

The table above indicates that 49.6% of respondents do not agree that first respondents do not take videos on purpose.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 6: Respondents' answer to if damages are made while taking videos/photographs instead of helping the victims** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Strongly agree | 80 | 30.3 | 30.3 | 30.3 |
| Agree | 140 | 53.0 | 53.0 | 83.3 |
| Undecided | 9 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 86.7 |
| Disagree | 16 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 92.8 |
| Strongly disagree | 19 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 264 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

Data presented in this table shows that 140 (53.0%) and 80 (30.3%) of Lagos state residents attest to the fact that damages are made when first respondents decide to take videos instead of helping the victims.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 7: Respondents' to if they were a first respondent at an accident scene will they take videos/photographs instead of helping?** | | | | | |
|  | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Yes | 40 | 15.2 | 15.2 | 15.2 |
| No | 220 | 83.3 | 83.3 | 98.5 |
| Can't say | 4 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 264 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

Data in table 6 shows that 83.3% of Lagos state resident would not get involved or get caught in the act of filming at an accident scene instead of helping the victims.

**Discussion of Findings**

**Research question one: What is the knowledge level of Lagos state resident on the reason why first respondent take videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims?**

The findings through the questionnaire revealed that the residents of Lagos state are not only aware but have high knowledge about the trend of first respondent taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims. The table allocated to this question showed that majority of Lagos state resident are knowledgeable about the case study. 120 (45.5%) and 85 (32.2%). From this, it is safe to say that Lagos state residents aren’t novices when it comes to this subject.

**Research question two: What is the perception of Lagos state residents towards first respondent taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims?**

The question on the questionnaire that administered answer to this research question was question 10, 11 and 12. Question 10 asked “Why do you feel first respondents take videos/photographs instead of helping victims?” and the table allocated to this question shows that 30.3% respondents feel the blame lays on technology and social media while 17.0% believe it is all of the above. Question 11 asked “Do you think some first respondents do not take videos/photographs of accident victims on purpose?” the table allotted showed that 49.6% and 33.7% of Lagosians do not agree that first respondents do not take videos on purpose. While question 12 asked “if taking videos/ photographs at an accident scene instead of helping victims is good?” and 49.6% disagree with it

**Research question three: What is the attitude of Lagos state residents in regards to first respondents taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims?**

The questions in the questionnaire which disclosed the answer to this question were number 13 and 16. Question 13 states that “if you were a first respondent at an accident scene will you take videos/photographs instead of helping?” 83.3% respondents agree that they wouldn’t be caught in such act and would readily help victims if present at the scene. Question 16 which was an essay response asked “What is your word of protest to stop this issue from reoccurring, so that more lives would be saved?”. Some of the responses were: Save more lives!, there should be a time for technology and reality! Say no to filming instead of helping! Drop your phone and attend to who needs your care! And so much more.

**Research question four: What is the level of damage first respondents inflict while taking videos/photographs instead of helping accident victims?**

Findings through table 5 and question 16 of the questionnaire show that there is a great level of damage made when first respondents decide to take videos instead of helping. 53.0% and 30.3% of respondents attest to this. Question 14 went further to ask what damages might be caused during this process and most respondent gave an essay response of death due to late attendance to. Therefore, it is safe to state that if victims aren’t attended to on time there is a very high possibility of death.

**Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that most people are not happy about the trend of first respondents taking videos instead of helping and wish for urgent attention to be given to it. Lagos state resident put the blame on technology and social media. It is a matter that has taken the lives of so many and has broken the heart of loved ones and individuals living in the country.

Built on the conclusion the following recommendations are given:

The government should set up a committee which would be responsible for holding or arresting anyone caught in such activity except on official purposes and to further strengthen this, a law should be passed across that fines people who are arrested for taking videos/photographs at accident scenes. More campaign and advocacy should be done concerning this issue. A television or radio program should be aired which will enlightens the people and also make them aware about the damage they make while taking videos instead of helping. More awareness campaigns and advertisement should be done about the issue. Subject that teaches about this problem should be added to school curriculum.

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**THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS IN PROMOTING PEACE IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*Throughout its history, Nigeria has encountered diverse forms of conflicts. Despite the presence of a formal justice system, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms continue to hold relevance in many communities across the country. It is necessary to examine the effectiveness of these mechanisms in promoting peace and maintaining social harmony in Nigeria, considering their cultural significance and deep-rooted historical practices the methodology adopted is the content analysis approach. The paper adopted the social capital theory as it theoretical framework. The theory provides a useful framework for understanding the role of traditional conflict resolution mechanism in promoting peace in Nigeria. The findings of the study reveal that it is crucial to recognize support, to build a peaceful and inclusive society in Nigeria. The paper concludes that there is a need for traditional conflict resolution in building a peaceful Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Conflict, Conflict resolution, Traditional conflict resolution, Peace, Nigerian

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution are crucial for the stability and development of any nation. In Nigeria, a diverse country with over 250 ethnic groups and a history of intercommunal tensions, the role of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms has been recognized as instrumental in fostering peace (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). These mechanisms, deeply rooted in the country's rich cultural heritage, have been practised for centuries and continue to play a significant role in mitigating conflicts at the local level. Nigeria has witnessed various forms of conflicts, including interethnic clashes, resource disputes, and political rivalries, which have often led to violence, displacement, and loss of lives. In the face of these challenges, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms offer a complementary approach to the formal legal system, aiming to address conflicts through mediation, reconciliation, and consensus-building within local communities.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are deeply ingrained in Nigerian culture and have gained wide acceptance due to their cultural relevance and effectiveness in resolving conflicts. They are often rooted in principles of consensus-building, communal reconciliation, and restoration of social harmony. Such mechanisms emphasise the involvement of community elders, religious leaders, and respected individuals who are seen as custodians of wisdom and impartiality in resolving disputes (Umezurike, 2016). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria are characterized by the involvement of respected community leaders, elders, and traditional institutions. These mechanisms draw on customary laws, cultural norms, and local practices to resolve disputes and restore harmony (Onyebuchi, 2020). Examples of such mechanisms include arbitration, mediation, and traditional courts, which provide a forum for affected parties to express their grievances, negotiate settlements, and rebuild social bonds. The effectiveness of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms lies in their ability to incorporate cultural values, preserve social cohesion, and promote community participation. They often prioritize the restoration of relationships and the healing of wounds over the imposition of punitive measures, fostering long-term peace and reconciliation (Olaniran, 2013). Additionally, these mechanisms are often more accessible and affordable for marginalized and rural communities, who may face barriers to accessing the formal justice system.

While Nigeria has a formal justice system, it often faces challenges such as a backlog of cases, lack of accessibility, and cultural disconnect with rural communities. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, on the other hand, are more localized, accessible, and culturally relevant, making them well-suited to address disputes within communities. They can provide swift, cost-effective, and mutually acceptable solutions to conflicts, thereby complementing the formal justice system (Anyi, 2022). Studies have shown that traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have positively impacted promoting peace and reducing violence in Nigeria They have been successful in resolving a wide range of disputes, including land disputes, family conflicts, and inter-ethnic tensions. However, there are also limitations to their effectiveness. Some critics argue that these mechanisms may perpetuate gender inequalities, lack legal enforcement, and sometimes favour influential individuals or groups (Olagunju, 2018). Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms is crucial for developing effective peacebuilding strategies. Traditional mechanisms often provide local communities with culturally appropriate and accessible avenues for resolving disputes, drawing on community values, norms, and customs (Muhammed, 2020). These mechanisms have been observed to promote social cohesion, maintain cultural heritage, and restore peaceful relationships, thus playing a crucial role in preventing conflicts from escalating into violence.

From the aforementioned, the paper explores the role of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in promoting peace in Nigeria, highlighting their effectiveness, limitations, and potential for complementing formal systems. The paper is therefore segmented into five sections, beginning with the introduction. The second section explains the methodology used while the third section examines literature on concept clarification and theoretical review. The fourth section discusses the subject matter, while the fifth section concludes the paper with recommendations.

**2. METHODOLOGY**

The study employed a qualitative methodology, gathering data from various secondary sources such as journals, official websites, literary works, documentaries, and newspapers. All the information collected for this study is directly relevant to the key variables and mechanisms under investigation. The analysis of content and utilization of a thematic approach played a significant role in examining the data.

**3. LITERATURE**

**Conflict Resolution**

Conflict is when individuals disagree or hold different viewpoints, which has the potential to be detrimental to any company. Personal agendas, insights, or goals often conflict with collective or team agendas, insights, or goals in the workplace. Conflict resolution aims to settle disputes or conflicts in ways that satisfy all parties involved or are advantageous to the group. Conflict, though, is frequently seen negatively (Ronquillo, 2022).

Deutsch (2020) defines conflict resolution as the process of peacefully solving a problem or conflict between two or more parties who disagree with one another leading to mutual understanding. For conflict resolution to take place, there has to be the presence of conflict which usually occurs as a result of individuals having diverse views on a particular issue. Any procedure used to manage, decide, or resolve conflicts that might develop between people, families, groups, organizations, communities, countries, or any other social unit is referred to as conflict resolution (Barsky, 2017). Conflict resolution can be defined as the informal or formal process that two or more parties use to find a peaceful solution to their dispute (Aluaigba, 2011).

Ramsbotham *et al*. (2016) believe that conflict resolution can take many forms, ranging from informal mediation between two individuals to formal negotiations involving large groups or even nations. Only by plumbing the depths of the complex and ever-shifting landscape of conflict can we hope to forge a sustainable path towards lasting peace and reconciliation.

According to Fisher, Ury, and Patton (2011), resolving a conflict is not just about putting a stop to the current disagreement, but also about taking into account the deeper needs and interests of the individuals or groups involved. They propose that successful conflict resolution necessitates concentrating on solutions that benefit everyone, rather than prioritizing one party's victory over the other's defeat, they prioritise “win-win” outcomes.

**Traditional Conflict Resolution**

According to Ajayi & Buhari (2014), traditional conflict resolution encompasses a range of techniques and methods that are utilized to address and resolve conflicts occurring within a specific society. These techniques and methods are deeply rooted in the indigenous cultural values, norms, and practices prevalent within that society. In the context of traditional conflict resolution, the emphasis lies on drawing upon the rich cultural heritage and traditions of the community to guide the resolution process. By relying on indigenous principles, customs, and practices, traditional conflict resolution aims to restore harmony and foster reconciliation within the community. It recognizes the significance of cultural context and seeks to uphold and preserve the cultural identity and cohesion of the society while addressing conflicts in a meaningful and culturally appropriate manner.

Tseer (2020) characterizes traditional conflict resolution as an intricate framework consisting of a multitude of customary practices and institutions deeply embedded in the cultural heritage of a specific society. These practices and institutions have evolved over time and are deployed strategically to effectively manage and resolve disputes that arise within the community. Central to the traditional conflict resolution process are the principles of consensus-building, negotiation, mediation, and arbitration, which serve as essential tools in facilitating resolution. The emphasis is placed on the collective decision-making and participation of all involved parties, fostering an inclusive and participatory approach to conflict resolution. By drawing upon the cultural values, norms, and wisdom passed down through generations, traditional conflict resolution seeks to promote understanding, restore relationships, and maintain social cohesion within the given society. It is through the utilization of these age-old practices and institutions that the community strives to find sustainable resolutions to conflicts while upholding its cultural heritage and maintaining its unique identity (Tseer, 2020).

Olademo *et al*. (2021) elaborate on traditional conflict resolution, highlighting its system of conflict management deeply rooted in indigenous values, cultural norms, and practices. This approach is driven by the overarching objective of not only resolving conflicts but also restoring harmony and nurturing social cohesion within the community. Traditional conflict resolution recognizes the significance of the cultural fabric within which disputes arise and employs culturally specific frameworks to address them effectively. By incorporating indigenous values, it ensures that the resolution process aligns with the collective identity and shared beliefs of the community. Cultural norms serve as guiding principles that shape the behaviour and expectations of individuals involved in the conflict resolution process, promoting understanding and empathy. Moreover, traditional conflict resolution places considerable emphasis on restoring harmonious relationships, focusing on long-term reconciliation rather than solely resolving immediate disputes (Olademo *et. al*, 2021). Through this holistic approach, traditional conflict resolution endeavours to heal divisions, strengthen social bonds, and sustain the overall well-being of the community.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study adopts the social capital theory. The theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the role of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in promoting peace in Nigeria. Social capital refers to the resources embedded within social networks, including trust, norms, and reciprocity, which facilitate collective action and cooperation within a community (Putnam, 2000). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, rooted in indigenous practices, are an integral part of Nigerian society and hold significant potential for resolving conflicts and maintaining social harmony. This discussion will explore how social capital theory applies to the role of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in promoting peace in Nigeria. social capital theory emphasizes the importance of trust and mutual relationships within a community. Trust is a fundamental component of social capital that fosters cooperation and facilitates conflict resolution (Coleman, 1990). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria, such as mediation by village heads, community elders, and religious leaders, rely heavily on trust and established relationships. These mechanisms leverage existing social networks to bring conflicting parties together, promoting dialogue and understanding. The trust embedded within these relationships enables disputants to engage in open and honest discussions, increasing the likelihood of reaching peaceful resolutions (Ukeje, 2009).

The social capital theory highlights the significance of norms and shared values in promoting collective action. Norms are informal rules and expectations that guide behavior within a community (Putnam, 2000). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria are deeply rooted in cultural norms, customs, and traditions. These mechanisms offer a familiar and culturally appropriate framework for resolving disputes. By adhering to established norms and shared values, traditional conflict resolution processes reinforce social cohesion and solidarity, reducing the likelihood of future conflicts (Ukiwo, 2005). social capital theory underscores the importance of reciprocity and social networks in fostering cooperation. Reciprocity refers to the mutual exchange of benefits and favours among individuals or groups (Coleman, 1990). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria often involve mediation by respected community members who are seen as impartial and neutral. These mediators leverage their social networks to bring together parties involved in a conflict and facilitate dialogue. The reciprocity and obligations embedded within these social networks create incentives for disputants to engage in the process and adhere to the outcomes, increasing the effectiveness of conflict resolution (Ukeje, 2009).

The theory highlights the role of social networks and community ties in fostering cooperation and resolving conflicts. In Nigeria, where ethnic and religious divisions often contribute to conflicts, the theory emphasizes the potential of social capital to bridge these divides and promote peace (Oviasuyi, 2009). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, deeply rooted in cultural practices and communal bonds, can tap into social capital to bring conflicting parties together and facilitate peaceful resolutions.

One weakness of social capital theory is the potential for social fragmentation. While social capital theory emphasizes the importance of social networks, it may not adequately address the potential for social fragmentation. In diverse societies like Nigeria, social networks may be fragmented along ethnic, religious, or regional lines, which can exacerbate conflicts rather than resolve them (Woolcock, 1998). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms must navigate these divisions to promote inclusive peace-building processes.The theory is however appropriate for the study as it provides a useful framework for understanding the role of traditional conflict resolution in peacebuilding. It also emphasises the importance of social networks and community ties in resolving conflict.

**4. TRADITIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS IN NIGERIA**

One significant strength of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms is their ability to promote social cohesion and harmony. These mechanisms recognize the importance of maintaining long-term relationships within the community and prioritize restoring peace and stability. By involving respected community members, they provide a sense of legitimacy and acceptance to the parties involved, fostering trust and compliance with the resolution outcomes. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms often focus on preserving the dignity and honour of the parties involved. They provide a platform for individuals to express their grievances and concerns, facilitating open dialogue and empathy. This process can contribute to healing emotional wounds and rebuilding damaged relationships, which may not be adequately addressed in formal legal systems (Ukiwo, 2005). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms often involve the use of mediation and arbitration to bring disputing parties together and facilitate dialogue. Mediators, usually respected community leaders or elders, act as neutral third parties, helping parties to reach a mutually agreeable resolution. According to Alemika and Chukwuma (2000), mediation has been effective in resolving disputes in rural communities, promoting understanding, and fostering community cohesion.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria emphasize consensus-building and community involvement. These processes promote dialogue, negotiation, and mediation, enabling disputing parties to actively participate in resolving their conflicts (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). Community members, elders, and traditional leaders play pivotal roles as mediators or arbitrators, employing their wisdom and experience to restore harmony and achieve mutually acceptable solutions. The process involves engaging members of the community, who contribute their knowledge, experience, and wisdom to the resolution of conflicts. This participatory approach can lead to more sustainable and satisfactory outcomes, as community members have a vested interest in maintaining harmony and preserving social cohesion (Umezurike, 2016).

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are deeply embedded in Nigerian culture and traditions. They reflect the values, customs, and beliefs of the local communities, which helps preserve cultural identity and social cohesion. They take into account the cultural norms, values, and customary laws of the specific ethnic groups involved. These mechanisms are based on deep-rooted traditions and customs that are well-understood and respected by the community members. This cultural sensitivity helps in maintaining social harmony and ensures that the resolution aligns with the values and beliefs of the community (Hyacinth, 2015). By embracing these mechanisms, individuals are more likely to adhere to the resolutions and maintain peaceful coexistence. The reliance on traditional institutions also strengthens the bond between community members and their leaders, promoting stability and social harmony.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria often emphasize restorative justice principles, focusing on healing relationships and restoring harmony within the community (Adeshina, 2021). The aim is not only to determine guilt or innocence but to repair the social fabric that has been damaged by the conflict. This approach promotes reconciliation and long-term stability, as it addresses the root causes of the conflict and seeks to rebuild trust among the parties involved. Traditional mechanisms prioritize mediation and negotiation over adversarial approaches. Mediators play a crucial role in facilitating dialogue and fostering a spirit of cooperation between the disputing parties (Ukiwo, 2005). By preserving relationships and promoting mutual understanding, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have a higher likelihood of generating sustainable and mutually acceptable solutions, compared to formal legal processes that often result in winners and losers

**Challenges of Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanisms in Nigeria**

Despite their strengths, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria face certain limitations. One significant challenge lies in their inclination towards upholding the prevailing social hierarchy and power dynamics, potentially introducing bias into the resolution process. These mechanisms frequently prioritize consensus building and the preservation of social order, often at the expense of individual rights and the pursuit of justice. Consequently, marginalized groups, including women and vulnerable individuals, may encounter significant obstacles when attempting to access fair and equitable resolutions due to deeply entrenched cultural norms and gender biases (Olademo *et al*., 2021).

Nigeria has experienced significant social changes, including urbanization, globalization, and cultural transformations. These changes have weakened traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, as they often struggle to adapt to the evolving social dynamics (Ayodele, 2020). Traditional mechanisms are deeply rooted in local customs and traditions, which may be eroded or marginalized in the face of modernization. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms often lack institutional support from the government and formal justice systems. The absence of legal recognition and limited resources undermine the authority and efficacy of traditional mechanisms (Sone, 2016). This lack of support diminishes the confidence of community members in these mechanisms and encourages the resort to formal legal systems.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms were primarily designed to address disputes arising from agricultural, communal, or family matters. However, contemporary conflicts in Nigeria often involve complex issues such as resource allocation, political disputes, and inter-ethnic tensions (Olawale, 2016). Traditional mechanisms may struggle to handle the intricacies of these conflicts, which require specialized knowledge and expertise. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria tend to be patriarchal and biased against women. Women often face discrimination and exclusion from decision-making processes (Kevin & Tony, 2018). This gender bias limits women's participation and undermines their ability to have their grievances addressed through traditional mechanisms.Traditional conflict resolution processes in Nigeria can be time-consuming and protracted. Multiple stages of negotiation, mediation, and reconciliation may prolong conflicts, particularly when there is a lack of consensus among stakeholders (Ogunseye, 2020). Prolonged processes may contribute to frustration and impede the resolution of conflicts.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms often face interference and manipulation by politicians and influential elites who exploit conflicts for personal or political gain. This interference can compromise the neutrality and integrity of traditional mechanisms (Mustapha, 2018). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms may lack the necessary capacity and training to handle complex and diverse conflicts. Traditional mediators may not possess the knowledge and skills required to address issues such as human rights violations, land disputes, or commercial conflicts (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). This limitation can hinder the effectiveness of traditional mechanisms. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms often lack formal enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with agreements and resolutions. Without effective enforcement, parties may disregard or violate the decisions reached through traditional mechanisms, undermining their effectiveness and perpetuating the cycle of conflict (Ferdinand, 2022).

**Findings**

From the reviewed literature, it can be inferred that traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have long played a vital role in promoting peace and stability in Nigeria. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigeria often employ mediation and negotiation processes to address conflicts. Community elders, religious leaders, and respected individuals play crucial roles as mediators, facilitating dialogue and reconciliation between conflicting parties (Ajayi & Buahri, 2014). These mediators possess deep knowledge of local customs, traditions, and values, enabling them to find culturally appropriate solutions that foster long-lasting peace.

Furthermore, it has been found that customary courts, known as traditional or native courts, form an integral part of Nigeria's traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. These courts apply customary laws and traditional practices to resolve disputes, addressing a wide range of issues, including land disputes, family conflicts, and inter-community disputes (Denga, 2018). The use of customary courts helps to restore social order, maintain peace, and preserve cultural norms and values. One significant finding is the high level of community participation and ownership in traditional conflict resolution processes. In Nigeria, communities actively engage in resolving conflicts through various methods, such as town hall meetings, community gatherings, and traditional assemblies (Rosado, 2014). This community involvement fosters a sense of collective responsibility, enhances trust among community members, and promotes peaceful coexistence. Through mediation, negotiation, customary courts, community participation, restorative justice, and cultural preservation, these mechanisms effectively manage conflicts, restore harmony, and foster long-term peace. It is crucial to recognize, support, and integrate traditional conflict resolution mechanisms with modern legal frameworks to build a peaceful and inclusive society in Nigeria.

**5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The role of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in promoting peace in Nigeria cannot be overstated. Despite the challenges faced by the country, the traditional methods of conflict resolution rooted in indigenous cultures have proven to be effective in resolving disputes and fostering peaceful coexistence. These mechanisms, such as mediation, arbitration, and reconciliation, have been practiced for generations and have the advantage of being deeply embedded in the local communities. One of the key strengths of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms is their ability to address issues at the grassroots level. The involvement of respected community leaders, elders, and religious figures helps to ensure that the concerns and needs of all parties involved are taken into account. Additionally, these mechanisms often prioritize restorative justice, focusing on healing and reconciliation rather than punitive measures. This approach not only resolves immediate conflicts but also works towards long-term stability and harmony. It is important to acknowledge that traditional conflict resolution mechanisms alone cannot solve all of Nigeria's complex challenges. They should be complemented by modern legal frameworks, institutions, and governmental support to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach to peacebuilding. Efforts should be made to bridge the gap between traditional and formal justice systems, encouraging collaboration and mutual respect. The role of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in promoting peace in Nigeria is significant and invaluable. By leveraging the wisdom, cultural knowledge, and community participation embedded within these mechanisms, Nigeria has the opportunity to foster peace, stability, and sustainable development at both the local and national levels

After a thorough examination of documented studies, the following suggestions are made. Government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) need to collaborate to enhance the promotion of peace in Nigeria. Government institutions can offer support, resources, and legal backing to traditional mechanisms, while NGOs can play a vital role in facilitating capacity building, training, and conflict resolution initiatives. Integrating traditional conflict resolution mechanisms with the formal legal system is crucial. This entails recognizing the decisions and outcomes of traditional processes and establishing a legal framework for their implementation. Political leaders should actively engage traditional leaders in peace-building efforts, as they hold significant influence and respect in Nigerian society.

The deep understanding of local customs, traditions, and history can contribute to effective mediation and conflict resolution. It is essential to identify and strengthen existing community dialogue platforms where conflicts can be addressed through mediation, negotiation, and consensus-building. These platforms provide a conducive space for open discussions, understanding, and reconciliation, thus fostering peace within communities. Furthermore, raising awareness about the importance and effectiveness of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms is key to promoting peace in Nigeria. Government and non-governmental organizations can conduct public awareness campaigns, workshops, and training programs to educate communities about their traditional conflict resolution practices and encourage their utilization.

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**A REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE FAILURE AND VIOLENCE EXTREMISM IN NIGERIA, CRIMES AND TERRORISM IN DISCOURSE**

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**Abstract**

*This review examines the intricate relationship between governance failure, violence extremism, crimes, and terrorism in Nigeria. The analysis reveals that Nigeria faces a multifaceted challenge stemming from governance shortcomings, which have created an environment conducive to extremist activities and criminality. Notably, the emergence of groups like Boko Haram has perpetuated violence, resulting in a humanitarian crisis. Additionally, the nation contends with high levels of crime and other forms of terrorism, further undermining stability and development. This paper adopts the failed state theory and the radicalization framework. It emphasizes the need for comprehensive, long-term solutions, including improved governance and social cohesion, to address the root causes of these issues and foster lasting peace and prosperity in Nigeria. The paper recommends that the Nigerian government needs to invest in education and job creation to provide young people with opportunities and hope for the future.*

**Keywords:** Governance, failure, violence, crimes, terrorism

# INTRODUCTION

Governance failure and the surge of violent extremism in Nigeria constitute pressing concerns that warrant a thorough examination. The intricate interplay between deficiencies in governance and the rise of violent extremism not only jeopardizes Nigeria's stability but also poses a substantial threat to regional and global security (Aghedo & Osumah, 2014). Nigeria, a nation characterized by its cultural diversity and abundant resources, has grappled with a turbulent history marked by periods of political instability, economic disparities, and social unrest (Herbert & Husaini, 2018). The legacies of colonialism, post-independence power struggles, and governance failures have collectively contributed to a complex environment where criminal activities and extremist ideologies have taken root. Consequently, Nigeria has confronted a range of challenges, encompassing ethnoreligious conflicts and insurgencies orchestrated by groups like Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), which have not only imperilled the lives and well-being of its citizens but also posed significant regional security threats (Centre for Preventive Action, 2023)

One of the central issues contributing to governance failure in Nigeria is widespread corruption within both public and private sectors (Transparency International, 2020). The embezzlement of public funds, nepotism, and a lack of transparency erode trust in government institutions and exacerbate social inequality (Ogbuti, 2023). The Nigerian government faces challenges in building and maintaining effective institutions capable of delivering essential services and upholding the rule of law (Achumba et al., 2013). This institutional weakness creates an environment conducive to criminal activities and extremist ideologies.

Nigeria's diverse population is divided along ethnic and religious lines, which are often exploited by political actors for their own gain (Okpanachi, 2012). This fragmentation hinders efforts to foster a sense of national unity and exacerbates social tensions. The Boko Haram insurgency, which emerged in the early 2000s, represents a significant manifestation of violent extremism in Nigeria (Brechenmacher, 2019). The group's radical ideology, coupled with socio-economic grievances, has fueled its recruitment efforts and sustained its campaign of violence. The escalation of conflicts between farmers and herders in Nigeria's Middle Belt region has also been linked to violent extremism (Brottem, 2021). Competition for resources, exacerbated by weak governance and inadequate security measures, has contributed to the proliferation of armed groups.

The interplay of governance failure and violent extremism has profound socioeconomic consequences. Displacement, loss of livelihoods, and disrupted access to basic services have resulted in a severe humanitarian crisis (UNOCHA, 2020). This crisis further strains the already overstretched capacity of both state and non-state actors. The spillover effects of Nigeria's security challenges extend beyond its borders. Neighbouring countries, such as Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, have experienced a ripple effect of instability due to the cross-border activities of extremist groups (Onuha, 2014). This necessitates a coordinated regional and international approach to address the crisis. Nigeria's current security predicament is deeply entrenched in a history of governance failure, exacerbated by the proliferation of violent extremism and organized crime. Addressing this complex challenge requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses political, economic, and social reforms

# CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

**Governance failure**

Robert H. Bates' concept of governance failure pertains to instances where governmental institutions fall short in their responsibility to furnish crucial public goods that are vital for fostering economic advancement within a society. This failure signifies a breakdown in the state's capacity to deliver essential services, such as infrastructure, education, healthcare, and security, which are fundamental to sustainable economic growth. Bates' definition highlights the pivotal role that effective governance plays in a nation's development trajectory, as deficiencies in providing these public goods can impede progress, hinder private sector investment, and exacerbate inequalities (Bates, 2008).

Francis Fukuyama defines governance failure as the incapacity of a political system to fulfil the fundamental roles of government effectively for its populace. He talks about how governance breakdowns can lead to dysfunction in providing essential services, maintaining the rule of law, and ensuring public order. Fukuyama's analysis extends beyond mere economic development, encompassing broader aspects of political stability and societal well-being (Fukuyama, 2014).

Elinor Ostrom defines governance failure as a scenario in which the organizational structures and rules employed by societies and institutions yield outcomes that are suboptimal or less favourable than what could be achieved. She emphasizes the importance of examining how these institutional arrangements influence decision-making, resource management, and the overall welfare of individuals and communities. Ostrom's framework highlights the need to assess and potentially reshape governance systems when they are not effectively serving the interests and well-being of the people they are meant to govern.

**Violence extremism**

Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger (2015) define violent extremism as the ideologies and behaviours of individuals who endorse or employ violence driven by political, religious, or social motives in pursuit of their objectives. This definition underscores the multifaceted nature of extremism, encompassing a wide range of ideological motivations that can lead to acts of violence aimed at achieving specific goals within these spheres

Crenshaw (2010) defines violent extremism as the utilization of force by non-state actors with political intentions, primarily intended to generate a profound psychological impact that extends well beyond the immediate victims or targets. This definition underscores the strategic aspect of violent extremism, emphasizing the intent to create fear, instability, or ideological influence on a larger scale, often with the aim of advancing a specific agenda or challenging established political structures.

Schmid (2013) defines violent extremism as the endeavour to achieve objectives through the deliberate application of violence against civilians or non-combatants, with the explicit aim of instilling terror and fear. This form of violence is orchestrated by sub-national groups or covert agents, and it typically serves the purpose of influencing a wider audience, whether it be to advance a political, ideological, or social agenda.

**Terrorism**

Bruce Hoffman defines terrorism as the calculated generation and manipulation of fear using acts of violence or the intimidation of violence, all carried out with the objective of effecting political transformation. This definition underscores the strategic nature of terrorism, which aims to instil fear within societies or governments to advance specific political goals (Hoffman, 2006).

Walter Laqueur defines terrorism as the unauthorized or unlawful application of force to attain a political goal by singling out innocent individuals as targets. This definition emphasizes the unlawful and morally reprehensible nature of terrorism, as it deliberately victimizes non-combatants to further a political agenda (Laqueur, 2000).

Schmid defines terrorism as a method of warfare in which either random or symbolic victims are deliberately chosen as the primary targets of violence. This definition underscores the strategic aspect of terrorism, where the selection of victims is often intended to convey a message or achieve specific psychological, political, or ideological objectives (Schmid, 2013).

# METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for the study is qualitative. Data were gathered from secondary sources like journals, official websites, literary works, documentaries and newspapers. Every single piece of information gathered for this study is pertinent to it. Content analysis and thematic approach were largely engaged.

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper adopts the Failed State Theory and the Radicalization Framework. The Failed State Theory provides a lens through which to examine governance failure in Nigeria. According to Robert H. Bates (2008), governance failure is characterized by the inability of governments to provide essential public goods necessary for economic development. In Nigeria, governance failure has manifested in various ways, including rampant corruption, a weak rule of law, and inadequate provision of public services. These failures have eroded public trust, fostered inequality, and contributed to a sense of disillusionment among citizens. Nigeria has faced challenges in addressing socio-economic disparities, particularly in regions with high levels of poverty and unemployment. These disparities can create fertile ground for radicalization, as disenfranchised individuals may be more susceptible to extremist ideologies that promise change and empowerment.

The Radicalization Framework focuses on the process by which individuals become involved in violence and extremism. This framework identifies a number of factors that can contribute to radicalization

The Radicalization Framework focuses on the process by which individuals and groups become radicalized and turn to violence (Sageman, 2004). In Nigeria, governance failure plays a crucial role in radicalization. The lack of effective governance, especially in marginalized regions, can fuel grievances related to identity, socio-economic disparities, and perceived injustices. These grievances can make individuals more susceptible to extremist narratives that frame violence as a means to address their concerns. Extremist groups in Nigeria, such as Boko Haram, have exploited governance failures and grievances to recruit members. They offer a sense of purpose, belonging, and the promise of change to individuals who feel marginalized by the state (Onuoha, 2014). The Radicalization Framework helps us understand how these groups manipulate socio-political tensions and employ online propaganda to radicalize and recruit members.

Both the Failed State Theory and the Radicalization Framework can be used to understand the violence and extremism that Nigeria has experienced in recent years. For example, the Failed State Theory can help to explain why Nigeria has been particularly vulnerable to the activities of Boko Haram, a violent Islamist extremist group. Boko Haram has been able to thrive in parts of northern Nigeria where the government is weak and unable to provide basic security and services.

The Failed State Theory may oversimplify the complex factors contributing to governance failure while the Radicalization Framework may oversimplify the process of radicalization by emphasizing external factors such as governance failure and grievances while underestimating the significance of individual agency and personal motivations in the radicalization process.

# Governance failure in Nigeria

The pervasive issue of governance failure in Nigeria is exemplified by its deeply entrenched culture of corruption and gross mismanagement of public resources. Transparency International's report highlights the extent of this problem, painting a grim picture of a system riddled with dishonest practices. This corruption seeps through all echelons of government, acting as a formidable barrier to the efficient delivery of services, hampering crucial infrastructure development, and stunting overall economic progress (Transparency International, 2020). The consequences are far-reaching, with the public's confidence in governmental institutions eroding over time. This, in turn, fosters an environment of unchecked lawlessness, where those in power act with impunity, further deepening the governance crisis. The cycle of corruption perpetuates a vicious cycle, depriving the nation of the opportunities and resources necessary for genuine progress and development (Transparency International, 2020).

Nigeria grapples with a severe deficiency in its public services, notably in crucial sectors like healthcare, education, and infrastructure. These services are not only insufficient but also marred by subpar quality, failing to meet the basic needs of the population. This chronic inadequacy fuels widespread discontent among the people, as they face daily challenges accessing essential services that should be readily available. Moreover, this systemic failure further deepens existing social inequalities, as those with the means to seek private alternatives can access better services, while marginalized communities continue to suffer (World Bank, 2020).

Nigeria's governance landscape has been marred by frequent episodes of political instability, which primarily manifest in electoral irregularities and contested elections. This persistent turmoil has inflicted substantial damage on the country's governance structures. The credibility of the electoral process is compromised, eroding public trust in the democratic system and undermining the very foundation of the rule of law. The International Crisis Group's (2018) assessment of the situation highlighted the grave implications of this instability. It not only hampers the consolidation of democratic principles but also fosters an environment ripe for criminal activities to thrive. The uncertainty and unrest surrounding disputed elections create fertile ground for political opportunism and lawlessness, further exacerbating Nigeria's governance crisis.

Corruption within Nigeria's security agencies and the misallocation of resources have severely undermined the government's capacity to combat terrorism and crime efficiently. According to the International Crisis (2018), the impact of this internal corruption is detrimental, it not only weakens the security apparatus but also erodes public trust in these institutions. As a result, the fight against terrorism and crime is hampered, allowing these threats to persist. The lack of access to education and employment opportunities, as highlighted by the World Bank (2020), contributes to grievances within the population. This can drive individuals toward criminal or extremist activities as they seek alternatives in the face of limited prospects.

Political instability can indeed create a power vacuum that armed groups are quick to exploit in order to advance their own agendas. The Council on Foreign Relations (2020) emphasizes this critical point. When a government's authority is weakened or contested due to political instability, it can leave a void in governance and law enforcement. In this vacuum, armed groups, insurgents, or militias may step in to seize control or exert influence over territories or communities.

According to Falae (2018), in addition to the clearly criminal acts like kidnapping for ransom and bank robbery, there are also overt activities where substantial amounts of money change hands between funding entities and terrorist organizations. It is crucial to recognize that no terrorist organization can effectively operate without financial resources and the necessary materials. Terrorism requires a significant financial commitment to sustain the organization's activities and pursue its goals within any country where it is established.

Furthermore, some acts of terrorism are driven by political motivations and involve politicians. For instance, in Nigeria, certain politicians have taken on the role of sponsoring terrorist organizations like Boko Haram. These politicians often exploit religious affiliations, presenting themselves as Islamists and aligning themselves with the terrorist group's objectives. In reality, they provide financial support to terrorist activities in Nigeria, aiming to destabilize the government in power, especially if it belongs to the opposing political faction. During elections, politicians frequently employ political thugs and even provide them with weapons to disrupt the electoral process (Osewa, 2019). Unfortunately, these weapons are often not recovered from the thugs, and they subsequently employ them as instruments of terror in society. Many of these thugs, armed with these weapons, eventually align themselves with terrorist organizations, becoming active participants in acts of terror in North-eastern Nigeria.

Another contributing factor is that Nigerian politicians, once in power, often fail to provide citizens with the essential necessities that would improve their quality of life and ensure a higher standard of living. When citizens are unemployed and idle, they may feel they have no choice but to readily succumb to the demands of terrorist groups and become fighters for these organizations. As Wisdom (2018) pointed out, Nigerian politics is considered a root cause of insurgency because it has been extensively analyzed how corrupt politicians have led to economic poverty and inequality, resulting in grievances in Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, politicians are often perceived as distant from the citizens, rarely being present on the ground to address the issues and challenges faced by the people. Consequently, citizens sometimes take matters into their own hands, resorting to various criminal activities as a means of survival. Osewa (2019) adds to this perspective by highlighting a significant gap between the government and the people in Nigeria, which also contributes to terrorism in the country. Often, individuals find that their voices are not effectively heard by government officials. While some choose to address this issue through peaceful and civilized means, others resort to armed actions, using fear as a tool to achieve their desired outcomes from the government.

# Violence Extremism in Nigeria

Violent extremism in Nigeria has emerged as a multifaceted challenge with profound implications for the country's security, social cohesion, and development. Boko Haram, founded in 2002, represents one of the most notorious extremist groups in Nigeria. The group's ideology is rooted in a radical interpretation of Islam and aims to establish an Islamic state governed by sharia law in Nigeria. Boko Haram has carried out numerous acts of violence, including bombings, abductions, and massacres (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020). The group's extremist ideology has been a driving force behind its activities. A splinter group of Boko Haram, ISWAP, aligns itself with the Islamic State. It operates primarily in northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, further exacerbating security concerns (International Crisis Group, 2020). ISWAP's violent extremism is closely tied to its affiliation with global jihadist movements.

Nigeria has experienced violence associated with Fulani militant herdsmen, distinct from Islamist extremist groups but still a significant source of conflict and instability. The International Crisis Group (2018) sheds light on the root causes of this violence. Key factors include disputes over land and resources, as well as underlying religious tensions. These conflicts often arise when Fulani herders and agrarian communities vie for control over land and resources, such as grazing areas and water sources. The competition for these limited resources can escalate into violent confrontations, leading to casualties and displacement. While not all Fulani militants can be classified as extremists, there are instances where some individuals or factions within these groups engage in violent activities with extremist undertones. These activities may be driven by a mix of factors, including grievances, radicalization, and opportunism.

The recruitment and radicalization of individuals into extremist groups frequently have ties to criminal activities. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2017) highlight the intersection of criminal elements and extremist recruitment. Extremist groups often employ various tactics, including promises of financial gain, to entice individuals, particularly those grappling with economic hardships. These promises of financial incentives can be especially appealing to individuals facing economic difficulties, as they may see joining extremist groups as a means of improving their financial situation or escaping poverty. In some cases, extremist groups engage in criminal activities such as drug trafficking, extortion, or smuggling to fund their operations. This criminalization of recruitment not only provides a revenue stream for these groups but also makes them more attractive to individuals seeking economic opportunities.

Kidnapping for ransom has indeed evolved into a lucrative criminal enterprise in Nigeria, as highlighted by the International Crisis Group (2020). This practice has become a favoured tactic not only among criminal gangs but also among extremist groups operating in the country. Kidnappings serve as a significant source of funding for these organizations. Extremist groups often resort to kidnapping as a means to finance their activities, purchase weapons, and sustain their operations. The cycle of violence created by kidnappings, along with the ransom payments demanded, provides these groups with the necessary resources to continue their criminal and extremist activities. This cycle of violence perpetuates a sense of insecurity and fear among the population, eroding trust in the government's ability to provide security and stability. It also places a heavy economic burden on both individuals and businesses, as they are forced to pay ransoms or implement costly security measures.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons represents a grave concern in Nigeria, further exacerbated by its connection to extremist groups. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2021) highlight the significance of this issue. Extremist organizations operating in the country often procure their weapons through criminal networks involved in arms trafficking. This nexus between arms trafficking and violent extremism amplifies insecurity in Nigeria on multiple fronts. Firstly, it equips extremist groups with the means to carry out acts of violence and terrorism, posing a significant threat to both civilians and security forces. Secondly, it fuels a cycle of violence, as these weapons are used to intimidate and perpetrate criminal activities, such as kidnappings and armed robberies, which further undermine stability and public safety.

The effects of these menace are numerous. The social and economic well-being of Nigerian citizens has been severely compromised, with people unable to carry out their daily activities. This impact is particularly felt by farmers, who are now facing famine and hunger. Additionally, numerous schools have been forced to close, and tragically, many teachers have lost their lives. Consequently, a significant number of Nigerian children have been deprived of their education (Osewa, 2019).

As highlighted by Giz (2016), since 2009, there has been extensive destruction caused by violent attacks, particularly in Borno state. Shockingly, these attacks have resulted in the loss of over 20,000 lives, and approximately 2.3 million individuals have been forced to leave their communities. The majority of these internally displaced persons have sought refuge in neighboring states like Yobe and Adamawa. Boko Haram's deliberate targeting of schools and healthcare facilities has further exacerbated the already inadequate healthcare and education systems in the affected areas.

According to UNICEF (2018), nearly 1,400 schools in Borno have been destroyed as a result of the armed group's eight-year rebellion. Additionally, more than 57 percent of schools in the region either remain closed due to damage or are situated in areas that are still unsafe. This widespread disruption of the educational system has had a profound impact on the children of Nigerians, especially those in North-eastern Nigeria, leading to increased illiteracy and ignorance in the country.

Furthermore, the tourism industry in the affected areas has suffered significantly, as foreign investors are reluctant to invest in the Northeast and Nigeria as a whole. A few years ago, the United States issued a warning to its citizens, advising them not to invest in Nigeria due to the ongoing terrorism that has plagued the country. This reflects the adverse effects of terrorism on Nigeria's international reputation and investment climate. The chronic humanitarian crisis, coupled with high unemployment rates and endemic poverty, is now a pressing issue in Nigeria, largely attributed to terrorism. Despite the efforts made by the Nigerian government to contain this crisis, the results have been relatively limited in addressing the overall impact of terrorism on the nation.

# CONCLUSION

Nigeria has faced a number of governance failures in recent years, which have contributed to the rise of violence extremism, crimes, and terrorism in the country. These governance failures include corruption, lack of accountability, and human rights abuses. Governance failure, characterized by corruption, weak institutions, and inadequate service delivery, has contributed significantly to the rise of violent extremism and the perpetuation of crimes and terrorism in Nigeria. The pervasive corruption, ineffective institutions, and a lack of inclusivity in governance have eroded public trust and exacerbated grievances among marginalized communities, creating fertile ground for extremist ideologies to take root. The prevalence of poverty, unemployment, and unequal distribution of resources further amplifies the appeal of radical narratives, pushing vulnerable individuals towards criminal activities and extremist groups.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The government needs to take steps to address corruption at all levels and to hold public officials accountable for their actions. This could include strengthening anti-corruption laws, establishing independent oversight mechanisms, and prosecuting corrupt officials.
2. Human rights abuses and a lack of respect for the rule of law can create an environment where violence extremism and terrorism can flourish. The Nigerian government needs to promote and protect human rights, and to ensure that the rule of law is applied equally to all citizens.
3. Young people are often vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremist groups. The Nigerian government needs to invest in education and job creation to provide young people with opportunities and hope for the future
4. The Nigerian government needs to promote inter-religious dialogue and understanding and to build bridges between different religious communities.
5. The Nigerian government needs to strengthen regional cooperation with other countries in West Africa and across the continent to combat transnational crime and terrorism.

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**REGULATION OF FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NIGERIA (1980-2019)**

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**Abstract**

*The level at which regulation of financial systems affected the growth of Nigerian economy motivate this study. It is essential to have an effective regulation in place to maintain stability, promote investor confidence, and safeguard the interests of all stakeholders within the financial system in order to ensure a sustainable economic growth. The broad objective of this study is to examine the challenges of financial systems and its implications on economic growth in Nigeria. Specifically, the study assesses the contribution of the Nigerian financial sector to economic growth in Nigeria, the study find out the impact of financial reforms on the performance of the Nigerian financial sector. Data used were sourced from various issues of Central Bank of Nigeria’s publications and National Bureau of Statistics. The Ordinary Least Square (OLS) Regression model is employed to derive the parameter estimates of the variables. The validity of the estimated coefficients is assessed using the Coefficient of Determination (R2), T-test, and F-test. The Coefficient of Determination measures the degree to which the independent variables account for the variation in the dependent variable. Findings revealed that the entire factors exhibit a positive association with the dependent variable (annual growth rate of GDP) suggests that to increase GDP growth, government fiscal policy has to be redirected and refocused on the development of goods and services. The study recommends that in order to sustain and enhance the existing relationship between financial sector development and economic growth in Nigeria, it is essential to deepen the financial system by implementing innovative practices, ensuring adequate and effective regulation and supervision, establishing a robust legal framework, promoting efficient fund mobilization, making funds available for productive investments, and improving financial services.*

**Keywords:** Regulation, Financial systems, Economic growth, Nigerian economy, Legal

framework

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The operation of the financial system can have a key impact on economic growth and the stability of the economy. It affects long-term economic growth through its effect on the efficiency of intermediation between the savers and final borrowers of funds; through the extent to which it allows for monitoring of the users of external funds, affecting thereby the productivity of capital employed; and through its implications for the volume of saving, which influences the future income-generating capacity of the economy. It affects the stability of the economy because of the high degree of leverage of its activities and its pivotal role in the settlement of all transactions in the economy, so that any failure in one segment risks undermining the stability of the whole system.

Nigeria, as the largest economy in Africa, has experienced significant economic growth and transformation over the past few decades. The country's financial sector has played a crucial role in supporting economic activities, mobilizing savings, and facilitating investment. Anyanwu, (2014). However, to ensure sustainable economic growth, it is essential to have effective regulation in place to maintain stability, promote investor confidence, and safeguard the interests of all stakeholders within the financial system.

The liberalization of the financial sector in the 1990s marked a significant turning point, as Nigeria embarked on a path of financial sector reforms. These reforms aimed to modernize the regulatory framework, promote market discipline, and attract domestic and foreign investmentsLawanson, (2018). Key regulatory bodies, such as the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), and National Insurance Commission (NAICOM), were established or strengthened to oversee specific aspects of the financial system.

Financial inclusion has also been a focus of regulatory efforts in Nigeria. Recognizing the importance of including underserved populations in the formal financial system, initiatives have been launched to promote financial literacy, expand access to financial services, and support the growth of microfinance institutions (MFIs) and fintech companies. These efforts aim to foster inclusive economic growth by providing individuals and small businesses with opportunities to save, borrow, and investOyediran, &Adediran, (2021).

While Nigeria has made progress in strengthening financial regulation, challenges remain. Non-performing loans, weak risk management practices, money laundering, and terrorism financing are persistent issues that require continuous attention. Additionally, technological advancements and the rise of fintech have introduced new regulatory complexities that need to be addressed to balance innovation with consumer protection and systemic stabilityOdularu, &Oyediran, (2020).

The relationship between financial system regulation and economic growth is of paramount importance. A well-regulated financial sector promotes investor confidence, attracts investments, mobilizes savings, and facilitates efficient allocation of capital, all of which are essential for economic expansion Central Bank of Nigeria. (2019). Furthermore, effective regulation fosters financial stability, mitigates systemic risks, and creates an enabling environment for businesses, entrepreneurs, and individuals to thrive.

In light of these considerations, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the regulation of financial systems and its impact on economic growth in Nigeria. By examining the regulatory frameworks, policy initiatives, and outcomes, this research intends to contribute to the existing knowledge base, inform policymakers, regulators, researchers, and stakeholders, and offer insights into areas where improvements can be made. Ultimately, the study seeks to support the development of a robust and inclusive financial system that serves as a catalyst for sustained economic growth in Nigeria.

The regulation of financial systems plays a critical role in fostering economic growth in Nigeria. However, several challenges and issues persist within the regulatory framework, hindering the attainment of optimal economic outcomes. Despite efforts to regulate financial systems in Nigeria, several challenges and issues persist, potentially hindering the country's economic growth. It is crucial to examine and understand these challenges to identify potential areas for improvement in financial regulation. According to Anyanwu (2014), the effectiveness of financial regulation and its impact on economic growth in Nigeria remains a subject of debate and requires further investigation. Lawanson (2018) emphasizes the need to explore the relationship between financial sector reforms and economic growth in Nigeria to assess the effectiveness of regulatory measures implemented.

Furthermore, Odularu and Oyediran (2020) highlight the significance of understanding the impact of financial sector reforms on economic growth in Nigeria, particularly with regards to strengthening risk management practices and addressing non-performing loans. Oyediran and Adediran (2021) emphasize the importance of regulatory quality in promoting economic growth and suggest the need to examine its nexus with financial development in Nigeria. The challenges related to money laundering and terrorism financing in Nigeria's financial system have been identified by Musa and Musa (2020). They stress the importance of developing and implementing robust regulatory frameworks to mitigate these risks and maintain financial system integrity.

In addition, the rise of fintech and its impact on financial regulation is an area of concern. Scott, Adediran, and Obada (2021) emphasize the need to analyze the relationship between financial sector development and economic growth, considering the increasing role of fintech in Nigeria's financial landscape. Lastly, ensuring financial inclusion and addressing barriers to access finance are essential for sustainable economic growth. Scholars such as the Securities and Exchange Commission Nigeria (2019) emphasize the importance of regulatory measures in promoting financial inclusion and expanding access to formal financial services.

The purpose of this study is to examine the challenges of financial systems and its implications on economic growth in Nigeria. Specifically, the study assesses the contribution of the Nigerian financial sector to economic growth in Nigeria, the study find out the impact of financial reforms on the performance of the Nigerian financial sector. Some of the questions formulated to guide the study are: (i) to what extent has financial development lead to economic growth? (ii) To what extent has the Nigerian financial sector contributed to economic growth? **(**iii) What is the significant impact in the financial sector performance before and after financial reforms in Nigeria?

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between financial regulation and economic growth in the Nigerian context. By analyzing relevant data, economic indicators, and conducting empirical studies, the research adds to the understanding of how regulatory frameworks affect the overall performance and stability of the financial sector, and subsequently impact economic growth. The study identifies and analyzes the specific challenges and issues faced in regulating financial systems in Nigeria. By exploring areas such as inadequate regulatory frameworks, non-performing loans, money laundering, technological disruptions, limited financial inclusion, and governance and transparency concerns, the research sheds light on the specific hurdles that need to be addressed to improve the effectiveness of financial regulation.

Building upon the identified challenges and issues, the study provides policy recommendations to enhance the regulatory environment of the Nigerian financial sector. These recommendations draw from the analysis of best practices, lessons learned from other contexts, and an understanding of the Nigerian economic landscape. The research contributes actionable insights that can guide policymakers, regulators, and stakeholders in implementing reforms and measures to foster a more robust and effective regulatory framework. The study takes a comprehensive approach to understanding the regulation of financial systems in Nigeria. By considering multiple components of the financial sector beyond banks, such as insurance companies, pension funds, capital markets, microfinance institutions, and fintech, the research provides a holistic view of the sector's functioning and its impact on economic growth. This comprehensive analysis contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the financial system's dynamics and the interplay between different financial institutions. The study contributes to knowledge by contextualizing the findings within the Nigerian economic and regulatory landscape. It takes into account the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Nigeria, such as its socio-economic conditions, specific regulatory frameworks, and institutional settings. This contextualized analysis adds depth and relevance to the understanding of financial regulation's impact on economic growth in the Nigerian context. The rest of the body of this study consists of Literature review, Methodology, Results and discussion, Conclusion and recommendations.

**2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **2.1 Conceptual Review**

## **Regulation and other policies**

This section discusses regulatory impediments to competition (both from domestic and foreign sources) in various segments of banking activities, as well as of the regulatory underpinnings of securities markets. Using essentially information from comprehensive regulatory databases compiled by the World Bank, the stance of regulation in banking and some aspects of securities markets is presented in the form of quantitative indicators. It is important to stress that the indicators presented in this section reflect for the most part the stance of domestic regulation in specific areas of banking and securities market. Financial sector development and efficiency can also be hampered by a number of less formal policy barriers to cross-border competition in securities and banking services.

Institutions, offering consumer protection, assisting industrial and/or regional development and preserving financial stability, in particular the safeguarding of the payment and settlement system. This has led in the past to tight and widespread regulation, ranging from interest rate ceilings and branching restrictions to capital requirements and deposit insurance. While some of the most stringent rules such as interest rate controls and branching restrictions have by now been largely eliminated in OECD countries, the sector remains nevertheless one of the most intensely regulated across countries. Furthermore, the main objectives of regulation have generally become more narrowly focused, with the main emphasis put on market integrity (conduct rules) consumer/investor protection (disclosure rules) and crisis prevention, in particular on limiting systemic risks should one or more institutions get into trouble (prudential regulation). In parallel, in an effort to level the playing field internationally, efforts have been made to harmonise prudential regulation across countries via the Basel I and II processes.

Against this background, the policy challenge is to strike the right balance between preserving the overall soundness of the banking system and fostering its efficiency. To a certain extent, rules aimed at consumer protection may contribute to re-enforce competition, for instance by helping consumers to make better informed choices, raising thereby their willingness to switch between institutions. Also, a minimum level of regulation is needed to ensure that financial institutions behave prudently, and this can raise efficiency even if it increases the cost of entry. In many cases, however, regulation aimed at stability or consumer protection is implemented at the expense of competition with the balance being unnecessarily tilted against efficient outcomes. Indeed, as long as measures such as capital requirements, disclosure rules and risk-based deposit insurance are in place to ensure banks’ prudent behaviour, further reductions in direct barriers to competition need not weaken the key regulatory objectives.

### **Construction of Regulatory Indicators**

In order to compare the stance of banking regulations across countries, the analysis relies essentially on the World Bank’s *Bank, Regulation and Supervision Database*. It compiles the results from a detailed survey of banking regulation conducted in 2000 and again in 2002-03 in a large number of countries (see de Serres*et al*., 2006 for details regarding the questionnaire and the construction of quantitative indices). As such, it provides a measure of the stance of banking regulation in the countries covered, with some indications of the enforcement powers by supervisors. The survey consists of approximately 250 questions which, for the purpose of this exercise, have been categorised under two broad headings: Stability and barriers to competition.

Each category is in turn divided in sub-groups according to the specific aspects of regulation covered. The sub-groups for the competition-barriers category include regulatory barriers on domestic and foreign entry, restrictions on banking activities and the extent of government ownership. The sub-groups for stability category consist of ten diverse regulatory areas. Even though the *Bank, Regulation and Supervision Database* contains some information about foreign entry and government ownership, the indicators used in the empirical work are based on alternative sources which were viewed as more comprehensive. More specifically, the index of restrictions on foreign entry in banking is based on earlier OECD.

**2.2 Theoretical Review**

**Financial Development and Growth: Theory**

Endogenous growth theory models services like risk diversification, savings mobilisation and  
liquidity generation offered by financial intermediaries. The theory proposes that through these  
services there is an implied positive relationship between financial intermediation and economic  
growth (Ghali, 1999). However it is important to note that this relationship can be affected negativelyby intense government intervention in financial institutions. According to Ghali, 1999 governmentintervention through direct interventions such as interest rate ceilings and direct credit programs onthe banking system restricts financial sector development, thus reducing economic growth.

However, one of the oldest debates in economics has remained the relationship between financialdevelopment and economic growth. Its root can be traced to Schumpter (1912), when he posits thatfinance is paramount for economic growth. However, Robinson (1952) argues that economic growthpromotes financial development. Financial markets provide an economy with vital servicescomprising, for example, the management of risk and information, and the pooling and mobilizationof savings (Gries et al, 2011). Theoretically, the linkage between finance and economic growth maytake different forms. On the one hand, the financial sector may affect growth through theaccumulation channel and the location channel. The accumulation channel emphasizes the finance induced growth effects of physical and human capital accumulation (Pagano, 1993).

The allocation channel focuses on the financed-induced efficiency gains in resource allocation that enhances growth (King and Levine, 1993). Following these considerations, causality runs from finance to growth (supply-leading hypothesis). On the other hand, financial development may also be stimulated byeconomic growth. For instance, in a growing economy, the private sector may demand new financialinstruments and an improved access to external finance. Financial activities then simply expand instep with general economic development (Robinson, 1952), positing the so-called demand- lowinghypothesis. Additionally, finance and growth may be mutually dependent. The real sector mayprovide the financial system with the funds necessary to enable financial deepening, eventuallyallowing for a capitalization on financial economies of scale which in turn facilitates economicdevelopment (Berthelemy and Varoudakis, 1996).

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

The Ordinary Least Square (OLS) Regression model is employed to derive the parameter estimates of the variables. The validity of the estimated coefficients is assessed using the Coefficient of Determination (R2), T-test, and F-test. The Coefficient of Determination measures the degree to which the independent variables account for the variation in the dependent variable. The T-test and F-test compare the calculated values with the tabulated values to evaluate the statistical significance of the explanatory variables. These tests also determine the acceptability of the formulated questions and the standardized beta coefficients are utilized to assess the relative effectiveness of the explanatory variables.

**Model Specification**

The main objective of this study is to examine the correlation between financial development and economic growth in Nigeria using econometric techniques. To assess this relationship, several variables are considered, including the annual growth of Gross Domestic Product (GY), real interest rate (R), the ratio of gross domestic savings to GDP (S), and the ratio of domestic credit to the private sector to GDP (P). The dependent variable in this analysis is the annual growth of Gross Domestic Product (GY), while the explanatory variables include real interest rate (R), the ratio of gross domestic savings to GDP (S), and the ratio of domestic credit to the private sector to GDP (P).

To establish the relationship between financial development and economic growth, we adopt a growth model based on the approach used by Eradaletal (2007), which is a modification of the growth model developed by Rata and Ram (1999). The methodological approach for this research follows the specification of a model that relates the annual growth of Gross Domestic Product (GY) to the real interest rate (R), the ratio of gross domestic savings to GDP (S), and the ratio of domestic credit to the private sector to GDP (P).

GYt - f(Rt, St, Pt,)……………………………(1)

In a linear form, the model can be specified as;

GYt= β0 + β1Rt + β2St + β3Pt + Ut …..(2)

Where;

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| GYt | = Annual growth of the Gross | Domestic Product |
| Rt | = Real Interest Rate |  |
| St | = the ratio of Gross Domestic | Savings to GDP |
| Pt | = Ratio of Domestic Credit to | Private Sector to GDP. |
| Ut | = Error Term |  |

βoto β3are parameters.

The Logarithm format becomes:

LnGYt = lnβo+ lnβ1Rt + lnβ2St + lnβ3Pt + Ut ……………(3)

The logarithm format above becomes necessary due to the fact that it measures the general growth rate to de-emphasize the rising trend of each of the variables used in the model.

Other equations are stated thus:

GYt = β0 + β1Rt + P2S t +U t ……………………(4)

GYt= β0+ β1Rt+ β2Pt +Ut:……………….(5)

GY t =β0 + β1 S t + β2 P t +U t ………….(6)

While equation 2 combined all the variables together, equations 4, 5 and 6 are meant to ascertain how each of the included variables in turns affect economic growth and how their non-inclusion in the equation will affect the performance of the analysis.

**Data Types and Sources**

The estimation of the model in this study is done using time series data over the period 1980 to 2019. All the data used were sourced from various issues of Central Bank of Nigeria’s publications and National Bureau of Statistics and other scholarly reports on the study. The data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The justification of the choice of the period of analysis is to examine the level of financial systems regulation during economic recession period in Nigeria

**4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Annual Growth of the Gross Domestic Product was regressed on the explanatory variables (Real Interest Rate, the ratio of Gross Domestic Savings to GDP, and the ratio of Domestic Credit to Private Sector to GDP) over the periods of 1980 to 2019 in order to estimate the impact of financial development on economic growth in Nigeria. Following is a presentation of the outcome:

**Table 1: effect of real interest rate and gross domestic savings on Nigeria Economic growth**

Dependent Variable: GDP

Method: Least Squares

Sample (Adjusted): 1980-2019

Included Observations: 39

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Variable Coefficient | Standard Error t-Statistic Prob. |
| Constant 4.214299 | 0.087250 40.27872 0.0000 |
| LOG(R) 0.149754 | 0.091292 1.640379 0.1117 |
| LOG(S) 0.077723 | 0.095918 0.810310 0.4244 |
| R-squared = 0.931838 | Adjusted R-squared = 0.876268 |
| F-statistics = 133.2149 | S.E. of Regression = 0.160385 |

Durbin-Watson stat =0.223145

Schwarz Criterion = -0.596006

Akaike info Criterion = -0.733418

Mean Dependent Var. = 4.677927

GDP = 4.214299 + 0.149754 R + 0.077723S

In this model, the explanatory variables are the real interest rate and gross domestic savings, while the dependent variable is the annual growth of Gross Domestic Product. The findings from the model, as presented in table 1, indicate a positive relationship between the real interest rate and gross domestic savings with the dependent variable (annual growth rate of GDP).

The coefficient of multiple determinations, which measures the goodness of fit of the model, shows that approximately 88% of the variation in gross domestic product can be explained by the included variables. The remaining 12% represents other factors that influence economic growth but were not accounted for in the model.

Furthermore, the low Durbin-Watson value of 0.223145 suggests the presence of serial correlation, indicating a possible pattern in the residuals of the model.

The F-statistics indicate the joint significance of the explanatory variables and their positive relationship with the dependent variable.

Overall, the coefficient of multiple determinations demonstrates a good fit of the model, explaining approximately 81% of the variation in gross domestic product. The remaining 19% represents factors influencing growth that were not captured in the model. Similarly, the low Durbin-Watson value of 0.213446 suggests the presence of serial correlation. The F-statistics indicate the joint significance of the explanatory variables and the substantial degree to which variations in GDP can be explained by variations in the explanatory variables.Top of Form

**Table 2: Effect of Real Interest Rate and Ratio of Domestic Credit to Private Sector on Nigeria**

**Economic Growth**

Dependent Variable: GDP

Method: Least Squares

Sample (Adjusted): 1980-2019

Included Observations: 39

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Variable Coefficient | Standard Error t-Statistic Prob. |
| Constant 0.639428 | 0.143759 24.06413 0.0000 |
| LOG(S) 0.223227 | 0.013915 16.04236 0.0000 |
| LOG(P) 0.008098 | 0.040254 0.201180 0.8420 |
| R-squared = 0.839755 | Adjusted R-squared = 0.822842 |
| F-statistics = 130.1461 | S.E. of Regression = 0.162078 |

Durbin-Watson stat =0.145076

Schwarz Criterion = -0.575011

Akaike info Criterion = -0.712424

Mean Dependent Var. = 4.677927

GDP = 0.459428 + 0.223227R + 0.008098P

The explanatory variables are the real interest rate and domestic credit to the private sector, while the dependent variable is the annual growth rate of GDP. The findings from the model, as presented in table 2, indicate a positive relationship between the real interest rate and domestic credit to the private sector with the dependent variable (annual growth rate of GDP).

The coefficient of multiple determination, which measures the goodness of fit of the model, shows that approximately 82% of the variation in gross domestic product can be explained by the included variables. The remaining 18% represents other factors that influence growth but were not accounted for in the model.

Similarly, the low Durbin-Watson value of 0.145076 suggests the presence of serial correlation, indicating a possible pattern in the residuals of the model. The F-statistics indicate the joint significance of the explanatory variables and their positive relationship with the dependent variable. Overall, the coefficient of multiple determinations demonstrates a good fit of the model, explaining approximately 82% of the variation in gross domestic product. The remaining 18% represents factors influencing growth that were not captured in the model. Similarly, the low Durbin-Watson value of 0.145076 suggests the presence of serial correlation. The F-statistics indicate the joint significance of the explanatory variables and the substantial degree to which variations in GDP can be explained by variations in the explanatory variables.

**Table 3: Effect of Gross Domestic Savings and Domestic Credit to Private Sector on Nigeria**

**Economic Growth**

Dependent Variable: GDP

Method: Least Squares

Sample (Adjusted): 1980-2019

Included Observations: 39

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Variable Coefficient Standard Error t-Statistic | Prob. |
| Constant 2.457331 0.1444913 24.54800 | 0.0000 |
| LOG(S) 0.012303 0.041613 0.295661 | 0.7696 |
| LOG(P) 0.233850 0.015114 15.47289 | 0.0000 |

R-squared = 0.733052

Adjusted R-squared = 0.805676

F-statistics = 121.0800

S.E. of Regression = 0.167409

Durbin-Watson stat =0.213446

Schwarz Criterion = -0.510283

Akaike info Criterion = -0.647696

Mean Dependent Var. = 4.677927

GDP = 2.457331+ 0.012303S + 0.233850P

The yearly growth rate of the gross domestic product is the dependent variable in this model, with gross domestic savings and domestic loans to the private sector acting as explanatory factors. Gross domestic savings and domestic credit to the private sector are positively correlated with the dependent variable, according to the model's findings, which are shown in table 3. Approximately 81% of the gross domestic product can be described by the variables in the model, according to the coefficient of multiple determination, while the remaining 19% may be attributed to factors that affect growth but were not included in the model. The low Durbin-Watson score of 0.213446 also indicates the possibility of serial correlation. The F-statistics indicate the joint significance of the explanatory variables and the high degree to which variations in the GDP are explained by variations in the explanatory variables.

**Table 4: Effect of Real Interest Rate, Gross Domestic Savings and Domestic Credit to Private Sector on Nigeria Economic Growth**

Dependent Variable: GDP

Method: Least Squares

Sample (Adjusted): 1980-2019

Included Observations: 39

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Variable Coefficient | Standard Error t-Statistic | Prob. |
| Constant 3.485310 | 0.148115 23.53114 | 0.0000 |
| LOG(R) -0.148920 | 0.092872 1.603488 | 0.1200 |
| LOG(S) -0.009912 | 0.040557 0.244391 | 0.8087 |
| LOG(P) 0.079042 | 0.097661 0.809350 | 0.0251 |
| R-squared = 0.902047 | Adjusted R-squared = 0.931552 |  |
| F-statistics = 85.95035 | S.E. of Regression = 0.163050 |  |

Durbin-Watson stat =0.026603

Schwarz Criterion = -0.489832

Akaike info Criterion = -0.673049

Mean Dependent Var. = 4.677927

GDP = 3.485310 - 0.148920R - 0.009912S + 0.079042P

The real interest rate, gross domestic savings, and domestic credit to the private sector are the explanatory variables in this model, while the dependent variable is the GDP's yearly growth rate. Table 4 shows the model's results, which show that when two variables are combined, real interest rates and gross domestic savings, they have an inverse relationship with the dependent variable, the GDP annual growth rate, while domestic credit to the private sector has a positive relationship..

The coefficient of multiple determinations, which measures the goodness of fit of the model, indicates that approximately 93% of the variation in gross domestic product can be explained by the included variables. The remaining 7% represents other factors influencing growth that were not captured in the model. Similarly, the low Durbin-Watson value of 0.026603 suggests the presence of serial correlation, indicating a possible pattern in the residuals of the model.

The interest rate variable, although significant, did not have the expected sign. This could be attributed to the investors' focus on their return on investment and the cost of funds. Likewise, the ratio of domestic savings to GDP, although significant, reflects a low saving culture. However, even the small amount of savings positively contributes to growth. The ratio of credit to the private sector to GDP was found to be significant and had the expected sign. However, its productivity could be enhanced if it is directed towards productive investments, considering the absence of an enabling environment such as reliable power supply and adequate infrastructure, which may hinder the potential of the Nigerian private sector.

This indicates that improving the quality of government expenditure by directing it towards productive sectors could stimulate economic growth, as suggested by Aregbeyen (2007) in his study of forty African countries, including Nigeria.

**Policy Implication**

Contrary to initial predictions, it is clear from the study above that all the factors exhibit a positive association with the dependent variable (annual growth rate of GDP) suggests that to increase GDP growth, government fiscal policy has to be redirected and refocused on the development of goods and services. To do this, clear objectives and targets should be established for the federal government, each state, and the real estate industry. Capital and public investments should be prioritized in government fiscal policy by receiving a more significant share of total government spending. The method would increase the quality of public expenditure, create more chances for employment, and promote sustainable growth and development, particularly in building the necessary infrastructure.

## To maintain the existing relationship between economic growth and financial sector development, it is crucial to deepen the financial system through innovation, effective regulation and supervision, efficient fund mobilization, and making these funds available for productive investments. Furthermore, there is a need for improved financial services to support the overall development objectives.

## **Top of Form**

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Using information on the yearly increase of the gross domestic product, the real interest rate, the ratio of gross domestic savings to GDP, and the ratio of domestic credit to the private sector to GDP, this research aimed to assess the link between financial development and economic growth in Nigeria. We draw the conclusion that the financial system needs to be sufficiently deepened through innovations; adequate and effective regulation and supervision, efficient fund mobilization and making such funds available for useful investment, and improved services. The study recommends in order to sustain and enhance the existing relationship between financial sector development and economic growth in Nigeria, it is essential to deepen the financial system by implementing innovative practices, ensuring adequate and effective regulation and supervision, establishing a robust legal framework, promoting efficient fund mobilization, making funds available for productive investments, and improving financial services.

Policymakers should design policies that promote the growth of financial and capital markets, address obstacles hindering their development, and strengthen the competitiveness and stability of the banking system. Measures should be introduced to enhance the accountability and autonomy of financial institutions, as well as to restructure and recapitalize them.

It is important to emphasize the complementary and coordinated development of financial reforms alongside changes in the real sector of the economy. This approach will enable the translation of the positive effects of the financial sector into tangible outcomes in the real sector, ultimately leading to economic growth.

Moreover, regulatory authorities should prioritize the establishment of a favorable legal and accounting environment, as well as institutional frameworks. This will facilitate the smooth flow of information, contract enforcement, and enable financial institutions to effectively assess risks and monitor their investments.

Attention should be given to the complementary and coordinated development of financial reforms and changes in the real sector of the economy. This integrated approach will allow the positive impact of the financial sector to be effectively transmitted to the real sector, thus contributing to overall economic growth.

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