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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.
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- Articles should be typed in Times New Romans, font size 12 and 1.5 line spacing.

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## PANDEMICS AND GOVERNMENT'S CONTAINMENT POLICIES: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENZA OF 1918 AND THE COVID-19 IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA.

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### Abstract

*The article provides a historical analysis of two of the deadliest pandemics in global history and their impact on the population of Lagos. These were the influenza of 1918 and the recent COVID-19 pandemic. It investigates their outbreaks, how they spread to Nigeria, their impact on the citizens of Lagos, and the government's efforts at managing and curtailing their spread amongst the population of Lagos and the entire citizenry of the country. It examines the role played by governments during pandemics in the disease history of Nigeria since the early twentieth century when influenza first occurred in Lagos, and its gradual spread to other parts of Nigeria. It also examines public health policies, and government interventions to forestall the spread of these pandemics. The paper argues that in 1918, the public health officials in Lagos did not quite understand the extent and the enormity of the threat posed by the influenza virus hence the devastating consequences. It posits that in the year 2020, governments at both the state and federal levels were better prepared as several measures, strategies, and policies were put in place within a short time to curtail the spread of the dreaded COVID-19 pandemic among the Nigerian populace. The paper further examined the various strategies such as lockdowns, isolation centers, quarantine, use of face masks, good personal hygiene, use of disinfectants, and limitations on public gatherings. Finally, the paper concludes by proffering recommendations that could be adopted in the future to guarantee health and safety during pandemics.*

**Keywords:** Pandemics, COVID-19, influenza, Health measures, containment policies.

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### Introduction

All over the world, government policies in any society are informed, shaped, and conditioned by several push and pull factors. Such policies are geared toward the interest of the nation and the general well-being of the people. This explains why governments strive to protect citizens' lives and properties and protect their sovereignty and territorial integrity. This article interrogates colonial and federal government's policies towards pandemics in Lagos, Nigeria during pandemics such as the influenza of 1918 and COVID-19 of 2020 respectively. This study

examines how government responses were shaped by socio-political, economic, and cultural dynamics from the colonial period to the post-colonial experience in Lagos. To be sure, a pandemic is an epidemic that is occurring worldwide, spreading across international boundaries, and affecting humans everywhere simultaneously across the globe.

This implies that a pandemic is a global disease outbreak. It may begin from a particular location such as the recent COVID-19 that emerged in Wuhan City, China.<sup>1</sup> It differs from a mere disease outbreak or even an epidemic because

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<sup>1</sup> International Labour Organization, *In the Face of a Pandemic: Ensuring Safety and Health at Work*, (Geneva, ILO, 2020), 7.



it affects a wider geographical area, often worldwide. It also affects a greater number of people than an epidemic. It is often caused by a new virus or a strain of virus that has not circulated among people for a long time and humans usually have little or no resistance against it. The causative virus is highly contagious, and it spreads quickly from infected persons to other individuals in close contact even at a global dimension. The available evidence shows that pandemics cause deaths and human mortality at a higher magnitude than epidemics. The major symptoms associated with these pandemics include fever, cough, fatigue, and breathing difficulties. Quite often, it creates social disruption, and economic loss, which can worsen inequality affecting some groups of workers, thereby causing abject misery, and general hardship.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Outbreak of Spanish Influenza, 1918-19.**

Over a century ago, the influenza pandemic of 1918-19 swept through the globe and its aftermath was the devastating number of young adult mortality. It has been argued that the influenza pandemic of 1918-19, with its staggering mortality rate, was one of the greatest challenges to Western imperialism during the period under review.<sup>3</sup> To be sure, the virulent epidemic swept through the entire globe in a matter of months with its devastating consequences of young adult mortality. It was resistant to the methods and practices of conventional medicine as it defied medical science. The highly infectious nature of the disease and its short incubation period as well as the imperfect nature of vaccines hindered

efforts to contain or prevent its spread. Spanish Influenza, or Spanish flu, was a virus that attacked the respiratory system.<sup>4</sup> It was highly contagious! When an infected person coughed, sneezed, or even talked, respiratory droplets were generated and released into the air, which could be inhaled by anyone in close range. The origins of the strain of the virus that caused the influenza pandemic are not exactly clear. However, slender evidence exists to show that the 1918 Spanish flu was first observed in America, European countries, and some parts of Asia during the First World War, (1914-1918) before it became a global phenomenon through a rapid and virulent spread.<sup>5</sup>

Although news coverage of the pandemic mainly emanated from Spain, some theories point to other European countries and possibly the United States as the first place where the pandemic first occurred. However, it became known around the world as the Spanish flu, because Spain was hit hardest by the virulent disease. It is believed that even the Spanish king, Alfonso XIII, contracted the flu.<sup>6</sup> The available evidence suggests that the Spanish flu was caused by an H1N1 virus with genes of avian origin. Although there is no consensus amongst scholars regarding the origins of the virus, it had a global spread from 1918-1919.

The emergence of the pandemic exposed the gap in the healthcare sector of the colonial administration, which had been weakened by the impact of the First World War. As the disease continued to spread, hospitals became overcrowded with infected patients to the extent that schools, private homes, and other buildings were converted into makeshift

<sup>2</sup> Joshua C. Morgenstein, Robert J. Ursano, et al, "Pandemic: Health Care Emergencies" in *Textbook of Disaster Psychiatry*, eds., Robert J Ursano, Carol S Fullerton, Lars Weisaeth, & Beverly Raphael, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, 270).

<sup>3</sup> Sandra Tomkins, "Colonial Administration in British West Africa during the Influenza Epidemic of 1918-19" in *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 28 no 1, (1994), 62.

<sup>4</sup> History, "What is Flu?" History. Com Editors, See, <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war>, (Date Accessed: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023).

<sup>5</sup> David M. Morens, Gregory K. Folkers, Anthony S. Fauci, "What Is a Pandemic?" *Journal of Infectious Diseases* 200, no. 7 (2009), 54.

<sup>6</sup> Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) "Influenza" [dc.gov. See, https://www.history.com/topics/world-war](https://www.history.com/topics/world-war). (Date Accessed: 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023).

hospitals, some of which were staffed by auxiliary nurses. Despite these efforts, the absence of vaccines enabled the influenza pandemic to take a heavy toll on humans; wiping out entire families and leaving countless widows and orphans in its wake. Funeral parlors were overwhelmed and bodies piled up. Many people had to dig graves for their family members. Apart from this monumental loss of lives, the Influenza epidemic or Spanish flu was also detrimental to the global economy. It caused abject misery and social dislocation.<sup>7</sup>

### **Occurrence of the Spanish Influenza in West Africa**

Significantly, the devastating nature and sheer magnitude of the influenza pandemic makes it historically important when analyzing governments' containment policies of pandemics in Lagos. Indeed, the experience of the epidemic in British West African colonies was radically shaped by several factors, and the immediate and long-term responses to its outbreak involved the participation of both Europeans and Africans in diverse capacities.<sup>8</sup> The available evidence establishes that its first point of call in West Africa was Sierra Leone. Thus, it was from Sierra Leone that it spread to other parts of the West African Subregion. Owing to the novel nature of the disease in Sierra Leone, its origins became a major issue. Its appearance was traced to the arrival of the *HMS Mantua* in Freetown on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1918 with some minor cases of influenza aboard the ship.<sup>9</sup> Before proactive measures were taken, steamers were already spreading the disease to other West African colonies. It was through this means that the Spanish Influenza entered

Lagos, Nigeria. In response to the dispute over *HMS Mantua*, an inquiry was instituted by the Advisory Medical and Sanitary Committee for Tropical Africa in London.<sup>10</sup>

However, as far as Nigeria is concerned, the available evidence suggests that by September 1918, the Sanitary Officer in charge of the Southern Provinces transmitted telegrams to other provincial headquarters warning that influenza had been declared an infectious disease. The telegram also stated that three ships from Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast had been secluded in Lagos. It equally stated that the deadly disease was already causing horrific deaths in Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast from where it came into Nigeria through Lagos ports by ocean liners.<sup>11</sup> The ports of Calabar and Forcados were also suspected as possible points from where the virulent infectious disease came into Nigeria. This is because, similar cases were reported on board such ocean liners as *S.S. Batanga* which was anchored in Calabar, on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1918. Likewise, isolated cases were reported among the Marine and Customs Departments and the shipping company's employees around 7<sup>th</sup> October 1918, which clearly showed infection by ocean ships.<sup>12</sup>

From the foregoing, it would have been easy to establish that Forcados, Calabar, Port Harcourt, and Lagos ports were the primary entry points of the contagious disease into the Southern Provinces of Nigeria. However, it was equally discovered through slender evidence that some elements of the infectious disease came into the south via Northern provinces from where it got to Onitsha via the River Niger by a boat from Lokoja.<sup>13</sup> The available evidence suggests that

<sup>7</sup> Colonial Office Papers (hereafter CO) London, Public Records Office: 854/54, 55, Colonies General: Circular Dispatches 5 November 1918.

<sup>8</sup> Sandra Tomkins, "Colonial Administration in British West Africa, 68.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> U.S Congress, Senate *Committee on the District of Columbia, Experiments on Living Dogs* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1930), 174.

<sup>11</sup> Cameron Blair, Senior Sanitary Officer, in C.O583/77 of September 1919, "Pandemic of Influenza: Experience of the Southern Provinces of Nigeria

<sup>12</sup> J. Beringer, "The Influenza Epidemic of 1918 in the Southern Provinces of Nigeria" Acting Senior Sanitary Officer, Southern Province of Nigeria, in CO 583/77 of 5<sup>th</sup> September 1919.

<sup>13</sup> D.C. Ohadike, "The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-19 and the Spread of Cassava Cultivation on the

from the Niger, it began to spread westwards to such places as Agbor, Uromi, Ubiaja in Esanland, and Benin City. Similarly, it spread eastwards to places such as Owerri, Enugu, Okigwe, Ngwo, and Abia. From these eastern cities and towns, it spread further reaching such places as Ikot-Ekpene, Afikpo, Obubra, Abakaliki, Obudu, Ikom, and Ogoja.<sup>14</sup> The reports obtained from the Northern provinces indicated that the virulent disease reached that part of the country from Lagos, via the Western Railway. Indeed, by December 1918 all parts of Nigeria had become affected by the epidemic. In the Northern Provinces, its occurrence and virulent spread were exceptionally pronounced among the local population.<sup>15</sup>

Understandably, the impact of the epidemic was quite severe and dreadful. Available evidence revealed that not less than 1.5 percent of the population of Lagos died, and the toll in other provinces of Nigeria was thought to be even greater and more horrifying. With about 200,000 deaths in the Northern province and 260,000 in the Southern Regions (about three percent of the population). Deaths in the Gold Coast totaled at least four percent of the entire population, and the Gambia, by far the smallest colony, sustained about 10,000 deaths.<sup>16</sup>

### **Containment Policies against the Spread of Spanish Influenza in Colonial Lagos**

The first step towards containing and curtailing the spread of this contagious disease was through strategic warnings. This was central because it helped other colonies to carry out proper arrangements and instituted policies that contained the spread of the deadly disease.

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Lower Niger: A Study in Historical Linkages” in *The Journal of African History*, Vol 22, no 3, (1981), 383.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Patterson David and Gerald Pyle, “The Diffusion of Influenza in Sub-Saharan Africa during the 1918-1919 Pandemic” in *Social Science and Medicine*, vol, 17(1983), 1299-1307.

<sup>16</sup> Marilyn Chase, *The Barbary Plague: The Black Death in Victorian San Francisco* (New York: Random House, 2003), 44.

Therefore, sanitary measures were put in place to forestall its deadly and virulent spread. While these warnings and campaigns were ongoing, the Colonial Office failed to warn its other African possessions and far-flung colonies.<sup>17</sup> While skepticism regarding the utility of quarantine was probably justified, the forewarning of the epidemic would have allowed preparations to be made in advance with colonial medical experts offering opportunities to the colonial population. However, these opportunities did not materialize. It was local administrators who proved more sensitive to the threat than the metropolitan authority.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, Sierra Leone failed to warn her immediate neighbours of this epidemic. The Gold Coast, (Modern Ghana) however, provided information about containing and curtailing the pandemic to other British West African colonies. To this end, concerted efforts on the part of all colonies were taken, and this helped each territory by strengthening mutual advantages as Lagos was notified of the pandemic, allowing preventive measures to be taken by giving necessary information. This made Nigeria and the Gold Coast (Ghana) to establish maritime quarantines that made the disease noticeable, once it occurred before it spread among the population.

Moreover, sanitary methods were introduced to contain the spread of the virus in Lagos because its population was increasing during this period. There was therefore the need for sanitary policies to be put in place. Obviously, the Influenza pandemic of 1918-19, posed one of the greatest challenges to Western imperialism in many ways. Medically, all efforts to find a

<sup>17</sup> Alfred Bollet, *Plagues, and Poxes: The Impact of Human History on Epidemic Disease* (New York: Demos Medical Publishing Inc, 2004), 25

<sup>18</sup> Alex Gregory, "Medicine and Disease in History: Bubonic Plague" Miami University, <https://sites.miamioh.edu/hst-journeys/2019/05/medicine-and-disease-in-history-bubonic-plague/>, (Date Accessed: 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023).

solution did not yield much success, and the pandemic swept through the Southern provinces like wildfire with devastating consequences. Benin Province alone recorded 15,000 deaths. In Ogoja and Owerri Provinces, 63,000 and 41,000 people died respectively. An official report confirmed that out of a population of nine million, a quarter of a million died from influenza in the Southern provinces of Nigeria during the epidemic.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, the British position in the colonies such as Lagos contained several inherent contradictions, the most important of which was the much-vaunted "European" science and methods produced without tangible results.<sup>20</sup> Yet, the colonies were not ready to put local medicine on clinical trials since they believed it to be inferior to medicines from Europe. Thus, any indigenous methods adopted by Lagosians were criticized. The available evidence indicates that of all the West African colonies, Nigeria organized the most thorough and efficient measures in tackling the spread of the disease. This was because warnings from Sierra Leone, and the Gambia had enabled the British administration to get prepared. However, as soon as the disease was confirmed in Lagos, the epidemic caused widespread panic among Nigerians who began to flee Lagos in droves to the interior of the country.<sup>21</sup> The available evidence shows that the colonial administration made frantic efforts to convince the indigenous people to remain in Lagos, where medical aid was available. Against this background, simple leaflets of advice in Yoruba and English were distributed in Lagos. House-to-house visitation was also embarked on by the Sanitary Officials.

Consequently, the colonial administration devised several measures and policies to curtail

the spread of the deadly epidemic. For instance, schools and churches were closed down, or where suitable, they were used as makeshift hospitals. Similarly, roads, native courts, and markets were closed down, just as large public meetings were strictly prohibited. There was panic everywhere. The Medical Officer reported that rather than avail themselves of hospital treatments, many people fled to their farms in the bush.<sup>22</sup> This partly explains why a scholar has argued that, although the trend towards the provision of medical services for Africans began during the First World War and continued in the 1920s, the influenza epidemic had no discernible effect on public health policy.<sup>23</sup>

### **COVID-19 and Governments' Strategies from a Global Perspective**

Remarkably, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was an infectious disease that was caused by a recently discovered coronavirus known as the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus2 (SARS-Cov-2). In January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared its outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern. The first human cases of COVID-19 were identified in Wuhan City, China in December 2019. By March 2020, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic.<sup>24</sup> To be sure, The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact worldwide, challenging governments to develop and implement effective strategies to mitigate its spread and minimize its devastating consequences. Understanding the global context and government strategies adopted by various countries provides valuable insights into the diverse approaches taken to combat the pandemic in different regions of the world.

<sup>19</sup> J. Beringer, "The Influenza Epidemic, Op cit.

<sup>20</sup> CO 879/118/1061/129, Report on influenza in Nigeria, 329-40

<sup>21</sup> Sandra Tomkins, "Colonial Administration in British West Africa, 71.

<sup>22</sup> D.C. Ohadike, "The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-19 and the Spread of Cassava, 385.

<sup>23</sup> Gale T. S. "Official Medical Policy in British West Africa, 1870-1930" Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis University of London, (School of Oriental and African Studies, 1970), 389.

<sup>24</sup> International Labour Organization, *In the Face of a Pandemic: Ensuring Safety and Health at Work*, (Geneva, ILO, 2020), 7.

Against this background, governments around the world initially focused on containment measures to prevent the virus from entering their borders and spreading within their populations. This included implementing travel restrictions, quarantine protocols, and enhanced border control measures.<sup>25</sup> Many countries, including Nigeria, adopted strict lockdowns and mass testing strategies to quickly identify and isolate infected individuals.

Governments across the globe recognized the importance of public health measures in reducing the spread of the deadly virus. These measures included Social Distancing, Mask-wearing, Hand hygiene, and limits on Public Gatherings. Governments developed guidelines and regulations to enforce these measures, with varying degrees of stringency depending on the severity of the outbreak in any particular location. Also, Testing, contact tracing, and quarantine became vital components of government strategies. To this end, several countries implemented widespread testing programs to identify and isolate infected individuals, followed by comprehensive contact tracing to minimize further transmission. Quarantine protocols were established for individuals exposed to the virus, ensuring they were effectively monitored and isolated until the risk of infection had elapsed.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, governments all over the world prioritized strengthening healthcare systems to manage the surge in cases such as increasing

hospital bed capacity, acquiring medical equipment and supplies, expanding intensive care unit (ICU) capabilities, and training healthcare workers.<sup>27</sup> Governments' collaborations with the private sector and international organizations also played a major role in bolstering the healthcare system across the globe. Similarly, the development and deployment of COVID-19 vaccines became a major strategy of governments in most countries of the world. To be sure, governments collaborated with vaccine manufacturers, secured vaccine supplies, and established vaccination centers to administer vaccines to their populations.<sup>28</sup> Vaccine distribution plans were implemented, prioritizing high-risk groups and essential workers. In a bid to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic, governments implemented various support measures. These included income support programs, financial assistance to affected industries, business grants, palliatives, and free food distribution. Governments also promoted remote work arrangements and facilitated online learning to minimize disruptions.<sup>29</sup>

The outbreak of COVID-19 prompted increased international cooperation, with several governments collaborating to share data, research findings, and best practices. Global organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), facilitated coordination, information exchange, and resource allocation to support countries in their response efforts.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Fuzeki, E, Groneberg, D.A, & Banzer, W. "Physical Activity during Covid-19 induced lockdown: Recommendations" in *Journal of Occupational Medicine and Toxicology*, vol.15 no 1, (2020), 1-5.

<sup>26</sup> Filip R, Gheorghita Puscaselu R, Anchidin-Norocel L, Dimian M "Global Challenges to Public Health Care Systems during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Review of Pandemic Measures and Problems" in *Journal of Medicine*. Aug; Vol, 12 no 8, (2022): 95.

<sup>27</sup> Brahima Sangafowa Coulibaly and Payce Madden. *Strategies for coping with the Health and Economic Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa*. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/03/18/strategies-for-coping-with-the->

[health-and-economic-effects-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-in-africa/](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/03/18/strategies-for-coping-with-the-health-and-economic-effects-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-in-africa/), (Date Accessed: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023).

<sup>28</sup> Filip, Gheorghita, Anchidin-Norocel, Dimian. "Global Challenges to Public Health Care Systems during the COVID-19 Pandemic" 56.

<sup>29</sup> Kupferschmidt K and Cohn, J. Can China's Covid-19 Strategy Work Elsewhere? in *Science*, 367 (2020) 6342: 1061-1062

<sup>30</sup> "Coronavirus in Africa: Five reasons why Covid-19 has been less deadly than elsewhere". *BBC News*. 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020. See, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54418613> Date Accessed: 12<sup>th</sup> August 2023).

The global context of COVID-19 and the diverse strategies adopted by governments offered vital lessons for the Lagos State Government. Understanding the successes, challenges, and innovations implemented by governments worldwide informed the development of tailored strategies and interventions that aligned with the specific needs and context of Lagos. It highlights the importance of evidence-based decision-making, proactive measures, and a collaborative approach in effectively managing and mitigating the impact of a pandemic.

### **The Outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Lagos State**

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Lagos, Nigeria, in February 2020 presented a significant public health challenge for the Lagos State Government, (LASG). The first case of COVID-19 in Lagos State was confirmed on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020, when an Italian citizen who had recently travelled to Nigeria tested positive for the virus.<sup>31</sup> This marked the beginning of the outbreak in the city of Lagos thereby necessitating swift and decisive action from the government to curtail the spread of the virulent pandemic among its 15 million inhabitants.<sup>32</sup>

Upon the confirmation of the first case, the Lagos State Government, in collaboration with the Federal Government of Nigeria and other relevant health agencies, activated its emergency response system. The Incident Command System (ICS) was established to coordinate and streamline the pandemic response efforts across various government

Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs).<sup>33</sup>

One of the primary objectives of the initial response was to contain the spread of the virus and prevent community transmission. The government initiated robust contact tracing efforts to identify individuals who had come into contact with confirmed cases. Contact tracing teams worked diligently to track and monitor the movement and interactions of infected individuals, ensuring that all potential contacts were identified, tested, and quarantined.

To support contact tracing and enhance testing capabilities, the Lagos State government rapidly expanded its testing capacity. Testing centers were established across the state, including in public hospitals and designated healthcare facilities. This allowed for increased testing of suspected cases and expedited the identification of positive cases.<sup>34</sup>

Isolation and treatment centers were set up to manage infected individuals. These centers provided specialized care for COVID-19 patients, ensuring that they received appropriate medical attention and were isolated from the general population to prevent further transmission. The government also worked to enhance the capacity of healthcare facilities to handle the surge in COVID-19 cases, including increasing the number of hospital beds, acquiring necessary medical equipment and supplies, training healthcare workers on handling COVID-19 patients, and implementing infection prevention and control measures.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> "Coronavirus: Nigeria 'strengthens' surveillance at five international airports". *Premium Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020, See, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/374865-coronavirus-nigeria> (Date Accessed: 13<sup>th</sup> August 2023).

<sup>32</sup>See; [www.macrotrends.net/cities](http://www.macrotrends.net/cities) (Date Accessed: 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023).

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Mrs Patricia Okorie, 51, who works at the Ministry of Health. (Civil servant), at her residence, February 10, 2023, 1:00-2:20 pm

<sup>34</sup> Odunsi Wale, "Coronavirus: Nigeria announces preventive measures, releases numbers" in *Daily Post Newspaper*, (28<sup>th</sup> January 2020).

<sup>35</sup> Ifijeh, Martins, "FG Sets up Coronavirus Preparedness Group". *This Day Newspaper*, (31 January 2020). See, <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2020/01/31>. (Date Assessed: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023).

The Lagos State Government implemented movement restrictions and lockdown measures to contain and curtail the spread of the deadly virus. To this end, a partial lockdown was imposed in March 2020, followed by a total lockdown that was announced in April 2020. During these periods, non-essential businesses and services were closed, public gatherings were prohibited, and residents were required to stay at home except for essential purposes such as accessing healthcare services or purchasing essential goods.

In addition to the implementation of public health measures, the Lagos State Government launched extensive public awareness and education campaigns. These campaigns aimed to educate the public about the virus, its symptoms, preventive measures, and the importance of social distancing, hand hygiene, and mask-wearing. The government utilized various communication channels, including television, radio, social media, and community engagement programs, to disseminate accurate and timely information.<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, international travel restrictions were put in place to prevent the importation of new cases. International flights were suspended, and strict protocols were implemented for returning residents and essential travelers, including mandatory testing and quarantine measures. Indeed, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Lagos prompted a rapid and comprehensive initial response from the government. The swift implementation of contact tracing, testing, isolation, and treatment measures, along with movement restrictions and public awareness campaigns, formed the foundation of the government's strategy to control the spread of the deadly virus and protect public health. These initial efforts set the stage for subsequent

interventions and measures aimed at managing the pandemic's impact in Lagos State.

### **Governments' Control Measures of the COVID-19 and Interventions**

The Lagos State Government (LASG) implemented wide-ranging measures and interventions to control the spread of COVID-19 and protect public health during the period of the pandemic in Nigeria. Indeed, the response of the Lagos State Government to the COVID-19 pandemic was multi-faceted encompassing decisive policies public health measures, and collaboration with national and international agencies. The government's response was characterized by proactive measures, evidence-based decision-making, and a commitment to protecting public health and mitigating the impact of the deadly coronavirus. Some of the measures are discussed below:

#### **1. Movement Restrictions and Lockdowns:**

In a bid to limit the transmission of the deadly coronavirus, the Federal government of Nigeria as well as the Lagos State Government imposed movement restrictions and implemented lockdown measures. To this end, a partial lockdown was declared in March 2020. This was followed by a total and complete lockdown in April 2020. During these periods, non-essential businesses were closed, public gatherings were prohibited, and residents were required to stay at home except for essential purposes. During this period, schools, churches, mosques, parks, and all other places of public gatherings were completely shut down. The Federal Ministry of Education directed all schools in Nigeria to shut down and allow students to go home. All 36 states in Nigeria followed suit on this directive on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in a concerted effort to curtail the spread of the deadly coronavirus.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, the Lagos State Government

<sup>36</sup> Ezigbo, Onyebuchi & Ifijeh, Martins "Coronavirus Spread: WHO Lists Nigeria Among High-Risk Countries". *This Day Newspaper*, (1<sup>st</sup> February 2020).

<sup>37</sup> Olaoluwa Samuel Olusegun, "Social-Environmental Issues and COVID-19 Pandemic: Advocacy for Children's Rights to Education" in *Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities & Development Studies*, (Vol, 4 no 1, 2021), 1-11.



implemented international travel restrictions. To this end, international flights were suspended, and strict protocols were put in place for returning residents and essential travelers.

## 2. Testing and Contact Tracing

Testing and tracing of contacts was another effective preventive strategy adopted by the Lagos State Government. It prioritized testing and contact tracing efforts to identify and isolate infected individuals. Testing centers were established across the state to increase testing capacity. Similarly, contact tracing teams worked assiduously to identify individuals who had come into contact with confirmed cases, ensuring that such individuals were tested and quarantined. Apart from this, the Lagos State Government focused on strengthening the healthcare system to effectively manage the influx of COVID-19 cases. This involved increasing hospital bed capacity, acquiring necessary medical equipment and supplies, and training healthcare workers to handle COVID-19 cases.<sup>38</sup>

## 3. Establishment of Isolation Centers

Moreover, the LASG in a deliberate attempt to effectively curtail the spread of the deadly coronavirus set up isolation and treatment centers across the state to provide specialized care for COVID-19 patients. These centers ensured that infected individuals received appropriate medical attention, were effectively isolated from the general population, and had access to necessary resources for recovery. The available evidence indicates that sick patients' contacts were traced and isolated after infection with the deadly and highly contagious virus. These infected and asymptomatic individuals were isolated from the general public during their treatment to avoid the spread of the deadly virus among the entire population. This was

done to prevent the outbreak of illness among the population since there were no vaccines or treatments for the deadly COVID-19 pandemic. The evidence available suggests that people with coronavirus could spread it before the symptoms surfaced. Therefore, isolation of the sick/ infected helped to mitigate the spread of the pandemic among large populations, and it worked best with contact tracing or tracking.<sup>39</sup> This partially explains why the LASG also implemented a robust contact tracing system to identify individuals who had come into contact with confirmed cases. This strategy enabled early detection, isolation, and treatment of infected individuals thereby minimizing the risk of further transmission and wider spread of the deadly virus. In addition, public workers worked as detective health agents fishing out, and identifying all individuals that have had contact with infected patients.

## 4. Policy and Governance

Significantly, the Lagos State Government in a swift reaction to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic established a robust policy framework to guide its response to the pandemic. This included the activation of the "Incident Command System" (ICS), which provided a coordinated and centralized approach to managing the crisis.<sup>40</sup> Significantly, the ICS brought together key stakeholders from various government departments and agencies, enabling effective communication, collaboration, and decision-making. This helped the government to implement movement restrictions and lockdown measures as part of its policy response to the pandemic. These measures helped to limit the transmission of the deadly coronavirus by reducing social interactions and ensuring compliance with public health guidelines. The Lagos State Government also developed guidelines and

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<sup>38</sup> Ifijeh, Martins, "FG Sets up Coronavirus Preparedness Group". *This Day Newspaper*, (31<sup>st</sup> January 2020).

<sup>39</sup> Siddharth Dixit, Yewande Kofoworola Ogundeji, and Obinna Onwujekwe. *How well has Nigeria responded to COVID-19?* (July 2, 2020). See,

[www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development](http://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development) (Date Accessed: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023).

<sup>40</sup> Odunsi Wale, (2020) "Coronavirus: Nigeria announces preventive measures, releases numbers" in *Daily Post Newspaper*, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020.



regulations for essential businesses and services to operate safely during the lockdown, balancing public health considerations with the need to maintain essential services.<sup>41</sup>

### 5. Establishment of Quarantines

Another effective strategy that was adopted by the LASG to mitigate the spread of the deadly coronavirus was the quarantine of suspected cases. This was done to guide against further spread and transmission of the contagious disease as people exposed to the infection were compelled to remain at home or in a designated place, isolated from other people or the general public. Evidently, quarantines were targeted at individuals who have traveled to affected countries or have had contact with large groups of people. To be sure, both the LASG and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) had the power to order mass quarantines or even isolate large numbers of individuals who have been exposed to the virus to prevent them from spreading the contagious disease among the population. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, both the LASG and FGN exercised these powers.<sup>42</sup> During the quarantine period, individuals were closely monitored for the development of symptoms. Health authorities conducted regular health assessments, including temperature checks and symptom screening, to identify potential cases early. Obviously, quarantines were mandatory measures, and individuals were expected to adhere to the quarantine guidelines and instructions provided by health authorities. In Lagos, failure to comply with quarantine requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in legal consequences with full application of Lagos state laws.

### 6. Social Distancing

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Obiakor, T, and A. P. Adeniran (2020) "COVID-19: Impending Situation threatens to deepen Nigeria's Education Crisis" in *European Journal of Scientific Research*, Vol, 154 no 4, (2020) 458-470.

Understandably, social distancing is an age-long practical way of mitigating the spread of a pandemic. The LASG adopted this physical distancing strategy after the compulsory lockdowns to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus by contact. Citizens were advised to keep about Two Meters away from other individuals when interacting within their communities.<sup>43</sup> For instance, in a bid to promote a safer school environment, it was mandated that sports, games, or physical activities must be organized in manners that allowed for physical distancing. Similarly, the concept of physical or Social Distancing (SD) was introduced in churches, mosques, malls, shops, and other public places to make the environment safer for all. Beyond, these measures, individuals were expected to wear facemasks or face shields in public places. When schools resumed at the end of the lockdown students were no longer expected to attend morning assemblies. Additionally, extensive public awareness campaigns were launched to educate citizens about the virus and promote preventive measures. The LASG utilized various communication channels to disseminate accurate and timely information, emphasizing the importance of social distancing, mask-wearing, hand hygiene, and adherence to public health guidelines.<sup>44</sup>

### 7. Collaboration with National and International Agencies

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lagos State Government recognized the importance of collaboration with national and international agencies to enhance its response to the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus pandemic. To this end, efforts were made to collaborate with other organizations at different levels. First, the Lagos State Government

<sup>43</sup> Minnesota Department of Health, (2021) COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Youths and Students Programs

<sup>44</sup> Abayomi Balogun, M.R., Bankole, M. et al, "From Ebola to COVID-19: Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans and Actions in Lagos, Nigeria" *Global Health*, Vol, 17, no, 79, (2021), 20-30.

worked closely with the Federal Government of Nigeria and other states in the country to harmonize response efforts, share information and resources, and coordinate strategies.<sup>45</sup> This collaborative approach ensured a unified response and facilitated the exchange of best practices and lessons learned.

**International Collaboration:** The government engaged in collaborations with international organizations and agencies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), to access global expertise, resources, and guidance. These collaborations facilitated the sharing of information, technical support, and the adoption of global best practices in managing the pandemic.<sup>32</sup>

**Private Sector Partnerships:** The government fostered partnerships with the private sector, leveraging their resources, expertise, and networks to support the response efforts. This included collaborations with private healthcare providers, technology companies, and philanthropic organizations to enhance testing, healthcare services, and the distribution of relief materials.<sup>33</sup>

The Lagos State government's response to COVID-19 has been characterized by a proactive and multi-faceted approach. Through effective policy and governance, implementation of public health measures, and collaborations with national and international agencies, the government has worked to protect public health, mitigate the impact of the virus, and ensure the overall well-being of the residents of Lagos State.

### **A Comparative Analysis of the Government's Containment Policies towards Pandemics in Lagos**

This section undertakes a comparative analysis of the government's containment policies towards pandemics in Lagos, Nigeria, from the

period of 1918 to 2020. It examines the different strategies and policies implemented first by the Colonial Government in 1918 as well as the Federal and Lagos State Governments in 2020 in managing and containing pandemics. The effectiveness of these policies, the challenges encountered, and the response of Lagosians are equally examined in detail. This is because by studying past experiences, we can gain insights that may inform future responses to pandemics. To begin with, the World Health Organization defines emergency preparedness as "the knowledge, capacities and organizational systems developed by governments, response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent, emerging, or current emergencies."<sup>46</sup>

Against this background, the influenza and COVID-19 pandemics are comparatively analyzed along Policy Response; Disease Surveillance and Early Warning Systems; as well as Healthcare Infrastructure and Resources. It is hoped that by comparing the government's responses to these pandemics, it will be easier to identify trends, assess the effectiveness of policies, and draw valuable lessons from history to enhance future pandemic preparedness and response strategies.

Essentially, the available evidence suggests that during the 1918 Influenza Pandemic, Lagos lacked a well-defined policy framework that was specifically tailored towards pandemics. The Colonial Government's response was primarily reactive, with limited measures such as the isolation of patients and closure of public spaces. However, the response was constrained by the limited knowledge about the virulent

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<sup>45</sup> Lagos State Government. LASG scales up preparedness for emergency infectious diseases. News; 2021. See, [www.lagosstate.gov.ng/blog/2019/10/01](http://www.lagosstate.gov.ng/blog/2019/10/01) Date Accessed: 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

<sup>46</sup> WHO, (2015) *Framework for a public health emergency operations Centre*. Geneva: World Health Organization, p. 1-180. See also: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/1066/254883-eng.pdf> (Date Accessed: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024).

influenza virus at that time.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, disease surveillance and early warning systems were rudimentary during the 1918 Influenza Pandemic. Limited resources and infrastructure hindered the timely detection and reporting of cases. The lack of effective surveillance mechanisms hampered the ability to implement targeted containment strategies. There was also the problem of inadequate healthcare infrastructure during the 1918 Influenza Pandemic. The limited number of hospitals and healthcare personnel strained the healthcare system's capacity to manage the influx of infected cases. There is therefore the need for increased investment in healthcare infrastructure to effectively respond to future pandemics.

Conversely, the situation was different in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lagos State Government swiftly developed a comprehensive policy framework. This included the establishment of the Incident Command System, (ICS) implementation of phased lockdowns, mandatory usage of face masks or face shields, and widespread testing and contact tracing protocols. These policies were regularly upgraded based on evolving scientific evidence and international guidelines.<sup>48</sup> Correspondingly, the Lagos State Government (LASG) significantly improved its disease surveillance and early warning systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first in its disease history real-time data collection, syndromic surveillance, and mobile applications facilitated early case detection, contact tracing, and rapid response to cases. Also, the testing

capacity was scaled up, and testing centers were strategically located across the state.<sup>49</sup>

Moreover, the Lagos State Government invested heavily in strengthening healthcare infrastructure in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The LASG established isolation and treatment centers, expanded testing facilities, and increased the number of healthcare workers. This bolstered the healthcare system's ability to provide adequate care to COVID-19 patients.<sup>50</sup>

By and large, the comparative analysis of Lagos State government containment policies towards major pandemics between 1918 and 2020 reveals significant improvements in various aspects of the pandemic response. The government's approach evolved from reactive measures to proactive, comprehensive strategies that emphasized early detection, rapid response, and community engagement. Investments in disease surveillance, healthcare infrastructure, public health campaigns, and international collaborations all contributed to more effective pandemic containment. It is our hope, that the Lessons learned from these pandemics, such as the importance of well-defined policy frameworks, strengthened disease surveillance, investment in healthcare infrastructure, effective communication, and community engagement, can guide future decision-making.

Finally, this historical analysis of governments' containment policies in Lagos contributes to the broader understanding of disease management, public health governance, and the importance of adaptive and robust strategies in combating future pandemics. The insights gained from this

<sup>47</sup> Lagos State Government. LASG scales up preparedness for emergency infectious diseases. News; 2021. See, <https://lagosstate.gov.ng/blog/2019/10/01/lasg-scales-up-preparedness-for-emergency-infectious-diseases> (Date Accessed: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024).

<sup>48</sup> See, <https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/> (Date Accessed; 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024).

<sup>49</sup> Kandel N, Chungong S, Omaar & Xing J. (2020) *Health Security Capacities in the Context of COVID-*

*19 Outbreak: An Analysis of International Health Regulations Annual Report Data from 182 Countries.* (London: Lancet Publishers), 395.

<sup>50</sup> Abayomi, A. Balogun, & Bankole, M. et al. (2021) "From Ebola to COVID-19: Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans and Actions in Lagos" in *Nigeria. Global Health Vol 17, no 79*, 20-30.

analysis may inform policy development, improve public health outcomes, and enhance the overall resilience of Lagos and other regions during future pandemics.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The article has undertaken a historical analysis of the outbreaks, management, and attempts at mitigating the spread of two of the deadliest pandemics in global history. The Influenza of 1918 and the COVID-19. The paper created a historical narrative around the similarities in the spread patterns of the influenza of 1918 and the recent COVID-19 pandemic. The study further explored how the colonial administration and the Lagos State Governments responded to the challenge of mitigating the spread of these deadly pandemics amongst the residents of Lagos and Nigerians. It argues that, unlike the situation in 1918, when the British colonial administration in Lagos was ill-prepared, the Lagos State Government and the Federal Government of Nigeria were better prepared during the COVID-19 pandemic. To that end, the virulent spread and high mortality rate that occurred in 1918 was mitigated during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In a matter of weeks, the governments devised policies, strategies, and measures to curtail the spread of the deadly coronavirus. Unlike what happened during the influenza of 1918, when people fled Lagos in droves to farms in their regions indeed the colonial administration made desperate efforts to convince the indigenous people to remain in Lagos where medical aid was available. The study demonstrates that things were in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic was better managed during COVID-19 leading to a low mortality rate amongst the people living in Lagos state. This underscores the preparedness of both the Lagos State Government and the Federal Government of Nigeria. Based on this research findings, we recommend the following:

1. Both the LASG and FG should strengthen the existing healthcare systems. This requires a robust budgetary allocation for the health sector, that will boost adequate infrastructure, medical supplies, and healthcare workforce. This will ensure that Lagos can handle large-scale outbreaks and provide essential healthcare services during pandemics.
2. The Lagos State Government must adopt international best practices. This implies studying and adapting successful strategies employed by other regions and countries in response to pandemics. International collaborations and knowledge-sharing platforms may also provide valuable insights into effective policies and interventions.
3. Both the FG and the LASG must improve Public Health infrastructure by establishing surveillance systems, early warning mechanisms, and effective disease tracking mechanisms. This will enable timely detection and response to outbreaks, facilitating a more proactive approach.
4. Both the LASG and FG should develop comprehensive emergency preparedness plans that outline clear roles, responsibilities, and protocols for various stakeholders. Regular drills and simulations should be conducted to test the effectiveness of these plans and identify areas for improvement.
5. The Lagos state government should promote Public Health education and awareness, and prioritize public health education campaigns to raise awareness about pandemics, preventive measures, and the importance of vaccination. This will empower Lagosians to make informed decisions and adopt appropriate behaviors during pandemics.
6. Both the FG and the LASG must invest in scientific research, development, and innovation to improve diagnostics, treatments, and vaccines. This requires encouraging local research initiatives and collaborations that can contribute to the global understanding and control of pandemics.

## **DIALOGUE PROCESS AS A PANACEA TO ETHNO-RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS IN BAUCHI STATE, NIGERIA**

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*This paper examined the dialogue process as a panacea to ethno-religious conflict in Tafawa Balewa local government of Bauchi State, Nigeria. The main objective of the study was to proffer the dialogue process as a way of tackling the conflict within the study area by employing qualitative and quantitative method. The research adopted the Structural Conflict theory as its theoretical framework. The study used descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprise of people affected by the conflict within the study area. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw respondents into the study structured questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. The results of the study revealed that ridiculing of a Christian or Moslem Prophet in the media causes religious tension and conflicts. Also, communal identity, political power struggle and socio-economic factors have one way or the other contributed to the ethno-religion conflict. Finally, on the alternative measures that can be adopted, the following recommendations among others were made: Followers of Christianity or Islam should desist from ridiculing prophets of other religion and peaceful coexistence among various ethno religious groups should be promoted; hatred and mistrust between Christians and Muslims during and after the conflicts should be discouraged.*

**Keywords:** Dialogue process, Conflict, Ethnicity, Religion.

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### **1. Introduction**

Nigeria, has been an independent nation since 1960 and is the most populated country in Africa with a population of over 200 million people (Opeoluwa 2023). The country is also endowed with abundant natural and human resources. It is a country of diverse and rich cultural heritage

but regrettably, the country has been grappling with problem of ethno-religious conflict and for several decades now and in the past few years, there has been an upsurge in these conflicts. Ethno-religious conflicts have created instability and remained a constant threat to peaceful co-existence in the Nigeria society.

Nigeria has 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT Abuja), with 774 local governments Areas (LGAs). The Nigeria 1999 Constitution as amended, took the cognizance of multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of the society. Nigeria's multi-ethnic and multi-religious diversities coincide with the North and South divide, with Muslims and Christians dominating each part respectively. These have created geo-religious identities; a situation where religion and its concomitant tension generation enthroned a threat to security of the country (Ukandu 2011).

The country has three dominant religions; African traditional religion, Islam and Christianity, it may be necessary to observe that irrespective of the seeming divide; indigenous Christians are in large numbers all over the northern states (Yakubu and Rothfuss, 2012). They further explained that Christians are in majority in at least seven out of the nineteen northern states while north-western and north-eastern regions have the largest concentration of Muslims. The North-central also known as the Middle Belt, is considerably mixed.

Indigenous Muslims are in large numbers in south-western states and are in small minority in the south-south while practitioners of African traditional religion can be found all over the country. Some are syncretistic, combining Islam or Christianity with traditional religion (Yakubu and Rothfuss, 2012). In the South East Christianity dominates. One would think that the presence of these religions would foster peaceful co-existence and unity in a multi-ethnic and multilingual society like Nigeria but multi-religiosity has tended to impact negatively on the nation creating tension and unrest. This made Dukor (1988) to assert that:

...religion is not a concept which is intrinsically bad. It is rather an integrating force. Religion as a disintegrating force is attributable to the organizers, the organization, the preachers, the preaching, the propagators and the propagation of religions.

It is very clear that religion defined our relationship with super natural (God) and fellow human being, religion does not preach bad or evils but rather the preachers of these religion some of them are fanatics, extremist and decided to put their interest of quest for financial benefit or power which have demonstrated intolerant attitudes that result to conflict.

In other words, religion has been a factor in national development while it has also been manipulated to wrought havoc on the Nigerian populace. Between the year 1980 and the year 1990, Nigeria recorded eight major religious disturbances with heavy human and material losses; many monuments of high and historical value were also destroyed.

According to (Kamal-deen 2016: Olawale 2016: Sulaiman 2016) while trying to explain the level of trauma the victims of ethno-religious conflict sustain, they understand that apart from the monumental losses which can be qualified, the crisis further deepened the division which hitherto existed among the various religious adherents. For example the psychological trauma and the fear among the victim of religious disturbances is a recurring decimal. Such persons never live to neither forgive nor forget the persons involved in the circumstances of such carnages.

As Jega (2002: 22) observed

"Socio-ethnic conflicts are deflected and fought under interreligious banner. This is because there is a strong overlap between ethnic and religious boundary in Nigeria's plural setting".

Lending credence to the above, Adejo (2002:248) stated that

"Each conflict does not just happen..., they are rooted in some basic dissatisfaction or grievances which await detonation at the slightest opportunity".

This has led to suspicion and unhealthy rivalry among the diverse ethnic groups including adherents of Islam and Christianity.

A major cause of what we now see as ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria has to do with the accusations and allegations of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimization, discrimination, marginalization nepotism and religious intolerance (Salawu, 2010).

In view of incidences of religious conflicts, the northern region has become the hotbed of religious extremism (Yakubu and Rothfuss, 2012) making people scamper for safety and turning many into refugees in their own country. The increase in Islamic Fundamentalism and the emergence of groups such as the Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihād, or *Boko Haram* and Islamic State's West African Province or ISWAP which detests western education and Christianity, has exacerbated the conflicts already in existence. Thus, the religion-political history of Nigeria is characterized by unprecedented upsurge in ethnic and religious conflicts leading to loss of lives and destruction of properties worth billions of Naira.

In every nation (including Nigeria), there is no complete and unanimous agreement on how wealth, power and status are to be shared among individuals and ethnic groups. There is no agreement also, on how to effect necessary changes and reforms. This is because, there are diverse interests associated with the different groups and individuals and in which case, some groups will have their aims met, while others will not. What this means is that conflicts (ethno religious ones inclusive) usually occur when deprived groups and individuals attempt to increase their share of power and wealth or to modify the dominant values, norms, beliefs or ideology (Aleyomi)

Nigeria as a nation is no stranger to incessant crises for which it has been known within the International Community. For many people problems seem to be religiously motivated. But for the informed citizens and close observers,

this issue is not the full story. With a large and growing population, diverse ethnic and tribal affiliations, varied cultural backgrounds, and bigoted political atmosphere, there is no doubt that the roots of Nigeria's perennial crises are multi-faceted and go beyond religious issues. Addressing these problems, therefore, calls for finding the primordial causes and channeling multiple problem-solving techniques, notably theological, political, and diplomatic strategies. It also crisscrosses the country's vast religious and cultural landscapes.

### **Research Questions**

The study is guided by the followings research questions

1. What are the causes of ethno-religious conflict in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State?
2. What are the challenges encountered by the stakeholders in intervening in the conflict?
3. What are the alternative measures that can be adopted to effectively tackle the conflict?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was set to achieve the followings objectives

1. To find out the causes of ethno-religious conflict in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State.
2. To find out the challenges encountered by the stakeholders in intervening in the conflict?
3. To identify the alternative measures that can be adopted to effectively tackle the conflict?

This research work is an empirical study which is carry out in order to overcome the contemporary problems of the society, other component of the paper include review of conceptual frame work, methodology, results and discussion, conclusion and recommendation as well as referencing.

## **2. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**

The study reviews relevant literature on "Ethno-religious Conflict and Dialogue process in Tafawa Balewa Local Government, Bauchi state Nigeria. So as to get the relevant literatures from scholars on the research topic. It includes conceptual, literature and theoretical framework as well as empirical reviews.

### **The Concept of Dialogue**

The term dialogue refers to an effective communication that takes place in-between the conflicting parties. According to Ugorji (2017), dialogue could be a means to solving the dispute or may constitute a basis for bargaining. Using dialogue demands the recognition of the core values of conflicting parties and the free flow of communication. Dialogue in itself is aimed at enabling people with different views and perceptions to work together. Dialogue is a culturally and historically specific way of social discourse accomplished through the use of language and verbal transactions. It suggests community, mutuality, and authenticity—an egalitarian relationship. So understood, dialogue provides a meeting ground and manifests itself in a variety of spontaneous and ritual modes of discourse in which nature and structure meet.

### **The Concept of Conflict**

The concept of conflict per se, has been defined by different scholars from different perspectives and approaches. Psychologists have focused on intrapersonal conflicts. Social psychologists have concentrated on inter-personal and inter-group conflicts. Economists have focused on economic competitions, labour negotiations and trade disputes. Political scientists have specialized in political and international issues. (Richardo and Wade 2010). The term conflict refers to the disagreement between one person and the other or a group of individual. Sule (2015), in his work, describes conflict as 'a situation or condition of disharmony in an interactional process'.

Robbins and Judge (2019) defined conflict as 'a process that begins where one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect something that the first party cares about'. This is a very apt definition, emphasizing that conflict is about perceptions, not necessarily real hard facts. It points to the emotional nature of conflict, by referring to a word like "care", it states that more than one party is involved and that there may be a future component attached to it. Darling and Walker (2017) linked this idea to the organization by stating that, even when conflict is a natural phenomenon in social relations (as natural as harmony), it can nevertheless be managed within organizations. They add that conflict may have both positive as well as negative consequences within the organization, the submission above blend with the fact that, conflict can never be totally eliminated within organizations but can be efficiently managed in order to move organizations to greater height and performance level.

Unugbro cited in Osemeke (2001) defined conflicts as people striving for their own preferred outcome, which, if attained, prevents others from achieving their preferred outcome, resulting in hostility and breakdown in human relations.

Conflict takes place mostly as a result of resource control and power sharing and violent conflict is when either or both parties resort to violent means to gain dominance by destroying the opposition group and its ability to push its interest further (Adamu and Ben 2015).

### **Ethnicity**

According to Salawu (2010) is a gloss of ethnic identity that people share a common historical and cultural antecedent. It is a social formation that is built around certain cultural practices and unique symbols. Ethnicity usually influences groups' social relationship and personal identity as a result of its complex social construct (Aleyomi, 2012). It is a discrimination that exists between members, of the in-group and out-group. Ethnicity is the feeling or actual practices of alienation and identity which characterize



both international and intra-national relations (Suleiman, 2011).). This identity is often employed in order to gain advantage in specific situations.

### **Religion**

The term religion derived its name from the Latin word religare (which implies to read or pursue together; the same origin goes to legible and intelligent), or rather more like and generally accepted from the term religare (to tie back, to find fast). But modern scholars like Tom Harpur and Joseph Cambell favor the derivation from ligare "bind, connect", probably from a prefixed re-ligare, that is (again) + ligare or "to reconnect", which was made prominent by St. Augustine, following the interpretation of Lactantius. Religion is value-based; as such, people are usually emotionally attached to it and less tolerant of any unwelcome criticism upon it. For the Romans, religion meant being tied back, staying connected with ancestral customs and beliefs, a kind of loyalty; among Christians, the word would originally stand for being tied back, connected to God. On the other hand, religion in Arabic and Islamic literature is referred to 'din'. In its literal meaning, din means obedient, being in debt, restoring one's rights, adopting as a habit, forcing, calling to account, managing, rewarding or punishing, serving, lending and so on. Muslim theologians have described din as the set of principles revealed by God through prophets for mankind to follow by free will in order to acquire happiness in both worlds (here and the hereafter). It can also be seen as a community of persons united by faith, united by a search for "the divine", and defined by its manner of confronting the problems of human existence.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **The Structural Conflict Theory**

The Structural Conflict Theory was adopted to explain the ethno-religious conflict in Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi state. This theory has two main sub-orientations. The first is the radical structural theory represented by the Marxist dialectical school with exponents like Marx and

Engels, V.I. Lenin, etc. the second is the liberal structuralism represented by Ross (1993), Scarborough (1998) and the famous work by Johan Galtung (1990) on structural violence. The main argument of the structural conflict theory is that conflict is built into the particular ways societies are structured and organized. The theory looks at social problems like political and economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, disease, exploitation, inequity etc. as sources of conflict (Ademola, 2006). The structuralists maintain that conflicts occur because of the exploitative and unjust nature of human societies, domination of one class by another etc. Structural theory is remarkably strong on the immediate and underlying factors that lead to conflict. It presents a large number of such factors that make the emergence and escalation of internal conflicts possible (Brown, 1996 as cited in Ademola, (2006). While economic and social factors are more common, political and institutional factors (the structure of the state, discriminatory political institutions, intergroup politics and elite cohesion or fragmentation); security factors (national security dilemma, regional military environment, refugee regimes, cross-border criminality, and civil-military relations); as well as ethnic factors are equally as critical. According to Ademola (2006), structuralists present factors such as those listed above as the major motivating factors that explain the emergence of destructive conflicts between individuals and groups.

### **3. Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of 300 respondents from the area of the study. The sample of 130 respondents were selected from the population this is based on the table of determining sample by research Advisors (2006). Purposive sampling technique was used for the study. The researcher used direct delivery and retrieval method to collect the data. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire design by the researcher, the content validity of the questionnaire item was sought by subjecting them to expert scrutiny to assess the

appropriateness, the ease of comprehension of information and the clarity of expression in the instrument while the internal consistency of the instrument was ascertained using the Cronbach coefficient Alpha method of estimating reliability Validity of the instrument for data collection was sought before use. The instrument was administered directly with the aid of one (1) research assistant. The use of research assistant

was to ensure a hundred percent (100%) return of the questionnaire. The researcher adopted on-the-spot and face-to-face method of data collection. Mean scores were used in answering research question. The criterion mean score for the 4 point modified Likert scale was 2.50. Items with mean scores greater than or equal to  $\geq 2.50$  were accepted while mean scores below  $<2.50$  were rejected.

**Results and Discussion**

**Research Question One: What are the causes of Ethno-Religious Conflict in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State?**

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1. Ridiculing of a Christian or Moslem Prophet in the media causes religious tension and conflicts.	128	3.96	1.32	Significant
2. Communal identity contributes to ethno-religion conflict	128	3.76	1.16	Significant
3. political power struggle cause religion conflict	128	3.74	1.21	Significant
4. Socio-economic factor has contributed to the ethno-religion conflict	128	3.94	1.29	Significant

**Source:** *Field research data, 2022.*

Table 1 above shows that the respondents in the study area agreed in the items of the instrument on the causes of ethno-religious conflict in Tafawa Balewa Local Government of Bauchi State. This is because their mean responses were above 3.0 mean target set for this study. This means that ridiculing of a Christian or Moslem prophet in the media causes religious tension and conflicts indicated the mean of 3.96 and SD 1.32; Communal identity contribute to ethno-religion conflict with the mean of 3.76 and SD 1.16; political

power struggle cause religion conflict with the means of 3.74 and SD 1.21; and Socio-economic factor has contributed to the ethno-religion conflict with the mean of 3.94 and SD 1.29 respectively. Therefore, the findings signified that ridiculing of prophet and socio-economic factor are the major causes of ethno-religious conflict whereas the communal identity, ethno-political power also signposted as the subsequences causes of ethno-religious conflict in Tafawa Balewa LGA of Bauchi state.

**Research Question two: What are the challenges encountered by the stakeholders in intervening in the conflict?**

<b>Table 2</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1. There is a hatred and mistrust between Christians and Muslims during and after religious conflicts.	128	3.92	1.142	Significant
2. Failure of government to implement the recommendations of committee's report cause challenges to stakeholders in tackling the problem.	128	4.09	1.146	Significant
3. Communication gap and poor coordination between government, stakeholders and various community members pose a great challenge.	128	4.44	.646	Significant
4. Financial problem is one of the challenge encounters by the stakeholders in tackling the problems.	128	4.21	.792	Significant

**Source:** *Field research data, 2022.*

Table 2 above discloses the significant challenges encountered by the stakeholders in intervening in the conflict and the respondents in the study area agreed. This is because their mean responses were above the 3.0 benchmark for this study. The findings signified that all the stated challenges encountered by the stakeholders intervened in conflict resolution in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi state, especially, the issue of

communication gap and poor coordination between government, stakeholders and various community members pose a great challenge where all the mean range were from 3.92 to 4.44 which is above average. However, thus there are strong strategies used to tackle the conflict by stakeholders, but they suffer from many challenges when they intervene in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the study area.

**Research Question three: What are the alternative measures that can be adopted to effectively tackle the conflict?**

<b>Table 3</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1. Religious bodies and leaders should facilitate and adopt the moral values of forgiveness and reconciliation.	128	4.31	1.011	Significant
2. Religious bodies and different ethnic group leaders should help to foster mutual respect and art of dialogue as a personal and social process.	128	4.27	.607	Significant
3. Ethnic and religious group that are at logger heads should bury their differences and cooperate with one another	128	4.38	.835	Significant
4. All ethnic and religious leaders should encourage their followers to silence the music of hatred and the guns of war to embrace peace and tolerance with one another.	128	4.18	.978	Significant

**Source:** *Field research data, 2022.*

Table 3 above shows that the respondents in the study area agreed with the items in the instrument on the alternative measures that can be adopted to effectively tackle the conflict in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State. Since their mean responses were above the 3.0 yardstick for this study. The findings signified that more than average of the respondents agreed with the stated strategies to be adopted for effective conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the study area since their mean responses range from 4.18 to 4.38 respectively. Therefore, when these strategic dialogue will be adopted in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area and the state, in general, the ethno-religious conflict occurrence will be tackled and promote peaceful living among the people of this area.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This study analyzed the problem associated with ethno-religious conflict and dialogue processes in Tafawa Balewa Local Government, Bauchi State Nigeria. This section reports the findings of this study and discusses the findings in line with previous scholarly literature.

Research question one sought to identify the causes of ethno-religious conflict. The findings signified that ridiculing of prophet and socio-economic factor are the major causes of ethno-religious conflict whereas the communal identity, political power also signposted as the subsequences causes of ethno-religious conflict in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi state. This finding corroborates the finding of Sulaiman, (2013); Anas, (2011); and Akinwale, (2012) documented that ethno-political power and communal identity and socio-economic are the causes of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria. They further affirm that many issues which are considered very vital to the existence and legitimacy of the nation were politicized along religious and ethnic lines over which competing groups tend to manipulate for their own selfish interests.

Similarly, in 2001, the introduction of Sharia in Bauchi state led to chaos which also took its root

from Tafawa Balewa, between Sayawa and Non- Sayawa. At this period, the religious undertone of the conflict was revealed. The conflict was compounded by religious and ethnic difference between the two groups whose populations are generally divided along Islam Christianity. While the Sayawa are largely Christians, the non-Sayawa remained Muslims. Ethnicity and religious sentiments have therefore led to mistrust, hostility and multiple confrontations between the two groups. It should be noted that both the Sayawa and non-Sayawa have continued to attract sympathy from other members of different communities who are equally divided along ethnic and religious sentiments.

Indeed, all the inter-religious violence that took place in the North-West zone, the Sharia inspired conflicts inclusive, could be subjected to ethno-religious interpretations. At least five major ethno-religious violence took place (two in the North-West, two in the North-East, and one in the South-East Zones) over the introduction of Shari'ah legal system between February 2000 and June 2000 alone. In each instance the conflict was remarkably similar (Khalid, 2004). The conflicts resulted to extensive destruction, thousands of deaths, and massive property losses. Akowonjo (2011) as cited in Owutu (2012) buttresses this point further when he said: "Ethno-Religious Conflicts have the tendency of creating crisis over the question of citizenship, hostility between indigenes and settlers, dehumanization of women and children, e.g. rape, child abuse, child neglect, deepening of hunger in the society, atmosphere of political insecurity and instability, declining confidence in the political leadership and apprehension of the system".

After the 2001 conflict, a relative peace was ushered till 2009 when the peace of the area was also intervened by another conflict as a consequence of an attempt to install a Sayawa chief in Tafawa Balewa. Although the installation of the Sayawa was aborted, however, it created skirmishes between the Sayawa and non-Sayawa. As earlier indicated, quest for chieftdom among the Sayawa and the

position of its headquarters has added to the complexity of the conflict.

In an in-depth interview with one of the traditional rulers in the area:

Ethno-Religious Conflict in Tafawa Balewa is majorly caused by intolerance and in some cases mockery of a revered religion leaders which at the end may result to serious conflict that may lead to loss of lives and properties. Also most of the political powers are concentrated in one religion which make the other dominant religion to feel been deprived. This goes in line with the findings of UNHCR (1993) in Zangon Kataf crisis (traditional ruler, 28/10/2022).

In the same vein, a Christian preacher in the area as quoted and transcribed in a face-to-face interview opined that:

The over dominance of other tribes that are not Muslims and their hatred is one of the major causes of ethno-religious crisis in the entire Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area. If the peace preached by all religions is adhered to, peaceful co-existence will be possible and everybody will enjoy the company of one another regardless of ethnic and religious differences (Christian Preacher, 25/10/2022).

Conflict can arise in different situations. Deutch and Coleman (2016) identified some of the causes of conflict to include the following; differences in knowledge, beliefs and basic values; competition for position, power and recognition; a need for tension release; a drive for autonomy; personal dislike; and differing perception or attributes brought about by the organisational structure, different role structure, heterogeneity of the workforce, environmental changes, differences in goals, diverse economic interest, loyalties of groups, and value discrepancies, which were all considered at various stages as major causes of conflict in organisations.

Research question two sought to disclose the significant challenges encountered by the stakeholders in intervening in the conflict and the respondents in the study area agreed. This is because their mean responses were above the 3.0 benchmark for this study. The findings signified that all the stated challenges encountered by the stakeholders intervened in conflict resolution in Tafawa Balewa LGA of Bauchi state, especially, the issue of communication gap and poor coordination between government, stakeholders and various community members pose a great challenge where all the mean range were from 3.92 to 4.44 which is above average. However, thus there are strong strategies used to tackle the conflict by stakeholders, but they suffer from many challenges when they intervene in conflict resolution and peace building in the study area. The finding was equally in line with Okechukwu (2018).

Function of the press in any society is to inform, entertain and educate, people. The mass media practitioners ought to be cautioned in their reports on sensitive issues that could threaten stability order in the society. In Tafawa Balewa Local Government, experience has shown that the mass media reports, news analysis and features have played a positive and negative role in the relationship between religious adherents, particularly Muslims and Christians depending on the intention and orientation of the journalist concerned. More often than not the actions or reactions of the Muslims to Christian's action or vice versa are determined by the mass media reports. Negative and sensational press reports and news analysis often breed religious violence. This incidence happens in Tafawa Balewa after the introduction of Sharia in Bauchi State in 2005 where women and men were asked to be separated in public transport. Where a vehicle belonging to Bauchi State Transport Company (Yankari Express) brought passengers to Tafawa Balewa town, the driver of the vehicle instructed as directed by the Bauchi State Government not to mix men and women passengers in public transport, but members of

Sayawa tribe in Tafawa Balewa instead that the sharia will not be applied in Tafawa Balewa. The media play negative role on the incidence which lead to a violent conflict between the adherent of the two religion Islam and Christianity.

The Stakeholders also faced some challenges of extremism, fanaticism, ignorance and lack of support from members of their faith and ethnic group in the course of fostering ethnic organization, religious peace-building and promoting ethno-religious dialogue.

A traditional ruler in an in-depth interview who seek his name to be anonymous responded that:

I think apart from mistrust among the tribes and religions, most of the recommendations offered to the government were not implemented and this led to loss of confidence on the stakeholders and government in general (traditional ruler, 28/10/2022).

Another challenge is that of poverty where it creates societal problems particularly when many people cannot afford their needs like shelter, clothing and feeding. Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area lacks structural economy to cater for large population the consequent poverty creates societal problems. Extremely poor people can do anything to sustain themselves. Thus, the poor youth in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area are manipulated with small amount of money to cause ethno- religious disturbance.

Research question three sought to identify the alternative measures that can be adopted to effectively tackle the conflict in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State. Since their mean responses were above the 3.0 yardstick for this study. The findings signified that more than average of the respondents agreed with the stated alternative measures to be adopted for effective conflict resolution and peace building in the study area since their mean responses range from 4.18 to 4.38 respectively.

A security agent in the Local Government responded in an In-depth interview that:

All the tribes and religious leaders in the area should be preaching peace and try to educate their people on unity, harmony, tolerance, mutual respect, dialogue, reconciliation and foster the spirit of developing their communities (Security agent, 20/10/2022).

Therefore, when these strategic dialogue will be adopted in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area and the state, in general, the ethno-religious conflict occurrence will be tackled and promote peaceful living among the people of this area. This finding is in conformity with that of Mogdle (2020).

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Ethno-religious conflicts involving adherents of the Muslims and Christian faith in Nigeria have occurred in greater regularity in the past 30 years. They appeared to be ethnically motivated and religiously driven. The virtues of peace, love, unity and forgiveness, which both Islam and Christianity preach, seem to be easily forgotten as soon as there is tension. Ethnicity and religion are often appropriated as mobilization tool by the political class in their struggle for political power and economic resources. Some of the 'ethnic conflicts' in Nigeria include the Ethno-religious conflict in Tafawa Balewa LGA. Inter-ethnic and Inter-faith dialogue is therefore not only a necessity but also imperative if Nigeria has to realize her full potentials on the African continent. Without such dialogue, her multicultural nature, geographical size, ethnic diversity, religious plurality; her abundant human and natural resources can become reasons for social unrest instead of a blessing.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that a number of factors should be put in place to ensure conflicts free society. The Government, community and religious leaders should adopt dialogue processes to ensure peaceful society which will

serve as a basis for meaningful development. Based on the research findings the following recommendations were made:

- i. Followers of Christianity or Islam should desist from ridiculing prophets of other religion.
- ii. Peaceful agreement among various ethno religious groups should be promoted.
- iii. Hatred and mistrust between Christian's and Muslims during and after the conflicts should be discouraged
- iv. Evidences have shown that many local and standard weapons of warfare were used in many conflicts in the recent past. The

government, through its security agencies, and the traditional rulers should ensure a strict control and surveillance over the possession of such weapons and spot out local manufacturing industries where these weapons are made for appropriate punishments.

- v. The role of civil liberty Organizations such as Human Right Groups and Red Cross, religious groups, cultural and tribal unions may also prove useful in inter-ethnic and inter-faith dialogue. This could be achieved through enlightenment campaign regular workshop arrangement among citizens.

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## LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC

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### Abstract

*Globally, leadership succession plays a crucial role in the stability and security of any nation, and Nigeria is no exception. It is the mode of transfer of power from one government to another, and is always accompanied by tension of imposing leaders. Leadership imposition has resulted in political instability, which has challenged the effectiveness of national security policies and strategies. The fourth republic in Nigeria, which commenced in 1999, has witnessed a history of leadership transitions marred by political instability, power struggles, corruption, ethnic and religious affiliation with each transition presenting unique challenges for national security. Therefore, this paper explores the impact of these leadership changes on Nigeria's national security apparatus. The paper adopted descriptive research method and uses institutional theory as its theoretical underpinning. The paper found out that lack of clear guidelines or established protocols for leadership succession pose challenges to national security. It also found out that power struggles or political instability within the political landscape has a great effect on the formulations and executions of national security policies. The paper concluded that effective leadership succession processes and clear guidelines are crucial for maintaining national security during transitions of power. Therefore, the paper recommended the development and implementation of clear guidelines and protocols for leadership succession in relation to national security. It also proposed the strengthening of institutional frameworks and processes to secure and successful leadership successions, with a specific focus on national security considerations.*

**Key words:** Democracy, Election, Leadership, Leadership succession, National security, Nigeria.

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### Introduction

Leadership succession in Nigeria has been a topic of great importance and interest, given the country's rich history of political transitions and challenges. As Africa's most populous nation and biggest economy, Nigeria's leadership

succession has significant implications, not just for the country but for the entire continent. In Nigeria, leadership succession is often influenced by factors such as country's ethnically diverse, religion, regionalism and politically fragmented landscape. So, while there are legal processes for succession, informal

factors also play a major role (Akpan, 2018). Leadership succession in Nigeria follows pattern of zoning in which the presidency is rotated among different regions and ethnic groups. However, this informal setting is not always respected and there have been instances of violence and political instability as a result. For example, the 2011 presidential election, in which Goodluck Jonathan from the South, ran for re-election. This was a controversial decision, as it broke the informal zoning system and led to protests and violence (Dike, 2020).

As it is mentioned above, ethnicity, regionalism and religion among others are the significant factors influencing leadership succession in Nigeria. Nigeria is home to over 250 ethnic groups, each with its own distinct culture, language, and interests. There are concern that the zoning system reinforces ethnic divisions and that it has led to a lack of trust and cooperation among ethnic groups. This diversity has often led to power struggles and conflicts during leadership transitions, making the process complex and delicate. Ethnic and regional considerations often play a significant role in determining who assumes leadership positions, which can either promote inclusivity and representation or deepen divisions. Also, there are concerns that the religious divide between the Christians and Muslims is being exacerbated by the succession system. Therefore, it is imperative to handle leadership transitions carefully and inclusively so as to avoid exacerbating ethnic tensions and compromising national security (Falade, 2019).

In addition, Nigeria's history of military coups and political instability has had significant impact on the country's leadership succession. Since gaining independence from British colonial rule in 1960, Nigeria has experienced several military regimes and civilian administrations. This frequent change in leadership has had a profound impact on the country's political and economic development and has shaped the attitudes and expectations of the Nigerian people towards leadership succession (Nweje & Amo, 2019). Furthermore, Nigeria's leadership succession has implications for regional and

global stability. As a major player in Africa, Nigeria's political stability and effective leadership are vital for the peace and development of the West African region. Nigeria's success or failure in managing leadership transitions can impact neighboring countries and influence the continent's overall stability. In recent years, Nigeria has made progress in ensuring a peaceful and smooth leadership succession process. The general elections in 2015, 2019 and 2023 witnessed a relatively peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another, demonstrating a growing commitment to democratic values and institutions (Adeniran, 2018).

National security on the other hand is the protection of a nation's sovereignty, citizens, and interests from internal and external threats. It encompasses various aspects, including defense, intelligence, law enforcement, and diplomacy. Effective leadership is essential in ensuring the success of these endeavors and maintaining the safety and security of a nation. Nigeria faces a range of security challenges, including insurgency, terrorism, ethnic and religious conflicts, kidnapping, and armed banditry. These security threats are multi-faceted and require strong and effective leadership to address them. Leadership succession plays a crucial role in shaping Nigeria's national security (Samuel, 2020). A successful leadership succession plan ensures a seamless transfer of power, allowing for the smooth continuation of national security initiatives. It enables new leaders to build upon the progress made by their predecessors, adapt to changing circumstances, and effectively address emerging threats. On the other hand, a poorly executed or delayed succession plan can lead to a power vacuum, leaving a nation vulnerable to potential threats. It can disrupt the continuity of policies, strategies, and operations, impacting the overall effectiveness of national security efforts (Okafor, 2019).

However, the instability caused by the leadership succession system in Nigeria has had a negative impact on the national security. For example the Boko Haram insurgency, which

began in 2009, has been exacerbated by the instability and division caused by the succession system. It has also weakened the capacity of the government to effectively address security threats. The government has been preoccupied with managing the succession system, and not been able to devote the necessary resources to national security (Jagun & Babarinsa, 2021). It is on this note that this paper tends to examine the impact of leadership succession on national security in Nigeria fourth republic

### **Conceptual Clarifications**

#### **Concept of Leadership Succession**

Leadership succession is a broader concept that encompasses political succession. It also involves succession of leaders in non-political setting such as business, nonprofit organization, and religious setting. For the purpose of this study, however, we will be considering scholarly definitions of leadership succession in political setting. Leadership succession is the process of replacing the person who holds the position of leader, with someone else (Bass, 1990). This definition highlights the importance of the leader's position, as opposed to their personal qualities or characteristics (Daniel, 2017). According to Bass (1990) and Yukl (1998), leadership succession is the process of selecting, preparing, and advancing the development of leaders so that the nation will have the right people available when needed to carry out the succession process. The scholars emphasize the significance of proactive succession planning, which involves identifying and developing potential leaders will in advance. This ensures a smooth transition and minimizes disruptions when a leadership position arises (Yagboyaju, 2022).

Von Solms and Van Niekerk (2008), defines the concept of leadership succession as the process of determining the appropriate timing of a change of leadership and ensuring the smooth transition of a new leader. Dulewicz and Higgs (2003) define leadership succession "as the process of moving people into more senior positions" and note that it is "about strategic planning to ensure that the nation has

appropriate leadership talent in place to meet the challenges of the future". This definition of Dulewicz and Higgs (2003) and that of Von Solms and Van Niekerk (2008) emphasizes the importance of long-term planning and ensuring that the nation has the right people in place to lead it into the future (Nwabuko, 2020). According to Iles (2001), leadership succession is about selecting, developing and nurturing successors for leadership positions to ensure continuity in the leadership of the country and to meet the needs country's need for effective leadership. In other words, this scholar emphasize on having a well-designed succession plan that ensures a seamless transfer of leadership responsibilities, minimizing disruption and maintaining the political performance of the country.

In the definition of Liu (2007), Political leadership succession is the process of replacing the head of state in a political system. He further notes that political leadership succession is a complex process involving many actors and factors and that it can have significant implications for the stability and continuity of the political system. According to Blondel (1986), political leadership succession is the process by which the holders of the most important political offices in a country or region are replaced over time. In the definition of Rose (1974), Political leadership succession is the process of selecting and transitioning leaders within political parties, examining the mechanisms and strategies used for this purpose. These definitions are not just about individual leaders, but also about the parties and political groups they represent. By this, the definition laid emphasis on the broader context of political leadership succession and its impact on parties and groups (Abraham, 2015 ). Panebianco (1988) defines political leadership succession as the process by which the various parties and factions within a political system compete for control of the leadership positions. In other words, Panebianco sees political leadership succession as a competitive process, in which different groups vie for power and influences. This definition highlights the

dynamic and sometimes contentious nature of political leadership successions. However, after reviewing various definitions by scholars, and for the purpose of this study, the researcher therefore, defines the concept of leadership succession as the process of transferring power and authority from one political leader to another within a governing body or a political party (Akpan, 2022).

### **Concept of National Security**

National Security is a complex and evolving one. Various scholars have attempted the concept base on their research focus and ideological background. The concept of "National Security Issues" is often misunderstood says (Wolfer, 1962) and as such elusive says (Carey, 2000). Hence a strange phenomenon, a subjective "feeling", and therefore relational and relatives, rather than an objective "thing" that can be seen and handled. However, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) defines National security as the protection of the American people, their way of life, and the resources upon which their well-being depends (Sogunro, 2019). According to Barry Buzan (1991), National security refers to the ability of a state to protect its core values, interest, and institutions from external threats, while also maintaining internal stability. Buzan's definition of National security emphasizes the protection of a state's core values, interests, and institutions. It encompasses both external threats, such as military aggression or terrorism, and internal challenges, such as political instability or social unrest. The definition involves maintaining a balance between protecting the state from external dangers and ensuring internal stability (Dike, 2018).

Keohane & Nye (1977) defines national security as the protection of a state's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence, as well the preservation of its economic well-being and societal values. This definition highlights the various dimensions of national security which includes the safeguarding of a state's sovereignty, which refers to its ability to govern itself without external interference.

According to Walt (1987), National security refers to the protection of a nation's ability to pursue and achieve its strategic goals, and to defend itself from threats (Sekoni, 2017). Neuman (1998) conceived National security from another angle. He defines it as the state's ability to prevent the infliction of unacceptable damage upon itself. The definition given by Walt focuses on the idea that national security is about maintaining a nation's ability to pursue its goals, while that of Neuman's definition emphasizes the state's ability to defend itself from threats. In other words, Walt's definition is more proactive, while that of Neuman is more reactive (Folarin, Sanni & Segun, 2017).

Also, Betts (1992) defines National security as the ability of a state to pursue its national interests and to deter or defeat aggression directed against those interests. Betts' definition highlights the importance of national interests, as well as the ability to deter or defeat aggression. However, for the purpose of this research, National security is defined as the measures taken by a country to protect its people, territory and interests from external threats, such as terrorism invasion, or espionage (Shola, 2019).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study adopted political leadership theory as its theoretical underpinning. This theory was adopted because it explains the role of leaders in shaping political outcomes and policies within a country. It focuses on how leaders' characteristics, decisions, and actions influence the functioning of political systems and the overall governance of a nation. The proponents of this theory include James MacGregor Burns (1978), Fred Greenstein (1982), Richard Neustadt (1960) and Graham Allison (1971). (Bevir, 2017)

Political leadership theory assumes that leaders play a crucial role in shaping political outcomes and policies. It emphasizes that leaders have agency and can significantly influence the functioning of political systems. The theory also acknowledges that leaders possess individual characteristics traits that impact their decision-

making and actions. These traits can include personality, values, skills, and experience which shape their leadership style. Political leadership theory also recognises that leaders operate within specific political, social, and historical contexts. These contextual factors influence the opportunities and constraints faced by leaders and shape their decision-making and policy choices. Also the theory focuses on the actions and behaviours of leaders, examining how their decisions, strategies, and policies impact political outcomes. Lastly, political leadership theory considers the relationships between leaders and followers. It recognises that leaders need to engage and inspire followers to achieve their political goals and implement policies effectively (Northouse, 2013).

Despite the importance of this theory in explaining the role of leaders in shaping political outcomes, it also has its fair share of criticism like every other theory. Some critics argue that the theory oversimplifies the complex dynamics of politics by attributing significant power and influence solely to the leader. They believe that political outcomes are the result of multiple factors, including institutions, societal forces, and collective action. The critics also argue that the theory places too much emphasis on the individual leader and neglects the influence of broader structural factors such as socioeconomic conditions, historical legacies, and power dynamics. They argued that these structural factors shape and constrain the actions of leaders. Lastly, the theory is been accused of lacking sufficient empirical evidence to support its claims. The critics contend that the theory relies heavily on unreliable evidence and case studies, making it difficult to establish generalisable conclusions about the impact of leadership on political outcomes (Grint, 2010).

However, in the context of this study, the theory explores how changes in leadership impact the country's security landscape. It considers factors such as the leadership style, priorities, and strategies of different leaders, and how these factors affect the effectiveness of national security measures (Zoller, 2019).

### **Leadership Succession in Nigeria Fourth Republic**

Since 1999, when Nigeria transitioned to a democracy, there has been several democratic successions. In 1999 election, former military leader Olusegun Obasanjo ran for president as a civilian, with the support of the People's Democratic Party. Obasanjo had been seen as a stabilizing force during his previous military rule, and he promised to fight corruption and bring stability to the country. He won the election by a wide margin, with 62% of the vote. While there were some allegations of fraud, the election was generally considered to be free and fair one (Ihonvbere, 2018).

In 2003, Obasanjo was seeking re-election, and he faced a challenge from Muhammadu Buhari, who had previously served as military head of state. This election was marred by violence and intimidation, with reports of ballot-stuffing and voter intimidation. Despite these problems, Obasanjo were declared the winner of the election, with 61% of the total vote casted. Buhari and his supporters disputed the results, alleging fraud and irregularities. The election commission stood by the results, and Obasanjo was sworn in for a second term. However, Obasanjo terms were marked by ethnic violence and unrest. In particular, the country experienced widespread violence between the Christian-dominated south and the Muslim-dominated north. This violence was exacerbated by religious and ethnic divisions, as well as economic inequality. Equally, Obasanjo was accused of corruption and cronyism during his two terms (Paden, 2015). In 2007, there were some controversies over the process of leadership succession. One example was the "Third term" controversy, when some members of the People's Democratic Party suggested that the constitution should be changed to allow Obasanjo to run for a third term. This proposal was ultimately rejected, but it caused a significant tension within the party and the country (Olujide & Moshod, 2018).

In 2007 election, because Obasanjo was term limited and was unable to run for a third term

which is against the constitution. Instead, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua was chosen as the People's Democratic Party's candidate. However, Yar'Adua succession was somewhat complicated. He was elected president in a controversial election, with allegations of vote-buying and widespread violence. The opposition boycotted the election, and there were protests and violence across the country (Banjo, 2019). In addition, President Obasanjo's term had been marked by a powerful struggle between him and the powerful governors. Yar'Adua, as a relatively unknown figure, was seen as a compromise candidate who could bring stability to the country. He was seen as being more likely to share power with the governors. Despite these mayhems, Yar'Adua was sworn in as president in May 2007. Umaru Yar'Adua took office amid an ongoing crisis in the Niger Delta, where militants were demanding a greater share of the region's oil wealth. His vice president Goodluck Jonathan was from the Niger Delta region, and he was seen as a compromise candidate who could help bring peace to the region. However, his selection also caused some controversy, as it was seen as a departure from the "Zoning" system in which the presidency rotates between the north and the south (Danladi, 2018).

Yar'Adua's administration was also faced with the worsening Boko Haram insurgency in the north. Boko Haram, an extremist Islamist group, had carried out a series of bombings and attacks on government and civilian targets. The government's response to insurgency was widely criticized as ineffective. Though, his presidency was cut short by illness, and he died in office in 2010. Following his death, there was some uncertainty about the process for succession. Under the constitution, the vice president, Goodluck Jonathan became acting president (Sanni, 2018). When Jonathan assumed the role of acting president under the provisions of the constitution, there was significant debate over whether Jonathan should take over as president or whether new elections should take place. The situation was complicated by the fact that there was no clear

line of succession in the constitution. Some people argued that Jonathan should not be allowed to become president, as it would set a dangerous precedent and create uncertainty about the country's future. As a southerner, his election could have been seen as a threat to the north's power and influence (Banjo, 2019). In addition, the fact that he was a Christian led to fears of religious conflict. Despite these concerns, Jonathan was able to gain the support of many northern politicians and was sworn in as president in May 2010. However, his tenure would be marked by continued political and security challenges, including the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency.

The 2011 elections were particularly contentious, and there were many allegations of fraud and vote-rigging. The election was contested by incumbent president Goodluck Jonathan and his main challenger, Muhammadu Buhari. The election results were very close, with Jonathan winning by a narrow margin. There were accusations of fraud and vote-rigging from both sides, and the election was marred by violence and protests. Ultimately, Jonathan was declared winner of the election. But the election was widely seen as flawed and undermined the legitimacy of the government (Dike, 2018). Jonathan faced a difficult, as the country was facing widespread violence and conflict, as well as struggling economy as at the time he was sworn in as the acting president. He was widely criticized for his handling of the Boko Haram insurgency and other security challenges.

In 2015 election, Jonathan ran for re-election, but lost to Muhammadu Buhari, who had run against Yar'Adua in 2007 and Jonathan in 2011. Buhari was sworn in as president in May 2015. He faced a number of challenges when he assumed the office as elected president. The Boko Haram insurgency was raging, and the country was also facing an economic crisis due to the fall in global oil prices. In addition, the country was dealing with the aftermath of the 2014-2015 Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Buhari also had to contend with a political system that was characterized by corruption

and patronage. Despite these challenges, Buhari was able to begin implementing some reforms, including a crackdown on corruption (Banjo, 2018). Also, Buhari appoint new military commanders to take on the Boko Haram insurgency. These commanders were able to make significant progress in the fight against Boko Haram, and by 2019 the group had been largely driven out of the areas it had previously controlled. However, Boko Haram continued to carry out attacks, and the conflict has taken a heavy toll on the country's economy and infrastructure (Folarin, 2021). The 2019 election was seen as a rematch of the 2015 election, with Buhari facing off against Atiku Abubakar, who had been Jonathan's running mate in 2015. Buhari won the election by a significant margin, with 55% of the total vote casted. The election was mostly peaceful, although there were some reports of irregularities and violence. Despite these problems, Buhari were sworn in for a second term in May 2019.

The recent democratic succession that brought in current president Bola Ahmed Tinubu was the culmination of a decades-long political career that saw him rise from a grassroots politician to the governor of Lagos state to eventually becoming president. Tinubu's rise to power was characterized by his ability to build alliances and support across Nigeria's various ethnic and religious groups. Tinubu's succession is quite different from that of previous succession. Unlike his predecessor, President Buhari, Tinubu came to power after a hotly contested election, which saw him face off against former vice president Atiku Abubakar and former governor Peter Obi (Segun, 2020). The election was marred by allegations of voter fraud and violence, and there were widespread concerns about the integrity of the electoral process. Despite these concerns, Tinubu was able to secure victory and was sworn in as president in May 2023.

### **Challenges facing Leadership Succession in Nigerian Fourth Republic**

There are numbers of challenges that complicated leadership succession in Nigeria's fourth republic. These include the following:

### **Weak Political Institutions**

Lack of strong political institutions is perhaps the most significant challenge facing leadership succession in Nigeria's fourth republic. It refers to lack of strong, effective, and transparent institutions in Nigeria. This includes political parties, judiciary, law enforcement, the military, and other government institutions. These institutions are often seen as being corrupt, inefficient, and not accountable to the people they serve. The country's political parties are often poorly organized and lack clear ideologies, which makes it difficult for leaders to build consensus and achieve their goals. For example, political parties are often poorly organized and lack a coherent vision, which makes it difficult for politicians to come together and work towards common goals. This was evident in the recent presidential election, where the two major political parties- the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) and the oppositions People's Democratic Party (PDP), were both deeply divided and unable to unite behind a single candidate. Without strong political institutions, it is difficult to ensure smooth and peaceful leadership succession (Akpan, 2020).

### **Corruption**

Lack of accountability and transparency in the political system, which has allowed corruption to thrive. The issue of corruption in Nigeria is one of the biggest challenges facing the country's political system, and it has a direct impact on leadership succession. Corruption is endemic at all levels of government, from local to federal, and has led to a lack of trust in the political system. Corruption takes many form, including embezzlement, nepotism, and kickbacks. For example, the country's oil industry has long being plagued by corruption, with billions of dollars being stolen through kickbacks, bribes, and other forms of graft. This corruption has drained the country's resources and made it difficult to achieve sustainable economic growth and makes it difficult to attract foreign investment and undermining development. In addition, corruption has led to a lack of trust in the political system, which makes it difficult for

leaders to be held accountable for their actions. The perception of widespread corruption also makes it difficult for political leaders to be seen as credible and effective (Johnson & Sobayo, 2022).

### **Ethnic and Religious divisions**

Ethnic and religious divisions which often leads to conflict and instability. It has long been a source of tension and conflict in Nigeria, and this has had a significant impact on the country's political system. The country is made up of a large number of different ethnic groups, and these groups often have competing interests. This can lead to political instability, as different groups vie for power and influence. Religious divisions have also been a source of conflict, particularly between the predominantly Muslim north and the predominantly Christian south. These divisions have made it difficult for political leaders to effectively represent all segments of the population. For example, the country's north-south divide has been a source of tension for many years, and there have been numerous conflicts between the predominantly Muslim north and the predominantly Christian south. Religious violence has been a particularly serious problem, with Boko Haram being one of the most prominent examples (Agboola, 2021).

### **Voter Apathy**

Voter Apathy is another major challenge for leadership succession in Nigeria's fourth republic. According to the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, the percentage of registered voters who actually turned out to vote has been decreasing since 1999 and many Nigerians feel disconnected from the political process. In the 2019 general election, voter turnout was just over 35%. This is partly due to a lack of trust in the electoral system, as well as a lack of confidence that their vote will make a difference. Many Nigerians have become disillusioned with the political system, as it has not delivered on its promises to improve living standards. Some analysts have also pointed to a lack of civic education and engagement as contributing factors. Voter Apathy has made it difficult for

political leaders to connect with and represent the needs of the people (Olawunmi & Zira, 2021).

### **Political Instability**

The country has experienced a number of military coups since its independence in 1960, and has also experienced periods of civil war and ethnic violence. This instability has led to frequent changes in government, and has made it difficult for political leaders to enact long-term reforms. In addition, instability can lead to a lack of confidence in the political system, which can further discourage voter participation and engagement (Asogwa, 2022). Another dimension of political instability in Nigeria is the phenomenon of "godfatherism". Godfathers are powerful figures who wield significant influence over the political system, often using their wealth and connections to control political parties and government officials. This can also lead to corruption and inefficiency, as government officials may prioritize the interests of godfathers over the interests of the public. Godfathers can also play a role in perpetuating political violence and instability, as they may use their influence to foment unrest. Overall, political instability makes it difficult for Nigeria to have a stable leadership succession process (Igbim, 2022).

### **Lack of Credible and Independent Electoral Institutions**

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is the body that is responsible for organizing and running elections in the country. However, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has been accused for being biased and ineffective, and has been criticized for its failure to prevent vote-buying and ballot stuffing. There have also been concerns about the accuracy of the voter registration process and the integrity of the voting process. Additionally, there is often a lack of transparency around electoral results to benefit the incumbent, which can lead to dispute and violence. All of these factors have contributed to a lack of faith in the electoral system (Afolayan, 2021).



### **Effect of Leadership Succession on National Security in Nigeria Fourth Republic**

Leadership succession in Nigeria has had a significant impact on the country's national security. Political instability and violence can have a negative impact on security. When there is political turmoil, the security forces may be unable to maintain law and order, which can lead to an increase in crime and insecurity (Asuquo, 2022). Leadership succession can also affect the ability of the military to effectively combat insurgent groups, such as Boko Haram. When there is political instability, the military may be unable to focus on its primary mission of protecting the country from external threats. The rise of Boko Haram during the Yar'Adua administration was a good example on how leadership succession affects national security. President Yar'Adua was seen as being weak and indecisive, and this allowed Boko Haram to gain strength to carry out more attacks. During this period, the Nigerian military was unable to effectively counter the group, as they were stretched thin by other security challenges, such as communal violence and oil theft. This allowed Boko Haram to expand its influence and carry out more attacks, including the kidnapping of over 200 school girls in 2014 (Bankole, 2022).

Increased civil unrest and violence is another effect leadership succession on the country's national security. When there is a change in leadership, it can lead to a power vacuum, as different groups compete for control. This can lead to violence, especially if there is no clear leader or if the government is unable to assert its authority. A good example of this is the violence that followed the death of President Yar'Adua. There was significant violence and unrest in the northern part of the country, as different groups fought for control (Ugu, 2021). Another effect of leadership succession on national security is the potential for increased insecurity in the energy sector. Nigeria is an oil-producing country, and the energy sector is a major source of revenue for the government. A change in leadership can lead to instability in the

energy sector, as different factions vie for control of oil resources. This can lead to disruptions in oil production and distribution, which can have a negative impact on the economy and national security. For example, during the 2011 elections, there was a significant drop in oil production due to unrest and sabotage. In addition, the insecurity caused by oil theft can lead to further instability and violence, as groups compete for control of oil resources. This circle of violence and insecurity can become self-perpetuating, further destabilizing the country (Usman, 2022).

Economic instability is another threat to national security caused by leadership succession. When there is a change in leadership, it can create uncertainty in the markets and lead to capital flight. This can have a negative impact on the economy, as investors may choose to withdraw their money and invest elsewhere. This can lead to currency devaluation, inflation, and a decline in living standards (Bawa, 2021). The economy can also suffer if the new leader makes policy changes that negatively impact businesses or consumers. For example, President Buhari's policies have been criticized for their negative impact on small businesses. When Buhari came to power, his attempt to stabilize the exchange rate, the government removed the currency peg that had been in place for several years. This caused the currency to lose value and led to a spike in inflation. This affected the businesses and consumers, as the goods and services increased. In addition, many businesses were forced to close down or lay off workers, as they were unable to compete with imports that were now cheaper due to the weakened currency (Umar, 2021).

Conclusively, leadership succession can also affect the relationship between government and its citizens. When there is a change in leadership, citizens may have a renewed sense of hope or optimism. Alternatively, they may be skeptical of the government's ability to make positive changes. This can affect how citizens view and interact with the government, and can ultimately impact security. (Adetula, 2021). For example, if citizens are skeptical of the

government, they may be less likely to cooperate with the law enforcement or provide information that could help prevent crime.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The issue of leadership succession and its impact on national security in Nigeria's fourth republic is a topic of significant importance. The study aimed to investigate the relationship between leadership succession and national security, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities that arise during transition periods. It can be concluded that effective leadership succession plays a crucial role in ensuring national security and stability in Nigeria. The peaceful and orderly transfer of power from one political leader to another is essential to maintain continuity in governance and effectively address national security challenges. On the other hand, a poorly managed succession process can lead to power struggles, political instability, and a weakened security apparatus. The existence of political factions, ethnic tensions, and the prevalence of corruption further complicate the leadership succession process, posing threats to national security.

Moreover, this study enables us to understand the impact of successful leadership transitions on national security. It highlights the importance of strong institutional frameworks, transparent selection procedures, and inclusive participation in the succession process. These factors can help prevent power struggles, political instability, and security threats, ultimately strengthening the country's security apparatus.

Furthermore, this study underscores the need for comprehensive policies and strategies that address potential security risks during leadership transitions. Strengthening democratic institutions, improving legal frameworks, and addressing socio-economic inequalities are vital steps towards achieving effective leadership succession and maintaining national security. It also suggests the need for policymakers to prioritize national security concerns during succession planning. These measures should focus on ensuring a smooth transfer of power, maintaining the rule of law, enhancing security forces' effectiveness, and fostering national unity. By addressing these issues, Nigeria can enhance its national security and create an environment conducive to sustainable socio-economic development.

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## **YOUTH AND RESILIENCE BUILDING IN COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN YOBE STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

Boko Haram has wreaked havoc in Northeast Nigeria for over a decade, displaced millions, and devastated communities. While much focus has centred on the violence, this study explored the extent to which the ~~how~~ youth and communities have demonstrated resilience amidst the crisis. Relying on Focus Group Discussions, and in-depth interviews in communities across Damaturu, Geidam, Gujba and Potiskum Local Government Areas in Yobe State, the study illuminated grassroots efforts to support vulnerable youth, reknit social ties, sustain cultural practices, and foster localized systems of economic and livelihood cooperation, cultural maintenance, and youth programming in entrenching community resilience. The study is qualitative. Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) was used for the data analysis. The study showed that endogenous resilience capacity by the surviving youth evolved amid Boko Haram insurgency. The study concluded that, to contribute to the rebuilding of communities impacted by Boko Haram insurgency, inclusion of young persons in decision making and their localised initiatives must be given consideration. The study therefore recommended that as government, non-governmental organizations and policy makers strive to generate ideas for the transformation of communities impacted by Boko Haram insurgency, lessons from the community resilience strategies evolved by youths could provide guide for future engagements and inclusive interventions.

**Key words:** Resilience, Community Resilience, Boko Haram, Insurgency, Youth.

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### **1. Introduction**

Since its eruption in 2009, the Boko Haram insurgency in Northeast Nigeria has brought immense suffering and displacement to the Lake Chad basin region. By 2017, an estimated

20,000 people had been killed while 2.6 million were internally displaced and 5.2 million suffered crisis-level food shortages across northeast Nigeria alone (UNOCHA 2017). While Borno State remains the insurgency's epicentre,

the crisis has reverberated through broader West and Central Africa as Boko Haram factions intersect with other militant groups across porous Sahelian borders (Mercy Corps 2019). Given Boko Haram's extreme violence, including razing of villages, mass abductions, and horrific assaults on civilians, most international attention has understandably focused on immediate humanitarian relief and violent extremism (VE) prevention (Botha and Abdile 2019). Less scrutiny addresses how communities impacted by the insurgency are drawing on endogenous capacities to foster stability and cohesion on their own terms (Yusuf 2017). Even as they navigate trauma, loss of livelihoods, ruptured social fabric, and inadequate humanitarian resources, youth, and community actors across Yobe State exhibited remarkable resilience by caring for vulnerable members, sustaining cultural practices, and devising localized systems of mutual aid. Their "resilience infrastructures from below" reveal openings for wider stakeholders to align international violent extremism prevention and development assistance with communities' own visions and priorities (Mac Ginty and Williams 2009).

Yobe State is among the six States of Nigeria's Northeast. Yobe became a State on August 27, 1991, and currently has 17 LGAs with Damaturu as its capital. Following the atrocities unleashed by Boko Haram on communities across the Northeast since 2009, different strategic responses to confront the group has been adopted by the Nigerian Government. However, there remains a considerable neglect of community perspectives, concerns and needs as part of policy measures aimed at promoting peaceful transition (UNDP, 2017). There is also the concern that the current Government project on rehabilitation and reinsertion of Boko Haram members does not take cognizance of local initiatives and contributions (Granville, 2020). Importantly, significant efforts utilised at ending the conflict appear to have created parallel structures in affected communities, downplaying the role of youths, traditional institutions, community, and religious

leadership, and denying local groups the opportunity to contribute to peace building processes (Beacon Consulting, 2022).

This study illuminates these grassroots resilience efforts in Yobe State with specific focus on Damaturu, Geidam, Gujba, and Potiskum Local Government Areas (LGAs). Following a brief literature review, the study outlines the qualitative methodology before analysing the interrelated domains of community resilience: youth-focused programming, economic and livelihood cooperation, and cultural maintenance and resilience building. Despite community members' continued vulnerability, the conclusion explores how endogenous resilience-building, championed by youths offers openings for wider stakeholder to reinforce pre-existing communal capacities rather than side-lining them through overly securitized or externally driven agendas. Understanding these community strengths and priorities can inform assistance not only in Yobe State, Northeast Nigeria, but globally in regions impacted by violent extremism and violent conflicts.

The study has six sections. Section one introduces the study capturing background of the study, statement of problem, purpose and scope of the study. Section two clarified key concepts of the study (community resilience, insurgency, Boko Haram insurgency and youth) and reviewed literature related to the study. Section three reviews systems theory as the theoretical framework for the study. Section four discusses methodology of the study capturing the design, population, sample size, sampling techniques, instrumentation and method of data analysis. Section five presents analysis, results and discussion of the study in thematic forms. Section six concludes the study and offers some recommendations in relation to the study.

## **2. Conceptual/Literature Review**

The key concepts in this study include community resilience, Insurgency, Boko Haram insurgency, and youth. The concepts are reviewed below:

## **Community Resilience**

The concept of resilience is applied in different contexts, including engineering, ecology, organisational and management studies, psychology, conflict and peace studies, risk management and disaster reduction. It has been conceptualised in numerous ways, ranging from traditional ideas around resistance to shocks and the ability to maintain or bounce back to the status quo to more progressive ideas linked to adaptive management and the creation of new capacities to deal with unforeseen changes (de Bruijne, Boin, & van Eeten, 2010; Manyena, O'Brien, O'Keefe, Rose et al., 2011). Equally, Patel et al (2017) suggests that 'there is no evidence of a common, agreed definition of community resilience'. However, a definition that is commonly used is the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources (energy, communication, transportation, food, etc.) to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations. This allows for the adaptation and growth of a community after disaster strikes. Resilient communities are the ones that can minimize the impact of disasters and make the return to normal life as effortless as possible. However, the concept of resilience is fairly new to the field of conflict resolution and peace building, it has been incorporated into a number of studies looking at the intersection of stress and conflict (Coleman & Lowe, 2007; Fitzpatrick & McWilliam, 2013). Accepting community resilience is thus a critical element towards finding viable solutions to violent conflict situations. When used in peace and conflict studies, the concept of resilience would often refer to the capacity of communities, societies, nations and/state to prevent and counter incidents of violence. In the conflict situations, resilience may come from different sources, such as family ties, social networks, friendship networks, communities and leadership in place.

## **Insurgency**

Insurgencies are not new in the history of states. They go back to times of antiquity, as far back as the old civilizations of the Greek city

state and the Roman Empire when the rulers of these ancient civilizations often had to face the challenge of insurgencies, insurrections, and revolts. Terrorism is a technique or strategy of insurgency (Crenshaw 2011; Merari 1993). The main aim of insurgencies has always been to overthrow an established authority and replace it with a new social or political order. It is for this reason that insurgents take up arms to overthrow those in power (Fafowora, 2012). The objectives of modern insurgencies remain the same, the overthrow of the existing order and its replacement by a new order or government. This description of insurgency fits well into the situation of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and the for the purpose of this study.

In conceptualising insurgency, Abdu and Shehu (2019) view insurgency as a rebellion against a constituted authority either in the pursuit of political goal or for selfish interest. Abolurin (2011) cited in Abdu and Shehu (2019) described insurgency as a revolution, revolt, rebellion, riot and mutiny. By insinuation, those carryout rebellious acts are insurgent groups involved in insurgency. Most people have also used the concept terrorism to describe the concept insurgency.

**Youth:** The United Nations defines the youth as „young people“ who fall within the age bracket of 15 and 24 years; without prejudice to the definitions upheld and recognised by other countries or bodies (United Nations, 2008). In the case of Nigeria, youth is used to describe individual males and females, who are between the ages of 18 and 35 (WYEDRSDD, 2019). This paper is adopting the latter since it primarily focuses on Nigeria.

Scholarship on international intervention often focuses disproportionately on externally designed policies rather than asking how affected populations view their own challenges or devise localized solutions (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty and Williams 2009). Assumptions of helpless victims “in need of external salvation” side-line communities’ agency and obscure pre-existing local norms, relationships, authority structures, and priorities that could inform

assistance efforts (Anders 2016; Paffenholz 2015). This tendency toward top-down securitisation and technocratic development programming risks community rejection or inadvertently aggravating crisis dynamics (Kaplan 2017).

In probing alternatives, researchers have increasingly explored how war-affected communities worldwide exhibit what Manyena et al (2011) termed "indigenous resilience capacities" by drawing on cultural resources, social networks, and communal self-help to cope amid adversity. Mac Ginty and Williams (2009) similarly traced "resilience infrastructures from below" where grassroots actors rework trauma into resources for renewal, reshape hostile contexts through "everyday diplomacy" and "co-existence work," and quietly reformulate unjust socio-political structures. Nonetheless, as Bashir (2021) notes in Borno State, communities' efforts to handle basic survival needs often remain invisible to external interveners. This "resilience blind spot" obscures opportunities for external assistance to reinforce existing communal capacities and priorities. Against depictions of passive victims or potential extremists, Afrobarometer surveys reveal strong community rejection toward militant groups across Africa coupled with bottom-up efforts toward rebuilding and reconciliation (Dionne, Inks, and Pichon 2019). The channels through which communities foster cohesion and resilience merit greater understanding (Yusuf 2017), including informal community structures pivotal in wartime northern Uganda (Allen and Schomerus 2006).

Nextier SPD (2020) conducted a study entitled "Entrenching peace: Assessing community resilience and peace building initiatives in Northeast Nigeria". The study examined efforts at the community levels to build resilience to conflict. Using participatory-qualitative method and purposive sampling technique, Nextier SPD provided detailed insight on how communities in Borno and Adamawa states were developing resilience and local solutions to counter violent extremism. The study had five objectives. Data gathered from the KII, FGD, observation and

secondary sources were presented and analysed using descriptive and narrative styles. The study found out that most of these community-based initiatives encompassed the efforts of women and youths engaging in peace building and early warning activities that contributed to community resilience. The most compelling deterrent that assisted the people in countering extremist narratives and building resilience is religious and the cultural practices of the communities. However, these values have been seriously affected by the insurgency. The study recommended that combined actions by community members to shield themselves, oversee ungoverned spaces, and reduce the chances of new conscriptions by Boko Haram should be sustained by government and non-government actors. Also, as peace building intermediations progressively move to a bottom-up approach, these endogenous local institutions and resilience tactics offer another course for embedding maintainable peace to the government and her development stakeholders that should be entrenched. And working with these communities and establishments gives an opportunity for the government to win the hearts and minds of the people. It also provides opportunities to create programmes for external stakeholders to support community cohesion, promote peace building, and help counterinsurgency actions.

Rimdans (2019) carried out a research work entitled "Rebuilding conflict-affected communities: post-conflict reconstruction and community resilience in Michika LGA, Adamawa State of Nigeria. Rimdans approached the study by categorising dynamics that enhanced resilience capacities within conflict-affected communities and exploring their applicability to the post-conflict rebuilding context in Northeastern Nigerian around the Boko Haram insurgency. Communities Advancing Resilience Toolkit (CART) and social constructivism frameworks were employed to scrutinise concepts of conflict especially violent conflict that is politically inspired as in the situation of insurgency. The research recognised three major resilience capacities from the insurgency



that have assisted Michika community emerge thus far from the insurgency. These resilience capacities are entrepreneurial ability and close affinity of the Michika people - communities that have resources and are associated were better able to respond to shocks like the insurgency. The study recommended that peace building responses and resilience agenda be localised so as to enable policy makers to recognise local resilience capacities.

While research on resilience and conflict intervention is expanding, gaps persist regarding youth. Over 60% of Africans are under 25 (Jaycox et al. 2017), navigating poverty, displacement, and unemployment that exacerbate militancy risks (Mercy Corps 2016; USAID 2017). However, youth simultaneously initiate grassroots peace efforts and community service activities, revealing untapped resilience and leadership potential (McEvoy-Levy 2006; UNDP 2014). This Study helps to address gaps by exploring how youth and community stakeholders in Yobe State exhibited "resilience infrastructures from below" amidst unrelenting violent conflict by the Boko Haram insurgents. Their efforts reveal openings for wider stakeholders to align assistance with communal priorities and visions. Although not uniformly positive, understanding endogenous community resilience offers vital nuance beyond depictions of passive victims or extremist threats requiring heavy-handed suppression or control.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

This study uses social capital theory as its theoretical framework. Pierre Bourdieu was the first to propagate social capital as a theory in sociological fashion in 1985 as stated by Portes. Portes (1998) linked the first contemporary usage of the term social capital to Bourdieu, whose work in 1985 offered two distinct elements; firstly, social relationships themselves that give individuals access to the resources of other group members, and secondly, the amount and quality of those resources. However, approximately a century back, Hanifan (1916) recognised social capital as good will, fellowship, mutual sympathy, and

social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit. Subsequently, numerous disciplines have adopted the theory, which, identifies how involvement and participation in groups can have values for the individual and the community (Portes, 1998). Woolcock (1998, p. 155) opines that social capital, is "a broad term encompassing the norms and networks facilitating collective action for mutual benefit". Bourdieu defined social capital as one of four types of capital, along with economic, cultural, and symbolic, that collectively determine social life trajectories. In his framework, social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition (Bourdieu, 1985). Individual and community social capital systems offer access to numerous capitals in conflict situations such as information, relief, resources (financial and material) along emotional and psychological supports (Elliott, Haney, & SamsAbiodun, 2010; Hurlbert, Haines, & Beggs, 2022). Despite the evidence about its efficacy, resilience research and disaster management practice have yet to fully embrace social capital as a critical component. Perhaps because scholars have agreed on fewer metrics for social capital than other economic or demographic factors (Meyer, 2013; Ritchie, n.d.), practitioners have underutilized social cohesion and social networks in disaster planning and management (Aldrich, 2021; Wisner, 2018).

### **4. Methodology**

This study employed qualitative research approach. Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized. Primary data were generated through total of eight (8) FGDs, twelve (12) in-depth interviews and twenty (20) KIIs were conducted across the four local governments including Damaturu, Geidam, Gujba and Potiskum LGAs. The FGD consists of at eight (8) participants. Efforts and strategies were put in place to ensure selection and full participation of young girls and women. We recruited four experienced research assistants

to support the conduct of the FGDs and interviews. These research assistants also served as note takers in some instances. A one-day online training was conducted for the research assistants, covering topics including research design and methodology, objectives of the study, ethical considerations, research instrument and field logistics. Sources of secondary data included archival sources, official publications, extant literature, media reports, first-hand accounts collected by Non-Governmental Organisations and other relevant sources. Content and descriptive analysis was used to analyse the data collected from the fieldwork.

## 5. Analysis, Results and Discussion

This study provides understandings on how youths in communities in Yobe State supported resilience building approaches and civic solutions to cope with the Boko Haram insurgency and counter violent extremism. Some of these community-based initiatives included but not limited to the emerging role of youths and women to undertake resilience building and early warning interventions, which have contributed to community resilience in the face of Boko Haram insurgency in Yobe State. The purpose of the study was to document and share the findings and lessons of these initiatives and the capability for learning and replication in other communities affected by violent conflicts in the Northeast region and across Nigeria.

The findings presented in here were obtained from opinion surveys conducted through key informant interviews (KII), focus group discussions (FGD), and in-depth interviews in selected communities in Damaturu, Geidam, Gujba and Potiskum LGAs of Yobe State. The findings of the study are thematically presented. Each of theme presented below outlined the underlying factors at the basis of the findings according to thematic areas as follows:

### **Youth Programming and their Roles in entrenching Community Resilience**

Youth are considered the nerve centre of community resilience to Boko Haram insurgency

in Yobe State. In all the communities visited for this study, it is the youth that formed voluntary policing groups such as vigilante, hunters' groups, and neighbourhood watch groups. "Because of their bravery, the voluntary policing groups have provided confidence to their communities in confronting Boko Haram and are said to be more efficient than the formal security actors" (KII with a community leader in Wagir, Gujba LGA, October 2022). The youths adopted a two-pronged approach to sustaining security in their respective communities. First, they volunteered in conducting a check on commuters and monitor movement of stranger elements apart from joining local voluntary policing groups and Government security in joint operations. Secondly, they provide vital security information to both the Government security agents and members of the community in countering the insurgents.

Interestingly, apart from actively participating in voluntary policing groups interventions, many youths were engaged on varied programming interventions by Non-Governmental Organisations to support resilience building and social cohesion in their communities.

From vocational schemes to psycho-social support to youth vigilante groups, youths and elders have established an array of what one community leader called "science for salvation" initiatives to meet urgent needs and rebuild social cohesion (KII, with community leader in Ahekiri Community, Geidam, Geidam LGA, 22 June 2022).

For example, a local Non-Governmental Organisation implemented a peacebuilding project in Damaturu, Geidam and Gujba LGAs, supported youths in these communities to provide security while organizing football matches integrating host community youths "using play" to transcend identity divides (In depth interview with Executive Director of Taimako Community Development Initiative, in Damaturu, October 2022). Local NGOs like Hope Initiative and Taimako Community Development

Initiative offer counselling for traumatized youth and women, provide religious education to deter radicalization, and sponsor interfaith dialogue promoting tolerance (interview, Project Coordinator, Taimako Initiative, in Damaturu, October 2022).

Ineffective community-level peace committees before the insurgency became more active and played significant roles in entrenching and building peace in the community. Through public sensitisations and orientations, intelligence sharing and adjudication of disputes, focal communities utilised existing traditional, religious and security (formal and informal) structures to manage emerging patterns of conflicts and violence. Youths were champions of most of these initiatives (FGD with youths in a community in Gujba, Gujba LGA, November 2022).

Here are some key points about youth and community resilience strategies and initiatives related to the Boko Haram insurgency in Yobe State as gleaned from the KIIs, FGDs and in-depth interviews conducted across communities in Damaturu, Geidam, Gujba and Potiskum LGAs:

- Youth engaged in countering violent extremism initiatives aimed at providing education, vocational training, counselling, and positive alternative pathways for youth who may be vulnerable to recruitment by Boko Haram. Some programmes are run by NGOs and community groups.
- Some communities set up mechanisms where youth and community members share information about potential security threats from Boko Haram. This aims to improve preparedness through early warning and early response mechanisms.
- In promoting community dialogue and resilience, interfaith groups, community leaders, women's groups and youth groups participated in community discussions, peacebuilding training, and initiatives that

fostered social cohesion and non-violent approaches to countering extremism.

- Youth groups conducted marches, protests, and media campaigns to draw attention to the Boko Haram insurgency's impacts and the importance of governance and security for community resilience. Campaigns called for greater youth inclusion in decision-making processes.
- Some communities established volunteer emergency response teams made up of youth and community members. These respond to incidents of violence and disasters using local resources.

These initiatives provided psychosocial, educational, and practical support to affected community members. To this end, community members erected localized systems of mutual aid, economic cooperation, and social safety nets drawing on cultural practices of reciprocity, adaptability, and communal care to foster survival and resilience amid crisis conditions.

### **Economic and Sources of Livelihood Cooperation**

Agriculture was the main occupation in Yobe State, Northeast Nigeria. There was also a robust transportation and logistics business to support the economic activities between the cities and the rural communities. The Boko Haram insurgency extensively disorganised economic life and livelihoods leaving many residents in abject poverty. To cope, many youths and community members had to rely on menial jobs, where possible. Many others have had to learn new skills to eke out a living. A few others have turned to crime (stealing and burglary). The insurgency dislocated the economic lives of most community members and, in numerous instances, wholly destroyed their livelihoods resulting in hunger, poverty and destitution. For example, a young farmer from Gujba community divulged that "I lost 45 heads of cattle to insurgency and have become a destitute depending solely on humanitarian assistance". Another merchant moaned that:

Prior to the insurgency, we made enough money as a result of the free

flow of movement. We were able to cater for not only our needs but, also, the needs of others. We would make a sale of at least ₦ 500, 000 a day then, but now we can hardly make sales for ₦50,000 a day. This worsened when state of emergency was declared by the Federal Government in 2014. Traders and commercial vehicle operators were adversely affected by the prolonged closure of international borders as well as the restrictions on the movement between and within communities to only a few hours of the day. (FGD with Young youths in Katarko, Gujba LGA, November 2022).

At the individual level, inhabitants of impacted communities advanced several effective ways of coping with the economic hardship experienced during the insurgency. For example, women sold basic wares such as firewood, vegetables and groundnuts in order to survive. The educated ones offered extramural lessons while the less educated offered themselves as menial labourers engaged in cleaning, washing and cooking for a fee. Households also reduced the ration of food consumed by their family members as a coping strategy. This was an effort to manage the risk of starvation through the prudent use of available resources by the family (Opinions surveyed via FGDs in Potiskum, Potiskum LGA, November 2022).

Consequently, everyday economic resilience relied on communal cooperation and reciprocal exchange to meet basic needs against severe humanitarian gaps. Rotating savings clubs called *Adashe* provided small cash loans to dozens of youths, helping members launch petty trading and avoid exploitation by predatory lenders. Despite losing everything, *Adashe* members pooled meagre resources to assist those most vulnerable. As one founder explained during KII:

Small, small, we survive. We revived our economic practices prior to the insurgency, which most of our people were used to. Some one of these

initiatives centred on agriculture, menial jobs and local trading. This helped us to cope with the aftermath of the insurgency (KII with a community leader in Kukareta Community, Damaturu LGA, November 2022).

In farming and livestock initiatives, youth gained income while increasing communal food security against acute shortfalls. Through such projects, external actors reinforced youths' economic resilience and prevented recruitment by militants or gangs. However, local community politics and resource constraints sometimes hampered scaling impact. Nonetheless, endogenous youth initiatives reveal vital resilience often overlooked when communities are treated as passive aid recipients or potential extremists rather than agents innovating their own solutions from within crisis conditions (Curato et al. 2016).

### **Cultural and Religious Maintenance and Resilience Building among Youth**

Even amid destroyed infrastructure, violent loss, and unrelenting trauma, cultural practices anchored many community members navigating upheaval. Music, oral traditions, prayer gatherings, life cycle celebrations, traditional arts, and home-area associations help sustain communal identity and pride for displaced groups. As one elder explained, "It is these small things that feed the soul when so much else has been taken" (KII with a community leader in Low-cost Housing Area in Geidam, Geidam LGA, October 2022).

Cultural practices that promoted community resilience and helped to cope with violence were also noticeable among the surveyed communities in the study areas. One of the cultural practices was group eating among community members of varied age groups. At the beginning of the insurgency, external actors such as the United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organisations (INGO), and Development Agencies provided emergency shelter, food and non-food relief materials to the affected communities. This was

complemented by the effort of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) to coordinate the distribution of relief materials to the Internally Displaced Persons and the host communities. Group eating was adopted as a coping strategy as this ensured that everyone got at least some piece of food from the little available resources. Mostly at nights, men and young persons grouped themselves in front of their houses in the communities and every household brings out the little food cooked outside and distributed it accordingly. This is in line with the cultural practice in African communities of being one's "brother's keeper", no matter how scant the available resources. During the group eating, "we encourage ourselves by relishing our sweets memories prior to the insurgency and strongly believing that sooner or later, we will get back on our feet" (FGD with Men in Nayi-Nawa Community, Damaturu LGA, August 2022).

Cultural and religious practices that constituted community resilience in the study area were identified in the course of the study. In Yobe State generally and in the communities surveyed specifically, perhaps the most powerful armament that has assisted the people during insurgency is religion.

My religion teaches love and unity, so religion has helped me in coping with the situation. I believed with good or bad, I recite the Quran frequently, pray five daily prayers and fast. This has helped me in building more confidence. If not because of the prayer you can find no one here. Religion is what is keeping us strong. We also pray whenever we are in trouble (In-depth interview with Deputy Chief Imam of Pataskum Emirate, August 2022).

Findings from the surveyed communities in Damaturu, Geidam, Gujba and Potiskum through FGDs, KIIs and in-depth interviews on the cultural practices that promoted resilience

building among youths and coordination among communities to prevent or cope with the insurgency can be summarised as follows:

- a. Inter-marriages that create opportunities for better understanding among these communities.
- b. Cultural festivals and traditional dancing performances in the various communities.
- c. Sympathy visits among members of different communities to condole bereaved members.
- d. Sporting competition among teams drawn from the various communities. This can take the form of inter-community or inter-school competitions.
- e. Rotational market days among the communities that enable members to exchange goods and services. Markets also serve as channels for disseminating information on security matters.
- f. Creation of religious platform to share information among the communities such as organising crusade or revival programmes.

This study investigated the contributions of young persons to community resilience in communities impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency in Yobe State. The study found out that as Boko Haram violence drags into its second decade with no end in sight, endogenous resilience capacities forged by especially youth, and everyday community members surviving amid protracted Boko Haram violent conflict evolved. Initiatives like youth vocational training, cultural gatherings for displaced communities, and informal communal saving clubs revealed what Mac Ginty and Williams (2009) term "resilience infrastructures from below." These grassroots efforts illuminate openings for international assistance to move beyond treating war-affected communities as passive aid recipients and instead ask how external interventions can reinforce the priorities, relationships, cultural logics, and modes of survival and renewal that communities are already nurturing through their own agency and resources on the ground.

A number of the participants in our study believed that communities impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency have had to advance diverse survival and resilience strategies. Eating together as a group was one way of ensuring that everyone gets something, no matter how small, to sustain life. Those who are better off are willing to share what they have with those who are worse off. This agrees with what Manyena et al (2011) termed "indigenous resilience capacities" by drawing on cultural resources, social networks, and communal self-help to cope amid adversity. Reactivation of some culturally forgotten practices was the most important community resilience strategies as it corrected negative perceptions individual strength as against the communal strength based on the cultural practices of the communities before globalisation and urbanisation. Previous studies also reported that the channels through which communities foster cohesion and resilience merit greater understanding (Yusuf 2017), including informal community structures pivotal in wartime in northern Uganda (Allen and Schomerus 2006). A noteworthy finding of the study is that youth constitute the daring centre of community resilience to Boko Haram insurgency. In all the communities visited for the study, it is the youth that constituted the vigilante groups, hunters' group and peace groups referred to as voluntary policing groups. Owing to their gallantry, these groups provided confidence to their communities in confronting Boko Haram and are said to be more efficient than some of the formal Nigerian security forces fighting the insurgency. This is corroborated by studies done by McEvoy-Levy (2006) and UNDP (2014) where the studies noted that youth simultaneously initiate grassroots peace efforts and community service activities, revealing untapped resilience and leadership potential. This has a significant implication in entrenching community resilience in communities going through violent conflicts as positive interest and aspiration from these voluntary groups of young people could serve as precursor to stabilisation efforts of government and non-governmental actors in Yobe State and the Northeast region.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of the study showed that youths and local youth institutions have contributed immensely to reduce vulnerability, counter the narratives of Boko Haram and enhance resilience in the affected communities. Most prominent among such institutions are youth vigilante organisations, (which are trusted by the communities more than the formal security and have become the intermediaries between the communities and the formal security), traders' associations, religious organisations cutting across Christian and Muslim faithful, and women associations and Hunters groups. There has also been synergy between the endogenous institutions and government, on one hand, and between them and national and international non-governmental organisations on the other hand.

This study, like others has its limitations. Firstly, the research instruments used for the study were self-developed and there could be elements of social appropriateness in the responses of the participants. In addition, the study was limited to purposively selected stakeholders who were deemed to have knowledge and localised context of the study location. Consequently, generalization of the results has to be done with caution.

As government, non-governmental organizations and policy makers strive to generate ideas and programmes for the transformation of communities impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency, lessons from the community resilience strategies evolved by the youths can be a guide for future engagements and inclusive interventions. While most of the strategies are specific to some communities, they can be adapted or adopted to similar conflict context. Therefore, the government and other stakeholders should provide these the avenues for utilizing these strategies to deal with either impending violence or the aftermath of the conflict. The findings from the study offer important policy implications regarding the usefulness of promoting and investing in community platforms as avenues for enhancing community resilience against adversity. Key stakeholders at the local and national levels should equally invest and place emphasis on

preclusion to compliment efforts by the state agents. The formal security outfits could only be effective in countering insecurities when resilience at the local levels is strengthened. Government and other stakeholders (traditional and religious institutions) should intensify effort

in supporting cultural activities that facilitate interaction and communication among communities such as marriage ceremonies, festivals, and sports.

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## **'UNKNOWN GUNMEN' AND INSECURITY IN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA: A STUDY OF ONDO AND OYO STATES**

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### **Abstract**

*The primary responsibility of any government is the protection of lives and properties. However, this has not been the reality in Nigeria as people are killed horribly and properties are wantonly destroyed by unknown gunmen. Hence the study examined unknown gunmen's uncanny behaviour and insecurity in Ondo and Oyo States, South-West of Nigeria. The study examined the trends, causes and effects of unknown gunmen's attacks in the selected states. The study adopted a descriptive survey research method and situational action theory as its theoretical framework. Four objectives and research questions were formulated and the questionnaire was used for data collection. 400 copies of the questionnaire were administered to residents of Ondo and Oyo states using a simple random sampling technique. Findings from the study revealed that gruesome killings and kidnappings characterised the trends of attacks by unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo states. The findings also revealed that the thriving nature of crime and poverty were the causes of unknown gunmen's attacks. These attacks have led to loss of lives and properties in Ondo and Oyo states. The study concluded that if the menace is not curbed, Ondo and Oyo states would become a hub for incessant killings and a booming industry for kidnappings. The study therefore recommended among others that government should invite all stakeholders to discuss the best approach to subduing the menace.*

**Keywords:** Attacks, Insecurity, Kidnappings, Killings, Unknown gunmen

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### **Introduction**

In an ideal world, security of lives and properties matters as it the first responsibility of any sane government. However, the history of mankind has always been Hobbesian in nature; a state of fear, threat and aggression; every man for himself, God for us all (Elizabeth, 2019). This is true as violence and conflicts have characterized the epochs in the world spanning from the early men till date. The word insecurity when

mentioned sends cold chills down the spine of everyone as it is a many headed monster that ravages the world at large. Insecurity is a common phenomenon in the modern world. All nations of the world have continued to battle with surge in armed violence, civil unrest, terrorism, banditry, kidnappings, assassinations, mass shootings, repressions among many others (Nasiru, 2020).

The state of insecurity in Nigeria would have been better imagined than experienced. The media platforms continue to be inundated with terrible and gory images of the level of destructions of lives and properties. While insecurity is a global phenomenon, the state of affairs in Nigeria is abysmal. Nigeria is struggling with a myriad of several insecurity issues which have consistently threatened its existence (Akinyetun, Ebonine & Ambrose, 2023). As a matter of fact, the level of insecurity in the country has rendered the government clueless and seemingly incapable to handle due to overstretched operations across the country's several regions of continuous conflicts (Agbelusi, 2022). According to the Global Peace Index (2023) report, Nigeria ranked as the 144th most peaceful nation in the world out of 163 nations. This is as a reflection of the security threat Nigeria faces from attacks from Boko Haram, Islamic State in West Africa province, bandits and herder-farmer clashes that continues to heighten by the day especially in the North and South-West, continuous secessionist threats from Indigenous People of Biafra particularly from its military arm Eastern Security Network, armed robberies, booming kidnapping business, militancy, armed bandits, cybercrime, herder-farmer clashes and more recently attacks from unknown gunmen especially in the North and South-East (Fortune, 2022; Thomas & Olumba, 2022; Abdullahi, 2019).

The recent heavy attacks from unknown gunmen have become a more terrifying insecurity issue in Nigeria. Mohammed (2022) believed that the emergency of this unidentified armed group of criminal has only created a new terminology and a new crime group within the many crime organisations straining Nigeria's security frameworks. Their activities and mode of operation is confidently similar but slightly different to the tactics of other criminal organisation but with no identified group name or known leading cause of attack, hence, the tag name 'unknown gunmen' (Nnodim, 2022; Nwaizu, 2021). These groups of armed men are fearless as they do not attack innocent citizens only but also top government officials, security

forces and government buildings (Chinagorom, 2023; Nda-Isaiah, 2021). Cyril (2023) identified that unknown gunmen have established themselves as deadly terror agents and penetrated every inch of Nigerian territory, unleashing havoc wherever they like. According to Amnesty International (2023), gunmen attacks in Nigeria claimed the lives of over 123 persons in June, 2023 alone. These gunmen were tagged rampaging killers due to the severity of the killings. On 13<sup>th</sup> of May, 2023, an advance convoy of the United States mission in Nigeria was attacked by these armed unknown men as it traveled through a rural part of Anambra state which claimed the lives of two Nigerians who worked for the mission and the police escort (James, 2023).

The pervasiveness of the tragedy of 'unknown gunmen' through their current killings, arson, kidnappings, vandalism and economic sabotage has worsened the state of affairs in Nigeria. Anxieties, grief, tears, aches, traumas, and moral panic are now commonplace in the day-to-day lives of the people of Nigeria. Residents cannot afford to sleep in their homes with their eyes closed or without being troubled daily that it could be their last on earth (Emmanuel & Emily, 2019). The people have suffered unquantifiable economic misery as a result of the actions of unknown gunmen. The large numbers of people who depend on daily income have been severely impacted by the ongoing acts of armed terror (Austin-Egole, Iheriohanma, Iheanacho, Ezeji, Okafor & Wokoma, 2022). Furthermore, numerous unidentified gunmen have ruined several investments and driven companies into the ground. The menace of unidentified gunmen is on the path of a never-ending insurgency (Kola, 2022).

The peril of these unknown gunmen has become inescapable as it has now spread to the South-West especially in Ondo and Oyo states. The spate of attacks in recent years have been daunting as these heavily armed gunmen attack correctional facilities, police stations, churches and others. The terrible attack by these unknown gunmen will forever be itched in the

memory of not just the survivors but residents of the community of Owo after an attack on St. Francis Catholic Church worshippers in Owo, Ondo state on 5th of June, 2022, leaving over 40 dead and several with heavy injuries (Timothy, 2022). It is against this backdrop that this study intends to examine 'unknown gunmen and insecurity in Nigeria, a case study of Ondo and Oyo States.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study is to examine unknown gunmen and insecurity in Nigeria: A study of Ondo and Oyo States. The specific objectives are:

- i. examine the trends of unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo States,
- ii. investigate the causes unknown gunmen's attacks in Ondo and Oyo States,
- iii. interrogate the effects of unknown gunmen's attacks on Ondo and Oyo States, and
- iv. identify the efforts of stakeholders in curbing unknown gunmen attacks in Ondo and Oyo States.

### **Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following questions

- i. what are the trends and nature of unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo States?
- ii. what do you consider as the causes unknown gunmen attacks in Ondo and Oyo States?
- iii. how does unknown gunmen attacks affect the residents of Ondo and Oyo states?
- iv. what are the efforts of stakeholders in curbing unknown gunmen attacks in Ondo and Oyo states?

### **Structure of the Study**

The study is structured into five sections; the first section is the introduction, the second section focused on the conceptual discourse and theoretical framework. The third section premised on the factors and effects of the emergence of unknown gunmen attacks in

Nigeria while the fourth section dealt with the methodology, presentation and analysis of data. The fifth section is the conclusion and recommendation.

### **Conceptual Discourse**

#### **Unknown Gunmen**

The nomenclature 'unknown gunmen' has lately gained popularity as a cliché in Nigeria's security crisis. The phrase has been applied to criminal groups from a specific region of the nation. Akinyetun, Ebonine and Ambrose (2023) believed they are criminals who kill, destroy, and kidnap people for ransom, as they do not agitate for a cause but sees their act of criminality as doing profitable businesses. Hauwa'u (2023) argued that media platforms frequently use the term "unknown gunmen" to describe armed group of men who conducts violent or illegal crimes but whose identities are not immediately recognised or verified by the authorities. It is possible to interpret the term "unknown gunmen" as a type of politically motivated violence employed by criminal elements, political elites, and ideological groups to further their social and political goals. The phrase "unknown gunmen" has been more popular in Nigerian discourse recently. People are still astonished by the "unknown gunmen" moniker because they haven't fully grasped the ideological background of these daredevils (Chiemaka & Chikere, 2023).

It's not totally true that the "unknown gunmen" are unknown. It is believed that the phrase is used by the media or others in positions of power to hide these offenders' identities. The way that offenders are labelled is according to the acts they commit. The authorities refer to them as "unknown gunmen" arguing that their identities are unknown. Others have maintained that calling them "terrorists" would be a more accurate term (Sallek, 2021). He maintained that the identities of these groupings have been mostly ambiguous and unclear in past years. However, a pattern has been established by the intensity of attacks and the crimes they perpetrate. According to Sallek (2021), the primary perpetrators in the north-west and

north-central regions of Nigeria are believed to be Fulani herdsmen who speak the Fulfulde dialect, according to survivors, eyewitnesses, and security sector sources. These sources also suggested that this group and other foreign Fulani who speak a distinct Fulfulde with an accent thought to be of French descent are working together more and more. This suggests a potential ideological objective. A mutual atrocity is the incursion of communities, destroying houses and properties.

This was corroborated by Edefejirhaye, Ogunwuyi and Olawunmi (2022) as they argued that findings and information gleaned from the unknown gunmen's surviving victims revealed that these unknown gunmen are Fulani militias that have made their way into Nigeria after seeing the high thriving rate of criminal business in Nigeria. These demonic forces expanded throughout Nigeria, from the country's north to south and west to east, continuing their illicit activities. It is believed that the apparently booming business of kidnapping and raiding of villages and communities by terrorist Fulani herdsmen, Boko Haram, the Islamic State in West Africa, and bandits has inspired the actions of the so-called unknown gunmen (Edefejirhaye, Ogunwuyi & Olawunmi 2022). The ferocity and Gestapo-style method in which these unknown gunmen target police stations, offices, and other public buildings, kidnap and kill public officials and innocent citizens is beyond grasp. The degree of confidence these armed men place in their infamous deeds is surprising regardless of the time of the day, in stylish vehicles without any hindrance to their various targets while firearms are strapped to their chests in readiness to fire (Njoku & Nzeagwu, 2022).

### **Insecurity**

The term "insecurity" carries a multitude of meanings; it fits to one of the many social science concepts lacking a widely accepted definition as different scholars have approached it in different ways. Insecurity denotes risk, peril, uncertainty and absence of security. Insecurity is a feeling of vulnerability and self-

doubt, as well as a state of being uncomfortable or uneasy. It could be anything from early life experiences to upsetting circumstances, maltreatment, and personal anxieties (Ndubuisi-Okolo & Anigbuogu, 2019). Adebajoko & Ugwuoke (2014) argued that the state of being vulnerable to fright, threat, risk, molestation, bullying, harassment, etc. in all aspects of life is known as insecurity. The term insecurity is conceived as a state that results from a lack of adequate safeguards against hostile people, influences, and acts for people, information, and properties. A society is said to be insecure when people feel unsafe going about their regular lives because their lives and property are at danger of being disrupted. The incapacity to defend against factors that foretell harm or danger to a person or community is known as insecurity (Nwamaka & Stephen, 2018).

Agogbua, Mgbatogu and Nzewi (2022) conceived insecurity as a condition of fear brought on by a lack of defence against an attack or other threat or by a lack of freedom from risk is known as insecurity. Hettne (2010) cited in Charles and Ikechukwu (2019) believed insecurity is an unreasonable level of unpredictability at different levels of the social system, from local communities to the global world. It shows a level of uncertainty, risk, discomfort, disruption in normalcy, unaware or unexpected danger and threats. In line with Gabriel and Joseph (2016) thought, insecurity is characterised by a state in which members of a certain society are unable to carry out their regular activities due to threats and detrimental disruptions to their lives and properties. It is a circumstance in which the likelihood of acquired values being harmed is significantly high (Baldwin, 1997 cited in Adenuga & Abiodun, 2023). Buzan (1991) argued that insecurity relates to the presence of threat and propensity of states and societies to lose their sense of self and their ability to operate to forces of change that they see as hostile. In the context of this study, insecurity is conceived as a state of heavy threats, restricted freedom and harm to lives and properties.

## Theoretical Framework

The study adopted situational action theory as its theoretical anchor. The theory was propounded by Wikström (2004) a Swedish criminologist in the University of Cambridge. However, copious scholars such as Buck (2019), Kroneber and Schulz (2018) and Bouhana (2014) have made salient contributions to improve the theory. Situational action theory explains why people obey and violate social norms of conduct, as well as why crimes occur. According to situational action theorists, circumstances determine why people respond in certain ways, as people are primarily rule-guided actors, and how they react to motivators is largely determined by how their moral inclinations interact with the moral standards of the environments in which they participate. The main contextual elements that impact the process that leads individuals to commit crimes are the person, the setting, the situation, and the action (Wikstrom, 2004). Taking the relationship between a person's predisposition and environmental exposure seriously, situational action theory deal with precise predictions about how these factors interact to produce criminal behaviours as well as a suggested causal pathway.

A person's personality and the environment in which they live are what motivate them to commit crimes (Wikstrom & Bouhana, 2014; Wikstrom, 2004). Crime is committed when someone lacks personal self-control or when it is deemed a good and appropriate course of action depending on the circumstances (Okwuwada, 2023). When a person experiences various sorts of poverty, burdened by shackles of unemployment and a means to provide them some degree of escape from these shackles, they are more likely to engage in illegal activities. The urge to commit crime is more often propelled by the influences of the environment. Wikstrom (2004) argued also that when a person is surrounded by influences of crime situations, they are more likely to give in to crimes especially if the benefits of crimes are more glorified in such area. With this, more people are becoming vulnerable in their

numbers to criminal activities as an escape route from these feigned shackles. Those who are not exposed to crimes in their environment are likely to have lesser appetite to give to crime as an alternative.

This theory is useful in explaining why the menace of unknown gunmen ravages Nigeria in more recent times using environmental and cognitive factors. According to the theory, Nigeria as a whole is a hotbed of several criminal activities for decades which have translated into a big thriving and booming criminal business hub for many non-state actors. Many criminal lords have become super rich and established a base and an atmosphere where other crime groups can thrive and become established (Okwuwada, 2023). Edefejirhaye, Ogunwuyi and Olawunmi (2022) in their assertion in line with the above believed that unknown gunmen have seen Nigeria as a nation is a breeding ground for all sorts of nefarious activities and where criminality can thrive with little resistance from the government security forces. Terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, armed bandits, militants among others have created a monster atmosphere in which terrorist acts have now become a norm in Nigeria. More so, the glorification of the spoils of their terrorist acts has continued to lure many criminal groups even from other nations to the shore of Nigeria.

This has created a hostile environment which those shackled with severe unemployment, abject poverty, marginalised, revenge for loss ones, bad governance and corruption to be more vulnerable and seeking alternatives routes to be established. Their perception and moral standard are highly influenced by the life of crime and the glorification of the benefits involved which seemingly gives a better glimpse of hope of survival than their current state, they found their involvement in criminality as a better rewarding enterprise. This accounts simply the ferocity of attacks of unknown gunmen to establish themselves as a deadly group and the series of kidnappings engaged in to receive heavy ransom.

### **Factors that influence the emergence of unknown gunmen in Nigeria**

So many factors have given rise to the emergence of unknown gunmen attacks in Nigeria among which are; thriving nature of crimes in Nigeria, economic hardship, inadequate armed security forces, ungoverned areas and porous borders and access to arms and weapons.

#### **Thriving Nature of Crimes in Nigeria**

Crime has become a thriving and booming industry in Nigeria, most especially kidnapping. Kidnapping is usually motivated by financial gain, which serves as the foundation for the rise in kidnappings around the nation. Many terror groups in the country sees kidnapping as a source of funds for their operations. It is reasonable to argue that kidnappings and abduction has developed into a thriving, multibillion-naira business (Urwah & Usman, 2023). SBM reports that between July 2021 and June 2022, more than 500 kidnapping instances were reported nationwide, resulting in the abduction of 3,420 Nigerians and a few foreign nationals. The report further stated that during this time, Nigerians paid over N653.7 million to release kidnapping and abduction victims. It is crucial to understand that giving these terrible terror groups a ransom makes their crimes profitable (Adamu, 2022).

#### **Economic Hardship**

Nigeria's economic problems are cutting extremely deeply. Businesses and factories are closing as employment is declining. Many people have been forced by the circumstances of the past several years to resort to drastic actions, including ending their own lives. The National Bureau of Statistics (2022) estimated that 133 million Nigerians, or 63% of the nation's population, are multi-dimensionally poor, while 84 million live in extreme poverty, making less than \$1.9 per day. Nigeria's unemployment rate rose to 33.3 per cent, translating to some 23.2 million people of which the younger generation is particularly heavily hit by unemployment (Izuaka, 2023). Many of these youths have given in to crimes as a way of survival and escape from poverty.

### **Inadequate Armed Security forces**

The ratio of military and police personnel to civilian populations is one factor that contributed to the rise of unknown gunmen. The chart's total number of 350,000 police officers and 223,000 soldiers for the nation's approximate 230,000,000 inhabitants is woefully insufficient (Okwuwada, 2023). The security forces do not meet up with the global standard of the Global Firepower (2023), more so, these forces are highly underequipped to match up with non-state actors in the nation. The security forces do not possess the capacity to defend themselves, let alone the masses they are constitutionally mandated to protect (Cheta, 2022).

#### **Ungoverned Terrains and Porous Borders**

The inability of the Nigerian government to establish its presences and exercise its sovereign authority over some areas has given room for these unknown gunmen to thrive and attack citizens. They see those areas as a safe haven to draw their strategies and execute them; it also serves as a hideout for them while running away from security forces. These ungoverned areas are well organised and managed properly (Igboin, 2021). There are 84 formal and an additional 1500 unofficial borders in the nation which are inadequately protected. These unauthorised borders have grown to be popular routes for illicit trade, the smuggling of items, including munitions and arms (Oladopo, Aladejebi & Ayeni, 2021).

#### **Access to Arms and Weapons**

It's also important to note that these the access to weapons and arms that these unknown gunmen have is a huge factor. Naturally, the spread of small arms and light weapons (SALW) is the primary cause of the violence that is fostered throughout the country. Abdullahi (2022) and Akpan (2021) argued that a large portion of their arsenal is obtained through organised crime, smuggling, local blacksmiths, and theft from security services. Weapons and arms is a huge enabler for these gunmen to carry out formidable attacks on people and properties.

### Effects of Unknown Gunmen and Insecurity on Nigeria

The level of callousness that has been wreaked on the nation by unknown gunmen is terrifying. This includes;

#### Destruction of Lives and Properties

The menace of unknown gunmen has claimed the lives of so many innocent citizens including important political figures and security personnel in the country. Among several others that have been gruesomely murdered by unknown gunmen are; Ahmed Gulak, the former Special Adviser on politics to President Goodluck Jonathan, Justice Stanley Nnaji, the former Judge of the Enugu State High Court, the Chief Provost of the Nigerian Immigration Service in Imo, Ifeanyi Okeke (Nda-Isaiah, 2021). These killings have continued to heighten the fact that nothing is safe in the country (Hanantu, 2023).

#### Disruption of Economic Activities

People have suffered unquantifiable economic anguish as a result of the actions of unknown gunmen. The ongoing instability in the nation has severely impacted a large number of people who depend on their daily income. They have caused numerous investments and enterprises to fail. People are afraid of being attacked at their places of employment and business, thus they no longer want to go outside (*This Day*, 2023).

#### Crackdown of Law and Order

Nigeria's issue of unidentified gunmen has resulted in a clampdown on law and order in the majority of the affected areas as well as a feeling of fear and uncertainty among the populace. Reports have surfaced of security forces violating human rights while attempting to stop the actions of unidentified gunmen. Torture, arbitrary arrests, and extrajudicial killings have all been examples of these abuses (Hauwa'ú, 2023).

### 3. Methodology

The study adopted a survey research method as its research design. The population of the study is drawn from residents of Ondo and Oyo State in the South-Western part of Nigeria with an estimated population of 5,316,600 and 7,976,100 respectively (City Population, 2023). Ondo State is made up of 18 local government areas while Oyo State has 33 local government areas (City Population, 2023). The choice of the State for the study is solely on the fact that compared to other parts of South Western Nigeria; these states have experienced greater heat and blows from threats and attacks from unknown gunmen in recent times. The study adopted Taro Yamane's (1967) statistical formula for the determination of sample size from the total population of both Ondo and Oyo State (5,316,600 and 7,976,100). The statistical formula is;

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

Where n= Sample size, N= Population Size, E= Margin of Error (0.05).

$$n = \frac{5316600 + 7976100}{1 + 5316600 + 7976100(0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{13292700}{1 + 13292700(0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{13292700}{1 + 13292700(0.0025)}$$

$$\frac{13292700}{33,232.75}$$

$$=399.98$$

The calculated sample size is 399; however, the figure was approximated to 400 to cater for any case of poor responses that cannot be articulated. The study adopted a self-structured questionnaire for its primary data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A which containing the socio-demographic variables of the respondents and Section B comprised of questions on trends, causes and effects of unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo states. The choice of close-ended questions was to ensure reliability as well as limit irregularity in answers. 400 copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents in Ondo and Oyo state using simple random sampling technique.



**4. Data Presentation and Analysis**

There was a significant high return rate of the questionnaire as about 386 copies representing 96.5% of the distributed copies of the questionnaire were retrieved. Data analysis is

based on this figure of the returned questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including percentage, frequency tables and mean which is the best fit for the analysis.

**Table 1: Nature and Trends of Unknown Gunmen attacks in Ondo and Oyo States**

S/N	Item	Frequency	Mean
1.	Gruesome killings have characterised the trends of attacks of unknown gunmen.	386	3.54
2.	Unknown gunmen target their attacks on churches and mosques.	386	3.48
3.	Unknown gunmen attacks target specific important people in the communities.	386	3.28
4.	Unknown gunmen also engage in various kidnappings of residents.	386	3.20
5.	Unknown gunmen attacks are targeted at police stations and correctional facilities.	386	3.84
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>3.47</b>

**Source: Field Work, 2023**

Table 1 shows the respondents’ response on the nature and trends of unknown attacks in Ondo and Oyo States. The first item in the table with a mean 3.54 signifies the respondents’ agreement that gruesome killings have characterised the trends of attacks of unknown gunmen. The second item in the table with a mean of 3.48 signifies the respondents’ agreement that unknown gunmen target their attacks on churches and mosques. The third item in the table with a mean of 3.28 signifies the respondents’ agreement that unknown

gunmen attacks target specific important people in the communities. The fourth item in the table with a mean of 3.20 signifies the respondents’ agreement that unknown gunmen also engage in various kidnappings of residents. The fifth item in the table with the mean of 3.84 signifies the respondents’ agreement that unknown gunmen attacks are targeted at police stations and correctional facilities. The grand total mean of 3.47 signifies the respondents’ agreement to items as the nature and trends of unknown gunmen attacks in Ondo and Oyo States.

**Table 2: Causes of Unknown Gunmen’s Presence in Ondo and Oyo States**

S/N	Item	Frequency	Mean
6.	Severe unemployment and chronic poverty accounts for the major cause of unknown gunmen attacks.	386	2.88
7.	Access to arms and weapons is a factor responsible for the emergence of unknown gunmen.	386	3.16
8.	Failure of state government to exercise full control over some ungoverned areas allowed unknown gunmen to thrive.	386	3.29
9.	The porous nature of the borders in Ondo and Oyo states serve as good escape route for unknown gunmen.	386	2.98
10.	The thriving and booming nature of crime serves as a motivating factor for the emergence of unknown gunmen.	386	3.14
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>3.09</b>

**Source: Field Work, 2023**

Table 2 shows the respondents' responses to the causes of unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo states. The first item in the table with a mean 2.88 signifies the respondents' agreement that severe unemployment and chronic poverty accounts for the major cause of unknown gunmen attacks. The second item in the table with a mean of 3.16 signifies the respondents' agreement that access to arms and weapons is a factor responsible for the emergence of unknown gunmen. The third item in the table with a mean of 3.29 signifies the respondents' agreement that failure of state government to exercise full control over some ungoverned

areas allowed unknown gunmen to thrive. The fourth item in the table with a mean of 2.98 signifies the respondents' agreement that porous nature of the borders in Ondo and Oyo states serve as good escape route for unknown gunmen. The fifth item in the table with the mean of 3.14 signifies the respondents' agreement that thriving and booming nature of crime serves as a motivating factor for the emergence of unknown gunmen. The grand total mean of 3.09 signifies the respondents' agreement to the items as factors that influenced the emergence of unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo States.

**Table 3: Effects of unknown gunmen's attacks on Ondo and Oyo States**

S/N	Item	Frequency	Mean
11.	Attacks by unknown gunmen have led to the loss of several lives and properties.	386	2.98
12.	Economic activities have been disrupted due to the fear of attacks from unknown gunmen.	386	2.87
13.	Attacks by unknown gunmen have constantly resulted in the violations of human rights of the residents.	386	3.23
14.	There has been awful increase in crime due to attacks by unknown gunmen.	386	3.45
15.	The emergence of unknown gunmen has raised ethnic tensions and hostilities.	386	2.96
	<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>3.01</b>

**Source: Field Work, 2023**

Table 3 shows the respondents' responses to the effects of unknown gunmen attacks on Ondo and Oyo states. The first item in the table with a mean 2.98 signifies the respondents' agreement that attacks by unknown gunmen have led to the loss of several lives and properties. The second item in the table with a mean of 2.87 signifies the respondents' agreement that economic activities have been disrupted due to the fear of attacks from unknown gunmen. The third item in the table with a mean of 3.23 signifies the respondents' agreement that attacks by unknown gunmen

have constantly resulted in the violations of human rights of the residents. The fourth item in the table with a mean of 3.45 signifies the respondents' agreement that there has been awful increase in crime due to attacks by unknown gunmen. The fifth item in the table with the mean of 2.96 signifies the respondents' agreement that the emergence of unknown gunmen has raised ethnic tensions and hostilities. The grand total mean of 3.01 signifies the respondents' agreement to the items as effects of unknown gunmen on Ondo and Oyo States.

**Table 4: Efforts of stakeholders in curbing unknown gunmen attacks on Ondo and Oyo States**

S/N	Item	Frequency	Mean
16.	The police force has not been effective in subduing attacks by unknown gunmen.	386	3.45
17.	The amotekun is ill equipped to face and suppress attacks from unknown gunmen.	386	3.67
18.	The military have not been effective in curbing the attacks by unknown gunmen.	386	3.80
19.	The vigilante groups in various communities are under-equipped to have a face-off with these unknown gunmen.	386	2.99
20.	Efforts to curb unknown gunmen attacks are ineffective because they have political backings.	386	3.27
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>3.45</b>

**Source: Field Work, 2023.**

Table 4 shows the respondents’ responses to the efforts of stakeholders in curbing unknown gunmen attacks on Ondo and Oyo states. The first item in the table with a mean 3.45 signifies the respondents’ agreement that the police force has not been effective in subduing attacks by unknown gunmen. The second item in the table with a mean of 3.67 signifies the respondents’ agreement that the amotekun is ill equipped to face and suppress attacks from unknown gunmen. The third item in the table with a mean of 3.80 signifies the respondents’ agreement that the military has not been effective in curbing the attacks by unknown gunmen. The fourth item in the table with a mean of 2.99 signifies the respondents’ agreement that the vigilante groups in various communities are under-equipped to have a face-off with these unknown gunmen. The fifth item in the table with the mean of 3.27 signifies the respondents’ agreement that efforts to curb unknown gunmen attacks are ineffective because they have political backings. The grand total mean of 3.45 signifies the respondents’ agreement to the items as the efforts by stakeholders in curbing of unknown gunmen on Ondo and Oyo States.

**Discussions of Findings**

The data obtained on the first objective which focused on the nature and trends of unknown gunmen attacks in Ondo and Oyo States

revealed that gruesome killings, kidnappings attacks on churches, mosques and government facilities especially correction facilities are the nature and trends of attacks in both States. This finding corresponds with the studies of Njoku and Nzeagwu (2022) and Akinyetun, Ebonine and Ambrose (2023) wherein they argued that unknown gunmen are known for their ruthless, ferocious and Gestapo-style of killings. They murder residents in their large numbers sparing a few who are heavy injured who live to tell the tales.

The data obtained from the second objective on the factors that influenced the emergence of unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo States revealed that severe unemployment, chronic poverty, access to arms and weapons, failure of state government to exercise control over its territories, porous borders and the thriving nature of crime are the major causes of attacks by unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo States. This is consistent with the studies of Urwah and Usman (2023), Igboin (2021) and Adamu (2022) as they argued that crimes thrive and boom in Nigeria as many non-state actors are finding crimes especially kidnappings a profitable business. More so, the porous borders and ungoverned areas in the States makes it easy for unknown gunmen to continue to thrive and launch attacks. The work of Izuaka (2023) also subscribed to the findings that recent

economic hardship has made a lot of people lose their employment status and plunged them into poverty. They have no means of survival and as such succumb to crimes as a means of survival.

The data obtained from the third objective on the effects of unknown gunmen attacks on Ondo and Oyo States revealed that attacks by unknown gunmen have led to loss of several lives and properties, disruption of economic activities, violations of human rights, increase in crime and ethnic tensions and hostilities in Ondo and Oyo States. The findings are in agreement with the studies of Nda-Isaiah (2021), Hanantu (2023) and Hauwa'u (2023) as they asserted that several prominent figures lives and others have been lost to attacks by unknown gunmen; economic activities disrupted, human rights violated and raised ethnic tensions alongside clampdown on law and order. The fourth objective which focused on the efforts of stakeholders in curbing attacks by unknown gunmen in Ondo and Oyo States revealed that the police force, amotekun security network and vigilantes are under-equipped and ineffective in combating and curbing attacks from unknown gunmen. Additionally, efforts to curb these attacks have proved abortive due to political backings of these unknown gunmen. The findings is corroborated by the assertions of Sallek (2021) and Nda-Isaiah (2021) as they asserted that every efforts of stakeholders to combat and curb the menace of unknown gunmen have been ineffective due some salient reasons such as political factors.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Insecurity is a global issue which continues to trouble every government of the world. At that, the situation in Nigeria has become a huge multifaceted monster that continues to bedevil the peace, stability and progress of the nation. The recent attacks by unknown gunmen is more troubling as these group of non-state actors ruthless kill innocent people just for the pleasure of it. Several lives and properties have been lost, businesses disrupted, clampdown on law and order and created an atmosphere of crime and hostilities, rendering the government helpless. The study concluded that if the menace of unknown gunmen is not properly and timely addressed, Ondo and Oyo States and Nigeria at large will a hub for crimes where lives and properties will be meaningless with government having lost its sovereignty.

In light of the findings, the study recommended that:

- State governments of Ondo and Oyo States should invite all stakeholders to discuss the best and multidimensional approach to combating and curbing further attacks by unknown gunmen.
- It also recommended that the police force be decentralized and equipped by state governments to be able to curb the menace.
- Finally, it recommended that state governments should exert their control and authority to every ungoverned area in their states by devising advance technological systems to monitor those areas and porous borders in their states.

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## RAPE HAVOC IN GENESIS 34: A JUXTAPOSITION OF TEXTUAL EXPOSITION AND CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN SITUATION

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### Abstract

*This paper attempted to juxtapose rape mayhem in Genesis 34 and contemporary Nigerian situation. The paper employed historical method to investigate the rape occurrences in both Ancient Near East and contemporary Nigeria. The findings revealed that not only female children experience sexual assault but also male children and spouses are victimized under domestic violence. Male children below the age 24 undergo sexual violence through oral and anal routes at home, school and lonely environment in the community at the rate of 6.1%. Most of the victims are innocent and ignorant about the menace like Dinah in Genesis 34, however, some causal factors identified include indecent dressing, poor parental upbringing, lack of sex education for the children, poor self-defense training, indiscipline, moral decadence in the society and injustice in prosecution of perpetrators, to mention but a few. The study shows that majority of rape happened in the day time while about 52.0% of assailants were relatives to the victims. This paper recommended intensive sex education at home, church, school and communal gatherings; public campaign and enlightenment program by the government, prosecution of the offenders, and evaluation of moral values in the society and rehabilitation of victims. Havoc of rape in Nigeria includes high rate of HIV patients, traumatic violence with physical, emotional mental damage and stigmatization on the victims and families. Unwanted pregnancy, abortions, sex additions and untimely death are all havocs of rape. Therefore, prevention is better than cure.*

**Keywords:** Rape, Havoc, Juxtaposition, Textual Exposition, Contemporary, Situation.

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### Introduction

Rape occurrence is a silent epidemic that has eaten deep into the fabrics Nigerian society and African at large of which women and children are the major victims. The National Survey of 2014 on violence against children in Nigeria reveals that sexual violence experienced by female children approximated to 70%. About 24.8% of female from ages 18 to 24

experienced sexual abuse before clocking the age of consent (18 years) and about 5.0% disclose their torment for assistance whereas only 3.5% reportedly were given attention for rehabilitation (Carbon, 2012). A survey carried out by Positive Action for Treatment Access (2014) reported that over 31.4% of girls affirmed to have been deflowered by rape. In 2012, the Centre for Environment, Human Right and Development reported 1,200 as the number

of girls raped in Rivers State Nigeria (Wolde, 2002). The aforementioned statistics and many other concealed cases of rape show the prevalence of rape havoc in Nigeria meted mostly against girl child. This has been re-echoed by Blessed, Ekanem and Oko, (2022:80) when they said that domestic violence in Nigeria is a problem, as in many other parts of the world. Although men can also be affected by domestic violence, women suffer disproportionately, such as such as when a man beat his wife with his hand, stick and belt.

According to (Waje, 2008), sexuality can be compared with electricity in its pure form. It is an unbridled power with both creative and destructive potential. Sexual intercourse is good within the ambient of marriage for procreation and pleasure but not every type of sexual activity that gives someone pleasure is legitimate. Sexual abuse occurs when intercourse is forced on one partner without the consent of the other. This sexual assault is called rape even between married couple. Rape can also be traced to the biblical narratives in Ancient Near East. It pervades contemporary Nigerian society and is rarely mentioned in male-dominated African societies. The inability of man to control and channel his sexual power may culminate into rape. This paper tends to unravel therefore the mayhem of rape in Nigeria, using hermeneutical method, in comparison of the biblical narratives in Genesis 34. It focuses on the havoc of rape on the victims and the society, and how it can be truncated. The objectives include clarifying the concepts of rape, rape havoc in Genesis 34, prevalence of rape havoc in Nigeria, rape during Covid\_19, response towards rape in Nigeria and so on. The work is divided into nine sections with meaningful discussions on the subject matter.

### **Conceptual Clarifications**

The word 'rape' is derived from a Latin word which means "to seize". The Hebrew word for rape differs in views and depends on the usage. Words like 'laqah', 'shakab 'et', or 'inna' denotes violence, abuse, or rape. In modern biblical studies until the 1980s, biblical scholars appear

to be unanimous in regarding the episode as forceful encounter; they generally translate the verb 'inna' as "Shechem 'raped' Dinah" (Woldde, 2002). In rape, the perpetrator seizes the victim's body and engages in sexual activity without his or her consent. Violence is used both for intimidation and for sexual gratification (Waje, 2008:273) 'Forcible rape' had been defined by the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Summary Reporting System (SRS) as, "the carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will" (Carbon, 2012). It only addresses forcible male penile penetration of a female vagina while in logical perception. The definition includes any gender of victim and perpetrator, not women being raped by men. Also, it emphasizes that rape with an object can be as traumatic penile or vaginal rape. Here, the victim is unable to give consent because of temporary or permanent or physical incapacity; the rape could be drug or alcohol facilitated; a victim may be legally incapable of consent because of age. It must be noted however that, physical resistance is not required on the part of the victim to demonstrate lack of consent rather, it should be determined in accordance with individual state or status. The victim tends to be helpless at the point of assault in most cases.

However, it is possible for a husband to rape his wife when he forces her to have sex against her will though it is a startling idea in Africa where it is generally assumed that a woman is her husband's property and that he has the right to have sex with his wife whenever he wants. Sex within marriage as ordained by God is supposed to be a loving, shared experience, not something violent, selfish and brutal. The word 'mayhem' is derived via Middle English from Anglo-French verb 'maheimer' meaning 'to maim'. Mayhem is a violent or extreme disorder, chaos. Legally, it refers to the gruesome crime of deliberately causing an injury that permanently disfigures another. The disfigurement sense first appeared in English in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the word had come to mean any kind of violent behavior by the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



### **Rape Havoc in Genesis 34**

Jacob settled in Shechem in the land of the Canaanite after he had met and reconciled with his brother Esau. He bought a piece of land from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, on which he pitched his tent and erected an altar he called, EL-Elo-he-Israel. Jacob and his wives Leah and Rachel and their children, and his maids with their children dwell in the land peacefully until Dinah the daughter of Jacob by Leah one day went out to meet the women of the land. Young persons, especially females, are never so safe and well off as under the care of pious parents. Their own ignorance, and the flattery and artifices of designing, wicked people, who are ever laying snares for them, expose them to great danger. They are their own enemies if they desire to go abroad, especially alone, among strangers to true religion. One of the princes of the land, Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, ceased and sexually abused Dinah the daughter of Jacob though Shechem later loved her and "spoken tenderly" to her and requested of the father to get the maiden for him as wife.

Those parents are very wrong who do not watch closely or hinder their children from needlessly exposing themselves to danger. Indulged children, like Dinah, often become a grief and shame to their families though she may not be blamed out rightly. It could be said that her curiosity to mingle with people of the land, to see the daughters of the land, to see how they dressed, and how they danced, and what was fashionables among them was contributory to her molestation. She went to see, yet that was not all, she went to be seen too. She went to get acquaintance with the Canaanites, and to learn their ways. When it came to Jacob's notice that his daughter had been molested, he held his peace until his sons came from the field.

Shechem and his father put the cart before the horse; they met with Jacob to ask for Dinah's hand in marriage. Dinah's brothers were angered by the defiling of their sister and as a result deceived Shechem and his father when they requested to make marriages with them.

They deceitfully agreed only on the condition that every male of Hamor's house would become circumcised like them. The terms and condition pleased Hamor's son Shechem and his father, they persuaded people of their land to accommodate Jacob and his household as friendly people; to allow them trade in the land; to give their daughters in marriages vice versa; and comply with the condition of male circumcision. Vs 18-24.

Consequently, Hamor and his son Shechem were murdered by the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi when they were sore after three days of getting circumcised; took their sister Dinah from Shechem's house; came upon the slain and plundered the city including flock and herds, donkeys, all their wealth, the children and their wives because Dinah their sister had been defiled. Vs 25-29. Simeon and Levi left their father Jacob in dread of retaliation from inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and Perrizite. Revenge came to limelight as a result of Shechem's lack of self-control as well as Dinah's gadding and careless roaming in a strange environment where she and her people were still ignorant if not completely of their ways. The point of discourse here is, what is obtainable in one's land could be an abomination in another man's land. Shechem who happens to be a prince in the land of the Hivite, a people embracing belief contrary to true religion may have scaled through such perpetration against any maiden of his own land. On the other hand, adventure or curiosity to learn, establish relationship with new friends on Dinah's part could not be solely regarded as waywardness depending on the motive.

### **Prevalence of Rape in Nigeria**

Rape or any form of sexual assault and sexual abuse are committed by both men and women, although, the majority of offenders are male and are known to their victims. Rape happens for variety of reasons which, mostly is attributed as the woman's fault. Usually, incidents are planned and occur because the perpetrator wants to feel a sense of power and control over another person rather than sexual pleasure.

Blaming the victim especially the woman is highly injurious to the psyche of such victim.

The hollowness of this argument becomes clear when we remind ourselves of the many respectably dressed women who have been raped. We can also refute this argument by looking at traditional African societies where do not dress 'properly'. Traditional dress covered only their private parts yet, there is no record that rape was more frequent in such societies (Waje, 2008). Examining the exertion of sexual coercion on children by some perpetrators debunks the woman's improper dressing argument as the cause of sexual assault. The child's victimization is a deliberate and planned misuse of power. It commonly involves or coexists with emotional abuse, because it violates the child's deepest feelings and emotional abuse (Cashman, 1993).

In Kaduna Nigeria today, one in four boys and one in 10 girls under age 18 are victims of sexual violence, the U.N. children's fund has said. Health experts say more children and young women are coming forward to talk about the problem as the stigma attached to discussing it slowly subsides. Three survivors and their caregivers spoke about their experiences recently at the Salama Sexual Assault Referral Center in Gwamna Awan General Hospital in the northern state of Kaduna. They insisted, however, on remaining anonymous. One was a 3-year-old girl who was under the care of her grandmother when she was raped twice by a 44-year-old neighbor. The grandmother said she was reluctant to report the assault to police because she did not believe justice would be served and because "being a poor widow, no one would believe me." After the second attack, she fled to the Salama Center for help. A second survivor, a woman in her late 30s, said she was kidnapped while sleeping with her husband and child. Her abductors took her to a dense forest where she was raped every day until a ransom was paid and she regained her freedom. The third survivor, a 10-year-old girl, was reportedly raped by a 29-year-old man living in her neighborhood. He allegedly lured her, saying he wanted her to run an errand.

Once they were out of sight, he allegedly stuffed her hijab into her mouth and raped her (Agririga, 2019:23)

Juliana Joseph, the manager of the Salama Sexual Assault Referral Center,(personal communication on 4<sup>th</sup> September,2023) said 90 percent of all victims are sexually abused by people they know. The center has treated women and children who have been raped by their grandparents, fathers and uncles. "You are going out and you entrust your child to the care of a neighbor, and by the time you're back, it's a different story," Joseph said, adding that poor investigations mean a good number of perpetrators move about freely. Barrister Zainab Aminu Garba, the chairperson of the International Federation of Women Lawyers in Kaduna, said rape has become an epidemic in northwestern Nigeria. She said victims are not just women, but men and boys as well. "Under aged boys are being defiled," It's an epidemic, (DeCaputa, 2013). Inferably, the lackadaisical attitude of some parents or guardian towards their child/ward well-being is a major contributory factor towards this mayhem most especially among the girl child.

More so, the fear of stigmatization from the incidence resulting in silence on the part of the victims, preventing them to demand to justice could ginger the perpetrators to continue in the obnoxious act without fear since no immediate consequences is suffered by them. As such, some continue in the act. In addition, lack of adequate sensitization of the girl child about issue of sex and supposed reaction towards rape if encountered could be regarded as a causal factor to rape cases.

Furthermore, Lust is also a causal factor of rape according to Waje though the lust is not sexual rather; it is a lust to demonstrate one's power over the weak and vulnerable. This therefore explains the fact that rape could be used a weapon on its victims, and is commonly adopted by soldiers on women during war to demonstrate contempt for men and women regarded as enemies (Waje, 2008: 274)

### **Rape Cases during COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria**

COVID-19 is an acronym of Coronavirus disease 2019 created by World Health Organization (WHO) for an illness caused by a novel Coronavirus with severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold. The first index case of COVID-19 was reported in Nigeria on 27 February, 2020 with overwhelming fear that made the federal government take proactive action of lockdown of Abuja, Lagos and Ogun States. The lockdown measure was also emulated by most state Governors to contain the spread of the pandemic in Nigerian. Unfortunately, Nigerians were bedeviled with other convergent afflictions such as abuse of governance, insecurity, poverty and rape.

Exponential increase is disheartening in reported cases of rape and sexual violence that inundate newspaper headlines daily. An instance is April, 2020 in which 10 profile cases were reported in Nigeria according to Abati in All African stories, Premium Times. Jennifer, an 18-year-old girl was assaulted and raped in Kaduna by five men. In Lagos, a young lady known as Tina Ezekwe was shot at a bus-stop by policeman and a 22-year old student of known as Vera Uwaila Omozuwa killed with a fire extinguisher in a church after being allegedly raped in Edo state (Cashman, 1993:70). Farishina, a 12-year old girl was reported dead consequent upon being raped repeatedly on different occasions by 11 men in Dutse/Jigawa state just to mention but a few in April, 2020 (Cashman, 1993:73). In June, 2020 Barakat Bello, a 19-year old student was raped inside her father's house and murdered in Ibadan. Shocking reports of men raping 2 years old baby and fathers raping with their own daughters tingle the ear. In Lagos 4 men raped a 12-year-old girl while in Niger state an 85-year-old woman was raped by a 25-year-old man. Another disgusting, incredible and abominable story came from Benue where a 38-year-old man raped his 7 months old daughter (Cashman, 1993:73). All these dehumanizing and horrible stories ignited rare reprimands and

protests by Nigerians especially women all over the world crying for merciless prosecutions of the culprits by the law; according to Ugoala (2021), young people are more prone to rape. The federal law disapproves rape as a punishable crime which some state Governors have directed for strict punishment such as life imprisonment and death sentence. An instance of these punitive measures to curb incessant rape havoc in Nigeria during this pandemic was Akwa Ibom state Governor who directed life imprisonment for any confirmed offender (Oko (2020: 172).

### **A Juxtaposition of Textual Exposition (Genesis 34) and Contemporary Nigerian Situation**

A keen examination of the rape encounter in the Old Testament especially Genesis chapter 34 and that, prevalent in Nigeria will enable the Nigerian society awaken from their slumber to eradicate the heinous act of violence against innocent victims. The victims are usually tagged as innocent because in most cases, they are dreadfully caught in the web of this menace unaware and are usually helpless. The helplessness could be attributed to the 'seizure' either physically or psychologically/mentally leaving the victims incapacitated at the scene. For instance, Dinah as a stranger in the land of the Hivite who went out to visit the women of the land without prior imaginary of such occurrence must have suffered physical 'seizure' beyond her vigour of resistance (Genesis 34:1-2). Likewise, the woman in her late 30's abducted beside her sleeping husband according to the Salamacentre report could be regarded as over helpless in rescuing the horrible and tragic drama of rape she encountered because she may have been overpowered by the abductors who could be more than two able bodied men. As well as the 10years old girl who was allegedly rape under her hijab by a 29years old man. The evident similarities between cases identified above remains 'seizure' of victims and their 'helplessness' in resisting tragedy from befalling them.

Another important aspect which requires comparison is the societal reaction towards the evil. The brothers' of Dinah took law into their hands by addressing the issue in a destructive manner. Simeon and Levi considered massacre of the perpetrator and his family as the appropriate reaction and solution to the pain caused their sister. Meanwhile, most victims in Nigeria today hide or fail to expose the act. Some find it difficult to share even with their parents for proper measure of remedy to be employed. Such cases ought not be overlooked or silenced for justice to have its course.

### **Effects of Rape Havoc**

Without mincing words, the perpetration of rape cannot but leave an indelible negative mark on most people especially the victim and also the society at large. Several other concepts could be breathed both positive and negative effects but with rape. However, the effects could be in most cases social, emotional, physical and religious.

The physical and emotional effects centers on the victims in view of the facts that, it causes bruises to the victim's body. Children who are raped usually suffer physical damage. This view is supported by Sibani and Oko, (2013:34) when they said in Nigeria some highly placed women in the society employ young men who are very handsome and sexually active to satisfy them whenever their services are needed as basis for employment. Sexually transmitted diseases could be contracted. The incidence may lead to pregnancy that may as well lead to abortion. All these eventually bounced back on the emotion of the victims (Waje, 2008:275). Rape is traumatic and can destroy the victim's self-esteem emanating into a mix of guilt, rage, anger, shame, powerlessness, incessant shock, anxiety and fear as well depression and sleeplessness. Insecurity especially with opposite sex or lack of trust in other people becomes evident. Oko (2020: 193) asserts that moralities which supposed to be a sense of right and wrong in human behaviour have been abandoned in our society. Consequently, an attempt to avoid the above may result into alcoholism. Some victims may end up becoming

extremely wild sexually. The inability of victims, who experience this assault within the home, lead to homelessness of some girls. A survey by CHAR (Campaign for Homeless People) found that over 40 percent of homeless girls were fleeing from sexual abuse. An associated problem is prostitution because children who run away from home are sometimes forced by poverty to sexual services. (Cashman, 1993:75)

Socially, the victims sometimes are blamed, ostracized depending on the community, and denied justice. Some society tends to stigmatize the victims of rape and as such the victim encounters the challenge of getting a suitor or spouse as the case may be. More so, attempt to get revenge in the face of delayed justice may lead to hatred, murder, or war. From the socio-religious viewpoint, married victims could suffer divorce from a spouse who lacks understanding and blame the victim out rightly for the incidence.

From the biblical viewpoint, inter-marriage which Shechem and his family felt could pacify the victim and his family contributed to the crude and irrational action by Simeon and Levi the brothers of Dinah. Inter-marriage with other nations is contradictory to the covenanted religion of Jacob. Therefore, the drastic and brutal decision taken may have religious undertone just like it had social connotations.

### **Responses towards Rape Cases in Nigeria**

When there are cases of rape or any form sexual assault in our society, should the society smile-off the issue and allow innocent girls and women live daily under the trauma of such evil? What should be or what overtime had been the reaction and or effort of the society towards alleviation of this mean act? The Nigerian Criminal Code recommends life imprisonment for the perpetrators of rape and 14 years for attempted rape. But Sabo (2016), the public relations officer for the police in Kaduna state, said many rape cases involving children are never investigated because parents want to protect their children from being stigmatized. "Some families kill the evidence,"

he said, maintaining the belief that rape victims will not be able to find a suitor for marriage. Recently the AkwaIbom state government House of Assembly has passed into law life imprisonment for the rapist when convicted. Rape and other forms of sexual harassment need the urgent and serious attention of the family, institutions, civil society groups, government and the international community if we really want to ensure a violence-free society for all. Ugoala, (2018) aver that sexual lust is becoming rampant to the extent that men now crave for humanoids.

Cases of sexual violence have increased all over the world. The Stanford rape case involving a 20-year-old former Stanford University student who was sent to jail for sexually assaulting an unconscious woman on the school campus is a case in point. The judgment generated a lot of negative responses on social media and from the public against the Judge mostly because the sentence – a mere six months and three years' probation – seemed like a slap on the wrist for the rapist (Basheer, 2021). In Nigeria as well, there has been an increasing number of rape and sexual harassment cases on a keen keel. A total number of 150 reported cases of sexual and physical abuse were recorded in Lagos State for one year period as of April 27, 2016 (). Again, The Ministry of Women Affairs had treated about 589 cases ranging from sexual abuse, physical abuse and child labour.

The occurrences of this menace seem to have grown in frequency probably because our institutions are not addressing these crimes by dealing with the perpetrators. There was a case of a 44-year-old man from Ini Local Government Area of Akwa-Ibom State who was alleged to have defiled his daughter and actually confessed to have had sexual intercourse with her several times as noted by Agiriga (2019). What then can be made of the man in Enugu who raped three of his children aged five, seven and nine and another 10-year-old girl who cried out after constant defilement by her father for a period of 18 months in Lagos?

In a survey carried out on rape in Nigerian universities according to..., it was discovered that in one of the top federal universities, 100 per cent of rape/sexually harassed victims are female students. Of that number, 67 per cent did nothing after they were raped while 33 per cent made some kind of feeble report of being raped to friends, a course adviser and others made reports to their parents or guardians. Nearly 88 per cent of respondents have heard of sexual harassment with 66 per cent being aware of more than two cases of rape. Of that number, 99 per cent of the students agreed that there should be a centre where incidences of rape are reported (Agiriga, 2019).

If that number of students in our tertiary institutions would decide to keep quiet after they have been raped by lecturers and fellow students, it means that we have one hell of a problem on our hands. Keeping quiet after being raped may just be one very good reason why the crime is on the rise in Nigeria. Obviously, it could be said as well that most people keep quiet because they do not have confidence in the institutions that should champion their cause. This lack of confidence can make students and the larger society begin to resort to self-help in the resolution of incidences of rape and sexual molestation in all strata of our lives.

Therefore, the judiciary should intensify their efforts in removing the delay in prosecuting rape, being fully aware that rape cases is hard to prove. Considering the increase rate of this menace, the law must no longer be lenient with rapists and perpetrators at all levels in the community so as to deter perpetrators in the society. The law enforcement agencies has major role to play than parents considering the fact that there had been cases of some parents who molested their daughters. The church as a bride to nation-builder must invest in massive human right educational programmes needed to raise the level of general consciousness in any given area so as to arouse actively the people's initiative and participation in nation building (Oko, 2018: 40).

## **Rape Rehabilitation Centres in Nigeria**

Nigeria, a country of 170 million where sexual assault is described as 'endemic' has just a handful of facilities dedicated to the care and support of survivors. The first in the country, the Mirabel Centre in Lagos, was set up in 2013. Thereafter, a former Miss Nigeria winner established the Eight Foundation Centre, which also offers crisis support for women. Mirabel Centre set up by Ito Eze-Anaba, a lawyer instrumental in lobbying the Nigerian government to pass a bill outlawing domestic violence, among other has been helpful in the following ways; has treated and supported more than 1,100 survivors of rape and sexual assault, treating diverse age range of victims ranging from young children to a 70-year-old woman; covers the cost of medical tests for sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy, as well as drugs and contraceptives; organizes sexual assault sensitization programmes across secondary schools to create awareness about the dangers of rape (Obiezu, 2020)

Media Concern Initiative is another organization devoted to using technology to enhance health outcomes to assist survivors in Nigeria by providing a one-stop app to: First, access medical emergency care/ treatment such as Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) to prevent HIV infections and Emergency Contraceptive (EC) and medical examination and treatments; access counseling and therapy services for proper management of trauma and mental health needs etc. (DeCaputa, 2013).

Other service provider includes, HELLO LAGOS, Project Alert on Violence against Women, Lagos State Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Women at Risk International Foundation (WARIF), Cee-Hope Nigeria, Child and Youth Protection Foundation (CYPF), Dorothy Njemanze Foundation, Pastor Bimbo Odukoya (PBO) Foundation etc.

## **Strategies of Curbing Rape in Nigeria**

The huge responsibility of minimizing or if possible eradicate completely the menace of rape in Nigerian society, rest majorly on the

following group of people within their diverse capacities.

First, the church has a significant role to play. 'Rape, like all violence, is a sin against God and a crime against humanity. It dehumanizes the victims and destroys the communities. The church should have no hesitation in condemning it in the strongest terms.' (Waje, 2008:277) Shunning this assault from all indication through the pulpit is required to enlightened perpetrators in knowing the mind of God about their conducts and imminent repercussion or punishment it will attract from God. According to Cashman (1993:47), the majority of reported aggressors are regular church attendees. It is difficult to measure someone's 'Christianity' but researchers do report that the adult males (abusers) tend to be very devout, moralistic and conservative in their religious beliefs. Subsequently, the church must aid in counseling the victims to deal with the physical and emotional torture of the experience without making them feel guilty of the evil done against them. In addition, relentless effort must be made by the church to awaken the government towards their responsibility by making and enforcing laws that protect rape victims and deter further perpetrations as they are seen as an integral part of the society (Oko and Ohaeri, 2020:180). People must be sensitized or encouraged to expose such act regardless of threat faced from the perpetrators. Furthermore, community engagement should be implored religious organizations generally to alert, sensitize and educate their members on the different tactics of perpetrating the evil and how they can avoid it.

Second, the state through the judiciary should introduce stiff or cruel penalties for guilty perpetrators as well as avoid delay of prosecution of rape cases. Recently, on the social media, a perpetrator was murdered and publicly hanged for other perpetrators to see in one of the Arabic states. Apart from centre for rape victims, rehabilitation centre should be established for rapist rather than focusing on punishment alone. They should be counseled and taught to respect the dignity and pride,

wishes and desires of others. Atanang, Ekanem and Oko (2022) asserts that effective teaching of religious studies and uplifting of moral and spiritual values by the religious leaders will go a long way to bring about peace in Nigeria. Also, the government should include sex education in the school curriculum cum training the female students on self-defense to equip them against violence. There should be 'mobile rescue mission' contacts made available for people to call when facing the evil. For (Oko and Ndubuwa, 2022:62) paradigm shift in Education and orientation strategies for National and ecological peace should be imbibed and applied through informal education and parental upbringing wherein African core values eco-theology, standardization of education and curriculum decolonization would be contextualized.

Third, the parents or relatives of victims also, has huge role to play in curtailing rape in our society today. The idea or mentality of silence to avoid stigmatization must be put to halt. Attempting to deal secretly or privately with rape issues is never helpful in solving the problem rather, it stimulate rapists to continue the act. Therefore, parents should report cases to the appropriate quarters. Sex education should be taken as responsibility of parents towards their children first before hearing about it outside or in the school. Education can help to build the sense of justice, fairness and equity (Oko, 2023:59). Parents should build cordial relationship with their children, create time to listen to their stories and answer their questions. In addition, communities experiencing rampant rape attacks should be courageous to alert appropriate authority for adequate measure of security to be put in place. For instance, precisely on August 1, 2019, the pmnewsnigeria.com reveals that female

students in University of Uyo protested vehemently over wanton insecurity in the institution and incessant rape of female students by hoodlums. The pm news correspondent, Ugbodaga (2016) gathered that robbers had been invading the institution to rob students of their money and wares and later raped the female students, with the school authority not doing enough to salvage the situation. The protest exercise by the student community will go a long way in abating this menace.

### **Recommendations**

The paper recommends that awareness and sensitization against rape havoc be upheld. Families should inculcate discipline in the life their children, especially teenage girls so as to prepare and train them to combat sexual assaults. The Church should encourage sex education in a godly way. The church through her leaders has always been a voice to the voiceless (Oko, 2018: 37). Nevertheless, prayer for the peace of Jerusalem could be viewed in an eschatological contest in the sense that future wellbeing and prosperity of any nation lies on peace and safety (Oko and Ndubuwa, 2022). The government should put more effort in prosecuting rapists and rehabilitating the victims of rape havoc.

### **Conclusion**

The equation of rape with murder in the Bible shows how seriously this heinous act of violence against innocent victims should be handled (Deuteronomy 22: 26-27). Nigerian government and citizens need to awake from their slumber to defend the right of the people in justice. This will even encourage victims not resolve to handling the case secretly. Regardless of whether the victims and perpetrators are young or old, male or female, rape is ungodly, obnoxious and human.

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## A MULTIMODAL FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING CARTOONS: A STUDY OF SELECTED WHATSAPP CORONA VIRUS CARTOONS

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### Abstract

*Using selected corona virus cartoons for illustration, this article develops a Multimodal framework that explains how cartoonists deploy semiotic elements and draw from common ground to foreground events and happenings in the society; and the reader's resources for decoding and interpretation of meaning. The study is premised on the belief that some semiotic elements are more distinct in cartoons than others and help the reader decode the meaning in cartoons. Blending the Common Ground theory by Clark and Brennan (1991), and Multimodality Theory by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the framework developed explains how human instinct naturally selects appropriate semiotic elements and strings them together to drive the meaning intended which the cartoon creator expects to pass across. The framework explains the cartoonist's choices in meaning creation and the reader's choice which invariably leads to the interpretation of the message encoded in the cartoons. The cartoons used as samples for the analysis were selected from WhatsApp platform during the first wave of the Corona virus pandemic in Nigeria between March and June 2020. For the reader to unravel the encoded meanings, s/he must possess some degree of understanding of the represented participants used in the cartoons. The study found that cartoons have natural reading paths which the reader is able to assess drawing from common ground knowledge between the reader and the cartoonist. The study concludes that the semiotic elements in a cartoons and the common ground between the cartoon creator and reader aids interpretation in cartoons. The study recommends that cartoonists (should) deploy  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  which are easily accessible to readers, through pragmatic elements like inferencing, implication, and presupposition.*

**KEYWORDS:** Corona virus cartoons, Common ground, Semiotic elements, Inference, Verbal and visual elements.

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### 1. Introduction

Since the emergence of the corona virus in November 2019 in Wuham China, scholarly articles have examined at it from different dimensions (Ugoala and Peace, 2020; Umerie & Nnamoko 2020; Chinwe et al. 2020; Oloribe et al, 2021; Erinoso et al. (2021; Adebowale et al. 2021). For instance, Ugoala and Peace (2020) studied Pragmatic acts in the first official

speeches of President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria and President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana. These studies show that epidemiological phenomena such as the corona virus are particularly of interest to scholars to show the different ways through which the effects on humans can be alleviated.

Societies have different issues which they grapple with at different times; and critics have

different ways through which the ills in societies are critiqued. Some critics may use words, some violence and some cartoons. Cartoons are modes through which ideas, views and information is disseminated either denotatively or connotatively. The framework developed in this study rests on the assumption that mutual knowledge assists a cartoonist to produce a cartoon, and a reader rests on mutual knowledge to unravel the hidden meaning in a cartoon in order to interpret it accurately. Some cartoons are for fun, and some for didactic purposes as they portray serious socio-cultural issues. For example, the aim of political cartoon is to increase public awareness using verbal and visual imageries to address crucial issues and criticize political leaders. Lamb (2004) sees political cartoons as critical artefacts used to ridicule political leaders and their despicable policies. Apart from the authors who have studied the Coronavirus using only one semiotic mode, some cartoonists have deployed multimodal semiotic elements to pass across their views in relation to the pandemic. The cartoons studied here are of particular interest to the author, because they arouse curiosity of how the reader is able to cognitively piece images and words to reach the likely meaning of the cartoon creators. The cartoons depict societal happenings. The aim of this article is to develop a framework that explains a cartoonist's cognitive resources for encoding meaning in cartoons, and the reader's cognitive resources for decoding meaning in cartoons.

Common ground or shared knowledge between interactive participants can create clear reading paths in images to arrive at satisfactory interpretation of the author's intended meaning thus adding evidence to the view that not only in syntactic structures can clear reading paths be reached, reading paths can also be arrived at in cartoons based on the cognitive knowledge that exist between the cartoonist and the reader. The rest of the paper is structured in five sections: section two looks at Grounding in Semiotic Resources, here, the theory underpinning the study is presented including the views of other scholars; section three

presents the new Multimodal Framework for analysing cartoons; data and analysis are presented in section four; the discussion of the analysis comes up in section five; section six wraps up the study by presenting the conclusion and recommendations.

## 2. Grounding in Semiotic Resources

Common ground theory (CG) is viewed from different perspectives by different scholars. Lewis (1969) assumes that "common knowledge" implicitly defines a community (group) wherein the knowledge is common, similarly, Schiffer (1972) equates common ground to "mutual knowledge" (131). Interpretations of texts are arrived at through inferences, entailment, presupposition and other tools through which meaning can be transmitted and interpreted. Stalnaker (1973) notes that background of knowledge shared by the speaker and his audience comprise the presuppositions which define the context. The notion of 'common ground' was introduced by Stalnaker (1978) to account for the way in which information accumulates in conversation. Stalnaker (2002) goes further to explain that when speakers speak, they presume certain things, and what they presume guides both what they choose to say and how they intend what they say to be interpreted.

People's understanding of linguistic utterances rests on an assumption of common ground. The assumption both reader writer and reader have almost the same amount of information on the semiotic resources used in communication. Clark (1996) describes common ground as the knowledge, beliefs, and suppositions that people must have to be able to interact with others. Allan (1986) equates CG to 'context'. Thomason (1990:339) likens CG to people collaborating on a shared task: "It is like a group of people working on a common project that is in plain view.

Of particular interest to this study is Clark and Brennan's (1991) postulations on Common Ground theory of communication. Clark and Brennan (1991) propose the Common Ground theory of communication to refer to "mutual

knowledge, mutual beliefs, and mutual assumptions" that are believed to be essential for successful communication between people. They submit that grounding which is the process by which interlocutors try to establish that what has been said is understood is so basic to communication; that it is important to understand how shared knowledge shape meaning intended (Clark and Brennan, 1991: 136). Many conversations focus on objects and their identities; when they do, it becomes crucial to identify the objects quickly and securely. According to Clark and Brennan (1991:127), two people playing a game must coordinate both the content and process of what they are doing. They must assume a vast amount of beliefs and shared knowledge between them. This shows that CG is important in any discourse scenario. Clark (1996) categorises the bases for common ground into two namely community membership and personal experiences. Community CG is information that is common to a community of people. Some of these communities are built around shared practices or expertise; in that each member of the community knows what the other person knows. Personal CG entails accumulated knowledge of what is expected of one in every situation both within one's immediate close relationship and external relationship drawing on beliefs and suppositions. The interpretation of cartoons depends on the viewers' ability to recognize the semiotic elements in the cartoon.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) complements Clark and Brennan (1991) in the framework developed in this study, to account for the cognitive processing and interpretation that exists between the cartoon creator and the ideal reader. A multimodal text combines many semiotic elements which are to be linked appropriately for clear interpretation. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) draw attention to the possible variables which can assist readers garner meaning from semiotic elements. Drawing from Halliday (1994), they aver that semiotic elements individually and simultaneously perform three functions. Instead of ideational as used by Halliday (1994), they

used Representational, instead of interpersonal, they used Interactive, and instead of textual, they used Compositional. Kress and van Leeuwen suggested and developed a method of social semiotic analysis of visual communication and established a descriptive framework of multimodality. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) for Representational Meaning, points out that semiotic resources should be able to represent events and happenings that occur in real world within or outside the environment they occur. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) split representational meaning into two main categories of processes—narrative and conceptual. Kress & van Leeuwen (1996: 41) note that "Any semiotic system has to be able to project the relations between the producer of a sign or complex sign, and the receiver/reproducer of that sign". This means that, any semiotic system has to be able to project a particular social relation between the producer, the viewer and the semiotic item represented. Compositional Meaning for Kress and van Leeuwen refer to semiotic system being able to form texts, different semiotic systems cohering both internally and being meaningful in the context in which they are produced. In other words, the visual and verbal elements in multimodal system form a compositional whole.

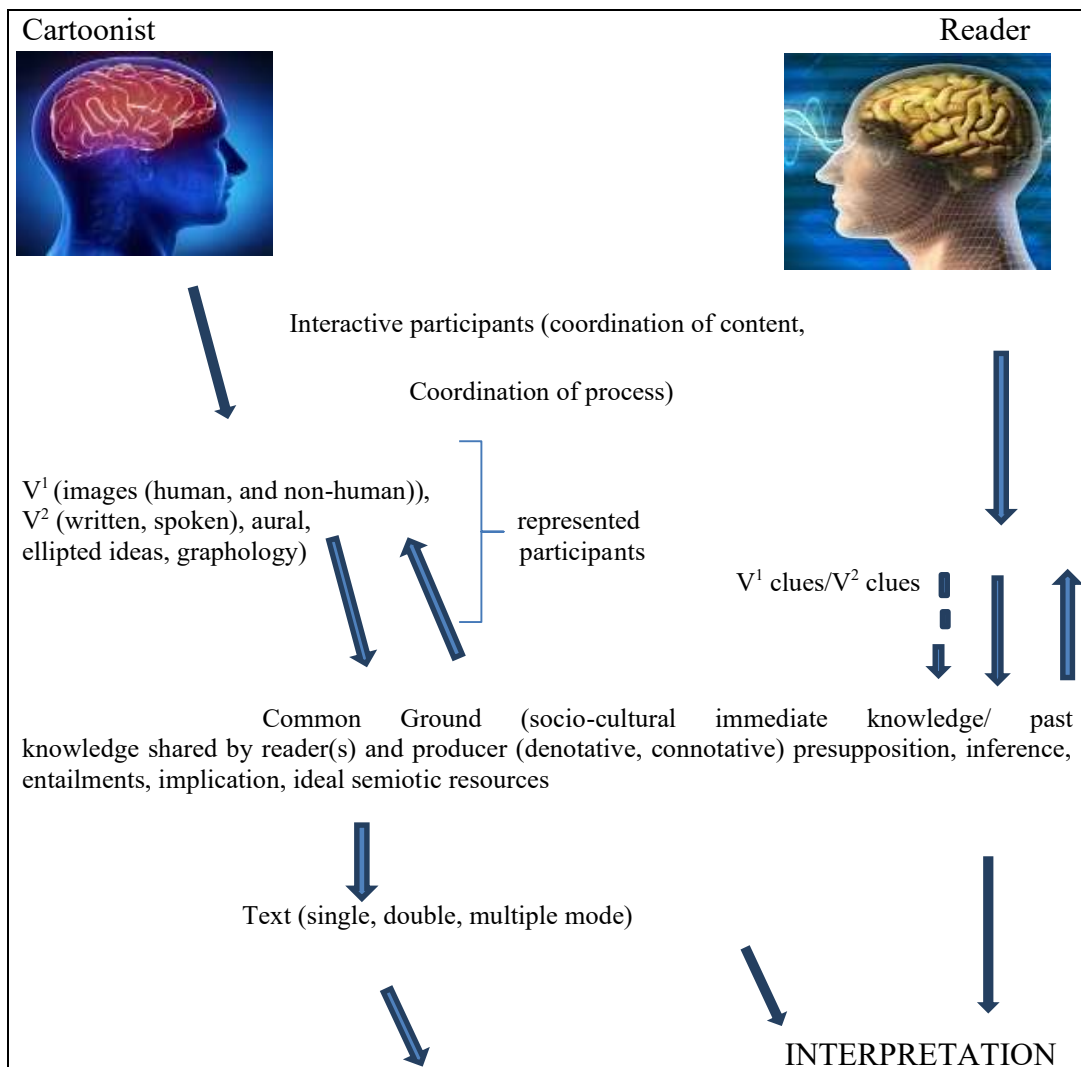
According to Kress & van Leeuwen (1996), represented participants and interactive participants are the two kinds of participants involved in an image. Between these participants, there are three kinds of relations: relations between represented participants; relations between interactive and represented participants, which refers to the interactive participants' attitudes towards the represented participants; and relations between interactive participants, which refers to the things interactive participants do to or for each other through images.

Kress & van Leeuwen's (1996) idea of possible reading paths in images is particularly motivating and compelling, a strong propelling force for the articulation of ideas in the new framework put forward in this work. As words are building blocks, and create roadmaps to

meaning so also visuals in the form of images and pictures have reading paths in them. Synthesising ideas from Clark and Brennan (1991), and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), this study develops a multimodal framework that explains how a text producer based on CG, harness semiotic resources in order to create meaning, and how the reader in turn, draws from CG to interpret meaning.

The meaning readers construct from decoding the semiotic resources used in a particular image or cartoon depends mainly on the knowledge they share with co-interlocutors.

Royce (1998) points out that visual and verbal should complement each other in passing across meaning. The reading paths in cartoons are made possible by visuals complementing verbal in cartoons. A linguistic text typically unfolds syntagmatically as a chain which is sequentially processed, and the semantic import gathers as the text progresses. The argument here is that meaning is progressively unfolds based on the framework developed here.



Multimodal Framework for creation and interpretation of meaning in Cartoons Ugoala (2021)

The cartoonist and the reader share certain background information, which aids dissemination and interpretation of meaning. The framework shows the given, the cartoonist and the reader. The cartoonist draws from the represented participants, that is, semiotic resources which encodes shared knowledge which are visuals ( $V^1$  clues) could be human and non-human, these could be in the form of real pictures, caricatures, images, and artefacts. The  $V^2$  clues are linguistic items (written, spoken), aural, elliptical ideas, and graphology. Elliptical ideas are pieces of information which the cartoonist has left unsaid, which s/he knows the reader is likely to fill in when reading the cartoon.

The aural relates to different forms of sound made by the cartoonist in the course of designing the cartoon, the aural is usually implied in printed cartoons. The broken lines show that at times, the degree of choices may vary. The graphology comprises the arrangement of the pictures/images and linguistic items. The  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  are supported by common ground (immediate knowledge/ past knowledge shared by cartoonist and reader(s)) (denotative, connotative) ideal semiotic resources. Through these, the cartoonist designs a cartoon which could be a single, double or multiple mode text. The arrow pointing to the cartoonist shows represented participants embed the common ground. The common ground guides cartoonist's choice of semiotic resources. Encoded in the  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  are inferences, prepositions, entailments, and implications.

The reader as symbolised by the framework shows that the reader must see the message which is the cartoon from the cartoonist (single, double or multiple mode). The reader is guided by the visual and verbal clues ( $V^1$  and  $V^2$ ), encoded in these verbal and visual clues are CG (immediate knowledge/ Past knowledge shared by reader(s) and producer (Denotative, connotative) ideal semiotic resources. The cartoonist and the reader share a CG which aids designing and interpretation. In a multimodal text, the reader synthesises ideas from  $V^1$  and

$V^2$ , in order to interpret the messages. The two arrows pointing to and from the reader show that the reader can obtain meaning directly from the  $V^1$  or  $V^2$  which encodes CG in order to interpret the message.

The interpretation of cartoons crucially depends on the readers' ability to identify mostly the  $V^1$ , and situations and on their knowledge of the relevant facts whether past or present encoded in the cartoons. This knowledge is essential for a full interpretation of the intended meaning by the text producer. This further buttresses the premise of the study that the production and interpretation of cartoons are socio-culturally dependant. In this framework, the reader is assumed to be a fully informed reader and viewer, that is, a reader who knows the conventions of the genre, and also recognizes the relevant persons, objects and situations and has sufficient factual knowledge to understand the message of the cartoon. The CG knowledge arrow points the reader to choose an appropriate visual element that will produce a fine interpretation of the message encoded in the  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  of the cartoon (represented participants. The reader chooses appropriate  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  to get a likely interpretation of the cartoon. The framework is a veritable analytical tool and roadmap for analysts working not only in the study of cartoons, but on scholars who are interested in encoding and decoding of meanings in multimodal texts.

The cartoons adopted to illustrate the framework developed in this paper were posted on WhatsApp during the first lockdown phase in Nigeria (March to June 2020). These cartoons were chosen because of their depiction of situation(s) being framed by the cartoonists. In cartoons, the cartoonist draws the reader into the process of signification through deploying elements he assumed the reader can/will interpret correctly. In deploying the new framework, the referential meaning will be discussed, such as the information the represented participants encode, and how they are conveyed. Then, I will also explore the contextual aspect, that is, how the context aids in meaning making between the interactive

participants. Lastly, I will discuss the ideological aspect, looking at the connotative ideas and positions the cartoons convey. These research questions have been raised in order to explicate the new framework— Multimodal Framework: how do represented participants encode shared knowledge between the interactive participants? How do the  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  deployed by the cartoonists trigger the cognitive processing of meaning for the reader in the cartoons? What cognitive techniques were used by the cartoonists to assist the reader draw inferences from the cartoons.

#### 4. Sample data and analysis



Figure 1. (source: Whatsapp 2020)

According to the Multimodal Framework, the cartoonist draws from the  $V^1$ , which are the image of the kneeling politicians, the corona virus image with cane in hand, the  $V^1$  prompts the  $V^2$  'we are sorry, we promise to fix it'. The metaphor is teacher and students is enacted here. The  $V^1$  stimulates the  $V^2$  for the reader. This is guided by the knowledge which the cartoonist has of corrupt government officials and the neglected healthcare sector in Nigeria, and which the cartoonist believes the reader also has. This assumed knowledge is depicted by the broken lines of  $V^1$  and  $V^2$ . The reader whom the cartoon is meant for, sees the verbal text and interpretes accurately drawing from the CG, and mentally pieces the information encoded in the  $V^1$  and  $V^2$ .

Knowledge of the corona virus  $V^1$  for the cartoonist and the reader acts as the main clue for the reader, the  $V^2$  is the sign post written on it 'NIGERIA'S HEALTHCARE SYSTEM', on the far left handside. In this cartoon the reading begins

from left to right. The possible common ground between the interactive participants is: Nigeria's healthcare system which has been neglected by the relevant authorities; the three main ethnic groups are depicted in the cartoon as discernable from the dressing patterns of the human image.

The  $V^2$  common ground knowledge of the neglected healthcare sector provides a reading path that provides the likely message of the cartoonist for the reader. The pandemic is an acid test—the neglected healthcare sector lacks the capacity to fight the pandemic. This neglect over the years is as a result of corrupt public office holders who are Nigerians.



Figure 2 (source: Whatsapp 2020)

The  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  deployed by this cartoonist is the CG. The cartoonist extends the meaning of  $V^1$  by metaphorically saying that COVID 19 THE NEW ATM. The corona virus is likened to the ATM, at the height of the pandemic in Nigeria, some people believed that those in authority used the pandemic to syphon money from the government. The Covid-19 fund meant for the management of the pandemic was syphoned as depicted in the  $V^1$  behind the Governor. The reader is able to share this meaning with the cartoonist based on the happenings in Nigeria about State Governors hiding under the pandemic to syphon money. The represented participants are familiar to the interactive participants.

The given image of the Corona virus, the human element doning a mask at the ATM, the bag of money create a reading path for the viewer. In the new framework, these are represented

participants deployed by the cartoonist to pass across the message to the reader. The shared knowledge guides the cartoonist's choice. The  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  clues guide the reader to interpret the message accurately. Both the reader and the cartoonist know the function of the ATM, that it dispenses cash. The  $V^1$  is the "Covid 19 the new ATM". The  $V^2$  illustrates the image of the corona virus carved like the ATM. The Governor standing in front of the ATM, ostensibly punching the buttons to enable more withdrawal of fund makes the meaning clearer. The  $V^1$  aided by the  $V^2$  creates the reading path inferable from the cartoon that Governors hide under the pandemic to syphon money.



Figure 3 (source: Whatsapp 2020)

The represented participants of a bus branded CORONA EXPRESS WORLD TOUR depict and creates the impression that the corona virus is on a journey. Corrupt practices of people in authority in Nigeria are portrayed here. The corona virus is not mentioned, but it is given a human voice, and tells the reader "In Nigeria people are using me to make money", "bye bye Nigeria". The 'corona virus' not mentioned is the elliptical semiotic element. The image of the virus inside the bus, and on top of the bus aids the processing of meaning. The interactive participants are able to interact through coordinating the  $V^1$  and  $V^2$ . Like in figures 1 and 2, the  $V^1$  assist the  $V^2$  in coordination of the content for adequate interpretation.

All Religions waiting for a positive response from Science.



Figure 4 (source: whatsapp 2020)

The represented participants of different religion as depicted by the different dressing by the human elements standing with bewildered/confused look, and the 'scientist' seated, relaxed with the aim of finding a cure for the virus creates some form of paradox. Different religions appear confused in the face of the pandemic. The scientist is seated and relaxed, looking into a microscope ostensibly with the intention of finding a cure for the virus. The  $V^2$ , "All Religions waiting for a positive response from Science" expands the meaning of the  $V^1$ . The elliptical semiotic element in the framework is corona virus that was not mentioned in the cartoon, but the interactive participants (the cartoonist and the reader) share the knowledge that the virus necessitated the cartoon. During the pandemic, in Nigeria, all religious places of worship were shut down in order to control the spread of the virus. Scientists all over the world worked hard to find a cure for the virus. The represented participants both  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  give the inference that Nigerians place so much confidence on religion to solve their problems. The inference is that science can solve societal problems. The virus is not mentioned, but the meaning is clear due to the prevailing situation.



Figure 5 (source: Whatsapp 2020)



The represented participants of a youngster in trendy clothes with gift on one hand, and handset on the other hand, a poor couple with their malnourished children depict the scene of affluence and poverty. The interactive participants are familiar with the trend of youngsters taking selfies with their phones of different situations, whether it is called for or not. The V<sup>2</sup> of “If you’re going help people this period, keep your camera at home! explains the V<sup>2</sup> more clearly. The ellipted semiotic element is the pandemic replaced with the phrase ‘this period’, which both interactive participants share. The cartoonist knows that the reader is familiar with what is happening and will easily understand the use of the phrase to replace the pandemic.



Figure 6 (source: Whatsapp 2020)

The V<sup>1</sup>, that is, human elements in the cartoon are familiar faces in Nigeria. One, a serving minister during the Corona virus pandemic in Nigeria, and the other, a movie actor. The cartoonist deployment of familiar faces and linguistic elements makes it easier for the reader to interpret the message accurately. The represented participants (both the V<sup>1</sup> and V<sup>2</sup>) are familiar to the interactive participants. The V<sup>1</sup> of the human elements is explained more in the V<sup>2</sup>. The common ground makes it easier for the reader to know that the linguistic items were uttered by the minister, “If not for coronavirus we would have finished the Lagos-Ibadan rail”. The minister’s uses the pandemic as a cover to explain the inability of his office to complete the Lagos-Ibadan rail, the actor knows that this is deliberate falsehood. This prompts his action of attempting to hit the minister with his raised hand.



Figure 7 (source: Whatsapp 2020)

Foregrounded in figure 7 as encoded in the represented participants (V<sup>1</sup> and V<sup>2</sup>) is the hunger in the land during the time of the lockdown as a result of the pandemic. The V<sup>1</sup> are the human images, the image of the corona virus personified with a human face given a voice to speak. The two sign posts with different number of deaths expands the meaning for the reader. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) tagged man with syringe in hand is somehow confused as to what to do to tackle so as to end the high rate of deaths in the land. The virus given a human face and voice is quick to tell the NCDC man that ‘YOU’RE A LIAR, I KILLED JUST A FEW...SEE WHAT KILLED MOST PEOPLE!’ The high rate of death was not because of the virus, but because of hunger in the land. The reader can infer that the high rate of hunger during the Corona virus period created more deaths compared to the virus itself, as people could no longer go out to seek for source of livelihood, the result is hunger and then death. This is reiterated by the V<sup>2</sup> at the topmost left-hand corner “COVID-19 LOCKDOWN, #StayInAndDie”.



Figure 8 (source: Whatsapp 2020)

Juxtaposing two contrary objects (Garri and drum of oil), and placing them next to each



other invites readers to unravel the mental difference caused by the apparent differences between the objects and to look for related links between the objects (cf. Teng and Sun 2002). Distilling the critical comment in this cartoon requires some contextual knowledge about the two objects which the cartoonist believes the reader possesses. Garri is a staple food in Nigeria, and it is affordable by all classes of people. It is sold and measured using different containers depending on how much worth a buyer wants. The yellow container is one of such measuring containers. It rose to as high as N4,800 because of the pandemic which made farmers not to go to the farm to harvest cassava used in the processing of Garri. Crude oil which is one of Nigeria's major source of foreign exchange fell as low as N3,000 per barrel, which then was about N60,000 (sixty thousand naira). At no point has the price of crude oil fallen below that of Garri, but it happened during the height of the corona virus pandemic. No country was interested in buying crude oil, as a result, the price has to crash lower than the price of Garri. Garri was scarce. This background knowledge provides the reader of the possible reading path in order to access the meaning in the ensemble. The V<sup>2</sup>, "if them tell you say Garri go blow one day you go believe? Just be there and doubting your potentials oh. Na turn by turn for this life" is a form of encouragement for persons who are not currently comfortable with their situation that one day things will look up for them, just like the price of Garri has risen, so also one day they will rise above their difficulties. The represented participants point to over reliance of crude oil by Nigeria as a source of foreign exchange. Anybody familiar with the economic situation in Nigeria will understand that the cartoon points to the need for the country to diversify, and that there is not constant situation in life.

## 5. Discussion

Through the new framework developed, answers to research questions and research objectives can be obtained. In response to the first research question, findings reveal that the semiotic elements (represented participants)

deployed by the cartoonists, encode knowledge and pieces of information that both the cartoonist and the reader share, this is Coordination of content; this assumed shared knowledge acts as prompts for the cartoonist to connect with the reader. For the second research question, it was found that the V<sup>1</sup> and V<sup>2</sup> in each cartoon complement each other in one way or another. This complementarity of the V<sup>1</sup> and V<sup>2</sup> helps the reader to unravel the meaning in the cartoons. The cartoonist deployed familiar scenes through which meaning can be arrived at connotatively. The meaning derived through connotation are the elliptical pieces of information which the reader fills in. The prevailing situation of the pandemic helps the reader to select the appropriate V<sup>1</sup> and what it represents or connotes. The unstated in some cartoons is very important to in helping the reader to reach a fine interpretation of the message. The third research question revealed that the cartoonist deployed literary devices like personification, metaphor, and juxtaposition to connect to the reader. These are obvious in figures 1, 3, and 7. Though the reader unconsciously may not be aware of these literary devices, they aided the cartoonists pass across their messages. The interactive participants are in a process of meaning encoding, and meaning decoding.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Cartoons like other multimodal texts have natural reading paths which aids the reading in decoding the meanings encoded in the cartoons by the cartoons creators. The framework developed in this paper explains how cartoonists and readers interact through the multiple semiotic elements in cartoons. The shared knowledge between the cartoonist and the reader is very crucial for the cartoonists in the cartoon designing process. The coordination of content and process help both the cartoonist and the reader interact seamlessly. In cartoons, the creation process is one thing, and the interpretation is another.

Common ground knowledge is a major factor that helps both cartoonists and readers to

create and interpret messages. Distilling the meanings in cartoons requires some contextual and socio-cultural knowledge about semiotic elements which feature significantly in the cartoon. The cartoons analysed here, generally use implied meanings and inferences based on common ground to communicate with the readers. Reinforcing Kostelnick (1993) view, readers filter pictorial information through a social lens. The cartoons encode images of corruption and political failure.

In some cartoons the  $V^1$  encodes more information than the  $V^2$ . Sometimes they encode the same amount of information in order

to assist the reader. But rarely in a combination of  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  does the reader miss the message, in so far the reader is from the same cultural enclave, or the reader knows about the cultural meaning encoded in the cartoon. The study recommends affirms that the human mind in encoding and decoding either  $V^1$  or  $V^2$  information differs from between the cartoonist and the reader. As a result, it recommends that cartoonists (should) deploy  $V^1$  and  $V^2$  which are easily accessible to readers, through pragmatic elements like inferring, implication, and presupposition.

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## CHALLENGES OF DEEPENDING DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA AND BEYOND

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**Abstract**

*This paper addressed the challenges of deepening democracy in Nigeria. The major objective of the paper was to examine weak institutions, perceived as a challenge to democracy and identity politics, which is an ingrained issue. Explanatory design was adopted for the paper, and data were collected from secondary sources. The paper employed elite theory. Among the major findings is that the challenge of Nigeria's democracy is principally elitist in nature, and political challenges associated with democracy appear is unabated. The conclusion of this paper is that the institution of democracy is weak and there is presence of identity politics in Nigeria and this has affected the deepening of democracy in Nigeria and beyond, even though this challenges the recommendation provided shows that challenges affecting democracy in Nigeria can be surmounted as part of the recommendations, there should first be a holistic review of the constitution and the Nigeria judicial system need also to be restructured.*

**Keywords:** Democracy, Politics System, Electoral System, Election and Liberal Democracy.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Democracy all over the world has been seen as the most favourable forms of government no wonder countries of Europe, America and Africa are adopting it as their form of government never the less the challenges associated with the practice of Democracy. Democracy is one of the best forms of Government, what this connotes to liberal Democracy, but how liberal is Democracy in Nigeria. The unliberalness of Democracy is one of the worse challenges bedeviling Nigeria's Democracy and beyond.

The Nigerian political system revolves around democracy which Nigeria sees as a better alternative to military regime but how better is democracy is to Nigeria since 1999 to the present period which forms Nigeria's Fourth Republic. The doubt express by the convener of this seminar over the introduction of this topic, means that there are fundamental flaws on Democracy in Nigeria due to the challenges

associated with the deepening of Democracy and beyond in Nigeria. The nature of Democracy in Nigeria seems to be different with other democracy around the world. There are daunting challenges no doubted associated with the deepening of Democracy in Nigeria especially as it affects the present democracy and beyond.

Democracy as it is presently in Nigeria is defective, its defectiveness is arising from the challenges associated with how it is being practiced in association with how Democracy has been accused of being one of the reasons for the continuous underdevelopment of Nigeria makes the topic apt and germane just to deepen the democratic ideal of Nigeria Democracy in the present Nigeria and beyond, there is no single authority mentioned to validate the direction of thought Mutillah, (2015:14).

**Statement of the Problem**

The propelling perplexing questions this paper tends to resolve are;

- i. Whether weak institutions are part of the challenges affecting Nigeria's Democracy in achieving a virile future
- ii. Whether identity politics is that of the challenges of Democracy in Nigeria.
- iii. Whether these challenges can be ameliorated to help improve Nigeria's Democracy at the present and beyond considering the enormous challenges bedeviling Nigeria's Democracy.

### **Objectives**

The Purpose for which this paper was conceived is among others to:

- i. Examine whether weak institutions is a challenge affecting Nigeria's Democracy
- ii. investigate whether how identity politics as been a challenge on Nigeria's Democracy.
- iii. examine whether these challenge can be ameliorated

The method of achieving this is through secondary method of Data Collection.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The methodology is in terms of the design and method of data collection. The explanatory design was employed by this paper and the secondary method of data collection was used in this paper as well, and the area where this paper was conducted is the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja which is a home to political practice in Nigeria. The choice of FCT is because F.C.T is the melting point for political and administrative activities in Nigeria. This paper is not a survey paper, rather it paper is an explanatory survey type, that base it evidence on existing literature to help in the analysis and discussion.

## **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The review of literature is base on review. The concepts to be clarified in this paper are; Democracy, Political System, Election and Liberal Democracy.

### **i. Democracy**

Democracy implies recognition of the duties of government and the right of the people. It postulates a measure of personal freedom and equal consideration of all classes. It is superior to other form of government because the right and interest of every person are secure from being disregarded only when the person interested in himself able and habitual disposed to stand for them the participation in governmental affairs lifts the individual above the narrow circle of his egoism and broadens his interests Azazi, (2012;49).

### **ii. Liberal Democracy**

The main idea of liberal democracy includes a system of representative democracy and the foundation of liberal principle. The philosophy and principle of liberal Democracy are free elections by the people, elected representatives from different political parties, government with separation of powers, equal protections and rights for citizens and a workable legal system for proper enforcement of law and order Goodness, (2022,131).

### **iii. Electoral System**

This refers to the final formal structuring of election(s); that are crucial to how electorate choose between options. That exist in other political party the preference of citizen into seats in representative institutions. Therefore, they have a considerable influence on the political character of a societies, Zoaka (2022; 512). However, Electoral System translates votes into seats in an elected Assembly(ies) may influence the degree of public support for democratic government itself. Public support might decline for example if citizens perceive that the legislature's composition does not sincerely reflect their electoral preference. Turnout during election will drop off, respect for politicians and elected representative will fall.

Etymologically the term Politics "is derived from two Greek words; Polis=city and techne = art, skill, craft or method, thus politics or politik meaning the act of governing a city, in ancient Greece, the term city designated an organized territory under the jurisdiction of a state for example Sparta Anthen e.t.c the world Politics has become dynamic and elastic today. Politics in some level partian to daily communal activities in which we all participate in it, but for Lasswell, (2004;33) "Politics is who get what, when and how", here Lasswell understand politics as the major effectivities of political parties. Rather Politics is found at all levels of human endeavor, Politic is found in the family, Church, Mosque, Trade Unions, Governance, Ministries and Agencies. Politics in modern day usage is the creation and allocation of values to achieve development Ereke, (2022: 548).

#### **iv. Election**

This is the process under democracy through which people or citizens exercise their freedom and in alienable right to organize their life and choose those whom they delegate their right as representation; in other words, an election means that sovereignty belong to the people and those who serve in public office must do so at the pleasure of the electorate Ikedi, (2020). Election is a vehicle for effecting Democratic change and the mode of its conduct a tool for a sustainable Democracy. Democracy is guaranteed when elections are conducted in a free, fair and credible manner. A simple attempt at defining Elections depicts a political exercise that affords citizens the opportunity to select those who represent them in government Ujo, (2011; 177).

#### **Factors Affecting Nigeria's Democracy**

The Nigerian Democracy from 1999 till 2023, has been affected negatively, the Nigeria's Fourth Republic which fall within the Twenty-Five of Uninterrupted

Democracy are;

#### **Weak Institution**

One of the greatest problems associated with the philosophy behind the deepening of Nigeria's Democracy is the existence of a fragile institution that can be manipulated by politicians that are selfish and greedy, so much so that most institutions in Nigeria are at the beck and call of the Nigerian Elites Adetula and Adeyi, (2014;63).

**a. Poverty:** Democracy is Synonymous with development, quantitative and qualitative transformation but in Nigeria, since 1999 to 2023, Nigerians are poorer, living in destitution, lack and squalor, meaning that Nigeria has not yet embrace the tenants of Liberal Democracy and Nigerian Politicians are aware of this and usually take advantage of the poverty of the people in every General Election to manipulate their psyche through the weaponization of poverty which make it easier for Nigerian Politicians to manipulate their vote to continually remain in power. Habu, (2020; 587).

**b. Illiteracy;** Illiteracy Is another reason why Nigeria's Democracy should be deepened, major of Nigerian in the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot read or write, making them blind follower to indecent and dubious politicians whose stuck in trade is to deceive those that are ignorant of what is happening around them just to steal and manipulate their votes using criminal means through inducement just to buy their votes because of illiteracy, there is a high risk of docility among Nigerian electorate, political ignorance among Nigerian has provided a fertile ground for the manipulation of Nigerian Electoral System and the consequence of such manipulation has led to bad governance and underdevelopment of Nigeria, Yorom, (2020; 179).

**c. Poor Justice System;** One of the basic elements of liberal democracy is Independent judicial system between 1999 to 2023, which is the Nigerians Fourth Republic Judicial Independence has been elusive and the present state of the Nigerian Judiciary has been heavily criticized for been partisan, unindependent, too expensive and above all working for politician in Nigeria instead of help to promote democracy by decision and judgment and this has made a

lot of Nigerian to loose interest in her Democracy Goodness, (2022; 134).

**d. Insecurity;** Security is one of the Lall mark in entrenching democracy, for over decade Nigeria has been grabbling with insecurity ranging from personal insecurity, food insecurity, kidnapping, terrorism, armed robbery and other violent crime that has negated the spirit and intent of Democracy, so much that Nigerians are beginning to question the rationale behind adopting Democracy as her form of Governance when the life and property of the people cannot be protected, this have called for concern that Nigeria should find an alternative to Democracy if the life and property of the people cannot be guaranteed.

**e. Poor Electoral Management Body;** The inconsistency of Nigeria's Electoral Management Body through the Independent National Electoral Commission to give Nigerians free, fair and credible Elections is one of the main reason(s) why there is urgent need to deepen Nigeria's Democracy, the fact that INEC enjoy a first-line charge of budged for the purpose of conducting a credible elections yet fails is of utmost concern to well-meaning Nigerians and INEC deploy billions of Naira for litigation against the election it conducted meaning that INEC credibility in the eyes of Nigerian electorates both within and outside the country is really in doubt.

#### **f. Theoretical Analysis**

This paper adopted the Elite Theory, in almost all democracies elite are ideal typically-social heterogenous emtonomous from one another and engage in decentralizing process. That is why we can say that Elite theory is a perspective in Political science use to provide explanations on the working of democracies because Elite Theory argue that a small, self serving and powerful group controls power, resource and decisions. And one of such powers is the power to appoint and determine who and who become electoral officers in the conduct of an election which the elite are part of as a contestant, the decision(s) of the way and manner the electoral system is to be managed are all influenced by these Elites.

The implication of this is that with the presence of the elites as the driver of the electoral and democratic system, Democracy in Nigeria will continue to noisedive, the dividend of Democracy will continue to be eroded, Nigeria will continue to have strong men and weak institutions at the detriment of growth and development even in the presence of Nigeria's enormous resources.

#### **4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

In liberal Democracies of Europe and America, Democracy is one of the centripetal and centrifugal forces that aid quantitative and qualitative transformation of the societies, this is because democracy in these societies are anchored on good governance and the presents of Good Governance has helped both as a concept and as a practice, unlike Nigeria, rational thinkers are beginning to question the rationale for Nigeria adopting Democracy as its form of government, due to the underdevelopment, bad governance and insecurity that has been linked with democratic practice in Nigeria, Asogwa (2016;58), hence the need for the deepening of Democracy in Nigeria.

The implication of not deepening Nigeria's Democracy is better imagined as presently all the indices of underdevelopment has been tripled, presently, Nigeria is one of the most illiterate countries in Africa and by extension the world and this has negatively affected political and Economic Development of Nigeria, so much that in 2021 Nigeria was rated as one of the less developed country in the world considering its enormous resource, no thanks to the faulty recruitment of leadership through a faulty and corrupt leadership process that is bedeviled with corruption, indiscipline, recklessness and dishonest and no outcome with such characteristic that can aid development of the society especially as it affects Nigeria, Halidu (2011:76).

Nigeria cannot make headway with the type of Democracy that is currently been practices in Nigeria. There are insinuation in certain quarters

that if Nigeria Democracy is not rescued the country collapse meaning that Democracy instead of bringing quantitative and qualitative transformation has rather brought to it citizens sorrow, sufferings and lamentation and this calls for concern because Democracy ought to bring succor to the people, but as it is currently practice, Democracy in Nigeria need to be rescued and to achieve this rescue, Nigerian need to deepen it democracy to achieve the status of Liberal Democracy with is synonymous with development and nation building, Okafor, (2012;80).

Again, the backwardness of Nigeria and highly indebtedness since the embrace of Democracy in 1999 marking the emergence of the Fourth Republic there has been more Nigerians thrown in poverty, more Nigerian are not out of school thereby increasing the level of illiteracy, promotion of cash and carry judiciary, the presence of weak institution with the emergence of strong men is actually a pointer that Nigeria need to deepen it Democracy as it is being currently practice Olukoshi, (2011;60).

Nothing is apparently liberal in Nigeria's democracy especially considering that brand of Democracy currently practiced in Nigeria that is not depend by the sovereignty of the people from 2015 till 2023 Democracy has been defined by heavy court process, highly elitist with less than 10percents of the population defining and determining the faith of over 200 million Nigeria and Nigerian in the perspective of transformation as Nigerians are become poorer even in the face of Democracy, and Democracy was supposed to be synomous with good and better life of the people Udensi, Daasi, Emah and Zukbee (2013;49).

The present situation and circumstance has made Democracy to become a suspect, as Nigerians are disenchanted when the concept Democracy is mentioned. Nigeria is grabbing with the challenge of Good governance, Poor Infrastructure, high level of unemployment, insecurity, high debt, poverty, absence of social amenities and voters' apathy. Are some of the challenges that has negatively affected Nigeria's Democracy.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The presence of weak institutions and the availability of strong men have pave way for the legitimation of poverty, squalor and lack, this has negatively increase the level of illiteracy, poor justice system, insecurity, bias and partisanship of Electoral Management Body, with the avalanche of the aforementioned, bad governance has been associated with the Nigerian Political system and backwardness and if nothing is been done to deepen Democracy in Nigeria the fragility and or the collapse of Nigeria is eminent and it is base on this that Nigeria's Democracy need to be deepened and to deepen Nigeria's democracy the following suggestion(s) is made to include;

A holistic review of the Nigerian constitution to majorly affect the Electoral clauses that will help to improve on the electoral system, to reflect the tenants of liberal Democracy for the purpose of eliminating Ethnic, Religious and Identity Politics.

There is need to deepen democracy through restructuring of the judicial system; by making sure that the judiciary is not left with any option of declaring or affirming anybody as a winner of the election in Nigeria's election system, the sovereignty of the people should be paramount and to achieve this the Electoral Management Board should make an opportunity for the people to have People's Election Commission (PEC) where issue of Electoral offences will be tried and verdict determined by this commission through their representation in the commission.

Good governance should be demanded to ensure provision of social amenities to reduce the level of poverty for the purpose of discouraging negative influence by politician in any Electoral Year. The laws should be review to prevent the Executive from appointing INEC Chairman and commissioner to prevent institutional manipulation.



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## IDEOLOGICAL-RELIGIOUS ROOTS OF NON-STATE VIOLENCE: THE BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This paper offers a close reading of the ideological, religious, and cultural mindset of the Boko Haram movement as epitomized in the mindset and doctrinal values of its key founders and ideologues. The paper argues for a critical investigation of not only the economic and cultural pressures that the Boko Haram movement had to contend with but also the subtle ideological and religious interpretations of key Islamic doctrine that the movement's leaders took on board and re-interpreted in a different context from those of the 7th -10th centuries. The central objective of this paper is to highlight the efficacy of the argument that a clear understanding of those issues is central to a scholarly study of the Boko Haram movement and its subsequent transformation from a pacifist organization to a violent Jihadi movement.*

**Key words:** Ideology, Religious Violence, Jihad, and Fanaticism

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### Introduction

Many scholars have sought to explain the deep ideological and sectarian heritage of the Boko Haram movement in Nigeria. These scholarly efforts range the historical origins of the group as a religious movement (Ibrahim et al (eds), 2017; Abimbola, 2010; Thurston, 2018 and Brigaglia, 2012a), the group's violent insurrection (Mantzikos, 2013; Walker, 2016); extremism dispositions (Adesoji, 2010) to their open confrontation with the security forces (Ibrahim, 1998; Campbell and Harwood, 2018 and Hentz, 2018); ideological temperament (de Montclos, 2014 and Mantzikos, 2010); and linkage with international terrorist organizations (Gourle, 2012).

### The Rise of Boko Haram

The official name of Boko Haram is *Jama'at Ahl al-Sunnah li- l Da'awah wa al-Jihad* or *Jama'atul Ahlis Sunnah Lidda' Awati Wal-Jihad* or *Jama'at Ahl al-Sunna li'l-Da'wawa'l-Jihad 'ala Minhaj al-Salaf*. Literarily the appellation could be translated as "People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and Jihad"

or "The Association of the People of the *Sunna* (i.e., tradition of the Prophet) for Preaching and Jihad according to the *Salafi* Method". Thus, not a single leader of this group from Muhammed Yusuf to-date has ever called this religious movement Boko Haram (translated: Westernization (Education) Is Sacrilege or Western Education is a Sin/sinful). Despite this truism, Boko Haram is the recognized and acceptable name of the group in domestic and international fields. But this name is an interpolation or a crude rendition of the group's stand against western influence and culture on Muslim society. It is the name popularized, especially by the Press and International Community.

Muhammad Yusuf was an indigene of Girgir Village in Jakusko Local Government, Yobe State. He grew up in northeastern Nigeria, an area "dominated entirely by the *Sunni*" (Monguno, 2017, p. 202). The area falls within the ancient kingdom of Kanem-Borno Empire famous for its rooted *Sunni* Islamic tradition and its role in the dissemination of knowledge and scholarship for long. Historically, Islam reached

the area around 665 and 666 AD and became the state religion with the *Mais* (Kings/Rulers) and citizens believing in its practice and sanctity (Usman and Alkali (eds), 1983). The *Ulama* (religious scholars) were highly respected and bestowed with privileges for their knowledge and scholarship. The area became a sanctuary for those seeking knowledge and was referred to as "the East" (*Gabas*) from all over Africa. These scholars were linked with the establishment of Islamic learning centers (*Tsangaya*) in faraway areas, such as Hausaland (Kano, Zazzau, Sokoto, Katsina, Lafia,) Nufeland (Kutigi, Enagi, Lapai, Bida, Kagara, Kontogora and Borgu) Fombina (Adamawa) and Yoruba land (Ilorin, Ibadan, Lagos, Ilaro, Ibora and Ibese). Thus, Yusuf was born and bred in an area known for its Islamic learning and propagation. It is a region that saw the emergence of "Islamic revivalist movements" under the persuasive conviction for the imminent apocalypse and the rise of the *Mahdi* (Islamic Reformer) (Brakoniecka, 2016; Thurston, 2016 and Sani, 2007).

As most leaders of religious movements, Muhammed Yusuf began his vocation as a student and later an Islamic preacher propagating the tenets of the religion in northeastern Nigeria. He perambulated from one renowned scholar or sect to another (Gari, 2017). He was initially known to be a *Shi'ite* under the leadership of Ibrahim El-Zakzakky's Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) with whom he had a disagreement, leading him to join a breakaway faction of the sect, *Jama'atu Tajdidi Islam* (JTI) (Salaam, 2013). Dissatisfied with *Shi'ism*, he abandoned the doctrine and became a follower of *Jama'at Izalatil Bidiawa Iqamatus Sunnah* (in short: *Izala*) (translation: Society for the support of Prophet's tradition and against innovations), the dominant and the most influential popular Islamic movement in northern Nigeria. The group is an outpost of *Salafism* in Nigeria (Anzalone, 2018). *Salafi* or *Salafism* is a movement within *Sunni* Islam advocating a return to the authentic traditions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as practised by the *Sahabah* (Companions of the Prophet),

*Tabi'in* (their successors) and *Taba al-Tabi'in* (successors of the successors). The *Salafists* stress that all actions or inactions in Islamic practice must be based on the Qur'an, the *Sunnah* (traditions of the Prophet) and the *Ijma* (Consensus) of the *Salaf*. The origin of the group in Nigeria is linked to late Sheikh Abubakar Gumi, a renowned Islamic scholar and Grand Khadi of the then northern Nigeria. The Movement aims at eliminating traditional, cultural and heretical innovations and returning the society to the authentic Prophet Muhammad model. *Izala* opposes *Sufism* (Specia, 2017) and other sects, such as *Qaddiriyya*, *Ahmadiyya* and *Tijjaniya* (Paden, 1973). Thus, *Izala* is a response against religious innovations represented and promoted by other sects that have been prominent in northern Nigeria.

Joining *Izala* availed Muhammad Yusuf the benefits of coming into a relationship and the tutelage of great *Sunni Salafist* Islamic scholars and members of the group, such as the late Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam, the late Sheikh Muhammad Auwal Albani, Sheikh Muhammad Abba Aji, Imam Ali Gabchiya and Sheikh Abubakar Mujahid (Kassim, 2015:188). Yusuf was a regular attendant of Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam's *tafsirat* at Indimi Mosque, Maiduguri who saw in him a promising upcoming scholar and a leading figure amongst the youth (Smith, 2016). However, the relationship became sour as Yusuf began to deviate from the authentic Islamic tenets, which led to the assassination of Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam on 13 April, 2007 while leading the (*Subh*) dawn prayers at Dorayi *Juma'at* Mosque in Kano (Brigaglia, 2012b). This assassination is acknowledged to be "carried out on the orders of Muhammad Yusuf" for his criticism of the group's hardline views on many Islamic issues (Walker, 2012:4).

### **Precursors: The Influence of Ibn Taymiyyah on Boko Haram**

However, the scholar that had a lasting influence on Muhammed Yusuf's thinking was a puritan *Salafi* scholar, Taqi Ad -Din Abu al-Abbas Ahmed Ibn Abd al-Halim Ibn Abd al-

Salam al–Numayri al–Harrani Taymiyyah, who was born on January 22, 1263 in Harrani town in modern day Turkey. The influence Ibn Taymiyyah had on Yusuf can be seen in the naming of his mosque and the center of his sermons, Ibn Taymiyyah Mosque in Maiduguri.

Ibn Taymiyyah was from a learned family of one of the schools of thought, Hanbali. He was a *Salafi* theologian, philosopher, prolific writer, thinker and the political figure of his era. Taymiyyah's central ideology as all *Salafists* was the eradication of "*Bidi'ah*" (innovations) and the promotion of strict adherence to Islamic principles and the implementation of *Shari'a* (Islamic Law). His propagation was for a return to the Islamic practice of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) era and justifying *Jihad* (holy war) (Cherski, 2017) not only on non-Muslims but even those (Muslims) deviating or running their states not based on the *Shari'a*. His preaching brought him into conflict with authorities, leading to his numerous incarcerations. His staunch stand against innovations (Maevskaya and Aga, (2021) and the promotion for *Shari'a*–compliant governance is seen through some of his books, such as, "*Al-Siyasa al-Shari'a*" (The Book of Governance According to *Shari'a*), "*Minhaj as-Sunah an –Nabawiyyah*" (The Way of the Prophet's *Sunnah*), "*As – Sarim al-Maslul ala Shatim ar – Rasul*" ("The Drawn Sword Against those who Insult the Messenger"), *Kitab Al-Iman* (Book of Faith), *Al-Khalimul Dayyib* (The Good Word), *Al-jawami* (General Questions), *Al-Furqan* (Discernment), *Al-wasi Sa bayn al-Haqq wal-Halq* (The Intermediate between Allah and His Creatures) *Al- tawassul wal-wasila* (The Invocation of Allah through a third party) *al-Maslul Ziyarat al-Qubur* (Visits to Tombs), *Tal'his al-Istgasa, Ar –Raad alja al-Ihnai, At–Tauassul' ual' Uasilja, Al – Istikama, Al-Mustadrak alja madzhmu al'– Fatava, Iktida Siratil'–Mustakim*, for instance.

Ibn Taymiyyah's influence on the development of *Salafism* in the Middle East and other parts of the world is not contestable. His ideas are also linked to the rise of Islamic revivalism across the world. Violent *jihadists* and militant and radical Islamic Movements, such as Al–Qaeda, Al–

Shabaah, Abu Sayyaf Group, Taliban, Al-Nusrah Front, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Jabhat Fatah al-Sham, Boko Haram, Muslim Brotherhood, Abu Sayyaf, Ansar al-Islam, Ansar Dine and Boko Haram are the products of his ideological propagation. His sermons encouraged resisting oppression and opposing people not following recognized Islamic tenets and obligations and not abstaining from prohibited practices. His short but influential treatise, entitled *Qa'ida fial-Inghimas fi al–Aduww wahal yubah fiha?* ("A Principle Regarding Plunging into the Enemy, and is it Permitted?") has been the most quoted among the armed *jihadists* to support martyrdom. "*Inghimas*" is plunging into enemy ranks in order to destroy or eliminate as many as possible, thereby sacrificing one's life, which is now central to most modern armed *Jihadist's* Movements. "*Inghimas*," according to Ibn Taymiyyah is not to be equated with suicide, which is sinful in Islam.

### **Transformation from Ahl Sunna Wal Jama'a to Boko Haram**

Muhammad Yusuf was not the founder of *Ahl Sunna Wal Jama'ah Hijra* (Adherents to the *Sunna* and the Community of Muslims), the precursor of the Boko Haram group, which was formed in 1995 in Maiduguri, Borno State, northeast Nigeria. The idea was that of a little-known individual named Abubakar Lawan (Oyegbile and Lawan, 2007). The founder left Nigeria in 2002 for further studies in Saudi Arabia, leaving a vacuum to be filled by Muhammad Yusuf (Gari, 2012). Within a short period of time, Yusuf had personalized the group by ousting out all those opposing his leadership and disagreeing or quarreling with his sermons and interpretation of the *Holy Qur'an* and *Hadith*. Initially, he allied himself with the existing structure of *Izala*, which has the support of both conservative and modern educated Scholars, such as the late Sheikh Abubakar Gumi, Sheikh Kabir Gombe, Sheikh Sani Yahaya Jingir, Muhammed Auwal Albani and late Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam. His association with the *Izala* opened the opportunity for him to relate with renowned

Islamic Scholars, thereby expanding his horizon and endearing him to more supporters from Borno, Yobe, Adamawa and Bauchi States and from neighboring countries, such as Niger, Mali, Chad and Cameroon. At the initial stage, Yusuf showed no sign of radicalism, fundamentalism or violent disposition. He was more into the propagation of Islam, cultivating rapport with the authorities than usurping power to implement the *Shari'a*.

The debate for and against the implementation of the *Shari'a* in the 1990s by some states opened a wide opportunity for Yusuf to get close to the political and business elites of Borno State. The reluctance of the then Governor of Borno state, Mala Kachalla (May 1999-2003), to implement the legal system led Yusuf into alliance with Ali Modu Sheriff, who was a contestant to the seat. This alliance contributed to the defeat of Governor Mala Kachalla in the 2003 gubernatorial election. For his support, the elected Governor, Ali Modu Sheriff, appointed Buji Foi, his right-hand man and disciple of Yusuf, as the Commissioner for Religious Affairs. But the honeymoon was short-lived as Yusuf and his supporters who were increasing into thousands were not impressed or satisfied with the ways and manners the *Shari'a* was being implemented by the newly elected Governor Ali Modu Sheriff (de Montclos, 2014).

Initially, Yusuf was an amiable personality ready to exchange ideas with scholars, such as Sheikh Muhammad Awwal Adam Albani (Saidu, 2012) or even debate with other scholars on religious matters. A case in point was the debate he had with Sheikh Isa Ali Pantemi on June 25, 2006 (Cook, 2018i). This debate was one among many conducted between 2004-2006 between him and other scholars, such as the one with Idris Abdul Aziz Bauchi on February, 2008 (Mohammed, (2014). However, as his ideas matured and transgressed from religious to political affairs with his armed *jihadist* tendency becoming more apparent, cracks appeared between him and *Izala* scholars and political elites in Borno State. The group separated itself from the tutelage of *Izala* and started to act independently by denouncing authorities for not

running the state according to the *Shari'a*. He equated non-compliance with the *Shari'a* as polytheism. He fell out with those in authority and *Sunni* scholars. His sermons were rooted in the rejection of the secular Nigerian State and the condemnation of western values, public service and governance (Brakonieka, 2016). He used his sermons to polish his views by leaning towards armed *jihadist* scholars, such as Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a Palestinian-Jordanian cleric known for his hardline ideological extremism. He was known as one who described democracy as a kind of apostasy and of the introduction of a concept of *al-wala wa-l-bara* (absolute loyalty to true Muslims and rejection of all others that are not) (Wagemakers, 2008). Thus, his (and later Shekau's) hostility against democracy was due to this cleric influence.

He exploited the doctrine of *al-wala wa-l-bara* in order to have the total loyalty of his supporters and make them amiable and submissive to his call. This explains their readiness to execute his dictum, including sacrificing themselves through suicide or the selective assassination of individuals. His charisma, eloquence and rhetoric attracted many followers, especially the youth (Salkida, 2012), who identified him as a savior against the nation's injustice and maladministration (Michael and Bwala, 2009). Although seen as a savior, he never claimed to be nor upgraded his status to that of a *Mahdi* (i.e., the rightly guided or a reformer/revivalist), despite the traditional belief in the expected appearance of such a personality, who would return the religion to its pristine beginnings (Brakoniecka, 2016). He did not make the sacrilegious mistakes of Muhammad Marwa; the leader of the Maitatsine group and uprising of 1982 in Kano who claimed prophethood (Adesojo, 2011 and Braji (1998).

His sermons emphasized waging armed *jihad* as a necessary duty for all Muslims. This became a pivotal set-up for the radicalization of Boko Haram, which spread within Nigeria and the Chad Basin. His ability to talk to his audience in the language they understood and give examples with the circumstances around them,

such as pervasive poverty, class exploitation, injustice and domination, endeared him greatly. This explains the former Ambassador of the United States to Nigeria, John Campbell's conclusion that the sect is a "movement of grassroots anger among northern people at the continuing depravation and poverty in the north" (Walker, 2012:9). Thus, without means of sustenance, the poor and the dispossessed and uprooted individuals without legitimate opportunities to lead a decent life found a haven in the extremist pose of Boko Haram. The bulk of its foot soldiers are members of the lumpen proletariat class, motorcycle and taxi drivers, manicurists, shoe-shiners, laborers, school drop-outs, *Almajirai* (Qur'anic students), wanderers and the mass of the unemployed youth suffering from economic hardships or the effects of the wars in neighboring Chad, Niger, Mali and Libya. Lewis's (2002:2) assertions that "social grievances often find religious expression through fundamentalist appeals to piety or through Islamic challenges to the political status quo..." is thus apt in describing the impetus of the rise of a subversive religious group, such as Boko Haram.

His sermons and lectures disseminated through audio and video channels and his books, such as *Hadhihi Aqidatuna wa Manhaaju Da'awatin (This is Our Creed and the Method of Our Preaching)* promoted the strict application of Islamic Law, thereby laying the intellectual foundation for a more conservative movement bent on transforming the Nigerian society into a caliphate through violent uprising (Cook, 2018). This book, using the translation of Kassim (2015:189), clearly summarizes and exposes Yusuf's ideological leanings:

Our religion is Islam, our creed is the creed of *al-Salaf al-Sahil Ahlul suna wal Jama'ah*, and our *manhaj* (path) is jihad. The constitution is a lie; it is kufr (disbelief). Democracy is a lie; it is kufr. Working with the government that does not rule by the *Shari'a* is lie; it is kufr. Working with the security agencies is a lie; it is kufr.

His ideological position was made clear during an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 2009, when he stated that western-style "education is mixed with issues that run contrary to our beliefs in Islam. Like rain. We believe it is a creation of God ...We also reject the theory of Darwinism" (Boyle, 2009 cited in Pharm, 2012: 3).

The break with the *Izala* was a necessity for Yusuf to transform his *Yusufiyya* group (Fasure, 2003) into one of the three categories of *Salafism*, the militant *jihadists* who endorse and participate in armed struggle to restore Islam to its pure form as practised by the *sahabah* (Companions of the Prophet) and establish a Caliphate (theocratic government). The other two known categories are the apolitical ("purists") group, who strive for scholarship and proselytization. This group avoided politics in order not to create discord, disharmony and chaos among Muslims. The last group is of "political activists", whose aim is to promote and defend Muslim interest by getting involved in politics without advocating armed struggle. This group (exemplified by Abul a'la al-Maudidi of Pakistan) participates in politics trusting that the *Shari'a* and other necessary reforms could be enacted through peaceful advocacy.

### **Muhammad Abubakar Shekau and Boko Haram's Transition to the *Khawarij* Creed**

The killing of Muhammed Yusuf while in the custody of the Nigerian Police transformed Boko Haram into one of the most indoctrinated, extremist and deadly religious movements in the world. As some scholars argued, the indoctrination process operated by an extremist organization, such as a religious one like Boko Haram, leads to fanaticism and violence (Webber et al, 2017). Schmid (2014) characterizes religious extremism with blind obedience, quest to establish a utopia, belief in the end justifies the means and the declaration of holy war. Arena and Arrigo (2005) have argued that the consequence of religious extremism is radicalism, violence and authoritarian leadership. Extremism is sustained by the resentment kindled by real or perceived

injustice (Sageman, 2008), such as the murder of Muhammad Yusuf by the security forces and pervasive grinding poverty encircling the youth in the face of abundance (Agbibo, 2013). This view seems quite correct when examining the rise of Muhammad Abubakar Shekau as the new leader of the group. His highly violent character manifested in his callous terrorist activities in Nigeria, and neighboring Chad, Cameroon, Mali and Niger Republic clearly demonstrated this theoretical perspective. He promised vengeance for the killing of Muhammad Yusuf and was quoted as saying, "Do not think *jihad* is over. Rather *jihad* has just began" (Tattersall and Maclean, 2010 cited in Pham, 2012:6). True to his promise and declaration, he transformed the group into an extremist one that believed its chosen path was the inviolably the true one.

Shekau's fanatical ideological belief manifested itself early when he clearly professed his commitment to bring down the political system and eliminate perceived enemies. His sermons glorified martyrdom and obedience and led to numerous suicide bombings in market-places, mosques, churches and any other crowded places (Afzal, (2020). Unlike Muhammad Yusuf, Shekau had never engaged himself in theological debates with other scholars but strategized his violent campaigns through audio and video messages, which were effective in mobilizing support, influencing the psyche of his audience and instilling fears in the generality of citizens (Cook, 2018). Being a warlord rather than a theologian and religious revivalist, he was more inclined to the use of violence as a means of subverting authorities. His erratic and fierce rhetoric and tetchy behavior in video and audio messages sanctioned massacre, bombing and marrying off, selling or enslaving the women and children of kidnapped victims drew the attention of both local and international communities. Committing such murderous onslaughts and publicizing them through social media outlets, such as YouTube and WhatsApp, led to the disturbance of the societal set-up, increased the number of displaced persons and witnessed mass migrations and developed a

culture of "silent connivance" (Braj, 2023) within the community as a result of fear.

The availability and easy usage of encrypted applications made it possible for the group to link up with its supporters and propagate its ideas. It gained international attention and notoriety with the bombing of important targets, such as the United Nations Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria on 22 August, 2011, numerous Police Stations and showing the beheading of hostages. Displaying sophisticated weaponry, such as anti-aircraft guns, anti-tank weapons, mortars, machine guns, rocket propelled grenades and mines that were smuggled through the nation's porous borders, convinced the world that the group was a threat to not only Nigeria but neighboring countries as well.

In his effort to garner international support, Shekau identified with, and moved towards ISIL (Ogbogu, 2015). With this relationship, the name of the group changed to *al-Dawla al-Islamiyya Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiya* (The Islamic State's West African Province (ISWAP)). However, this allegiance to ISIL in late 2014 was short-lived. ISIL accused Shekau of committing inconceivable violence and being a follower of the doctrine of the *Khawarij* sect. ISIL saw him as someone who had gone astray with his indiscriminate and unmitigated killings and slaughtering of people.

The *Khawarij* is the earliest sect in Islam, which was prophesied by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) (Ali, 2016). Its historical origin is linked to a political crisis between the fourth Caliph, Ali Bn Abi Talib, and Mu'awiyah Bn Abu Sufyan over succession to the caliphate leadership following the murder of the third Caliph, Usman Bn Affah, around 656AD. The efforts to resolve the crisis and the ensuing war, through arbitration, which failed, made the conflict be considered repugnant and a contradiction of the Islamic doctrine. Both factions of Caliph Ali bn Abi Talib and Mu'awiyah Bn Abu Sufyan and Bani Umayyaa companions were considered as having strayed away from Islamic principles. Thus, the name *Khawarij* (Arabic word: "*Kharaja*") which means exit or left) came to be linked to those who



withdrew or exited from the main contingent at the arbitration stage to follow its own acclaimed doctrine (Watt, 1973).

Thus, from its beginning in 656AD to date, the *Khawarij* has been a political rebel movement (Zubaidah and Zulkifi, 2016). The sect has numerous denominations from the moderate to the most radical. Moderates, such as *Ibadiyya*, *Najadā't* and *Sufriyya*, unlike the radical, for example are known for their involvement in intellectual and theological debates. The followers of Nafi ibn Al-Azraq's *Azāriqah Khawarij* are the most known extremist militant faction that is obsessed with upholding its new tenets of puritanism, moralistic zealotry and violence disposition. Nafi ibn Al-Azraq was known for being religiously revered by his disciples; those who disagreed with him were accused of apostasy and could thus be justifiably eliminated. Boko Haram's temperament, deed and ideological fervor clearly reveal their ideological kinship with the *Azāriqah* denomination of the *Khawraji* creed. Spannaus, (2007) is of the view that the doctrine of *Azāriqah* is based on principles such as:

- i) Condemning and eliminating non-*Azariqah* Muslims and sanctioning the killing and enslavement of women and children,
- ii) Considering the commission of any sinful act as demonstrating atheism. This includes the refusal to support the Movement in its rebellion against established authority. This act may attract the death penalty.
- iii) The children of unbelievers are also not spared; they are killed indiscriminately just like their parents;
- iv) Impermissibility of *taqiya* (dissimulation or hiding true belief of being an *Azariqah* (*Khawraji*) for fear of the consequences in the face of oppression)

Shekau's actions and utterances in videos and audios reflected and promoted these creeds. This explains his rigidity and obsession with the elimination, assassination or slaughtering identified enemies as well as his frequent and indiscriminate violence against the society. To

assert his leadership, he started with the elimination of his close associates (Kassim and Nwankpa (eds) 2018), such as Sheikh Abd al-Malek al-Kadunawi, Abu al-Abbas al Bankiwani, Abu Ammar, Taasi'u Abu Osama al- Ansari, Mustapha Chad, Kaka Allai, Abu Mujahid, Malam Umar and Abu Maryam. The group legalizes and justifies the killing or assassination of identified individuals in authority, such as village/ward heads, emirs and Local Government leaders, as well as the police and other prominent members of the security forces, as witnessed for example, in Maiduguri, Gwoza, Mubi, Bama in 2004 and Kano in 2007.

His indiscriminate campaign of violence, murder, confiscating properties, robbing banks and enslaving, kidnapping, assassinating and beheading victims frightened the society into "silent connivance". A case worth noting was the execution of around 70 agricultural workers at Zabarmari village, near the Borno state capital, Maiduguri. (Alfa and Maclean, 2020). For years, the farmers had an agreement with the group to tend their farms as far as they did not report the fighters' presence in the area to the Nigerian military. Attacking and eliminating a few group members by the Military convinced the group that the farmers had betrayed them. This led to such a gruesome reprisal on November 28, 2020. Thus, most communities had no alternative but to collaborate, shield or even provide relevant information to the group against the state's interests. This explains the acclaimed invincibility of the group, which hoisted its flag and administratively controlled 20 of the 27 Local Government areas of Borno State from 2014-2015. The seven Local Governments not under the flag of Boko Haram during that period were Maiduguri Metropolitan, Jere, Biu, Hawul, Shani, Bayo and Kwaya-Kusar. The group's continuous attacks in neighboring Yobe, Adamawa, Bauchi, Kano, Kaduna, Gombe, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states destabilized them and made farming and other economic and social activities impossible. The crisis also went beyond Nigeria's border and dripped into the Chad Basin region of West Africa.

The United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) reported in 2018 that more than 1000 children had since 2013 been abducted, including the 276 Chibok School girls. In the process of the abduction of the students at Dapchi Girls Secondary School, Yobe State, 5 girls lost their lives. Within a short period 2,295 teachers were killed and more than 1,400 schools destroyed by the group in different locations in the north east. The group deployed 117 children as suicide bombers in different parts of the country (Allen-Ebrahimian, (2017).

Thus, Shekau's justification for violence, enslavement, assassination and looting the properties of people clearly made him an *Azāriqah Khawarij* follower and the promoter of its dogma and not a follower of Abul A'la Maududi (Maududian) as categorized by Dikki (2017). Maududi (1903-1979) was a Pakistani Islamic scholar, philosopher, jurist, ideologue and an activist. Maududi was a purist but not an armed struggle *jihadist* like Boko Haram. Politics according to him is a lawful medium for the materialization of Islamic revolution. He was thus a political activist and a realist, who greatly contributed to the transformation of Pakistan into an Islamic state without taking arms. Shekau's character of violence and zealotry were considered by mainstream Islamists heretical.

ISIL disagreed with Shekau's extremism and the orchestration of mass murder of Muslims and Non-Muslims (Pisa and Hume, (2015). This led to ISIL's recognition and appointment of Abu Musa al-Barnawi in August 2016 to lead the organization under the name of Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP). Refusing his disposition and this change of leadership, Shekau renamed his faction *Jamaat Ahlus Sunnah li Dawah wal Jihad* (Community for the Propagation of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) Practices and *Jihad*). This led to a schism and intra wars, which in the end caused him his life. He killed himself using a suicide vest on 19 May 2021 at the negotiation meeting for a truce with ISIL representatives.

With the death of Shekau, the violence against the state and civilians subsided and most of the areas formerly under the complete control of the sect were freed by the Nigerian Military with the support and collaboration of the Civilian Joint Task Force (JTF) and Multinational Joint Task Force (composed of military personnel from the neighboring Chad, Cameroon, Benin and Niger Republic. The intensity of state pressure and internal squabbles among the Boko Haram and other terrorist groups, such as Ansaru and ISWAP, forced them to reposition their fighters to the rural and desolate parts of northeast, such as the craggy Sambisa Forest and the swamplands south and southwest of Lake Chad.

The groups changed their strategies from direct attacks of security forces, villages and urban centers to planting landmines, establishing checkpoints, sabotaging electricity power supply, attacking and kidnapping travelers on the highway and schools for ransom or summary execution for noncompliance to settle a fixed ransom (Duerksen, 2021). They have, thus, concentrated on attacking civilians and other soft spots as a new strategy. It is based on the above discussion that one can understand Boko Haram's *Azāriqah Khawarij jihadist* ideological disposition.

### **The Way Forward:**

The state needs to uproot the insurgents through kinetic and non-kinetic strategies. Non-kinetic methods would involve a combination of tactics, such as Winning Hearts and Minds (WHAM), in which the Nigerian State would need to win the hearts and minds of the communities that feed Boko Haram with fresh, young fighters who are convinced of the religious rightness of the group ideology and doctrinal values. This is especially important in the context of impoverished rural or remote urban communities that are yet to receive development projects, either from the local or central government. Another method in this instance is to set up formal schools for the re-education of the captured fighters and a veritable medical outreach for the wounded amongst them. This might include integrating

the captured fighters into a vocational program intended to give them skills that would get them integrated into the economic and cultural life of the surrounding communities. The Nigerian State should embark on a vigorous ideological offensive on the basic doctrines of the Boko Haram movement, such as questioning the canonical legitimacy of their claim that it is justified to attack mosques, markets, schools, and abduct and marry off young girls, or the whole basis of the group claims that waging *jihad* on a Muslim community is justified whenever that community supports an allegedly infidel" government (even when that very government is headed by a Muslim). Already, the Nigerian federal government has established the Northeast Development Commission, designed to build infrastructure in the region and establish more schools, roads, and medical facilities in a region that is one of the least developed in Nigeria.

For the Kinetic methods, the central government should intensify its military pressure on the Boko Haram insurgents by cutting off their supply lines and rooting them out from their established hideouts and sources of recruitment. Yet another is to better coordinate the regional military structure, which involves

the Niger Republic, Chad, Mali, Cameroon, and Benin, for a more effective military assault on the Boko Haram fighters.

### Conclusion

As in Social Theory, political theory privileges, in addition to structural analysis, the epistemological uncovering of the bedrock of the ideas, notions, mindset, and perspectives of a dominant group, in this case the Boko Haram movement. This tracing of the ideological roots of the group is crucial in understanding their motives, strategies, and doctrinal identity. The group's justification for its violent campaigns against the security forces and other unarmed groups and individuals is underdetermined by the group's ideological identifications and their allegiance to an orthodox and proto-violent heritage. This does explained why non-state social-political groups such as the Boko Haram had had to resort to violence and an ambitious program of universal *Jihad*, in its effort to challenge the state and its institutions in both violent ways and the battle for the ideological wining of the hearts of minds of the surrounding population.

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## TRADITIONAL AFRICAN CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES AS SOLUTION TO BANDITRY IN NIGERIA A STUDY OF GUMI'S INTERVENTION

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### Abstract

*This study examined Sheikh Ahmad Gumi's peace initiative in the context of traditional cum Islamic conflict resolution techniques. The study used both primary and secondary sources in data gathering. Descriptive survey design was adopted. The population of the study comprises all the residents, traditional rulers, community leaders, vigilante/security agencies and clergymen in Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna state, and Tafa Local Government Area of Niger state. Simple random sampling technique was used. Two hundred and fifty respondents were used as samples. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collections. Simple percentage was used for the analysis of the data. The paper applied the Youth Bulge Theory as explicatory framework. The main purpose of this study is to examine the traditional conflict resolution mechanism in the context of Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative in northwestern region of Nigeria. Based on the findings, the traditional and Islamic peace concepts have a wider acceptability among the different strata of people in the society. The research concludes that both the African Traditional Conflict Resolution mechanism and the Islamic peace method can be deployed in mitigating the extant violent conflict in some part of Nigeria. In the same line, the study recommends negotiation, amnesty and Peace Education programme in both formal and informal settings as part of effort to tame the lingering banditry ravaging the northwest part of Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Peace Initiative, Northwest Nigeria

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### Introduction

In the pre-colonial and traditional African societies, it was clear that Africans had conflicts, and had evolved conflict resolution techniques that scholars say could still be useful in managing modern conflicts, even as Nigeria faces more pronounced crises in the form of

banditry and terrorism in the northwest part of the country. Some of the features of African traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, according to Oyeboade (2015), include: negotiation, reconciliation, conciliation, mediation, divination, sacrifice, trial by ordeal, retribution, eyewitness account, communal trial,



reliance on culture; and African ad hoc judicial system coated in religious garb. Other methods used in pre-colonial Africa, which may still be relevant today, include: diplomacy, consultation, meeting, amnesty, apologies, forgiveness and compensation.

Causes of conflicts in traditional African societies have been enumerated to include: protection of family and dynasty, economic causes, land related causes, religious and cultural causes resistance to change, diplomatic row and personal issues, among others (Alubo, 2016 and Williams, 2010). To re-unite the nation, political leaders, over the years, adopted different mechanisms to address the challenges affecting the country with varying degrees of successes and failures. Invariably, conflict may generally exist wherever incompatible activities occur (Albert, 2014). However, the resolution, transformation and management of conflict may produce better results if well harnessed. To promote development in the traditional African sub-region, there must be peace, not just peace as defined by the absence of war, or some form of detente, but as an atmosphere of tolerance, harmonious co-existence and mutual development (Gofwan, 2014).

Playing the script of Africa cum Islamic models of conflict resolution, renowned Cleric, Sheikh Ahmed Abubakar Mahmud Gumi initiated what experts have dubbed Islamic and traditional conflict resolution techniques that are crucial in ameliorating the challenges facing the country. Without doubt, the Kaduna-based Muslim Cleric effortlessly deployed several mechanisms to fight insecurity, precisely kidnapping and banditry, tormenting Nigeria's northwest geopolitical zone. Shekarau, (2020) posited that Sheikh Gumi often-time led his team, and men of the law enforcement agencies to meet with the leadership of the bandits. In fact, the Sheikh commenced his mission by intrepidly foraying into the bushes in the Central and Southern Senatorial districts of Kaduna state, meeting communities of Fulani herdsmen allegedly breeding the main population of kidnappers and bandits terrorizing the region (Shekarau, 2020). The Sheikh's mission is since criminality and

conflict start in the mind, the solution must be sought in the mind through such strategies as peace education, persuasion, negotiation, mediation reintegration. He also created an opportunity that gave a voice to the bandits through which their concerns and plights are understood.

However, Sheikh Gumi came up with initiative towards reconciliation with several groups of the dreaded bandits, kidnappers and armed robbers in some parts of the Kaduna state, Zamfara, Katsina state, Niger state and Nigeria generally. The cleric strategy include organizing discussion sessions with the leaders of these miscreants with a view to cajoling them to lay down their arms and ammunitions so as to give peace a chance. Deploying a give-and-take strategy, as well as carrot and stick, Gumi's purpose is to strike a deal with the bandits on the cessation of the crimes and direct them to the path of righteousness. At the same time, Gumi collects and forwards their grievances against the Nigerian state to the authorities. Education, enlightenment and appeals were used to entice these daredevil individuals and bandits to see reasons and abandon their nefarious acts and embrace peace (Premium Time Annual Report, 2021). On this description, Nigerian has lost thousands of lives and wealth over the years to these meaningless conflicts. Therefore, it is in the light of the foregoing that, President Buhari (2020) ordered all the heads of armed forces, the police, religious leaders, and other security operatives to jointly work and immediately consider integrating Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative as part of a holistic approach towards restoring lasting peace and progress to affected communities. The intervention of the Clergy man has not gone down without criticism from other stakeholders.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Mostly people affected have observed that banditry in the North is caused by poverty, lack of education for herdsmen and entrenched culture of materialism. They say there is a large swath of ungoverned spaces in the North. They are also concerned about the weak action of

government in tackling the menace. They are quick to welcome any form of negotiation from any quarter that will the crisis to an end. Though, these are more of hypothetical or day-to-day readings of situations that will need some scientific corroboration. Hence, it is safe to say that one of the biggest gaps is that this study was unable to lay its hands on any scientific study on the activities of Sheikh Gumi. Similarly, even though a court of competent jurisdiction has declared that the bandits be tagged terrorists, the phenomenon has not abated either. The work of Sheikh, though published in the media, has not been subjected to academic scrutiny. This is perhaps one of the very few works to be done on the intervention of the Muslim Cleric. Hence, there is a research gap to be filled. The research work will help interrogate the activities of Sheikh Gumi and his team vis a vis the traditional cum Islamic method of peace and conflict resolution. It will also help understand the perception of people on the peace initiative.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the traditional conflict resolution mechanism in the context of Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative in northwestern region of Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. Examine the mediatory role of Sheikh Gumi peace initiative in northwestern part of Nigeria.
- ii. Investigate the strategies employed by Sheikh Gumi in the bid to eradicating violence conflicts in northwestern region of Nigeria.
- iii. Find out if Sheik Gumi's peace initiative fits into the known traditional African cum Islamic conflicts resolution methods of reconciliation, arbitration, mediatory, forgiveness, compensation and re-integration.
- iv. To find out how Gumi's intervention has worked in achieving peace in the northwest
- v. Find out the perception of the people on the mediatory strategies adopted by

Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative in northwestern region.

### **Research Questions**

To achieve the stated objective, the following research questions were put forward to guide the study:

- i. What is the nature of the mediatory role of Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative in northwestern region of Nigeria?
- ii. What are the conflict resolution strategies employed by Gumi?
- iii. Does Sheik Gumi's peace initiative fits into the known traditional African conflicts resolution methods?
- iv. To what extent does Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative supports peace and conflict resolution in northwestern region of Nigeria?
- v. What is the perception of the people on the mediatory role adopted by Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative in northwestern Region of Nigeria?

### **Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

This study covers some selected villages in Kaduna and Niger states in the northwest region where people were mostly affected by bandits. The villages under study are: Giwa LGA and Tafa LGA in Kaduna and Niger state respectively. The study focuses on the traditional African conflict resolution mechanism in the context of Sheikh Gumi peace initiative in North-western region, Nigeria. The human and financial resources were not covered in the work. The essence of the delimitation was to make a more thorough study of the areas covered in the study.

The paper introduces conflict resolution techniques with specific reference to traditional African cum Islamic system. It also carried out conceptual, literature, empirical and theoretical reviews in various sections. It consequently adopted the Youth Bulge Theory, and then presented its primary data, then delve into discussion of findings, conclusion and recommendation.

The study employed descriptive survey design to examine the traditional African conflict resolution mechanism in the context of Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative in northwestern region of Nigeria. The population of this study comprises of all the residents, traditional rulers, community leaders, vigilantes/security agencies and clergymen in Giwa, Kaduna state and Tafa, Niger state respectively. The population of the residents in Giwa, Kaduna state stood at approximately 286,427 people, while the population of Tafa in Niger state stood at about 83,544 (PHC Priority Tables, 2006). Simple random sampling techniques were used for the sample selection of two hundred and fifty (250) respondents in the area. These techniques were to ensure that there is an equal representative of the respondents in the area.

### Conceptual Discourse

#### Conflict

Conflict and peace are two important variables that stand as the basis for this research work. Both concepts are related and will be discussed subsequently as dependent and independent variables for the purpose of this study. According to Chaplin (1979), conflict is the simultaneous occurrence of two or more mutually antagonistic impulses or motives. Etymologically, conflict came from a Latin word: *Confligere*, which means to strike together (Akinjobi, 1967). Roderick Ogley (2006) simply defines conflict as "incompatibility in the aim, goals or interests of two or more individuals, groups or other units." Wilson and Hanna (1990) described conflict as a struggle involving ideals, values, or limited resources. However, Deutsh (1973) sees conflict as an action that interferes, injures, prevents, obstructs or renders ineffective another action considered incompatible. Albert (2001) described conflict as competition over resources, contradiction over value system, psychological needs of the people and the manipulation of information. Wilmot and Hocker (2011) defined conflict as a struggle between two or more independent individuals over perceived incompatible difference in beliefs, values and goals, or differences in desire

for esteem, control and connectedness. Conflict according to Wilson and Kolbe (1949) is the normal process of interaction particularly in a complex society, in which resources are usually scares. March and Simon (1958) defines conflict as a breakdown in standard mechanism of decision making. Conflict is the pushing and pulling, Giving and Taking the process of finding balance between powers (Akinwole, 1980).

**Researcher's operational definition:** For the purpose of this research, conflict is the antagonistic hostility against the Nigerian state by criminal bandits who kidnap, maim and terrorize for the purpose of acquiring material gains.

#### Concept of Peace

Ibeanu (2020) says even though peace is the absence of war, and by logical expression, war is the absence of peace, the definition is though attractive but cyclical and simplistic. It is inadequate for understanding the nature of peace. For instance, the Palestinians and Israelis have been able to establish peaceful use of water resources even as the war between them rages. In the same vein, Galtung (1990) explains that structural violence could not be defined as a state of war. He said it would be wrong to say a country bedeviled with structural violence or negative peace in the form of poverty, human right violation, oppression and intimidation, as peaceful. Etymologically speaking, the word peace comes from the Latin Feminine noun 'Pax' from which the English word is derived. It has varied connotations. It may mean the agreement between parties, respect for others, and quality of life, peaceful time, civil safety and security.

The divergent views of the concept of peace connote that an approach towards the resolution of conflict and promotion of peace is necessary. What this means is that the focus should be on peace education.

Johan Galtung (2017, cited in Best) categorized peace as negative and positive. To him negative peace "is the absence of violence, absence of war and positive peace is the integration of

human society and its structure.” Peace therefore means a state of social harmony, good governance, inclusiveness, respect for human rights and even distribution of social amenities. According to Author, peace research investigates the conditions for moving closer to peace or at least not drifting closer to violence. In the religious sense, peace studies believe in the peaceful state of mind. Peace researchers are composed of members of different religions of the world whose goal is to educate the public about the true concepts of peace. Peace builders and practitioners see peace as part of human condition. Thus different schools of thoughts have given myriad of definitions to the concept of peace. This range from philosophical, political, sociological and peace as a process.

### **Review of Related Literatures**

#### **Fatalities from banditry in northwest**

The pervasive armed banditry and its associated threats to human security in the northwestern region of Nigeria, particularly, Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna, Sokoto and Niger States, have become a subject of national security and public concern. Only recently, a Federal High Court in Abuja under Justice Taiwo Taiwo designated the bandits as terrorists, some of which were tagged or grouped as Yan Ta’ada and Yan Bindiga. The multifaceted layers of criminality involved, and recurrent nature of the armed banditry call for effective mechanisms to mitigate the threat it poses to peace and security in the affected States. In July 2019, the northwestern Governors began negotiating with a number of armed bandits operating in the region to curb the menace and further boost internal security in the affected States. Despite its recorded successes evident in the drastic decline in attacks, release of kidnapped victims and weapons recovery, the renewed attacks by bandits in Zamfara, Katsina and Niger States between November and December 2019 posed a threat to the peace agreements negotiated by the State Governors (Ahmed and Lewis, 2020).

Data generated from the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) indicates that armed

banditry led to the death of over 1,058 people in Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, Sokoto and Niger States between January and December, 2019. Also, the report of the committee set up to find solutions to banditry in Zamfara State supervised by the erstwhile Inspector-General of Police, reported a total of 6,319 deaths including women and children between June 2011 and May 2019 in the State. Additionally, an estimated 4,983 women were widowed, 25,050 children orphaned, and 190,340 others internally displaced between June 2011 and May 2019 in Zamfara State.

In Katsina State, over 2,000 people have been killed, 500 communities destroyed and over 33,000 people displaced. Further reports also revealed that over 10,000 cattle were lost, while 2,688 hectares of farmlands and 10,000 houses destroyed within 2011 and mid-2018 in Zamfara State. Also, the State recorded the loss of 147,800 vehicles and motorcycles between June 2011 and May 2019. In November 2019, an estimated 4,000 people were also internally displaced in Shiroro LGA of Niger State alone.

This represents an approximately 45-percent increase in attacks and a 65-percent increase in fatalities compared to the 2018–19 period. Many smaller attacks and abductions go unreported. Emboldened and increasingly organized as sophisticated criminal enterprises, these gangs have made global headlines with a series of mass kidnapping raids on boarding schools in Kaduna, Katsina, Niger, and Zamfara States.

There has been a doubling of kidnapping in 2021 in the North West compared to 2020. This continues a worsening trend for the past several years, resulting in fatalities that are nearing 1,000 annually. This is likely a significant undercount. There are now over 450,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) according to the [International Organization for Migration](#)—other sources suggest even higher totals. Previously, attacks had been mostly concentrated in rural areas, but now the bandits are venturing further away from their hideouts in the remotest communities. This is because many of those areas have been raided

repeatedly and are increasingly impoverished. So bandit groups are turning their attention to urban communities to get more money, to rustle more cattle, and to get larger ransoms. Now you find bandit gangs more frequently attacking local government headquarters and bigger communities that are closer to federal highways—especially since they have acquired the manpower and arms to confront bigger targets. This year, bandits have attacked military bases and police stations in Zamfara and Sokoto, which gave them access to greater firepower.

### **Conflict Resolution Techniques in Traditional African Societies**

According to Oyebode (2015), traditional African conflict resolution techniques are still relevant and are still being in vogue in modern African societies. Some of which includes; mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, arbitration and negotiation. It also includes employing extra-judicial devices and usage of legal maxims to persuade or convince the disputants about the implication or otherwise of their behavior. These methods have been effective in traditional African Society.

#### **Mediation**

Mediation is an old method of conflict management surrounded by secrecy. It involves non-coercive intervention of the mediators(s), called third party either to reduce or go beyond or bring conflict to peaceful settlement. Olaoba (2017) described mediation as a method of conflict resolution that was central to traditional African society. The mediators usually ensured that peace and harmony reigned supreme in the society. This is also usually couched with the dictum of *No Victor No Vanquished* as buttressed by the maxim of former Nigerian Head of State Yakubu Gowon (Isurmona, 2015). Mediators are sought from within the communities or societies of the parties concerned. Elders are respected as trustworthy mediators all over Africa, because of their accumulated experiences and wisdom. Their roles depend on traditions, circumstances and personalities, accordingly. These roles include:

pressurizing, making recommendations, giving assessments, conveying suggestions on behalf of the parties, emphasizing relevant norms and rules, envisaging the situation if agreement is not reached, or repeating of the agreement already attained (Bright-Brock, 2011). Former President Olusegun Obasanjo and many other older African leaders still play mediatory role across African troubled spots.

#### **Adjudication**

In traditional African society, adjudication involves bringing all disputants in the conflict to a meeting usually in the chambers or compounds of family heads, quarter heads and palace court as the case maybe. Dialogue was linked with the adjudicatory processes in traditional African societies (Olaoba, 2015).

#### **Reconciliation**

This was the most significant aspect of conflict resolution. It is the end product of adjudication. After the disputants have been persuaded to end the dispute, peace was restored. This restoration of peace and harmony was always anchored on the principle of *Give A Little And Get A Little*. This idea buttresses the idea of the disputing parties to give concessions. A feast was usually organized to confirm the readiness of the conflicting parties towards reaching points of compromise (Kotze, 2010). At least, as characteristic of African traditional society, conflict resolution method is the use of arbitration. The reconciliation function is practiced by an authority figure that mediates between conflicting parties but is empowered to make binding judgments. The purpose is not to render a judgment in law but to reconcile the conflicting parties and its norms. The relationship between the authority and the community is cushioned by community representatives who advise authority (William, 2010).

#### **Negotiation**

The intention here is to harmonize the interests of the parties concerned. Thus, even when the conflict involves a member against his or her society, there is an emphasis on recuperation

and reinsertion of errant member back into its place in society, as Sheikh Gumi has often suggested. The recovery of a dissident member can just as well be seen as the restoration of the harmony and integrity of the community, as the assertion of value consensus and social cohesion, so that the management of the conflict favours the concerns of both parties (Isaac, 2011). In traditional Yoruba society, peace was negotiated and apologies initiated. Such apologies were channeled through Yoruba elders, compound heads and chiefs of high caliber in the society. It was done on the representative level or quasi-representation. The Babaogun (patron) played the role of a representative in the sense of conflict resolution (Olaoba, 2015). Sheikh Gumi's intervention aptly fits into this role.

### **The African peace cosmology of Ubuntu**

It is coined from the Bantu language of East, Central and Southern Africa. According to Francis (2020), the African idea is based on the maxim that every single human being only becomes truly human being by means of relationship with others. As an indigenous conflict prevention and resolution concept, it embraces the notion of acknowledgment of guilt, showing of remorse and repentant by the perpetrators of injustice, asking for and receiving repentance, amnesty and paying compensation as a prelude to reconciliation and peaceful co-existence.

### **The Fulani Pulaaku cosmology**

According to Adesina (2018) Fulanis also called Peul or Fulbe are predominantly Muslims that are found mostly in West African countries of Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, Cameroon, Guinea, Chad and Gambia. They used the traditional parlance of Pulaaku as their traditional code of conduct to check excesses of members (Karim, 2020). Pulaaku aside being a set of guiding principles, has also been a conflict resolution mechanism. This much is important as studies have shown that most of the bandits are of the Fulani ethnic extraction. Through the use of Pulaaku, one who ferments trouble in the community is ostracized. (Sa'ad, 1999). The Pulaaku is

activated when a complaint is lodged with the Fulbe communal leadership by present some kola nut. An individual does not declare Pulaaku on his own, and only by the leadership or the Fulbe Traditional institution (elder or Ardo).

The Fulani Pulaaku is linked to the Hausa concept of Mutumin Kirki (an upright person) who enjoys all the privileges in the society, and who is the opposite of Mutmin Banza (uncultured person) who is denied all the privileges in the society.

### **The Yoruba concept of Omoluwabi**

According to Karim (2020), the concept of Omoluwabi is one of the strategies used by the Yoruba communities in conflict management. Historically, the Yoruba society have dealt with issues of character formation (Adesina, 2018). The notion of Omoluwabi encapsulates the following values: Iwa (character); Ihuwasi (expression of character); Isesi (habitual expression of character), and Ajumose (working in unison for social survival). These values are quintessential factors in Yoruba peace and social cosmology (Akiwowo, 1986).

### **The Igbo traditional Conflict resolution strategy**

The Igbo Traditional institution for conflict management is highly decentralized, and the following units play vital roles: The family, amala (Council of elders), Okpara system (elders male), Umuanna (Clan), Umuada (Female born in a town but married out), Age Grades, Assembly of the People, Ohanaeze (Assembly of the people and the King), hunters association, Agbara (local deities or oracles), the ancestors and oath taking are part and parcel of traditional conflict resolution mechanism. This traditional formula led to the peaceful resolution of the Aguleri-Umuleri-Umuoba Annam war (Karim, 2020).

### **Gumi's Peace strategy and the Islamic Philosophy of Conflict Resolution**

Shiekh Gumi initiative is based on the principles of Islamic and African philosophy of peace and conflict resolution. These approaches, though

controversial, has to do with the basic teachings of the Islamic religion.

These approaches are categorized, according to Hashimu (2021) as follows:

#### **Takhim model of conflict resolution**

Takhim, according to Hashimu (2021) is an Islamic concept of conflict resolution which literally means 'Arbitration.' In this model a third party arbitrator is selected to mitigate conflicting parties. The arbitrator is expected to possess certain qualities of justice, fairness and vast in Islamic jurisprudence. Once an arbitration agreement is submitted to a judge or Qadi, agreement is binding on the parties (Cadar, 2017).

#### **Suhl model of conflict resolution:**

The principles of Suhl (settlement) or Musalaha (Settlement) are twin conflict resolution techniques that revolve around the judicial system in Islam. Suhl goes beyond reconciliation but embraces consensus, as explained in the Holy Quran:

...And if you fear a breach between the twain (the man and wife) appoint an arbiter from his folk. If they desire amendment, Allah will them of one mind.(QURAN 4.35) Lo, Allah commands you that you restore deposits to their owners, and of you judge between people, that you judge with justice. Lo! Comely is this, which God admonish you. Lo! Allah is ever hearer, sear (Quran 4.58).

#### **Empirical studies and uniqueness of the research work**

Literature and research works related to the present study are scanty. Meanwhile, a study was carried out by Abdul (2020) to examine the role of Islamic techniques in conflict resolution in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja. Four objectives and research questions guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design; the population of the study comprised of all teachers, community leaders, religious leaders and parent in Gwagwalada

community. Stratified random sampling technique was used to sample one hundred and eighty two (182) respondents from four communities in the study area. Questionnaire and interview were the instruments used for data collection. The questionnaires were analyzed using mean (X), frequencies count and simple percentage in calculating the data. The findings revealed that different misconception among ethnic groups, society and misinterpretation of religious creeds leads to conflicts and thereby increases banditry and terrorism in the country. Based on the findings, recommendations were made that religious institutions should be encouraged to teach inter and intra faith studies. This according to the findings will help improve the understanding of tenet of the different religious groups in the country.

Another study was carried out by Ajayi and Buhari (2014) in their paper to investigate the methods of conflict resolution in African traditional society. This study examined the patterns or mechanism for conflict resolution in traditional African societies with particular reference to Yoruba and Igbo societies in Nigeria and Pondo tribe in South Africa. The paper noted that conflict resolution in traditional African societies provides opportunity to interact with the parties concerned; it promotes consensus-building, social bridge reconstructions and enactment of order in the society. The paper submitted further that the western world placed more emphasis on the judicial system presided over by council of elders, kings' courts, peoples (open place) assemblies, etc; for dispute settlement and justice dispensation. It concludes that traditional conflict resolution techniques such as mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, and negotiation as well as cross examination which were employed by Africans in the past, offer great prospects for peaceful co-existence and harmonious relationships in post-conflict periods than the modern method of litigation settlements in law courts.

Adamu, (2016) conducted a research to examine the impact of religious Education in

Promoting Human Rights in Colleges of Education in Kaduna State. The study involved 50 lecturers, and 568 students from the two colleges of Education we have in Kaduna state. The reason for choosing Colleges of Education is because it produces teachers who are expected to serve as good models for the students and the society at large. This study is premised on the fact that there are cases of human rights abuses in our colleges that need the intervention of lecturers especially in the field of religion who are highly respected by the society because of their emphasis on morality. The two colleges: Federal College of Education Zaria and College of Education, Gidan Waya, Kafanchan in Kaduna state. Data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, mean scores, percentages and t-test. The three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance to determine the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis. The findings of the study include among others: lectures and students of Islamic and Christian Religious Education has important roles to play in promoting human rights in Colleges of Education in Kaduna state. The study therefore recommends; workshops, seminars and conferences on human rights to be organized periodically and should be part of academic curriculum.

Ultimately, Shekwonuduza, (2019) carried out a research to examine the importance of studying religious studies in FCT College of Education Zuba, Abuja. The study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study comprises Islamic and Christian religious knowledge students in FCT College of Education Zuba, Abuja. One hundred and fifty (150) respondents were sampled for the purpose of this study. The instrument for data collection is questionnaire. The questionnaire was design to collect useful data from the respondents. The study adopted simple percentage, and frequency account to analysed the data collected. The finding revealed among others that the serious problem facing the teaching of religious studies in FCT College of Education Zuba, Abuja is lack of effective strategies in

teaching the subject. The study recommended that religious studies curriculum should be reviewed and updated to meet the modern way of teaching and learning of the subject.

In contrast, this present study relied on the traditional African conflict resolution mechanism in the context of Sheikh Gumi peace initiative in northwestern region of Nigeria, in order to understand the importance of conflict resolution, Sheikh Gumi's peace initiative needs to be taking into consideration, from the empirical study, much study has not been carried out to determine the strategies of Sheikh Gumi peace initiative in ameliorating conflicts in the country. Therefore, this present study will fill the gap by examining the traditional African conflict resolution mechanism in the context of Sheikh Gumi peace initiative.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Youth Bulge Theory**

Youth Bulge Theory aptly fits into this research work as enunciated by German scholar Gunnar Heinsohn and popularized in the 1990s by American Political Scientists Gary Fuller and Jack Goldstone (Hoffman & Jamal, 2013; LaGraffe, 2012). Proponents of the theory argue that conflict prone "societies are characterized by a Youth Bulge (a burgeoning youth population), while simultaneously facing limited resources. The theory situates the banditry and its attendant consequences within the context of "youth bulge." There is no universally agreed definition of the term "youth." However, the concept is often used to describe the age bracket between 15 and 24, though the upper age range could be as high as 35 in many African countries and the lower range as low as 12 in others (Hilker & Fraster, 2016). Also there can be a high degree of overlap between the definitions of "youth" and "children." For example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child defines "child" as anyone under the age of 18 years. In essence, youth "is better understood as a transitional stage in life between childhood and adulthood rather than as a rigid construct based on age" (Hilker & Traser, 2016).



The theoretical foundation of the Youth Bulge is based on the premise that countries with weak political institutions that are undergoing demographic transitions are vulnerable to social unrest, rebellion, and violent conflicts because of the likelihood that the unemployed male youth will seek socioeconomic advancement through extralegal means. Societies that fit the youth bulge profile are mostly prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and the Pacific Islands and usually have a large youth cohort (over 30 percent) relative to the adult populations (Schomaker, 2015; Hart, Atkins, Markey, & Youniss, 2014). This theory is relevant to this study given the burgeoning demography of youth and bandits in the country. According to the different statistics, Nigerian

Despite its popularity, youth bulge theory has been criticized for being a tool for the promotion of American interests. It has been alleged that the “demographic time bomb associated with a youth bulge is a myth used by the US to justify its military intervention and population control efforts in the South” (Corner House, 2014). The criticism has been further buttressed by the fact that youth bulge theory was originally aimed at providing US intelligence with a tool by which to uncover national security threats, coupled with the fact that a large youth population could be a blessing rather than a curse, as exemplified by the Asian Tigers (Corner House, 2014). Despite the criticism, the theory is still relevant in the explanation of banditry in northwest on the back of youth population outstripping the available resources and jobs availability.

**Criticism of Youth Bulge Theory**

**DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1: Sample Size for the Study**

S/N	Respondents in Giwa, Kaduna State LGA	Total Sampled	Respondents in Tafa, Niger State LGA	Total Sampled	Total
1	Residents	98	Residents	101	199
2	Traditional Rulers	2	Traditional Rulers	4	6
3	Community leaders	7	Community leaders	6	13
4	Vigilantes/security agencies	14	Vigilantes/security agencies	8	22
5	Clergymen	4	Clergymen	6	10
	Total	125	Total	<b>125</b>	<b>250</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2023**

Questionnaire was the instrument used for this study. The questionnaire was designed to collect useful information from the respondents. 125 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in Giwa LGA of Kaduna state, while another 125 questionnaires distributed to the respondents in Tafa LGA of Niger state making a total of 250 copies of the questionnaire administered with the aid of two research assistants that accompanied the researcher for

the distributions of the questionnaire in Giwa and Tafa LGA respectively. The data was analyzed using frequencies count of the answered questions from the respondents, which were afterwards translated into simple percentages in a tabular form for an easy interpretation.

**Research Question 1:** What is the nature of the mediatory role of Sheikh Gumi’s peace initiative in northwestern region of Nigeria?

**Table 2:** Responses on the Mediatory Role of Sheikh Gumi Peace Initiative. **N-250**

S/No	Items	Response			
		Yes		No	
		Freq.	(%)	Freq	(%)
1	Do you think Sheikh Gumi’s peace initiative is crucial in resolving conflicts in northwestern region of Nigeria?	202	80.8%	48	19.2%
2	Can Gumi’s negotiation/and reconciliation effort yield any result?	198	79.2%	52	20.8%
3	Would Sheikh Gumi’s effort towards peace and religious education as non-kinetic mechanism yield any positive result?	217	86.8%	33	13.2%
4	Do you think Sheikh Gumi’s discussion of negotiation, reconciliation, peace cum Islamic education and general amnesty for the bandits can be actualized?	51	20.4%	199	79.6%

**Source: Field Survey 2023**

Data from table 2 above shows that 202 respondents, representing (80.8%) agreed that Sheikh Gumi’s peace initiative is key in resolving conflicts in northwestern region of Nigeria, while 48 respondents representing (19.2%) disagreed with the question. Also, 198 respondents, representing (79.2%) answered yes to the research question that reconciliation with the bandits according to Sheikh Gumi’s peace initiative is the solution to violence conflict in northwestern region of Nigeria, while 52 respondents representing (20.8%) answered No to the question. More so, 217 respondents representing (86.8%) are in agreement that Sheikh Gumi’s steps toward educating the bandits on peace and religious knowledge is the solution to ongoing conflicts in northwestern region of Nigeria, while 33 respondents, representing 13.2% disagreed with the question. On the contrary, 51 respondents representing (20.4%) answered yes to the question on if Sheikh Gumi’s discussion on

amnesty for the bandits without adequate compensation will be actualized, while closely 199 respondents representing (79.6%) disagreed with the question. From the findings, the analysis shows that the role of Sheikh Gumi’s peace initiative, reconciliation with the bandits and educating them on the need to embrace religion and peace education is important in the effort to recalibrate and re-programme the bandits’ mindset.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent does Sheikh Gumi’s peace initiative support peace and conflict resolution in northwestern region Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Responses on the extent to which Sheikh Gumi’s Peace initiative support peace and conflict resolution **N-250**

S/No	Items	Response			
		Yes		No	
		Freq.	(%)	Freq	(%)
1	Are you aware that Sheikh Gumi’s team has been working for the optimum peace and conflict resolution in northwestern region of Nigeria?	221	88.4%	29	11.6%
2	Are you aware that Sheikh Gumi was accompanied by the security agencies to the bushes to discuss with bandits on the need to embrace peace?	203	81.2%	47	18.8%
3	Do you agree that Sheikh Gumi’s peace-making mission will reduce bandits’ nefarious activities in the northwestern region of Nigeria?	192	76.8%	58	23.2%

**Source: Field Survey 2023**

Data in table 3 above reveals that 221 respondents, representing (88.4%) answered yes to the research question that Sheikh Gumi and his team have been working effortlessly for the optimum peace and conflict resolution in northwestern region of Nigeria, while 29 respondents representing (11.6%) answered no to the question. Also, 203 respondents, representing (81.2%) are in agreement that security agencies accompany Sheikh Gumi to the bushes to discuss with bandits on the need to embrace peace and also mediate on their behalf, while 47 respondents, representing (18.8%) disagreed with the questions. 192 respondents, representing (76.8%) posited that Sheikh Gumi’s peacemaking mission will reduce

bandits nefarious activities in the northwestern region of Nigeria, while 58 respondents, representing (23.2%) disagreed with the research question.

**Research Question 3:** What are the perceptions of the people on the mediatory role of Sheikh Gumi?

**Table 4:** Responses on the perception of the people on the mediatory role of Sheikh Gumi

<b>N-250</b>					
<b>S/No</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Response</b>			
		<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
		<b>Freq.</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>(%)</b>
1	Are you aware that Sheikh Gumi’s peace initiative has generated many controversies among the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) for aggravating long-running religious and ethnic tensions?	181	72.4%	69	27.6%
2	Do you think Sheikh Gumi’s peace initiative is to deliberately belittle the Nigerian Army to portray them in bad light in the fight against terrorism and bandits in northwestern region of Nigeria?	49	19.6%	201	80.4%
3.	Do you think that Sheikh Gumi has the requisite experience to carry out such a conciliatory role?	31	12.4%	219	87.6%

**Source: Field Survey 2023**

Data in table 4 above reveals that, 181 respondents representing (72.4%) answered yes to the research item that, they are aware that Sheikh Gumi peace initiatives have raised many controversies among the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) for aggravating long-running religious and ethnic tensions, while 69 respondents representing (27.6%) answered no to the following question. Also, 49 respondents representing (19.6%) answered yes to the question that they sees Sheikh Gumi peace initiative as a deliberate act to belittle the Nigerian Army so as for the masses to portray the soldiers as bad light in the fight against terrorism and bandits in North-western region of Nigeria, while 201 respondents representing (80.4%) disagreed with the questions. 31 respondents representing (12.4%) posited that, Sheikh Gumi has the requisite experience to carry out such a conciliatory role, while 219 respondents representing (87.6%) disagreed with the research question.

**A Comparative Thought**

From the foregoing data, it is evidenced that Sheikh Gumi’s method of conflict resolution is in

alignment with African Traditional techniques to a certain degree. While Gumi accepted negotiation, mediation, arbitration, conciliation and reconciliation, amnesty, rehabilitation and reintegration. He has not spoken about the possibility of the bandits compensating the victims and the Nigerian State. Second, Gumi will not accept or believe in certain traditional techniques because of his Islamic Faith. These techniques may include: divination, even though he believes in prayers; oath taking, sacrifice, trial by ordeal, trial by secrete by societies, blood covenant, retribution, eyewitness account, communal trial, restitution and compensation, reliance on culture; and other un-Islamic methods. But his appeal for non-kinetic approach gained acceptance among the locals and victims who are desperately in need of peace. His effort is however in alignment with the known Islamic peace methods of Takhim (arbitration), Suhl and Maslaha (settlement), Nasiha (exhortation) and Taawun (Cooperation).

### **Discussion of Findings**

Based on the findings in table 2, the study reveals that 86% of the respondents accepted the non-kinetic view of Sheikh Gumi, and his appeal that the bandits' mindset be recalibrated and reprogrammed through such programmes as religious and peace education. The findings is in line with Murtadha, (2021) who posited that people who were involve in violence and all forms of cruelty activities in the country lack religious education and, therefore, they do not fear God. Indeed, nothing is as potent as the fear of God with regard to stopping someone from committing a crime. The findings in table 3 also reveal that almost 84% of the respondents believe that the cleric can succeed if supported by the government and other stakeholders in the country.

The findings in table 4 shows that 72% of the respondents confirmed that Sheikh Gumi is well informed enough in supporting the government and the communities in mitigating the menace of violence conflicts in northwestern region, and not to look down on the efforts of Nigeria Army in the fight against terrorism.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The research concludes that both the African Traditional Conflict Resolution mechanism and the Islamic peace method can be deployed in mitigating the extant violent conflict in some part of Nigeria, West Africa. The traditional peace system is more trusted and reliable to most Nigerians.

The study has thus revealed the significance of traditional techniques of conflict resolution in Africa and specifically Nigeria. This non-kinetic

approach being put to test by the controversial cleric would have paid off if supported by the government and the stakeholders. Data from respondents reveal that the cleric enjoys the support of ordinary Nigerians who eagerly want the conflict to end. It is thus recommended that government should launch an amnesty program for the repented bandits. The amnesty should be well crafted as to include a thorough rehabilitation and peace education to help reprogramme their mindsets. The Federal Government's programme such as trader Moni, Conditional Cash Transfer, and palliatives among others, can be extended to these bandits with a view of collecting their arms and ammunitions in exchange for, say one bull and two female cows on a loan basis. In the same vein, groups such as Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria should be involved in sorting out those that should benefit from the amnesty programme after undergoing a process of de-radicalization, drugs rehabilitation and then economic rehabilitation with a view to alleviating poverty and achieving lasting solution. There should be dedicated and well informed religious teachers to educate the bandits on the need to embrace change from their evil ways and embrace peace. Every religious leader, community leaders and securities agencies should emulate Sheikh Gumi initiative to address the issue of banditry so as to give peace a chance to reign in the country. African traditional peace resolution techniques and peace education should be accorded priority in the country's journey towards a peaceful and prosperous society.

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## **VIGILANTE GROUPS AND MANAGEMENT OF SECURITY IN NIGERIA'S FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA**

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### **Abstract**

*In recent years, Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented surge in insecurity, eroding public confidence in the federal government and conventional security agencies. Modern apparatus of crime control cannot adequately address the enormous spate of crimes without the involvement of local security mechanisms. This study discusses the escalating national insecurity and deficiencies in conventional security agencies. Conceptually, the paper elucidates scholarly views on security, crime and vigilante. Empirically, it assesses how vigilante groups in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) conduct intelligence gathering, surveillance, and community engagements to provide grassroots security through qualitative methodology involving interviews, focus groups, and participant observation with members of vigilante groups operating in AMAC. By closely engaging with these groups, the author was able to gather in-depth insights into their functions and contributions as informal community police. The findings of the study showed that vigilante groups serve as de facto community police and make vital contributions to local security management. The paper concluded that there is a need to better integrate vigilante groups into the broader security apparatus through frameworks to optimize their role, given their vital grassroots security provision. It further recommended frameworks to optimize vigilantes' role within a broader, coordinated security apparatus for Nigeria's capital region. Strategies include increased funding and training, among others.*

**Keywords:** Security, Insecurity, Vigilante, Crime

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### **Introduction**

According to the Nigerian Constitution (1999), the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government. However, managing security has been a critical issue in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT), particularly in the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). The rising rates of crimes such as banditry, kidnapping, and armed robbery have threatened its citizens' safety and prompted questions on effective security management. Historically, Nigerian communities relied on

traditional authorities to design crime prevention and control measures grounded in fear of supernatural consequences. However, colonial rule eroded these indigenous security frameworks in favor of modern state-centralized approaches.

The inadequacies in conventional security provisions in recent times have led communities, notably vigilante groups, to revive non-state security alternatives. Hauwa (2022) study revealed that locals perceive vigilantes better to provide personalized proximity policing



and rapid response services. Hence, they have stepped in to fill gaps in conventional security agencies, which is why the traditional authority strategically designed crime control and prevention at the local level. Crime prevention is part of managing security that deals with an action or actions taken to stop criminal activities from occurring in a community. Crime control is a method designed by the local authority and the government to reduce crime in a society. The conventional crime relegation control mechanism in favor of modern crime mechanisms has done more harm than good in Nigeria. It has been discovered that the high rate of crimes in Abuja is increasing daily with less effective measures from the government at all levels.

The study provides background on the rising insecurity in Abuja's Municipal Area Council (AMAC), where crimes like theft, kidnapping, and other social vices have threatened socioeconomic development. The inadequacies of conventional security agencies in addressing this insecurity have led to a resurgence of vigilante groups using traditional security approaches grounded in local knowledge. Recent studies like Shehu (2019) find that adopting vigilante mechanisms is the best way to reduce crime and boost security. Locals view vigilantes as better able to provide personalized, rapid response services than formal agencies. This has prompted vigilantes to step in and fill gaps in security provision through proximity policing and other strategic crime prevention and control measures designed at the grassroots level.

The paper discusses the revival of non-state security actors as an alternative means of addressing the menace of insecurity in AMAC, the context of rising crime, inadequate conventional policing, and the resulting comeback of localized vigilante groups in Abuja's municipal area. The paper examines this phenomenon and its implications for security policy and governance.

### **Concept of Security**

It is beyond a reasonable doubt that security is a very vital issue in the survival of any society or nation. This is because society will be rife with lawlessness, conflict, violence, and chaos and eventually collapse without providing Security that could protect life and property. Security is considered a dynamic condition, which involves the relative ability of a state to counter threats to its core values and interests. Security has been described as objective, measures the absence of threats to acquire values, and in a subjective sense, the lack of fear that such matters will be attacked (Wolffers, 1962). Many scholars emphasize the absence of threats to acquire value or tendencies that would undermine national cohesion and peace as a step for determining what Security meant. Security is the condition of safety from harm or danger, the defense, protection, and the absence of threats to acquire value.

The security of societies, whether primitive or modern, is essential because their survival and development depend upon the government, which people willingly surrender their rights and authority to protect them. In general conception, Security has to do with freedom from danger or threats to a nation, which is the ability to preserve and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interests, and enhance the well-being of its people. Thus, internal security could be seen as the freedom or the absence of those tendencies that could undermine internal cohesion and the cooperative existence of the nation and its ability to maintain its vital instructions for the promotion of its core values and socio-political and economic objectives, as well as meeting the legitimate aspirations of the people. Internal security also implies freedom from danger to life and property (Imobighe cited in Jude 2013). From this point of view, the concept of the security of any nation encompasses other vital areas such as environmental protection, social and food security, and especially the prevalence of internal peace.

### **Insecurity in perspective**

The insecurity challenges have posed a formidable perspective by forcing the country's political and economic manager and indeed the entire nation, to actual loss of their loved ones, investors, and investments and the absence of safety in most of the country and, by and large, the chance of survival of democracy is very narrow because without security hardly things are possible (Comfort 2013). Insecurity has been viewed as a state of not knowing, a lack of control, and the inability to take defensive acts against forces that portend harm or danger to an individual or group or make them vulnerable (Onifade et, 2013). It has been examined that insecurity is "the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection." (Beland, 2015) Insecurity has continued to threaten the very fabric of national integration and created an ecology of fear, disquiet, and anxiety. It has also meted out a deadly blow, or what has been referred to as a "Special bite" to industrial development (Onifade et al., 2013).

The nature of insecurity differs and varies from one country to another, from one region to another. For instance, in the southwest, the insecurity was exacerbated by army robbery, ethnic militia, and hooliganism. The fundamental problems initially centered in the North were religiously motivated violence and crises from extremist groups. Meanwhile, the East and South primarily contended with kidnappings for ransom, attacks, and oil theft by Niger Delta militant groups. Recently, Abuja has grappled with the spread of various forms of criminality from the northern, eastern, and southern parts of the country.

### **A conceptual view on vigilante groups**

Vigilantes are in every city, town, and village with community support to control crime, insecurity, and social evils. They have their dogs, locally made guns, swords, arrows, and bows fortified by charms. They encounter all sorts of criminals, whether at night or during the day, and are dealt with severely. Their sole functions and duties are to exercise within the

traditional limit, and constitutional power confides on them to arrest and prosecute before the local court or palace court. They engage themselves in spiritualism, an aesthetic one against all odds. Their role in fighting insecurity and crime control in society is beyond quantifiable, considering their active performance in the fight against Boko-Haram, Banditry, and Kidnapping in the social milieu in the country ('Yandaki, 2015; Tauri, 2019; Hauwa, 2022). The concept of vigilante groups in traditional form is described as unarmed voluntary citizen groups created in local communities to help the security forces confront common crimes and social violence by arresting suspected criminals and handing them over to the Police. Nigerian law recognizes the lawfulness of vigilante groups arresting suspected criminals, provided they are unarmed and the suspect is immediately handed over to the Police (Report, 2008).

The term Vigilante is viewed as neighborhood or community vigilantes, organized by street associations in cities or villages in rural areas to man street entrances or village gates, as the case may be, at night. They also carry out foot patrols at night to reassure community members that some people are watching over their communities. They are not armed but often carry whistles, which they use to alert the neighborhoods if there are unwanted "guests" (Chukwuma, 2002). This kind of informal policing, the historical antecedent, revealed that vigilantes have existed since 1922 as neighborhood guards in the USA. However, the historical records indicate that Vigilante came into existence in Nigeria in 1983 as a vigilante group during the Buhari regime as part of the efforts to prevent and control crime. Due to its resilient, in 1984, the then Inspector General of Police, Etim Inyang, inaugurated the Police Community Relation Committee (PCRC) in all the States of the Federations and directed Commissioners of Police to urgently revitalize vigilante groups to enable the Police and public to interact regularly in the fight against crime (Kehinde, 2021). Initially, crime control and security management were part of the police

constitutional mandate to protect life and property in the country. However, because the Police cannot do it alone without involving the community as policing to share local intelligence, the Vigilante is coopted in managing local Security in Nigeria.

### **Interventions by Vigilante Group**

From the African perspective, four typologies of vigilantism have been identified. These include religious vigilantism, ethnic vigilantism, state-sponsored vigilantism, and neighborhood or community vigilantism. The belief is that this category is not rigid or exclusive since one type of group could combine the features of two or more (Chukwuma, 2002). An analysis by USAID (2022) revealed that Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) had the highest rate of insecurity incidents at 55.6% compared to other area councils in the Federal Capital Territory.

Hauwa (2022) analysis of the complex security crisis in Nigeria's capital region reveals escalating threats within Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), reflected in the highest frequency of criminal incidents across the Federal Capital Territory's administrative divisions. To curb this crisis through collaborative governance, the AMAC administration under Abdullahi Candido undertook multifaceted interventions: establishing dedicated committees to resolve farmer-herder disputes that could trigger wider inter-communal tensions, creating a 300-person Marshals force of youth volunteers to supplement formal policing through community embeddedness, additional Environmental Cadet units to aid monitoring and response, facilitation of military/police recruitment to integrate youth capacities with conventional security agencies, as well as community policing stipends to incentivize grassroots vigilance. Hauwa contends that sustaining such integrated initiatives that activate both state and societal resources is imperative for durable security. While applauding the administration's efforts, she advocates even greater investments in resilient communal support networks while ensuring oversight against excesses through

systematic coordination with state oversight bodies. Hauwa suggested that participatory, locale-specific solutions harnessing culturally attuned informal security alongside formal law enforcement can foster stability and prosperity even amidst Nigeria's complex security threats, allowing AMAC to overcome vulnerabilities arising from increasing demographic pressures and urbanization.

### **Managing Crime and Security through**

The discourse on informal mechanisms for crime control has evolved diversely from the perspectives of scholars who have described them variably as "traditional," "customary," "indigenous," "non-state," "local," "community-based," and "participatory." While some terms capture the same underlying social phenomena, others elucidate distinctive attributes. Fundamentally, informal systems are defined by their unofficial, non-coercive, decentralized, and non-professional nature, relying more on flexible community-specific norms than formal bureaucratic rules. Within Nigeria's traditional societies, long-standing customary mechanisms upheld security and order by interpreting behavioral codes and dispensing justice locally. As Hauwa (2022) explains, unlike Western precedents, these community-driven checks and balances functioned effectively without written regulations.

Today, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) grapples with insecurity threats that have escalated nationally, reflected in various crimes like kidnapping, banditry, rape and substance offenses based on municipal records. Hauwa (2022) finds that despite the predominance of formal security agencies, their stern, costly, and delayed procedures have sometimes proven inadequate in addressing contemporary challenges, often failing vulnerable residents. However, historically grounded informal techniques centered on communal solidarity allow more accessible and rapid recourse. AMAC has witnessed vigilantism and voluntary neighborhood watch groups fill critical gaps left by the formal system's limitations. Additionally, the continuity of traditional authority structures

like Emir councils and community heads provide localized regulation hubs, coordinating with state organs. According to Hauwa (2022), optimizing informal, community-based security mechanisms is a sustainable solution to balance formal forces across districts, given their unique flexibility and decentralization strengths arising from proximity and cultural specificity. Their participatory orientation can deliver justice more responsibly when structured appropriately.

### **Surveillance and Local Intelligence**

The study adopted qualitative methods involving interviews, focus groups and ethnographic observations with vigilante groups operating across various districts within AMAC. This provided in-depth insights into how these informal actors cultivate localized intelligence and conduct community surveillance in their grassroots security provision. Preliminary findings reveal that at the ground level, vigilantes undertake regular foot and vehicular patrols to monitor their assigned localities. They gather human intelligence on emerging criminal plots or suspicious stranger movements through hyper-local ties. The vigilantes coordinate closely with formal agencies when responding to apprehended threats.

Additionally, focus groups with vigilante leaders indicate they facilitate security meetings with community stakeholders to enable intelligence sharing on incidents, risk mappings, and the development of tailored localized security solutions. While lacking substantial technologies, vigilantes employ basic tracking methods aided by local knowledge of communal dynamics and terrain complexities. Overall, the empirical data suggests vigilantes adopt a decentralized but integrated approach that privileges extensive intelligence cultivation via community immersion. When combined with flexible hyper-local prevention and response measures, this enables them to fill gaps in formal policing across AMAC's diverse constituent districts. Further analysis is undertaken in the discussion section to assess the implications of these localized security practices.

### **Vigilante Groups and Settler Communities**

Settler communities have emerged as critical anchors upholding neighborhood stability amid escalating national insecurity. As urbanization intensifies across Nigeria, displaced groups seeking economic opportunities or fleeing violence flock to cities, occupying informal settlements lacking infrastructure access or conventional security cover. By integrating such communities into grassroots vigilance structures, local authorities in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) have cultivated expansive human intelligence gathering networks to pre-empt brewing threats. Vigilante formations like the AMAC Vigilante Organization (AVO) spearhead continuous outreach and liaisons with marginalized camps populated by migrant laborers, remote-dwelling religious orders as well as a host of other peripheral groups scattered across districts under council jurisdiction. During intensive monthly meetings and visits, AVO volunteers engage settler community leaders, youth, and grassroots watch parties to optimize rumor mills and early warning systems regarding suspicious activities that could portend attacks, communal tensions, or organized crime. In 2021 alone, tips by locals enabled 33 raids on hideouts used by armed robbery and kidnapping elements for stashing weapons and holding victims while preparing ransom demands. The integration of AVO's rapid action capacities with granular insights from communities on human and physical terrain dynamics has become pivotal to stabilizing security amidst surging threats in AMAC's extensive jurisdiction spanning dozens of districts, as per official 2022 administrative records.

Furthermore, direct interfaces through dedicated joint patrols numbering over 80 last year have also prevented imminent outbreaks of group violence - as AVO members leverage trust and intimate cultural/communal knowledge to resolve tensions through mediations before escalation into riots or gang clashes that could spiral stochastically. However, beyond core crime-fighting functions, AVO's outreach initiatives provide opportunities for joint

capability building - with volunteers receiving guidance on expanding grassroots surveillance and basic self-policing from local vigilantes to boost self-sufficiency in sustaining order.

Nonetheless, the proliferation of motorcycles exacerbates risks across AMAC, becoming the conveyance of choice for robbers and kidnappers to conduct raids and then vanish along narrow alleys impossible for conventional security vehicles to penetrate, according to municipal criminal records. Nearly 41% of incidents in 2022 alone involved assailants exploiting precisely such tactical mobility advantages. However, through intensified checkpoints along peripheral zones and motorcycle route mapping, AVO and community volunteers mitigate unrecognized intrusions into residential areas. Constructive interfaces as complementary forces remain crucial for holistic security governance amidst contemporary threats.

### **Checking (Motorcycle and Tricycle Operators) for Intruders**

Insecurity arising from crimes facilitated by motorcycles has emerged as a severe challenge across Nigeria's capital region. According to the 2023 Nigeria Security Report by Beacon Consulting, an Abuja-based security risk management and intelligence consulting company, over 41% of nearly 800 kidnapping and robbery incidents recorded involved assailants utilizing motorcycles for quick getaways after attacks in Abuja. Beyond the FCT, scholars like Alemika (2013) find that nationwide, motorcycles aid the perpetration of violent crimes, with 65% of armed robbers admitting reliance on them for tactical mobility advantage during robberies. In response, authorities have resorted to controversial motorcycle bans to curb this threat. For instance, in October 2006 and again in June 2021, the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) Security Committee enforced prohibitions on commercial motorcycles to check for recklessness and crime-abetting movements (Idris, 2021). However, analysts like Eze (2018) argue that

blanket bans also impact the legitimate livelihoods of youth who rely on motorcycle taxi services, potentially heightening socioeconomic frustrations that drive conflict - representing over 17 million Nigerians as of 2014 (Oni & Okanlawon, 2020). As such, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) has spearheaded more calibrated policy interventions. A 2022 AMAC transport sector review indicates over 128,000 registered commercial motorcycles and tricycle operators within the council area as of 2021.

To enhance monitoring, AMAC developed a special identification scheme for adequately registered vehicles and drivers to enable tracing and accountability in cases of criminal facilitation. Targeted patrols have also scrutinized parks and junctions to clamp down on infiltrators from outside AMAC seeking to conduct kidnaps and robberies within localities and then escape (Eze, 2018). Between 2018-2022, these checkpoint vigilance campaigns facilitated by AMAC Marshals and local vigilante collaborations led to the interrogation of 19,672 unfamiliar motorcycle/tricycle operators and potential suspects - averting planned incidents according to 62% of apprehended (AMAC, 2022).

Additionally, engagements with the Tricycle Owners Association of Nigeria (TOAN) and Motorcycle Operators Union by AMAC authorities have tightened internal surveillance against criminals seeking to commandeer vehicles for illegal activities through infiltration of unions (Chinwokwu, 2021). Joint park and community policing patrol teams have also expanded monitoring beyond highways into suburban neighborhoods, mitigating intrusions. However, some opposition council members and civil society groups like the Abuja Urban Forum have critiqued the alleged excessive use of force and extortion reports against Marshal patrols since 2020 (AuF, 2021). Nonetheless, AMAC Chairperson Abdullahi Candido defends the overwhelmingly positive impacts - from deterrence of stranger suspect movements to addressing youth marginalization underlying insecurity drivers through rider union jobs.

## **The Role of AMAC Marshals in Controlling Crime**

According to the 2023 Nigeria Security Report by Beacon Consulting, an Abuja-based security risk management and intelligence consulting company documented the scale of human tragedy and noted that no fewer than 9,754 Nigerians were killed, while 4,049 abduction cases were recorded nationwide between January and December 2022. Many proximate factors drive this scourge, from widespread unemployment and poverty to the proliferating threats of terrorism, kidnapping, sectarian clashes, and organized crime. However, security analysts also highlight deficiencies within formal law enforcement agencies as hampering efforts to curb violence and crime. Police forces remain understaffed, overwhelmed and lacking in critical operational capabilities. In response, many communities have revived informal policing arrangements to fill the security void.

Vigilante groups composed of local volunteers have emerged to provide grassroots protection, intelligence gathering, surveillance and rapid response mechanisms. Within Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), vigilante formations have become indispensable partners in maintaining public safety. They tap into a granular understanding of human and physical terrains as well as close ties with residents to facilitate information sharing. By conducting regular foot and vehicular patrols across markets, motor parks, public infrastructure, and vulnerable neighborhoods, these vigilant groups deter criminal activity through visibility. Their integration and proximity enable swift mobilization to intervene in crimes in progress or track suspects based on alerts by neighborhood watch systems. AMAC Marshals established by the municipal council have helped slash crime rates since their formation in 2016. Numbering over 600 personnel currently, the Marshals leverage extensive community networks to gather actionable intelligence about potential threats and stranger movements. Their backup support in investigations and arrests also bolsters conventional agencies like

the Nigerian Police Force plagued by overstretch. Beyond crime-fighting, the Marshals provide employment opportunities to economically marginalized youth who may otherwise resort to criminal activities - addressing socioeconomic root causes of insecurity. While recognizing their effectiveness, concerns persist around oversight frameworks and accountability of vigilantes given their informal status.

However, AMAC authorities and security experts argue that optimizing their contributions warrants institutional support rather than neglect. Recommendations include increased funding and assets for patrols, formal training to enhance capabilities and align with human rights standards as well as legislative regulation at state and federal levels to clarify mandates and coordination with public law enforcement agencies. Overall, the versatility and flexibility of vigilante groups serves as indispensable force multipliers that deserve constructive engagement to manage contemporary security threats confronting Abuja and the Nigerian federation at large. Their civic engagement brings additional "eyes and ears" to broaden security coverage for citizens and authorities alike.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Managing security threats in a complex urban center like Abuja requires collaborative efforts between formal security agencies, local government, and community-based groups. As this study has shown, vigilante units operating in the various districts and neighborhoods of Abuja Municipal Area Council form a critical component of the collective security apparatus. While lacking the formal authority of state agencies, these informal community networks provide extensive intelligence, timely responses, and linkage to vulnerable populations that other statutory bodies cannot easily achieve. As AMAC continues to urbanize rapidly amidst growing economic hardship and ethnic diversity, integrating vigilante capacities into broader Multi-Agency Security Partnerships while improving oversight and accountability

mechanisms is essential. Ultimately, harnessing both state resources and resilient community security nets through cooperation and coordination under local authority supervision can provide comprehensive, context-appropriate means for addressing contemporary security challenges in Nigeria's capital region.

This study proposes the following recommendations:

- The Nigerian security agencies and international training institutes can collaborate to implement formal training and capacity-building programs for vigilante groups in AMAC. The training curriculums should focus on community policing, intelligence gathering, lawful arrest procedures, human rights, rules of engagement, first aid, self-defense techniques, and regular refresher courses. This will professionalize their operations and enhance their capabilities.
- The federal government can collaborate with international stakeholders to develop legislative frameworks to formally recognize and regulate the activities of vigilante organizations. The laws should outline organizational structures, permitted functions, jurisdictions, relationships with security agencies, oversight mechanisms, reporting lines, and collaborations. This will clarify their mandates and powers.
- The federal government can establish coordinated communication and intelligence-sharing networks between vigilante groups, local communities, and federal security agencies. Dedicated hotlines, online platforms, and regular stakeholder forums should be set up to enable real-time transmission of actionable intelligence on security threats. This will improve early warning and rapid reaction.
- Nigeria Security Agencies can partner with international security agencies to incorporate vigilante organizations into community policing initiatives through structured partnerships and engagement strategies. Joint exercises like foot/vehicular patrols, crime mapping, and dispute mediation can promote a coordinated approach to security governance.
- The federal Government can provide basic equipment support such as patrol vehicles, communication gadgets, and protective gear to enhance the response capabilities of vigilante groups. Proper kits will motivate vigilantes and aid timely security interventions.

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## THE SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACT OF "IBAN ISONG" IN CONSERVING MORALITY, NORMS AND VALUES IN IBIBIO TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

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### Abstract

*The paper examines the socio-cultural impact of Iban Isong on the conservation of morality, norms and values in Ibibio traditional society. Iban Isong was mostly practiced during the pre-colonial era in Ibibio traditional society, it was instituted by the elderly women in communities to help curb and checkmate abuses as well as maintain fidelity and respect among married women in the society. Even though, this institution had long faded away it was a means of promoting and enforcing norms in Ibibio value system. It was also a type of local police that compelled people to avoid unguarded utterances, hate speech and abusive slangs. The paper therefore focuses on the importance of the feminine socio-cultural organization – Iban Isong in instilling and maintenance of social order; the paper adopts historical approach. This study is significant if rebranded in the modern Nigerian society. Similarly, observations have shown that some cultural norms and values, can be positively employed to promote morality. Nevertheless, the paper recommends the reformation of the institution to suit the modern times while avoiding nudity, which was one of its earliest characteristics.*

**KEYWORDS:** Socio-cultural impact, *Iban Isong*, conserving, morality, norms, values

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### INTRODUCTION

The involvement of women in conflict resolution is not optional but rather an essential ingredient of peace-building the organized participation of women's group in conflict mediation processes has often times yielded positive result to the conflicting parties thereby bringing understanding and agreement to place. In the pre-colonial era, women in Ibibio land have organized themselves into associations and union to champion the course of women as well as ensuring peace in the family, community and the society. Women leaders, particularly those from civil society groups, can appeal to their communities and generate greater buy-in for the mediation process among the broader public. This is especially true in societies where women's interactions with male leaders tend to be limited. Nsikak Abasi, Offiong and Okoro (2021).

The chief mediator whether male or female can play a role of engaging directly women leaders from early on in the process, thus investing in the long-term acceptance and consent for the peace process in the communities these women represent. This is not only a result of the result of the chief mediator behaving more inclusively towards those affected by the process; it reflects the mediator's willingness to demonstrate and implement inclusivity in terms of who is at the peace table, permitted and to participate fully. Therefore, women involvement in conflict is voluntary, they are volunteers. Women are volunteers for conflict resolution, it is suggested that women mediators would bring different ("soft") skills to mediation, that they would be more focused on inclusivity, and that they would be catalyst to women empowerment in mediation. Potter, (2005). In Ibibio land, men and women had their cultural groups that

provided for social interaction and recreation. They came in various forms and arrangements and were expressed during festivals, seasoned displays in the moonlight. There are two common women's group found in Ibibio communities. These includes, Nka *Iban Isong* and Ebre clubs. Nana, (2020:212).

*Iban Isong* (women of the land or community women) was a strong women's pressure group in Ibibio society Abasiattae (1991:284). *Iban Isong* is an exclusive women's society, which is midway between freemasonry and the trade union. Its objective was to safeguard women against the tyranny of the men folk. *Iban Isong* were a group of bold Ibibio women who used indigenous methods in the fight justice liberation and restoration of the Ibibio women folk's dignity in a male dominated world. In Ibibio communities, every adult women or female of the village was regarded as a member of *Iban Isong Idung* and when they meet judicial body, they had the right to impose any form of sanction on offending members and such sanctions would be accessed by the village head. In fact, most crimes committed by women in Ibibio were referred to this body for trial. Therefore one could rightly say that *Iban Isong* in were groups of women who stood up to fight for peace and justice for the weak and oppressed and as such they were seen as agents of social transportation in the Ibibio traditional society in their own way.

The *Iban Isong* is the traditional institution in Ibibio that protects and defends public morality in Ibibio traditional society. In Ibibio community, deviant behaviors as use of abusive or wrong choices or words are considered a taboo and are unethical and sacrilegious, capable of incurring the wrath of the gods and ancestors. The Ibibio culture and society have an organized institution that promotes morality and discourages wrong use of words. These *Iban Isong* are so powerful, socio-cultural organization with judicial and coercive powers rooted in the people's valued culture and age-longed tradition. This women organization helped to maintain the ethical values and sanctity of Ibibio women by

promoting discipline and sanctions against abusive words or hate-speeches.

This topic comes at the time where there is a full grip of moral decadence among our young girls and incessant abuses of aged women by the young folks in the society today. The paper has the following structure;

- a. Study on the Ibibio Women.
- b. The nature of Ibibio morality.
- c. Transmitting morality.
- d. Ibibio traditional thoughts and Women.
- e. *Iban isong* as agent of maintaining ethical/moral norms, laws and taboos.
- f. Abusive and unethical/immoral utterance among young ladies.
- g. *Iban isong* administrative and judicial system.
- h. *Iban isong* as a group or association.
- i. *Iban isong* and their ritual performances.
- j. *Iban isong* and their denigration of widowhood.

### **Studies on the Ibibio Women**

Ibibio land was not visited by foreigners, until the first missionary arrived in 1887. The British anthropologist Talbot carried out research that was published in 1912 and 1914. Also, his wife D.A. Talbot, an observer, recorded the first comprehensive account of sociological studies on Ibibio women in 1914.

The works by European writers – anthropologies, ethnographers and missionaries – embody strong ethnocentric biases. However, their contributions to Ibibio study still remain useful. Talbot (1915:20), gives a vivid account of traditional women's domestic affairs, beliefs the practices and their communal role. Talbot (1915:18) Bush (1914:65) "some Ibibio customs and beliefs; discuss the traditions, custom, and belief, including practices, secretes associations, their origins, place names; origin of groups and some tropical plant, economic and political institutions of the Ibibio. The Nyama society of the Ibibio women explain the Ekong dance and the accompanying magical practices of the "spider" or "bird" dance and especially the

significance of the disguised female figure. The burial bird of the Okuku shed light into the burial custom of the Ibibio in connection with very senior and elderly men and women.

Noah (1980:63) discusses the significant position Ibibio women occupied in private and public matters while criticizing Talbot for crediting the origin Ekpo, to women without himself coordinating his information with oral testimonies. Ekong (1983:67), studies the role of men in traditional institution and the charges that have occurred since then. He, not only treated the forms of things and events as they were used to be but more importantly stressed the present of potential effects of modernization and change on such structures. He made an attempt to critically analyze and compare their significance both to the Ibibio of the past contemporary Nigeria. He therefore basically assembled and analyzed most Ibibio ethno-cultural realities. However, he ignored gender as a basis for analysis. Udo (1983:5-10), also gives a useful insight into traditional customs and beliefs of all the Ibibio speaking groups and their sub-groups and the role of certain class of elderly women in Ibibio traditional institution.

Esen (1982:22) tries to explain the motive behind certain customs of the Ibibio. Hence, he sees the bride prices as a symbol of women's subordinate position and their reproductive role as the most vital assets to the Ibibio community. "Ibibio traditional society was a man's society created by the men and dominated almost entirely by male interest. Women were seen mostly as appendages with clearly defined and circumscribed roles which were calculated to advance the pervasive interest of the males perhaps without confessing it, men were secretly afraid of the potential power of women which is probably why they did everything to suppress women and prevent the realization of the dangerous potential. Esen, cites bride price, adultery laws, and female abstinence from drinking on certain days and female economic sustenance efforts as part of male efforts to dominate the female. Bride price, he relates, "may have been invented then to symbolize the capacity of the male to acquire the female of his

choice by paying a price for her". He continues, the payment of the bride price for a wife was not as poorly informed foreigners and cynical European anthropologists used to think analogies to the purchase of slave. He then tries to explain the differences in bride prices and purchase of slave in the various vernacular word for them.

### **The Nature of Ibibio Traditional Morality**

Ibibio traditional morality can be described in the following terms; communalistic; humanistic or anthropocentric; this worldly; religions; taboo and ancestral.

Communalistic: we carry out a duty to help someone in distress; we would not be doing so because we think a person has a right against us, a right we should help to fulfill. We should be carrying out that duty because we considered that person worthy of some moral consideration by us. (Wiredu, 1998:32) is of the opinion that Africa traditional morality is "quintessentially social". Further, he adds; the communalistic orientation means that an individual's image will depend rather crucial upon the extent to which his/her actions benefit others rather than himself or herself, not of course by coincidence, but by design an individual who remained content with self-regarding success would be viewed as so circumscribed in outlook merit the title of a real person.

Humanistic or anthropocentric: according to Wiredu (1998:72) African concept of morals are generally of a humanistic orientation at all stages morality is grounded in conceptual and empirical considerations about human well-being this is why the term 'humanistic' is so very apt as a characterization of African moral thinking a human person is essentially the center of the thick set of concentric circles of obligations and responsibilities matched by rights and privileged revolving round levels or relationship irradiating from the consanguinity of household kith and kin, through the 'blood' ties of lineage and clan, to the wider circumference of human family hood.

### **Transmitting Morality**

Morality has to do with values and standards we have set for ourselves, families, and the society at large. In all these institutions, there are "do's" and "don't" which serve as a guide to good moral life.

The "do's" serve as rules that governs the conduct in a given community. All members constituting that particular community are expected to abide by the rules. Violations of the values lead to disapproval of one's conduct by other members of the community. Generally, human communities transmit norms of good conduct orally from generation to generation. The transmission is to a large extent done by the parent. In communal societies extended family members and the community as a whole play a significant role in transmitting moral conduct to younger members of the community and in maintaining the same standard for all other members. This process of socialization primarily serves to maintain the fabric of social relations and thus ensuring the survival of the society. The process of transmitting moral norms to younger generation or members of the community by adult does not take place through instruction, it also happens through the interaction of parents or adult with their children. Karl Menger (1974:4) correctly concludes that morality begins at an early age. He maintains that when children listen to adult speaking about good or evil actions, behavior, language. They are actually engaged in a learning process of differentiating between good and bad moral objective. He further asserts that this process "principal objective is to guide the child's actual decisions towards that which they call good and away from that which they call evil". For Karl Menger, punishment and rewards, promises and suggestions are all processes of instilling moral value in children. If a child misbehaves, he or she knows that he or she will be punished. Equally, the child knows that if he or she does good, he or she is sure of being rewarded.

William (1996:6-7) agrees with Karl Menger that people learn moral conduct in their early

upbringing he also points out that the behavior of those around children, the standards of culture, our experiences and our critical reflection further the moral education of children. Shaw continues to say that they are two ways if looking at morality. He calls the first one, a narrow definition of morality and the second one he calls a broader definition of morality. Morality in a narrow sense refers to "principles that do or should regulate peoples conduct and relations with others" and morality in a broader sense goes beyond "principles of conduct that we embrace but also includes the values, ideals and aspirations that shape our lives. (Shaw 1993:13). The second definition reflects what kind of a person one is or wants to be and what one involvement in both the physical and the spiritual worlds should be.

### **Ibibio Traditional Thoughts and Women**

Ibibio, both male and female, have argued that before colonialism, Ibibio women were as free as men were there are examples that can be given to illustrate this freedom. But the question is, were they really free as men were?

It might be safe to say that before colonialism, Ibibio women were not totally subdued or totally free. There were those women who were free because of their husband's positions. Some were respected by men and women alike because of the charisma and the spiritual gift they had of foretelling the future and healing the sick which many today are respected because of their formal education. There has never been a blanket freedom for all women in Ibibio. Edet and Ekaya (1989:5) opined that;

Africa's traditional society was by and large not as fair to women as we would like to think sometimes women were regarded as second hand citizen; often they were used and handled like a personal property of man, exploited, oppressed, and degraded. Under colonial rule women fared no better for all the disabilities of western Christian culture were added to the already burden-some African situation.

The point that Edet and Ekaya are making here is important Christian teaching especially during

the missionary era, confined women the home. In particular, the role of the missionary's wife was to teach African women to be good wife's much of what they taught reflected the hierarchical patriarchal structure of the missionary's culture which was already influenced by classical western thoughts. What immersed from this scenario was that what was thought was often given Christian religious legitimization given the story of religious character of African culture, the degradation of women took hold.

In African society as well as Ibibio, men marry women because of their beauty they also have preference for women who will perform wifely duties for the husband and his family, as long as she served, she is fine. What matters most is how well she works, not only for her husband, but for the entire family. In Ibibio society, the wife is not the husband's but the family one important wifely duty is to bear children, more importantly boy. A woman who does not have children is considered an insult to her family to her family, her husband's family and to the entire community. She is forced to through rituals which are intended to remedy her barrenness. Barrenness has never been thought to be man's problem in traditional Ibibio society.

### ***Iban Isong* as an Agent of Maintaining Ethical/Moral Norms, Laws and Taboos**

The term, *Iban Isong* means women of the land. *Iban Isong* stood as a giant institution or as an umbrella for other female associations which acted independently, with separate rules. It covered a number of powerful women's cults most of which performed secret rites and were of a religious nature.

However, there were certain women's organization which were different and independent from *Iban Isong* society but which played similar governmental roles and were secretive and powerful like *Ekpo Nsabako*. The Ibibio women while forbidding theft among them were silent and very discrete about witchcraft or *Ifiot*. However, the Ibibio forbade the use of its destructive powers upon other people and still view it as a serious crime.

*Iban Isong* is a secret cult and social institution made up of aged women who have reached menopause and younger ones known as *ndito Iban Isong*, which means "children of the women of the land" this institution is isosteric and strictly for women. An interview with my Effiong Udoh Usanga *Iban Isong* was exclusively for married women of proven integrity to regulate behavior of its members and ensure discipline and good conduct. Historically, *Iban Isong* started as a result of some concerned women to curb the use of indecent languages in interpersonal communication. In Ibibio, *Iban Isong* performed judicial, social and ethical/morals obligation by promoting, maintain, encouraging compliance to the established norms, laws and taboos. *Iban Isong* frown at, and punishes deviant behaviors by members and non- members. It is worth to note that in Ibibio, *Iban Isong* promote gender equality and morality especially in the use of right words in addressing women and punishes those who use bad (unethical immoral words) words in addressing or communicating with other people (*idiok ikoo unua*), that is indecent, bad, abusive, derogatory and discriminatory words). Grace Udoette (interview) opines that if a man is caught using an abusive word with his wife, including assault and battery, the man would be reported and summoned to appear before *Iban Isong*. It is also important to note that, if a woman misbehaves and eventually, she is reported to *Iban Isong*, if there is any negligence of duty (starving the husband of his conjugal rights) insulting the husband, use of abusive words and sexual promiscuity.

### **Abusive and Unethical/Immoral Utterance among Young Ladies**

Indecent utterances by younger women towards the aged (old women) or calling them names such as old woman (*Akanwan*), *Ifiot* (witch), *Utebe* (dirty), are not allowed to be used in addressing the elderly women in the society and if done under any circumstances, such a person would be summoned to appear before *Anwa Iban Isong* for speedy trial and punishment if found guilty. In Ibibio, words such as *Utebe Mkpoo* mean rotten thing, is prohibited

in any form of human communication. Atim Udo Inwang, report that it is possible for women to report their husband to *Iban Isong* for sanction if the men uttered abusive words that demeans womanhood. This attribution or linkage of human nature and behavior to animals (*abiat unam ikot*) and also using animal names in addressing human beings was also seen as abusive and unethical.

### ***Iban Isong* Administrative and Judiciary System**

*Iban Isong* also act as judicial administrators. The official meeting days of *Iban Isong* was usually on Friday though an emergency meeting can be called on Saturday or Monday for judgement. Imaobong Asuquo Iteh, affirms that *Iban Isong* were being consulted by members with one bottle of negative dry gin with a summon notice, while non-members file their cases with equivalent of four thousand naira (4000 naira) and one bottle of dry gin (*ufofop*) after this presentation of items to the officers, the complainant's case will be reviewed to ascertain whether or not a prima facie case has been establish to warrant any formal notice, or ordinary reconciliation of aggrieved party. But if abusive and derogatory words were used, the defaulters were given a summon notice, which is delivered by a man who is the messenger and before the issuing of the notice letter, the native dry gin will be opened and poured for libation with incantation. (Udofia, Okon Idem, oral interview).

After the first and second summon notice, if the defaulter refuses to put up appearance before *Iban Isong*, the leaders will move *Iban Isong* in the evening or night to the defaulters house where all the women present will dance nude until the defaulter meets all the requirement for the appeasement of *Iban Isong* which include a fine of approximately five thousand naira and a bottle of local gin (*Ufofop*).

During the traditional court session of *Iban Isong*, the accused person must stand on the periwinkle shells or the granite stones on the ground until she provides the money for all the women. It is also the practice for *Iban Isong* to

go nude as a punishment for the guilty which is regarded in *isirisu (Ndiokiso)* meaning "bad luck" to the defaulter and the entire inhabitant of that compound. This traditional practice was not only restricted to the people, any stranger that drinks the water of that land and lives within the community is also liable to judgement of bad luck. If the defaulter is a man who has been abused a woman or his wife, he will be given a summon notice to appear before the *Essien Iban*. When he refuses to honor the invitation, *Iban Isong* will move in large numbers to the person's compound and dance nude with their drum called Ikon in Ibibio language, beaten three times for the defaulter which signifies *Ndiok-iso* meaning "bad luck". The defaulter will be expected to pay a fine of two bottles of local dry gin, cola nut, and in some cases a native cock as in Ibibio. (interview with Usen Ekanem Ikpong). In most cases oath taking is administered to the defaulters as a measure of discipline to correct them from further occurrence (Nana 2020:212).

### ***Iban Isong* as a Group or Association**

*Iban Isong* was a cult as well as a club, although today, it operates as a social club due to Christianity. However, their rites are still being performed at night and the nude in sacred pools or streams (Nicklin 1991:120). Every adult female of the village was regarded as a member of *Iban Isong Idung*. As a government, *Iban Isong* assumed an executive and judicial form. The activities of the *Iban Isong Esit* in collective action against male offenders would provide another example of women's customary police work.

*Iban Isong* was and still is the mother of the most powerful women's organization. *Iban Isong* imposed any form of sanction against its offending members and such sanctions were as acceded to by the village head (Ete Idung). When *Iban Isong* assumed the name *Iban Isong Essit*, which means hardhearted, strong willed women, their actions were directed at men. *Iban Isong Essit* women were elderly and very stain in their judicial proceedings and left no stone unturned until they brought an offender

to complete humiliation and often to death. In fact, this category of women comprises the members of the highest grade *Ekpa Iban Isong* or *Abang*. Their leaders were the oldest women in each village and were known as *Eka Iban* (Mother of women) *Obong Iban* (Chief of women). Members of this category of *Iban Isong* were middle aged and belonged to other privileged associations. It is worth to note here that members of the *Ekpa Iban Isong* and *Ekpo Nsabok* exacted judicial decisions under the umbrella of *Iban Isong* because of the secrecy that surrounds the two-secret cult. Each of those associations were strictly restricted to very elderly women and younger women of proven integrity who must have been properly married and well respected in both their natal and marital villages.

#### ***Iban Isong* and their Ritual Performance**

*Iban Isong* always performed their rituals annually. During the process of ritual performances, men children and non-initiates (members) were not allowed to come out until the duration of their ceremony was over. According to Imefon Etuk (interview), he avers that, this festival is liked to Isemin festival where men are not allowed but only women are allowed. This festival is an annual event where women and girls went to Isemin shrine located in a new by river, there no bathe in supplication for fertility (Talbot, 1968:76-95).

But during the match against a male offender, there marked off the area of operation with a long and tough rope derived from the raffia called piassava. Nobody was allowed within that vicinity, until they finished their activity. Otherwise, any violator of this injunction risked his or her life. Anybody within the marked area was told to remain indoors. Their object was the protection of all females from physical and verbal abuse from anybody in the community. Men secretly reported their wives to society for discipline, so women reported their husbands to *Iban Isong*. When this happened, their leaders sent their messenger who deposits a calabash in front of the offender's hut, and on seeing it, he immediately understands its implication.

They did not sympathize with any man who spoke rudely about a woman sexual organ at such a summon, the offender was supposed to answer by meeting the *Eka Iban* and her executives. If he showed adequate remorse, he was asked to pay a fine.

However, if he became recalcitrant and stubborn, they fix a date in which they would 'visit' him. On the appointed trial day, the women made sure that the offender slept in his house and as early as four O'clock in the morning they surrounded his compound, woke him up with the sound of a gun fired into the air by the *Eka Iban* or a piercing cry. This signaled their readiness for action. The culprit was then forced out of his house and surrounded by nude women who bade him to look at them. The culprit was forced to sit in a circle drawn on the ground by the *Eka Iban*. The women then began their ritual dance. Each member held an object in form of a woman's uterus in her hand. The *Eka Iban* poured out libation with both palm wine (*ukof*) and local gin (Ufop-ufop). They then began the invocation and incantations and cursing the offender. They called on all their Ancestors and Ancestress, invoked the Supreme God (*Abasi Ibom ke ikpa eyong*), who made women and endowed them with sexuality, which enabled both men and women to come into the world and which the offender had abused to smite him and deny him children. They entreated *Ndem*, the goddess of fertility which dwelt in pools and rivers and groves, to kill him, they called on *Abasi Isong* (Earth goddess) to annihilate him anytime he attempted sexual intercourse with a woman. They then washed their private parts and threw the water at his doorsteps, sometimes forcing him to drink it.

In some instances, *Iban Isong* performed some sacrifices, lived in a small hut prepared for them in the forest cut off from the rest of the world around them, they are also forbidden from eating cooked food within the period of this sacrifice. (Nana 2018:128). Another important issue is the ritual which are also perform for traditional rites such as *mbuppo,udad*

*ekpo,ekuho ekpo* as well the general initiation.(Nana 2023:142).

### ***Iban Isong* and the Denigration of Widowhood**

Widowhood had been played down. If a man is dead, the people will capitalize the fact that the woman is a widow, and she is subjected to torture and denigrated. The *Iban Isong* tries to redress, check abuses and the relegation of widowhood through the immorality like theft, adultery, premarital pregnancy, disruption of public peace, maltreatment or non-consultation of women in major decisions affecting them. Occasionally, women collectively refuse to cook food, care for children or grant sex favors to their husbands which immediately force the men to reconsider their position on an issue.

Maltreatment of widows by family members is absurd and the *Iban Isong* will not accept such actions. *Iban Isong* tends to protect the widow from external forces and cautioned the widows to live above board by respecting their late husband's name, which is very important.

The *Iban Isong* in and members were mostly women. Their functions were aimed at sustaining discipline and rejecting immoral act, irresponsible behavior and utterances. They serve to protect the integrity of women by training them in moral and domestic responsibilities and upholding the value/virtue of the people and the society. This group does not tolerate indiscriminate utterances or blackmail of the women. In extreme situations they usually sing and dance nude in front of the offender.

This cult exercise unquestionable authority over affairs of women in the community with the fundamental objective of protecting the decency of womanhood. It is observed that their laws are always harsh on women who stole in the market places or farms. When caught, their hands and feet were tied and their mouth stuffed with dirt. In extreme cases the culprit body will be painted in charcoal and paraded before the public. The

offender could also be banned from future participation in the affairs concerning women in the village.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This research "the socio-religious impact of *Iban Isong* in conserving morality is an important topic—which is apt. *Iban Isong* helps in promoting morality and checkmated the use of indecent and abusive words on women and other ladies of Ibibio. The activities of *Iban Isong* help control young females to control their lips even under severe provocation. It also helps to maintain fidelity and respect among married people. This research has unveiled that *Iban Isong* served as vanguard of morality in traditional community. It is recommended that all forms of diabolism associated with the activities of *Iban Isong* should be prohibited.

The following recommendations are made to correct some of the wrong act of *Iban Isong*. The act of going nude in front of defaulters to invoke the demons of misfortune should stop henceforth. When the culprit is identified by the *Iban Isong*, the *Iban Isong* would call other members or select few members who are aged and dance naked to the compound of the culprit. On arrival, certain incantations, libations and invocation to gods will be chanted in the compound to cause misfortune and other mishaps on the culprit.

1. They should be reformed to suit the modern times.
2. The group should be seen as an institution for correcting the ills of young ladies and not to introduce unending calamity to the people who are found wanting.
3. They should act as secret police and watch dogs in the Nigerian society.
4. The *Iban Isong* should also respect the integrity of men, not just delving to issues on firsthand information.



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## **MICROFINANCE BANKS' STRATEGIES AND LOAN RECOVERY AMONG SMALL SCALE BUSINESS OWNERS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA.**

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### **Abstract**

*Microfinance is a banking service provided to low- income individuals or groups who otherwise would have no other access to financial source. The low-income earners include small scale business owners. The study determines policy and non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small scale business owners (entrepreneurs) in River State. Descriptive Survey design was adopted. Two research questions and null hypotheses guided the study. The population for the study was 26 bank staff of Live Above Poverty Organisation (LAPO) Micro-Finance Bank in Rivers State, structure questionnaire containing a total of 24 items was used for data collection. It was found out that policy and non-policy strategies adopted strictly by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State, Nigeria. it was concluded that policy and non-policy strategies of recovering loan among small scale business owners are very important, that the adoption of this strategies by microfinance bank will help protect their capital based and promote economic growth by empowering small scale business owners in Rivers State. It was recommended that policy and non-policy strategies must be strictly adhering to by microfinance banks and be sustained.*

**Key words:** Business Owners, Loan Micro-finance banks, Recovery Small scale

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### **Introduction**

Small and medium enterprises are usually owned and managed by individuals called business owners, entrepreneurs or business operations. These business owners some time resort to microfinance bank source for finance as loan. The primary objective of Micro-Finance Banks is about providing financial services to the poor who are traditionally not served by the conventional financial institutions. Micro-finance in Nigeria is culturally rooted and dated back several centuries (Obayi, Obi & Okafor, 2012). The traditional micro-finance institution provides access to credit for the rural, urban and low income earners. They are mainly the informal self-help group or rotating savings and credit association types. Other providers of

Micro-Finance Services include savings collectors and co-operative society.

Micro-finance banking, particularly those sponsored by government have adopted the traditional supply-led, subsidized credit approach mainly directed to agricultural sector and non-farm activities, such as trading, tailoring, wearing, blacksmithing, agro-processing and transportation although, this type of banking have resulted in increased level of credit disbursement and gain in agricultural production and other activities (Naboth-Odum & Jim, 2015).

According to Obayi (2012), three distinctive features can be associated with micro-finance, they are: smallness of loan advanced and savings collected; absence of asset based

collateral; and simplicity of operation. Robust economic growth cannot be achieved without putting in place well focused programme to reduce poverty through empowering people by increasing their access to factors of production especially credit. In Nigeria, 35 percent of the economically active population is served by the formal financial system while the remaining 65 percent are excluded. These 65 percent served by informal financial sectors such as NGOs, Micro-Finance Institutions (MF/S), money lenders, friends, relatives, credit unions (ISUSU), etc. (Okoli, 2013).

Government in its wisdom then put in place a micro-finance policy to enhance the provisions of diversified micro-finance services on a long term sustainable basis for the poor and low income groups. Notably, among such government programmes are the establishment of Nigeria Agricultural and Co-Operative Development Bank (NACDB), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), defunct peoples Bank of Nigeria (PBN), community Bank now (MFIS) and NAPEP with the mandate to provide financial services to the poor and alleviate poverty subsequently, with the launching of the micro-finance policy regulatory and supervisory frame work for Nigeria in December, 2005 by CBN, the Micro-finance market has attracted new participants due to the expanding informal market.

Further, government efforts through the provisions of micro-finance opportunities to small and medium businesses is a step in the right direction in addressing poverty amongst its growing population. From the appraisal of the existing micro-finance oriented institutions in Nigeria, the following facts have become endent; weak institutional capacity, weak capital base; and the existence of a huge unserved market; these have hampered the attainment of the objectives of micro-finance policy (FRN, 2013).

Some specified objectives of micro-finance policy are: to make financial services accessible to a large segment of t he potentially productive Nigerian population which otherwise would have

little or no access to financial services promote synergy and mainstreaming of the informal sub-sector into the national financial system, contribute to rural transformation and enhance services delivery by micro-finance institutions to micro, small and medium entrepreneurs.

Federal government small scale business development programme (SBDP) define a small scale business as any manufactory, processing, or service industry with a capital investment not exceeding ₦150 ,000 in machinery and equipment alone and employment not more than 50 workers. The word entrepreneurs is considered to have the same meaning as small business owner; manager or operators (Osuala, 2009). The abilities of small business owners to respond to innovation and contribution to employment makes them, significant in economic growth and development (Jim, 2020). Entrepreneurs usually encounter financial difficulties or lack capital to expand their business. This, necessitated them to look for micro-finance banks for shorter loan credit (Jim 2019) some of notable micro-finance banks are Live Above Poverty Organisation (LAPO) U&C and among others that are recommend and approved by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The micro-finance banks are owned and run by individual owners. However, both male and female officers, works in these banks. There is no gender bias in the banking system in Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It has been observed that so many banks including micro-finance banks went distress in Nigeria as a result of poor management of loan facilities among other factors (Jim, 2019). Up till date, many commercial and micro-finance banks are bathing with huge sums of loan due for repayment but not recovered. The situation is affecting further granting of loan to small and medium scale business owners. Some other problems encountered by micro-finance banks officers in recovering loan are insult and deceptive words from their customers. Based on these, the researcher is interested in finding out possible policy and non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering

loan from small and medium scale business owners in Rivers State.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study was to determine the strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan granted to small scale business owners in Rivers State. The study specifically sought to determine:

1. The policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.
2. The non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State?
2. What are the non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses tested at .05 level of significance guided the study:

- HO<sup>1</sup>: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female bank staff on policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.
- HO<sup>2</sup>: A significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings of male and female bank staff on non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.

### **Methodology**

The design adopted for this study was descriptive survey design. According to Nworgu (2006), a survey research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or entire group. However, in this study, data were collected from LAPO micro-finance bank staff in Rivers State of Nigeria. The population was 28 staff of LAPO micro-finance bank in Rivers State (10 males and 16 females). The number was manageable and as such, there was no sampling. LAPO is one of government approved micro-finance bank in Nigeria whose primary objective is to grant loan to small and medium scale business owners or low income earners.

Data collections were done using a 24 items questionnaire developed from literature review. Four-point response scale of strongly agree (4), agreed (3), disagreed (2) and strongly disagree (1) was used. The instrument was validated by three experts two from department of business education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu and one bank manager. Their corrections and suggestions were used to produce the final draft of the instrument. The instrument was trial tested using 14 bank staff from Bayelsa State in South-South State of Nigeria.

The reliability coefficient was 0.83 using Cronbach Alpha formula. Two research assistants helped in the destruction of the 36 copies of the questionnaire. All the 36 copies of the instrument were returned, given 100% return rate. The two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Mean with standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The t-test statistics of no significant difference was used to test the null hypotheses the t-calculated was compared with the t-table value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance and appropriate degree of freedom. The null hypotheses were not rejected where the calculated t-value was less than the t-table value with a give degree of freedom; otherwise the null hypotheses were rejected.

**Results**

The result of the study were obtained from the research questions answered and hypotheses tested (see table 1-4)

**Research Question 1**

What are the policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering the loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State?

**Table 1: mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents on the policy strategies adopted by micro-finance in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.**

S/N	Items statement on policy strategies include:	X <sub>1</sub>	SD <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	SD <sub>2</sub>	XG	SDG	Decision
1	License and regulates the establishment of micro-finance banks	3.50	0.75	3.37	0.84	3.43	0.86	Agreed
2	Promote the establishment of NGO-based micro-finance institutions.	3.20	0.83	3.41	0.64	3.31	0.74	Agreed
3	Promotes the participation of government in the micro-finance industry	3.20	1.15	3.07	1.07	3.14	1.11	Agreed
4	Promotes the establishment of institutions that support the development and growth of micro-finance service	3.65	0.67	3.19	0.83	3.42	0.75	Agreed
5	Strengthens the regulatory and supervisory framework for MFBs	2.90	1.17	3.04	1.19	2.97	1.18	Agreed
6	Promote sound micro-finance practice by advocatory professionalism	3.15	0.88	3.07	0.78	3.11	0.83	Agreed
7	Mobilizes domestic saving	3.26	0.72	3.75	0.46	3.51	0.58	SA
8	Promotes the banking culture among low-income group	3.35	0.81	3.11	0.85	3.23	0.83	Agreed
9	Strengthens the capital base of the existing micro-finance institutions	3.30	0.92	2.96	0.90	3.13	0.19	Agreed
10	Strengthens the regulations, operators and beneficiaries of micro-financial initiatives.	3.60	0.50	3.37	0.79	3.49	0.65	Agreed
	<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>	3.00	0.84	3.23	0.84	3.27	0.84	Agreed

Table 1 revealed that the respondents strongly agreed on item number 7 with pull mean rating of 3.51. This means, they strongly agreed that strategy of mobilizing domestic savings. All other items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10) relating to policy strategies had their pull mean values ranging from 2.98 to 3.49. This showed that the respondents agreed that all these policy strategies are adopted by micro-finance banks in Rivers State in recovering their loan assessment from small and medium scale business owners. The pull grand mean of 3.42

testified to that. The table also indicated the pull standard deviation ranging from 0.58 to 1.17 and the grand standard deviation as 0.73. The values are less than 1.96 indicating homogeneity of responses.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female bank staff on the policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering loan from small and medium scale business owners in Rivers State.

**Table 2: The t-test comparison of the opinions of male and female respondents with respect to the policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small and medium scale business owners in Rivers State.**

Gender	X	SD	N	Df	t-cal	t-table	Decision
Male	3.30	0.81	10				
Female	3.22	0.82	16	24	0.186	1.96	Not rejected

The result in table 2 revealed that the t-calculated value of 0.186 is less than the t-table value of 1.96 at .05 level of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female bank staff on the policy strategies adopted by micro-finance bank in recovering their loan from small business owners in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2**

What are the non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan assessment from small scale business owners in Rivers State?

**Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviations of respondents on the non-policy strategies adopted micro-bank in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.**

S/N	Items statement on non-policy strategies include:	X <sub>1</sub>	SD <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	SD <sub>2</sub>	XG	SDG	Decision
1	Ability to form a union with at least 10 members	3.70	0.48	3.46	0.52	3.58	0.48	SA
2	Opening and running of individual account with the bank	3.60	0.50	3.70	0.47	3.65	0.49	SA
3	Opening and running of union purse account with the bank	3.40	0.68	3.95	0.86	3.68	0.78	SA
4	Saving of interest of the union members account in case of default and of them	3.34	0.74	3.26	0.70	3.30	0.73	A
5	Saving of interest of the union purse account in case of any default.	3.21	0.70	3.44	0.50	3.32	0.60	A

6	Identification of business location	3.30	0.80	3.22	0.73	3.26	0.78	A
7	The use of certain collateral security	3.55	0.50	3.40	0.69	3.48	0.61	A
8	Bank officers ensuring weekly returns from customers through their various union chairman or secretary based on the interest rate	3.30	0.90	3.33	0.72	3.31	0.82	A
9	Weekly meeting of the bank staff incharge with each union	3.24	0.91	3.11	1.22	3.18	0.91	A
10	Procedure meeting of the bank officers with the various unions heads and secretaries	3.00	1.02	3.48	1.00	3.25	1.05	A
11	Issuance of membership card for proper record purpose	3.61	0.61	3.56	0.69	3.58	0.75	SA
12	Regular retaining of bank staff for follow-up measures	3.65	0.67	3.48	0.75	3.57	0.71	SA
<b>Grand mean/SD</b>		<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>A</b>

Table 3 reveals that respondents strongly agreed on items number 1, 2, 3, 11 and 12 hence, their pull means were 3.58, 3.68, 3.58 and 3.57 respectively. This means that micro-finance banks adopted non-policy strategies in recovering their loan from their customers in Rivers State. Subsequently, the respondents agreed that items numbers 4 to 10 are adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State. Hence, the pull mean ratings were 3.30, 3.32, 3.26, 3.48, 3.31, 3.18 and 3.25

respectively. The grand mean value of 3.42 concurs to that. The table also showed that their pull standard deviation ranging from 0.49 to 1.06. This means closeness of opinions. The grand standard deviation of 0.75 also supported that assertion.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** A significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings of male and female bank staff on the non-policies strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.

**Table 4: The t-test comparison of the opinions of male and female respondents with respect to the non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance bank in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.**

Gender	X	SD	N	Df	t-cal	t-table	Decision
Male	3.40	0.70	10				
Female	3.38	0.74	16	24	1.60	1.96	Not rejected

The result in Table 4 revealed that the t-calculated value of 0.160 is less than the t-table value of 1.96 at 0.5 level of significant and 24 degree of freedom. Hence a significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings of

male and female respondents on the non-policy bank strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State.

## Discussion of Findings

The study found out that all the respondents agreed with 10 items under policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their from small scale business owners in Rivers State. Some of these items include: ability to license and regulate the activities of micro-finance banks, strengthen the regulatory and supervisory framework of micro-finance banks, strengthen the regulatory and supervisor framework of micro-finance banks, strengthens the capital base of the existing micro-finance banks etc. this is in line with Obayi, Obi & Okafor (2012) who stated clearly the policy strategies of micro-finance banks.

Further, the findings of the study revealed that the respondents agreed will all the 12 items under the non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State. This is in consonant with Naboth-Odum & Jim (2015), who stated the same needs and difficulties in recovering loan by banks from their customers. The null hypotheses revealed no significant difference in the mean ratings of the male and female respondents in respect of both the policy and non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State. This is in line with the view of Okoli (2011) who emphasized on the need to protect and recover any loan given to small scale

business owners by micro-finance banks in order not to weaken the capital base capacity.

## Conclusion

Policy and non-policy strategies of recovering loan assessment are very important. Their adoption by micro-finance banks will help protect their capital base and promote economic growth by empowering small scale business owners in Rivers State. However, a significant different does not exist in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the policy and non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks in recovering their loan from small scale business owners in Rivers State of Nigeria for self-employment.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. The identified policy strategies should be strictly adhering to by micro-finance banks and be sustained.
2. The identified non-policy strategies adopted by micro-finance banks should be maintain effectively.
3. Micro-finance banks should not be discouraged by the attitudes of some of their customers toward repaying their loan, but diverse more possible measures of recovering their loan from the various unions.

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## HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION: CONCEPTS, DOCTRINES, AND LESSONS FOR AFRICA

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### Abstract

*The practice of humanitarian intervention is marred by conceptual, and theoretical and doctrines factors. This has huge implications for Africa, as interventions are influenced by a combination of factors beyond the charter on the Responsibility to Protect and explicit contents of the article. Using descriptive research design that relied mostly on secondary data sources, this study was guided by following objectives: to analyse the conceptual underpinnings of intervention and humanitarian interventionism; to appraise the classicists versus realist doctrines in humanitarian intervention; and to determine the implications of humanitarian interventions for Africa. In spite of the fact that the United Nations Security Council has endorsed a number of interventions around the world (such as the UNSC endorsed Humanitarian Intervention to protect the Kurds in Northern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War), African crises do not get treated with the same urgency or attention even with humanitarian issues at stake. Even when such actions are taken, they may become negative and counter-productive such as the humanitarian intervention in support of Congolese army with bad human rights record. This mostly succeeded in increasing the notoriety of the Congolese army due to its numerous atrocities, moving the intensity of bloody conflict from level of 1 in 2012 (before the intervention was launched), to 2 in 2013. Conclusively, the arguments for and against humanitarian interventions, will continue as it pertains to world peace. The responsibility of the United Nations, though overwhelming, has to depend on partners, especially as the body depends of use of force from contributing nations. For Africa, successes and actual practices of humanitarian interventions are occasioned by factors that are beyond rhetoric and the contents of the charter. African leaders must therefore scrutinize components of intervening forces where they are available with the view to ensuring that forces do not become counter-productive and escalate the same conflict they were supposed to mitigate.*

**Key words:** Humanitarian Intervention, Concepts, conflict, doctrines, Africa

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### Introduction

The idea of humanitarian intervention is noble, while the practice of it is highly problematic. This is the essence of Conley and Hazlett (2020) notion that the law applicable to humanitarian intervention has inherited the ambiguities present in both of these concepts, and has also generated ambiguities of its own through

century-old, haphazard, and controversial practices of states and non-state entities in the international system. As Henkin, (1991), has pointed out, the basis for a humanitarian intervention is rooted strongly in the near absence of a minimum moral order in the whole or a part of a state. This is also inconsistent with fundamental humanitarian norms which are

unacceptable to other states or non-state entities in view of the fact of their sovereignty.

Regardless of the conditions for meddling in the affairs of a nation, the use of coercion by a foreign power into the internal affairs of a sovereign state, for what can be allegedly humanitarian reasons, will always be resisted because it is plainly controversial. The conditions therefore, under which this can be permitted by international law is also widely disputed. By its overall prescription, humanitarian intervention has to mostly be an extraordinary exercise with the use of external forces by another state, group of states, international organization, or sometimes, the combination of the above. Since this has to happen in the internal affairs of a target state in order to impose certain humanitarian values and practices on the latter, it has to have legitimacy which may include a prior authorization by a regional or international intergovernmental organization (Steve, 1993). This must be understood to be quite different from mere interventionism that may occur at the will of a stronger nation for reasons including but not limited to economic gains.

It must be noted that the first sets of interventions of humanitarian intervention did require the use of force in international relations but did not necessarily need legitimacy. Examples include the landing of British troops in China in 1927 for the protection of British subjects; landing of British forces in Egypt in 1956; the US intervention in Lebanon (1958) and Dominican Republic (1965); Israeli raid and rescue operation at Entebbe airport in 1976; the list is endless (Conley and Hazlett, 2020).

The notion of humanitarian intervention in contemporary times have thus have evolved, especially with the legitimacy of the UN Charters, which prohibited the use of force; on one hand and equally imposed an obligation on every state to protect human rights. As McMahan (2005) explained, the Charter firmly established state responsibility with respect to human rights and also curtailed the freedom of others to intervene in the internal affairs of a

state, lest it led to the use of force against the territorial integrity, political independence, or sovereignty of the state.

Africa is often characterized as continent rife with conflicts. In one of the assessments on Africa violent conflicts, Fang, Kothari, McLoughlin, and Yenice (2020) noted that conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa are particularly deadly. They referred to estimates based on the GED to suggest that in the 1990s alone, conflict-related deaths totaled at least 825,000 (over two-thirds of global conflict deaths). They also pointed to the fact that:

... the high death toll was driven by the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda; the Ethiopian-Eritrean war; and protracted violence in Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. As several of these conflicts ended in the early 2000s, the number of conflict-related deaths in the region fell sharply, reaching its lowest level of about 2,400 deaths in 2010. A resurgence in violence in recent years, however, implies an increase in conflict-related deaths, which have averaged about 14,000 a year since 2014 (a significant number, though well below the average of 84,000 (Fang *et. al.* 2020: p. 6).

It follows therefore that for Africa, humanitarian intervention should be one of the fundamental needs of the continent, especially if carried out legitimately, and in fairness to every one of the parties involved. However, the case for Africa appears to be that the more intense and destructive the conflict, "the greater is the paralysis of the international community in acting decisively to bring an end to the violence" (Gueli, 2004: p. 120-121).

This study is therefore necessary to investigate humanitarian intervention and their impact on African peace and security. This was carried out using descriptive techniques that relied mostly on secondary data sources. In order to be able

to achieve this, the following objectives were raised:

- i. To analyse the conceptual underpinnings of intervention and humanitarian interventionism;
- ii. To appraise the classicists versus realist doctrines in humanitarian intervention; and
- iii. To determine the implications of humanitarian interventions for Africa/

### **Intervention and Humanitarian Intervention: Conceptions and Doctrines**

An intervention is an intended, planned, and targeted operation in a system or process which aims at removing or preventing an undesirable phenomenon. In the context of humanitarian support and prevention, an intervention is a planned and systematically implemented activity taking place in current social structures, which aims at changing knowledge, attitude or behavior of a person, an organization, or a population (Conley and Hazlett, 2020).

Intervention is mostly narrowly defined as the "dictatorial interference by a state in the internal affairs of another state or in the relations between other states" (Wright, 1958). This approach to the definition of intervention is not only useful, but also a generally reasonable and accurate description of intervention, and even humanitarian intervention, as can be seen in the conceptions that follows. Interventionism is any significant activity that is undertaken by a government to influence the political or economic affairs of another country (Rabe, 2005). This may be military, political, cultural, humanitarian, or economic in nature, and intended to maintain international order, peace/prosperity. Downes (2021) noted that it is an act that is coercive, aggressive, threatening and thus unwelcomed by the state that is intervened.

Interventions can also be said to include all actions designed to improve the status of a society at risk or the status of one that has sustained damage from an event or events. The status of the society at risk may be enhanced by

elimination of a hazard or by modifying the risk that a hazard may become an event, or by enhancing the resilience of the society at risk. Interventions are designed to create change. Interventions are a transformation process.

As Steve (1993) puts it, interventions are processes. Resources (human and/or material) are required to create the change(s). Thus, all interventions have costs associated with their planning and implementation. According to him, all interventions must have predetermined goals and objectives and these goals and objectives must be coordinated with the overall planning in the society. The coordination should be provided by government agencies for the locality, region, or country for which they are proposed. Evaluations seek to establish the value of the interventions after their implementation.

The term humanitarian intervention is a contraction of two unlikely term, involving the essential concept of human rights and the unpopular idea of *intervention* in the affairs of a sovereign state. It thus can be problematic to find a balance for the term, *humanitarian intervention*. An example of this bad taste is found in the definition proposed deLisle (2001), when he defined the term as:

the use or threat of force by a state or states in order to alter institutional structures, or practices inside a target state in such a way as to stop or prevent severe human rights law violations or humanitarian law violations (deLisle, 2001: p. 536).

However, Henkin, (1991) is of the view that the term 'humanitarian intervention' is worth salvaging from political misuse because it is also associated with an important practice (or at least an idea) that is worth preserving. According to McMahan (2005) humanitarian interventions are interventions against ongoing or imminent atrocities in a foreign state that involve considerable altruism and a morally consistent agenda. Interveners must intend, and publicly declare their intention, to protect potential victims of atrocity and/or attempt to

contain the aggressors. This is because many already assume that humanitarian interventions must have publicly declared humanitarian intentions, the view is worth articulating in part because there is a growing movement among some academic just war theorists that questions or even explicitly rejects right intention as one of the necessary features of a just war. Others argue that humanitarian interventions must have reasonable prospects of causing only proportionate harm, including George R. Lucas in his insistence that they also require careful planning which, at the very least, seeks to avoid even the unintentional commission of injustices such as the ones it tries to stop.

Regardless of the favorable connotation of the term "humanitarian" in the combination, the term has historically been an unpopular doctrine and will continue to be in the foreseeable future. It is viewed as amoral and lacks legality under principles of international law. As Akehurst (1984) has opined, "the United Nations debates on Cambodia in 1979 provide some evidence that there is now a consensus among states in favor of treating humanitarian intervention as illegal." Certainly, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia might, in light of the appalling

Steve (1993), amongst others posited that humanitarian interventions are illegal under contemporary international law as they are in breach of the prohibition on the use of force in article 2(4) UNCh. The exception that are found in article 42 UNCh (The authorization of the UNSC) and article 51 UNCh (The use of force in self-defense) are neither applicable to the proper definition of humanitarian interventions. Indeed, these interventions do not fall under the concept of R2P either, as such interventions under the concept of R2P has to authorization by the UNSC.

Even with its underlying moral status, humanitarian intervention is believed to have been outlawed or at best, restricted by this United Nations Charter. For the avoidance of doubt, the Charter, while preserving the right of "individual or collective self-defense against military attack, also provides that "every State

has a duty to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations (UN Article 2(4) p. 35). The extent to which this is applicable is hotly debated but it is however copiously quoted by many scholars to support the proscribe aggressive expansionist war, and most forms of humanitarian intervention.

However, McMahan (2005) added that humanitarian intervention still exists regardless of whether the intervening agent identifies it as such. On the other hand, humanitarian intervention is justified because the humanitarian crisis to which it responds represents a threat to international peace and security. Humanitarian crises have effects beyond the state in which they occur, such as cross-border floods of refugees, posing a threat to the international community. If a state does something that undermines international peace and security, this is akin to aggression, and a military action against it may be regarded as defensive war. Under such a condition, humanitarian intervention is, morally speaking, a defensive war and so not in fact an exception to the non-intervention principle.

According to Adelman (1992), humanitarian intervention "is not invoked just because human rights have been violated, even in a massive way. The state may exist to protect the rights of its citizens, but its failure does not provide the grounds for intervention." Rather, HI is justified by the threat to international peace and security caused by the humanitarian crisis. When that crisis causes a massive outflow of refugees, for example, the stability of neighbouring states and the region is undermined. "A state loses its legitimate right to [have its sovereignty] respected only when it threatens the peace and security of its neighbours" through the effects of the humanitarian crisis. The defence of the rights of the population in the target state achieved by the HI is at most "a by-product of that intervention." It is not its justification (Conley and Hazlett, 2020). In sum, humanitarian intervention exists in spite of the

UN Article 2(4), especially when it works in the interest of the intervening state and in the guise of humanitarianism. This has huge interpretation for African countries.

### **Classicists Versus Realists Doctrines in Humanitarian Intervention**

With the end of the Cold-War, and increase in violent transnational conflicts, world scholars aligned themselves basically into two fronts, to present arguments in support and against the interpretive strategies to enable the occasions for legitimate use of force that is beyond self-defense. This was to explain the UN Security Council enforcement actions. These two fronts fell along two jurisprudential camps often referred to as "classicists" (or "textualists") and "legal realists." The classicists are strictly conservative, believing that the words, phrases, and sentences in treaties should be plainly interpreted, with meaning and specific ascertainable to the original intentions. This means that the conditions for humanitarian intervention must be consistent with the principle of the rule of law, and must be binding for as long as the treaty remains in force. This means that they (the Classicists) promote world peace through elements of order in an anarchic political system. (Farer, 2003; p. 61). Farer (2003) distinguished "Legal realists" from international relations' "political realists," who descended from Hans Morgenthau in the modern era. The legal realists on the other hand, the central argument of legal realism is the shift the main burden the argument to the of inquiry into the "meaning" of a law, its regulation or treaty from the past to the present once the broad purposes and principles of the text have been clarified (Farer, 2003; p. 61)."

The arguments for the legality of humanitarian interventions are both classicists and realists, with each side presenting very credible discourse. However, with regards to the legalities of unilateral humanitarian intervention, the classicist generally wins. This could also be said to be due to the ambiguity of the UN Charter and specifically in reference to its wording, when it relates to unilateral

humanitarian intervention. In this case, the classicist usually tilt their argument towards their argument on self-defence as the call for humanitarian intervention. The argument again for Classicists is that the most important values to be protected by the article that of non-intervention. This is supposed to ultimately culminate in world peace. It is this desire for peace that emphasizes the prohibition on the use of force in international disputes, and this is one of the original goals of the United Nations.

Another angle to it may be related to meeting the argument from both ends. Consequently, classicists may view it from the angle of the "protection of human rights," while the legal realists may come from the angle of the "promotion of human rights" which was eventually put in the text of the Charter (Conley and Hazlett, 2020). To the realists, their strong argument stem from the fact that the human rights provisions in the Charter were not put there accidentally or carelessly but that nations felt the need to ensure that all enjoyed fundamental human rights. As Lauterpacht (1968) posited that the human rights provisions of the charter were adopted only after an extensive discussion, making it a legal duty for nations to respect and observe. He recognized that the Charter drafters could have used a much stronger word such as "respect" instead of "promote" but insisted that such an omission was of little practical importance:

It would be out of keeping with the spirit of the Charter and, probably with the accepted canons of interpretation of treaties, to attach decisive importance to that omission (of the word "respect"). It would be otiose to the point of pedantry for the draftsmen of the Charter to incorporate an explicit provision of this nature in a document in which the principle of respect for and observance of human rights... is one of the main pillars of the structure of the Organization (Lauterpacht, 1968).

There is also the logic on who should be more concerned about human rights violations, the international community's or of domestic concern. Conley and Hazlett (2020) again noted that concluding that human rights are strictly matters of domestic concern would nullify many international agreements. For the international concern, if human rights are made strictly matters of domestic, most government would be guilty of interfering in the domestic affairs of another nation. This is premised on the fact that nearly all nations are now subject to some international human rights agreement and this will oblige them to promote and protect the human rights within their border.

Kathman and Gent (2012) noted that humanitarian intervention is therefore not inconsistent with the provisions of the UN Charter. This is because the UN Charter of the Security Council has the authority to intervene using analogous permission when the peace is breached, especially with serious human rights abuses and deprivations, should give rise to an. To this end, pro-interventionists have argued that is a definite link between the maintenance of peace and respect for human rights. Thus, human rights will continue to be of international concern because they are presented as threat to the peace.

It is likely that the back and forth of the Classicists and realists will continue into the foreseeable future. While there are no clear-cut agreements on the subjects, powerful nations will continue to take advantage of the different arguments to interfere in the affairs of weaker countries in particularly Africa.

### **Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons for Africa**

Africa has historically been the focus on concern of the international community for many reasons including conflict and on humanitarian grounds. In one of the instances, the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in his 1998 report to the Security Council (regarding causes and effects of conflicts in Africa), bemoaned the fact that too many instances of 'appalling violations of fundamental rights' were the main obstacles

to economic progress on the continent. Mr. Annan noted was merely restating the concern of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU way back in 1993 in its 'Cairo Declaration' when the Assembly noted that:

Conflict in Africa poses a major challenge to United Nations efforts designed to ensure global peace, prosperity and human rights for all. Although the United Nations was intended to deal with inter-State warfare, it is being required more and more often to respond to intra-State instability and conflict. In those conflicts the main aim, increasingly, is the destruction not just of armies but of civilians and entire ethnic groups. Preventing such wars is no longer a matter of defending States or protecting allies. It is a matter of defending humanity itself (Annan, 1998).

He further noted that the present socio-economic problems in Africa is caused by the scourge of conflicts that has occurred within and between African countries. This according to Annan, has brought about death and human suffering, engendered hate and divided nations and families. All these underscores the importance of the humanitarian crises conditions in different African countries.

In times past, the UNSC has endorsed a number of interventions around the world. One of such was the UNSC endorsed Humanitarian Intervention to protect the Kurds in Northern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War. This was carried out under the guise of Chapter VII of the Charter, which allows the authorization of military action "as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security." This is one of the examples of the legality of the humanitarian crisis that calls for humanitarian intervention due to the fact that there was a threat to international peace and security. While this is laudable, the African situation is not met with the same urgency or even treatment. A

good example of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, where there was a huge humanitarian crisis with the slaughter of thousands even before they had a chance to flee the country. This was surely a worst case than that of the Kurds in Northern Iraq.

In line with what the former UN Secretary General, Mr. Annan said, Africa seems to have a series of unending armed conflicts that defies African solution. Another good example is the Rwandan case, where the international community should have done to save the situation of humanitarian crisis. Same conditions were seen in neighbouring Burundi and other countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This therefore means that with regards to Africa, humanitarian interventions are selective and at the behest of the international community. An example in this regard is the United Nations and African Union intervention in Central African Republic's was a success story and mitigated the humanitarian atrocities against the civilians at least in the first two years. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Central African Republic (MINUSCA). This was collaborated with French forces to protect civilian population from militias.

Humanitarian interventions can also be negative, in spite of the fact that action was definitely taken. A good example of this is the humanitarian intervention in support of Congolese army which has dismal human rights record. This mostly succeeded in increasing the notoriety of the Congolese army due to numerous atrocities. It is instructive to note that the DR Congo was already enshrined in bloody conflict that had conflict intensity level of 1 in 2012 before the intervention was launched and. With the launch of the intervention, this was increased to level increased to 2 in 2013. To this end, Sawyer, Cunningham, and Reed (2017) observed that it is better not to intervene than to have biased interventions, which reduces the likelihood of civil war termination. While the basic thrust idea of humanitarian intervention lies in the responsibility of the international community to maintain peace through

interventions, Pesken (2012) observed that interventions that support governments may likely increase the likelihood of extrajudicial killings and disappearance of especially the opposition.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

From the above, it can be seen that there are arguments for and against humanitarian interventions, regardless of the fact that it is supposed to help maintain world peace. The responsibility of the United Nations, though overwhelming, has to depend on partners, especially as the body depends of use of force from contributing nations. This means therefore that beyond the debates, interest of countries of the west has to be also factored into the entire process of intervention. This becomes a big cog in the gap between its responsibility and capability.

From examples advanced at the concluding sections of the study, it becomes clear that humanitarian interventions in Africa are occasioned by factors that are beyond rhetoric and the contents of the political commitment of the UNSC on the Responsibility to Protect. The underlisted recommendations are therefore proffered.

- i. African leaders must therefore come to understand that African solutions to African problems has to be sourced from within, and not to run to countries of the West, who mostly serve their own interests.
- ii. African political and military leadership must also scrutinize components of intervening forces where they are available with the view to ensuring that forces do not become counter-productive and escalate the same conflict they are supposed to mitigate.
- iii. African scholars owe the continent the duty of constantly interrogating international policies with the view to determining their suitability for the continent; and
- iv. The international community must do more than pay lip service to Africa's security and development initiatives. They must understand that with the dynamics of globalization, insecurity in Africa translates automatically to insecurity around the world.



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## **CLIMATE CHANGE AND COMMUNAL CONFLICTS: A STUDY ON GURARA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, NIGER STATE-NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*More than ever before, the effects of climate change manifest more practically on society. One of the consequences is communal (violent) conflicts. It thus becomes cogent to investigate the effects of climate change on communal clashes in Gurara Local Government Area, of Niger State. Objectives of the study are: to identify the types of communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State; to determine the effect of climate change on communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State; and to analyse measures that must be taken to mitigate the effects environmental change on communal conflict in the study area. Survey research design was used, while instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The study sampled 531 residents of Gurara local government council of Niger State. It was found that there is a correlation between climate change and communal conflict in the study area. Also, the study found the major types of communal conflicts in Gurara Local Government to include farmers and herders' clashes, Indigene/Settler Issues, land and Socio-Cultural disputes. Similarly, effect of climate change in the study area were found to include food security challenges, outbreak of diseases and other crops and animal diseases, irregular migration and internal displacement and ultimately disruption to socio-economic activities. Measures that can be taken to manage conflict in Gurara LGA of Niger state include alternative conflict resolution strategies and the need for governments to address the effect of climate change. Conclusively, climate change has had significant impact on communal conflict in Gurara LGA that has exacerbated farmers and herders' conflict, indigene/settler rife. It has also resulted into severe land and other socio-cultural disputes. It was recommended that Government at all levels should make concerted efforts to fight banditry and insecurity in order to mitigate the increasing farmers-herders conflict in Niger State. The study recommends among others that government should engage in kinetic and non-kinetic conflict resolution frameworks to mitigate the increasing farmers-herders conflict in Niger State, Nigeria. It was also recommended that enlightenment programmes on climate change programmes should be carried out.*

**Key words:** Climate Change, Communal Conflict, Gurara LGA, Food Security, Migration

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## Introduction

The world's vegetation was aptly described as the renewable green gold by Odeyemi (1998). He noted that it is on this that the long-term sustainability of life on earth rests. This vegetation and accompanying atmosphere that protect the earth is threatened by mostly man-made disasters. However subtle and random droughts, landslide, flooding, desertification, pollution, and so on, may appear to be, they are sudden manifestations of degradation processes that has taken effect over time (UNEP/GRID-Arendal, 2005). In spite of these subtleties, data confirm that the phenomenon of climate that seem to creep in to greater or lesser extent, around the globe has been noted to cause changes associated that constitute major threat to socio-economic stability of societies around the world (IPCC, 2013). This phenomenon has been found to be greatly impacted by the depletion of the earth's ozone layer, accelerated especially by industrialisation. But as the former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declared "Climate change carries no passport and knows no national borders (Ki-moon, 2015)". Sadly, this phenomenon also impacts Africa, with the western Sahel band (a region that includes the northern part of Nigeria), being severely hit with declining rainfall levels, long drought periods and rising temperatures (Assibong et al., 2017).

The central-eastern and northern regions of Nigeria are worst hit, resulting in the reduction of the availability of natural resources, such as arable land and water. This has put increased pressure on local pastoralists, herders, and others who rely on these elements to make for their sustenance. It is therefore not surprising that there has been increased communal conflicts and other criminality in the region, particularly Niger State, Nigeria. The entire state has been under siege as reported by Vanguard Newspapers. According to it, the state has become a hotbed of violence. Armed gangs force villagers out of their homes and field into displacement camps in the state capital, Minna and the federal capital Abuja (Mosadomi, 2021).

These bandits now strike mostly in the day time and operate without any challenge from the security agents. Their mode of operation remains the same; riding on motorcycles with not less than two to three of them on each motorcycle and fully armed... Anybody that comes across them, men, women, old and young are felled by their bullets. They would then move from house to house in search of money, foodstuffs, other handy valuables and also rustle cows and other domestic animals (Mosadomi, 2021).

These have snowballed into severe conflict in communities such Guarara, which is one of the 25 LGA's in Niger State Nigeria. Climate change induced conflicts, especially within and between local communities' results in several deaths, displacements, loss of properties such as livestock, settlements, among others. These conflicts have lingered for many years and it is therefore necessary to investigate the effects climate change has on conflicts within local communities, exemplified here by Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State in Nigeria

## Objectives of the Study

In order to adequately deal with this subject matter, the under-listed objectives have been raised.

- 1 To identify the types of communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State.
- 2 To determine the effect of climate change on communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State.
- 3 To analyse measures that must be taken to mitigate the effects environmental change on communal conflict in the study area.

For practical purposes, the immediate section below dealt with conceptual analyses of key terms and related literatures to show gaps in study. This is followed by the methodology of the study, which guided the task of data gathering and analyses. Subsequently, results and analyses of the study were detailed. The study was concluded and recommendations were ultimately proffered

## **Conceptual Analysis**

### **The concepts of conflict**

Conflict, which has been historically known to be unavoidable, takes various forms and dimensions in African societies. Its negative or positive impact can come from misunderstanding stemming from family feud, market brawls, skirmishes, boundary disputes, and assaults. It also includes chieftaincy and boundary disputes. These storms of conflicts are widespread in Africa (Olaoba, 2005). Conflict as an element of social interaction has been defined in various dimensions. Some writers argued that, a conflict situation emerges when two or more parties could not agree on an issue.

While African conflicts have not always been predictable, they can be explained. Overt manifestations of conflict are seldom unremitting, even in relations between rival cultures (Robert, 2011). Conflict is a particular relationship between states or rival factions within a state which implies subjective hostilities or tension manifested in subversive economic or military hostilities (Quincy, 2001). Conflict can be described as a condition which identifiable group of human beings whether tribal, ethnic, linguistic, religious, socio-political, economic, cultural or otherwise is in conscious opposition to one or more other identifiable human group because these groups are pursuing what to be incompatible goals. Conflict could be violent or uncontrollable dominant or recessive, resolvable or insolvable under various sets or circumstances (Omotosho, 2003). Mohammed (2002) argues that conflicts are inevitable wherever severe resources are unequally distributed among competitors and inequity is reflected in cultural and political relationship between groups. This is linked to resources conflict that is currently prevalent in Gurara LGA.

### **Communal conflict**

Communal conflicts when they occur, takes root from communal identity and therefore occurs along ethnic or religious lines. It is therefore conceptualised as subjective group

identification based on common culture, history, and or common core values (Gurr 2000:4–5, 16–20). However, communal conflicts transcend the communal identity trap of ethnicity and religious. In West and Central African states, communal conflicts follow dividing line of original inhabitants of the locality (often called *indigenes* pitched against recent settlers of the communities. In spite of guaranteed rights as citizens, indigenes often see themselves as 'sons of the soil' perceive themselves as the rightful owners of the land (Fearon and Laitin 2011). However, it may be argued also that this represents another form of identity.

Brosché and Elfversson (2012: p. 35) defined communal conflict as violent conflict between nonstate groups that are organised along a shared communal identity. They further clarified this by noting that violent conflict may result when parties use lethal violence to gain control over some disputed and perceived indivisible resource, including a piece of land or local political power. Ilvento (1995) opined that communal conflict underscored the importance of additives like place, interplay and subsistence which presents an insight into the dynamics of communal lifestyles. as an instance, human beings inhabit a geographic region, and work together in turn which provide opportunity for interplay, which engender battle. Even the ubiquity of current communicate era has now not replaced the fundamental relationship among propinquity and interaction. on this regard,

### **Conceptualising Climate change**

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines climate change

as a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods (UNFCCC, 1992: p. 7).

This therefore means that there is the natural climate change that is not directly attributed to human activity. This natural change occurs when the Earth orbits, leading to changes in energy output from the sun. It can also result from natural volcanic activity. Also, the natural geographic distribution of land masses and other processes can influence natural climate change, which Mother Nature naturally handles. This leads to the regular periods of cold, warmth, seasons and the likes.

However, the problem arises when man, through various activities, carelessly or purposefully cause harm to the natural order of the earth, resulting in adverse effects of climate change, such as changes in the physical environment or biota that have "significant deleterious effects on the composition, resilience or productivity of natural and managed ecosystems or on the operation of socio-economic systems or on human health and welfare" (UNFCCC, 1992: p. 7). This results in harm to the environment, which as defined by Osawe and Ibebunjo (2010: p. 175), as the totality of the factors that surround and affect a living entity within an interactive process. They further noted that these environmental factors may be other living organisms (biotic factors) or non-living elements (abiotic factors).

Climate change has been said to be described as the observable and sizeable changes within the compositions of weather situations especially worldwide environment over similar time intervals because of direct or indirect activities of man (Ebele and Emodi, 2016). Climate change is perceived in bad lights as it is far regularly followed through environmental crises together with; boom and reduce in rainfall activities ensuing in floods, droughts and land slide, melting of polar ice-caps thermal enlargement, surges and acidification of oceans and result to ocean front flooding. the ensuing natural failures together with hurricanes, bush fire and landslides reasons financial losses, population displacement, communal crises, forced migration, growing ecological refugees, desertification and wide unfold soil erosion (Edowu, et. al., 2011). Climate change can also

be defined as the long-term and significant change in the expected patterns of a specific region's average weather for an appropriately significant period of time caused by the accumulation of greenhouse gases (gases facilitate for climate change are CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O) in the atmosphere which leads to global warming (Tadess and Dereje, 2018).

### **Literature Review**

Global warming has also altered the climate situation in the Horn of Africa (HoA) that metamorphosed into the intense drought and useful resource brought about contestation within the location. Udo (1999) posits that Nigeria is largely a tribal society in which various ethnic groups lay claims to territories to the exclusion of other groups. The settler (non-indigene) communities latch on the Constitutional provisions on human rights and the problem of definition of status to assert their rights in their places of settlement. For instance, many National Constitutions and Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees free movement, free association and ownership of property but at the same time enshrine the Principles of Federal Character and Quota System (FRN, 1999).

Several studies, including those cited below reveal that a reasonable number of communal conflicts in Africa and Nigerian communities are traceable to land scarcity, territorial disputes and competition for the use of land resources. Dunmoye (2003) in a survey of conflicts in the Middle Belt zone of Nigeria traced the cause of communal conflict to land scarcity and boundary disputes, due to population pressure, alienation and concentration. However, the argument that land scarcity results into dispute flies in the face of other documented findings about the socio-economic and cultural values of land and territory as economic resources. Moreover, conflicts over land are antithetical to equity, justice in distribution, allocation and use of land-based resources. The Akaeze and Osso Edda Oguzaraonweya conflicts of 2003, in Ebonyi State, Aguleri-Umuleri conflict in Anambra state and the Tiv-Jukun communal conflicts Taraba

state is plausible example (see Ebonyi State Government White Paper, 2005; Best, 1998)

Another major cause of dispute is the encroachment into farmlands by herdsmen and their cattle. This action of herdsmen provokes farmers to go after their cattle thereby resulting in serious conflict (Ndubushi, 2018). Urban development has also contributed to loss of grazing land for herdsmen in the country. Most lands that were originally used for grazing livestock are now permanent human settlements making it difficult for herdsmen to find good pasture for grazing their livestock. These permanent human settlements have pushed many herders into the forest where farmlands are. In the process of grazing their cattle, some herders allow their cattle to eat farm crops and destroy farmlands. The result of the action of the herdsmen is the conflict that ensued. The perspective that the decrease in the quality and quantity of natural resources, aggravated by climate change, participates in the chain of events that may influence communal conflicts between herdsmen and farmers is used here.

### **Methodology**

The research designed adopted to carry out this study is descriptive survey. This research design provides an efficient and accurate means of gathering and primary data in view of the population of interest. As indicated in this study, the study area is Gurara Local Government in Niger State, Nigeria. It was carved out of Suleja Local Government and has its headquarters at Gawu Babangida. Gurara LGA also adjoins the country's Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. In spite of the fact that major inhabitants are the Gwari people, the area is heterogenous. The locality is also home to the famed and beautiful Gurara Waterfalls. It has an area of 954 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 90,974 at the 2006 census.

Gurara experiences semi-arid weather conditions that leads to desertification and

resultant drought. The climate is thus warm to scorching all year, with grasses, occasionally bushes, but rarely significant trees. It has 68°F as its average yearly temperatures, 76" of annual precipitation, average humidity of 33% and a UV-index of 7. It is thus not surprising that the environment is dry for 291 days of the year. It is clear that Gurara LGA is challenged environmentally.

Cluster sampling technique was adopted for the study. This technique was adopted because the technique was carried out based on size and proportions of the population in Gurara Local Government Area. Therefore, the researcher followed the appropriate cluster groups which are the residents of Gurara in some selected wards and community in the local government. The study clustered the most affected communities within Gurara Local Government Area. In the second stage, in order to reduce the sample population, the researcher clustered Lambata, and Gawu by using a simple random sampling technique.

The projected population of Gurara Local Government Area according to National Population Commission NPC (2016) is 90, 974. Using Taro Yamane's formula,  $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$ , the sample size was determined to be 529. Thus, 529 residents of Gurara LGA were sampled.

### **Results and Analyses**

The primary data instruments in the study were questionnaires used in gathering information from residents of Gurara Local Government Area of Niger state. However, 531 questionnaires administered to the respondents, but 487 were returned. 27 questionnaires were not correctly filled while the remaining 17 questionnaires were not returned. Therefore, the data analyses were based on the 531 questionnaires that were correctly filled and returned.

**Research Objective 1: Types of communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State**

**Table1: Types of communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State**

Types of communal conflict	SA	A	D	SD	X	Sd	Decision
1. Farmers and Herders conflict	215	214	40	16	2.97	0.915	Agree
2. Indigene/Settler Issues	210	197	49	28	2.85	0.828	Agree
3. Land disputes	200	198	85	42	2.75	0.735	Agree
4. Socio-cultural disputes	162	165	92	65	2.53	0.647	Agree
					<b>2.87</b>	<b>0.804</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 shows mean scores of 2.97, 2.85, 2.75 and 2.53 in support of the types of communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State for items 6, 7, 8 and 9. The overall mean scores of 2.87 and a standard deviation of

0.804 respectively to indicate that the major types of communal conflicts in Gurara Local Government include farmers and herders clashes, Indigene/Settler Issues, land and Socio-Cultural disputes.

**Research Objective 2: Impact of climate change on communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State**

**Table 2: Effect of climate change in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State**

Effect of climate change	SA	A	D	SD	X	Sd	Decision
1. Shortage of food and insecurity	252	101	96	35	2.80	0.846	Agree
2. Infestation of crops/animals by pests/diseases	209	186	52	37	2.85	0.858	Agree
3. Irregular migration and displacement of people	206	173	90	15	2.75	0.663	Agree
4. Shutdown of economic activities the area	185	187	92	20	2.60	0.658	Agree
					<b>2.82</b>	<b>0.873</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 8 shows mean scores of 2.80, 2.85, 2.75 and 2.60 in support of the effect of climate change in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State for items 14, 15, 16 and 17. The overall mean scores of 2.82 and a standard deviation of 0.873 respectively, indicate that effect of climate change in Gurara Local

Government Area of Niger State include Shortage of food and insecurity, infestation of crops/animals by pests/diseases, irregular migration, internal displacement of people and paralyzing of socio-economic activities in the study area.

**Research Objective 3: Mitigating the effects environmental change on communal conflict in the study area**

**Table 3: Measures that can be taken to manage communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State**

Measures	SA	A	D	SD	X	Sd	Decision
1. Alternative Conflict Resolution Strategies to address the root causes of communal conflict.	290	186	64	20	2.80	0.844	Agree
2. Adoption of peacemaking initiatives like negotiation, mediation, and settlement to provide a lasting peace in the communities	292	180	56	32	2.85	0.848	Agree
3. The Federal and state Governments should meet with relevant stakeholders to address the effect of climate change to control the movement of cattle.	296	181	43	50	2.86	0.863	Agree
4. There should be adequate security to protect citizens of the community	269	185	60	46	2.70	0.753	Agree
					<b>2.72</b>	<b>0.773</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 projects a mean score of 2.80, 2.85, 2.86 and 2.70 in support of the measures can be taken to manage communal conflict in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State state for items 18, 19, 20 and 21. The overall mean scores of 2.72 and a standard deviation of 0.773 respectively to indicate that some of the measures include alternative Conflict Resolution Strategies to address the root causes of communal conflict, adoption of peacemaking initiatives like negotiation, mediation, and settlement to provide a lasting peace in the communities and the *need for Federal and state Governments to meet with relevant stakeholders to address the effect of climate change to control the movement of cattle and provision* adequate security to protect citizens of the community.

**Discussions on Major Findings**

The study revealed that the major types of communal conflicts in Gurara Local Government include farmers and herders’ clashes, indigene/settler issues, land and socio-cultural disputes. As can be seen from our data, causes of communal conflict in the study area align with Gurr (2000) conception of conflict as being subjective to group identification which may result from common culture, history, and or common core values. These conflicts also majorly transcend communal identity trap of ethnicity and religious in Gurara LGA following divided lines of *indigenes versus* recent settlers of the communities (Fearon and Laitin 2011). This result also aligns with Dunmoye (2003), who found that conflicts in the Middle Belt zone of Nigeria is traceable resources scarcity and boundary disputes. However, in the case of Gurara, the communal conflict is further



exacerbated by activities of bandits, who raid and destroy farm and arable lands, rustle cattle and put further pressure on the available land resources, causing farmers and herders to compete violently for the available natural resources.

The study found that effects of climate change in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State includes shortage of food and insecurity, Infestation of crops/animals by pests/diseases, irregular migration and displacement of people as well as paralyzing of socio-economic activities in the area. This is in agreement with Okpa, et. al. (2022).

The study revealed that some of the measures that can be taken to manage conflict in the community include alternative Conflict Resolution Strategies to address the root causes of communal conflict, adoption of peacemaking initiatives like negotiation, mediation, and settlement to provide a lasting peace in the communities and the *need for Federal and state Governments to meet with relevant stakeholders to address the effect of climate change to control the movement of cattle as well as provision adequate security to protect citizens of the community.*

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

From the foregoing, it can be seen that climate change impact on communal conflict in Gurara Local Government so much that it has led to farmers and herders' conflict, indigene/settler rife. It has also resulted into severe land and other socio-cultural disputes. Expectedly, effects of these include food insecurity, drought, crops and animals' diseases, irregular migration and displacement of people as well as paralyzing of socio-economic activities in the area. There is also a linkage between the recent upsurge in banditry in Niger State as some residents who

cannot make a living due to the effects of climate change on their locality and livelihood result to joining the pilferage. This subsequently exacerbates the already bad effects climate change on communal conflict in Gurara LGA.

The study thus recommends that:

- i. Government at all levels should make concerted efforts to fight banditry and insecurity in order to mitigate the increasing farmers-herders conflict in Niger State, Nigeria.
- ii. While kinetic security measures such as the deployment of security units to prevent attacks and reprisals attack should be put in place, emphasis should be placed on positive peace ideologies that will curtail the root cause of conflict;
- iii. Awareness programs on climate change challenges should be carried out to help sensitize the local community;
- iv. Government should have the political will to ensure that findings of commission of enquiry are implemented. This will also help to address the root cause of conflict, thereby providing long term solutions to the conflicts;
- v. The establishment of functional national infrastructure for peace as well as supporting other peace initiatives such as dialogue initiatives, faith-based dialogue initiatives, town hall meetings for farmers and herdsman. Capacity building training and advocacy and support for intervention is relevant in promoting peacebuilding; and
- vi. Citizens must learn to accommodate one another, irrespective of identity such as tribe, ethnicity, religion and any other affiliation.

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## **INTERROGATING THE CLIMATE CHANGE AMIDST EDUCATION DISPLACEMENT: RESILIENCE FOR KEEPING CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper begins by interrogating the linkage between climate change amidst education displacement through cultural sustainability drawing on a plethora of cross-disciplinary evidence and lessons learned from education systems. Climate change is one of the world's greatest challenges and its adverse impacts undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development. Climate action is fundamentally connected with achieving cultural sustainability, poverty eradication and reducing inequalities. The growing recognition of the importance of limiting warming to 1.5°C in order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change provides a framework for measuring the climate-cultural sustainability correlation. The climate impacts avoided at 1.5°C of warming compared to 2°C would make it easier to achieve many aspects of cultural sustainability that communities desire like health, livelihoods, food security, water supply and human security. Therefore, as the paper argues through the use of relevant primary and secondary sources there is a growing and urgent need for all that were involved in education systems to understand better the systemic effects of climate change. Thus, culture influences our understanding of the environment and our relationship with it on a deep level. People modify the ecosystems around them through cultural practices, values, and visions of the world. Cultural factors can promote social inclusion, deliberation and implementation, making attention to the cultural dimensions of governance and engagement indispensable. In conclusion the concept of regenerative education is introduced to posit a transformational agenda for education in the context of climate change through a real cultural sustainability. It provides recommendations for policy makers and stakeholders to achieve this goal.*

**Keywords:** Climate change, Education, Warming, Cultural sustainability

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### **Introduction**

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its adverse impacts undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development. Climate Action, including adaptation and mitigation, is fundamentally connected with achieving cultural sustainability, poverty eradication and reducing inequalities. Each degree of global warming matters. The growing recognition of the importance of limiting warming to 1.5°C in order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change provides a framework for measuring the climate-cultural sustainability correlation. The climate impacts avoided at 1.5°C of warming compared to 2°C would make it easier to achieve many aspects

of cultural sustainability that communities desire like health, livelihoods, food security, water supply and human security (Denton et al, 2015).

It is projected that climate change effects on health, food security, water and human security will increase. The world's poorest communities who bear little responsibility for climate breakdown are at the highest risk. The achievement of Sustainable Development Goals hinges on the fulfillment of the critical principles of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest first, notably communities and learners who are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Therefore, there is a growing and urgent need for all involved in education systems to better understand the systemic

effects of climate change, including their interaction with displacement. However, culture influences our understanding of the environment and our relationship with it on a deep level. People modify the ecosystems around them through cultural practices, values, and visions of the world (IPCC, 2021).

Cultural factors can promote or obstruct social inclusion, deliberation and implementation, making attention to the cultural dimensions of governance and engagement indispensable. Cultural and creative processes make it possible for individuals and communities to explore their histories and sense of identity, imagine different futures, and promote a dialogue about needs, aspirations and rights. Narratives and storytelling create space for agency, deliberation, co-constructing meaning, imagination and desirable and dignified pathways. Cultural and creative processes make it possible for individuals and communities to explore their histories and sense of identity, imagine different futures, and promote a dialogue about needs, aspirations and rights. Active participation in cultural life provides the motivation and possibility of increased civic participation, lends cultural visibility to marginalized groups, and fosters mutual recognition and cooperation between different generations and cultures (UNGA, 2020).

The most disadvantaged and vulnerable populations, particularly some indigenous people, local communities dependent on agricultural or coastal livelihoods, dry land areas and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), are at a disproportionately higher risk of the adverse consequences. Analysis has shown a dramatic increase in the reported number of extreme weather disasters resulting in people being displaced in last decade. The world's poorest communities who bear little responsibility for climate breakdown are at the highest risk. The achievement of SDG 4 hinges on the fulfillment of the critical principles of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest first, notably communities and learners who are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Therefore, there is a growing and urgent need for all involved in education systems to better understand the systemic effects of climate change, including their interaction with displacement. This paper begins to fill the gap in the understanding of the nexus between climate change, displacement, and education, drawing on a plethora of cross-disciplinary evidence and research, emerging better practices and lessons learned from education systems across the world, and foresight work on the futures of education. Beginning with conceptualizing climate-displacement in the context of education, the paper then articulates the bi-directional relationship between climate change and education before diving into the nexus between climate change, displacement, and education, including exploring how education systems can be adapted to be climate-displacement resilient (Cristina et al, 2019).

Similarly, the concept of regenerative education is introduced to posit a transformational agenda for education in the context of climate change and climate-displacement. Although climate change poses a real and significant threat to life and livelihoods, narratives predicting large numbers of "climate refugees" which education plays a crucial role in promoting cultural diversity. Incorporating diverse perspectives, histories, and cultural practices into curricula can foster intercultural dialogue, tolerance, and mutual understanding among students. Through the adoption of historical method of enquiry, the paper is divided into ten parts, starting with the introduction as the first part; second part speaks concerning climate displacement; third part highlights education & climate change; fourth part examines climate displacement as a risk multiplier & aggravator in education; fifth part is on culture's role; sixth part centres on climate adaptation & cultural sustainability; the seventh part discusses adaptation & building climate displacement resilience in education system through crisis-sensitive planning; eight part looks at safe & climate resilient school infrastructure; ninth part focus on mainstream climate change into

education sector plans & policies while the last part of the paper offers the conclusion and recommendation.

### **Conceptualizing Climate-Displacement**

Although a distinction is often drawn between climate-induced migration and displacement, there is an emerging consensus that the line between forced and voluntary human mobility is blurred and difficult to define in the context of climate change. Furthermore, the utility of making a distinction between migration and displacement in education can also be deemed problematic as the application of the right to education is universal, not conditional on migration status or reason for moving (Koko et al., 2015). The underlying mechanisms and drivers of climate-displacement remain poorly understood, with the relationship between environmental factors and mobility not being deterministic, with environmental conditions alone rarely being the only driver of human mobility.

However, evidence does demonstrate that vulnerability, defined by social differentiation in access to resources, is inversely correlated with mobility, meaning those who are most exposed and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change are the least capable to migrate voluntarily and the most at risk of displacement. Despite the universal application of the term 'climate-displacement' in the context of this paper and education, it is important to recognize the varied temporality of mobility captured by this term. There is a need when discussing climate-displacement to understand that the term can cover more temporary forms of displacement, which are typically a reaction to rapid-onset events and change. Extreme weather events demonstrate the most direct and rapid pathway from climate change to human mobility (Ingrid et al, 2019).

Such events are known to drive displacement however only a proportion of these lead to permanent displacement. The term in this context, also captures seasonal displacement and more permanent mobility and resettlement, which are usually undertaken as a means of

adaptation to reduce risk exposure in highly vulnerable settings. Five broad expected patterns of climate-displacement have been identified: temporary displacement; permanent local displacement; permanent internal displacement; permanent regional displacement; and permanent inter-continental displacement. Each of these categories have differing dynamics and distribute displaced persons and learners across varying policy jurisdictions and geographies, which has significant ramifications for how education systems prepare, respond, and adapt.

Although climate change and breakdown make human mobility more probable, vulnerability to environmental and climatic change is inversely linked to mobility, thus not all communities will have the ability and resources to move rendering them immobile and trapped. Immobility has received comparatively little attention, yet it presents important policy challenges and concerns for education systems. However, due to limited available research, evidence, and data, particularly in education, on the dynamics of trapping this paper focuses solely on climate-displacement. There is a clear need for future research into immobility and trapped populations, to better understand its impact on education and how education systems can adapt to such dynamics.

### **Education and Climate Change**

For many communities across the world climate-related risks, environmental change and intensifying extreme weather events are not theoretical; they are a reality with catastrophic consequences. Recently published evidence shows "significant anthropogenic influence" on many high impact events such as droughts, heat waves, wildfires, rainfall and flooding (WMO, 2020). The landmark Paris Agreement acknowledges the urgency of work in this area, calling it "a common concern of humankind" and highlighting that climate action should respect and promote the rights of migrants, children, and people in vulnerable situations. Yet, little work has been done on the impact on learners and education systems more broadly.

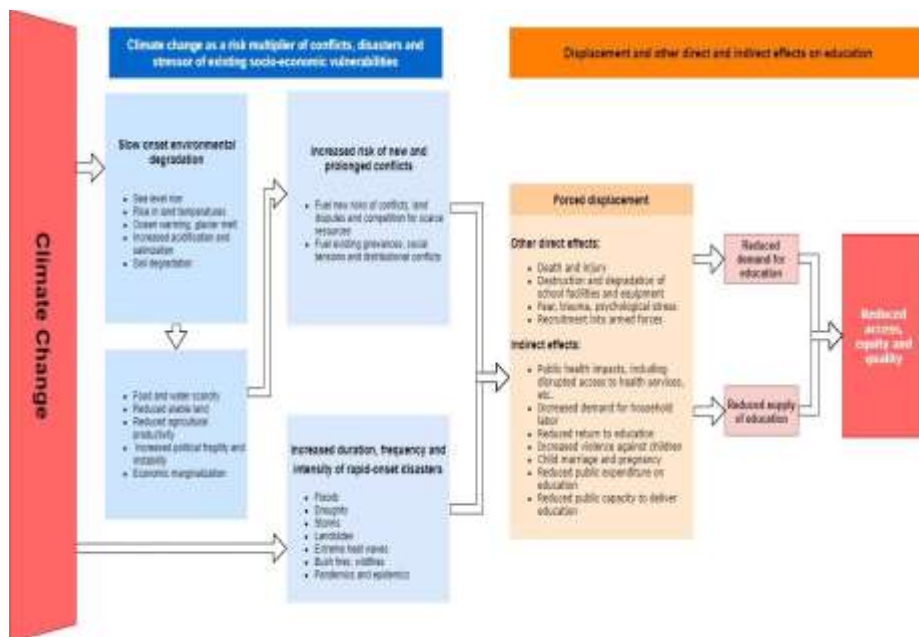
Despite this gap, learners themselves have been some of the most active and strongest advocates for climate action in the last few years through protest and civil society movements, such as the Fridays for Futures and the Sunrise Movement. Many of these children and youth have periodically opted out of formal education, opting instead for strike action, as a means of calling for accelerated and more radical climate action. Children and learners are now increasingly visible as not only climate victims but as active climate change actors (George et al, 2019). Education needs are largely invisible in most key discussions on climate change with advocacy for linking the two issues, beyond climate change education, remaining relatively silent.

Even less is known about the nexus between climate change, displacement, and education. The immediacy of climate change requires system-wide educational responses that go beyond a single domain of education (e.g. curriculum), with urgent focus needed on how education systems will address:

- Direct impacts on the lives and well-being of students, education staff and school communities, on educational infrastructure, equipment, and costs.
- Indirect impacts on the livelihoods and the environment of school communities, increasing the likelihood of food insecurity and the spread of vector borne diseases, which consequently reduces the physical and mental health of learners and can lead to displacement.

Both direct and indirect impacts increase the exposure and vulnerability of populations to hazards and their capacities to adapt to them. The way in which climate-displacement interacts, aggravates, and multiplies existing vulnerabilities and risk in and through education is of particular concern. However, the risk posed to learners by climate-displacement alone is highly dependent on policy responses in the education sector and beyond (UNESCO, 2022).

### Climate Change - Displacement—Education Nexus



Outlining the relationship and nexus between climate change, displacement and education, it is important to reiterate that little research has been conducted into this nexus, thus the understanding of the particular challenges in education is limited. It must also be noted that the nexus between climate-displacement and education exists and acts in complex socio-economic and political contexts, which require granular understanding, analysis, and action. Within these contexts climate change and displacement overlap and intersect with existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, notably those based on gender, disability, race, and migration status. Therefore, without due consideration and analysis of such intersections there is a significant risk that existing inequalities in education will become further entrenched and exacerbated, limiting any transformational change offered by education.

It is already known that displaced learners are more likely to encounter discrimination, racism, and social exclusion on basis of their identity when attending schools in alien environments (UNICEF, 2017). The exacerbation of existing inequalities due to the climate crisis is likely to affect vulnerable children and adolescents the most, particularly in the education space. The 2030 Framework for Action underscores such issues and concerns, calling for the needs of displaced populations to be addressed in order to strengthen the inclusion of forcibly displaced people in education (UNESCO, 2015).

The education sector is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and displacement. At times of hardship, education is often the first casualty, and despite progress, education is often neglected in the aftermath of mass movements due to conflicts and disasters. In 2019, education received only 2.6 percent of total humanitarian funding and continues to be overlooked in many crises routinely being the most underfunded sector in humanitarian appeals. Forced displacement, whether due to conflict or disasters which are both intertwined with climate change, has a negative impact on education adding considerable strain on already struggling education systems. Furthermore,

learners displaced or trapped by environmental change fall through the cracks of international protection mechanisms focused on the legal definition of 'refugees', leaving them in a state of limbo (UNESCO, 2018).

The rights of those internally displaced are detailed in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, including principle which reaffirms the right to education; however these principles are not legally binding. These challenges overlap and interact with the more visible and blatant impacts of climate change, notably intensifying extreme weather events, which deny and inhibit learners' access to education. In the wake of climate-related disasters, children and learners may be displaced to locations that are simply too far from educational facilities to make continuity of learning possible. For those within reach of schooling infrastructure, they may find schools destroyed, damaged or being used to provide shelter for stricken and displaced communities, of which they may be part.

Even when schools remain operational, they are often faced with teacher shortages, which are a common feature of displacement situations, due in part to teachers having fled, coupled with a lack of equitable and reliable remuneration needed to ensure their supply, retention, and motivation. Currently, these impacts of internal displacement on education systems tend not to be included in planning processes, meaning education infrastructure in host areas is unprepared to absorb new students. Evidence recently produced by IDMC has begun to reveal the scale of disruption caused to learners by internal displacement, estimating that more than 4.4 million children of primary and lower secondary school age between the ages of 5 and 14 in sub-Saharan Africa are at risk of having their education affected by internal displacement.

However, when considered against the backdrop of 127 million primary and secondary school school-age children and young people living in crisis-affected countries being out of school, which accounts for 50% of the global

out-of-school population, the estimate for IDPs is likely to be conservative. The discrepancy in these data demonstrates the need to better document and understand displacement and its intersection with education, including the role and influence of climate change (UNICEF & IDMC, 2019).

### **Climate-Displacement as a Risk Multiplier and Aggravator in Education**

Climate-displacement is likely to see sizeable populations move from high-risk settings to urban areas where the risks are different yet still high. There is the potential for the emergence of overlapping and increasingly complex emergencies and protracted crises, involving displacement, unplanned urbanization and a lack of quality or any education provision. Additionally, people who are trapped by climate and environmental change may become more prone to humanitarian emergencies and possibly even further displacement if their situation worsens, or if extreme events occur.

Children and youth with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to disasters, and by implication climate change and displacement, due to the socioeconomic and health factors inherent to disabilities. To fully achieve inclusiveness, education systems in the face of climate-displacement and trapping need to consider the impact of these dynamics on learners with disabilities. Considering climate change is affecting the most vulnerable first and hardest, there is an urgent need to examine the impacts on and possibilities for learners with disabilities. This specific angle is drastically under researched and little attention is currently paid to displaced learners with special educational needs and disabilities, reflecting a broader normative ableism in education scholarship and systems. At least half of all internally displaced persons are women and girls, totaling around 21 million. Displacement has gender-specific implications for both education responses and outcomes, in few cases mobility creates opportunities to break free of gendered social moulds but more

frequently it exacerbates gender-based vulnerability (Caroline & Nidhi, 2017).

The lack of data and the difficulty of predicting population movements due to environmental change pose a range of challenges for education policymakers and planners. The extent to which climate change, environmental change, and displacement disrupt learners' access to equitable and quality education and more broadly determine equal access to education is highly dependent on policy action and planning. To this end, governments and specifically education ministries must recognize education's role in adapting to and mitigating climate change by engaging in and steering concerted climate action. Ultimately, the goal should be to limit and reduce the release of greenhouse gas emissions, whilst increasing countries' adaptation to negative climate change effects. Intervention areas for education to actively contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation include Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), the use of vocational and technical education and training and higher education research and development to facilitate the transition to green economy, retrofitting and construction of green and climate resilient school infrastructure, and other green purchasing of education supplies (UNESCO, 2018).

### **Culture's Role**

Physicists and chemists have computed humankind's 'carbon budget,' that is to say the remaining amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> humans can put into the atmosphere and still stay below 1.5°C, and the probabilities that various emissions scenarios will allow us to stay within this warming threshold (IPCC, 2021). What these calculations cannot tell us, however, is — fundamentally — what futures do people want to transition to? Whose resilience matters? What types of societal and systemic changes are most workable within any given human system? It is culture, heritage and values, along with other institutional, economic and technological conditions, that supply the answers to these questions. In the jargon of climate policy and



science, these are the enabling conditions that will support or defeat achieving low-carbon and resilient pathways and sustainable development.

Culture influences our understanding of the environment and our relationship with it on a deep level. People modify the ecosystems around them through cultural practices, values, and visions of the world. Cultural factors can promote or obstruct social inclusion, deliberation and implementation, making attention to the cultural dimensions of governance and engagement indispensable. Artists, cultural organizations and cultural institutions hold transformative potential by challenging the values that condition life choices, including economic and consumption models. Narratives and storytelling create space for agency, deliberation, co-constructing meaning, imagination and desirable and dignified pathways.

Cultural and creative processes make it possible for individuals and communities to explore their histories and sense of identity, imagine different futures, and promote a dialogue about needs, aspirations and rights. Active participation in cultural life provides the motivation and possibility of increased civic participation, lends cultural visibility to marginalised groups, and fosters mutual recognition and cooperation between different generations and cultures. Culture provides the basis for inter-cultural dialogue and exchange, which fosters interconnectedness, but also embodies endogenous capacities of communities that promote local self-sufficiency, use of local materials, gastronomies and know-how.

Culture is the product of thousands of years of history, and the fruit of collective contributions by all peoples that supports a diversity of knowledge systems, livelihoods, and functions through languages, ideas, techniques, practices, and creations. Cultural diversity and biological diversity are closely related. Cultural groups and networks support a multiplicity of social pathways that result in people having multiple options. Culture is a resource for

constructing the identities of people and communities that strengthens social fabric and promotes place attachment. Cultural consideration address equity in terms of how widely capabilities are distributed within a society; gender considerations; social roles in resource use, sharing and management; and political and economic relations and legal institutions (IPCC, 2021).

In the face of cultural extinction from climate impacts, cultural rights are an integral element of human rights, guaranteeing the ability to identify with one or several cultural communities, active participation in cultural life, and access to the knowledge necessary to exercise other rights, freedoms, and responsibilities, as well as to design and take climate action.

### **Climate Adaptation and Cultural Sustainability**

Adaptation in human systems refers to the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm and maximise opportunities. It correlates to Article 7 of the Paris Agreement (COP, 2015) which established a global goal of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change. Article 7.5 acknowledges that adaptation action should be 'based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems.

Humans have already heated the planet by roughly 1.1 degrees Celsius since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, largely by burning coal, oil and gas for energy. The consequences can be felt across the globe in the form of devastating heat waves, floods and wildfires. According to climate scientists many changes are now essentially irreversible, especially in the ocean, ice sheets and global sea level. So people and communities must adapt to the changes that humans already have caused and plan for future changes. Culture is an important key to successful climate adaptation, the multi-faceted dimensions of which are increasingly well understood. A recent

study prepared by the Climate Heritage Network showed that when climate actions plans do address culture, it is most often in the context of adaptation (UNGA, 2020).

Culture is central to understanding and implementing adaptation actions, be they human behavioural change, institutional, or technological adjustments. The identification of risk, decisions about responses, and means of implementation are all mediated by culture. Highlighting the role of heritage in social integration and inclusion supports adaptation, especially by inclusive community stewardship and participatory inventorying and cultural mapping, which can mobilise communities, articulate sense of place and provide a knowledge base to inform adaptation decision-making. Relating past adaptability to environmental change to current issues can support present and future adaptation.

#### **Adaptation and Building Climate-Displacement Resilience in Education Systems through Crisis-Sensitive Planning**

The lack of data and the difficulty of predicting population movements due to environmental change pose a range of challenges for education policymakers and planners. The extent to which climate change, environmental change, and displacement disrupt learners' access to equitable and quality education and more broadly determine equal access to education is highly dependent on policy action and planning. To this end, governments and specifically education ministries must recognize education's role in adapting to and mitigating climate change by engaging in and steering concerted climate action.

Ultimately, the goal should be to limit and reduce the release of greenhouse gas emissions, whilst increasing countries' adaptation to negative climate change effects. Intervention areas for education to actively contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation include Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), the use of vocational and technical education and training and higher

education research and development to facilitate the transition to green economy, retrofitting and construction of green and climate resilient school infrastructure, and other green purchasing of education supplies. Education systems must also adapt to the effects of climate change including displacement by taking action to prepare for and adjust to both the current effects of climate change and the predicted future impacts. Both, mitigation and adaptation strategies require an enabling institutional, policy and financing framework.

To that end, it is crucial to understand how risks resulting from climate change including displacement impact education service delivery and how education systems can reduce their impact and occurrence, as defined in UNESCO-IIEP's crisis-sensitive educational planning approach. Crisis-sensitive educational planning (CSP) involves identifying and analysing the risks to education posed by conflict and natural hazards including climate-related hazards. This means understanding both how these risks impact education systems, and how education systems can reduce their impact and occurrence. The aim is to lessen the negative impact of crises on education service delivery, whilst fostering the development of education policies and programmes that will help prevent future crises arising in the first place and manage those that cannot be prevented.

A key part of CSP is to preserve education even in the most difficult circumstances whilst overcoming inequity and exclusion in education, which can exacerbate the risk of grievances and conflict when left unchecked. Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies are most effective when they are well planned and budgeted for, led and supported by national and local policies, coordinated across different governmental and non-governmental entities, and financed and procured sustainably. Educational planning that is sensitive to risks and underlying factors that expose certain populations to disproportional risks has the potential to address and mitigate those risks, reducing the vulnerability of affected populations.

### **Safe and Climate Resilient School Infrastructure**

In the past decades, many countries have adopted safer school construction guidelines and standards to ensure the safety of learners and education personnel. However, investment in climate-proof education infrastructure is slow. As climate change introduces new risks, including extreme heat waves, flooding and drought, education facilities must adapt. Planning for suitable school construction sites needs to take into consideration climate change projections to avoid areas which are likely to be affected by rising sea levels, floods or typhoon risks. Temporary or mobile education facilities can be an adaptive and cost-effective solution for climate displaced learners or replace school buildings damaged by extreme weather. Adaptive solutions remain limited with the result that students affected by the climate crisis and displacement miss classes and risk dropping out of school.

Ensuring that education infrastructure is climate resilient and adaptive to population movements requires new approaches in educational planning, specifically the integration of geospatial, climate change, and displacement data into school mapping and other planning tools. Existing practices that take into consideration regular movements of populations such as of nomadic families may offer useful insights into the opportunities and challenges of mobile school infrastructure. Similar, experiences from decades-long investments in school safety as part of the disaster risk reduction in education agenda will be key in identifying strategies to ensure both, climate resilient and displacement appropriate school infrastructure.

### **Mainstream Climate Change into Education Sector Plans and Policies**

Integrating climate risk and vulnerability assessments into standard education sector and situation analysis allows for improved information on vulnerable populations affected by or at risk of displacement, as well as on segments of the population who remain in place

and immobile. Such assessments consequently inform the preparation of crisis-sensitive education policies and sector plans, supporting governments for example in tackling the challenge of ensuring the provision of equitable and quality education to vulnerable populations without locking them into areas of extreme risk which may increasingly become unviable. Education policies and sector plans should detail strategies at school, community, and system level to prevent, prepare for, and mitigate crisis (Cristina et al., 2019).

Depending on the context, this can include strategic provisions for building new schools in hazard-free areas, potentially introducing a double shift system in areas affected by climate-displacement, and setting up comprehensive school safety programs including school-level contingency plans, school staff training in DRR and alternative education modalities. The small island state of Kiribati for example has issued a 'migration with dignity policy', as part of the nation's long-term relocation strategy which addresses climate induced sea level rise. Based on potential host countries' demand for skilled workers such as in health and care, the policy aims to equip the population with relevant qualifications to access decent work opportunities abroad.

During the process of policy and plan development, MoEs need to ensure representation of affected communities, ensuring that their voices, opinions, and perspectives are heard and addressed in policies and plans. Concrete provisions for climate change actions including for displacement in sector plans allow Ministries of Education (MoEs) to allocate domestic finances and lobby for external financial resources. In several countries in East Asia and the Pacific, funding allocated to MoEs for climate-related disaster response is mainstreamed into education budgets. However, contingency funds available for education in the case of climate-related disasters are— like global emergency funding—disproportionally small compared to other sectors, including agriculture and infrastructure (UNESCO, 2018).

Much remains to be done to understand and monitor the effectiveness of climate adaptation measures in education to learn, adapt to and test new strategies. This includes education sector plans and policies that promote research and development and public debate, including at school and community level to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies taken and to allow local-level decision makers and implementers to diagnose design mistakes and implementation weaknesses. Such a trial-and-error approach at local level must be taken seriously by system leaders through institutionalized feedback loops to devise system strengthening reforms that allow for effective strategies to adapt to climate change and mitigate effects that cannot be prevented.

Finally, Alexander and Angela (2017) argued that in addressing climate change and displacement effectively through preparedness and adaptation requires a collective and coordinated response across sectors, with relevant government agencies fully involved, including ministries of environment, national emergency management authorities, ministries of health and other national and sub-national stakeholders. A key concern for effective leadership remains governments' and societies' "myopic worldview", underestimating or simply neglecting increasing risks due to climate change. This is visible in low investments in preparedness. As investment in preparedness has far less visible outcomes and can require unpopular decisions such as prioritizing wetlands over settlements, thus it is often eclipsed by issues considered more politically salient by politicians and voters.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

To conclude, this paper through conceptualizing climate-displacement and exploring its relationship and multitude of intersections with education has elucidated some of the complexity, nuance, and interconnectedness of the risks and challenges posed by climate change. The discussion and evidence presented is by no means exhaustive and is limited by the availability of education-specific research and

evidence. Furthermore, it is essential that there is recognition that despite the urgent need for mitigation and adaptation detailed in the previous section, moving towards a sustainable future requires a much broader and radical rethinking of education.

Climate-displacement poses a real challenge to existing knowledge, understanding, and ways of working, including blurring the lines between the conventional categorizations of human mobility.

The impacts of climate-displacement in, on and through education are likely to be highly unequal, with existing inequalities involving gender, disability, income and wealth, race, and migration status at risk of being exacerbated and becoming entrenched. To avoid repeating the discussion above and to provide scope for future research and thinking in this area, as a means of concluding, this paper offers thoughts, questions, and potential directions on how education in the context of climate change and displacement can go beyond adaptation and towards a sustainable future in education. UNESCO's International Commission on the Futures of Education, an independent commission convened to rethink education in a world of increasing complexity, uncertainty, inequalities, risks, and possibilities, has recently highlighted the urgency of changing course in education towards the concept of "regenerative education". (UNESCO, 2020).

Responding to this in the context of climate related displacement, education systems must seek to go beyond just adapting to the challenges posed, they must respond to the demands of learners for justice and a sustainable future, whilst simultaneously addressing the inequalities faced by displaced learners. Although building resilience in education systems is critical, it must not become a vehicle through which tolerance of increased uncertain and risk is cultivated. Furthermore, climate-displacement has the potential to induce widespread psycho-social trauma, cause a heightened sense of injustice and breakdown social cohesion within and amongst communities and learners. For many displaced learners, and their communities, the injustice

and inequality goes beyond displacement and the associated loss of their security and livelihood with the impacts extending to a severing of their connection to their ancestral land, identity, wellbeing and culture. In this context, education must be reimagined and reshaped to fulfil its regenerative role. For example, at a granular level teachers and support staff in areas hosting those climate-displaced learners need to be provided with the skills and knowledge to open space for the expression of this injustice and allow learners to

reestablish their culture, languages, and identity whilst learning in displacement. This space and practice have the potential to open new forms of solidarity, pedagogy, and learning that provides the opportunity to build cultural sustainability.

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## EFFECT OF SECRETARIAL COMPETENCY ON JOB RETENTION IN AHOADA EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA.

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### Abstract

*Secretarial duties are pivotal to administrative functions, but certain competencies are mandatory for effective performance. This study was design to determine the competencies required by secretaries and was restricted to Ahoada East local government council secretariat in Rivers State, Nigeria. The adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted by 20 secretaries from 8 departments in the local government area. Structured questionnaire was used in collecting data for this study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions and t-test to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the analysis, it was found that communication skills, word processing competencies and relevant to the job of secretaries are needed by the secretaries to retain their jobs. Based on the findings, it was concluded that ICT is very important to acquisition of competencies required by secretaries for them to cope and perform efficiently in modern office work. As part of the recommendations, the Head of Personnel and Heads of Departments should ensure that secretaries possess the required competencies and qualifications relevant to the job.*

**Keywords:** Competency, Effect, Jobs, Secretary and Retention

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### Introduction

Secretary with required competencies will help alleviate some of the problems that lead to failure in performance in office job and equally causes lost of job of some persons. According to Adebayo and Akinyele (2012), the Professional Secretary International (PSI) defines a secretary as an executive assistant who has mastery of office skills, demonstrates the ability to assume responsibility without direct supervision, exercise initiative and judgment and makes decisions within the scope of assigned authority. From the above definitions, although various office workers perform some facets of

secretarial work, but not all office workers secretaries, as such some qualifications are required. Also, some qualified are not registered with the Professional Secretary International (PSI) which is an organization for professional secretaries.

Aromalaran (2010) opined that the certificate required of a general secretary in Nigeria was West Africa School Certificate Examinations, Pitman Institute of London or Royal Society of Arts (RSA) London. These days due to professionalism and automation, the required certificate include; Higher National Diploma (HND) in office technology and management of

secretarial management (studies from any accredited polytechnic; Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Education from a recognized university. In other words, the training of the secretary must reflect the changes and experiences in the world of work. Due to changes in technology, the role of secretary in business has changed tremendously from that of typewriting and shorthand dictation, answering of telephone calls and processing of mails. Today's secretaries are exposed to office technology including the internet that makes work much easier and knowledge more accessible (Edwin, 2008). It is worthy to note that in the work of a secretary, there is no gender bias. Both male and female work as secretaries observed that in profession of a secretary, one of the unethical practices is the erroneous notion of the secretary's career as being solely for females. However, their competencies can only be measured in their output. Competency is required on the part of the secretary for the achievement of an organization objective.

Competency in the words of Olaitan, Alaribe and Eze (2010) refers to successful performance of a task through the use of knowledge, skills, attitude and judgment. This means that a secretary will not only have the theoretical knowledge of his work but should be able to carry out the duties practically, efficiently and effectively towards achieving the objectives of the organization and that of the nation. The secretary should possess the required competencies for job dexterity. These include: Personality, technical, public relations, and communication, computer/word processing competencies among others.

The secretary should possess communication competence as he is the coordinator of the daily routines of an office and organizes the office schedules and paper works. Adebayo and Akinyele (2012) posited that a secretary's duty includes; helping the executive manager, his schedules, handle visitors and callers, produce document and communication. Subsequently, the secretary is required to possess computer/word processing competencies. With

automation and organizational restructuring, computer software programme such as word processing for writing and editing letters, memos and reports; data management programme for use of long list of data and spreadsheet programme which handle tables and numbers should be mastered by the secretary.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Competency of the secretary impact on the prospects and success, any organization without a secretary with the desired competencies will amount to organizational suicide. The use of an incompetent secretary will amount to enormous mistakes. According to Igbinedion (2010:116) mistakes include; errors in typing important document and the poor image they convey, inability to interpret issues in correspondence correctly, lack of prompt initiative, misplacing of important documents due to poor filing approach, poor organization of work leading to unnecessary delays and inability to deal with technical complex matters. The above facts are well noticeable in competency display by secretaries in discharging their duties. Hence, the need to determine the effect of secretarial competency on job retention.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to determine the competencies required of secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study specifically seeks to determine:

1. The communication competencies required of secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. The computer/word processing competencies required of secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State.
3. Qualification required of secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State.



## Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the communication competencies required of secretaries for retaining their jobs in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. What are the computer/word processing competencies required of secretaries for retaining of jobs in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State?
3. What are the qualifications required of secretaries for retaining of jobs in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State?

## Null Hypothesis

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of competency and communication skill of secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government for retaining their jobs.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the competency and computer word processing secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government for retaining their jobs.

## Methodology

The study adopted survey research design. A survey research design was suitable for this study because according to Osuala (2002), a survey research focuses on people, the vital facts of people, their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, motivation and behaviors. Okia (2000) stated that a survey research is an outline or plan in which the entire population or representative sample is studied by collecting and analyzing data from the group through the use of questionnaire.. The result from the sample to be used for the study was generalized to the entire population. This study was carried out in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State. There are 8 departments including other departments in Ahoada East Local Government Council. Each department has general secretaries and confidential secretaries to the

Head of Departments, Directors, Head of Personnel Management (HPM), Head of Local Government (HLG), Local Government Chairman (LGC) and Human Resource (HR). The population for the study consists of 20 secretaries from the various departments in the Local Government Council. There was no sampling due to the manageable size of the population.

Structured questionnaire was designed by the researchers in collecting data for the study. The questionnaire was tagged: Competencies Required of Secretaries in Retaining Jobs in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State (CRSRJ). The instrument was in two parts: I and II. Part I contained bio data while part II was divided into sections A-C containing 31 items. Section A seeks information on communication competencies required of secretaries in retaining their jobs. And there are 10 items in the section. Section B with 9 items seeks information on computer/word processing competencies required of secretaries in retaining their jobs. Section C with 12 items seeks information on the qualification required of secretaries in retaining their jobs in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State. Response options were 4-point Likert rating of highly required, required, not required and highly not required assigned to the items. The instrument (CRSRJ) was subjected to face and content validity. Draft copies of the instrument were given to 3 experts, one from the Department of General Studies and two from the Department of Business Education, all in Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, Rivers State. They were asked to check whether or not the items were clearly stated, in terms of adequacy and suitability for eliciting the desired responses from the respondents. Necessary correction and suggestions by the experts were effected by the researcher to get the final draft of the instrument with 30 items. The instrument was administered to a sample of 10 secretaries randomly selected from five departments in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area (ONELGA) of Rivers State. This is because ONELGA is not part of the study

area. There are also 8 departments in the Local Government Area. Hence, ONELGA is suitable for conducting reliability test of the instrument for this study. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. Reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained, which indicate a high correlation, given credence that the instrument was highly reliable. Hence, it can be used to obtain data for this study. In order to collect data, 20 copies of the questionnaire will be distributed to the respondents by the researchers.

The data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation for the research questions. The hypotheses was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significant. T-test would be used because the

population of the study is less than 30 respondents. The upper and lower limits of the mean will be used to determine the degree of required and not required. Thus:

3.50 – 4.00 = Highly Required (HR)

2.50 – 3.49 = Required (R)

1.50 – 2.49 = Not Required (NR)

0.49 – 1.49 = Highly Not Required (HNR)

The null hypothesis will not be rejected if the t-calculated value is less than t-table value at .05 level of significance. However, where the calculated t-value is equal to or greater than the t-table or critical value at .05 level of significance with a given degree of freedom.

**Results**

**Research Question 1: What are the communication competencies required of secretaries for retaining their jobs in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State?**

**Table 1: Mean ratings of secretaries on communication competencies required.**

S/N	Communication competencies required of secretaries include the followings abilities:	Responses				0	Decision
		4	3	2	1		
		HR	R	NR	HNR		
1.	Construction of mailable letters.	16	2	2	0	3.70	HR
2.	Editing of documents.	18	1	1	0	3.85	HR
3.	Generating e-mail.	14	4	1	1	3.55	HR
4.	Sending e-mail.	15	4	1	0	3.70	HR
5.	Production of office correspondence.	18	2	0	0	4.00	HR
6.	Answering telephone calls in pleasant manner.	19	1	0	0	3.35	R
7.	Handling confidential matters.	20	0	0	0	4.00	HR
8.	Use of English language to pass information effectively.	17	3	0	0	3.85	HR
9.	Handling a cordial communication with staff.	16	3	1	0	3.75	HR
10.	Maintaining a good human relation.	13	7	0	0	3.65	HR
	<b>Grand mean</b>					<b>3.74</b>	

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 reveals that the respondents agreed on item numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Hence, their means were 3.70, 3.85, 3.55, 3.70, 4.00, 4.00, 3.85, 3.75 and 3.65 respectively. Subsequently, the respondents agreed on item

number 6 as required. This means that communication competencies are highly required by secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area. The grand mean value of 3.74 concurs to that.

**Research Question 2:** What are the computer/word processing competencies required of secretaries for retaining of jobs in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers

**Table 2: Mean ratings of computer/word processing competencies required of secretaries.**

S/N	Computer/word processing competencies required of secretaries include the followings:	Responses				0	Decision
		4	3	2	1		
		HR	R	NR	HNR		
11.	Ability to operate the computer.	17	3	0	0	3.85	HR
12.	Ability to use scanning machine.	13	6	1	0	3.60	HR
13.	Ability to browse and download information from internet and store or save appropriately.	15	5	0	0	3.75	HR
14.	Database Microsoft access for storage and administration of data.	12	5	3	0	3.45	R
15.	Spreadsheets like – Microsoft excel to manage the council budget and other financial document.	13	6	1	0	3.60	HR
16.	Ability to engage in conference calls/video conferencing for staff meeting.	15	3	1	1	3.55	HR
17.	Ability to create, format, save and print document.	18	2	0	0	3.90	HR
18.	Ability to access the internet through the use of mobile phones.	11	6	2	1	3.30	R
19.	Ability to create a website.	15	5	0	0	3.75	HR
	Grand mean					3.28	

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 2 reveals that the respondents agreed on item numbers 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 19 respectively. Hence, their means were 3.85, 3.60, 3.75, 3.60, 3.55, 3.90 and 3.75. This means that computer/word processing competencies are highly required by secretaries. Subsequently, the respondents agreed on item numbers 14 and 18 as required by secretaries in

Ahoada East Local Government Area. The grand mean value of 3.28 confirmed to that.

**Research Question 3:** What are the qualifications required of secretaries for retaining of jobs in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State?

**Table 3: Mean ratings of qualifications required of secretaries for retaining of jobs.**

S/N	Qualifications required of secretaries include the followings:	Responses					Decision
		4 HR	3 R	2 NR	1 HNR	0	
20.	First School Leaving Certificate.	3	2	15	0	2.40	NR
21.	Senior School Certificate.	4	6	10	0	2.70	R
22.	Royal Society of Arts (RSA).	2	7	8	3	2.40	NR
23.	National Diploma in Secretarial Studies.	10	6	4	0	3.30	R
24.	National Diploma in other study areas.	6	6	7	1	2.85	R
25.	Higher National Diploma in Secretarial Studies.	18	2	0	0	3.90	HR
26.	Higher National Diploma in other areas of study.	10	8	1	1	3.35	R
27.	B.Ed in Secretarial education.	17	3	0	0	3.85	HR
28.	B.Ed in other areas of study.	8	10	1	1	3.25	R
29.	B.Sc in Secretarial study.	19	1	0	0	3.95	HR
30.	B.Sc in other areas of study.	8	8	4	0	3.20	R
31.	M.Sc in Secretarial Administration.	20	0	0	0	4.00	HR
<b>Grand mean</b>						<b>3.96</b>	

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 3 reveals that the respondents agreed on item numbers 20 and 22 as not required. Their means were 2.40 and 2.40. Also, the respondents agreed to item numbers 21, 23, 24, 26, 28 and 30 respectively as required. Hence, their means were 2.70, 3.30, 2.85, 3.35 and

3.20. Subsequently, respondents agreed to item numbers 25, 27, 29 and 31 as highly required. This means that qualifications are now needed by secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State. The grand mean value of 3.96 indicated homogeneity of responses.

**Hypotheses**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significance difference between the mean ratings of competency and communication skill of secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government for retaining their jobs.

**Table 4: t-test analysis on mean responses of male and female secretaries on communication competencies required by secretaries**

S/N	Group	N	0	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
1	Male			0.28				Not significant
2	Female			0.31	29	0.81	1.96	

The result in Table 4 shows that there was no significant difference in the responses regarding the need of communication competencies by secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area. This was indicated by t-cal value of 0.81

and table value of 1.96, at .05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significance difference between the mean ratings of the competency and computer word processing secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government for retaining their jobs.

**Table 5: t-test analysis on mean responses of male and female secretaries on computer/word processing competencies required**

S/N	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
1	Male		3.42	0.38				Not significant
2	Female		3.56	0.41	29	0.74	1.96	

The analysis in Table 5 shows that secretaries did not differ significantly in their mean responses regarding the need for computer/word processing competencies by secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area. This is shown by t-cal value of 0.74 and table value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected with a given degree of freedom.

**Findings of the Study**

Based on the analysis, the following findings were made:

That communication competencies, computer/word processing competencies and higher qualifications are needed by secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State. Nevertheless, it was found that there was no significant difference between the responses of male and female secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area. Hence null hypotheses were not rejected.

**Discussion**

Any organization without a secretary with the desired competencies will amount to organizational suicide. The use of an incompetent secretary will amount to enormous mistakes. From research mistakes include; errors in typing important document and the poor image they convey, inability to interpret

issues in correspondence correctly, lack of prompt initiative, misplacing of important documents due to poor filing approach, poor organization of work leading to unnecessary delays and inability to deal with technical matters. The above facts are well noticeable incompetency display by secretaries in discharging their duties. Based on the analysis, the following findings were made: that, communication competencies, computer/word processing competencies and higher qualifications are needed by secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State. Nevertheless, it was found that there was no significant difference between the responses of male and female secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area. Hence null hypotheses were not rejected.

**Implication of the Study**

The findings of the study have implications for local government secretaries and other organizations. Since local government and other organizations have the secretaries, they would be more dedicated in training the secretaries in ICT programmes. Second, it is a pointer to local government who did not have the necessary modern equipment and materials, that they should acquire them before participating in training secretaries. The findings of the study have some implications for secretaries. The

secretaries need to be serious while on ICT training to acquire the skills and competencies that would help them fit into the world of work.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

It is certain that ICT is very important to the acquisition of competencies required by secretaries in Ahoada East Local Government Area to perform efficiently in the work. Some local government authorities and other organizations however, do not have all the equipment and materials that are needed by secretaries for skill acquisition but are present in some organizations. Therefore, a functional ICT training is the solution.

Consequently, it could be observed from the findings that a functional programme could improve secretaries' competencies in the area of ICT management. However, it is the responsibility of the local government to ensure that the entire objectives for which ICT is established should be realized.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Head of Personnel and Head of Departments should make sure that the secretaries they employ possess the required communication, computer/word processing competencies and qualification in order to achieve the organizations objectives.
2. Workshops and seminars should be organized by the management of local government area in Ahoada East of Rivers State for retraining their secretaries for possessions of the required competencies.
3. Professional Secretaries International (PSI) should make sure that secretaries of local government are registered with them to ensure compliance with the high qualifications and competencies.

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## **CURTAILING UNINSURABLE RISKS THROUGH PROMOTION OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT AS UNORTHODOX INSURANCE SCHEME**

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### **Abstract**

*As climate changes appear worsening and is perceived as a threat to human existence, but the insurance industry appears remote, hence, there is need to resort to unorthodox insurance. The objective of this study is to determine how green infrastructural development can curtail uninsurable risks. The population for this study consisted of senior staff of the top five (5) insurance companies in Lagos, Nigeria, with 152 senior/management staff strength. This study adopted a descriptive research design. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. A structured questionnaire was administered for the study's data. Data relating to climate change were retrieved from the National Centres for Environmental Information. Regression model was used to analyse the data gathered. The study showed that green infrastructural development can serve as mother insurer of human existence and with time curtail uninsurable risks like flood and other unforeseen epidemics. This study revealed that uninsurable risks such as floods, epidemic, natural disasters, to mention few can become insurable through green infrastructural development by investing in the development of green infrastructures such as plantation of tree, renewable energy insurance, and green car insurance. This study hereby recommended that every human, organisations and the governments should see themselves as potential part of the unorthodox insurer by investing in green infrastructures to avoid human extinction. Also there is need to create more awareness on green innovative products which could help in mitigating the negative effect of climate change.*

**Keywords:** Uninsurable Risks, Green Infrastructural, Unorthodox, Insurance Scheme

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### **1. Introduction**

The long-term trend in meteorological phenomena can be seen as climate change. This is a premeditated end to human life. As a consequence, it is vital to provide insurance for human survival through unique insurance systems that could guarantee survival in any climatic condition. Irrespective of the reality that there is a long history of "weather," which suggests that climate should be regarded insurable, climate change may combine components of temperature change with variations in temperature for which there is no precedent in history, or at least no instances for which information exists. Since the insurance

business still considers climate change to be an uninsurable risk, what is the appropriate course of action? (Commission for Europe, 2022). According to Arkush and Braman (2023), there is a 66% chance that between 2023 and 2027, the global near-surface temperature would surpass 1.5°C, which is greater than pre-industrial levels, due to climate change. This will exacerbate uncertainty globally. Weidner and Guillén-Gosálbez (2023) also demonstrated the previously undisclosed negative consequences of climate change, which were responsible for about 75% of all fatalities and property losses. But the whole point of insurance is to lessen or lessen the financial burden of a loss or



person who suffers a bad event, like a flood or hurricane. Rapid economic growth has led to an increase in environmental and pollution issues, such as large-scale industrial excessive quantities, major carbon emissions, and waste pollution (Xu et al., 2020).

The best way to describe adverse outcomes is to use the word risk. However, risk is an inevitable aspect of any economic activity, and the risk is borne disproportionately by the participants, particularly the investors, employees, and business owners. Some risks can be passed onto others since they are insured. The advantage of transferring risks to an insurer is that they are experts in risk management and data collecting (Munich-Re, 2022). "Green insurance" is an insurance policy that protects the environment and helps to minimize global warming. The term "eco-friendly insurance" is occasionally used to describe precisely what it is: a financial incentive to encourage behavior change. As people grow more conscious of how their actions influence the environment, they adopt ecologically friendly practices for themselves. Insurance companies are creating new products and services to encourage sustainable habits and technology.

The world's climate continually is evolving, and which is currently widely acknowledged. According to the IPCC, it is primarily driven by human activity, notably greenhouse gas emissions. A lot of activities, including driving cars and running businesses, rely on the combustion of fossil fuels. These procedures send hazardous substances into the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide, influencing the climate system. In one phrase, insurers help clients recuperate from losses while absorbing a great deal of the risks. As the climate worsens, weather-related hazards (such as floods and cyclones) grow more deadly. As a consequence, insurers around the globe recognize the significant danger that climate change poses to the industry. They must make more payments due to greater damages caused by the unpredictable weather. Scientists have devoted special focus on green innovation recently as a

result of growing environmental concerns, shortages of resources, and environmental pressures. (Kawai, Strange, & Zuchella, 2018). According to Anser, Yousaf, Nassani, Abro, and Zaman (2020), green innovation will aid in the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and other effects of climate change, as well as product use.

Green insurance products are becoming more widely offered on a global basis, covering anything from agricultural products to home restoration (Clark, Knecht, McCaulay, Palutikof, & Yambi, 2020). Green insurance solutions are essentially risk-reducing sustainable investing alternatives. Organizations must place a greater value on environmental management innovation and planning projects. As a result, companies strive to advocate green innovation practices (Musaad et al., 2020).

The primary goal of this research is to determine ways to reduce uninsurable risks through the promotion of green infrastructure development. Specific objectives are to: ascertain the extent to which climate change could result in human extinction; and how green infrastructural development can curtail uninsurable risks. This paper is divided into introduction, literature review, methodology, data analysis and discussion of findings and conclusion and recommendations. In the literature review section, various concepts and prior related studies are discussed, the research design and methods of analysis are discussed in the methodology, analysis and results of the study are covered in the data analysis section while the conclusion and recommendations are the final section of the paper.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Green Insurance**

Eco-friendly products last longer because they are produced with cutting-edge manufacturing methods. Green insurance options are now readily accessible, encouraging sustainable living and improving disaster readiness. Investment and underwriting processes vary greatly among countries and businesses. To combat climate change, it is now necessary to

invest in renewable energy sources like solar and wind power (McNeely et al., 2020). However, such innovations are frequently expensive and dangerous.

To promote development and lower risks, insurance companies provide technological innovations and individual insurance coverage for renewable energy. For instance, during the course of a project's development, insurers might pay for risks related to engineering and construction. When it comes to income loss and business disruption, others could also be able to help. Incentives may also be available to homeowners that use sources of renewable energy in their homes. For instance, anyone can get regular electricity for free during a blackout. Environmental authorities must certify buildings as "green." Green authority encompasses groups like Energy Star, Green Globe, and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

Buildings that are termed "green" are typically constructed with non-toxic materials and take into consideration both water and energy conservation. They could, for instance, have radiant ceilings or rainwater collection systems. Insurance companies can assist clients in building their own green homes or structures, lowering risks and enhancing sustainability (Friends of the Earth, 2022). Additionally, green building owners' insurance protects their facilities as well as their property. Third, some insurers now provide green rebuild insurance after an insured loss in order to promote the use of environmentally friendly products. Existing green building insurance policyholders may be eligible for reduced premiums.

There are several eco-friendly insurance solutions. At present, the transportation industry is the major source of greenhouse gas emissions. Conventional fossil-fuel-powered vehicles, specifically those that operate on gasoline and diesel, have a significant detrimental effect on the environment. The average car passenger emits 404 grams of CO<sub>2</sub> every mile.

As a consequence, insurers provide discounts for ecologically friendly vehicles. Such insurance coverage may include hybrid or energy-efficient vehicles. Such insurance policies also cover farmers' boats and automobiles (Lesourd & Schilizzi, 2022).

The World Meteorological Organization (2023) claims that pollution, tree-cutting, and other bad environmental practices cause annual increases in global temperatures that cause loss of life and property. Given the increasing global population and shifting consumer preferences, agriculture investment is vital. Although consumers could favor more expensive agricultural products, the risks attached to such purchases are increased by climate change. Green agriculture insurance offers more adaptable solutions, which helps to reduce climate risks. For instance, farmers that employ equipment with lower greenhouse gas emissions may be eligible for financial incentives. In addition, recipients may receive reimbursement when changes occur in weather patterns (like an increase in rainfall) as opposed to total crop failure.

According to this principle, green insurance makes investors and farmers less vulnerable and ecologically conscious (Mundy, 2022). In order to prevent climate change, advance dangerous technologies, safeguard against loss, and promote risk-averse consumer behavior, green insurance products are essential. A significant portion of the savings in the financial markets is accounted for by the insurance sector. With the globalization of financial markets, their role as middlemen in finance has grown significantly. Like other significant investors, they believe that climate change is a good thing.

But there are serious worries about climate change. Investors in environmentally friendly technologies, like wind turbines, need to safeguard their new investments. Insurance companies are skilled at controlling these risks. Their endeavors have led to an encouragement of the use of eco-friendly products and technologies. Different coverage levels are often offered by insurance providers for modest and

large-scale projects. For instance, the generation and conservation of energy is one of the most important challenges of our day. Despite being one of the most plentiful energy sources, solar energy needs sophisticated technologies to be harnessed. Insurance companies continue to encourage this kind of technology innovation in spite of the reservations (Price, 2022). Zuefle (2022) asserts that loss prevention is unquestionably essential to the insurance sector. Climate change, however, poses serious risks and losses to the industry.

Insurance companies provide funding for environmental projects that support the needs of their customers increased resilience. As an example, elevating a house in an area at risk for flooding can lessen the damage a flood causes to it. Insurance firms may offer long-term incentives to lower long-term damage loss. They could also be against new construction in high-risk regions and in favour of improved land use planning. Customers who embrace sustainability are seen as less hazardous by insurers. For instance, people who own electric and hybrid cars usually take this action to lessen their carbon footprint. These individuals receive premium savings from insurers since they are viewed as "beneficial risks" (Folmer, 2021).

**2.2 Environmental Risk Management**

According to Tucker (2021), the primary goal of environmental management should be to change the behavior of people who are at risk. Risks are usually classified as exogenous or endogenous. True "Acts of God" are exogenous risks, which means that the insured individual has no influence over them. Exogenous risks make up the typical insurance environment. Nevertheless, few threats are external in nature.

Endogenous dangers are those over which the individual who is at risk has some control. The householder can take safeguards to limit the likelihood of successful theft attempts, as is true in the case of theft. It relates to fire since safety measures can be performed. It does, however, apply to a broad variety of other environmental risks. Building a house or factory in a flood plain entails assuming a risk that could have been prevented by picking an alternative site or by adopting safety-conscious building techniques, among other measures. For instance, masks can assist reduce the chance of health issues brought on by air pollution. Insurance companies are aware that risks are endogeneous. In order to (a) issue insurance at all and (b) distinguish among risk groups, they usually impose requirements on those covered. others who voluntarily take on more risk must pay a higher price for the economy's efficiency than others who take preventive measures and take less risk.

Insurance companies may discriminate against these insured individuals. Tort may also be used as proof of incompetence in certain instances. Additional damages would then be sought from those found to be substantially liable for the harm. Nevertheless, insurance's objective and risk classification system are significantly more narrowly defined than tort law's.

Nonetheless, all insurers charge performance-based premiums. The motivations for doing so differ. The first is competition, which means that premiums distinguished by performance may appeal to customers. The second is that insurers are more concerned with social responsibility. According to Kunreuther, Meszaros, and Spranka (2020), Table 1 shows whether they are likely to be attained in the context of environmental issues.

**Table 1 Environmental risks and the conditions for insurability**

Condition	Environmental risk
Risk pooling	Millions of people may have to bear environmental dangers. Therefore, it stands to reason that risks might be shared. However, if the risks are seen as

Clear and definable risk	"bads" by the general population, then the prerequisites for risk pooling will not be satisfied. Reinsurance could help overcome this problem.
Frequent risk	When there are confusing elements, it can be difficult to determine if a cause and effect relationship exists. An example of this is when trying to trace the impacts of diffuse source pollution. The time-dimension test fails cumulative pollution issues.
	Air pollution is a condition that is frequently met, although in other circumstances it could not be, like in the case of serious risks from oil spills. There may be several little oil leaks, but relatively few significant ones. Therefore, it could be challenging to obtain insurance against "environmental disaster." Audits of hazards and the environment can offer vital information on dangers with low frequency but significant potential for damage.
Moral hazard	Moral hazard shouldn't be a huge issue because insurance firms can typically examine the insured's behaviour. The insured may get incentives from insurers, for instance, by being rewarded for risk-reducing behaviour.
Adverse selection	As mentioned above, individual behaviour might be watched in order to categorize premiums according to risk class. In the end, high risk individuals might not be approved for insurance.
Enforceable contracts	Contracts should be easily enforced for local disputes, but there are complications at the regional and international levels.

Source: Kunreuther, Meszaros and Spranka (2020)

Changes in land use may be the closest cause of biodiversity decline. Over time, changes in land use have benefited urbanized and agricultural areas at the expense of forest land. Pearce (2020) draws a comparison between this and changing from high to low biodiversity land uses. "Biological invaders" are another factor contributing to biodiversity loss (Perrings, 2020), where pest-resistant or alien organisms infiltrate natural habitats. It is currently believed that climate change would hasten the loss of biodiversity, or the diversity of ecosystems and species, because such structures will not be able to "move" or develop rapidly enough to respond to rising rates of temperature change and other climatic factors (Teng, 2021).

As long as the science behind climate change is still unknown, its effects will continue to come as a surprise. Upon initial observation, it seems that the insurance sector might have to contribute significantly to mitigating the risks associated with climate change. The damage brought on by biodiversity loss is one of the issues under investigation. Actually, it's been suggested that insurance might pay for all of the

damages caused by climate change (Teng, 2021). It is impossible to guarantee climate change, as Tol (2021) shows. The first problem is that the notion of insurability, or risk propagation, is fundamentally contradicted by the fact that many people are simultaneously impacted by climate change. However, not everyone will have the same level of impact.

Without a doubt, certain individuals might gain and others lose out. Distributing the risks among the numerous parties involved to satisfy the risk pooling condition if it is uncertain who will win and who will lose, as well as how much the losers will lose. The scenario bears similarities to reinsurance in that individual insurers are protected by a reinsurer against the possibility of substantial group claims. Nevertheless, insurance won't be financially feasible if there aren't many groups. The second problem is that it's likely already known who the most harmful individuals are. Most people concur that in terms of lost GNP, the poorest parts of the globe are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Conversely, those who are less vulnerable do not require insurance if the most dangerous individuals have already been identified. There have been many proposals for a "climate insurance fund," to which different countries would contribute according to the amount of greenhouse gas emissions they produce. These proposals are essentially liability schemes instead of insurance schemes (McKenna, 1986). Third, hazards need to be measurable and connected to climate change. However, given the controversy surrounding the science underlying climate change, it is unclear that any particular kind of harm will ever be conclusively linked to it. Sea level rise is caused by several causes in addition to ocean temperature.

Without a mechanism to quantify the suffering caused by climate change and without an obvious explanation of the connection between cause and effect, it is once again uninsurable. Fourth, some contend that irrevocable effects are not covered by insurance. But a lot of insurance policies only act as though they will "restore" the pre-damage state, while in fact an irrevocable change has occurred, like a disability brought on by an accident. Fifth, local populations, geographical regions, and the entire world community are all impacted economically by the loss of biodiversity. The early hazards may be illustrated but the latter threats cannot. Everyone on Earth is at risk if climate change undermines the planet's life support systems. Risks cannot be diversified or spread over space, which rules out the idea of insurance.

Sixth, it goes without saying that there is a time limit on risks. However, this is not how climate change constraints work. The harm that is caused is sometimes highlighted by the term "2xCO<sub>2</sub>," which denotes a doubling of pre-industrial greenhouse gas concentrations.

Nevertheless, this is only a threshold. If we don't intentionally slow down, global warming will continue. In addition, because of the temporal delays in the climate system, the effects of current emissions won't be apparent for about a century. Consequently, the insurer would not be

guaranteed information regarding the timing, expected amount, or likelihood of follow-up claims (McKenna, 1986).

All things considered, climate change is a pattern or trend rather than a natural disaster like a storm or tornado. While the latter is not covered by insurance, the former is. There is a chance that insurance will protect against the previous events, which climate change would surely exacerbate. Clark, Knecht, McCaulay, Palutikof, and Yambi (2020) state that only this specific interpretation of "climate change" is probably going to be covered by insurance. While explicitly insuring against climate change may not be feasible, it is possible to do so for certain occurrences that may or may not be related to the concept. Climate change is more of an overarching trend or movement than meteorological events, which are specific weather occurrences. It can be problematic to insure against storms and other major weather occurrences like hurricanes and typhoons, especially for reinsurance firms. For example, 755 different natural disasters in 2021 caused insurance damages of \$22 billion (Munich-Re, 2021). Except for the 100,000 deaths ascribed to natural disasters in 2021, insurance only covered around 20% of the ensuing financial damage, despite losses exceeding \$100 billion. Any insurance plan does not cover ecological systems. There is disagreement over whether the consistent rise in the total number of claims is related to or unrelated to climate change. According to others, this is because there are more costly assets, a greater number of assets, and more vulnerable individuals (Munich Re, 2022).

As Tucker (2021) notes, on the other hand, "from the viewpoint of the insurers, taking steps to limit the likelihood of global warming or mitigate its effects would be the best approach to minimize risk" (p. 95), risks are actually increased as a result of climate change. One might utilize significant weather event examples to highlight the issues that arise when damage severity increases. Of the \$25 billion in losses inflicted by Hurricane Andrew, \$17 billion were insured. The reimbursements forced nine

smaller insurance firms into bankruptcy, and the state of Florida was forced to enact laws prohibiting policy cancellation and non-renewal. The increase in insurance rates was over 70%.

The research conducted by Chen, Cui, and Gao (2023) revealed that temperature impacts differ in northern and southern China, as well as across numerous sectors (cropping, livestock, forestry, and fisheries) due to differing agricultural vulnerability and tolerance to rising temperatures. The effects of global warming are most noticeable in the colder northern region, whereby high temperatures at the same time hurt the livestock and crops industries but help the forestry industry. According to Banjo & Ajemunigbohun (2023), the demand for home insurance is significantly influenced by the insured's financial literacy, cultural views, and economic status.

### 3. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design, which is appropriate since it makes distinguishing a significant population from a group of people more straightforward.

Both Primary and Secondary data were used for this study. Data relating to climate change were retrieved from the National Centres for Environmental Information (2023). The study was conducted in Lagos state, Nigeria. There are big insurances of different sizes within the Lagos metropolis, some of the popular ones are:

Leadway Assurance Company Ltd; Sterling Assurance Nigeria Ltd; Linkage Assurance PLC; Custodian Life Assurance Ltd; and Coronation Insurance Plc.

The population for this study consisted of senior staff of the top five (5) insurance companies with 152 senior/management staff strength.

The commonly used approach for sample size determination is Taro Yamene (1970) formula for sample size determination.

Using the formula, the sample size therefore is;

$$ss = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2}$$

Where:

ss = Sample Size

N = Population

e = error term (0.05)

$$ss = \frac{152}{1 + 152 (0.05)^2}$$

ss = 110 (Insurances Staff).

A total of one hundred and ten (110) copies of questionnaire was administered to the senior staff of the Insurance companies.

### Reliability of the Research Instruments

The data collected for this study was coded and enter into SPSS 25.0 and was subjected to a reliability test. The reliability test result is show in the table 1.

**Table 1: Reliability Test Result**

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.721	76

**Source: SPSS 25.0 OUTPUT**

The result of the reliability test in table 3 shows that Cronbach Alpha for all the items in the questionnaire is reliable. This means that the questionnaire is reliable enough for further research.

**Table 2: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett's test of Sphericity KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.741
Approx. Chi-Square		3241.144
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	76
	Sig.	.000

**Source: SPSS 25.0 output**

This study conducted the KMO and Barlett’s test of Sphericity. The KMO measures the sampling adequacy (which determines if the responses given with the sample are adequate or not) which should be close than 0.5 for a satisfactory factor analysis to proceed. Kaiser (1974) recommend 0.5 (value for KMO) as minimum (barely accepted), values between 0.7-0.8 acceptable, and values above 0.9 are superb. The table 4 shows that the value of KMO measure for the questionnaire is .670 which is greater than 0.5 and therefore accepted that the sample was adequate.

An additional measure of the strength of the association between the variables is the Bartlett's test. The idea that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix is tested in this way. A matrix where every diagonal element is 1 and every other diagonal member is near to 0 is called an identity matrix. Table 2 indicates a significant result for the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (0.001). In other words, significance is lower than 0.05. This indicates that correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

**Method of Data Analysis**

110 copies of the questionnaire were administered, however, 76 was well filled and returned. Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression model was employed to test the hypothesis one and graphical presentation was used to rate the different marketing strategies. (OLS) model is considered appropriate because it has the ability to predict the effect of independent variables on the dependent variables.

Formula for Ordinary Least Square model:

$$H-Ext = \alpha + \beta (C-Chng) + e.$$

Where:

H-Ext = Human extinction

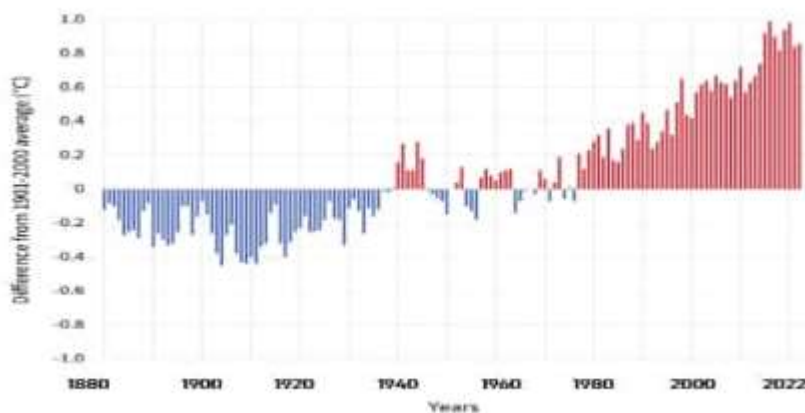
C-Chng = Climate change

$\alpha$  = Intercept

$\beta$  = Slope

e = Error terms

**4. Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings**



**Figure 1: Climate Change: Global Temperature**

**Source:** <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-global-temperature>

From the yearly surface temperature compared to the 20th-century average from 1880 – 2022, it shows that the blue bars indicate cooler-than-average years; red bars show warmer-than-average years. It further showed that the year 2022 was the sixth-warmest year on record based on NOAA’s temperature data. The 2022 surface temperature was 1.55 °F (0.86 °Celsius) warmer than the 20th-century average of 57.0 °F (13.9 °C) and 1.90 °F (1.06

°C) warmer than the pre-industrial period. The 10 warmest years in the historical record have all occurred since 2010.

Earth’s temperature has risen by an average of 0.14° Fahrenheit (0.08° Celsius) per decade since 1880, or about 2° F in total. The rate of warming since 1981 is more than twice as fast: 0.32° F (0.18° C) per decade.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.786 <sup>a</sup>	.735	-.146	.15463

a. Predictors: (Constant), Climate change

As shown in the model summary result, the relationship (R-Square) between the dependent and independent variables is about 74%, this

implies that the independent variable (Climate change) can predict or determine dependent variable human extinction index by 74%.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.554	1.312		-2.422	.000
	Climate change	-2.9505	.012	-1.186	-2.657	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Key Performance Index

The value of the intercept -1.554 is the predicted the possibility of human extinction if the independent variable (climate change) continue to decline by -1.554. Climate change has a coefficient value of  $\beta_1 = -2.950$ , t-test = -2.657, p = .004, this revealed that a negative

significant relationship exists between the human extinction and Climate change. This means that increase in climate changes account for the possibility of about -2.950 decreases in the human extinction.

**Model Summary**

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	-27.124 <sup>a</sup>	.787	.754

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 7 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

**Source: SPSS 25 Output**



**Variables in the Equation**

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Plantation of trees	3.241	3.14	2.11	4	.001	15.111
Renewable energy insurance	2.211	3.21	3.21	4	.004	12.214
Green Industries insurance	3.471	2.14	3.14	4	.005	13.621
Green car insurance	2.141	2.77	3.31	4	.009	11.321
Constant	5.141	22.117	5.141	4	.001	2.321

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1

**Source: SPSS 25 Output**

The model summary table shows that green infrastructural development can serve as mother insurer of human existence and with time curtail uninsurable risks like flood and other unforeseen epidemics. Variables in the equation table shows that the beta value of tree plantation account for 3.241 unit impact. This implies that plantation of tree can curtail uninsurable risks (B = 3.241, Wald = 2.11, Sig. 0.001).

The table further shows that renewable energy insurance account for about 2.211 unit impact and this has significant impact in curtailing uninsurable risks (Wald = 3.21, Sig. = 0.004). Green industries insurance has a unit impact of 3.471, this also implies that investing in green industries, uninsurable risks can be curtailed significantly (Wald = 3.14, Sig. = 0.005).

Lastly, green car insurance account for 2.141 unit impact on uninsurable risks. This implies that green car insurance can curtail uninsurable risks significantly (Wald = 3.31, Sig. = 0.009).

This finding is in support of the study of Chen et al (2023) who reported that temperature impacts differ in northern and southern China, as well as across numerous sectors due to differing agricultural vulnerability and tolerance to rising temperatures. The effects of global warming are most noticeable in the colder northern region.

**5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Unorthodox insurance is necessary since the insurance industry appears irresponsive to the effects of climate change on human existence worsen. This study found that by fostering the development of green infrastructures like tree plantations, energy from renewable sources insurance, and green car insurance, uninsurable risks like floods, epidemics, and natural disasters, to name just a few, can become insurable. Thus, the study came to the conclusion that uninsurable risks could be reduced by encouraging the development of green infrastructure as an unconventional insurance plan.

It is therefore recommended that every human, organisations (including insurance industry), and the government should see themselves as potential part of the unorthodox insurer by investing in green infrastructures to avoid human extinction from the planet earth. Also, there is need to create more awareness on green innovative products which could help in mitigating the negative effect of climate change.

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