Journal of Political Discourse

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MARITIME DRUG TRAFFICKING ON UNITED STATES OF AMERICA COASTS: CHALLENGES IN DETECTING AND INTERCEPTING NARCOTICS

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Abstract
Maritime drug trafficking poses a significant threat to global security, public health, and economic stability, leveraging vast oceanic spaces and complex international trade networks to smuggle large quantities of narcotics. This article explores the concept of maritime drug trafficking and its intersection with the broader narcotics trade, emphasizing the challenges in detection and interception. Key obstacles include the sheer size of maritime domains, advanced smuggling techniques, and jurisdictional complexities. The discussion is framed within criminological theory such as Routine Activity Theory, offering insights into traffickers' strategies and enforcement limitations. The scope and scale of maritime drug trafficking highlight its far-reaching consequences, from financing organized crime to destabilizing transit regions and burdening public health systems. Despite advancements in surveillance technologies and international collaborations, traffickers continue to exploit gaps in enforcement. Recommendations include enhancing technological capabilities, strengthening international cooperation, improving port and container security, addressing socio-economic drivers of the narcotics trade, and reducing global demand for illegal drugs. This article underscores the importance of a multi-faceted and adaptive approach to combat maritime drug trafficking effectively, integrating law enforcement, socio-economic interventions, and global partnerships to address this transnational challenge.
Keywords: Maritime, Drug trafficking, Detecting and intercepting, Narcotics

Introduction

Maritime drug trafficking poses a significant threat to U.S. national security and public safety, as smugglers exploit the vastness of the oceans and the intricate networks of global trade routes to transport narcotics. With thousands of miles of coastline stretching along the Pacific, Atlantic, and Gulf of Mexico, the United States faces unique challenges in monitoring and securing its maritime borders. Drug cartels and transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) view maritime routes as lucrative and less detectable alternatives to land crossings, moving large quantities of cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, and synthetic drugs into the country.

The competition between law enforcement and traffickers is most apparent in the maritime space known as the “transit zone” through which traffickers move as much as 80 percent of all the cocaine leaving Colombia (Border Security Threats to the Homeland, 2012). Traffickers use a wide variety of mostly maritime means to move drugs through this area and avoid detection and interdiction by law enforcement. Two decades after the discovery of the Facatativá submarine, submarines and semi-submersible narco-submarines are still a preferred method for moving cocaine because they are so difficult for law enforcement to detect (Kyle Mizokami, 2020). They move hundreds of tons of cocaine from the shores of Colombia and Ecuador to Central America and the Caribbean, stopping briefly to shift modes of transportation before moving on to the United States or directly to Europe (BBC News, 2006). Narco-submarines were and are a particularly effective adaptation to increasingly effective air and maritime interdiction by law enforcement, supported by the U.S. armed forces in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The scale of the problem is staggering. According to recent reports, billions of dollars' worth of narcotics is smuggled annually via the sea, with traffickers relying on advanced tactics and technology to evade detection. High-speed boats, semi-submersible vessels, and even drones are increasingly used to outmaneuver law enforcement agencies. Furthermore, the sheer volume of legitimate maritime trade complicates efforts to identify and intercept illicit shipments hidden within containerized cargo. These challenges underscore the need for robust strategies and coordinated efforts to combat maritime drug trafficking effectively.Narco-submarines are an example of innovation by traffickers under pressure from law enforcement, and a response to military pressure specifically. Traffickers and law enforcement are in a continuous cycle of competitive adaptation whereby each side adapts in response to the other's actions—the inevitability of this back-and-forth making it possible to identify potential future developments in trafficking (Michael Kenney, 2007).

The Manufacturing and distribution law enforcement agency (MDLEA) is a criminal statute prohibiting an individual from knowingly or intentionally "manufacturing or distributing, or possessing with intent to manufacture or distribute, a controlled substance" aboard a "covered vessel." (USC, 1980) This prohibition also includes attempts and conspiracies to violate the MDLEA. The definition of "covered vessel" is comprehensive, including, inter alia, "vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United States," (USC, 1980) thereby extending the United States' jurisdiction as far as international law permits. Such vessels include "vessels without nationality," vessels "assimilated to . . . being without nationality," vessels "registered in a foreign nation if that nation has consented or waived objection to the enforcement of United States law," and "vessels in the territorial waters of a foreign nation if the nation consents to the enforcement of United States law." Finally, the MDLEA expressly prohibits acts of drug trafficking committed extraterritorially, thereby explicitly extending the MDLEA's reach beyond the territorial jurisdiction of the United States and into both international waters and foreign territorial seas (BBC News, 2000).

This article aims to delve into the complexities of detecting and intercepting narcotics along U.S. coasts. By examining the methods employed by smugglers, the technological and logistical hurdles faced by authorities, and the innovative approaches being implemented, we can better understand the evolving landscape of maritime drug trafficking. In doing so, it becomes clear that addressing this issue requires not only advanced technology and greater resources but also international collaboration and a holistic approach to reducing demand and disrupting supply chains.

Conceptual Clarification

Maritime drug Trafficking

According to USAID (2013) maritime drug trafficking refers to the illegal transportation and distribution of illicit drugs via sea routes. It is a subset of global drug trafficking, specifically focusing on the exploitation of maritime spaces, including oceans, seas, rivers, and ports, for the smuggling of drugs. This form of trafficking is particularly challenging due to the vastness of international waters, the high volume of global maritime trade, and the difficulties law enforcement faces in monitoring and securing such expansive areas. USAID (2013) Maritime drug trade, like any other type of transnational organized crime, portends danger to political and socio-economic development, fosters corruption, and violence, undermines the rule of law and good governance, and poses serious health challenges. Drug trafficking is an outlawed trade, where drugs under legal prohibition are made available for general consumption.

This form of trafficking not only fuels the global drug trade but also contributes to broader issues such as money laundering, violence, and environmental degradation in coastal communities. As a result, understanding the mechanisms and impacts of maritime drug trafficking is critical for law enforcement, policymakers, and international organizations working to disrupt these operations and safeguard maritime security.

Narcotics

Narcotics are a category of substances that affect the central nervous system, often used for pain relief, sedation, or euphoric effects. Traditionally, the term "narcotics" referred specifically to opiates or opioids derived from the opium poppy, such as morphine and heroin. However, in contemporary usage, the term has expanded to include a broader range of controlled substances that are regulated or illegal due to their high potential for abuse, addiction, and adverse health effects. Narcotics play a dual role in society, serving legitimate medical purposes while simultaneously fueling illicit markets and addiction crises when misused.

Legally, narcotics are classified based on their medical utility and abuse potential, as defined by regulatory frameworks like the U.S. Controlled Substances Act. Drugs such as fentanyl, oxycodone, and methadone are examples of prescription narcotics used in healthcare settings for severe pain management. However, their misuse, often leading to dependency, has contributed significantly to the global opioid epidemic. Illicit narcotics, such as heroin, cocaine, and synthetic drugs like methamphetamine, dominate black markets and are often linked to organized crime and transnational smuggling operations (US Controlled Substance Act, 2005).

Narcotics have a profound impact on individuals and society. On a personal level, they can cause addiction, mental and physical health deterioration, and, in many cases, overdose and death. On a societal scale, the production, distribution, and consumption of narcotics drive criminal activity, destabilize communities, and burden public health systems. Furthermore, the lucrative nature of the narcotics trade incentivizes violence among trafficking organizations, often spilling over into civilian populations.

Theoretical Framework

Routine Activity Theory

Routine activity theory begins by stating the importance of understanding the spatial component of crime patterns put forth by the Chicago School. We frequent particular places and not others and visit those particular places at particular times. When we travel to the same place at the same time regularly, these activities can be considered “routine activities”, defined by Cohen and Felson (1979, p. 593) as “any recurrent and prevalent activities which provide for basic population and individual needs, whatever their biological or cultural origins”. Because these activities will normally take us out of the relatively protectiveenvironment of the home if we alter the frequency and/or timing of these routine activities, we will alter our risk of criminal victimization; if these routine activities change *en masse* at a societal level, we will alter crime rate trends.

The Routine Activity Theory can be effectively applied to explain the persistence of maritime drug trafficking in the USA. According to the theory, crime occurs when three key elements converge: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardians. In the context of maritime drug trafficking, motivated offenders include transnational drug cartels and local traffickers, driven by the lucrative profits from the illegal drug trade. The U.S strategic location along major international shipping routes provides traffickers with suitable targets such as under-patrolled coastal areas, remote creeks, and vast stretches of

unmonitored waters. The high volume of cargo and fishing vessels makes it easier for traffickers to conceal drugs among legitimate goods (Ayoola, 2024).Increasing the presence of Coast Guard and naval patrols, particularly in high-risk areas, acts as a visible deterrent to traffickers. Furthermore, fostering international cooperation ensures a more comprehensive enforcement framework, reducing safe havens for smugglers in regions with weaker maritime security.

At the same time, targeting the factors that make maritime routes suitable for trafficking, such as remote coastlines and unregulated ports, can also reduce opportunities for offenders. Investments in port security, routine inspections of cargo vessels, and the use of predictive analytics to identify suspicious shipping patterns can make maritime drug smuggling significantly less viable. By addressing the environmental conditions and guardianship gaps, Routine Activity Theory offers a strategic lens for curbing the maritime narcotics trade.

Overview of Maritime Drug Trafficking

The transport of narcotic drugs by sea is not new or a recent trend. It dates back to antiquity. History is full of anecdotes about the drug trade. Relative to the other forms of modem transport such as motor vehicles, railroads, airplanes and post the maritime medium is the oldest. Vessels of one form or another have been utilized for several thousand years. Only the use of animals and mankind's own bodily form of locomotion predate the maritime sector. What is new is the diversification in methods of conveyance and concealment utilized and the categories of drugs trafficked within the maritime medium. There is an entirely new complexity to the trafficking scene. Primarily, this is the result of modem technological, industrial, legislative and administrative developments interacting with economic motives. Vis-a-vis the historical context these dynamic changes and their continual propagation in society today may be simply summed up in the phrase "the world has changed". This reality applies to all facets of life and activity inclusive of the drug trade. Commensurate with the changes and structuralization of life and activity an inverse relationship of progressively stronger anti-drug efforts contraposed by increasingly illicit and furtive drug-related activities has materialized. The result is that less is known about these underground economic enterprises and enforcement is complicated (Bjorn, 1989).

Maritime drug trafficking is one of the most significant and complex challenges in global efforts to combat the illicit drug trade. It involves the transportation of large quantities of narcotics via oceans, seas, and waterways, leveraging the vastness of the maritime domain to evade detection. This method is particularly attractive to traffickers because it allows for the movement of substantial volumes of drugs in a single shipment, far exceeding what is possible through land or air routes. Maritime trafficking serves as a critical link in the supply chain of global drug networks, connecting production regions, such as South America and Southeast Asia, with major consumer markets in North America, Europe, and beyond.

The significance of the maritime component of drug trafficking has not been lost. The United Nations through its specialized agency, the Division of Narcotic Drugs, has gathered considerable information on the maritime drug trade for years (UN, 1987). It maintains a Commission on Narcotic Drugs which in turn is subdivided into units of special interest, one of which is the Expert Group on Countermeasures to Drug Smuggling by Air and Sea (hereinafter referred to simply as the Air & Sea Group). They convene regularly to discuss developments and issues of a direct bearing and draft proposed countermeasures. The results are published as agency reports.

Scope and Scale of the Issue

The scope and scale of maritime drug trafficking are immense, reflecting the global demand for illicit substances and the strategic advantages of maritime routes for traffickers. The United States, with its extensive coastlines along the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf of Mexico, is particularly vulnerable, serving as both a primary destination and transit point for narcotics smuggled by sea. Billions of dollars' worth of drugs is transported annually via maritime routes, with cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, and synthetic drugs like fentanyl constituting the bulk of these illicit shipments. The vastness of the oceans and the high volume of legitimate maritime trade make it exceptionally challenging to detect and intercept these operations.

The problem is not confined to the U.S. alone; it has far-reaching implications for global security and stability. Regions like the Caribbean and Central America serve as key transit zones, where criminal organizations operate with impunity, often due to weak governance and corruption. The trafficking of narcotics not only finances violent cartels but also destabilizes nations, contributes to rising crime rates, and perpetuates cycles of poverty and exploitation in source and transit countries. For instance, cannabis and their sources.

Cannabis

Cannabis is a hardy plant found globally in the warmer climatic regions of land areas. The latitudinal range extends from the tropics to the higher latitudinal boundaries of the temperate zone (in both hemispheres). At least 27 countries figure significantly in the production of cannabis and contribute to the international trade in the drug. Several more have been identified as sources of cultivation but are not considered here because either all cannabis produced is consumed domestically or their contribution to the trade is negligible or their cultivation of the drug falls within the definition of 1 experimental (RCMP, 1985). Table 1.1 lists the states which have been linked to the international trafficking of cannabis and, where available, the data on production.

The seven principals of the first order are Colombia, Thailand, Mexico, the U.S.A., the Philippines, Paraguay, and Jamaica. Colombia, Thailand and Mexico vie for the position of largest producer of cannabis in the world. For the four-year period 1984 - 1987 Colombia produced about 17,630 m.ts. while Mexico produced 16,670 m.ts. The foothills and slopes of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and Serrania de Peri ja mountain ranges in the northeastern Departments of Magdalena, Cesar and La Guajira are the principal cultivation areas in Colombia (RCMP, 1985). Other sites of lesser cultivation include the Serrania de San Lucas mountain range in the Department of Bolivar and the mountainous and jungle areas of Antioquia, Choco, Cordoba, Llanos, Santander, Sucre etc

Table 1.1: Showing Average Production Per Annum in Metric

AVERAGE PRODUCTION PER ANNUM IN METRIC TONS					
	Country	1984	1985	1986	Cannabis Type(s)
1st Order	COLOMBIA	5,750	3,300	3,080	Marijuana
	THAILAND	N/A	N/A	4,000	Marijuana/Sinsemilla
	MEXIC0	2,750	3,500	5,000	Marijuana
	U.S.A.	1,700	3,250	4,413	Marijuana/Sinsemilla
	PHILIPPINES	N/A	1,960	3,164	Marijuana B
	PARAGUAY	2,250	2,250	2,250	juana/Sinsemilla/Hashish
	JAMAICA	1,875	953	1,755	Marijuana/Sinsemilla/Hashish
2nd Order	KENYA	N/A	1,000	N/A	Marijuana
	BELIZE	1,100	645	550	Marijuana
	LBBANON	300	720	900	Hashish

	SOUTH AFRICA	N/A	305.7	622.3	Marijuana
	MOROCCO	345	345	341	Hashish/Marijuana
	AFGHANISTAN	300	300	300	Hashish
	PAKISTAN	200	200	200	Hashish
	GUATBMALA	N/A	N/A	275	Marijuana
	INDONESIA	No Data Available but Deemed High			Marijuana
	BRAZIL	No Data Available But Deemed High			Marijuana
3rd Order	VENEZUELA	N/A	80	N/A	Marijuana
	COSTA RICA	N/A	110	90	Marijuana
	PANAMA	N/A	818.2	30	Marijuana
	MAURITIUS	N/A	N/A	75	Marijuana
	R P.N.G.	N/A	40	N/A	Marijuana
	GHANA	N/A	5.5	N/A	Marijuana
	NIGERIA	No Data Available but Deemed Low			Marijuana
	INDIA	No Data Available but Deemed Low			Marijuana/Hashish
	LAOS	No Data- Available but Deemed Low			Marijuana
	NEPAL	No Data Available but Deemed Low			Hashish

Sources: All data extracted from the following publications: BINM, INCSR - March 1987 (Washington D.C,); NNICC, WIB 1984 (Washington. D.C., 1985); and, UN Docs. E/CN.7/1987/CRP.6 ft B/CN.7/1988/CRP.8

Roughly 63% of the annual amount produced is exported (UN Doc, 1987). On the other hand, every state in the Mexican Republic has some degree of marijuana cultivation occurring within them. The United States, like Mexico, possesses the status of having cannabis cultivation in all 50 states. In the period 1985 - 1987 approximately 281.4 million plants were seized. Of that total, 265 million were wild marijuana plants and 12.2 million were cultivated plants while the remaining 6.1 million were sinsemilla (RCMP's NDIE, 1985). Domestic production accounts for 12% of the total US cannabis supply. The combination of strong demand and unfavourable natural conditions for growth in areas has promoted the use of diversified agricultural practices to increase marijuana production. California, Hawaii, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas are the principal states for marijuana production under the category of active cultivation (RCMP's NDIE, 1985).

Key Routes and Smuggling Tactics

Transit states are countries deemed either geographically, politically or economically expedient for transshipping drugs. The definition has already been given and the examples among the OECD states mentioned. In order to syllogize the middle tier of what is referred to as a tritier flow structure the analysis is confined to those transit states which serve as marine conduits to the OECD states. Any production and consumption occurring in these states is ignored to facilitate identification. The most prominent aspect concerning transit states is that they permit numerous flow patterns and the adoption of a multi-modal transportation structure for a given route. Depending on the complexity of the trade matrices involving transit states in a region, it is feasible to denote such regions as transit regions. Furthermore, depending on the complexity of the flow matrices created by transit states it will be observed that specific regions can be denoted as trafficking regions (Bjorn, 1989).

The opiates adhere to relatively distinct flow lines. Except for Mexico's neighbouring position with the U.S. there are large distances between the suppliers and the consumers. The sea is one of only two viable transport mediums. All opiate products transported large distances are trans-shipped at some stage in their journeys and often more than once. Golden Triangle products destined for the OECD consumers always transit Thailand first; then, usually go on to a second transit state before importation to the demand states (Bjorn, 1989).

Caribbean geography plays a critical role in shaping maritime trafficking in the region both today and historically. Whether it was to avoid taxes from the Spanish crown or to run illegal rum into the United States during Prohibition, smugglers have relied on the region's complicated physical and political geography to move illicit goods for hundreds of years (James, (2007). Traffickers have taken advantage of "myriad hidden bays, rivers, unmapped islands, ports, or open seas" to hide and segment their routes, moving illicit goods with "almost complete impunity" for most of Caribbean history (Zackrison, 2005). Traffickers also use political and jurisdictional boundaries to evade law enforcement, traveling in and out of international borders to prevent law enforcement pursuit. Last, the imbalance in wealth between the United States and its Caribbean neighbors means that moving goods from the Caribbean to North America or through the Caribbean will always be a lucrative endeavor.

Griffith argues that two primary geographic factors influence the narcotics trade in the Caribbean. First, because even smaller states like the Bahamas comprise hundreds of separate islands, they enable traffickers' movements into, out of, and within the Caribbean. Second, the Caribbean straddles North America—the primary market for illegal drugs— and South America—the primary producer of drugs like cocaine and marijuana (Ivelaw, 1998). James Zackrison, a scholar of the drug war, summarizes the relationship between narcotics trafficking and Caribbean geography: "The geography seems to have been planned for smuggling operations between the three major land masses of North America and South America and Europe (Zackrison, 2007)."

The Caribbean also benefits from its position between resource-rich South American and consumption-heavy North America. It has been a "transit zone" of goods moving north to the United States and east to Europe for hundreds of years. Naval analyst Joshua Tallis argues, "The Caribbean's geographic location has long been among the region's most lucrative assets"(Tallis, 2002). Indeed, Miami, Florida, is closer to Barranquilla, Colombia (the largest Colombian city on the Caribbean coast), than Miami is to Chicago, and Florida has more than 8,000 miles of shoreline for traffickers to use (Zimmerman, 2006). In the 1970s and 1980s, Miami was a perfect endpoint for cocaine smuggling because the market first developed in South Florida, and its physical geography enabled trafficking (Zimmerman, 2006). Smuggling is a constant but unrecognized factor in Florida's steamy history.

The Caribbean is also large enough to offer traffickers room to adapt. It spans more than one million square miles, which are effectively doubled when traffickers also use Eastern Pacific routes along the western side of Central America. The immense size and complex geography of the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific offer traffickers' countless options for their routes. If there is heavy law enforcement presence in one area, traffickers can adapt and shift to another. If one country's political climate is no longer permissive for smuggling, traffickers can easily shift the route to another.

Challenges in Detecting Maritime Narcotics

Detecting narcotics smuggled via maritime routes poses significant challenges due to the complexity of the maritime environment and the ingenuity of traffickers. One of the most critical obstacles is the sheer size and openness of the oceans. With thousands of miles of coastline and millions of square miles of open water, monitoring every vessel is virtually impossible. This vast expanse provides traffickers with ample opportunities to evade detection by navigating through remote or poorly patrolled areas (RCMP's NDIE, 1985). The high volume of legitimate maritime traffic further complicates the task, as distinguishing illicit activities from lawful trade requires advanced intelligence and surveillance capabilities.

The methods used by traffickers add another layer of difficulty. Smugglers employ a wide range of tactics to conceal their operations, including the use of semi-submersible vessels that operate below the surface and are nearly invisible to radar. Fishing boats, yachts, and even container ships carrying legitimate cargo are also exploited, often with drugs hidden in secret compartments or mixed within innocuous goods (Ayoola, 2024). Additionally, traffickers increasingly rely on technology, such as GPS trackers and encrypted communications, to coordinate their movements and outmaneuver law enforcement. These adaptive strategies make detection and interception efforts particularly challenging.

Jurisdictional issues further hinder detection efforts. Maritime drug trafficking often occurs in international waters, where enforcement authority is limited and subject to international agreements. Even within national waters, enforcement agencies face resource constraints, such as insufficient personnel, outdated equipment, and limited budgets, which reduce their ability to conduct consistent and effective patrols. The complexity of coordinating efforts among multiple agencies, such as the Coast Guard, Navy, and Customs and Border Protection, adds to the difficulty of mounting a unified response.

Another major challenge is the use of containerized cargo, which has become a preferred method for smuggling drugs on a large scale. The global shipping industry handles millions of containers annually, and inspecting even a small percentage of these for narcotics is a daunting task. Advanced scanning technologies and artificial intelligence can help identify suspicious shipments, but these tools are expensive and not universally available, particularly in developing nations that serve as transit points for drug shipments (USAID, 2013).

To overcome these challenges, law enforcement agencies require significant technological, logistical, and financial support. Enhanced international cooperation is also essential, as traffickers exploit gaps in enforcement caused by jurisdictional boundaries. Despite these efforts, the constantly evolving tactics of traffickers mean that detecting maritime narcotics remains a persistent and formidable challenge for governments worldwide.

Conclusion

Maritime drug trafficking remains a critical challenge for global security, public health, and economic stability. The vastness of the oceans, the adaptability of traffickers, and the complexities of international jurisdiction have made it a persistent threat. It facilitates the global narcotics trade, finances organized crime, and destabilizes source, transit, and destination countries. Despite advancements in detection technologies and increasing international collaboration, the scale and sophistication of maritime trafficking operations continue to outpace enforcement efforts. Addressing this issue requires not only robust interdiction strategies but also a comprehensive approach that tackles the root causes of the narcotics trade, such as poverty, corruption, and demand for illegal drugs.

Recommendations

1. **Enhancing Surveillance and Technology**
   Investment in advanced technologies such as satellite monitoring, automated identification systems (AIS), and artificial intelligence-powered analytics can significantly improve the ability to detect and intercept suspicious maritime activities. Expanding the use of drones and other unmanned systems for patrolling remote areas can also fill gaps in surveillance coverage.
2. **Strengthening International Cooperation**
   Maritime drug trafficking is a transnational issue that requires a unified global response. Countries should strengthen agreements on information sharing, joint operations, and extradition protocols. Initiatives like the United Nations Office on

Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and regional task forces such as JIATF-S should be further supported and expanded.

3. **Improving Port and Container Security**
   Since containerized shipping is a major method for trafficking drugs, enhancing port security is critical. Implementing more widespread use of non-intrusive inspection technologies, such as X-ray and gamma-ray scanners, alongside predictive analytics to flag high-risk shipments, can help disrupt this avenue of smuggling.

4. **Addressing Economic and Social Drivers**
   Tackling the root causes of drug production and trafficking requires investment in the socio-economic development of source countries. Programs that provide alternative livelihoods, combat corruption, and strengthen governance can reduce the reliance of vulnerable populations on the narcotics trade.

5. **Demand Reduction Strategies**
   Reducing the demand for illicit drugs in consumer countries is equally essential. Public awareness campaigns, accessible treatment programs for addiction, and stricter regulations on the prescription of narcotics are critical components of a comprehensive strategy to weaken the global drug trade.

6. **Capacity Building for Developing Nations**
   Many countries serving as transit points lack the resources and infrastructure to combat maritime trafficking effectively. Providing these nations with training, equipment, and financial support can enhance their ability to detect and intercept smuggling operations.

By combining these strategies with ongoing efforts to adapt to the evolving tactics of traffickers, governments and international organizations can make meaningful progress in combating maritime drug trafficking. A sustained, multi-pronged approach will be crucial to mitigating the impacts of this pervasive issue and ensuring the security of maritime domains worldwide.

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INVESTMENT IN HUMAN CAPITAL AS A MECHANISM FOR ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study examines investment in human capital and its importance as a mechanism for ensuring sustainable development in Nigeria. Human capital is that intangible factor that brings human intellect, skills, and competencies in the production process and allows for the provision of goods and services. It is the human capability and productivity engendered through knowledge and skills acquired from vocational and technical education, training and experience and facilitated by astimulating environment. Methodologically, the study used secondary sources of data such as text books, journal articles as well as internet sources and were analysed qualitatively. Theoretically, Human Capital Theory whichemphasizes how education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of their cognitive skills, was adopted considering its relevance to the topic of discussion. The study reveals that investing in human capital involves strengthening the weaknesses of public policies that promote common good of the society and at the same time, these efforts are expected not to harm or obstruct the ability of the future generations to achieve their developmental needs. It concludes that adequate investment in human capital is fundamental to any meaningful and sustainable development programme by any nation whether developed, developing and underdeveloped. It recommends among others, the need for collaboration between the public and private sectors to accommodate communities, non-governmental organizations and individuals so as to engender economic expansion that could address the rising demands of the growing population and relate it to environmental and resource capacity.
Keywords: Investment, Human Capital, Development, Sustainable Development

Introduction
Sustainable development came into limelight in 1987 by the World Commission onEnvironment and Development in its seminal report called “our common future”. Since then, sustainability has become a principal benchmark against which economic development policies are assessed by national governments, development agencies and NGOs. Although, the adoption of sustainability as a benchmark for development has been hampered by ambiguities in definition and interpretation, as there seems to be a consensus that sustainable development implies an active role of government in efficient and equitable management of natural and environmental resources (Pearson 2013:463). As early as 1932, Pigou cited in Krutilla (1967:10)stressed that it is the clear duty of government as the trustee for present and unborn generations to watch over and if need be, by legislative enactment, to defend the

exhaustible natural resources from rash and reckless spoliation.However, the attainment of sustainable development cannot be realized at the expense of human beings, most especially the governed, no matter how the government at both national and international levels strive to.

At the European Union (EU) level, it is recognized, through the European 2020 Strategy (European Commission, 2010), that improving human capital and innovation can definitely contribute to a smart, sustainable and inclusive development. Human capital is a complex concept which "consist of the knowledge, skills, and health that people accumulate over their lives, enabling them to realize their potentials as productive members of society" (World Bank, 2019:50). In fact, many economists (neoclassical and endogenous growth theorists) later explained that human capital was the most important factor that created development. They agreed that with minimal physical capital, human capital could stimulate or cause substantial progress to happen. Human capital makes the difference in production. On this note, Ajibade (2013) stressed that "indeed, it is known that plants, offices, computers, automated equipment, intranets, internet systems, websites and all other facilities that any organization may install remain unproductive except for human efforts and direction.

Adam Smith included human capacities in his conception of capital stock in 1776, it was only in the late 1950s and 1960s that the importance of human capital began to feature prominently. Becker, Minzer and Schultz (1964) andLaroche & Merette (1999) argued that investment in education and training build up a stock of skills and abilities (capital) in the population that can benefit national economies and fuel economic growth.For example, China as the world leading populated country with over 1.4 billion residents were among the largest economy of the world, whose development has attained the rank of sustainability as a result of its relentless investment in human capital. Although, population is among some of the elements of national power aside the military power, but it is important to note that, population of any nation can be either detrimental or productive to its development.

Economist such as Frederick (1973:3) opine that investment in education and training enhance the skills and manpower that ultimately gives more production as new machines have more productive capacity. However, the point to drive homehere is that, the concept of human capital can be applied not only to education and training, but to any activity that increases the quality and productivity of the labour force and thus raises the future income levels,(Theodore, 1961). On a general note, as the international system is composed of developed and developing counties of the world, the former takes the case ofinvestment in human capital seriously than the later.

The discourse on sustainable development has received tremendous attention from policy makers and academics for four main reasons. First, sustainable development is considered to be the end-goal of the United Nation's development plan for the world, and many countries are working towards achieving sustainable development goals (Linner and Selin 2013; Baxell and Jonsson 2017). Secondly, sustainable development helps to promote a sustainable planet for every generation (Weiss 1992; Emina 2021}. Thirdly, sustainable development is considered to be all embracing development agenda as the goal and aspiration of development is to be sustainable. Lastly, sustainable development is expected to bring lasting socio-economic benefits to all people and the environment (Szymanska 2021).At the heart of sustainable development is natural resources management which has become inevitable dueto the existence of conflicts between the short-term need to alleviate poverty and the long-term objectives for environmental sustainability in the third world, pressures placed on natural resources to meet people's demands presents a dilemma for policy makers concerned to pursue sustainable development (Cahill and Fitzpatrick 2012:53).

It is based on the above background that this study examines investment in human capital as a possible mechanism for ensuring sustainable development with particular reference to Nigeria. The work is sub-titled and discussed below.

Conceptual Clarification

This section deals with the clarification of the three key concepts used in this study for easy understanding of the readers. These concepts areSustainable Development, Human Capital, and Investment.

Sustainable Development

According to Sharpley (2000), development and sustainability could be in the juxtaposition, where both could have possible counterproductive effects, while neo-classical economists emphasize that there is no contradiction between sustainability and development (Lele, 1991). Meanwhile, Sachs (2010:28)noted that there is no development without sustainability or sustainability without development. The notion of development is related to the past western concept of imperialism and colonialism, and during that period, it implied infrastructural development, political development and economic policy, serving imperialist as an excellent tool for marginalization and diminishing the power of certain countries (Tangi, 2005). Based on these connotations, most developing countries are lagging behind in terms of sustainability of development especially in the area of agriculture as a result of the influence of the colonial administrator's exploitative actions, which form part of the reasons why their political environment (developing countries) face food insecurity and hike in prices as a result of inflation.

According to Al-Roubaie (2013), sustainable development is a situation that "requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspiration for a better life". Similarly, Ajibade (2013) defined sustainable development as improving the quality of life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems. Sustainable development is the ability of physical development and environmental impacts to sustain long term habitation on the planet earth by human and other indigenous species while providing: an opportunity for environmentally safe, ecologically appropriate physical development; efficient use of natural resources; a framework which allows improvement in the human condition and equal opportunity for current and future generations; and manageable human growth. (Roosa, 2008). This view is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a universally intervention for sustainability.

According to (Tangi 2005), the fundamental purpose of this process is creation of stimulating environment whereby people will enjoy and have long, healthy and creative life. In this direction, Thomas (2004) argued that development involves the positive changes that society has experienced throughout history, and still experiencing, while (Jenkins, 2009:380) observed that the term sustainability literally means "a capacity to maintain some entity, outcome, or process over time" and carrying out activities that do not exhaust the resources on which that capacity depends. What the definitions imply is that sustainable development is targeted at human wellbeing (the health, wealth and quality of life of people) and linked to the diversity, productivity and quality of the ecosystem. Building requisite human capital i.e. people with the right skills, knowledge, competencies frame of mind, attitude, and motivation remain the most enduring strategies for the pursuit of sustainable development. This is the only way to provide people with the capacity, knowledge, skills, attitudes and motivation to reduce the harmful influence of society on the environment and to protect and preserve the globe for future generations.

Human Capital

There exists a number of related studies conducted by different scholars on human capital formation. Some of these scholars include Ojukwu (2000), Agboola (2005) and Enyekit (2014). The related literature has differing views on the concept of human capital development, the knowledge of human capital organization and rationalizations concerning the contributions of labour and other factors of production that could bring about the stimulating environment for achieving the targets in any industrial setting Agboola (2005). Therefore, human capital development concerns all kinds of labour, coaching, training, internship and human capital management investments. Fundamentally, it is that intangible factor that brings human intellect, skills, and competencies in the production process and allows for the provision of goods and services. It is the human capability and productivity engendered through knowledge and skills acquired from vocational and technical education, training and experience and facilitated by astimulating environment. Elements of human capital encompass knowledge, skills, attitudes, and motivation of an enterprise or society brought together to engage in the development of that enterprise or society and fulfil its objectives.

Different authorities have attempted to define human capital from different perspectives. For instance, the Oxford English Dictionary viewed human capital as the skills acquired by an individual in the course of vocational and technical education training, and the experience drawn from industrial work after training. Human capital is as well defined as human resources in vocational and technical education, an inevitable issue that calls for the attention of both the government and individuals (Enyekit, 2014). Human capital development presupposes investments, activities, and processes that produce vocational and technical education knowledge, skills, health or values that are embodied in people. It implies building an appropriate balance and large human resource base and providing an enabling environment for all individuals to be fully engaged and contribute to the organizational or national goals, (Ojukwu, 2000). Any effort to increase human knowledge, enhance skills, productivity and stimulate resourcefulness of individuals is an effort towards human capital development.

Studies by Peretomode (2003), Osuala (2005) and Ubulom, (2006) were unanimous that the process of human capital should be systematic to the extent that there should be a plan for which previous activities will provide support for upcoming activities while facilitating the attainment of set goals,the process should be sustainable since the product (human capital) must make desired and enduring impact on the organization or society, should be strategic to the extent that there are well-defined goals and targets whose attainments are time-bound. It should be dynamic, responsive and result-oriented; continually evolving and proactive when addressing emerging challenges. Corroborating the above positions, Enyekit, Amaehule&Teerah (2011) stated that there should, therefore, be an effective monitoring system to inform further necessary improvements in the process.

Ulinfu (1996) in Agboola (2015) defined Human Capital education as consisting of the total activity that is planned, organized and developed in form of the preparation of youths for responsible economic participation in the community. It is a subject of the entire vocational and technical education often referred to as technology or technical education.Going by the above, many countries of the world are far behind as they have not really invested in their available human capital for sustainable development. For quite some time now, the educational system of most countries of the world where this human capital is to be produced are being faced with a number of crises. This is evident in Nigeria where the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), were on an industrial strike for eight months, all in a bid to bring an end to the Nigerian government’s lack of commitment towards human capital

investment particularly in the area of education. In addition, the endogenous growth theories mostly emphasize the role of human capital (e.g., Mankiw, Romer, and Weil (1992) and Lucas (1988).While Igbami (2003) noted that the objectives of human capital formation have come to mean more than just grooming students for specific entry jobs, stressing that programs should help to prepare people for occupational changes occurring in recent years.

However, Soyede (2003) and Enyekit (2017) listed some of the objectives of human capital formation to include: Training of people for the specific occupation,providing schooling and imparting the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians, and other entrepreneurial and self-reliant skilled personnel, acquisition of practical and applied knowledge as well as basic scientific knowledge,providing basic intellectual information on science, arts, and commerce, forming the key industrial knowledge, preparing people for a business career; preparing the individual to earn a living or to be self-reliant.

Investment

Investment is an asset or item acquired with the goal of generating income or appreciation. Appreciation refers to an increase in the value of an asset over time. When an individual purchases a good as an investment, the intention is not just to consume the good but to also use it in the future to create wealth. The investment process has varying associations in economics and finance. An investment can be defined as an asset or an item purchased in the hope of generating future returns or appreciating in value (Myles, 2003). In the economic sense, an investment is the purchase of goods not consumed today but rather used in the future to create wealth (TD Direct investing, 2010). According to Power Management Institute (2011) in finance, an investment represents a monetary asset purchased with a view to providing a future income or a capital gain. Interestingly, all the aforementioned approaches underscore potential future gains and highlight the financial aspects of investment commitments. The decision of the investor to invest is subjective. His decision depends on the expected cost, his knowledge of the improved techniques and his perception, which is entirely a subjective factor. Businessmen want to know the investment project's pay off period to decide whether they actually will make the investment expenditure or not. Harcourt (1967) opine that, for a good investment, the investor needs to understand completely and correctly the possible opportunities, therefore investment should not be made in rush.

Nevertheless, investment implies intentional expenditure that is channelled towards raising or maintaining the stock of capital. In this respect, the stock of capital includes tangible assets or products, plants and machines and so on which support production (Dornbusch & Fischer, 1981). Human capital training and provision of infrastructure which are relevant factors needed for encouraging economic activity depend on investment. Hence, investment can be informed of domestic, foreign, private and public investment. This accounts for why Bakare (2011) points out that public investment consists of government, and public enterprises capital expenditure on social and economic assets. Some have argued and disagreed with the role allotted to investment in the economic growth process. Whatever view held about the impact of investment in development and growth of an economy, the effect of investment in machinery and equipment is considered the main determinant factor of growth (De Long and Summers, 1991 and 1993).

Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this study, Human Capital Theory was adopted due to its relevance to the topic of discussion. Human Capital theory as propounded by Paul Romer (1986) emphasizes how education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of their cognitive skills. Schultz (1961), came up with the notion that people who invest in education increase their stock of human capital. Examples of such investments include

expenditure on education, on the job training, health, and nutrition. Such expenditures increase future productive capacity at the expense of current consumption. However, the stock of human capital increases only in a period when gross investment exceeds depreciation with a passage of time, with intense use or lack of use. The provision of education is seen as productive investment in human being, an investment which the proponents of human capital theory consider to be equally or even more worthwhile than that of physical capital.

However, Mincer (1984), Ranis et al. (2000) found a relationship in both directions between 'human development' and economic growth using cross-country regressions and argued that over time, countries favouring economic growth may go into a vicious cycle, whereas those emphasising human (capital) development are more likely to develop a virtuous cycle. In this regard, Barro (1991) found human capital to be one of the key determinants of per capital income in a cross-sectional country study, but used school enrolment rates as a proxy measure. Nehru et al. (1995), Johnson (2002) measure human capital by replacement cost, like machinery, and found a positive and significant, but small effect on GDP growth, using average educational attainment of the labour force as a human capital measure. Late Gary Becker often cited Marshall's assertion that 'the most valuable of all capital is that invested in human being, but Marshall is seldom quoted in full:

> *If we compare one country of the civilized world with another, or one part of England with another, or one trade in England with another, we found that the degradation of the working-classes varies almost uniformly with the amount of rough work done by women. The most valuable of all capital is that invested in human beings; and of that capital the most precious part is the result of the care and influence of the mother, so long as she retains her tender and unselfish instincts, and has not been hardened by the strain and stress of unfeminine work.* (Marshall, 1890:468).

Consequently, first the context reflects household division of labour and gender stereotypes of the nineteenth century England, but Marshall's key message is that human capital formation is intimately connected with, and affected by wider social issues and especially the capacity of the family unit to ensure the early development of children. It is important explicitly to acknowledge this two-way relationship between human capital and other aspects of human progress: education plays a key role in promoting health and eradicating poverty, whilst a healthy population is a prerequisite for developing a highly skilled workforce. Secondly, investment in human capital is not a task of a single body, it also requires the support and contribution of other social forces in order to attain sustainable development in social, political, and economic setting.

In the opinion of Suri et al. (2011), human development plays a key role in economic growth but noted that human development is also a 'final product' in its own right, contributing to a nation's well-being. Young adult mortality affects human capital investments, but human capital accumulation equally can lower mortality rates, inducing a demographic transition and an industrial revolution (Tamura, 2006). Thus, addressing how human capital theory has evolved within the wider human resource literature in respect of competencies, core competence and within the wider strategic resource-based configurations becomes pertinent.

In fact, contemporary knowledge in the United States acknowledges that investment in human capital is three times greater than that in physical capital. Human capital theorists have established that basic literacy enhances the productivity of workers in low skill occupations. They further stated that an instruction that requires logical or analytical reasoning or provides technical and specialized knowledge, increases the marginal

productivity of workers in high-skilled professional positions. It has been proven that the greater the provisions of schooling, the greater the stocks of human capital in the society, and consequently, the greater the increase in national productivity and economic growth.

Relationships between Investment in Human Capital and Sustainable Development

Development concerns itself with the ability of man to take control of his environment, to manipulate and manage progressively everything in that environment, to increase his production and productivity, to enhance a qualitatively better life. Therefore, in the quest to develop, the question that bothers the mind is that; can the development be sustained? Sustainable development on the other hand, is development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of the future generation. Sustainable development according to Ascher and Healy (1990),Eriyekit., Silas-Dikbo&Vinazor (2011) emphasizes not the need to limit development, but the need to develop in order to be able to conserve.It also extends more than what the government of the day might think, but for continuous and concurrent ideologies that project and enhance the betterment of the entire society. Sustainable development therefore calls for adequate Human Capital development.

This involves investing in human capital to strengthen the weaknesses of public policies, so as to promote common good of the society and atthe same time, these efforts are expected not to harm or obstruct the ability of the future generations to achieve their developmental needs. Meanwhile, Morris (2002) asserted that most discussions (and actions) of sustainable development have to give due attention to meeting the needs of the present and indeed of the future generations through human capital development. The strides should be noticed in both education and health, therefore, sustainable development cut across and transcend to all spheres of life. Sustainable development strategies allow drawing natural resources assets, and utilization of environmental services through human knowledge and innovation which is the outcome of human capital formation.

Worthy of note is that sustainable development in human society is not a one-sided process rather, multi- sided issues; individuals perceive development as increase in the skill and ability, it is viewed as maximum freedom, the ability to create responsibility. Seer (1977) in Enyekit (2017) states that sustainable development involves capital accumulation and economic growth only but the condition in which people in a country have adequate food, job and income inequality among them is great. It is the process of bringing fundamental and sustainable changes in the society with high level of technical know-how. It encompasses growth and embraces the quality of life as social justice, equality of opportunity for all citizens, equitable distribution of income and the democratization of development processes. It is the capacity of members of the society to actualize them by participating actively in the social engineering of their destiny.

In addition, it entails the ability of individuals to influence and manipulate the forces of nature for their enhancement and that of humanity. Economic, political or social development implies more changes in the technical and institutional arrangement by which it is produced. Sustainable development is multi-dimensional and is basically about the process of changes around the spheres of societal life. However, human capital formation is the engine through which the development is carried out. This implies that labour development is the bedrock of any nation.

Investment in Human Capital and Sustainable Development

Human Capital and Economic Growth

Human capital theorists underline how education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by augmenting the level of the cognitive stock of the economically productive human capability (Olaniyan and Okemakinde 2008). In other words, better educated people will have a higher level of productivity and creativity, fact that will stimulate the technological progress. Lall and Kramer-Mbula (2005) submitted that developing states cannot simply import technologies without investing in building 'capabilities' to learn how to master, acquire, adapt and improve the existing technologies. These capabilities involve acquiring new skills and knowledge. Salazar- Xirinachs, Nubler and Kozul- Wright (2014) argued that the productive capabilities lead to economic diversification and generate the competences necessary to take advantage of potential opportunities. The same idea has been previously debated by Strum (1993), who noted that highly skilled individual may better evaluate the new opportunities because they can easily distinguish between random and systematic elements of the economic changes. Therefore, a higher level of education leads to a better participation in the global economy. Suffice it to say that high skilled persons stand a better chance of earning higher wages, to have a lower unemployment rate, a higher mobility and a better employment opportunity during their active lives.

Apart from these direct effects on economic growth and development, the education may foster the welfare state through some direct externalities such as: improvements in health and nutrition level, offering opportunities for personal fulfilment and developing some individual abilities (Haveman and Wolfe, 1984). This consequently have indirect positive bearing on the economic growth as McMahon (1999) opined that the well-educated people will contribute to improvements in the democratic process, to enforcing the rule of law and to political stability. In an attempt to answer the question as to why the performance of poor countries are so weak?' the analyst added that another main factor, together with the low level of education, is the low level of health. Despite the fact that the life expectancy has increased dramatically in the developing countries over the past fifteen years, many people from poor countries still face difficult health conditions.

The health status of an adult may be directly linked to physical work capacity because the healthier an individual is, the higher his productive capacity and vice versa. When labour productivity is high, the income level is also high. The positive relationship between the level of health and the economic growth has also been statistically tested by Bloom, Canning and Sevilla (2004) who noted that starting from a production function model aggregate economic growth show that a good level of health has a positive, sizeable and statistically significant effect on growth aggregate output. They however, concluded that the life expectancy's effect in growth regressions is a real labour productivity effect and not the result of the life expectancy acting as a proxy for worker experience

Human Capital and Social Cohesion

Sianesi and Van Reenen (2000) observed that a higher level of education may be linearly correlated not only to a friendly environment, but also to a better political and community implication, a higher social cohesion and to a lower criminality rate. Regarding the lower criminality rate, the opinions are divided. Freeman (2000), in his research for example found that there is no clear direct relationship between the education level and the criminality rate. Meanwhile, Kelly (2000) argues that between the two variables are indirectly related: while different educational levels lead to income differences, this inequality will increase the criminality rate. The same idea has previously been discussed by Leigh (1998), who observed that a higher level of education is positive and directly correlated to the crime absence. This

direct relationship has also been statistically tested by Lochner (1999), who concluded that the state with higher school enrolment rate and with a strict legislation have the lowest criminality index.

Analysing the causes of income inequalities in societies, Wilkinson and Marmot (2003) believe that, in the advanced capitalist countries, a higher gap in the revenue levels leads to lowered social cohesion which in turn, produces poorer health status. According to Schuller (2001), the social cohesion is both a consequence of and a producer of the social capital. The presence or absence of the social capital depends on the level of education. This was argued by Dwinigrum (2013) who noted the fact that the elements involved in the social capital (social reds, trust and norms) can be acquired during the formal, non-formal and informal education. She supported this idea with the result of an empirical investigation conducted on teachers and principals from 17 elementary schools, 18 lower secondary schools and 16 high schools in Indonesia. The conclusion highlighted the fact that the family, the schools and the community have a very important role in shaping the individual character which will largely influence the social capital. Moreover, the social relations in the structure of a society have a role in developing the nation's cultural identity.

Clemente, Marcuello, Montanes and Pueyo (2004) have conducted an empirical study in the case of Spain. Their research indicated that there is a strong correlation between social and human capital and both of them have favoured the economic growth in Spain in the beginning of the 21st Century. The explanation for the close connection between social and human capital is simple: a higher level of education leads to higher revenues which will increase the individual satisfaction; the more fulfilled a person is, the higher the social cohesion will be. The strong correlation between the human capital and the social cohesion is also proven by the Cypriot Operational Program "Employment, Human Resources and Social Cohesion", 2014-2020, in which the direct objective is the improvement in the vocational and technical educational system, in order to increase the employment rate and the social cohesion (European Commission, 2015).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Adequate investment in human capital is fundamental to any meaningful and sustainable development programme by any nation be it developed, developing and underdeveloped. Using a comparative study of countries' peculiarities in human capital, it is pertinent to consider the process or strategy adopted by the advanced nations to achieve economic growth and the realization of sustainable development thereby applying such method in Nigeria to attain sustainable development. One of such models is the adoption and implementation in human capital development as propagated by the United Nations as part of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). From the findings of this study on the correlations between human capital and sustainable development, the study calls for a shift in thought and action to make development of human capacities and fostering of human welfare the centre-stage of sustainable development strategy. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made.

There is the need for collaboration between the public and private sectors to accommodate communities, non-governmental organizations and individuals so as to engender economic expansion that could address the rising demands of the growing population and relate it to environmental and resource capacity.

Investment in science and technology as an integral part of sustainable development should be given utmost priority owing to the fact thatit enhances human activities for effective utilization and management of natural resources.

Attitudinal change by all stakeholders is paramount for investment in human capital so as to engender paradigm shift fromthe activities and processes not favourable to the environment, to alternatives that promote and facilitate innovation and best practices which are environmentally beneficial to sustainable development.

Increase in investment in education is also a major factor of human capital formation to be provided by government at all levels as well as cooperate bodiesas it is a major form of investment in human capital that provides key inputs in human resource development.

There is high level of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria, lack of entrepreneurial skills and inadequate training facilities as a result of bad governanceespecially in the less developed countries as a whole and Nigeria in particular. Poverty can be reduced through investment in human capital asreduction in extreme poverty is portrayed as greatest symbol of economic progress.This can as well be achieved through proper educational planning and management.

There is the need for government to enact policy on social and economic sustainability that could enhancehigh level of productivity while improvement in the conditions of service for workers across all sectors of the economy particularly in education be promoted.

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THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN MARITIME DRUG INTERDICTION: INNOVATIONS IN SURVEILLANCE AND DETECTION

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Abstract
Maritime drug interdiction plays a crucial role in combating the global narcotics trade, a multifaceted threat that exploits the vast and largely unregulated nature of international waters. The integration of technology into this domain has revolutionized enforcement efforts, enabling more effective surveillance, detection, and interception of illicit activities. Technologies such as satellite imaging, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and artificial intelligence (AI) have significantly enhanced maritime domain awareness (MDA), allowing for real-time monitoring and predictive analytics to identify high-risk vessels and trafficking routes. Despite these advancements, the implementation of technology faces considerable challenges, including high costs, operational complexities, legal constraints, and traffickers' ongoing adaptations to evade detection. This paper explores the concept of technology in the context of maritime drug interdiction, emphasizing the role of surveillance and detection innovations. It analyzes the application of theoretical frameworks, such as Rational Choice Theory and Maritime Security Theory, to understand the dynamics of trafficking and enforcement. The study also examines case studies that highlight the operational, legal, and ethical considerations associated with using advanced technologies, underscoring the need for adherence to international law and cooperation among nations. The findings reveal that while technology provides transformative capabilities, its effectiveness depends on strategic deployment, capacity-building, and robust international collaboration. Recommendations include increasing investment in cost-effective technologies, fostering public-private partnerships, and developing adaptive strategies to counter traffickers' evolving tactics. Addressing these challenges holistically can ensure that technology continues to strengthen maritime drug interdiction efforts while maintaining compliance with legal and ethical standards.

Keywords: Technology, Maritime drug Interdiction, Surveillance, Detection

Introduction

Drug trafficking by sea remains a persistent and evolving challenge in global security. With approximately 80% of the world's goods transported by maritime vessels, the same pathways are exploited by traffickers to smuggle illicit substances across international borders. The sheer scale of the oceans, coupled with the ingenuity of traffickers employing stealthy tactics such as hidden compartments, ghost ships, and unregistered vessels, has made maritime drug interdiction a daunting task for law enforcement agencies.

As the world increasingly relies on the oceans for food, energy, employment, and environmental solutions, maritime security is becoming an important discussion topic among policymakers, policy implementers, and researchers. This is because the maritime space is under increasing threats, resulting from the over-exploitation of fish stocks through both legal fishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, piracy and armed robbery at sea, illegal oil bunkering, toxic waste dumping, drugs and human trafficking, and other illegal activities. Indeed, there has been a steep increase in global maritime insecurity since the end of the Cold War, which saw a decrease in naval sizes and has impacted state enforcement

capacity. At the same time, surplus weapons, technology and vessels were acquired by organised criminal networks – such as pirates and terrorists (Russell, 2010). While the last decades witnessed the rise of transnational public-private initiatives to enhance maritime security and had some success mitigating security risks to economic activities on the high seas (Stockbruegger, 2021), many threats are highly persistent in their effects on coastal states and communities, particularly on the African continent. The Gulf of Guinea (GoG) and the US Coast has become one of the global hotspots of maritime insecurity due to prevalent IUU fishing, piracy, armed robbery, oil theft and illegal oil bunkering. The reasons for that include a limited capacity for regional states to monitor and control activities at sea, as many countries cannot devote necessary resources to address maritime insecurity.

In an age where the ripples of technological advancement touch every aspect of our lives, maritime security stands at a pivotal junction. Historically, the safeguarding of our oceans has been a tale of battling piracy, securing trade routes, and protecting national borders. Today, this narrative is being rewritten under the influence of groundbreaking technological advancements. The world's oceans have become the lifeblood of global trade, the imperative to safeguard maritime domains has never been more pressing (Moore, 2003). This convergence of new technologies with the longstanding mission of ensuring maritime security presents both remarkable opportunities and formidable ethical dilemmas (Androjna, 2020). However, the rapid advancement of technology offers a beacon of hope in this ongoing battle. Innovations in surveillance and detection technologies, ranging from satellite imagery and unmanned aerial vehicles to AI-powered predictive analytics, are revolutionizing the way authorities monitor and intercept illegal activities at sea. These tools not only enhance real-time monitoring capabilities but also allow for more accurate detection of suspicious vessels and cargo, significantly boosting interdiction efforts. In the maritime drug trafficking, technology has proved to be a promising path to enhance regional capacity to address security threats at sea. This involves using technologies to boost MDA, facilitating improved information gathering, communication, and interventions and fostering smoother cooperation among various security actors within and across nations (Okafor-Yarwood, I., Pigeon, M., Amling, A., Ridgway, C., Adewumi, I., Joubert, L 2020).

Recent years have witnessed technological innovations that have revolutionized our understanding and management of maritime security (Hetherington, 2006). Autonomous vessels, satellite surveillance, drones, AI, and advanced cybersecurity measures have emerged as potent tools in the maritime security arsenal (Calderaro &Blumfelde, 2022). These technologies promise heightened efficiency, improved response times, and enhanced situational awareness. Yet, their deployment also raises profound ethical questions touching upon human rights, privacy, and environmental concerns. AI can detect and track suspicious vessels, while satellite surveillance can provide real-time information on maritime traffic. Autonomous vessels hold the potential to patrol the oceans without human intervention. While these new technologies offer the potential for significant enhancements in maritime security, they concurrently introduce novel challenges (McKay, 2022). This article delves into the pivotal role of technology in maritime drug interdiction. It explores the challenges of combating illicit maritime activities, the technological breakthroughs driving change, and the potential for future advancements. By understanding how technology is reshaping enforcement strategies, stakeholders can better address this global threat, safeguarding international waters and the economies they sustain.

Conceptual Clarification

Technology

Technology, at its core, serves as a tool for enhancing human capabilities and addressing complex challenges, particularly in areas where traditional methods fall short. In the context of maritime drug interdiction, technology bridges the gap between the immense scale of the oceans and the limited resources of enforcement agencies. It enables authorities to monitor vast territories, detect anomalies, and respond with precision, transforming how illegal activities at sea are identified and curtailed.

Thus, the term technology has been given various definitions by previous literatures. According to Kumar, V., Kumar, U., & Persaud, A. (1999) technology consists of two primary components: 1) a physical component which comprises of items such as products, tooling, equipments, blueprints, techniques, and processes; and 2) the informational component which consists of know-how in management, marketing, production, quality control, reliability, skilled labor and functional areas. The earlier definition by Sahal (1981) views technology as 'configuration', observing that the transfer object (the technology) relies on a subjectively determined but specifiable set of processes and products. The current studies on the technology transfer have connected technology directly with knowledge and more attention is given to the process of research and development (Dunning, 1994). By scrutinizing the technology definition, there are two basic components that can be identified: 1) 'knowledge' or technique; and 2) 'doing things'. Technology is always connected with obtaining certain result, resolving certain problems, completing certain tasks using particular skills, employing knowledge and exploiting assets (Lan and Young, 1996). The concept of technology does not only relate to the technology that embodies in the product but it is also associated with the knowledge or information of it use, application and the process in developing the product (Lovell, 1998; Bozeman, 2000).

Pavitt (1985) suggests that technology is mainly differentiated knowledge about specific application, tacit, often uncodified and largely cumulative within firms. Thus, based on this argument, technology is regarded as the firm's 'intangible assets' or 'firm-specific' which forms the basis of a firm's competitiveness and will generally release under special condition (Dunning, 1981). Tihanyi and Roath(2002) propose that technology can include information that is not easily reproducible and transferable. Based on this argument technology is seen as "tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1967) or firm-specific, secrets or knowledge known by one organization" (Nonaka, 1994).

Maritime Drug Interdiction

Maritime drug interdiction refers to the strategies and operations undertaken to detect, deter, and disrupt the smuggling of illicit drugs via sea routes. Given that the oceans account for over 70% of the Earth's surface, they present traffickers with vast, unregulated spaces to transport contraband. Smuggling operations often exploit commercial shipping routes, unregistered vessels, and remote coastal areas, making maritime drug interdiction a complex and resource-intensive endeavor. The core concept revolves around identifying suspicious activities within the maritime domain and intervening before the contraband reaches its intended destination. This requires a coordinated approach, combining intelligence gathering, surveillance, and enforcement. Maritime drug interdiction often involves multiple stakeholders, including coast guards, navies, customs agencies, and international organizations, working collaboratively to address the transnational nature of the crime (Nonaka, 1994).

Surveillance and Detection

Surveillance and detection are foundational components of maritime drug interdiction, enabling authorities to monitor vast ocean territories and identify illicit activities with precision. In essence, surveillance involves the continuous observation of maritime zones, vessels, and cargo, while detection focuses on identifying specific threats, such as illegal substances or suspicious behavior. Together, they form a critical defense against the sophisticated tactics employed by drug traffickers operating in international waters.

Surveillance begins with the ability to monitor the movement of vessels across expansive maritime regions. Technologies like satellite imagery, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and high-powered radar systems provide real-time insights into ship locations, routes, and activities. These tools help authorities track irregular patterns, such as erratic navigation, avoidance of regulated shipping lanes, or prolonged stays in high-risk areas. By maintaining a constant watch, surveillance systems ensure that potential threats are identified before they escalate. Despite the centrality of innovation in the War on Drugs, there have been few attempts to understand the process. Given that 90 percent of the cocaine from Andean countries is transported using maritime routes (DTIC, 2020), it is necessary to analyze the development of drug trafficker and state agency technologies in the maritime environment. That is to say, the study of the game of cat and mouse between interdiction and evasion.

Detection takes the process a step further by focusing on uncovering concealed threats. Advanced detection technologies, such as hyperspectral imaging and chemical sensors, are capable of identifying illicit substances hidden within containers, ship hulls, or cargo holds. These systems often rely on artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning algorithms to analyze vast datasets and pinpoint anomalies, such as deviations in weight, temperature, or chemical composition. Furthermore, underwater detection tools, including autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) and sonar systems, enable authorities to inspect vessel hulls and identify submerged smuggling compartments. In the 2023, the Colombian Navy detected and captured the first electric narco-submarine (Daily Mail UK, 2023). Demonstrating the innovative capacities of Colombian drug traffickers, narco-submarines, drug subs, narco-semisubmersibles, self-propelled semisubmersibles, or simply narcosubs, are maritime custom-made vessels used principally by Colombian drug traffickers with the purpose of smuggling illicit drugs to consumers or transshipment countries.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Maritime Security

The Maritime Security Theory says that a combination of preventive and reactive measures is needed to protect the maritime domain from threats and unlawful actions, by law enforcement for civilian entities and marine defense operations for military entities (Feldt, 2013, p.2). One element of maritime security is protection from criminal acts. This theory inspires the need of reducing NPP Smuggling by controlling of supply and demand of NPP smuggling.

Maritime security theory is applied to the study by emphasing the protection of maritime domains from a wide range of threats, including piracy, terrorism, human trafficking, and drug smuggling. It is a multidisciplinary framework that integrates international law, geopolitical considerations, technological innovation, and enforcement strategies to ensure the safety and security of global waterways. In the context of maritime drug interdiction, the theory provides a conceptual foundation for understanding and addressing the unique challenges posed by transnational criminal networks operating at sea (Feldt, 2013).

Maritime security theory also underscores the importance of collaboration between nations, as no single country has the resources or jurisdiction to monitor and enforce laws across all maritime territories. This is particularly relevant for drug interdiction, where traffickers often operate in international waters to evade national enforcement. The theory advocates for cooperative frameworks, such as joint patrols, intelligence sharing, and multinational task forces, to combat these transnational threats effectively. For example, initiatives like the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and regional partnerships like the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) align with this principle by fostering coordinated responses to maritime drug trafficking (Tihanyi and Roath 2002).

Role of technology in Maritime Drug Interdiction

In the current era of rapid technological advancement, maritime security is being profoundly transformed. The way maritime threats are perceived, addressed, and mitigated is being revolutionized by new technologies. In this section, the dynamic and evolving role of technology in enhancing maritime security will be delved into. Key areas, including autonomous vessels, satellite surveillance, artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, and more, will be explored. Through the examination of specific examples, how these innovations are reshaping the maritime security domain will be uncovered.

Technology plays a transformative role in maritime drug interdiction, offering law enforcement agencies the tools to overcome the challenges posed by vast ocean territories, limited resources, and increasingly sophisticated smuggling tactics. Through advancements in surveillance, detection, and data analytics, technology has shifted the paradigm from reactive to proactive enforcement, enabling authorities to anticipate, monitor, and disrupt drug trafficking operations more effectively through the use of some technologies such as:

Autonomous Vessels

The integration of autonomous vessels into maritime security operations represents a pivotal shift in how security challenges at sea are approached. This paradigm change is being brought about by unmanned ships equipped with advanced sensors, navigation systems, and artificial intelligence (Trowers, 2023). This transformation is exemplified by the "Sea Hunter," an autonomous surface vessel developed by the US Navy. It is designed for continuous, long-endurance missions, during which submarines can be tracked and trailed, underwater mines detected, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions performed autonomously (Gallup, 2022). Equally significant is the emergence of autonomous technology in the commercial maritime industry, aiming to enhance operational efficiency and safety. "The Yara Birkeland", often cited as the world's first fully autonomous cargo ship, represents a leap towards sustainable maritime trade, utilizing electric power and automation to minimize human error and environmental impact. This shift towards autonomy in shipping promises not only to redefine traditional maritime labor but also to set new benchmarks for environmental stewardship in the industry.

Satellite Surveillance

Satellite technology has revolutionized maritime domain awareness, providing an unprecedented view of maritime activities on a global scale. High-resolution satellite imagery, coupled with advanced analytics, offers a comprehensive view of vessel movements and maritime conditions (Lieske, D. J., Mahoney, M., Wilhelm, S. I., Weir, L., & O'Hara, P., 2011). The Global Fishing Watch platform is a prime example of satellite-based technology's application in maritime security (Drakopulos, L., Silver, J. J., Nost, E., Gray, N., & Hawkins, R., 2022). It utilizes satellite data and artificial intelligence to monitor and combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities (Zuzanna, K., Tomasz, U., Michał, G., &

Robert, P., 2022). By analyzing vessel movements and identifying suspicious behavior, it helps authorities enforce fisheries regulations and protect marine ecosystems. This technology-driven approach enhances transparency and accountability on the high seas, contributing to sustainable fishing practices.

One of the most significant contributions of technology lies in enhancing maritime domain awareness (MDA). High-resolution satellite imagery and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) provide real-time monitoring of maritime traffic, allowing authorities to track vessel movements and identify suspicious activities. These tools can cover vast areas of the ocean, filling critical gaps that traditional patrols cannot address. For instance, drones equipped with thermal imaging cameras can detect "go-fast" boats operating under the cover of darkness, while radar systems can monitor and identify unusual vessel behavior, such as abrupt course changes or loitering in high-risk zones.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI plays a pivotal role in maritime security by providing predictive insights and decision support tools. AI-driven algorithms analyze vast datasets, including vessel traffic patterns, weather conditions, and historical incident data, to identify potential threats and vulnerabilities (Mandal & Ghosh, 2023). The Maritime Safety and Security Information System (MSSIS) is a comprehensive AI application in maritime security. MSSIS integrates data from multiple sources, including AIS signals, radar, and satellite imagery, to create a realtime situational awareness picture. By continuously monitoring maritime traffic and identifying anomalies, it assists in early threat detection and rapid response. This system enables maritime authorities to proactively address security challenges and deploy resources more effectively.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning have further enhanced interdiction efforts by enabling predictive analytics and anomaly detection. By analyzing vast datasets on vessel movements, cargo manifests, and historical trafficking routes, AI systems can identify patterns and predict high-risk activities. This allows authorities to prioritize resources and focus on vessels or regions most likely to be involved in drug smuggling. For example, an AI system might flag a vessel that deviates from standard shipping lanes or has irregular port visits, prompting closer inspection.

Cybersecurity: Demonstrating the Criticality of Maritime Cyber Threats

The maritime sector's increasing reliance on digital technology has simultaneously opened avenues for efficiency and vulnerability. Cyber threats in this domain are not just theoretical; their impacts are real and far reaching, as several incidents have starkly demonstrated. These examples not only underline the severity of potential threats but also emphasize the crucial need for robust cybersecurity measures. One of the most significant incidents illustrating this vulnerability was the NotPetya cyberattack in 2017 (Lika, R. A., Murugiah, D., Brohi, S. N., & Ramasamy, D. 2018). Targeting several large organizations, including the maritime giant Maersk, this ransomware attack disrupted global shipping operations, leading to substantial logistical chaos and financial losses (Lim, 1998). The attack's impact on Maersk alone, which included the immobilization of port operations and the necessity for a complete IT systems overhaul, serves as a sobering reminder of the catastrophic consequences of such breaches.

Beyond NotPetya, other instances further highlight the sector's susceptibility. For example, in 2018, the Port of San Diego suffered a ransomware attack that disrupted its IT systems and administrative services, impacting its ability to effectively manage maritime operations (Senarak, 2023). Similarly, in 2019, a cyberattack on the Mediterranean Shipping Company's

servers led to significant interruptions in its cargo booking system, showcasing the potential for operational disruption (Alekseenkov, A., Klyuchnikova, D., Dedova, N., & Sokolov, S. 2022). These incidents reveal several key points about maritime cybersecurity. First, they underscore the interconnected nature of digital infrastructure in the maritime sector, where a single breach can ripple through various interconnected systems, causing widespread operational disruptions. Second, they show that cyber threats can have direct financial implications, both in terms of immediate disruption costs and long-term reputational damage. Lastly, they highlight the human element, as these attacks can potentially compromise crew safety and environmental security.

Biometrics and Access Control

Securing Critical Infrastructure, the adoption of biometrics and advanced access control systems is enhancing security at maritime facilities, ports, and vessels. Biometric technologies, such as fingerprint and facial recognition, are being employed for identity verification and access control, ensuring that only authorized personnel gain entry to sensitive areas. Many ports around the world have implemented biometric access control systems for dockworkers and personnel. These systems streamline security procedures, reduce the risk of unauthorized access, and enhance overall port security. Biometric authentication provides a secure and convenient method for verifying the identity of individuals in high-security environments. The integration of new technologies into maritime security operations is ushering in an era of enhanced capabilities, efficiency, and effectiveness. Autonomous vessels, satellite surveillance, artificial intelligence, biometrics, and robust cybersecurity measures are instrumental in mitigating maritime threats, safeguarding marine environments, and ensuring the safety of seafarers and critical infrastructure (Stöhs& Bruns, 2018).

Analysis of Case Studies in Maritime Security Technology: Legal Considerations

The implementation of maritime security technologies has been a critical component of efforts to combat drug trafficking at sea, but it is often accompanied by significant legal considerations. Examining case studies where technology played a pivotal role in maritime drug interdiction reveals the complexities of operating within the framework of international law, national sovereignty, and human rights protections. These legal dimensions are crucial for ensuring that enforcement actions are not only effective but also legitimate and justifiable.

Several recent case studies have illuminated the ethical quandaries that arise with the increasing integration of new technologies into maritime security provide a platform to explore specific legal frameworks and their implications.

China's use of facial recognition in the South China sea (2019)

In 2019, China came under international scrutiny for deploying facial recognition technology to track and monitor Uyghur Muslims in the South China Sea (Mooney, 2021). This controversial use of technology allowed the Chinese authorities to identify and monitor Uyghur fishermen even within their traditional fishing grounds, raising alarm bells among human rights advocates regarding privacy and freedom of movement. China's acts conflicts with Article 17 of the ICCPR, which China has ratified. This article explicitly protects individuals against "arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence."

US AI surveillance at the Mexico border (2021)

In 2021, the United States government faced criticism for its deployment of artificial intelligence to track and monitor migrants at the US-Mexico border (Boyce & Chambers, 2021). This technology, aimed at identifying and tracing migrants as they crossed the border, prompted a debate on the balance between security and individual rights, particularly

regarding privacy and freedom of movement. The US government's use of AI in border surveillance engages the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which protects against "unreasonable searches and seizures." This practice also needs to be aligned with Article 12 of the ICCPR, ensuring the right to liberty of movement.

Israeli surveillance of Palestinian fishermen (2018)

In 2018, the Israeli government came under fire for employing surveillance technology to track and monitor Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip, spotlighting the ethical implications of such technology in a sensitive political context (Loewenstein, 2023). This case falls under the scope of Part VII of the UNCLOS, specifically Articles 87 and 90, which guarantee the freedom of the high seas and the right to engage in fishing on the high seas, respectively. Additionally, Article 17 of the ICCPR on privacy could be relevant here. However, the legal challenge arises in determining the point at which a vessel can be intercepted. According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), nations have limited jurisdiction in international waters unless they can establish reasonable grounds for suspecting that a ship is involved in illegal activities. In the 2019 seizure of a drug-laden cargo ship off the West African coast, authorities relied on satellite data to justify their actions, but the case underscored the need for robust evidence to avoid accusations of unlawful interference.

Challenges in Implementing Technology

A primary challenge lies in the **financial burden** of acquiring, maintaining, and upgrading advanced technology. Tools like high-resolution satellite imagery, autonomous drones, and AI-powered systems require substantial investments in infrastructure, training, and upkeep. For many nations, especially developing ones, these costs can be prohibitive, leading to disparities in maritime enforcement capabilities. The unequal distribution of technological resources among countries creates vulnerabilities that traffickers can exploit by targeting regions with limited surveillance or detection infrastructure (Feldt, 2013).

Another significant challenge is the **integration of new technologies with existing systems and operations**. Maritime law enforcement agencies often rely on a mix of traditional methods and modern tools, and ensuring seamless coordination between these approaches can be difficult. For instance, data collected from advanced sensors or AI systems must be compatible with existing command-and-control frameworks to facilitate real-time decision-making. In many cases, outdated infrastructure or a lack of technical expertise can hinder the effective deployment and use of new technologies (Mooney, 2021).

The **vastness and complexity of the maritime environment** also pose operational challenges. Unlike land-based enforcement, maritime interdiction requires monitoring immense and dynamic areas, where traffickers can easily change routes or tactics. Technologies like drones or satellites may struggle with limitations in range, endurance, or resolution, particularly in harsh weather or remote regions. Additionally, detecting illicit activities amidst the immense volume of legitimate maritime traffic requires highly sophisticated systems that can differentiate between routine and suspicious behaviors.

Legal and jurisdictional issues further complicate the implementation of technology. Maritime drug trafficking often occurs in international waters, where enforcement actions are governed by international laws like the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Deploying surveillance or detection technologies in these areas can raise questions about sovereignty, privacy, and data ownership. For example, intercepting communications or tracking vessels in international waters may require consent or

agreements among multiple nations, which can delay critical operations (Ramasamy, D. 2018).

Finally, **traffickers' adaptation to technological advancements** presents an ongoing challenge. Criminal networks are resourceful and often employ countermeasures to evade detection, such as using encrypted communications, spoofing vessel identities, or deploying submersible vehicles that bypass surface-level surveillance. This cat-and-mouse dynamic necessitates continuous innovation and upgrades in enforcement technology, creating a perpetual cycle of investment and adaptation.

Conclusion

The role of technology in maritime drug interdiction has proven transformative, enabling law enforcement agencies to address the evolving and sophisticated tactics of drug traffickers. Advanced tools such as satellite surveillance, AI-powered analytics, and autonomous detection systems have enhanced maritime domain awareness and the ability to identify and intercept illicit activities. However, the implementation of these technologies is not without challenges. High costs, operational complexities, legal considerations, and traffickers' adaptations underscore the need for a strategic approach to maximize their impact. Furthermore, international collaboration and adherence to legal frameworks are essential to ensure the effectiveness and legitimacy of enforcement actions.

Recommendations

1. **Investment in Technological Development and Accessibility:**
   Nations should prioritize sustained investment in maritime security technologies, with a focus on cost-effective solutions for developing countries. Collaborative funding mechanisms, such as international grants and partnerships, can help bridge resource gaps and ensure broader accessibility to advanced tools.
2. **Capacity Building and Training:**
   Effective use of technology requires skilled personnel who are trained to operate complex systems and interpret data accurately. Regular training programs and knowledge-sharing initiatives should be implemented to enhance technical expertise among maritime law enforcement agencies.
3. **Strengthening International Cooperation:**
   Given the transnational nature of maritime drug trafficking, it is crucial to foster international collaboration. This includes establishing standardized protocols for data sharing, joint operations, and evidence collection to facilitate seamless coordination among nations.
4. **Legal and Ethical Frameworks:**
   Governments and international organizations must develop clear legal and ethical guidelines for the use of technologies like drones, AI, and surveillance systems. These frameworks should address concerns related to privacy, data ownership, and the admissibility of evidence while ensuring compliance with international law.
5. **Adaptive Strategies to Counter Traffickers' Innovations:**
   Traffickers continuously refine their methods to evade detection. Law enforcement agencies should adopt adaptive strategies that incorporate predictive analytics and intelligence-driven approaches to anticipate and respond to emerging threats.

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STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPACT OF TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY AND INTEREST IN ACADEMIC WORK IN SOUTH – SOUTH GEO–POLITICAL ZONE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The aim of this study was to investigate to investigate Students' Perception on the Impact of Teaching with Technology and Interest in Academic Work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria. Based on the objectives, three research questions were raised to guide the study. The study adopted the survey research design; the study population comprises of all the public senior secondary students of 2023/2024 academic session in the South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria. A sample size of 400 senior secondary two (SS 2) students was selected using the multistage sampling technique.The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Students Perception on the Impact of Teaching with Technology and Interest in Academic Work Questionnaire (SPITTIQ)", which had been validated and subjected to a cronbach alpha reliability index of 0.80 and 0.84 for each measure.The analysis was done using mean and standard deviation and Pearson r with aid of IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0. The results revealed positive students' perception on the impact of teaching with technology and their interest in academic work in Rivers State. The result r-value of .87 reveals a relationship between teaching with technology and students' interest in academic work. In conclusion the study indicates that students generally view technology-enhanced teaching as a positive and effective tool for improving engagement, comprehension, and motivation in learning. Based on these findings, it is recommended that schools should invest in technological infrastructure, provide adequate training for teachers on digital instructional methods and ensure equitable access to technological resources for all students.

Keywords: Students' Perception, Teaching with Technology, Interest in Academic Work, South – South Geo-political Zone

INTRODUCTION
Most research work today in our society both home and abroad are more concerned with students' performances or achievement, rather than what gives the students the interest to study in their academic work. Hidi as cited in Harackiewicz and Hulleman (2010), described interest as a process that contributes to learning and achievement. i.e., being interested in any subject or topic is a mental resource that facilitates learning, which in turn leads to better performances as well as achievements. So the researcher observed that interest in students' academic work; will bring about good performances or outcomes, and the teachers are the main determinant that will bring about this good performances or outcomes from students. In the world today, several policies of education have explicitly included technology

requirements in process of teachers' qualification (Mouza et al., 2014), which Voogt, et al. (2016) considered the requirement of technology as an active agent shaping the educational practices. It has been argued that in order to use appropriate tools of technology in teaching, the teachers need to have a well-grounded Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Cox & Graham, as cite in Abadom, 2020). Which according to Mishra and Koehler in Abadom (2020), is a blend of pedagogical knowledge (PK), content knowledge (CK), and technology knowledge (TK) and has been addressed in many research studies as an indicator of successful technology use. He further described that, the Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK)is knowledge of the existence, components, and capabilities of various technologies as they are used in teaching and learning processes or settings and conversely, knowing how teaching might change as the result of using particular technologies.

As one can see with the evolution of technology in general, educational capabilities in particular are growing and as well changing day by day. No wonder Tondeur, et al. (2012), posit that, technology in this 21st century society is an essential knowledge and skill needed for everyone. And when technology is combined into lessons, students are expected to be more interested in the subjects they are studying. Evidence have shown that, most classroom around the globe have implemented several forms of technology in order to enhance students interest as well as achievement.

Problem

Student's academic performance in our societies is a topic of great concern to parents, teachers', stakeholders and even researchers. Many empirical studies in Nigeria such as Kpolovie, et al (2014); Fehintola, (2014); Charles, (2015); Gogo and Nduka, (2017) etc., had indicated that most secondary school students' academic performances are low. Take for instance the following unexpected low performances of Senior School Certificate Examination, UTME, Post UTME results etc. this shows that, the students' outcomes do not match the government and parental investment. The persistent poor performance of students is a problem of concerned. It is against this dropping in students' performances that the researcher is undertaking this investigation "Students Perception on the Impact of Teaching with Technology and Interest in Academic Work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria" to see if teaching is augmented with technology will stimulate the students' interest in their academic work in this 21st century society.

Aim and Objectives

The aim and objectives of the study was to investigate the Students Perception on the Impact of Teaching with Technology and Interest in Academic Work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria. In specific, the study sought to:

1. Examine the students' perception on the impact of teaching with technology in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

2. Examine the students' perception on interest in academic work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

3. Investigate the students' perception on the impact of teaching with technology and interest in academic workin South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the students' perception on the impact of teaching with technology in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria?

2. What is the students' perception on interest in academic work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria?

3. What is the relationship between students' perception on the impact of teaching with technology and interest in academic work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Technology

The term "technology" refers to advancements in the methods and tools we use to solve problems or achieve a goal. The origin of technology according toOlaoye as cited in Onipede, (2010) is traced from the word "techne"; which means, activities by which man searches to adapt to his environment. The term technology has a large scope; the large scope has led to the various definition of technology. According to Olaoye (2009), he defined technology as the transformation of a theoretical idea to a practical skill in order to produce the objects of one's need. Homby (2002), defined technology as a scientific knowledge utilized in practical ways, especially in the designing of new machines, machineries as well as equipment.Grisham and Wosley (2006), they defined technology as the practical form of scientific knowledge or the science of application of knowledge to practical. From the various definitions of technology, technology can be seen as equipment or machines that can be applied to make difficult task to become seamlessly simple and more effective. It can be applied in many facets of our lives Abadom and Charles (2022), including our education system. In connection with the educational system, technology in teaching can encompass all kinds of tools, ranging from low-tech pencil, paper, and chalkboard, to the use of presentation software, or high-tech tablets, online collaboration and conferencing tools and more.

However in our contemporary society (Abadom & Charles, 2022), some of the most commonly used technologies to make teaching and learning process efficient are; Desktop and laptop Computers, Internet, Projectors, Audio Enhancements, Electronic bulletin board, Interactive Whiteboard, Television, Video tape recorder etc. These facilities are the most commonly used technological facilities in our classroom environment more especially the Desktop/laptop Computers, Internet, Projectors and Audio Enhancements (Abadom & Charles, 2022).

Impact of Technology in Teaching

The role of technology in the world of education has been ever changing. It has been supported in various ways to teach and learn. Most recently, technology has been a new phenomenon to help motivate, differentiate and permit students to achieve and excel in ways that, they have never been able to do before. Garcia et al., (2015) asserted that, the extensive use of technologies by students can positively impact students in accomplishing better course grades as well as finishing their course on time. According to Johnson (2003), the computer and technology, if used correctly, has the ability to "invoke dream in the minds of visionary educators who saw endless potential for altering traditional notions of teaching and learning" (p. 2). It has also been observed that learners of this 21st century are more innovative and interested in technological driven tasks. In addition, the newest technologies allow us to try things in physical and virtual classrooms that were not possible before. Today,technology is used in almost every part of our life, due to its increasing significance which the classroom is not an exception.

Students Interest in Academic Work

Krapp and Prenzel, (2011) sees interest as a representation of a specific and distinguished relationship between an individual and an object, that can be refer to concrete things such as a topic, a subject or an idea. Though students may expressed interest or non-interest in any subjects. The degree of an individual's interest has consistently been found to be a powerful influence on learning (Subramaniam in Abadom, 2018). He believes that interest influences an individual's attention, goals, as well as levels of learning. In a study by Thomas (2013) on "students' interest in academic work" she discovered that, there was a growing distance between the teachers and students; the interest levels were highest in teacher less classes while the delivery of the content experience was often a blot. However in situations where students believed that a teacher genuinely cared for them, will come to class once she or he is able, and that they (the students) will be actively involved in the lesson, they eagerly looked forward to that class. On the contrary, where the opposite situation existed, feelings of isolation, confusion, mistrust, hurt, anger, and resentment between teacher and student existed. No wonder Harackiewicz and Hulleman (2010), in their correlational study found out that, achievement goals and task values can work together in the development of subsequent interest. Support from significant others can have a substantial impact on adolescents' interest in academic work, overall academic performance, and other aspects of school (Thomas, 2013).

Farruggia et al. (2016) suggested that achieving academic success is closely linked to the development of a strong academic mindset. Students who demonstrate a high level of academic interest are more likely to continuously refine and expand their learning skills, particularly in subjects such as accounting. This is especially significant because accounting is often perceived as a difficult and uninteresting subject, which can negatively influence students' engagement and academic performance (Kögler& Göllner, 2018). Furthermore, academic interest has been found to have a strong relationship with self-efficacy, meaning that students who possess a higher level of interest in their studies tend to develop greater confidence in their abilities. This, in turn, has a considerable impact on their learning outcomes and overall academic achievement (Fallan & Opstad, as cited in Mappadang et al., 2022).

Empirical research has further supported the notion that academic interest plays a crucial role in educational success. For instance, studies conducted by Ahinful et al. (2019) and Pérez-López & Ibarrondo-Dávila (2020) identified a significant correlation between academic interest and student performance. However, other studies have suggested that the relationship between academic interest and achievement may not always be direct. For example, Lee et al. (as cited in Mappadang et al., 2022) found that while academic interest influences achievement, the relationship is indirect, suggesting that other mediating factors may be at play. On the other hand, contrasting findings have also emerged in the academic literature. A study conducted by Zhang and Wang (2020) in the field of mathematics reported no significant correlation between students' level of interest and their academic performance. This suggests that the role of academic interest in determining success may vary across different subjects and educational contexts, highlighting the complexity of the relationship between student motivation, engagement, and achievement.

Theoretical Review

The study adopted the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The model was developed byFred Davis in the year 1989. It is a theoretical model that explains the way in which users accept and embrace technology. The Technology Acceptance Model postulates that, the actual technology usage is shaped by behavioural intent. The model proposed that, perceived usefulness of new technology regulates the mind or attitude of a user towards the innovation.

While on the other hand, perceived easy used influences the users' utilization of technology. In general, the model assumes that once perceived usefulness as well as perceived ease of use interacts and the purpose to act is developed; then an individual is boundlessly able to act. According toDavis et al. (2002), this has been seen as the main limitation of the Model, since in reality people face constraints such as time, limited ability as well as organizational and environmental restraints. However in spite of the limitation of the model, when comprehending the way technology is advancing, it would have positive impact on students' interest in academic work.

Empirical Review

Mappadang et al. (2022) investigated "Academic Interest Determines the Academic Performance of Undergraduate Accounting Students: Multinomial Logit Evidence". Their major objective was to assess student's academic interest, learning attitude, and learning quality as well as control variables for the academic performance improvement of undergraduate students in Indonesia. They adopted the cross-sectional survey design and a sample size of 872 respondents was drawn from the target population. Data collection was done using the structured questionnaire and analysed using the multinomial logit regression model. The results showed that academic interest was proved to determine significantly the academic performance. However, the learning attitude and learning quality did not contribute to the student's academic performance. High academic interest students possessed a bigger chance to have better academic performance. Meanwhile, learning attitude and learning quality indicated otherwise, decrease the students' academic performance.

Stine and Guro (2017) studied the Effects of Technology on Students' Academic Performance: Rollout of Individual Laptops in Norwegian Upper Secondary Schools. Their study aim was to analyze the causal effect of the one to one laptop program in upper secondary education in Norway on the performance in three common core subjects namely: First-choice form of Norwegian, second-choice form of Norwegian and English. Their analysis was performed on a sample of 289 upper Secondary Schools in a time period from 2003 to 2016. They exploit data on average grades at school level and the rollout of the one-to-one laptop program across the country by using a generalized difference in difference approach and an event study specification. Their results indicated no clear benefits of technology use on academic performance in upper secondary education as no statistically significant effects were found.

Al-Hariri and Al-Hattami (2017), investigated the impact of students' use of technology on their learning achievements in physiology courses at the University of Dammam. The aim of their study was to investigate the possible relationship between students' use of technology and their academic achievements. Survey design was adopted and a population of health college students of Medicine, Dental, Clinical Pharmacy, Applied Medical Sciences, and Nursing from which a sample of 231 2nd year students were drawn. Pearson r and descriptive statistics were implemented to study the frequency and the relationship between, technology and learning achievement in physiology courses. From the findings, their study observed a significant relationship between students' use of technology and their achievements in the colleges. Their findings also demonstrated that, the most used devices are laptops (50%) and phones (42%) followed by tablets (7%) and desktop computers (0.5%). Based on their findings, they concluded that technology usage might produce comparatively more significant increases in academic achievement than would non usage.

Adeniyi, (2015), investigated the Effects of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Secondary School Students' Economics Performance in Kaduna State. The main purpose of her study was to investigate the performance of SS2 Economics students taught

with the use of CAI and those taught with the conventional method of teaching. Six research questions were raised and six hypotheses were formulated for the study. The research design adopted was quasi experimental and a target population of 23,406 public senior secondary two students in 12 educational zones of Kaduna State, which the stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 200 SS 2 Economics students. The instrument for data collection was a developed Economics Achievement Test (EAT) 40 items multiple choice objective test and ten fill in the blank questions which had been validated and tested for reliability. Analysis of the study was done using mean and standard deviation and two sample t-test. The findings amongst others revealed that, students taught with the use of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) performed significantly better than those taught without CAI. The findings also revealed that, the use of CAI in teaching Economics is not significantly affected by school location. Based on the findings, it was concluded that school location does not affect the performance of Economics students with the use of CAI. It was therefore recommended amongst others that CAI programme be encouraged as an effective tool for teaching and learning of Economics in schools.

Ullah, et al. (2019), investigated the Impact of ICT on Students' Academic Performance: Applying Association Rule Mining and Structured Equation Modeling. The aim of their study was to examine the effect of ICT on the students' academic performance at different universities in Chittagong, Bangladesh.They adopted the comparative research design, and their data collection was done using a survey questionnaire from the sampled universities in Chittagong. Their data analysis employed descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), OLS Regression, Structured Equation Modeling (SEM) and Data Mining Algorithms such as Association rule Mining and Éclat to evaluate the importance of the factors in identifying the academic performance of students. From their findings, the overall result indicated that; there is a significant relationship between ICT use and students' academic performance. Also, their finding revealed that students' addiction to ITC has a significant influence on the comparative measurement in identifying the academic performance of the students. As result of their findings; they gave some recommendation that: Technology should be used for own advancement and should control the unnecessary use of technology, Students should use ICT for their academic purposes most of the time, All the university should adopt the technology for academic purposes, Students should make aware of ICT use in Education etc.

Yebowaah (2018) investigated Internet Use and its Effect on Senior High School Students in Wa Municipality of Ghana. His aim was to investigate the use of internet and its impact on Senior High School students in the Wa Municipality of Ghana. A cross sectional survey design was employed to accomplish the research aim and specific objectives. The multistage sampling procedure was used in the selection of 314 third year Senior High School Students. The data collected from administered questionnaire were analysed both descriptive and inferential statistics of Chi-Square and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings indicated that, the source of internet to the students are; the school Information Communication Laboratory, Mobile Phones, Household Internet Facilities and Public Internet Cafes. In addition, students' access to internet was found to have a positive influence on their academic performance. Again different uses of the internet among students do not influence their academic performance. He concluded that availability of different internet sources to students does not grant all of the students immediate access. He recommended that Heads of Senior High School should liaise with policy makers and management of Ghana Education Service to provide internet infrastructure in schools.

Oseghale and John (2014) investigated the Impact of Computer Literacy on Students' Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Esan West Local Government Area,

Edo State, Nigeria. The aim of their study was to examine the impact of computer literacy on students' academic performance. Four research questions were raised to guide the study. The descriptive survey research design was adopted and a population of 14 senior secondary schools consisted of 1,200 students, which 120 final year student were randomly selected for the study. The instrument for the study was self-structure questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Students' Computer Literacy Level and Computer Usage (QSCLLCU)", which the data gathered were analysed using mean difference statistics. The study findings revealed among others were: computer literate students perform better than non-computer literate; computer literate female students perform better than male students who are also computer literate; computer literate students who are not addicted to the use of computer facilities perform better than those who are addicted; computer literate students in co-educational secondary schools perform slightly better than those in single sex schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended that, all the students in LGA should be taught how to use computer facilities to search for valid information related to their academic work.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. The study population comprises of all the public senior secondary students of 2023/2024 academic session inthe South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.A sample size of 400 senior secondary two (SS 2) students was selected using the multistage sampling technique. From theSouth – South Geo-political Zone, four states – Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers State were selected; from each of the selected states, five schools were selected; from each of the selected five schools, twenty senior secondary two (SS 2) were selected. The instrument used for this study was a questionnaire titled "Students Perception on the Impact of Teaching with Technology and Interest in Academic Work Questionnaire (SPITTIQ). The questionnaires were of likert scale with four options of Strongly Agree with 4 points, Agree with 3 points, Disagree with 2 points and Strongly Disagree with 1 point that was subjected to face and content validity and a Cronbach alpha reliability technique was employed to test the reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach alpha reliability technique established a reliability index of 0.80 and 0.84 for each measure. Data were gathered from the administered questionnaires of which 384 out of the 400 administered were found useful and used for the final analysis. The analysis was done using mean and standard deviation and Pearson r with aid of IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0. Research question one and two were answered using mean and standard deviation with a criterion mean of 2.5, while research question three was answered using Pearson r.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1
Students' Perception on the Impact of Teaching with Technology

Items	N	Mean	St. Dev.
Technology-enhanced teaching makes learning more engaging and interactive.	384	3.30	.460
The use of technology in teaching improves my understanding of subjects.	384	3.38	.527
I find it easier to retain information when technology is integrated into lessons.	384	3.28	.450
Digital resources have positively impacted my learning experience.	384	3.29	.455
I feel more motivated to learn when lessons incorporate technological tools.	384	3.04	.476

I am comfortable using digital learning tools provided by my school.	384	3.30	.541
Criterion Mean = 2.5			

In Table 1, the values of all the items are above the criterion mean of 2.5 and the positive standard deviation respectively. This implies positive students' perception on the impact of teaching with technology in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

Table 2
Students' Perception on Interest in Academic Work

Items	N	Mean	St. Dev.
I am interested to learn when a teacher can choose technologies that enhance the teaching approaches for a lesson.	384	3.33	.471
I am interested to learn if a teacher technological knowledge could influence his/her teaching approaches in the classroom.	384	3.21	.478
It interests me to learn when a teacher knows how to use technology in the classroom.	384	3.23	.424
It interests me to learn when a teacher can adapt the use of the technologies to different teaching activities.	384	3.39	.489
It interests me to learn when a teacher can use strategies that combine content, technologies and teaching approaches.	384	3.29	.490
I am interested to learn when a teacher can choose technologies that enhance the content for a lesson.	384	3.31	.504
Criterion Mean = 2.5			

In Table 2, the values of all the items are above the criterion mean of 2.5 and the positive standard deviation respectively. This implies positive students' perception on interest in academic work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

Table 3
Relationship between Students' Perception on the Impact of Teaching with Technology and Interest in Academic Work

Variables	n	r	Remarks
Teaching with Technology			
	384	.873	High Positive Relationship
Interest in Academic Work			

In Table 3, the r-value of .87 reveals a high positive relationship between teaching with technology and students' interest in academic work. This result implies that as teaching with technology increases, there is also a corresponding increase in interest in academic work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

Discussions

The results from research question one revealed the positive students' perception on the impact of teaching with technology in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.This result is similar with the findings ofAdeniyi, (2015) and Al-Hariri and Al-Hattami (2017).

Adeniyi, (2015), investigated the Effects of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Secondary School Students' Economics Performance in Kaduna State. The main purpose of her study was to investigate the performance of SS2 Economics students taught with the use of CAI and those taught with the conventional method of teaching. The findings amongst others revealed that, students taught with the use of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) performed significantly better than those taught without CAI. The findings also revealed that, the use of CAI in teaching Economics is not significantly affected by school location. Al-Hariri and Al-Hattami (2017), investigated the impact of students' use of technology on their learning achievements in physiology courses at the University of Dammam. The aim of their study was to investigate the possible relationship between students' use of technology and their academic achievements. From the findings, their study observed a significant relationship between students' use of technology and their achievements in the colleges. Their findings also demonstrated that, the most used devices are laptops (50%) and phones (42%) followed by tablets (7%) and desktop computers (0.5%). Based on their findings, they concluded that technology usage might produce comparatively more significant increases in academic achievement than would non usage.

The results from research question one revealed two the positive students' perception on the impact of teaching with technology in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.This result is also similar with the findings ofMappadang et al. (2022). Mappadang et al. (2022) investigated "Academic Interest Determines the Academic Performance of Undergraduate Accounting Students: Multinomial Logit Evidence". Their major objective was to assess student's academic interest, learning attitude, and learning quality as well as control variables for the academic performance improvement of undergraduate students in Indonesia. The results showed that academic interest was proved to determine significantly the academic performance. However, the learning attitude and learning quality did not contribute to the student's academic performance. High academic interest students possessed a bigger chance to have better academic performance. Meanwhile, learning attitude and learning quality indicated otherwise, decrease the students' academic performance.

The results from research question three revealed there is a relationship between teaching with technology and students' interest in academic work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria. This result is similar with the findings of Ullah, et al. (2019) and Yebowaah (2018). Ullah, et al. (2019), investigated the Impact of ICT on Students' Academic Performance: Applying Association Rule Mining and Structured Equation Modeling. The aim of their study was to examine the effect of ICT on the students' academic performance at different universities in Chittagong, Bangladesh. From their findings, the overall result indicated that; there is a significant relationship between ICT use and students' academic performance. Also, their finding revealed that students' addiction to ITC has a significant influence on the comparative measurement in identifying the academic performance of the students. Yebowaah (2018) investigated Internet Use and its Effect on Senior High School Students in Wa Municipality of Ghana. His aim was to investigate the use of internet and its impact on Senior High School students in the Wa Municipality of Ghana. The findings indicated that, the source of internet to the students are; the school Information Communication Laboratory, Mobile Phones, Household Internet Facilities and Public Internet Cafes. In addition, students' access to internet was found to have a positive influence on their academic performance.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

This study explored students' perceptions of the impact of teaching with technology on their interest in academic work in South – South Geo-political Zone of Nigeria. Findings indicate that students generally view technology-enhanced teaching as a positive and effective tool for

improving engagement, comprehension, and motivation in learning. The integration of digital tools, multimedia resources and interactive teaching methods has contributed to increased student participation and a more stimulating learning environment. Based on these findings, it is recommended that schools should invest in technological infrastructure, provide adequate training for teachers on digital instructional methods and ensure equitable access to technological resources for all students.

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POVERTY REDUCTION IN CHINA: THE YAN'AN EXPERIENCE AND MODEL

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Abstract
Government plays a crucial role in eradicating poverty to ensure national progress, development, and well-being. Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, the Chinese government has implemented targeted policies and strategies tailored to the environmental and socio-economic conditions of specific regions, achieving large-scale poverty reduction. China's poverty alleviation program, a consistent economic policy across successive administrations, serves as a potential model for developing countries worldwide. This study examines the comprehensive approach to poverty alleviation in Yan'an, which includes the "Grain for Green" policy, government capital investment, subsidies, direct interventions, agricultural promotion, and the provision of affordable education and healthcare. Data for this research were obtained through homogeneous purposive sampling and typical case sampling. The study investigates the Chinese government's rural poverty reduction policies, strategies, and implementation mechanisms, adopting the Meta-Theory of Empowerment to analyze poverty alleviation efforts. It argues that community, individual, and professional empowerments are fundamental to eradicating poverty. Furthermore, the study highlights the government's central role in championing poverty eradication. The findings suggest that successful economic policies require governments to possess accurate situational knowledge, enact people-centered policies, provide financial and intellectual support, and invest in infrastructure development.

Keywords: Poverty, Eradication, Development, Policies, Strategies

Introduction

Poverty is an endemic problem of our world today and every government has the obligation to be responsive to the needs of its citizenry. In combating poverty, government must initiate policies that would alleviate the suffering and needs of the people. Thus, poverty alleviation has remained the focus of political and non-political actors as well as international organization. In places where poverty is prevalent, we have seen a dwindling proportion of human conditions with high malnutrition rates and no income for live sustenance.

The notion of poverty itself is multidimensional but it's strongly associated with the absence of any form of income, lack of human capabilities and productive resources. It could also mean the absence of people's participation in decision making matters that affect their social, economic and political life (UN, 1995). Poverty indeed means the deprivation of human capabilities as perceived through the absence of income, livelihoods or any form of decent work. It's also conceived as the absence of political empowerment, rights and the people's

voice or perhaps the presence of high vulnerability, risks and protective insecurity (OECD, WHO, 2003).

China has made a remarkable yet outstanding fight towards the eliminating of poverty within its territory. It has been one of the hallmark policies of the Chinese Communist Party over the years and has initiated people-oriented policies to tackle this societal problem. Yu (2015) argues that China has accumulated a wealth of experience in the area of poverty alleviation and elimination. Over the last 40 years, the country has implemented a large scale, long-lasting, government led and very effective rural poverty alleviation and development plan. It has initiated a series of policies and strategies that has helped the country to alleviate poverty in a sustainable manner. Morrison (2015) posits that China has evolved over the years with its development strides and has made huge progress in the areas of poverty alleviation for its citizenry. He argues that since the opening up reforms of 1978, the country has made outstanding progresses in health, education, science and technology and it's closing up the gap to become a full-fledged developed nation. He opined that the country had lifted over 700 million people out of poverty within 40 years, a feat no nation in history has ever achieved. China's poverty dilemma is different from western countries because poverty is not an urban phenomenon but rather a rural problem (Naughton, 2007).

In recent years, China's fight against poverty is remarkable because of the Chinese leadership drive against fighting this societal menace. Xi (2015) asserted that fighting poverty has been an important task in state governance both in China and abroad throughout history. It is an essential requirement of socialism, as well as a key mission of the Communist Party of China to eradicate poverty, improve people's living standards, and gradually achieve common prosperity. China's poverty alleviation drive is formulated according to international organisations standards with the acute consideration of China's peculiar national conditions. The government has taken into high consideration certain factors, education, health, and the living standards of the poor people. Its benchmark focuses on ensuring that the poor people do not lack the basic amenities and have enough food and clothing to survive (Ang, 2016). Likewise, the government has taken into consideration infrastructural development, poor communities have benefited most from an improvement in infrastructure. China has long emphasized the need to build roads, highways and bridges to fuel the country's development. By the end of 2019, China's total length of roads in rural areas had reached 4.2 million kilometres, and all townships and villages had paved roads. From 2016 to 2019 alone, 16,900 kilometres of national expressways were built or renovated in poverty-stricken areas (State Council Information Office, 2020).

This paper aims to examine the present governments' initiative at combating poverty in Yanan, it intends to bring out the Chinese model for other nations to emulate, examine and comprehend. It argues that government must be people oriented and create policies that would suit and serve the people's needs genuinely.

Literature Review

The concept of poverty has been extensively examined by scholars and international organizations. Jason Hickel (2020) argues that poverty is not just about low income but also systemic global inequalities. He critiques GDP-based poverty measurements and, instead, advocates for ecological economics and redistribution. Similarly, Isabel Ortiz (2021) defines poverty in relation to social protection policies. She emphasizes that a lack of universal healthcare, education, and social security exacerbates poverty worldwide. Moreover, Jayati Ghosh (2022) highlights the feminization of poverty, arguing that women suffer disproportionately due to wage gaps, unpaid labor, and limited economic opportunities. Furthermore, Branko Milanovic (2023) discusses the role of global capitalism in shaping

poverty, emphasizing how income inequality across and within countries contributes to persistent poverty. Thomas Piketty (2024) expands on his earlier work, focusing on the impact of wealth accumulation and inheritance on intergenerational poverty.

Similarly, the World Bank (1990) asserts that poverty encompasses hunger, lack of shelter, illness, illiteracy, unemployment, and limited access to basic services such as water, electricity, and political representation. Similarly, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1995) employs the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Capability Poverty Measure (CPM) to assess poverty, considering life expectancy, education, and per capita income as key indicators. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 1976) expands this perspective by introducing the poverty line, which defines poverty based on the minimum requirements for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, sanitation, healthcare, and education.

From a theoretical standpoint, Hagenaars (1991) conceptualizes poverty in terms of survival, linking it to the income necessary to secure a minimum caloric intake, essential goods, and basic welfare. Sen (1996) advances this idea by arguing that poverty results from the lack of key capabilities necessary for individuals to function in society. He identifies inadequate income, education, poor health, insecurity, low self-confidence, and political marginalization as critical poverty indicators. In contrast, Smith (1937) defines poverty as a relative condition, emphasizing the disparity between individuals within a society. He contends that poverty does not necessarily imply extreme suffering but rather an inability to access goods and services deemed essential within a given cultural context. Similarly, Townsend (2014) views relative poverty as a state of deprivation that prevents individuals from participating fully in social and economic life.

More recent scholarly contributions offer diverse perspectives on poverty. Liu et al. (2017) describe it as an economic condition in which individuals or households are unable to afford basic necessities. Alkire and Foster (2011) highlight the lack of opportunities as a defining characteristic of poverty, while Guo et al. (2018) emphasize the inability to access social services as a key factor. Schwartzman (2000) categorizes poverty into economic and absolute forms, defining the former as insufficient financial resources to meet basic needs and the latter as extreme deprivation leading to hunger, premature death, and suffering. The United Nations General Assembly (1949) underscores the responsibility of nations to ensure citizens' access to essential goods that uphold their fundamental rights.

Furthermore, Kuper and Kuper (1996) argue that absolute poverty pertains to the minimum resources required for physical survival, while relative poverty reflects income disparities within a society. Walton (1990) presents poverty as a multidimensional issue, encompassing inadequate income, malnutrition, limited access to social services, and marginalization from political and social participation. Reutlinger and Selowsky (1976) define poverty as the inability to meet basic nutritional needs, whereas Blackwood and Lynch (1994) adopt a broader view, linking it to restricted access to food, healthcare, education, and civic engagement. Sen (1984) introduces the concept of "entitlements," asserting that poverty is determined by an individual's command over resources and access to essential goods. Similarly, Amis and Rakodi (1994) emphasize subsistence and the capacity to sustain oneself, while Musgrove and Feber (1976) advocate for assessing poverty based on consumption and expenditure patterns.

From the foregoing, it is evident that poverty is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. While some scholars define it as the inability to access basic necessities, others emphasize economic disparities, human rights, and political exclusion. Given its

comprehensive nature, this paper adopts the World Bank's (1990) definition, which encapsulates poverty as the lack of shelter, water, electricity, employment, and access to healthcare and education, as well as the absence of political freedom and representation. This broad perspective effectively captures the key dimensions of poverty across different contexts.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts the Meta-Theory of Empowerment as a framework to analyze President Xi Jinping's poverty alleviation model in Liangjiahe, Yan'an. The theory emphasizes the interplay between individual and collective empowerment, moving beyond biological or mechanical systems to foster a dynamic relationship between micro- and macro-level empowerment (Ritze, 2007). At the micro level, empowerment entails the process of transitioning from powerlessness to self-sufficiency, while at the macro level, it focuses on community empowerment, enabling groups and organizations to control their environment and influence decision-making.

The empowerment theory is distinct from other poverty alleviation approaches, such as the basic needs theory or the trickle-down economic model. Unlike these, which often rely on external aid, state-driven economic policies, or indirect market benefits, the empowerment approach focuses on developing self-reliance, skills, and collective agency. It fosters active participation rather than passive assistance, ensuring that poverty reduction is not just a redistribution of wealth but an elevation of the people's ability to sustain themselves.

The theory aligns with Xi Jinping's approach in Liangjiahe, where he experienced firsthand the struggles of rural poverty and later implemented strategies focusing on self-reliance, skill-building, and infrastructure development. His model in Yan'an prioritized education, agricultural modernization, and grassroots governance, empowering individuals to become active participants in poverty eradication rather than mere recipients of aid. Unlike traditional top-down economic reforms, China's targeted poverty alleviation campaign integrates individual skill development with structural reforms, ensuring that the poor are active contributors to their own economic mobility.

The empowerment process, as described by Rappaport (1987), involves granting individuals and communities the tools to act autonomously. Berger and Neuhaus (1977) argue that effective social change must leverage mediating institutions, a principle evident in China's use of local cooperatives, grassroots cadres, and village-based industries to combat poverty. Kieffer (1984) highlights that empowerment is an active, evolving process that turns passive individuals into assertive citizens with socio-political agency an idea deeply embedded in China's rural transformation policies.

Furthermore, Xi's model of poverty alleviation differs from Western welfare systems, which often emphasize direct financial aid or government subsidies. Instead, China's approach focuses on creating an ecosystem of self-sufficiency, a principle central to the empowerment theory. Programs such as industrial support, rural e-commerce, education-driven poverty reduction, and ecological resettlement reflect a blend of state intervention and local empowerment, ensuring that communities remain economically sustainable beyond state assistance.

Lastly, the Meta-Theory of Empowerment provides a lens through which China's Yan'an poverty alleviation efforts can be understood. It highlights the necessity of integrating individual skills, community engagement, and political leadership to achieve sustainable poverty reduction. By merging top-down policy support with bottom-up self-reliance,

China's approach offers a unique contrast to conventional welfare models, positioning empowerment as both a means and an end in the fight against poverty.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach, relying on secondary data sources to examine China's poverty alleviation strategies, with a particular focus on Yan'an. Data were collected from both Chinese and Western academic databases to provide a comparative perspective on poverty definitions, theories, and models. Key Chinese sources include CNKI, Wanfang, and VIP, which provide access to scholarly works, government policy documents, and institutional reports from Beijing, Yan'an, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. Additionally, Western academic databases such as Google Scholar, CORE, RefSeek, Virtual LRC, and iSeek Education were consulted to incorporate broader theoretical discussions and global perspectives on poverty alleviation. Government white papers, policy documents, peer-reviewed journal articles, and newspaper archives were also analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of China's poverty reduction model.

For data analysis, the study adopts a content analysis method to systematically examine and interpret the collected materials. This approach allows for the identification of key themes, strategies, and patterns in China's poverty alleviation policies, particularly those implemented in Yan'an. By analyzing policy documents, academic discussions, and media reports, the study aims to reveal how China's unique poverty reduction model was developed and executed. Content analysis also enables the evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of these strategies, providing insights into the broader implications of China's poverty alleviation approach compared to Western models.

Discussion

With the advent of a new political leadership for China in 2012, China's central focus development has been the alleviation of poverty in the country, President Xi when he came into power set poverty alleviation as one of his key policy issues. The concept of poverty alleviation is not new in China, it had been proposed firstly by Deng Xiaoping in 1979 when he pushed for the concept of advancing a moderately prosperous society. However, the central goal, drive and policies for achieving this were set at the 18th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress of November, 2012. President Xi's plan which comes in form of a thought was incorporated into China's 13th Five Year Plan (FYP) from 2016-2020 to eliminate absolute poverty at the end of 2020 (State Council Document, 2016).

Thus, President Xi's approach on poverty can be seen as follows, the identification of people who need help, the organisation of projects, the use of funds, the execution of measures, the assignment of the right people to each village and the effects of poverty alleviation. He also opined that the government should address the questions of who exactly needs help, who should provide it, how help should be offered, and what standards and procedures should be adopted for eradicating poverty. He argued that the government and people should refrain from engaging in broad and unrestrained campaigns or resorting to boisterous methods that do not solve the problem. He pushed for the need to implement policies tailored to individual villages, households, and people, address their specific challenges in a precise and targeted manner, and alleviate poverty by getting to the root of the problem (Xi, 2018).

Xi's approach to poverty as seen from above centres on the people's needs, truly identifying people with poverty issues, construction and planning of developmental projects, accountability and transparency with the use of government funds, planning, implementing

and executing a poverty alleviation policy standard that measures its efficiency and tailor fit poverty strategies to the local conditions of each place. His argument here is that one size doesn't fit all; its policies must be adapted to the local conditions of each poverty zone. Xi therefore created what we call targeted poverty alleviation, his idea and thought seems to have emanated from his own life experience and encounter. This approach is consistent with the arguments of the Meta-theory of empowerment that propagates the professional development of the people. President Xi pushed for people-oriented policies in which people in dire needs of the basic amenities of life and lacked the necessary skills to function. These people became the priority for the government and they were supported with the necessary knowledge, information and technology survive.

Xi's conceptualisation of poverty in his early years of youth laid the foundation for his model of targeted poverty alleviation based on the natural conditions of the place. At the age of 16 in 1969, Xi found himself in Liangjiahe, Yanan City, Shaanxi Province and he encountered a seven-year career as an educated youth. His experience in the country side which was characterised with hardship gave him deep insights into helping the poor and less privileged. It became an eye-opener for him on the needs of the people, the status of the people and the effect of the environmental conditions in carving out the lives of the people. Xi asserted that the experience of going to the mountains and going to the countryside has enabled him to enhanced his feeling for the masses at the grass-roots level. According to him, Communists should view the common people as their source of food and clothing. He argued his comrades to bear in mind the purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly while remembering they are public servants of the people which should hold close to their hearts the concerns of the people (Xi, 2010).

Yanan was a place characterised by poverty and as Premier Zhou Enlai observed on June 9, 1973 that many people were impoverished and lacked the basic amenities to survive. As of 1973, Yanan included 14 counties, 1.3 million residents with a per-capita food ration of 250kg per year and a per-capita annual income of 50 yuan. Their life according to the Premier was seen as 'no goods in their pots and no money in their pockets' (Qin and Gao, 2014). Xi's ideology and his thoughts were all carved out from Yanan and this is due to the experience he had with the people. While in Yanan, he concentrated on helping the people selflessly, he worked with the people on the construction of a silt dam to alleviate the poverty situation in Yanan by making the land more arable for agriculture. He initiated the construction of a methane tank for the people which generated clean energy for light and food for the people. As of 1975, Liangjiahe had constructed 34 methane tanks to fuel 43 households lighting and cooking needs. He initiated the construction of a sewing workshop, a mill house and a vegetable garden for the village. He further went ahead to trade his precious bicycle from Beijing for a steel-roller mill and a small tractor for the needs of the village. Finally, he led the villagers to dig a well that produced clean drinking water for the needs of their sustenance (Zheng et. al. 2018).

Empowering the society was another basic attribute of Meta-theory of empowerment, and as we can see President Xi drove his empowerment agenda through the county of Yanan. While here, he ensured that certain facilities were constructed to provide for the basic needs of the people. The provision and then the usage of the silt dam, methane tank, sewing workshop, mill house, well and vegetable garden for the community reversed the hardship trends the people were encountering.

Xi's policy was encapsulated in his departing remarks at Liangjiahe, 'Liangjiahe's future depends on leadership and his example, for them to fulfil their promises to the people, they must think more, connect more and innovate more. If leadership ignores the people, their

feelings and sentiments, they won't be able to do a good job' (Xi, 2013).Therefore, this paper can argue that Liangjiahe's revival and resuscitation from poverty hinges on a tripod relationship, the leaders, the people and its policies while having the party ideologies as the driving force for action.

On Leadership and the Party

President Xi has stated vehemently the role of leaders in combatting poverty. He called for self-cultivation of the leaders. He posited that when one's character is refined, the family is in order, the nation is governed and the world is at peace. Leaders to him needed the refinement of their character to be able to combat poverty and govern efficiently (Xi, 2015). When the leaders have achieved this, they would understand the tenets proposed by President Xi.

Firstly, he called for party leaders to have the party spirit. The spirit of the Communist Party of China is seen when leaders serve the people wholeheartedly. They need to go to the grassroots and immerse themselves with the people to understand their needs and requirements as well as offering selfless services to them. Secondly, he called for the magnanimous act of party leaders. Xi posited that a petty man is neither talented nor virtuous. A man of virtue is capable and brave. He argued for the discovery and development of talents which can be developed through joint efforts. Xi argued for communal and joint service without any form of fame or recognition in serving the people. Thirdly, he urged for moral courage for the party leaders. To him, great accomplishments can be made when people had great character. He drew his ideas from the works of Confucius, Mencius and Karl Marx who all elaborated on the importance of moral courage through good conduct as an element of good character. Fourthly, he enshrined the concept of honesty as the driving conduct for party leaders. Xi asserted that leaders need to speak honestly, work honestly and act honestly. He adopted the famous axiom of Karl Marx, 'seeking truth from the facts,' he urged for objectivity while basing arguments and decisions on realities and facts while adopting science. Fifthly, he posited that leaders should be bold in their dealings and encounter. He called for boldness as a trait to enable leaders face complicated situations, make right decisions and desist from hesitation in dire situations (Li, 2016).

The leadership of the CPC therefore designed the overarching goals of the "four beams and eight pillars" for poverty alleviation in Yanan and other provinces of China. Its design hinges on the responsibility system, the policy system and the investment system for poverty alleviation. The management system whereby poverty alleviation is "planned by the Central Government, managed by the provinces, and implemented by the cities and counties" will be adhered to (Yan and Li, 2020).

From the above, we can see Xi's model of who a leader is in every nation. To him, leaders must have ideologies, selfless, magnanimous, honest, bold, moral courage with people-oriented ideologies to dispel out their policies while interacting with the people. These character traits were developed when Xi was in Liangjiahe due to his interaction with the people.

On the People

Xi's ideology of the people comes from the historical document of the Tang dynasty as stated by Chen Zi'ang who wrote a poem saying 'The sage does not look to benefit himself; he worries and aids the common folk.' Virtuous people care about the ordinary people and do not pursue advantages for themselves. He also draws inspirations from the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party that strongly believes that they come from the people and work for the people. Xi therefore called for the eradication of bureaucratic procedures and get closer to the grassroots level to understand the people and offer the necessary assistance accordingly.

Xi called for a strong link with the people to get the opinions and needs of the people respectively (Lam, 2016). To achieve this, he called for the following:

Firstly, leaders should visit the people to understand their economic situations, living conditions and inspect their environmental situations. From this he argues that leaders would learn about the work and life conditions of the people while forging a better relationship with them. Government according to President Xi is about serving and reassuring the people. This can only be achieved when government alleviate the suffering of the people. Secondly, he called for empowerment of the people through education, training, skills acquisition and the promotion of government policies among the people. Thirdly, the people's voice can guide political leadership policies, plans and actions. To him, the voice of the people would drive the work of the leaders. In listening to the voice of the people, leadership should desist from distortion of facts; all actions must be based on utmost sincerity. He asserts that as long as leaders at all levels form true connections with the people, genuinely share their views, and persist in coming from the people, and going to the people, the work of leaders would improve monumentally. Fourthly, leaders need to connect with the people in order to unite them and stabilise them. The people have high expectations of their leaders and the Party cannot afford to fail them. He posited that the Chinese people follow the CCP for three reasons, one to be liberated, two to be prosperous and lastly is to be happy. A united front with the people will help leaders to actively work out plans, understand the needs of the people and get the required feedback from the people accordingly. Leaders have to promote social integrity among the people, enrich the cultural life of the people, create a good atmosphere and provide a friendly, harmonious and stable society for them. Fifthly, the basic needs of the people have to be taken care of assiduously. People's difficulties and challenges in the areas of clothing, food, housing, transportation, health and others have to be met and put as a priority for the government. Providing accessibility for the people to flourish should be a driving force for the government, consistency and methodologically understanding the true urgent needs of the people should be the government priorities (Lam, 2015).

From the above, we can see that the people lie in the centre of every political activities and economic planning of the government. The core interests of the people have become a driving force for political action by Chinese leaders. This has guided, informed and directed government policies and actions towards the genuine needs of the people. Government has also discovered that the people need to be empowered so as to be able to sustain their life and acquire a means of livelihood.

On Policies

Poverty exists in most regions of China because there is a lack of coherent industrial structure in most impoverished areas. Businesses if ever they exist, lack the links in production and coordination, they lack the abilities to form cooperation within the region, they lack the skills to make quality local products on a large scale. Xi therefore calls for an improvement and development of the industrial sector to combat poverty. Industrial policy is seen as the macro regulation aimed at having a rational allocation of resources among industries, optimizing the industrial sector and improving the qualities of industries (Zhang and Zuo, 2019). Industrial policies according to President Xi to combat poverty should be designed around the following:

Firstly, industrial policy should be based on the regional conditions for big agriculture. This sector needs to be leveraged to develop the industry while ensuring optimal value. Secondly, the industrial policy should be based on the actual strengths and realities of the regions. He argues that an industrial structure should correspond to the specific times, places and conditions. Optimal industrial value can only be achieved when the policy is formulated on

the basis of the given conditions of the region in question. The natural resources found in each region should be capitalised on, developed, harnessed and used to tackle the inherent poverty issues of the region. Thirdly, polices should not be like a hand grenade or should blindly pursue unachievable objectives. Policies should be concerned about long-term goals and developmental objectives. It should be self-reliant and conform to self balancing standards. Proper usage of capital, technology, talent and resources will help the developmental projects of the region. Fourthly, policies should be centred on improving economic efficiency. To him, this helps to unearth existing potential and possible advantages while emphasising the development of the agricultural sector, basic industries, and infrastructure. Fifthly, policies must be hinged on the construction or technological transformation of developmental projects that have already being identified (Xi, 2015).

Therefore, Yanan policies of poverty alleviation based on Xi's ideologies are seen as follows: Yanan's policies of restoration and management of ecological environment under the four combinations of reform, fallow, reclaim and construct laid one of the foundations for the vegetation constructions that moved Yanan out of poverty. Apple planting is being encouraged, pepper and walnut is being actively developed, and animal husbandry and fishery are being widely promoted. Industrial development and construction were another method Yanan used to move out of poverty, sixteen key industrial enterprises were developed such as building materials, metallurgy, coal and oil industries, tobacco and textiles, e.tc. Infrastructural developments also facilitated a process for Yanan's model of poverty alleviation, roads network projects, railway networks were embarked upon with bridge constructions (Yan and Li, 2020).

From the above we can see Xi's ideologies of combatting poverty through dynamic policies, he calls for economic policies designed based on the existing conditions of each region. He pushed for the use of technology, industries, talents and agricultural resources to transform the existing conditions of poor.

Findings

This paper has made certain discoveries and identified certain qualities and character that have influenced Chinese leadership and have driven the ideologies behind the targeted poverty alleviation program of China. In essence it unravels the key success factors, the challenges and the policy implications of the poverty alleviation strategy

Key Success Factors

President Xi's poverty alleviation strategy was built on a people-centered approach that emphasized targeted measures tailored to local conditions. Notably, his model of poverty alleviation prioritized the precise identification of people in need, the organization of developmental projects, and the responsible utilization of government funds. Consequently, the strategy ensured transparency and accountability in poverty reduction efforts. Additionally, Xi's approach emphasized professional empowerment by equipping individuals with necessary skills, information, and technology to achieve self-sufficiency. His early experiences in Liangjiahe significantly influenced his understanding of poverty, reinforcing his belief in grassroots engagement and sustainable development. Furthermore, the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) played a pivotal role in poverty eradication by designing overarching policies such as the "four beams and eight pillars" framework, which ensured a structured and coordinated effort in alleviating poverty across China.

Challenges

Despite the successes of Xi's poverty alleviation policies, several challenges emerged in the implementation process. Firstly, the lack of a coherent industrial structure in impoverished

regions hindered the sustainability of economic development. Many local industries lacked proper coordination and the capacity to produce high-quality goods on a large scale. Consequently, this created difficulties in achieving long-term economic stability in these areas. Secondly, some regions faced ecological constraints that limited agricultural productivity, requiring careful environmental restoration efforts. Moreover, bureaucratic inefficiencies and local governance issues sometimes slowed down the implementation of targeted poverty alleviation programs. Additionally, the necessity for sustained financial investment posed a challenge, as continuous funding was required to maintain infrastructure and industrial development projects. Although policies were designed to be region-specific, ensuring their effective execution across diverse areas of China remained a complex task.

Policy Implications

Xi's poverty alleviation strategies have significant implications for future policymaking. Importantly, his emphasis on tailored regional policies highlights the need for localized economic strategies rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. Consequently, future policies should continue to build on this framework by leveraging regional strengths, natural resources, and technological innovations to promote sustainable development. Moreover, Xi's approach underscores the critical role of leadership in poverty reduction. Leaders must embody integrity, moral courage, and a deep connection with the people they serve. Furthermore, his policies reinforce the necessity of integrating economic, social, and environmental considerations into poverty alleviation programs. Lastly, the success of China's poverty alleviation model suggests that other developing nations could adopt similar strategies by prioritizing grassroots involvement, fostering industrial development, and ensuring government accountability in resource.

Conclusion

This study has highlighted essential insights into poverty alleviation strategies, emphasizing that such initiatives must be specifically designed to impact the poor, malnourished, and underprivileged members of society. President Xi's model underscores the necessity for governments to engage closely with the people to fully understand and experience their living conditions. Consequently, this proximity enables policymakers to design targeted interventions that genuinely address the needs of the population. By doing so, governments can develop people-oriented policies that lead to tangible improvements in livelihoods and, ultimately, sustainable social transformation.

Moreover, this paper has underscored the significance of experience, accumulated knowledge, and long-term engagement in shaping effective policies. President Xi's ability to craft people-centered strategies was deeply influenced by his early-life experiences among the rural populace. Therefore, his leadership approach serves as a model for addressing poverty through direct engagement, grassroots involvement, and pragmatic policymaking. Furthermore, the values he embodied, hard work, dedication, humility, sincerity, and consistency were instrumental in fostering trust and strengthening his connection with the people. These leadership traits remain fundamental for any government seeking to combat poverty effectively.

Additionally, this study has demonstrated the necessity for governments to integrate scientific development, particularly through agricultural innovation, into their poverty alleviation efforts. The role of science and technology in eradicating poverty cannot be overstated, as advancements in agricultural techniques, resource management, and infrastructure development introduce more efficient and sustainable solutions.

Lastly, this paper has emphasized the importance of tailoring poverty alleviation policies to local conditions. Policies should be designed with careful consideration of each region's unique resources, environmental conditions, climate, geographic location, and socioeconomic realities. Such an approach enhances the effectiveness of governmental interventions, ensures long-term sustainability, and aligns policies with the core attributes of the communities they are meant to serve.

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AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTS OF NIGER -DELTA CRISIS ON THE FLOW OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT TO NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
Foreign direct investment (FDI) has been globally acknowledged as a driver of economic growth and development. However, in developing economies, the insecurity-induced environmental factors have unacceptably relegated the roles of the FDI, especially in the host countries, to the background. Therefore, this study investigated the effect of the Niger Delta internal crisis on the inflow of foreign direct investment to Nigeria. The study employed a qualitative research approach. It adopted Library sources to gather secondary data and it was analysed qualitatively using content analysis. The study leveraged linkage theory as its framework of analysis. Findings of the study indicated that unemployment, injustice, and environmental damage caused by the exploration of the multinational companies in the region without corresponding compensation are associated risk factors of recurrent crises in the study area. It also showed that spate of insecurity induced environment has far negative consequences on the inflow of foreign direct investment in the region and by extension, Nigeria. The study contended that even though FDI has the capacity to stimulate socio-economic condition of the people of the study area through employment generation, technology transfer, investment in infrastructure and transfer of capital as well as culture of entrepreneurship, the incessant outbreak of internal crisis in the region has undermined the impact of FDI on the socio-economic advancement of the people in the study area. The study recommended, inter alia, that good governance, effective information management, and strategic communication are imperative and timely to ameliorate the identified challenges in the region.

Key Words: *FDI, Niger- Delta, insecurity, Nigeria, development, economic growth, Conflict*

1.**Introduction**

Globally, governments are fundamentally responsible for safeguarding their citizens. In Nigeria, however, this duty is compromised by internal strife, terrorism, and criminal activities like kidnapping, creating instability (Nwolise, 2019). While conflict is inherent in any society, unresolved disputes in Nigeria escalate (Alemika, 2019), fostering an environment that severely hinders economic growth and discourages foreign investment.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is crucial for host nations, bringing essential resources like long-term capital, technological expertise, and managerial skills (Krugman & Obstfeld, 2000; Temle, 1999). However, in Nigeria, particularly the Niger Delta, persistent conflicts stemming from long-standing grievances over resource control continue to undermine national security and impede economic development, despite attempts at resolution such as the 2009 amnesty (Jacob, 2014). Further compounding this issue, the Nigerian business climate is plagued by various forms of insecurity, including theft, kidnapping, and militancy, creating a hostile environment that deters investment (Oyibo, 2008; Dickson & Presley, 2012;

Adebakin& Raimi, 2012; Jackson, 2007). Critics contend that the government's efforts to resolve the Niger Delta conflict have been inadequate, focusing on surface-level solutions and relying on coercive tactics rather than addressing the root causes of the unrest (Jacob, 2014).

Hence, making the Niger Delta situation the cynosure of grave developmental defects and gross human neglect which reflects in the lack of basic infrastructure like hospitals, roads, schools, electricity, potable water and security. This dearth of amenities is heightened by the activities of oil prospecting multinational corporations in the region whose operations continue to damage both the ecosystem and climate due to oil spills, dredging, flaring and the laying of pipelines which require the removal of large swaths of forest resources with no alternative plans for renewal and sustainability (Olusola, 2013).

Foreign companies are Nigeria's largest employer of labour, particularly in communication, construction, oil and gas. However, FDI inflows have dropped from 3.4 billion naira in 2009 to -6.22billion naira in 2023 (International Monetary Funds, 2023), due to the activities of Niger Delta militancy and Boko Haram insurgency. Although national security is a concern, as economic development depends on it, poor policy implementation, deteriorating infrastructure, social unrest, religious and ethnic strife, and crime have stifled FDI. The Niger Delta region's neglect, poverty, and environmental damage have exacerbated socio-economic unrest. These factors have reduced the potential gain from foreign direct investment in Nigeria ((Oladimeji &Oresanwo, 2014),

The literature on the impact of insecurity on foreign direct investment (FDI) reveals divergent views. Some scholars such as Kang and Lee (2007), Bandyopadhyay (2013), Rasheed and Tahir (2012), argue that terrorism, kidnapping, and hostage taking incidents can divert FDI, reducing economic growth in developing countries. However, Wagner (2016) suggests that foreign investors may not be discouraged by terrorist attacks. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the effects of the Niger Delta crisis on foreign direct investments in Nigeria, focusing on the international environment characterized by dwindling crisis and terrorism. Hence, filing the existing gaps in literature become imperative and timely.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

Thus, this study sets out to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To find the causes of the conflicts in Niger Delta Region
2. To examine the effects of the Niger Delta crises on the flow and performance of foreign direct investment to Nigeria
3. To interrogate the implications of foreign direct investment for the socio-economic development in Nigeria.

2.1 Conceptual Review

Insecurity

In a broad term, insecurity signifies a lack of safety, encompassing danger and risk, and is understood as a state of unease stemming from perceived absence of security (Beland, 2005). This implies victims face uncertainty about potential harm and are vulnerable when it materialises. Essentially, it is a condition of fear and vulnerability.

In another continuum Gambo and Adebanjo (2021) define insecurity as a vulnerable state marked by uncertainty and anxiety, impacting mental stability (Hudson, 2014), but argue this definition is incomplete. They contend that insecurity's causes are multidimensional, extending beyond psychological factors to include political instability, leadership failures, unemployment-driven crime, and security agency shortcomings (Gambo & Adebanjo, 2021). Thus, physical and systemic factors are crucial in understanding insecurity.

The impact of insecurity is far-reaching, resulting in significant financial burdens for businesses due to property damage and legal expenses (Sohnen, 2012). Notably, it severely restricts economic advancement, especially in developing nations, by impeding growth and discouraging foreign capital (Otto &Ukpere, 2012; Ewetan&Urhie, 2014). Beyond economic consequences, insecurity erodes public welfare, disrupts commercial activities, and forces business relocations, ultimately destabilizing entire economic systems (Adegbami, 2013).

Conflict

Conflict, encompassing clashes and contention, contrasts with peace, extending beyond physical violence to include disagreements (Gana, 2019). It is understood as a struggle over scarce resources and values (Coser, 1956), or as an interaction between interdependent parties with perceived incompatible goals (Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 1997). Conflict follows a cyclical pattern, from initiation to resolution (Gana, 2019).

By implication, conflicts, impacts global security, it persists in countries like Afghanistan and Syria, highlighting the continuous struggle to protect lives and property (Alemika, 2019). Conflict is viewed as an inherent part of human interaction, arising when incompatible actions hinder another's effectiveness (Deutsch, 1973). Essentially, conflict stems from perceived incompatible goals and interference between interdependent individuals or groups (Folger, Poole, &Shutman, 1997).

A synthesis of the above conceptualisations reveals that Conflict arises when established decision-making processes fail, leading to challenges in choosing between options, and it is a fundamental part of social life, impacting interactions at all levels (Imobigbe, 2002; Garuba, 1998; Bouma & Singleton, 2004).

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

The concept of foreign direct investment is interpreted differently by various sources. The OECD library defines FDI as a cross-border investment made by an entity with the goal of gaining a lasting interest in a company in another economy, with a minimum of 10% ownership indicating investor influence. Montiel and Reinhart (2001) describe FDI as a significant component of international capital flows, involving the movement of financial and human capital for investment purposes.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), characterized by at least 10% equity ownership and control of foreign businesses (World Bank, 1996; Ayanwale, 2007), involves resource allocation into international operations (Hill, 2003). Driven by multinational corporations for asset control and production (Mallampally&Sauvant, 1999; Annaek, 2007), FDI addresses developmental challenges (Caves, 1996) and is distinct from portfolio investments. Developing nations prioritize FDI to stimulate economic growth, facilitate technology and skill transfer, and enhance foreign exchange reserves (Todaro, 1977).Moreover, foreign investment fosters knowledge transfer through training and job creation, introduces advanced technologies to local markets, and improves access to research and development, all contributing to economic progress.

Economic Growth

Economic growth is an increase in the production of economic goods and services compared from one period of time to another (OECD, 2024). It can be measured in nominal or real terms, the latter of which is adjusted for inflation. Usually, aggregate economic growth is measured in terms of gross national product (GNP) or gross domestic product (GDP), although alternative metrics are sometimes used (Mankiw, 2021).

Economic growth is crucial for national prosperity, driving increased wealth that enhances living standards through improved access to essential services like healthcare and education (implied: World Bank, etc.). Furthermore, it generates employment and opportunities, contributing to the reduction of poverty and inequality (Todaro, 2012). In essence, growth translates to better lives and a more equitable society. However, economic growth is not without its challenges. It can lead to environmental degradation, increased inequality, and social disruption as the case in the Nigerian Niger Delta region. Therefore, it is important to ensure that economic growth is sustainable and inclusive, meaning that it benefits all members of society and does not come at the expense of the environment.

Development

Development is a comprehensive concept that extends beyond mere economic growth, encompassing social, environmental, and political progress. Economically, it involves increasing national wealth through industrialization and technological advancements (Mankiw, 2021). Crucially, this economic development must be sustainable and inclusive, ensuring benefits for all while safeguarding the environment (World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), 1987).

Development, from a social perspective, is concerned with enhancing human well-being through improved access to education, healthcare, and social services, while also promoting social justice and equality (UNDP, 1990). Environmentally, development focuses on ecological sustainability, addressing issues like climate change and resource depletion (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA), 2005). Politically, it emphasizes good governance, democracy, and respect for human rights, alongside citizen participation and government accountability (Diamond, 1999).

2.2 Empirical Review

A survey of the literature on the effect of insecurity on FDI reports divergent views. While some scholars suggest that terrorism, kidnapping and hostage taking insecurity induced incidents have economic consequences by diverting foreign direct investment (FDI) which is a significant source of savings, and if a developing country loses abundant FDI, then it may also experience reduced economic growth, Oladimeji and Oresanwo (2014), Kang and Lee (2007), Bandyopadhyay(2013), Rasheed and Tahir (2012), Nnamdi (2015), Oladimeji and Oresanwo (2014), (Todaro, 2000).Temle (1999), Otto and Ukpere, 2012; Jackson et al, 2007; McKenna, 2005), (Dickson and Presley, 2012; Adebakin and Raimi, 2012), Shonekan (2001), However, study by Wagner (2016) argued that foreign investors may not be discouraged by the rate of terrorist attacks.

A synthesis of the findings of these studies shows that these scholars have not satisfactorily and systematically addressed in the extant literature Niger Delta's crisis and foreign direct investments. These are the gaps that this study intends to fill.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts linkage theory as its framework for analysis. The linkage theorywas propounded byKerlinger (1973). The linkage approach emphasizes the interconnectedness of domestic factors and external foreign policy, asserting that internal processes significantly influence a nation's external actions (Rosenau, 1967). This approach establishes a general context for analyzing the relationship between a country's internal situation and its external environment (Birai, 1996). Furthermore, it provides a specific framework for assessing how particular forces can affect the success or failure of a given policy (Birai, 1996). Domestic variables, including environmental factors like a nation's size and resources, play a crucial role in shaping foreign policy.

To a large extent, this theory is relevant to the study because it is obvious that Linkage theory elucidates how a nation's foreign investment policies are shaped by both internal needs, such as development, and external relations, as exemplified by the impact of the Niger Delta crisis on Nigeria's FDI. This theory highlights that state actions, including attracting FDI, are intrinsically tied to various domestic and international objectives. Whether such relationship is mutual or not, it is linked to lots of factors including conducive security environmental factor.

3.1 Methods and Materials

This study employed a descriptive research design. The study used secondary data sources to collect data from various means, including the library of the debt management organization, ministry of foreign affairs, and the Central Bank of Nigeria. The data was analysed qualitatively using content analysis technique.

4.1 Causes and Dynamics of the Crisis in the Niger Delta Region

The Niger Delta, a vast region of over 70,000 square kilometers and home to approximately 45 million people (National Bureau of Statistics, 2006), is predominantly inhabited by diverse ethnic minority groups (Azaiki, 2007). This area, comprising nine states as defined by the NDDC ACT (2000) (Kimiebi, 2010), is rich in natural resources, notably oil and gas, which contribute over 90% of Nigeria's total revenue (Brisibie, 2001; Tell, 2008). The Delta's landscape is characterized by varied terrain, including sandy ridges, mangrove forests, and freshwater swamps, and it encompasses over 40 distinct ethnic groups, including Ijaw, Ogoni, and Edo.

The Niger Delta's militancy and insurgency are largely driven by economic and developmental frustrations, stemming from the perception of being deprived and threatened (Olusola, 2013). This discontent is fueled by the environmental damage caused by foreign oil companies, including pollution and deforestation, which neglect local communities (Olusola, 2013; Ikelegbe, 2004). Despite the region's vast oil wealth, it has experienced severe environmental degradation, socio-economic decline, and increased violence, rather than development (Ikelegbe, 2004; Pegg, 1999). Essentially, the region's resource wealth has paradoxically led to its impoverishment and instability.

Another cause of insurgency in the Niger Delta area is severe unemployment and poverty of the people from oil producing communities. Ejibanu (2007) and Brisbie (2001) pointed out that unemployment is very high among the people of the Niger Delta region. According to them, the youths from the area do not benefit from the presence of the transnational oil companies operating in their communities even when they are qualified, less than 5% of the people from the Niger Delta work in the companies, while women from the region working with multinational oil firms are less than 1%. In the words of Ibaba (2005) “poverty level in the Niger Delta is about 80% while unemployment level is about 70% and majority live without the basic amenities such as pipe-borne water and electricity.

Government inaction regarding the environmental damage caused by oil exploration, including pollution of waterways and soil, has fueled local frustration (Nwaomah, 2009; Nwogwugwu et al., 2012; Azaiki, 2007). This neglect, combined with a lack of enforcement of environmental protection and corporate responsibility, has led to increased militancy and aggression (Olusola, 2013).

Instead, as Kemedi (2003) notes, oil producing companies in the Niger Delta adopted a divide and rule method which aimed at identifying for compensation, people in the host communities they believe can influence the indigenes to ensure that they have a peaceful environment to operate in. Thus, monies that could have been used to develop the entire community are partly paid to some individuals as compensation at the detriment of the communities they represent. Nwogwugwu (2012) noted that “militancy in the Niger Delta

region of Nigeria is attributed to the consciousness of exploitation being perpetrated against the people and the struggle to change the status quo. They contend that "it is on record that more than $400 billion was stolen from the treasury by Nigeria's leaders between 1960 and 1999 while the country's GDP per capital fell from US $ 1.010.00 in the early 1980s to US $300.00 in 2019.

4.2 Interventions in the Niger Delta Crisis

The Nigerian government has utilized three main strategies to address Niger Delta oil conflicts: resource allocation, development agencies, and military intervention. Initially, the derivation principle, which determines revenue sharing, was reduced from 50% during agricultural dominance to the current 13% (Okolie-Osemene, 2015). Secondly, numerous development bodies, including the NDDC, have been established, yet challenges persist (Okolie-Osemene, 2015). Lastly, military force, through the Joint Task Force, has been employed, but this approach has led to human rights violations and further radicalized the region, indicating the failure of previous conflict resolution efforts (Odoemene, 2012). Essentially, while Nigeria has tried several approaches, none have fully resolved the Niger Delta crisis, and the reliance on military force suggests a breakdown in effective, non-violent solutions.

Furthermore, the Nigerian government implemented an amnesty programme in 2009, following recommendations from the NDTC (Mitee, 2009), and later convened a peace dialogue in 2016, though lasting peace remains elusive. Despite these efforts, the region continues to experience instability, leading to calls for resource control (Akintunde & Hile, 2016). These ongoing issues contribute to the instability of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Nigeria, which is heavily influenced by the nation's oil sector and other economic factors.

4.3 Foreign Direct Investments in the Nigeria Niger- Delta Region

The growth of FDI in Nigeria has been unstable for quite sometimes as it is either declining or increasing. There has not been an enormous growth in the inflow of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria, especially the non-oil except for 1994 which had over 700% increase with foreign private investment inflow of 5599.3 million naira from 6825.5 million naira. Other subsequent years with an encouraging performances include 1989, 1997, 2000 and between 2003 to 2020 though is unstable but encouraging. Meanwhile, there was a major decline in 1980, 1990, 2001 and 2002. According to UNCTAD Foreign Direct Investment inflow between 1970 to 1975 rose from $205m to $470m, while the positive inflow of FDI in the non-oil sector were directly affected by various private sector policies adopted since early 1970s (UNCTAD, 2019).It has been made known that Nigeria receive the largest amount of FDI inflow over the course of the last decade from $1.14billion in 2001 to $2.1billion in 2004, and $11billion in 2009, making the country the 19th recipient of FDI in the world with 30% of all FDI inflow in Africa, due to its oil attractiveness.(Business, Trade and Investment Guide, 2020/2021).

The growth in foreign investment over time and the growth in real Gross Domestic Product show that apart from the inflow of foreign direct investment there are other key factors that contribute to the increases or decreases in the GDP. These include consumption, investment, government expenditure export, import etc. notwithstanding, the contribution of foreign private investment can still be explored. The stock of FDI in Nigeria was estimated to be $67.23billion as at December 2020 and $61.23billion as of December 2019 (www.cia.gov, 2021)

Prior to the 1970s, Nigeria actively encouraged FDI, with foreign entities controlling a significant portion of the economy (Biersteker, 1987). However, post-civil war, the government shifted towards indigenization, aiming to reduce foreign dominance through policies like the Nigerian Enterprise Promotion Decree of 1972, which limited foreign equity

to 60%, and further restrictions in 1977, reducing it to 40% (Ogunkola& Jerome, 2006). This transition reflected a nationalistic push to promote indigenous entrepreneurship and control.

Nigeria's investment landscape shifted in 1995 with economic liberalization, marked by the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission Act, which permitted 100% foreign ownership in most sectors, excluding oil and gas (NIPC Act, 1995). To streamline investment processes, the NIPC established the One-Stop-Investment-Centre (OSIC) in 2006, consolidating various governmental agencies, and has since registered over 2,500 companies (NIPC data, 2006 onwards).

With all these, the Nigerian government is committed in bringing in even more investment. In August 2009, UNCTAD and the Japan Bank for international co-operation (JBIC) presented the Nigerian government with a 15-point action plan to develop the country investment promotion structure and create more enabling investment environment so as to enable Nigeria to meet its target of becoming one of the world's top 20 economies by 2020.

However, despite all these policies and reforms, Nigeria remain a high risk operating environment. Institution barriers to doing business including corruption in government as critical determinants of private sector development and prospect for sustainable growth.

4.4 Effects of Niger Delta Crisis on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) toNigeria

Every nation especially developing and undeveloped countries need fast national and economic development. One major way of attracting and ensuring economic development is an enabling environment that is investors friendly. A country where terrorists regularly bomb, kidnap, kill innocent people, and destroy villages and social facilities can never be a safe haven for investment. Isakpa (2011) noted that "there can be no real progress made in any economy that is hostage to security".

Insurgency in Nigeria has significantly damaged the economy, causing substantial financial losses for businesses and a decline in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), with investors relocating to more stable environments. The Boko Haram insurgency has led to business closures, population displacement, and deterred foreign investors due to the prevailing insecurity (Aro, 2013; Afolabi, 2015). The region's war-like conditions necessitated a US$1 billion allocation in 2018 for counter-insurgency efforts.High rate of insurgency in Nigeria has led to low level of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria. International investors are now afraid of investing in Nigeria environment that could be describe as a "time bomb". Baiyewu (2012) noted that "no business will come to Nigeria with the current security challenge. Okah (2010) noted that foreign direct investment (FDI) is getting leaner, and international oil investors are diverting to cheaper/safer environment.

4.5 Challenges

There are several security challenges affecting Nigeria's Niger Delta region, among others include;

Kidnapping/Hostage taking: Kidnapping and hostage-taking have become prevalent tactics among Niger Delta youths and militants, primarily targeting oil and construction workers for ransom, significantly disrupting company operations and profitability (Nwankwo, 2012). Beyond its use as a means of protest, kidnapping has evolved into a lucrative criminal enterprise, with substantial ransoms demanded, which negatively impacts company finances due to non-deductible payments. Consequently, the region's development and business environment suffer from the instability caused by these activities.

Militancy and Youth Restiveness: Militancy and Youth restiveness is also another mode of insecurity existing in the region and sometimes beyond. It constitutes one of the multiple effects of the critical problem of insecurity in Nigeria's Niger Delta region (Ejumodo, 2014). Militancy and youth restiveness means the alleged matters of youth agitations over the issues of negligence, marginalization and deprivation, due to feelings of dissatisfaction. It entails a situation whereby youths get agitated, and becomes quite difficult to control. It can also be

seen as youths' agitations over for the settlement of their rights through self-seeking and criminality or criminal activities.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

This study has interrogated the rationale behind the incessant crisis in the Niger Delta region and its implications on the foreign direct investment in Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed that land degradation, environment damage caused by the exploration of the multinational companies in the region without corresponding compensation as social corporate responsibilities, as well as high rate of poverty and unemployment among the youth in the region have been identified as the root causes of internal conflict/crisis in the study area.

The study also indicated that, internal crises in the study area manifested in different forms such as pipeline vandalisation, kidnapping, hostage taking, among others, and this spate of insecurity induced environment have far negative consequences on the inflow of foreign direct investment in the region and by extension, Nigeria in general. In addition, results from the study showed that even though FDI has the capacity to stimulate socio-economic condition of the people of the study area through employment generation, technology transfer, investment in infrastructure and transfer of capital as well as culture of entrepreneurship, among others, the incessant outbreak of internal conflict/crisis in the region has undermined the impact of FDI on the socio-economic advancement of the people in the Niger Delta region.

Conclusion

This study conclusion that the core issue driving internal conflict in Nigeria is a lack of effective governance and people-centered policies, which has been exacerbated by Niger Delta militancy, inspiring other insurgent groups and causing widespread destruction. The resulting insecurity, including rampant kidnapping, and the failure of security agencies to protect citizens, severely hinders Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and sustainable development, creating an unfavorable investment climate. This instability undermines state authority, threatens democratic governance, and fosters an environment of fear, further deterring FDI.

Recommendations

Addressing the intertwined issues of environmental induced insecurity in the Niger Delta and the flow of FDI to Nigeria demands a comprehensive approach that tackles the root causes while also strengthening security measures. Here are some potential recommendations:

i. Governments at the federal and state levels in the Niger DeltaRegion should implement equitable resource sharing mechanisms, ensuring oil revenue benefits local communities through investments in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and sustainable livelihoods through a reformed and robust NDDC.
ii. Government at all levels should hold multinational corporations accountable for environmental damage through stricter regulations, regular audits, and fair compensation for impacted communities in the region.
iii. There is urgent need for the Federal government to combat corruption within government agencies and corporations especially in the NDDC to ensure effective resource management, and development project implementation in the region.
iv. There is need for the governors of the region to address grievances and marginalization through inclusive dialogue and conflict resolution mechanisms.
v. There is need for government to invest in community policing initiatives, involving locals in security efforts and building trust with security forces, enhance improved

intelligence gathering and data analysis to predict and prevent criminal activities in the conflict areas of the Niger Delta region.

vi. There is also need for the federal government to address underlying social issues like poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to education through targeted interventions.

vii. Federal government should encourage FDI that aligns with long-term sustainable development goals for the Niger Delta, focusing on environmentally friendly projects and community benefits.

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MINDING THE GAP: OBASANJO AND RE-IMAGING OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT
The study examined the impact of Obasanjo's foreign Policy and Nigeria's Image in the International System. The study is essentially qualitative in approach, secondary data and documentary sources were the major source of data collection. This study simultaneously relies on desk review. The study indicated that despite the recovery of looted funds, debt cancellation and the promotion of foreign direct investment; there was neglect of the pursuit of vital national interests which include protection of territorial boundary and the lives of Nigerians. The study found that despite the great success recorded in the country's foreign policy in the fourth republic, there are challenges that often drag the country into the mud. Such as; corruption, ceding of Bakassi and steps to improve foreign direct investment. The study concluded that the introduction of democratic rule in Nigeria was a critical success factor, which made the world very eager to welcome the country back into fold.

Introduction

The success of any interstates relations, world politics, and foreign policy practice, is predicated on professional diplomacy achieved through the art and scale of negotiations and dialogue. This is because numerous actors are involved, which makes the conduct of international relations and world politics a rather complex affair and enterprise. States engage in bilateral and multilateral relations with one another with a view to achieving socio-economic and political objectives.

However, a country's standing in the international system is highly dependent on its image perception being positive or negative. A good image results in respect, influence and prestige while a bad or negative perception of a country's image implies that such a country lacks respect, influence and prestige in the international system (Chidozie, 2014). Such standing of a country is dependent on some factors such as country, trade, investment, leadership/policy support, financial aid and development assistance cooperation. (Chidozie, 2014) could affect the achievement of its foreign policy objectives.

Thus, during most of its years as a democratic state, Nigeria enjoyed a positive image with members of the international community as an independent country, which has been a fundamental aspect of the country's foreign policy among other determinants that dictate the level of influence and relevance of a nation in international politics (Adeniyi, 2012).

Nigeria considered positive image building to be an integral part of global politics and devoted her time and resources as well as committing huge financial support to decolonization process in Africa through liberalization struggle movements and dismantling of apartheid regime in South Africa, with commendation (Kolawole, 2005). Above all, the peace keeping operations Nigeria embarked upon attested to her profile and made her a major force in promoting conflict resolution and security around the world.
The promotion of friendly relations in Nigeria's foreign policy was mapped out initially during the late Alhaji (Sir) Abubakar Tafawa Balewa regime the first Prime Minister after independence. This process continued with the subsequent regimes both authoritarian and

democratic rulers with little or no changes. Though most of this period vis-a-vis the supply Nigeria rendered to African states and its operation in Africa, the country enjoyed a very good standing in the international system and among the comity of Nations.

However, General Sani Abacha military regime was a clear departure from its predecessors, largely due to Nigeria's bad image standing especially from the perspective of Nigeria's western friends including the USA and European allies, both foreign and domestic policies became problems such that Nigeria was unable to consolidate the gain of her positive image. This led to making Nigeria a Pariah state and isolated by its erstwhile U.S. and western friends.

Following the death of General Abacha in June 8th 1998, and the subsequent emergence of General Abdulsalam Abubakar, Nigeria's image was full of crisis. Internally there was crisis of governance and externally Nigeria was perceived as a pariah state and was treated with suspicions in international system. Thus, when Obasanjo assumed power, the new president was faced with addressing this challenge as a condition for effective democratic governance and international engagement in order to revitalize the country's image vis-a-vis improve its economic growth development and douse the tensions among various activist and ethnic religious groups. This study investigates the implications of Nigeria's image crisis and explain foreign policy strategies adopted by President Obasanjo in quickly restoring the country's bad image, and how such strategies not only improve Nigeria's political standing among the comity of Nations but also helped Nigeria to strategically improve its bilateral and multilateral relations with other actors in the international system.

METHODOLOGY

This study is purely qualitative and therefore, relies heavily on desk review of relevant data drawn from books, journals and news -papers. The format of analysis is largely qualitative and accordingly the thematic process which involve sorting and cording of the data. And content analysis as a form of qualitative data analysis was also used.

The Concept of Foreign Policy

Foreign policy, as a concept, are general objectives that guide the activities and relationships of one state in its interactions with other state. The development of foreign policy is influenced by domestic considerations, the policies or behaviour of other states or plans to advance specific geopolitical designs. (Encyclopedia Britanica 2025). Though different scholars have defined it from different points of view, each of these definitions could be said to have stemmed from, and influenced by, peculiar ideological strands. The concept of foreign policy is of utmost interest and importance to every nation, according Dunmoye, Njoku & Aluko (2007:12), 'it connotes formal decisions/positions of sovereign states towards their counterparts, defined in terms of political, economic, cultural/social and strategic realms of inter-sovereign relationships, bilaterally and or multi-literally.' Foreign policy essentially deals with the relations between sovereign actors in international system. Foreign policy objective therefore can be understood as a range of intended actions as well as set of strategies adopted by a sovereign -states with the purpose of influencing the behaviour of other sovereign actors within the international system.

The Concept of Nigerian Foreign Policy

Having conceptualized foreign policy, it will be much easier for us to explain what constitutes Nigerian foreign policy. Nigeria's foreign policy can be defined as an effort made by Nigerian government or her policy makers to attain level of international rapport that would favour the national ideology. Simply put, it is the policy that decides the Nigerian stands on inter-dependence of nations, that is Nigerian stand on certain international issues,

such issues that affect the country's image (Omale, 2015).

Ibezim (1996), explains that the formulation of Nigeria's foreign policy is done by the present minister and the ministry for foreign affairs, Nigerian Diplomats, experts from the universities, the business world and the armed forces. Usually, these formulators of foreign policy are guided by the history of her colonialism and, geographical location. Within Africa.

However, Nigeria's foreign policy direction has been very clear for instance, Africa for a long time has been the centre piece for Nigeria's foreign policy initiatives. This is inspired by the need to enshrine the tenet, of justice, equity political emancipation of the oppressed and the true independence of African states (Saliu, 2006). To be sure, it is generally asserted that, there have been continuity in the substance content or forces, meaning the principal objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy since independence remains unchanged. (Akinyemi, 1989; Akindele, 1990; Akinboye, 1993; (Gambari 1986; Akinboye, 2013). But whatever differences there has been, is by and large, a matter of style, emphasis, personality, institutional reform and historical circumstances within and the outside Nigeria.

Objectives of **Nigeria's Foreign Policy**

Accordingly, Ogwu (2006:6) argues that the ultimate objectives of any foreign policy are to achieve short-range or long-range goals that ensure the superiority of one sovereign national actor over another. That is, foreign policy could be perceived as the pursuit of national interests. The milieu within which foreign policy is contrived and executed could be dichotomized into three main realms; the psychological, the domestic and the external. The psychological realm denotes the mental process of the decision maker(s) and all the factors that shape the conception of the policy. The domestic realm on the other hand is beyond the decision maker(s), but within the territorial bounds of the state. The external realm deals with the international system into which the policy is directed and this could be significantly unpredictable. The interface of the trio therefore is essential in the formulation of foreign policy.

The Principal objective of Nigeria's foreign policy is as provided for in Section 19 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic and others that predated it. These objectives are as follows:

(a) Promotion and protection of the national interest;
(b) Promotion of African integration and support for African unity;
(c) Promotion of international co-operation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of discrimination in all its manifestations;
(d) Respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication; and
(e) Promotion of a just world economic order (Anthony, 2017; FGN, 1999).

These objectives are to protect the country's national interests in its interaction with outside world and relationship with specific countries in the international system. Thus, Olusanya & Akindele (1986:2)

The Concept National Interest

The concept of national interest is a very complex one. Hence, there is no generally accepted definition of the concept. Scholars however, have put forward various definitions of the concept based on their understandings. They have also argued on how to determine national interest or who actually determines national interest. Decision must constantly be made about which goals to emphasize and which to neglect. The definition given to the national interest is a major factor affecting which value will be favored. This is because not all foreign policies and the values to protect are compatible with a given definition of national interest.

National interest is an elusive term which has been described in various ways. Kaplan (1967) defined it as the interest which a national actor has in implementing a defined system terms of action. Morgenthau (1976), conceived it, as simple as politics among nations. To Jones (1970), National interest is, a term use in politics debate within a country, to signal the case that the term of policy suggested will bring benefits not merely to its proponent but also to its opponent.

The Concept of Image

National image both at home and abroad, is an ethical issue. It may appear intangible but the benefit and advantage flowing from a good image are inestimably unquantifiable. The perception of a country by members of the international system, how a country, pursue its relations with others and particularly the behavior of its citizens at home and abroad combined to determine the country's image (Zimako, 2009). Thus, image making is an essential feature of a nation's foreign policy.

Holsti (1985), defined image as an individual's perception of an object, fact or condition in terms of badness or goodness as well as the meaning ascribed to or deduced there from, if we explore from that, we can conclude that image building must necessary constitute a fundamental element of a nation’s foreign policy suggesting that the way a country is perceived especially in the 21st century, is a function of her national image (Ademiji, 2012).

Also, country's image is defined as the total of all descriptive inferential and information belief one had about a particular country. After a perception process, image of a person or a particular country in the memory of others are shaped. Personal judgments on many things like subject’s individual behavior towards others and object etc. became the main component of perception process on culture, environment, political structure, history and other factors etc. (Afri.org/image). A positive image (i.e. good behavior, respect of sovereignty, free from all social vices by its citizen, promotion of good governance and maintaining friendly relations with other countries) is important to all countries (Tunca, 2010).

Accordingly, image building forms an essential element in the strategy for foreign policy formulation and implementation in any country, when well-focused, foreign policy initiative help create and reinforce favorable image of a country to the external world.

Image and its Role in International Relations

Folarin (2010), argued that role theory as one of the most compelling instruments bridging individual behavior and social structure. According to him, role which is in part dictated by social structure and in part by social interactions, guides the behavior of the group or individual. He concluded that group in turn, influences the norms and expectations. And behaviors associated with roles.

In the 21st century of globalizing world, image can help to lift up a nation, and this is exactly why many nations are very protective of their image." Image" is also used as a tool of international relations in promoting a country's national interest as a whole. Image is inevitably subjected to where the realities exist. In diplomatic functions or international relations of a country, the desired ways in which the nation state is accepted by other members of the international community is reflected though the good image projected by the country. The image of a nation might as well be the destiny of a nation.

Origin and Natureof Nigeria’s Image Crisis at International Arena

Nigeria’s image crisis is rooted in her history, nature of her independence, character of her federalism and complexities of her ethnic composition (Agbodike, 1998; Ayoade, 1998; Tamuno, 1998). In short, it is rooted in the “national question” as a recurring and nagging

issue in her national discourse (Alapiki, 2005; Nnadozie, 2005; Olufemi, *et al,* 2015). An understanding of Nigeria's national question is an understanding of her image crisis. Onuoha (2005) captures the interpenetration of the concept of national question and foreign policy enterprise most succinctly thus:

Essentially, the national question involves not only the territorial integrity of Nigeria, power sharing and management of Nigeria's resources in terms of access, control and distribution, but also the issues of minority interests, ethnicity, citizenship, revenue allocation, the creation of states as well as religious, linguistic, cultural and educational policies. It is about resolving the antagonistic contradictions between the majority and minority ethnic groups, combating tribalism, racialism and any form of ethnic chauvinism.... the central question is, to what extent does the issues of national question influence external relations between one country and another? (Onuoha, 2005:406-407).

The point remains that a critical view of the above array of contradictions contained in the national question discourse portray the stark reality about the origin, nature and indeed dynamic character of Nigeria's image crisis. It should also be noted that domestic factors are the determinants of foreign policy of any given country. Hence, it could be safely posited that the origin of Nigeria's image crisis is the violent electoral politics in the First Republic that culminated in the first military coup of January 15, 1966 (Ademoyega, 1981; Akinsanya, 2005). Indeed, this was followed by a counter coup on July 29, 1966 culminating in series of political drama that ultimately resulted in the civil war of 1967 (Achebe, 2012).

Theoretical Frameworks

This study adopts Concentric Circles Theory as a framework of analysis. The major proponent of this theory is Ernest Burgess into the field of foreign policy analysis. The analysts were Gambari (1980), Adeniji (2003) and Akinboye (1993). The major idea underpinning the Concentric Circles Theory was to provide effective defense necessities within the West Africa's Sub region. According to the theory, the first circle represents Nigeria's own security, independence and prosperity and is centered on its immediate neighbor-states that are contiguous, which could constitute a basis for the defense of West Africa. At this level, the theory advocates a foreign policy of re- assessment, self-appraisal and defense of Nigeria's strategic interest before West Africa and then the continent. The second circle takes into consideration the strategic interest of the states in the West African sub region or Nigerian involvement on continental African neighbors. The third circle involves foreign policy involvement on continental Africa issues of peace, development and democratization; and the fourth circle involves Nigeria's relations with organizations, institutions and state outside Africa (Gambari, 1989).

This study is premised on the first circles to evaluate Nigeria's foreign policy and engagements under the civilian administration of President Obasanjo. Nigeria's role expectations at different ''concentric circles" of her foreign policy have generated multiple role perceptions, thus leading to unintended role conflicts. The theory has been criticized for oversimplification and neglecting historical and cultural context of the image crisis in Nigeria.

Historical Context of Nigeria's Foreign Policy and Her Image in the International System

Since independence in I960, Nigeria external relations has been focusing on Africa as a regional power and by the attachment to several fundamental principles: African unity and independence; capability to exercise hegemonic influence in the region: peaceful settlement of disputes; non alignment and non- intentional interference in the internal affairs of other

nations; and regional economic co-operation and development (Akindele, 2013).

In carrying out these principles, Nigeria participates in the Organization of African Unity (QAU) now African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth of Nations and the United Nations Organizations (Aluko, 1981; Akinyemi 1989). Thus, generally, Nigeria's foreign policy trends (the development and formulation) since 1960, has consistently been guided by the same principles and objectives. Although while the main thrust of the country's foreign policy, is the promotion of her national interest and the policy of afro- centricity, remained permanent, the strategy and emphasis for such protection by successive regimes varied from one to another. While the substance of Nigeria's foreign policy remained largely the same, from regime to regime however, witnessed various adjustments and modifications depending on the orientations of the political leaderships. In addition, the prevailing domestic (political, economic and socio-cultural realities) and international environments have been major determinants in Nigeria's foreign policy trends over the years. The development (formulation and execution) of Nigeria's foreign policy, has been specifically under the past eras or regimes, namely; the Balewa Era 1960 - 1966; the Ironsi Era - 1966; the Gowon Era 1966 - 1975; the Murtala/Obasanjo Era - 1975 - 1979; the Shagari Era - 1979 - 1983; the Buhari Era 1983 - 1985; the Babangida Era - 1985 -1993; the Shonekan/Abacha Era- 1993 - 1998; the Abubakar Era 1998 - 1999; Obasanjo (civilian) Era 1999 - 2007.Which era is the main focus of these study.

OBASANJO ADMINISTRATION AND RE-IMAGING OF NIGERIA PRACTICE

Consolidation of democracy in Nigeria impacted on re-imaging Nigeria during Obasanjo's era. Repositioning Nigeria as a champion and defender of democratic values flow from the belief and conviction that desirable political stability in Nigeria as well as in any other country, could best be actualized and enhanced only under a regime of democratic governance and culture, demanded and venerated by the international community (Rafiu, 2000).

Arguably, to drive home the anachronism of dictatorial military rule in the new millennium and to underscore the close connection between peace and development on the one hand and democratic (good) governance on the other, president Obasanjo wasted no time in condemning the military coup in Pakistan and Cote d'Ivoire and in joining other to endorse and float the doctrine that governments that have come to power through the barrel of the gun must not only be kept at a distance but must also be asked to show why they should be allowed to continue to participate as members of international organizations to which they belong, given the fact that democracy is the name of the governance- game that nation - states play then.

Obasanjo Economic Diplomacy

The evidence of Nigeria's return to the international arena and recognition was also reflected in the Obasanjo administrations' pursuit of economic diplomacy. These include the pursuit of the recovery of funds looted and stashed abroad by the late General Sani Abacha and others, campaign for debt forgiveness, as well as the attraction of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the country.

Debt Relief

Nigeria's external debt servicing when Obasanjo come to power stood at 28.54 Billion dollars as at Sep. 30 1999. (Country Report on Economic Policy and Trade Practices1999). Obasanjo pointed out that external debt burden and large unsustainable debt service obligations of African countries (especially Nigeria) constituted a major impediment to their quest for social

and economic development. The concerted efforts of Obasanjo, the ministry of finance, national assembly, Debt Management Office, the Economic Management Team, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders, and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEED) Started yielding results as the creditors and multilateral financial institutions such as; Paris Club and IMF began to position and consider Nigeria for debt relief. His campaign for debt relief started shortly after he was inaugurated as president in 1999. And in 2005, the G8 finance ministers reached an agreement to relief Nigeria of the debt she owed the Paris Club (Enweremadu 2012).

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Apart from image and confidence building abroad Nigeria also gained more foreign water supply that can encourage foreign investment.In terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Nigeria is a small player in the globaleconomy. With GDP at $100 billion, the country accounted for 0.28 percent of world'sGDP in 2005 (Oshikoya, 2008). The GDP of South Africa is more than twice that ofNigeria, the economy of the latter ranks 49th in the world, up from 55th in 2000(Oshikoya, 2008). UNCTAD (2005) indicates that Nigeria's FDI inflows performanceranking improved from 82 in 1999-2001 to 44 in 2002-2004 - ahead of all its peers,including China, which ranked 45 (Oshikoya, 2008).

Anti-Corruption Campaign

Hence, Obasanjo's effort to recover the looted funds yielded positive results to some extent due to the support he got from both within and outside the country. Pham (2007: 34) posits that:

> During the Gulf crisis of the early 90s, about $12 billions of Nigeria' oil windfall went missing. In five years alone (1993-1998) General Abacha salted away as much as 5 billion dollars in Swiss, German, UK and American banks, among several other countries.

President Obasanjo civilian regime in continuation of the efforts of President Abdulsalami Abukakar administration reported recovery or freezing of some of the loot (as much as $2 billion as at year (2000) especially from and in Swiss banks, some directly from Nigerian crooks and the partners (Pham, 2007). Swiss officials said that about 120 accounts in Zurich and Geneva have been frozen. In early April (2000), Swiss officials charged a businessman for falsifying documents to open a bank account in Geneva for the Abacha family (Pham, 2007).

According to the (New York Times,2000), the unidentified businessman is Dharamvir of New Delhi, India. In mid-May, 2000, Obasanjo announced that his government has recovered $200 million public funds looted by former Nigerian dictator-Abacha and his associates. In July, Nigerian authorities announced that Swiss officials have transferred $64.36 million of the looted money to the Central Bank of Nigeria (Enweremadu, 2012).

In 2005, Nigeria recovered $500 million from Switzerland. According to Okonjo- Iweala, "Switzerland has actually been quite good. They returned $500 million. But there is still money lying in other parts of Europe". Enweremadu (2012) posits that by the time Obasanjo left office in May 2007, he had secured the recovery of approximately 2 billion USD in assets and triggered some vital international initiatives against money laundering. All these, success is achieved through the establishment of anti-corruptions agency which includes, EFCC and ICPC and also the enactment of laws that allow for the anti -corruption crusade in the country.

The Judgmentof International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Bakassi in 2002

These, controversial decision was taken by President Obasanjo to cede Bakassi to Cameroon in compliance with the ICJ verdict. Data drawn from oral interviews and other documentary sources indicates that most Nigerians see Obasanjo's decision with regards to the ceding of Bakassi as hasty. The action by President Obasanjo seemed to be part of the opportunity cost for Obasanjo's quest for international statesmanship and acceptance. There was no proper consideration of the pain and agony of the inhabitants. The issue of the Bakassi was centered on oil and its resources and not on the people. This is part of the poor citizen diplomacy of the Obasanjo administration. Annoyingly Obasanjo and other African leaders allow the West to exact undue influence that is almost always disadvantageous to their people. Furthermore, some African states also inflict damage on Nigeria's image, citizens of other countries commit certain atrocities and claim the identity of Nigerians and unjustifiably attacking Nigerians travelling to other countries despite the effort of the country in ensuring independence and peace across the region.

Conclusion

Nigeria was described as a pariah state due to idiosyncrasy, personality trait, and the mode of operation of the then military junta headed by late General Sani Abacha. However, the advent of democratic government that ushered in President Obasanjo in 1999 couple with the various reforms the government embarked upon domestically and internationally such as NEEDs, NEPAD, and shuttle diplomacy actually brought out Nigeria out of the messy situation that late General Sani Abacha led the country into. The alternative strategy of negotiation process adopted by the regime has, to a greater extent shaped the Nigerian foreign policy and regained Nigeria's image within the comity of Nations.

In addition, there is no doubt that Obasanjo succeeded in re-lunching Nigeria into the orbit of international politics, from her pariah status of the past Authoritarians regime. Probably his personal clout, contact and commitment helped a lot in this regard. However, it must be pointed out that the introduction of democratic rule in Nigeria was a critical success factor, which made the world very eager to welcome the country back into fold, in order to perform her natural role as a leader in the West African sub-region and indeed Africa.

Recommendations

On the part of citizens, patriotism should be the watch word. Anything capable of tarnishing the image of Nigeria should be avoided. Bribery and the diverse criminal acts that Nigeria is now' known for cannot take the country to the level that advanced nations have attained. Building an enviable foreign policy in Nigeria requires the concerted effort of both the leaders and the followers. But the leaders should always be aware that to whom much is given much is required, there is need for every leader to keep the country domestic sectors in good shape before inviting for foreign investors. For example, Obasanjo was busy encouraging countries of the world to come and invest in Nigeria without considering the need for Nigerian government to heavily invest both within and outside the country. It would probably have been more effective as a development strategy than overwhelming reliance on seeking debt relief, important as that task was. Hence, there is need for the leadership of Nigeria to use both human and material resources for the pursuit of national priorities in a way that could enhance development in all sectors of national life.

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CHILD LABOUR AND TRAFFICKING IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL SECURITY

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ABSTRACT
The global upsurge of child labour and trafficking has posed serious threats to the existence of modern states. While this phenomenon has been widely studied regarding its impact on

economic development and the psychological and emotional well-being of the victims, the connection to human capital development and internal security in Nigeria remains unexplored. Hence, investigating this problem within the context of economic and survival theory, the study employed a descriptive research design. It adopted library sources to gather secondary data, and it was analyzed qualitatively using content analysis. The study contended that, even though certain domestic factors account for the prevalence of child labour and trafficking, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current economic quagmire worsened the situation. The paper found that this menace has led to an increasing rate of children out of school, depriving them of their fundamental right to education, which is the bedrock of human capital development. Following the path of the relative deprivation school of thought, the paper argued that these deprived children react to the inflamed sense of injustice inflicted on them by their families, thus resulting in acts of violence, which have over the years threatened internal security in Nigeria. The paper concluded that child labour and trafficking have negative consequences on human capital development and internal security in Nigeria. The study recommends, inter alia, that the government should intensify efforts on the implementation of policies aimed at eliminating the out-of-school children phenomenon and prohibiting human trafficking in Nigeria.
Keywords**:** Child Labour, Trafficking, Development, Security, Covid-19, Education, Human Capital, Economic quagmire

1. Introduction

The prevalence of child labour and trafficking has reached alarming levels worldwide, with Sub-Saharan Africa experiencing a notable surge in detected victims, particularly a 31% increase in child victims between 2019 and 2022 (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2024). Contributing significantly to the global figure of 160 million child Labourers, Nigeria reports 39.2% of its child population engaged in such activities (NBS, 2020), a situation intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic (International LabourOrganisation (ILO), 2023; United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 2022; United Nations (UN), 2024). The root causes of this exploitation within Sub-Saharan African families are deeply intertwined with poverty, educational deficits, and societal issues such as greed and the erosion of cultural values (Godwin &Iyaba, 2008; Adegun, 2013; Awosusi& Adebo, 2012).

This persistent problem results in children engaged in various forms of labour, including agriculture and street vending (Abdu, Rabiu & Usman, 2020), and has evolved into a lucrative industry, particularly in urban areas, driven by economic hardship and leading to children's involvement in apprenticeships and domestic service (Folarin, 2009; Taiwo, 2023).

The detrimental impact of child labour and trafficking on Nigeria's development has prompted the government to adopt various international conventions and protocols, including the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (1981), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990), the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003), the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (2001), and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), in an effort to combat this issue.

The Nigerian Constitution, through Section 34(1) and Chapter II, establishes a legal foundation against child labour and trafficking, further strengthened by acts like the Child Rights Act and the Trafficking in Persons Act (The Nigerian Constitution, 1999). Despite these legal protections, child labour and trafficking persist, leaving many Nigerian children

without access to education in both rural and urban areas (Awosusi& Adebo, 2012; Abdu, Rabiu & Usman, 2020).

In addition, the pervasive issues of child labour and trafficking have significant social, economic, and welfare consequences for children, as evidenced by existing research such as Godwin and Iyaba, (2008); Adegun, (2013). While continental and regional analyses are prevalent, numerous studies, including those by Okafor (2010), Abdu, Rabiu, and Usman (2020), and Ebigbo (2006), have specifically examined the detrimental impact of child labour on children's education, sustainable development, and economic growth.

However, there is no literature that establishes nexus between child labour, trafficking and human capital development and internal security in Nigeria. Hence, it is this identified academic lacuna that this paper sets out to fill. Against this backdrop, this study investigates child labour and trafficking in the 21st century and its implication for human capital development and internal security in Nigeria.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study sets out to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the nature and pattern of child labour and trafficking in Nigeria.
2. To investigate the implication of child labour and trafficking on human capital development in Nigeria.
3. To examine the effects of child labour and human trafficking on internal security in Nigeria; and
4. To advance some measures in tackling the menace of child labour and human trafficking as panacea to enhance human capital development and internal security in the country.

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

Child Labour

Child labour, as defined by the ILO (2021), encompasses work that jeopardizes a child's well-being, development, and education, including hazardous tasks that disrupt schooling (ILO, 2023). This exploitation, recognized as a pervasive issue, robs children of their childhood, potential, and dignity (UNICEF, 2022).

While children may engage in various forms of work, it is essential to differentiate between child labour and child work; the latter, encompassing activities like light household chores or family business assistance outside of school hours, which can positively contribute to a child's development, as long as it does not impede education or endanger their health (ILO, 2023). Meanwhile, Child labour on the other hand, as viewed by UNICEF (2001), involves children working excessively long hours in hazardous environments, bearing age-inappropriate burdens, and sacrificing their education, resulting in exploitation and harm to their overall development. Furthermore, the ILO (2011) characterizes child labour as any work that robs individuals under 18 of their childhood, potential, and dignity, with adverse effects on their physical and mental health.

Therefore, child labour involves work that is mentally, physically, or morally harmful and/or disrupts a child's education by preventing school attendance, forcing them to drop out, or requiring them to balance school with overly demanding and lengthy work.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is viewed as a grave violation of human rights and a global crime Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, harboring, or receipt of individuals

(action) through coercive methods like force, fraud, coercion, abduction, deception, abuse of power, or exploiting vulnerabilities (means), for the ultimate purpose of exploitation, which may include sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, or organ removal (UNODC, 2021).

Human trafficking, a global concern, exploits individuals of all demographics, with children particularly at risk (UNICEF, 2023), and encompasses diverse forms of exploitation, including forced Labour, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced marriage, and organ removal (Polaris, 2022); this crime occurs both within and across international borders (UNODC, 2023).

In this study, we define human trafficking as encompassing both sex trafficking, where force or coercion is used to induce a commercial sex act, particularly involving minors, and the recruitment, harboring, or transport of individuals for forced labour or services.

Human Capital Development

Human capital development (HCD) refers to the process of improving the knowledge, skills, abilities, and health of individuals, enabling them to contribute effectively to economic growth and societal well-being. It encompasses investments in education, training, healthcare, and other social services that enhance human capabilities (OECD, 2021). Essentially, it is about investing in people.

Human capital development (HCD) involves expanding people's capabilities through education, healthcare, and experience, enabling their economic and social participation (World Bank, 2023; UNICEF, 2023). HCD, as measured by skills and education, significantly impacts worker productivity and earning potential (Pettinger, 2019; OECD, 2022). Consequently, HCD is a lifelong process that fosters a productive and healthy workforce.

By inference, the principal components of human capital development are fundamentally built upon education, spanning all learning stages (UNESCO, 2021), robust health, which ensures a productive population (WHO, 2023), the acquisition of diverse skills through training and experience (ILO, 2023), and strong social protection systems that enable individuals to overcome challenges and invest in their own development (ILO, 2021).

Internal Security

Internal security, as defined by Buzan, Wæver, & de Wilde (1998), involves a nation's efforts to protect itself from internal threats, focusing on maintaining peace, order, and stability to safeguard citizens, institutions, and infrastructure against dangers such as civil unrest, crime, terrorism, and insurgency.

Imobighe (2003) defines internal security as the absence of threats to life and property, facilitating a stable environment for citizens to pursue their lawful interests; in this study, internal security is understood as the comprehensive safety of all citizens across all aspects of life, encompassing health, economy, education, governance, and environment. Besides, internal security, focused on threats within a nation's boundaries, is managed by law enforcement and internal security forces, and sometimes the military (Collins, 2010; ICT, 2020). This domain encompasses diverse threats such as civil unrest, organized crime, terrorism, and socio-economic instability, which governments address through policing, intelligence, counterterrorism, border control, cybersecurity, and socio-economic programmes.

Analysis and synthesis of the above conceptualisations show that internal security is a nation's active effort to protect its citizens and infrastructure from internal threats, going

beyond just preventing violence to creating a stable environment for all aspects of life, like health and education, using a combination of policing, intelligence, military action, and social programs to maintain peace and societal resilience against various dangers.

2.2 Literature Review

Child labour and trafficking severely hinder socio-economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa, leading to widespread negative consequences that have prompted extensive research by scholars and organizations.

Study by Adegun (2013) revealed that Child Labour and trafficking in Nigeria have seen a substantial increase, rising from 12 million children in 1995 to over 20 million by 2021 (Adegun, 2013; ILO, 2021), with children from various regions, including Calabar, Delta, and others, frequently seen as domestic servants or street vendors. The North East region shows particularly high prevalence, linked to factors like poverty and lack of access to basic services (UNICEF, 2001).

Meanwhile, the studies carried out by Awosusi and Adebo (2012), Okafor (2010), Abdu, Rabiu and Usman (2020) found nexus between child labour and human trafficking, and inhumanly abused physically, mentally sexually, psychological trauma, poor education or lack of education and development, among others. In fact, it is obvious that the child labour and human trafficking dynamics have far reaching negative effects on sustainable development in Nigeria.

Furthermore, Oloko's study revealed that working children, especially those laboring late or on highways, face increased risks of falls and assaults, with girls particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment. Additionally, denied educational opportunities, especially in rural areas where agriculture hinders school attendance, and combining work with schooling negatively impact academic performance compared to non-working children (Oloko, 1994).

Also, a 2020 UNICEF study revealed a strong link between child Labour and trafficking and human rights abuses, with girls facing sexual exploitation and boys at risk of exploitation by armed forces, exacerbating social inequality and depriving children of their childhood (UNICEF, 2020). Specifically, girls burdened with school and household duties are particularly vulnerable to poverty and exclusion, highlighting the connection between child exploitation and socio-economic inequality in Nigeria.

Ebigbo's 2006 research linked widespread poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment to the prevalence of child trafficking, demonstrating how these factors drive desperate, poorly educated parents with large families to engage in such exploitative practices due to their lack of awareness about the consequences. In another continuum, Heady's 2000 research demonstrated a direct correlation between child Labour, specifically involvement in various hazardous economic activities, and decreased school attendance and educational attainment in Ghana, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

A synthesis of the literature reviewed above shows that poverty, economic inequality, unemployment, illiteracy, poor living standard etc. are at the root causes of child labour and child trafficking. Hence, it is evident that the findings of the previous studies established nexus between this social pathogen and its effects on psychological, economic, educational backwardness of the victims. However, it is clear that none of these studies focuses on the effects of child labour and human trafficking on human capital development and internal security crisis in Nigeria. It is this gaps that this current study sets out to fill.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts economics and survival theory. The theory was proposed by Berdal and Malone (2013). It is hinged on the assumption that social conflicts are generated by so many factors, some of which are deep-rooted. And that conflicts have come to be seen as having a functional utility and are embedded in economic disparity/inequality. This is supported by the fact that child laboourer and people trafficked are mostly the poor and under privileged in the society who seek means of survival outside their family homes or countries with acute economic deprivation occasioned by economic disparity.

In relation to this study, the economic situation triggered by the Covid-19 Pandemic and current high rate of food inflation in the recent times in Nigeria has produced poverty driven families and this has made child labour and human trafficking a lucrative business to the extent that the victims of these social pathogen are vulnerable. Therefore, it is most likely that a country or society that has the interest of its citizen would take pragmatic steps to discourage people who are involved in this illicit venture for the sake of human capital development and internal security.

3.1 Methods and materials

This study was a product of library research. It employed a descriptive research design This approach necessitates the review of existing reports, legal frameworks, and government documents, alongside the analysis of statistical data from sources like the NBS, ILO, UNICEF, and UNODC to understand prevalence and trends of child labour and trafficking thereby creating a comprehensive understanding of the issue. It also adopted qualitative approach to gather secondary data from published books, journal articles newspapers and internet materials, and it was analyzed qualitatively using content analysis.

4.1 International and Domestic Legal Frameworks Against Child Labour and Trafficking in Nigeria

Nigeria combats child Labour and human trafficking through a combination of national laws and international agreements, creating a legal structure designed to protect children's rights. The following sections outline the core components of this framework.

Nigeria demonstrates its commitment to combating child Labour and trafficking by ratifying crucial international treaties, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which mandates protection from exploitation (Articles 32, 34), and ILO Convention No. 182, requiring immediate action against the worst forms of child Labour (Article 1). Additionally, ILO Convention No. 138 establishes minimum employment ages, and the UN Palermo Protocol addresses human trafficking, requiring criminalization within national laws. These actions signify Nigeria's adherence to global standards in safeguarding children (United Nations Convention on the Right of Child, Articles 32, 34; ILO Convention 182, Article 1; ILO Convention 138; UN Palermo Protocol, 25 December 2003).

Nigeria's domestic legal framework, though aiming to combat child Labour and trafficking, presents both strengths and weaknesses. The 1999 Constitution protects fundamental rights (Sections 34 & 35), and the Child Rights Act 2003 prohibits exploitative Labour and trafficking (Sections 28-30), while the 2015 Trafficking in Persons Act criminalizes all forms of trafficking and establishes NAPTIP (Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act, 2015). However, the outdated 2004 Labour Act's conflicting provisions (Section 59) undermine these efforts (Nigeria Labour Acts, 2004), and the scattered nature of other relevant laws dilutes their effectiveness, highlighting the need for consistent application and enforcement.

Arising from the above, it is evident that although Nigeria has laws against child Labour and trafficking, effective enforcement is hindered by inconsistent application, resource limitations, low public awareness, and persistent socio-economic challenges like poverty and cultural norms, which sustain these exploitative practices.

4.2 Nature and Pattern of Child Labour and Human Trafficking in Nigeria

Specifically, the nature and pattern of child labour and trafficking in Nigeria are discussed thus:

Industrial work: This form of child labour cut across agricultural and non-agricultural sector in Nigeria. This pattern of child labour is common in most urban areas in Nigeria, where children labourers engage in production of Manioc/Cassava, Cocoa, Rice, tobacco, fishing activities, herding livestock, mining and quarrying granite and grovel, construction including making blocks, artisanal gold mining and processing, (Akinwotu, 2016). These labourous works are considered too risky even for adult in the industrialized societies (Burke & Knaul, 2021).

Domestic Service: Majority of child workers in Nigeria are in domestic services. The use of child for domestic services such as: house help, household chores, collecting money on public buses, and automotive repair, etc. (ILO, 2013). These set of children that engage in these services no doubt are deprived of affection, adequate and functional schooling (Tade, 2010 & Okafor, 2010).

Child Trafficking: This has been considered as one of the worst forms of child labour. This form of child abuse, especially on the part of girl child include girl engaging in sex trade/commercial sex within and even outside the country. Ebigbo (2006) points out that about 60% - 80% of girls that involved in sex trade outside the country are in Italy, while Belgium and the Netherlands experience an increasing rate in the number of Nigerian girls.

Street hawking: This pattern of child labour is common in most cities in Nigeria. The child may be made to hawk along the Bus Street and major highway, in order to augment family income. In most cases, object of hawking includes: cold soft drinks, fruits, sachet cold water, foot wears, etcetera (Isamah& Okunola, 2002: Okafor, 2010; Burke & Knaul, 2021).

Other pattern of child labour are: forced begging, street vending, textile manufacturing the use of children in illicit activities for armed groups, more often, as a result of forced recruitment, including participation in extortion, armed robbery, drug trafficking recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict and in non-conflict support role as in the case of north eastern Nigeria where Boko Haram forcibly recruited and used child soldiers in their operation (Sally, 2017: Nigeria Moderate Advancement, 2021).

Thus, the manifestation of all these patterns of child labour and trafficking in Nigeria reflects in the incessant crime rate and violent conflict in the country.

4.3 Impacts of Child Labour and Trafficking on Human Capital Development and Internal Security in Nigeria

There are many effects of child labour and human trafficking. But our focus in this paper is on human capital development and internal security. This is considered pertinent judging from the angle of present precarious internal security challenges and developmental debacles that Nigeria is experiencing.

The practice of child labour and child trafficking has posed the problems of eroding human capital by its negative impact on the labour market in Nigeria. According to ILO (2023),

forcing children to work at an early age and subjecting them to ten to 20 hours of work per day denies children access to the education necessary to break the cycle of poverty and literacy that makes conditions ripe for child trafficking. It also denies them a healthy childhood development, both socially and physically. Hence, children cannot acquire the skills necessary to compete in their country's labour market, which translates into a labour force at the national level that is not equipped to compete in the global economy, where success is based on skilled workers.

Also, departure of children to other countries is no doubt an irretrievable loss of human resources for Nigeria because, these trafficked children contribute to the development of their host country. The long term effects of trafficking translate into a lower number of individuals left to care for an increasing number of elderly as well as social imbalances in the proportion of males to females (Godwin &Iyaba, 2008). In 2021, ILO estimates that over 10,000 children are trafficked each year, even though statistics regarding the magnitude of child trafficking are difficult. Also, the trafficking of Nigerian female children to Italy and other European countries as sex workers has become prominent in Nigeria. In 2019, more than 18,000 Nigerian female children were recorded to have arrived into Europe through illegal route (Human Trafficking Factsheet, 2021). In 2020, child abuse and the exploitation of children in domestic labour, forced begging, and armed conflict in Nigeria severely hindered their education and undermined the development of human capital.

Nigeria's current economic hardship poses a significant threat to both human capital development and internal security by exacerbating the already prevalent issues of child labour and trafficking. The increased poverty resulting from this economic downturn directly fuels child labour and trafficking. Desperate families, facing stark choices, send their children to work, even in hazardous conditions, or fall prey to the deceptive promises of traffickers (Cody et al., 2023). This immediate need for survival undermines long-term human capital development by pulling children out of school. As education becomes a less attainable priority, school attendance plummets, depriving these children of the very skills and knowledge they need to contribute to the nation's future (Yunana& Ishaya, 2022). This loss of educational opportunity translates to a diminished workforce with reduced capacity for innovation and economic growth, hindering Nigeria's long-term development.

Furthermore, the economic crisis fuels the expansion of the informal sector, a breeding ground for child labour and exploitation due to its less regulated nature (Akinwotu, 2016). Children engaged in street vending, domestic work, and other informal jobs are not only deprived of education but also exposed to heightened risks of abuse and exploitation, further damaging their physical and psychological well-being, key components of human capital.

Compounding these issues, economic hardship as manifested in the hyper inflation rate of 24.66% in 2023, rising to 32.46% in 2024 before slightly decreasing to 24.98% in 2025 (Statista, 2025). However, Trading Economics reports a higher rate of 34.8% for December 2024, suggesting that inflation is on the increase (Trading Economics, 2024). Economic hardship in Nigeria weakens child protection institutions, reduces law enforcement capacity, and fosters impunity for those exploiting children, which not only directly endangers children but also undermines the rule of law, a critical component of internal security.

Economic hardship in Nigeria intensifies child trafficking as traffickers exploit vulnerable families with false promises (Uzoh & John, 2023), leading to community instability, transnational crime, and a decline in internal security. This creates a cycle where poverty-

driven child Labour and trafficking undermine human capital development and threaten Nigeria's future.

Human insecurity has become a cause of internal security. Coupled with over 10 million out of school children in Nigeria, which is on increase annually by 3 million of which Covid-19 Pandemic and the current economic quagmire are equally contributing factors. This shows that Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children in sub-Sahara Africa (The Guardian, 2021).

The impact of child Labour and trafficking on internal security can be understood through the lens of relative deprivation theory, which suggests that a gap between expectations and achievements leads to negative attitudes (Offiong, 1983; Imobighe, 2009; Nwagbara, 2004, 2017). Children denied education experience negative emotions like anger and resentment (Dube & Guimond, 1986; Nwagbara, 2004), which can manifest as social unrest, violence, and crime when their expectations are unmet. Consequently, child Labour and trafficking create human insecurity, contributing to internal security crises in Nigeria.

For example, in Northern Nigeria, the Almajiri system, where children are sent to urban areas for Quranic education under Mallams, often results in forced begging, making them vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups like Boko Haram (Shepler, 2016; US Embassy, 2015). This exploitation has severely hindered the Nigerian military's counter-insurgency efforts, as evidenced by the use of child suicide bombers (Nigeria Moderate Advancement, 2016). Children as young as eight are frequently coerced into armed conflict by various groups, including bandits and political militias, further destabilizing internal security.

Also, during the reporting period, Boko Haram's activities in Northeast Nigeria involved the forced recruitment of child soldiers (UNGAHR, 2016; Hinshaw, 2016), an increased use of girls as suicide bombers (UN General Assembly Human Rights Council &Oshome, 2016), and the exploitation of out-of-school girls for forced labour and sexual servitude (USDS, Watch list & UN, 2016). This resulted in the internal displacement of 1-8 million people, including 1 million children, with reports of children being trafficked from IDP camps for labor and sexual exploitation (IOM, 2016; Oshome, 2016). The destruction of numerous educational institutions in Maiduguri, Yobe, and Adamawa, including hundreds of primary and secondary schools, has significantly increased the number of children without access to education in Nigeria, thereby exacerbating the existing security challenges.

5. Conclusion

The paper concludes that child labour and trafficking as social pathogen are becoming more prevalent in the 21st Century in Nigeria especially in the face of globalization and it causes are multifaceted. However, the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the current economic hardship in the country have worsened the situation. It was also found out that these practices have far reaching effects on the human capital development in Nigeria on the one hand because the very foundation of human capital development is deeply rooted in access to quality, sound, and basic education, skills acquisition, health facilities, on job training, etc. and these have been heralded and denied of the children under child labour and trafficking venture and by extension hampered human security which is one of the causes of internal security crisis in the country on the other hand.

The paper also contends that even though Nigeria government at different point in time have enacted various laws, formulated different policies in line with the international, regional and continental conventions as legal frameworks to overcome these challenges, the menace remains seemingly unabated. Therefore, combating child labour and trafficking as a panacea

for enhancing human capital development internal security, require strong and implementable policy options as recommendations.

6. Recommendations

1. Government at all levels in Nigeria should as a matter of urgency intensify efforts on the implementation of eliminating out –of-school child policy. This will not only enhance human capital development, but it will also stimulate human security and address internal security crisis in Nigeria.
2. Government in collabouration with non-governmental organization should provide educational incentives such as scholarship, school uniforms, transportation and writing materials to the rural poor children whose parent cannot afford such educational needs and costs.
3. There should be strong government and civil initiative to promote the already decomposing moral values in the society which are base values of the society.
4. There is need for the Federal Government to harmonize practice and procedure by the government agencies in the enforcement of laws and values that are against child and human trafficking in our society.

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LAND ACQUISITION AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN JIGAWA STATE: A STUDY OF GAYAWA VILLAGE

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Abstract
Land acquisition for commercial purpose increases across the globe in recent years and this affects the land used for subsistence farming and pasture. This paper aims at studying the socio-economic and political implications of land acquisition by Chinese investors in Gayawa Village, Jigawa state. The paper utilized field research where data were collected using interview and FGD from the affected community members and other stake holders. The data was analysed using qualitative method of analysis (by cross tabulating the FGD with interviews). Globalization theory is used as framework of analysis. The study found that the acquisition negatively affects the community members; the land could no longer be passed to the next generation, sold or leased. Many farmers have lost the only means of subsistence they possessed. Many of the affected farmers used the farming as the primary source of employment to their families and other community members, they lost this source. Some of the affected farmers could not continue with supporting the education of their children. It also found lack of consultations with the stakeholders by the state government. The paper concludes that the acquisition favours the investor because the affected farmers have not been provided with better alternative and this affects them economically, socially and politically. The paper recommends that the affected farmers should be supported financially by the state while at same time providing them with better farmland for them to continue with their farming activities.

Key Words: Land Acquisition, Development, Foreign Investors, Government, Subsistence

Introduction

Land acquisition for commercial purpose has increased across the globe and this affects the land used by farmers for subsistence and pastoralist for pasture. Africa is among the mostly affected regions where millions of hectares have been acquired and millions have been proposed for acquisition. The major investor in Africa's agricultural land include China, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, companies from Western Europe, Canada and United States of America (Gorge in Global Land Project 2010). Some of these companies produce food crop while others produce bio fuel plants such as sugar cane, guinea cone, palm oil, cassava etc. Investment in agricultural land is believes to be profitable and secure by investor especially after the 2008 food and financial crises in which loss had been recorded (Future Agriculture, 2011). In Nigeria, thousands of hectares have been acquired with the help of Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) for bio fuel plant and food crop production respectively (Friends of the Earth Africa and Friends of the Earth Europe, 2010).

Chinese company, Great Norther Agribusiness Limited (GNAL) invested in Jigawa State where it acquired 20000 hectares of land for sugar plantation and sugar factory. The acquisition affects about 32 communities where some lost the farmland and others lost both

the farmland and residences (government source). The affected farmers had rejected the government decision and protested against, though compensation was offered. The land was acquired on January, 2015, and the project was launched on May 2017. Gayawar Malam village is among the affected communities in which their farmland has been acquired. To some of the farmers the land is the only means of subsistence they possess while others have other means, though the farmland is their primary means of subsistence. This paper aims at studying the socio-economic and political implications of this acquisition on the people of Gayawar Malam village.

1.Research Method

Jigawa State in Northern Nigeria was created from Kano State on 27th August, 1991. It is bordered to the West by Kano State, to the East by Bauchi and Yobe States, and to the North by Katsina and Yobe States and the Republic of Niger (Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission, 2019). It has a total land area of 23,287 Kilometer Square. Jigawa State has 27 Local Government Areas with total population of 6,176, 192 (male – 3,149,858 and female – 3,026,334). Its vegetation is Sudan and Guinea Savannah (Ibid). The State is located 12o 0'0" N (latitude) and 9o0'0"E (longitude), 380 above sea level (Getamap.net, 10th June, 2019).

The major crops produced include: Hibiscus, Soy Beans, Cowpea, Tomato, Maize, groundnut, millet, rice, sesame, and sorghum. It is also rich in solid minerals which include: granite, tin, kaolin, columbite, iron ore and soda ash, with main investment opportunities that include Agribusiness, Light Manufacturing, Healthcare, Tourism, Energy and Mining (Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission, 2019). However, these communities largely depend on farming for their survival. During the dry season, members of these communities especially the youth move to neighboring states and even as far as Lagos state in search of greener pasture - (*cirani*), and when the rainy season starts approaching they return to their respective villages and start clearing their farmland in preparation for another farming activity.

Gayawar Malam village is under Gagarawa Local Government Area of Jigawa State. It has a population of about one thousand (1000) people and four hundred (400) house hold (community leader). The major occupation of the people is farming for subsistence. The farmland of the entire household has been affected. With only few escaping with half *safiya* or less.

Field research was conducted and the data were collected from two source; the primary source which is the information from the respondents in the field and the secondary source which include text books, academic journals, newspapers, government documents etc. Sample of eleven (11) respondents was used. They include six (6) affected farmers, two (2) government officials, one (1) traditional leader, one (1) members House of Representative, representing the affected constituency and one member representing the GNAL. The 6 affected farmers were selected randomly because there was no sampling frame. The criteria for the selection is that they must be members of Gayawa community and among those whose land was affected. The two government officials (the surveyor general and Director Jigawa State Investment Promotion Agency (Investjigawa), represented by Head of Advocacy and Strategy for InvestJigawa and Legal Analyst, Desk officer for Renewable Energy for InvestJigawa; a member House of Representatives representing Gagarawa/Gumel/Maigatari/Sule-tankarkar constituency; the traditional leader (Gayawa village head) and representative of the GNAL (Director Agricultural Services) were selected purposively. This is because, their position allows them to have access to key information that is useful to the study.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used to collect data from the 6 affected farmers, and Key Informant Interview (KII) was used to collect data from the two government officials, a member representing Gagarawa/Gumel/Maigatari/Sule-tankarkar constituency, the representative of the Gayawa constituency and the traditional leader.

The data were analysed qualitatively using cross tabulation of the FGD with the interviews. However, the representative of the GNAL did not respond.

2. The Acquisition of Land by Great Northern Agribusiness Limited

Great Northern Agribusiness Limited is a subsidiary of MESSRS Lee Group of companies called Lee Group. The mother company has been in Nigeria for over 40 years with investments in steel, footwear and plastic industries, and it has worldwide branches and production locations (Lee Group, 2021). It is a Chinese owned company. It has offices in Kano, Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt in Nigeria. It also has offices in Hong Kong and Shanghai in China (Lee Group, 2021).

The Great Northern Agribusiness limited was incorporated on 5th May 2014, with company number 1188675 as private company limited by shares. Its Directors include Lee Sheau Y, Lee Sheau F, Lee Man L, Earth Wide Company Limited and Crystal Consolidated Enterprises Limited (Corporate Affairs Commission in GN-Check, 2021, B2BHint, 2021). The company's registered office address is number 3 Kijawal District, Ringim Local Government, Ringim, Jigawa State. The incorporation of the company is not unrelated with the interest of investing in agriculture in the state during its first investment summit in 2013 where many investors including the Lee Group attended.

The idea of investing in land by GNAL (owned by MESSRS. Lee Group) came up after Jigawa State Government at its First Summit in 2013 invited investors to come and invest in Jigawa State. The GNAL answered the call, came to Jigawa and showed its interest in investing in sugarcane in the state. The company together with government representatives went to several sites and finally chose Gagarawa axis (Surveyor General, Jigawa State, 2018). The company wrote to the state, and the approval was made on 7th January, 2015, granting 12000 hectares of land including farmland and residential areas of many villagers which affected about forty-two thousand (42,000) households (Zorro, 2018). The Muhammadu Badaru's administration (which assumed office on 29th May, 2015) while rallying campaign for 2015 general elections, promised to repeal the agreement if elected into office. However, after spending 38 days in office a new agreement was signed on 30th June, 2015 between the Jigawa State Government and the GNAL, in which 8000 hectares was added for sugarcane factory, making it a total of 20000 hectares (Zorro, 2018).

3. Literature Review and theoretical Framework

The concept of land acquisition in form of foreign investment is discussed under this section and the global capitalism framework of analysis is discussed and found to be relevant to the study.

3.1 Conceptualization Foreign Investment in form of Land Acquisition

The concept of foreign direct investment (FDI) in form of land acquisition is used interchangeably as land grabbing, land deals, international land acquisition, large scale land acquisition (LSLA) and FDI in land, depending on the perspective, critics call it land grabbing while investors call it FDI or land deals (Cotula, 2013).

The debate over the FDI in form of land acquisition has been on the impact of the FDI on the host communities. While some scholars argue that FDI in form of land acquisition has positive impacts on the host economies (Schonevel, 2011, Agba et al, 2018, others argue that

it has negative impact (Mechiche-Alami et al, 2021; Kachika, 2021 ; Roth, 2012; Raudart and Mazomer, 2015; Golay, 2015; Ndi, 2017; Basu, 2007; Klopp & Lumumba, 2014; German et al 2011).

Schonevel (2011) for instance attributes the current wave of FDI on land to factors such as perception by northern investors, of a long-term demand for bio-fuels in industrialized countries and demand for food products in southern countries from Asia and the Middle East. He argues that though potentially some places like Sub-Saharan African countries are in economically advantageous position as a result of these investments, ineffective domestic governance of land acquisition makes it difficult for these countries to tap the benefits of these investments, and are at risk of becoming isolated in a global market of foreign capital accumulation. Agba et al (2018) argues that after conceiving FDI in form of land acquisition as the flow of foreign income into particular economy through investment which involves multinational corporations, that FDI in land is in the long-run associated with benefits that include increased job opportunities, exchange rate stability, increased interest rate, among others.

Basu (2007) has different position with the preceding scholars, he argues that FDI in land is negative and it involves forceful acquisitions by governments of host countries in the name of 'public purpose' on payment of compensation even when the owner is not willing to release the plot. Basu (2007) argues that the main motive is competition by states to attract global capital. He holds that, one major characteristic that differentiates this age of imperialism from that of 1960s and 1970s of the last century is its overdependence on state power for rewriting economic laws and for their implementation. Supporting Basu's position, German et al (2011) argue that there is connivance between the global capital and the state in securing the fertile agricultural land by the former. They conceive FDI in land as transboundary investment in land for the cultivation of food and bio-fuel crops. They mention the drivers as rising food prices and alternative energy. German et al (2011) argue that results suggested in many cases it is not a global 'land grab' driven only by the private sector but also by a supply-driven process in which governments and local elites (eg. customary) are playing an active role in their taste for foreign capital for development and for revenue in form of rent. They further that customary rights are not protected during negotiations despite the recognition of these rights. They cited evidence from their study which covers four countries – Ghana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. In Ghana for instance, traditional council plays a major role, also, office of the land administrator plays a role by collecting and sharing the revenue. Therefore, FDI in form of land acquisition is taking over the land rights and use by foreign interest through purchase or leasing in many instance without consent and willingness of the local people to give out the land. The foreign investors are supported by the government in question to acquire the land usually in the name of public interest – bringing about economic growth and development, in form of provision of job opportunities, food security and revenue to the state. In reality however, these investments are associated with the opposite of these opportunities.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

Globalization theory called global capitalism developed by Robinson (2017) is found to be relevant to this study. The theory has the following tenets:

That we are now in the new wave of major transformation of global capitalism, a transition to a qualitative new transnational or global state. The turning point is the global crisis of 1970s that followed the oil crisis and the collapse of the Bretton Wood system. Capitalism was able to survive after going global, leading to its expansion and more integration of the world economy, and the emergence of transnational capital, transnational capitalist class and

transnational state apparatus. Transnational capitalist class has emerged as the agent of global capitalism. This class is made up of the owners and managers of transnational capital. Its main interest is promoting global accumulation.

Capitalism requires the state in order to function. The capitalist system cannot be sustained through market relations alone. But national governments do not exercise the transnational political authority that global capitalism requires. It is through Transnational State (TNS) apparatuses that the global elites convert the structural power of the global economy into supranational political authority.

Transnational capital's liberation from the nation-state has enhanced its structural power. As a result, there is increased polarization of wealth between the haves and have-nots, which in turn provokes the internal contradictions and generates escalating social conflicts and crisis of state legitimacy.

Robinson's tenets include the transition from the world economy to the global economy facilitated by expansion of production lines of corporations, the intensity in the integration of global financial system, which made possible the emergence of transnational capital, transnational capitalist class and the transnational state. These have resulted in globalization of labour and its exploitation by the global capital.

However, land has also become a global commodity, where governments and corporations have been committing huge resources for food and bio-fuel production for strategic reasons and turnover on the investments. Other factors are: the decolonization process which made more countries independent, market reforms by communist regimes, multiple centers in the world and multiple sources of investment capital. These factors have led to further integration of countries of the world and making capitalism global. Based on these some tenets have been added.

There are multiple sources of investment capital dominated by Western countries and China.

The two dominant poles are competing to have dominant role in the global economy via control of global assets.

The continuous acquisition of global assets (especially agricultural land) by the capitalist (indigenous and foreign) lead to structural impact on the affected population which lead to social transformation that lead to emergence of groups, classes, and economic relations which later transform into political relation (class dominance).

The acquisition of global assets (especially means of production) by global capitalist leads to redistribution of income within and between countries of the world which lead to improvement in living standard of nationals of one country (foreign investors) and poor living standard of nationals of other countries (host country in this case).

The ruling elites allied with capitalist (local and foreign) to promote the expansion of capital across the globe in the interest of both (the ruling elites and the capitalist).

4.1 Data Presentation Interpretation and Analysis

The following table represents the land cleared and used by GNAL and crops lost by the six respondents in Gayawar Malam

Table 1. Land and Crops Lost by the Respondents which FGD was Administered

Land in *Safiya* (0.7	Grains (sorghum	Sesame in	Beans in	Hibiscus in	Bitter melon seed	Groundnut

hectare)	and millet) in bags	bags	bags	Kilogram	(*Guna*) in bags	in bags
5	20	-	10	-	30	-
2	8	5	-	-	-	-
4	20	7	5	500	-	-
4	20	10	10	1000	-	-
7	30	20	10	1000	-	-
2	15	-	10	500	25	-
Total, 24	**113**	**42**	**45**	**3000**	**55**	-
Amount in Naira (N)	**5,424,000**	**4,830,000**	**3,690,000**	**2,700,000**	**2,200,000**	-

Source: Compiled by the author using data collected from the field (2021, updated 2025).

The table above represents the land cleared and used by GNAL and crops lost by the six respondents in Gayawar Malam. The first respondent lost five *safiya* (a *safiya* equals to 0.7 hectare of land). As a result, he could no longer produce what he used to before the lan is acquired, that is, 20 bags of sorghum and millet, 10 bags of beans and 30 bags 30 bags of melon seed. The second respondent whose 2 *safiya* is affected lost 8 bags of millet and 5 bags of sesame. The third respondent whose 4 *safiya* has been affected has lost 20 bags of sorghum and millet, 7 bags of sesame, 5 bags of beans and 500 kilogram of hibiscus. The fourth respondent has lost 4 *safiya* to the acquisition and could no longer produce the 20 bags of sorghum and millet, 10 bags of sesame, 10 bags of beans and 1000 kilogram of hibiscus he used to produce. The fifth respondent respondent whose 7 *safiya* is affected has lost 30 bags of sorghum and millet, 20 bags of sesame, 10 bags of millet and 1000 kilogram of hibiscus. The six respondent whose 2 *safiya* is affected has lost 15 bags of millet, 10 bags of beans, 500 kilogram of hibiscus and 25 bags of melon seed. The total monetary value of these products is N18,844,000.

4.2 Socio-Economic and Political Implications

4.2.1 Social Implication

Hundred percent (100%) of the respondents (from the FGD conducted) stated that the acquisition has affected their subsistence negatively. It has so many implications on the affected farmers. Generally, the acquired land becomes nontransferable. It could not be inherited, sold, leased or used as collateral. Prior to the acquisition the farmers inherited the land and were willing to pass it to their next generation; sell it or lease it to satisfy urgent need (especially settling heath bills and marriage expense and other important needs), but it is no longer possible.

The acquisition also affects child education especially in the areas where the work has started by GNAL. 40 percent (FGD respondents) of those whose farms had been cleared and used by GNAL stated that they find it difficult to pay their children's school fees because they lost the cash crops they used to farm and sell for that purpose. For instance, one of the respondents who has 22 children stated that 4 of his children could not proceed from secondary school,

and another who completed NCE could not proceed. Another respondent who has 13 children stated that 5 of his children were in Primary school but could not proceed because he could not sponsor their education.

In this area, the youth have lost interest in farming. More youth are now moving out of the area in search of greener pasture in states from the southern part of the country that include Lagos, Ogun, Oyo and Rivers. For instance, about 50 youth left Gayawa (a number far higher than usual migration). Although the State has argued that it provided the affected farmers with alternative farmland, 100 percent of the respondents (FGD) argued that no alternative farm has been provided, and that they were not willing to collect the compensation offered, all they want is their farmland. Gayawar Malam is among the communities where the compensation given by the State Government was not collected by the affected farmers. Although most of them are in possession of the land allocation card issued by the state, the was yet to be allocated to them.

4.2.2 Economic Implication

Economically, it affected subsistence (both food and cash) of 100 percent of the respondents in Gayawar Malam (who participated in the FGD). For instance, 113 bags of grains, 42 bags of sesame, 45 bags of beans, 3000 kilogram of hibiscus and 55 bags of bitter melon seed (used to produce vegetable oil) has been lost annually by the affected farmers. It is also found that the acquisition led to ploratenization of some of the affected farmers (though the number of those employed was not significant). Those who work for the company receive N700 to N800 as wage for a work of ten hours. Not everybody has a chance of being employed by the company. However, the community leader Bulama who argues that the project is beneficial to his community because it provides job opportunities to them confirmed that the number of those employed by the company was two people, and were employed as security, even though many people looking for the company's job have been contacting him (interview with the community leader). 100 percent of the respondents (FGD) argues that they are not willing to work for the company because they still believe they are the owners of the farmland. They refused to collect compensation and have not been provided with alternative land, and this affects their earnings. For instance, the total revenue lost by the respondents is N18,844,000, which is a big money. These farmers used the money generated from the sale of farm produce to buy mean of communication, renovate their houses, marry, and for parents marry up their children. They also use it to take care of the household. This lost implies that they could no longer be able to satisfy these needs. Their purchasing power has been affected and this affects their living standard negatively, and makes them poorer. Though the State Government stated that 50 percent of the lost land was provided as an alternative to farmers for farming for substance and out grower scheme which make job opportunities available (interview with government official), it is found that no alternative land has been provided and the out grower scheme has not been introduced. The farmers whose farmland was cleared and used by GNAL have no any alternative.

4.2.3 Political Implication

Politically, the acquisition led to transfer of ownership of means of production and subsistence from the farmers to the GNAL (the dominant interest). The farmers are now the dominated. Although the State Government claimed that it provided alternative land to the affected farmers (interview with government official), the study found that no alternative farmland has been given to them. The farmers have lost the means of subsistence they possess without being provided with alternative. The GNAL continue with clearing of more land after issuing notice to the affected farmers. Whenever expansion is to be made, security forces are reinforced against the resisting farmers. There were instances of clash. For instance, one of the protesting farmers lie down on his farm and vowed not to allow the

company workers to clear the land. Therefore, the GNAL is now the dominant, the owner of means of production and subsistence, while the farmers are the dominated, losing the means of production and subsistence. The member representing the area has challenged both the state and the GNAL of using force to acquire the land. Initially he supported the acquisition but later opposed it. According to him, the initial proposal was violated. Initially, the government addressed the farmers and informed them of its intention and decision that the land of the affected farmers will be divided into three; one-third to be sold to the company for sugar plantation; tow-third to be owned and managed by the farmers who would plant sugarcane on one and cultivate the other for their subsistence. However, having realized that the acquisition was total, covering the whole farmland, the farmers and the member representing the constituency protested and rejected the project (interview with the member). It is found that the farmers were not adequately represented when the state government took the decision. However, the State Government accused the member of self-interest and that he only rejected the project because the government turned down his demands. The member stated that he was not aware of any demand made to the state. However, in stating another reason for challenges the project, he argues that he proposed that the money for compensation should be paid through Jaiz Bank because to him Islamic bank should be the one to benefit. The State rejected his suggestion. That could be one of the demands the State was referring to. However, the affected farmers led by this member took the State to court and the case is now in Court of Appeal. The land has been acquired and the project has been launched. The ownership of this means of production and subsistence has been transferred to the GNAL. The State Government and the GNAL signed the Memorandum of Understanding on 30th day of June, 2015, and Certificate of Occupancy on 15th March, 2017 for the 12000 hectares, and has paid the ground rent of 500 Naira per hectare (Agricultural Rate) for 21 totaling 10,058473 Naira (Surveyor General, Jigawa State). This transfer was enforced by the state as confirmed by the FGD respondents whose farmlands had been cleared and used by the GNAL.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion of this study has been summarized. Although various governments are struggling to attract foreign investments for economic growth and development, this research found deprivation as a result of such investment. The land acquisition by GNAL does not bring about development to the affected farmers in particular and their communities in general. The farmers lost their means of subsistence (for food and income earnings) without any alternative. They lost their title of being owners of means of production and subsistence; they also lost economic freedom, for they could no longer produce food and cash crops, and this affects their living standard.

6. Recommendations

Alternative land should be provided to the people as promised by the state. This will allow the farmer to continue with their farming activities while at same time have a title to the land.

Special fund should be set aside by the state to support the affected farmers and their families in the areas of education, health, feeding and settlement in the a newly located farmland. This would ease the pressure which the farmers are already in.

Fresh land or reserve that is not occupied by local people should be used for allocated to investors by the state; this is because land lost is associated with difficulties and socio-economic problems that heighten the existing poverty, unemployment.

Government should focus on supporting the local farmers to improve and expand their activities by providing subsidized equipment and inputs, extension services etc, thereby

increasing yield, income, and revenue to the state, this would in turn lead to development of the farmers in particular and the state in general.

Government should carry along all stakeholders in decision making process concerning granting out the land that is already occupied by local people. This would make its decision acceptable to all the parties involved.

Government should focus on stability and welfare of its citizens rather than the revenue they would get from foreign investors. This is because many studies found positive relationship between poverty and insecurity (Salihi, 2012; Walker, 2012; Campbell, 2014). Depriving the local farmers could lead to increase in crime and social vices in the area and neighbouring states.

Inward investment should be encouraged and supported by the State, by providing incentives to the local investors. A strong farmers' association to stand against any pressure from any quarter should be formed by the farmers. This study found that the affected farmers have no union or association that could protect their interests. This is based on the response from the respondents which clearly indicated that they do not have a farmers' association that can confront the state. The farmers depend on the member, House of Representatives, representing the constituency to fight for their right, and is already doing so through court.

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AN EVALUATION OF THE BANDITRY REDUCTION STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE KATSINA STATE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA (2015-2023)

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Abstract

Banditry has posed significant challenges in Katsina, characterised by kidnappings, cattle rustling, and violent attacks on rural communities. The government has adopted a multi-faceted approach to address these issues, resulting in a reported reduction of banditry incidents. Key strategies include enhanced collaboration among security agencies, community engagement initiatives, and legislative advocacy for the establishment of state police. Socio-economic interventions aimed at education and community rehabilitation have also been prioritised to mitigate the root causes of banditry. Despite these efforts, challenges persist, as bandits have adapted their tactics, targeted remote areas and employing more violent methods. To investigate this phenomenon, the paper used both primary (focus group discussion and structured interview) and secondary sources of data collection, and qualitative method of data analysis. The study underscores the need for continuous adaptation of strategies, including the integration of technology and community involvement, to effectively combat the evolving nature of banditry in Katsina State. Overall, while progress has been made, the ongoing threat of banditry necessitates sustained and innovative approaches to ensure long-term security and stability in the region.

Key words: Banditry, bandit, security, insecurity, strategy

Introduction

The security and progress of Nigeria have been seriously threatened by the plague of banditry. The hotspots that have received the most attention recently are Kaduna, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto and Zamfara. In Katsina state banditry has had devasted its people with over thousands of fatality figures, and about 500,000 displaced persons has continued to climb, and it has taken the form of shooting and murdering, cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, rape, torching entire villages, and stealing of valuables (Ladan & Mutawalli, 2021).

The remote and mostly pastoral communities in Katsina state have endured years of neglect, depriving them of the infrastructure, education, and other necessities for the diversification of new means of subsistence that are not openly reliant on natural resources (Bello & Kazibwe, 2024). Internal conflict and the loss of governmental control of the forests have made it possible for small guns to proliferate, greatly increasing the prevalence of banditry and its effects. Poorly policed country borders serve as safe havens for robbers both inside the state and in neighbouring nations like the Niger Republic (Bello, 2023).

To stop this carnage, Katsina state government from 2015 to 2023 adopted various strategies such as collaboration and supports to security agencies and other development and empowerment initiatives directed at addressing the deep-rooted structural causes of the situation.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to evaluate the banditry-reduction strategies launched and implemented by the Katsina State Government from 2015 to 2023. To find out about the steps taken by the Katsina state government to reduce banditry and to explain why banditry has persisted despite all the efforts to stop it.

Methodology

This paper uses the data collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected from face-to-face semi structured expert interviews and focus group discussion using purposive sampling technique. The face-to-face respondents include two academics, two traditional leaders, two security personnel, two local farmers' group leaders, and two local herders' group leaders that are residents of Katsina state. For the focus group, the paper analysed the data from two set of FGD, each containing eight individuals totalling of sixteen local individuals drawn from the three senatorial zones. The Katsina north and south have five respondents each while Katsina central have six respondents respectively to ensure representation. Each group contained two females each, and the respondents were selected using their experience, victimhood, and knowledge of the situation. The secondary data used included published Katsina state government documents containing the documented information of the strategies and various efforts to curbing insecurity in the state, journal articles accessed online using Scispace AI tool and google search engine and other relevant reports. My search for data was guided by an inclusion and exclusion criteria where themes related to banditry, armed bandits, herders/farmers conflicts Katsina state government's response, community-based approach to banditry were included in the search. Any issue in relation to bandit's attacks outside Katsina state, any issue that is beyond 2023 in relation to banditry were excluded from my coverage and analysis The data was analysed qualitatively.

Conceptual Clarifications: Banditry and Bandit

Banditry is the practice of engaging in criminal acts, such as robbery, theft, and violence, by organised groups or individuals who exploit their victims for personal gain (Utibe &Ogundiya, 2024). It is commonly understood as criminal activities earned out by organised groups or individuals who use violence, coercion, and illicit means to achieve their objectives. These criminal activities often include robbery, theft, extortion, kidnapping, smuggling, or other forms of predation (Abraham &Sakariyau, 2023).

These criminal activities are perpetrated by criminal elements called bandits, which are organised groups that operate with a degree of structure, coordination, and division of labour (Osasona, 2022). These groups may have leaders, hierarchical structures, and specific roles assigned to their members (Mungadi et al., 2020). Bandits employ violence, coercion, intimidation, or the threat thereof to achieve their objectives (Vande, 2023). This includes the use of physical force against victims, psychological tactics, or the display of weapons to instil fear and compliance (Vande, 2023). Bandits often target vulnerable individuals or groups, such as travelers, merchants, or rural communities (Osasona, 2022). They exploit the weaknesses or lack of protection of their victims to carry out criminal activities, such as robbery, kidnapping, or extortion (Mungadi et al., 2020).

Banditry often thrives in regions with weak governance, ineffective law enforcement, or areas undergoing political unrest (Abraham &Sakariyau, 2023). These conditions provide fertile ground for bandits to operate with relative impunity.

Causes of Banditry in Nigeria

Banditry in Nigeriais a complex issue with multiple contributing factors. Understanding the causes can help shed light on the underlying dynamics that fuel this phenomenon (Akinyetun, 2021). Several elements have been suggested as driving forces of banditry in Nigeria, particularly in the country's northwest region. Some socio-existential variable that characterise the region's interior, as well as its borders, are the drivers of banditry in northern Nigeria (Ahmad & Jamilu, 2022).

Widespread poverty, unemployment, and lack of economic opportunities in northwestern regions have created an environment conducive to banditry (Adenike, 2021). Marginalized communities with limited access to education, healthcare, and basic services have become vulnerable to recruitment by criminal elements (Shrestha, 2021).Weak governance, corruption, and inadequate security infrastructure in remote areas has further create a breeding ground for criminal activities (Ewusi&Ngange, 2020). Similarly, inadequate law enforcement presence, porous borders, and limited resources for maintaining law and order are contributing to the proliferation of banditry (Idris &Tutumlu, 2022).

Furthermore, competition over natural resources, such as land, water, and minerals, can escalate into conflicts involving banditry (Schellens& Diemer, 2020). In Northern regions where access to resources is limited or disputed, armed groups may resort to banditry as a means of survival or to gain control over valuable assets (Schellens& Diemer, 2020). As Nigeria is characterized by diverse ethnic and religious groups, and tensions between these groups can fuel banditry (Agbiboa&Okem, 2011). In some instances, criminal elements exploit these divisions to mobilize support or justify their actions, exacerbating conflicts along ethnic and religious lines (Agbiboa&Okem, 2011).

Inadequate access to justice, weak dispute resolution mechanisms, and a breakdown of traditional authority structures undermine the rule of law (Selita, 2019). This creates an environment where bandits can operate with impunity, eroding trust in institutions and contributing to a cycle of violence (Agbiboa&Okem, 2011). Regional instability, cross-border criminal networks, and transnational organized crime, and arms smugglings contribute to the growth of banditry (Bello, 2023). The movement of arms, drugs, and illicit goods across borders can facilitate the activities criminal groups and fuel insecurity within Nigeria.

Availability of small and light weapons, and other interrelated factors, has often worked to the advantage of armed bandits (Sa'ad &Idakwoji, 2021).

Forms of banditry, its nature, dynamics, and operation patterns in Katsina State of Northern Nigeria

The nature and pattern of armed banditry in Katsina state has become so pervasive that only a few residents that travel or live within border communities can claim not to have suffered its impact (Osasona, 2022). The phenomenon has taken various forms in various places which may include waylaying victims on the highways and on transit points; storming and sacking of whole villages; stealing hundreds of cattle; settling in villages and collecting taxes; and extortion on village routes (Osasona, 2022). Losses could range from monetary, material, valuables livestock and above all, human resources (Ojo, Oyewole, & Aina, 2023).

In most cases, by their nature, armed bandits often live in ungoverned or under-governed spaces, where government presence is mostly limited or absent (Ojo, Oyewole, & Aina, 2023). These include remote areas and forest enclaves, which are used as hiding places to plan and execute attacks (Onwuzuruigbo, 2020), such an environment provides bandits with opportunities for operational advantage. Accordingly, armed bandits often operate in rural

settings, such that their attacks, kidnappings, and cattle rustlings, lootings, among other criminal activities, are carried out in, from and against villages (Abdulyakeen, 2021). Their operational control can therefore revolve around rural and border communities, and uninhabited or less populated spots along major roads or waterways (Ojo, Aina & Oyewole, 2024). In this manner, the primary victims of armed banditry are innocent citizens residing in or traveling along remote parts of the state (Onwuzuruigbo, 2020).

Although armed bandits generally live and act in anonymity, they commit violent crimes in the open (Ojo, Aina & Oyewole, 2024). This reflects a tactic employed by common criminals, who consider theft as a means to an end, which is often defined in private terms (Ojo, Aina & Oyewole, 2024). Although the operational, tactical, and strategic roles of individual members of armed groups may be shaped by gender differences, the growing sexual diversity of armed conflicts and criminal violence can no longer be ignored. By their nature, women are more suitable, employed and sometimes restricted to intelligence, counterintelligence, and logistics.
The mode of operation of the bandits could constitute an obstacle to preventive measures that could have been put in place by the law enforcement agents (Ladan & Mutawalli, 2021). This is because these bandits engage in one-time raids and follow a 'nomadic' (or slash and bum) form of appropriation. Once the territory covered by the bandits expands so that they incur high travel costs, they find it economically advantageous to form rebel government where looting is converted to taxation.Instead of the anxiety of random looting, people suffer the certainty of steady taxation (Aina & Ojo, 2024).

Strategies implemented by the Katsina state government towards reducing banditry
The Katsina State Government in Nigeria has implemented various measures to address the issue of banditry and improve security within the state. Some Key measures taken by the state government include:

Dialogue and Reconciliation
The government has engaged in dialogue and reconciliation efforts with repentant bandits (Bello, 2019). This involves encouraging bandits to surrender their weapons, renounce violence, and reintegrate into society. According to one respondent, state government have provided opportunities for rehabilitation, skills training, and education for former bandits to discourage them from returning to criminal activities (Personal interview, 2023, June 7). The State government has convened a reconciliatory meeting at Runka in Safana LGA where bandits were called upon to stop all criminal activities to ensure the security of lives and properties in not only Safana but also other LGAs that were affected by banditry and cattle rustling (Aina, 2023; Bello, 2019).

Following series of reconciliatory meetings with the bandits the State government granted amnesty to them and arranged a peace deal where the bandit leader Buharin Daji symbolically handed over his gun to Governor Masari at a gathering in Kankara, Kankara LGA on 16th January 2016 (Abdullahi, 2020). The other bandits also handed over weapons that include 47 AK47 assault rifles, 267 locally made guns, and 57 other brands of weapons (Abdullahi, 2020).

The State government has purchased one Hilux vehicle and fifty motorcycles which were given to the ex-bandit leader and ex-rustlers and selected cattle rustlers for the purpose of patrolling the vast terrain of the Rugu and other forest areas (Abdullatif, 2021). This forest patrol is to ensure that cattle rustling is effectively contained and to confront the few bandits that still engage in stealing cattle (Aina, 2023). The State government has also built health

care facilities such as dispensaries for the benefits of Fulani herdsmen. Some dams located at the Rugu Forest were rehabilitated to provide water to the cattle belonging to the Fulani communities (Abdullahi, 2021). This was beside provision of some monthly allowances to the leaders of the ex-bandits for fuelling the car and the motorcycles (Abdullahi, 2021). The State government carried out public enlightenment programmes on the media with the objectives of informing the people of the eight frontline LGAs that an amnesty programme and peace deal has been organized and that the vigilante group and local people should not attack the ex-bandits. The ex-bandits should be allowed to settle within the local communities if they wish to do so and carry out their daily activities without any fear of danger (Danjuma, 2020).

Community Engagement

The government has focused on community engagement and mobilization to enhance security (Abdullatif, 2021). This includes the establishment of community-based vigilante groups, collaboration with local leaders, and encouraging citizens to report suspicious activities. Community-driven initiatives aim to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility for security within local communities. Community engagement is a crucial aspect of the measures implemented by the Katsina State Government to curb banditry within the state. It involves actively involving and mobilizing local communities in the security efforts and creating a sense of ownership and responsibility for maintaining peace and security.

One respondent asserted that, "government encourages the formation and support of community-based vigilante groups" (Personal Interview, 2023, June 6). These groups consist of residents who are trained, equipped, and empowered to assist in maintaining security within their communities. The state government also recognises the influence and role of traditional and community leaders in the provision of security, and because of this, it engages with local leaders, such as village heads, religious leaders, and community elders, to seek their support and involvement in addressing banditry. These leaders play a vital role in mobilising their communities, mediating conflicts, and promoting peacebuilding initiatives (Personal Interview 2024, June 7).

The Katsina state government conducts public awareness campaigns to educate communities about the dangers of banditry, the importance of security, and the need for collective action (Abdullatif, 2021). These campaigns involve town hall meetings, community dialogues, radio programmes, and other platforms to disseminate information and promote community participation in security efforts. Community members are encouraged to actively participate in intelligence gathering and reporting of suspicious activities. The government establishes confidential reporting mechanisms, hotlines, or dedicated platforms where residents can share information with security agencies (Katsina State Government Budget Presentation Speech, 2023). According to one participant, this collaborative approach strengthens the flow of information and helps security forces to proactively respond to potential threats. Promoting community-based conflict resolution and mediation processes to prevent and address conflicts that may fuel banditry (FGD 2023, June 8).

Additionally, one participant from my FGD maintained that Local Peace Committees or platforms are established to mediate disputes, resolve grievances, and foster peaceful coexistence across all Local Government Areas. These initiatives according to him contribute to reducing tensions and addressing the underlying causes of conflicts (FGD 2023, June 8).

The government supports skills training, entrepreneurship programs, and access to micro-credit facilities to empower community members economically (Katsina State Government

Budget Presentation Speech, 2023). By providing alternative livelihood opportunities, the government aims to reduce the vulnerability of individuals to recruitment by bandits. Recognizing that youth are often targeted for recruitment by bandit groups, the government implements programmes to engage and rehabilitate vulnerable youth (Katsina State Government Budget Presentation Speech, 2023). These programmes include education and vocational training, sports and recreational activities, and mentorship opportunities (Katsina State Government Budget Presentation Speech, 2023). By offering positive alternatives, the government aims to steer young people away from engaging in criminal activities. Some participants agreed that through community engagement, the importance of involving local communities as active stakeholders in ensuring security and combating banditry can be recognised. They extended that by building trust, promoting dialogue, and empowering communities, the state government can foster a collaborative environment where communities become active partners in maintaining peace and security within the state (FGD 2023, June 8).

Support for Intelligence Gathering

The Katsina state government has invested in intelligence gathering and sharing mechanisms. This involves strengthening the capacity of security agencies to collect and analyse information, improving communication and coordination among various security agencies, and utilizing technology for early warning systems and information dissemination (Katsina State Government Budget Presentation Speech, 2023). Enhanced intelligence gathering is a significant component of the measures implemented by the Katsina State Government to curb banditry within the state. It focuses on improving the collection, analysis, and sharing of information to enhance security operations (Katsina State Government Budget Presentation Speech, 2023).

The Katsina government provides support to security agencies operating within the state, including the Nigerian Police Force, Nigerian Army, Department of State Security Services (SSS), and other relevant agencies (Ladan, 2020). This support includes training, equipment, and resources to enhance their intelligence gathering capabilities. The government emphasizes the collection of timely and accurate intelligence on bandit activities. This involves deploying trained personnel to gather information from various sources, including local communities, informants, surveillance systems, and technology-driven intelligence tools (Ladan, 2020).

It also promotes collaboration and coordination among security agencies operating within the state. This includes establishing mechanisms for sharing intelligence, joint operations, and regular communication channels (Ladan, 2020). Improved coordination allows for more effective responses to banditry incidents and the sharing of vital information for proactive measures (Ladan, 2020).

The government also invests in early warning systems to detect and prevent banditry incidents (Odia, 2023). These systems utilize information from various sources to identify potential threats and trigger timely responses. Early warning mechanisms include community reporting platforms, hotline numbers, and communication networks to disseminate alerts and share information with security agencies (Odia, 2023). One respondent suggested that if the State government can engage local communities to act as sources of intelligence, community members will feel empowered to report suspicious activities, provide information on bandit hideouts, and share relevant details that can aid in investigations. This according to him will help in building trust and cooperation with communities and enhance the flow of actionable intelligence (Personal Interview 2023, June 7).

The Katsina State Government also invests in the training and capacity building of security personnel involved in intelligence gathering (Ladan &Iguda, 2019). This includes equipping them with skills in data analysis, surveillance techniques, information management, and the use of modem technologies. Strengthening the capacity of security personnel improves their ability to collect, analyze, and utilize intelligence effectively (Ladan &Iguda, 2019). By prioritizing enhanced intelligence gathering, the Katsina State Government aims to proactively identify and neutralize banditry activities.

Support for Security Agencies

The government provides logistical support, equipment, and resources to security agencies operating within the state (Ladan &Iguda, 2019). This includes the provision of vehicles, communication equipment, and adequate funding to enhance their operational capabilities and response to security challenges. Support for security agencies is a critical measure implemented by the Katsina State Government to effectively combat banditry and improve security within the state. The government allocate financial resources to ensure security agencies operating within the state have the necessary funds to carry out their operation effectively (Ladan &Iguda, 2019).

The government also acknowledges the importance of the well-being and motivation of security personnel (Abdullatif, 2021). This support encompasses financial resources, logistics, training, and collaboration, welfare, and infrastructure development. Incentive schemes was implemented to recognize and reward exemplary performance, boosting morale and commitment to tackling banditry. Investing in the development of security infrastructure, such as the construction and renovation of police stations, barracks, and other security facilities (Abdullatif, 2021). By providing support to security agencies, the Katsina State Government strengthens their capacity to combat banditry and maintain peace within the state. These measures collectively enhance the capabilities of security agencies to respond to banditry incidents, deter criminal activities, and safeguard the lives and property of the residents of Katsina State (Enna, 2021).

Support for Border Security

Given Katsina State's proximity to neighbouring countries, the government has placed emphasis on strengthening border security. This involves collaboration with border control agencies, enhancing surveillance, and implementing measures to curb cross-border criminal activities, including arms smuggling and illicit trade. Border security is an essential component of the measures implemented by the Katsina State Government to curb banditry and enhance overall security within the state. Given Katsina State's proximity to neighbouring countries, effective border security measures are crucial in preventing the inflow of bandits, arms smuggling, and cross-border criminal activities (Radio Nigeria, 2022).

> You cannot secure a country that has too many porous borders. You cannot effectively secure a country that has vast un-governed spaces, and you cannot effectively secure a country when its neighbours provide a gateway for the inflow of small arms and light weapons as well as hard drugs (Radio Nigeria, 2022).

The government actively engages with communities residing along theborders. It educates them about the importance of border security, encourages them to report suspicious activities, and establishes channels for them to provide information to security agencies (Radio Nigeria, 2022). Engaging border communities promotes their involvement in maintaining security and strengthens the overall border security framework. The government invests in the training

and capacity building of security personnel involved in border security. This includes equipping them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and techniques for effective border control, surveillance, intelligence gathering, and interagency cooperation (Ogbonna, Lenshie& Nwangwu, 2023).

Establishment Local Vigilante Groups

The Katsina State government has trained of over 3,000 vigilantes to guard their various communities against bandits and kidnappers. At an inaugural parade held in Katsina, the Special Adviser to Governor Aminu Bello Masari on Security Matters, Ibrahim Ahmed Katsina, decried the situation where residents of communities rely solely on security agents to protect them (Radio Nigeria, 2022).

> These security agents are doing their best, they are human beings too, and we know their number is not enough, therefore we have resolved that we can no longer leave this all-important matter in their hands, we must make individual and collective efforts to guard our villages, towns, and communities (Radio Nigeria, 2022).

Socio-economic Development Initiatives

The Katsina government recognizes the link between socio-economic development and security (Wudil& Haruna, 2021). Efforts are being made to improve access to education, healthcare, and basic infrastructure, as well as promote agricultural and economic opportunities in rural areas. These initiatives aim to address the underlying socio-economic factors that contribute to banditry and provide alternative livelihoods for vulnerable populations. By focusing on socio-economic development, the government aims to create opportunities, alleviate poverty, and improve the overall well-being of the population (Ruja, Sumarmi, & Idris, 2024).

By enhancing educational opportunities, the government aims to provide alternatives to banditry and empower individuals to pursue legitimate livelihoods (Personal interview 2023, June 6). The government promotes agricultural development by providing farmers with access to improved seeds, fertilizers, and modern farming techniques (Wudil& Haruna, 2021). It also supports irrigation projects, mechanization, and the establishment of agricultural cooperatives to enhance productivity. increase income and reduce poverty in rural areas. Strengthening the agricultural sector provides economic opportunities and reduces the vulnerability of individuals to banditry (Ruja, Sumarmi, & Idris, 2024).

By providing education, skills training, agricultural support, infrastructure, poverty alleviation, job creation, healthcare, and social services, the government seeks to create an enabling environment that promotes stability, reduces poverty, and offers legitimate opportunities for the population, it is important to note that addressing banditry requires sustained efforts, collaboration among multiple stakeholders, and a comprehensive approach that goes beyond security measures alone. The Katsina State Government's initiatives seek to tackle the root causes of banditry while improving security and promoting development in the state (Ruja, Sumarmi, & Idris, 2024).

Other initiatives

The State government has taken punitive measures through suspensions of village and ward heads that connived with cattle rustlers as investigations continue to end of cattle rustling. Even during the time when kidnapping started, the government continues to take punitive measures against village and ward heads that were suspected of conniving with the bandits (Abdullatif, 2021). Following request by village communities that are spread in isolated locations, the State government has constructed access roads to link them with the rest of the

LGA. These roads are expected to make it easier for security personnel to move to the villages to provide security in case of any security breach. Examples include the 50 km road from Dutsinma to Tsaskiya to Kukar Samu and the 9 km Garin Tambari to Illela road all in Safana LGA (Ladan, 2020).

Challenges faced by the government in its efforts to curb banditry in Katsina State.

The foregoing discussions highlight the efforts of the State Government, it can be observed that the State Government has made many efforts armed at tackling the security challenges facing the state right from the time of its inception in May 2015 to May 2023. However, a summary of the responses retrieved from a focus group discussion (FGD 2023, June 8) revealed that, the effort implemented by the government have not yielded to desired result or outcome of ending the security challenges due to the following identified factors:

i. Some of the repentant bandits of January 2016 and that of September 2019 Amnesty programme/peace deal were not sincere and as such they secretly engage in banditry and cattle rustling then. The result was that they were killed by some of their members who felt cheated and then decided to go back to their criminal activities.
ii. There are porous borders along the Katsina State and Niger Republic boundary which allowed the movement of arms and ammunition and even movement of bandits from Niger Republic and Mali into the State to join other bandits in carrying out attacks on villages. The bandits were also able to bring arms into the State through the porous borders.
iii. The efforts of the State government have not ended the security challenges because its neighbour Zamfara State which has become the hub of banditry in Nigeria has continued to experience it. The security challenges re-surface in July 2018 because of movement and influence of bandits from Katsina States neighbour Zamfara State.
iv. The laws enacted by the State Government against banditry, cattle rustling, and kidnapping were not enforced by the security agents. The result is that very few were arrested riding motorcycles around forests or engaged in kidnapping and cattle rustling in the frontline LGAs.
v. Some members of the State security committee are politicians not experts in security matters and as such they tend to politicize the functions of the committee or use the committee as avenue for making money to accumulate wealth. Some citizens of the State have questioned the large sums of money spent by the committee since its inauguration, but the security challenges continue to worsen.
vi. The State government has not focused its efforts on taking punitive action against security agents that engage in large scale extortion of money and cattle from the Fulani people. This had seriously undermined the efforts of the government to tackle the security challenges.
vii. The response of the security agents to reported cases of kidnapping seems discriminator) they respond promptly and or effectively when highly placed persons were kidnapped but do not show the same commitment when other persons of low socio-economic status were involved

Recommendations and Conclusion

Various government's initiatives, in addition to military anti-banditry operations, have been implemented to combat the persistent problem of armed banditry in Katsina state. This had helped to decrease armed banditry case; nevertheless, over time, it has become more aggressive and violent.

To address this protracted menace, topping banditry in Northern Nigeria requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses the root causes of the problem and implements effective measures to deter and combat banditry. This can be achieved by enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of security forces by providing them with necessary training, equipment, and intelligence to effectively combat banditry with professionalism. Increase the number of police officers and strengthen collaboration between different security agencies to share information and coordinate operations. Additionally, addressing the underlying socio-economic issues that contribute to banditry, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunities. The government should also implement policies and programmes that promote economic development, job creation, and social welfare in affected states. The state government also must develop mechanism to foster cooperation and trust between communities and security forces. This also involves encouraging community members to report suspicious activities and provide them with assurance of protection. Furthermore, the federal government should foster community policing initiatives to encourage communities to take an active role in maintaining security.

The government should ensure that those involved in banditry are arrested, prosecuted, and appropriately punished. Expedite legal processes and improve the capacity of the judiciary to ensure swift justice. It should also establish special courts or tribunal to handle cases related to banditry and insurgency. There is need also to encourage individuals involved in banditry to disarm and enter rehabilitation programmes and offer incentives for those who voluntarily surrender their weapons and provide them with opportunities for reintegration into society.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that stopping banditry requires a long-term and sustained effort, combining security measures with socio-economic development, good governance, and community engagement.

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EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FUEL SUBSIDY REMOVAL AND PUBLIC SERVANTS' WELL-BEING IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
This study investigates fuel subsidy removal and public servants' well-being in tertiary institutions in Anambra state, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to: determine the relationship between fuel subsidy removal and purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state; ascertain the relationship between fuel subsidy removal and standard of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state; and to determine the effect of fuel subsidy removal on the cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state. Three research questions and hypotheses guided the study.. The study was anchored Neoliberalism theory. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study consisted of the 11,442 staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Federal Polytechnic, Oko, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, and Anambra State Polytechnic, Mgbakwu. The sample size of 386 respondents was determined using Taro Yamane. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in the study. Data for the study were collected through structured questionnaire. Data from the field were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Simple Regression Analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Findings of the study revealed that Fuel subsidy removal significantly and negatively relates with purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state; Fuel subsidy removal significantly and negatively relates to standard of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state; and that Fuel subsidy removal has significantly and negatively affected the cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state.Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made: there should be periodic salary reviews or adjustments for public servants to cope with the decreased purchasing power caused by the removal of fuel subsidies; Government at all levels should subside transportation for the populace by operating effective Mass transit schemes for the urban working population to mitigate these effects; there should be renovation of Nigerian refineries to reduce the cost of petroleum products.

Keywords: Subsid**y,** fuel subsidy removal, purchasing power, cost of living, standard of living

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INTRODUCTION

In what is generally considered as global efforts towards subsidy removal, a group of 20 advanced and emerging market economies advocated for phasing out of fossil subsidy in order to boost efficiency in the late 2000. Since then, countries like Ukraine, India and Morocco has developed and implemented its own indigenous reform on fuel subsidy removal regardless of its conflicting opinions. The removal of fuel subsidies is a contentious issue that has far-reaching implications on various sectors of the economy, including the lives and livelihoods of public servants. In Nigeria, like in many developing countries, fuel subsidy removal has been a subject of fervent debate due to its potential impact on the socioeconomic well-being of individuals, especially those working in the public sector. Ideally, fuel subsidy represents financial assistance which the government provides for the reduction of fuel cost for the consumers so as to keep fuel prices lower and make fuel more affordable to the general population (Akinnibi, 2023). According to the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (2023) the target of fuel subsidy in Nigeria is to reduce the fuel cost hence financial assistance is directly given to oil enterprises so as to lower the cost of fuel for the citizens.

Globally, there is discussion concerning fuel subsidies because of their enormous cost and impact on citizens' wellbeing and national economic health. Fuel subsidies have been implemented by many governments as a way to alleviate the financial burden on citizens and stimulate economic growth. (Masera et al., 2015) contends that these subsidies often benefit the wealthy more than the poor and may also lead to environmental degradation by encouraging excessive firewood consumption. Additionally, the high cost of fuel subsidies puts a strain on government budgets, diverting funds that could be used for other important social programs such as healthcare and education.

Fuel subsidies are implemented by governments in many developing countries with the aim of promoting economic growth and affordability of basic transportation and cooking fuels. However, subsidies place enormous strain on government budgets and can lead to market inefficiencies through overconsumption. The removal of fuel subsidies is often an economic reform suggested by international organizations, but the impacts are complex. Thus, there is a need to understand how removal of subsidies affects aspects of socio-economic development including consumer welfare, income distribution, poverty levels, inflation, political stability and sustainability.

According to Ozili and Obiora (2023), fuel subsidies were initially implemented in Nigeria in the 1970s in reaction to the 1973 oil price shock. Fuel subsidies have been in effect since then. The government unexpectedly ended fuel subsidies in 2012. This sparked large protests, with the goal of forcing the government to return the fuel subsidy. Following the enormous protests, the government resumed fuel subsidies in 2012. Fuel subsidy payments in Nigeria have increased dramatically since then. Fuel subsidies reached $4 trillion (US$6.088 billion) in 2022, accounting for 23 per cent of the national budget of 17.126 trillion (US$25.87 billion) (CBN 2023). As a result, Nigeria's fuel subsidy could no longer be sustained in 2023, and the government stated that it would be phased off in June 2023 (Ozili and Obiora, 2023).

Subsidy removal without correspondent economic benefit can lead to increase in fuel prices and subsequent rise in the cost of living. This predicament brings a lot of concern as raised by Ude (2023), emphasizing that while subsidy elimination might hold long-term benefits, it can strain the financial resources of households. Akinnibi (2023) asserts that removal of fuel subsidy implies bringing to an end, the financial assistance which government gives for fuel and such leads to the rising of prices to market levels. With the removal of fuel subsidies, the

public servants may experience a decrease in their purchasing power, as the increase in transportation costs could inflate prices of goods and services.

Public servants in Nigeria play a crucial role in the functioning of the government and the delivery of public services to citizens. Their socioeconomic well-being is therefore of paramount importance not only for their individual livelihoods but also for the overall efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. The removal of fuel subsidies can have direct and indirect effects on various aspects of their lives, from increased transport costs to changes in purchasing power and overall standard of living. Therefore, this study examine the effect of fuel subsidy removal on public servants' well-being in tertiary institutions in Anambra state, Nigeria

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, the subsidy policy has been a controversial issue in Nigeria – an oil producing country that paradoxically relies on imported PMS. Indeed, Nigeria has a long history of fuel subsidies dating back to the 1970s' oil boom, when the Federal Government introduced subsidies on key commodities such as petrol, kerosene, and diesel to cushion the impact of price fluctuations on its citizens and residents. While many stakeholders in this debate argue that the PMS subsidies are the last hope for the common man to benefit from the "national cake," the reality is that the subsidies have been a tremendous drain on the country's resources and a source of corruption and government inefficiency. NNPC 2023 report indicates that the PMS fuel subsidies have really benefited smugglers, neighbouring countries, rent-seekers and the rich, as opposed to the poor. Furthermore, if Nigerians – rich, middle-class, or poor alike – wish to see accelerated levels of socio-economic development, the expensive and unaffordable PMS subsidy must go. The removal of fuel subsidies was finally decided by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on 29 May 2023 during his inaugural address to the nation when he stated that "fuel subsidy is gone. The decision to phase out fuel subsidy in June 2023 was met with mixed reactions from the public. Asare et al (2020 argued that it was a necessary step to reduce government spending and promote economic growth, while Umeji and Eleanya (2021) expressed concerns about the potential impact on the cost of living for ordinary citizens. Nonetheless, the government emphasized the need for fiscal responsibility and stated that alternative measures would be put in place to mitigate any adverse effects. This marked the beginning of a massive hike in the prices of PMS and other related products in Nigeria.

Despite the various objections and critiques on the move by the president, he was not deterred at the very least and the decision was implemented. Sadly, the removal of fuel subsidies was predicted to have a ripple effect on not just the prices of crude oil-related products but also on other goods in general and the overall well-being of the people of Nigeria and Anambra state in particular.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does fuel subsidy removal relate to purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state?
2. To what extent does fuel subsidy removal relate to standard of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state?
3. To what extent has fuel subsidy removal affected the cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state?

Objective of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between fuel subsidy removal and public servants' well-being in tertiary institutions in Anambra state, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to:

1. Determine the extent of relationship between fuel subsidy removal and purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state
2. Ascertain the extent of relationship between fuel subsidy removal and standard of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state
3. Determine the extent which fuel subsidy removal has affected cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state

Research Hypotheses

1. **H0:** Fuel subsidy removal does not significantly relate to purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state
2. **H0:** Fuel subsidy removal does not significantly relate to standard of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state
3. **H0:** Fuel subsidy removal has not significantly affected the cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state.

Scope of the Study

The study covered the effect of fuel subsidy removal on public servants' well-being in tertiary institutions in Anambra state, Nigeria. The study was conducted among four tertiary institutions in Anambra. The study focused on determining how subsidy removal relates with purchasing power, standard of living, and cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state. The institutions studied are: Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Federal Polytechnic, Oko and Anambra State Polytechnic, Mgbakwu. The study covered the period from 2012 to 2024 when Nigeria faced the reality of withdrawal of subsidy by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Subsidies and Fuel Subsidy

Subsidies are financial or non-financial incentives provided by the government or other organizations to support specific industries, sectors, or individuals (Scott and Kvilhaug, 2022). They are intended to alleviate economic burdens, promote growth, and address market failures. According to IMF et al. (2022), subsidies can take various forms, including direct government expenditures, equity infusions, tax incentives, soft loans, government provision of goods and services and procurement on favorable terms, and price supports such as price reduction.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines a subsidy as a measure implemented by the government to provide producers or consumers with an advantage so that they can increase their revenue or decrease their expenses. Subsidies can take the form of tax breaks, grants, or other financial assistance. According to Sowa and Edpri in Suleiman, Mohammed and Ahmed (2024), subsidies are policies that are enacted by the government in order to keep prices for producers or consumers at a level that is either higher or lower than the market. These actions could be grants, tax breaks, exemptions, or price limits. Subsidies are government programs that help make purchasing goods and services available and affordable to people who are less fortunate (Victor, 2009).

The government often subsidizes fuel so that the high prices of fuel do not create any burden on the producers or the consumers. Fuel subsidy is a government discount on the market price of fossil fuel to make consumers pay less than the prevailing market price of fuel (Ovaga and Okechukwu, 2022). When subsidies are in place, consumers would pay below the market price per litre of the petroleum product. A fuel subsidy is an aid the government provides that makes the commodity available at a lesser cost to consumers. The subsidizing is done in Nigeria to make the product affordable and accessible and to make life easy for the citizens. Government resources are used to pay for the differences, sustain the welfare of the citizens, and bridge the gap between private costs and societal benefits. Fuel subsidy has been in place in Nigeria since the 1970s; the Nigerian government has since been augmenting the differences in the importation cost of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) and the cost at which customers purchase the commodity. The benefit of a subsidy is that it lowers the cost of products and living costs. However, it financially burdens the government (Adegoke, 2023).

Fuel Subsidy Removal

The issue of fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria has been a contentious and complex subject, deeply intertwined with the country's economic, social, and political landscape. However, the removal of these subsidies has been a recurring theme in Nigeria's economic reform discussions, driven by factors such as fiscal sustainability, global oil price fluctuations, and the need to redirect resources towards other developmental priorities. As Nigeria's population grew and demand for fuel increased, the cost of fuel subsidies began to strain the government's finances. The subsidies created a situation where the government was spending substantial amounts to keep fuel prices low, resulting in fiscal imbalances and diverting resources from critical sectors such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

Fuel subsidy removal implies the deliberate action by the government to withdraw all forms of reductions and leverages on the price of crude oil or its products (Oladeji and Akinlabi, 2022). One of the main benefits of subsidy removal is the potential for cost savings for the government, which can be redirected towards other development projects (Oluwabukola, 2023). Public analysts and government officials who have supported the removal of fuel subsidies have always promoted this narrative. The money saved from subsidies can be used in other critical sectors such as healthcare, education, and targeted infrastructure development. Additionally, subsidy removal can promote competition in the petroleum sector, increasing efficiency and better service delivery (Civic Keypoint, 2023). With the removal of subsidies, new investment possibilities in the upstream, midstream, or downstream sectors are higher, with local and international investors likely to invest their resources. It will undoubtedly create employment and develop the local community where such investment occurs. Furthermore, the management and implementation of subsidy policies can be plagued by corruption and inefficiencies, leading to the misallocation of resources and the enrichment of a few individuals at the expense of the general public (Ray, 2023). This highlights the need for effective governance and transparency in the management of subsidy policies.

Subsidy Removal and Cost of Living

The removal of fuel subsidies directly impacts the cost of living, affecting academic and non-academic staff's financial stability and well-being. The increased costs of transportation, utilities, and other essentials can lead to financial strain, particularly for academic staff in developing countries, where salaries may already be modest (Idris et al, 2024). Financial stress is a significant contributor to declining well-being, as it often leads to anxiety, depression, and burnout (Ogunode and Aregbesola, 2023). For academic professionals, these

factors directly influence their capacity to perform their roles effectively, as mental and emotional well-being is closely tied to professional productivity.

Lower job satisfaction and well-being have also been linked to lower levels of innovation, research output, and teaching quality (Mohammed et al, 2020).The removal of fuel subsidies not only affects the productivity of the academic staff but also has a direct impact on their professional engagement and financial well-being. Engaged employees are generally more productive, committed, and motivated. However, when financial pressure mounts, individuals may become disengaged from their work (Ani et al, 2021).

Fuel subsidy removal and the overall well-being of people

The impact of fuel subsidy removal on the overall well-being of people extends beyond economic considerations, influencing various facets of daily life and societal dynamics. The immediate and tangible effect of fuel subsidy removal is the financial strain it places on individuals and households (Sampedro, Arto and González-Eguino, 2017). As transportation and goods become more expensive due to increased fuel prices, public servants often experience a reduction in their purchasing power. This financial strain can disrupt budgeting for essential needs and lead to challenges in meeting daily expenses. The rise in the prices of goods and services, influenced by increased transportation costs, can impact the accessibility of basic necessities (Harring*et al.,* 2023). Individuals may find it more difficult to afford essential items such as food, healthcare, and education. This has direct implications for the overall well-being of residents, particularly those with lower incomes. The overall quality of life in Nigeria is influenced by the affordability and accessibility of key services.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Neoliberalism theory. Neoliberalism is an economic and political ideology that advocates for free market capitalism, deregulation of business, trade liberalization, privatization, reduction of government spending, and individual responsibility. The theory is often associated with proponents such as Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, and Margaret Thatcher. Hayek, an Austrian economist, is one of the key proponents of neoliberalism. He argued that central planning and government intervention in the economy inevitably lead to inefficiencies and loss of individual freedom. Hayek believed that free markets are the most efficient way to allocate resources and that government intervention distorts the price mechanism.

Neoliberalism theory provides valuable insights for studying the effect of fuel subsidy removal on public servants' well-being in tertiary institutions in Anambra state, Nigeria. Neoliberalism emphasizes the importance of market forces and free-market principles. In the context of fuel subsidy removal, one could examine how the removal of subsidies affects the cost of living for public servants in Anambra state, potentially leading to changes in their well-being. Neoliberalism advocates for limited government intervention in the economy. Neoliberalism places importance on individual responsibility and self-reliance. By examining how public servants in Anambra State adjust to the removal of fuel subsidies, the study can provide insights into how individuals navigate and take responsibility for managing their economic well-being in a less subsidized environment. Neoliberalism advocates for a limited role of the state in economic affairs. Analyzing the effects of fuel subsidy removal on public servants' well-being can shed light on how government policies, such as subsidy removal, influence the relationship between the state and individuals in the provision of public services in tertiary institutions.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design which is a research process that involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or answer questions concerning the current status of the subject in the study. This approach was adopted because the researcher intends to examine the relationship between Fuel subsidy removal and public servants' well-being in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. The population of this study consisted of 11,442 staff of the 4 tertiary institutions randomly selected for the study. The sample size of 386 was determined using Taro Yamane (1964) statistical approach. A multistage sampling technique was employed in the study. This was because samples were selected in stages using a combination of different techniques. In the first stage, the purposive sampling technique was used in selecting four tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. At the second stage, a proportionate stratified sampling procedure was employed to select respondents such that each employee of the four selected tertiary institutions formed a stratum. Finally, simple random sampling (balloting) was done to select respondents from each stratum based on their proportion in the parent population. This was to ensure that, every member of the population was given an equal and independent chance of representing the population. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed using 5 points Likert scale to elicit information that borders on the objectives of the study. The instrument was validated by three experts from education management and policy. A reliability coefficient of 0.96 was obtained for instrument using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient through the test- retest method. The research questions were answered using mean, while the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Simple Regression Analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Tables were constructed in respect of the demands of the respective research variables/questions, hypotheses and a criterion mean of 3.0.

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis of Fuel Subsidy Removal

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of respondents' responses on Fuel Subsidy Removal

S/N	Items on Fuel Subsidy Removal	OPTIONS							
		SA	A	U	D	SD	∑ fx	X	Decision
1	Fuel subsidy removal has cause increase on price of petrol	180	126	30	5	5	1509	4.36	Agreed
2	Transportation price has increase as a result of recent fuel subsidy removal	200	130	10	6		1556	4.50	Agreed
3	Fuel subsidy removal has cause increase on price of goods and services	188	136	12	5	5	1535	4.44	Agreed
4	Fuel subsidy removal has reduced the scarcity of fuel	0	20	5	180	141	596	1.72	Disagreed
5	The benefits of removing fuel subsidy will outweigh the short-term challenges	10	15		180	141	611	1.77	Disagreed

	faced by the citizens.								
	Grand Mean							**3.36**	**Agreed**

Source: field survey 2024

Table 1 analyses the responses of the respondents on removal of fuel subsidy. The respondents' average thoughts on removal of fuel subsidy and its effects on public servants in public tertiary institutions in Anambra State are displayed in the above table, the information in the table demonstrated that the respondents agreed with 3 questions and disagreed on 2. The grand mean of 3.36 indicates a positive reaction from the respondents on the removal of fuel subsidy. However, the respondents disagreed that Fuel subsidy removal has reduced the scarcity of fuel; and the benefits of removing fuel subsidy will outweigh the short-term challenges faced by the citizens.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1.1

S/N	Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender	Male Female **Total**	206 140 **346**	59.5 40.5 **100.0**
2.	Age (Years)	18-34 25-34 35-44 45-54 55+ **Total**	10 30 160 110 36 **346**	2.9 8.7 46.2 31.8 10.4 **100.0**
3.	Education	Primary Secondary Tertiary **Total**	5 10 331 **346**	1,4 2.9 95.7 **100.0**
4.	Employment	Employed Unemployed Student Retired **Total**	283 23 32 08 **346**	81.8 6.6 9.2 2.3 **100.0**
5.	Income Level	Low Middle High **Total**	83 220 43 **346**	24.0 63.6 12.4 **100.0**

Source: Field Survey 2024

Descriptive Analysis of Purchasing Power

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of respondents' responses on Purchasing Power

S/N	Items on Purchasing Power	OPTIONS							
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**∑ fx**	**X**	**Decision**
1	The removal of fuel subsidy has significantly increased my monthly transportation costs.	180	126	30	5	5	1509	4.36	Agreed
2	Since the fuel subsidy removal, my overall expenses have noticeably increased.	200	130	10	6	-	1556	4.50	Agreed
3	The reduction in my purchasing power due to increased transportation costs has made me cut down on essential expenses.	188	136	12	5	5	1535	4.44	Agreed
4	The increase in transportation costs has negatively affected my punctuality and attendance at work.	17	160	6	-	5	1538	4.45	Agreed
5	The removal of fuel subsidy has had a significant negative effect on my overall well-being.	200	140	-	6	-	1572	4.54	Agreed
	Grand Mean							**4.46**	**Agreed**

Source: field survey 2024

The respondents' average judgments on removal of fuel subsidy and Purchasing Power of public servants are displayed in Table 2, the findings demonstrated that the respondents' responses to the research variable were positive. The respondents agreed that removal of fuel subsidy has significantly increased their monthly transportation costs; and since the fuel subsidy removal, their overall expenses have noticeably increased. They also agreed reduction in purchasing power due to increased transportation costs has made them cut down on essential expenses; the increase in transportation costs has negatively affected their punctuality and attendance at work; and that the removal of fuel subsidy has had a significant negative effect on their overall well-being.

Descriptive Analysis of Standard of Living

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of respondents' responses on Standard of Living

S/N	Items on Standard of Living	OPTIONS							
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**∑ fx**	**X**	**Decision**
1	The removal of fuel subsidy has led to a decrease in my disposable income, affecting	184	132	20	5	5	1523	4.40	Agreed

	my ability to meet basic needs.								
2	Since the fuel subsidy removal, I have had to make sacrifices in terms of lifestyle or quality of life.	190	140	10	6	-	1552	4.48	Agreed
3	The increase in transportation costs resulting from fuel subsidy removal has negatively affected my overall financial stability.	200	140	6	-	-	1578	4.56	Agreed
4	The removal of fuel subsidy has affected my ability to save for the future or unexpected expenses.	180	150	16	-	-	1548	4.47	Agreed
5	The removal of fuel subsidy has made it challenging for me to maintain my standard of living within my current income level.	160	166	20	-	-	1524	4.40	Agreed
	Grand Mean							**4.462**	**Agreed**

Source: Field Survey 2024

The focus of Table 4.4 above is on standard of living of public servants. Data from table 4.4 shows that all the listed items showed a mean score of 4.40 and above. Hence the respondents agreed that, the removal of fuel subsidy has led to a decrease in the disposable income, affecting their ability to meet basic needs; Since the fuel subsidy removal, they have had to make sacrifices in terms of lifestyle or quality of life; they also agreed that the increase in transportation costs resulting from fuel subsidy removal has negatively affected the overall financial stability; the removal of fuel subsidy has affected the ability to save for the future or unexpected expenses. The respondents also agreed that removal of fuel subsidy has made it challenging for them to maintain the standard of living within their current income level.

Descriptive Analysis of Cost of Living

Table 4: Descriptive analysis of respondents' responses on Cost of Living

S/N	**Items on Cost of Living**	**OPTIONS**							
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**∑ fx**	**X**	**Decision**
1	The removal of fuel subsidy has significantly increased my monthly expenses.	100	210	20	-	16	1416	4.09	Agreed
2	The removal of fuel subsidy has led to a noticeable rise in the cost of essential goods and services that I regularly use.	150	170	10	10	6	1486	4.29	Agreed
3	The removal of fuel subsidy has significantly increased the cost of living for public	135	150	36	10	15	1418	4.10	Agreed

	servants in tertiary institutions in Anambra State								
4	The removal of fuel subsidy has made it challenging for me to manage my monthly expenses.	146	152	24	14	10	1448	4.18	Agreed
5	The rise in fuel prices due to the subsidy removal has directly influenced the overall cost of living for me.	160	138	28	12	8	1468	4.24	Agreed
	Grand Mean							**4.18**	**Agreed**

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 4 focuses on the removal of fuel subsidy and Cost of Living of the public servants. Data from table 4 shows that all the listed items showed a mean score above 3.0, while the Grand mean score was 4.18. This revealed that removal of fuel subsidy has significantly increased the participants' monthly expenses; the removal of fuel subsidy has led to a noticeable rise in the cost of essential goods and services; it has also increased the cost of living for public servants. The respondents also agreed that the removal of fuel subsidy has made it challenging them to manage the monthly expenses, and the rise in fuel prices due to the subsidy removal has directly influenced the overall cost of living.

Test of Hypotheses

This section focuses on the test of three hypotheses formulated for the study. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Simple Regression Analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

Test of Hypothesis One

Ho: Fuel subsidy removal does not significantly relate to Purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state

Table 5: Pearson Correlation for Hypothesis One

Correlations[a]

		Fuel Subsidy Removal	Purchasing Power
Fuel Subsidy Removal	Pearson Correlation	1	-.672**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.028
	N	346	346
Purchasing Power	Pearson Correlation	.-672**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	
	N	346	346

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

a. Listwise N=346

Source: Researcher's Computation (2024) Using SPSS 20

The result of the correlation coefficient for hypothesis one indicates that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is -0.672 showing that there is a negative relationship between Fuel subsidy removal and Purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state.

Decision Rule: From the computation above, the probability value at 0.026 is less than 0.05 significant level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, and conclude that Fuel subsidy removal significantly and negatively relates with purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state.

4.2.2 Test of Hypothesis Two

Ho: Fuel subsidy removal does not significantly relate to standard of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state

Table 6 Test of Hypothesis Two

Correlations

		Fuel Subsidy Removal	Standard of Living
Fuel Subsidy Removal	Pearson Correlation	1	-.512
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.024
	N	346	346
Standard of Living	Pearson Correlation	.512	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	
	N	346	346

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

a. Listwise N=346

The result of the correlation coefficient for hypothesis three indicates that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is -0.512 showing the negative relationship between Fuel Subsidy and standard of living of the public servants.

Decision Rule: From the computation above, the probability value at 0.024 is less than 0.05 significant level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis, and conclude that Fuel subsidy removal significantly and negatively relates to standard of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state.

4.2.3 Test of Hypothesis Three

H0: Fuel subsidy removal has not significantly affected the cost of living of public servant in

Table 7: Test of Hypothesis Three

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.337[a]	.214	.323	38.645

a. Predictors: (Constant), Fuel Subsidy Removal

Source: Field Data, 2024

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4991.102	1	4991.102	-3.342	.004[b]
	Residual	38829.898	26	1493.458		
	Total	43821.000	27			

a. Dependent Variable: Cost of Living
b. Predictors: (Constant), Fuel Subsidy Removal
Source: Field Data, 2024

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	35.018	13.391		6.349	.000
	Fuel Subsidy Removal	.618	.174	-.337	-1.828	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Cost of Living
Source: Field Data, 2024

The result of the linear regression for hypothesis two indicates that the Linear Regression is -3.32 showing that Fuel subsidy removal has negative effect on the cost of living. Also the result shows that the probability value of (0.04) is less than the alpha value (0.05) implying that the null hypothesis which stated that "Fuel subsidy removal has not significantly affected the cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state" is rejected and conclude that Fuel subsidy removal has significantly and negatively affected the cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The result of the tested hypotheses indicates that fuel subsidy removal has significant negative relationship with public servant wellbeing in tertiary institutions in Anambra state. Three hypotheses were tested in the study. The first hypothesis was tested in table 4.6 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Findings show that Fuel subsidy removal significantly and negatively relates with Purchasing power of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state. This is as a result of increased in transportation costs, and increased on price of goods and services. This finding aligns with Anijah (2021) whose study revealed that fuel subsidy removal has led to increased financial strain, impacting staff well-being and productivity. Increased commuting costs and financial pressures have negatively affected staff morale, motivation, and professional engagement.

The second hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in table 4.7. Findings showed that Fuel subsidy removal significantly and negatively relates to standard of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state. This is as a result of decreased in disposable income caused by the removal of fuel subsidy, and increased in transportation cost. This finding aligns with Agu, Ekwutosi and Augustine (2018), who noted that here is a significant negative relationship between subsidy removal and Standard of living ($r = .816$, $P < .05$). Subsidy removal negatively promotes poverty ($r = 0.758$; $F = 408.373$; $t = 20.208$; $p < 0.05$).

Finally, the findings from the test of third hypothesis in table 4.8 showed that Fuel subsidy removal has significantly and negatively affected the cost of living of public servant in tertiary institutions in Anambra state. This finding aligns with Suleiman, Mohammed and Ahmed (2024) who found that petroleum subsidies have a negative and significant effect on consumption patterns, the cost of living, savings and investment. The study is also in agreement with the research findings of Abu, Mohammed, Muhammad and Ahmed (2024) who found that, fuel subsidy removal in Nigerian have affected citizens cost of living, income generation, employment level and security of lives and properties of people of Chanchaga Local Government Area of Niger State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings discussed, it is evident that the Fuel subsidy removal has significant negative effect on public servants well-being. The removal of fuel subsidies in Nigeria has had a significant negative effect on the well-being of public servants in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. The increased cost of living resulting from the subsidy removal has directly affected the purchasing power and overall standard of living of public servants in these institutions. Public servants, particularly those in lower income brackets, have faced financial challenges due to the rising fuel costs, thereby placing a strain on their budgets and negatively impacting their quality of life. It is essential to address these issues promptly to prevent further financial hardship among public servants and ensure their well-being is safeguarded.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were given as follows:

1. There should be periodic salary reviews or adjustments for public servants to cope with the decreased purchasing power caused by the removal of fuel subsidies.

2. The government at all levels should subside transportation for the populace by operating effective Mass transit schemes for the urban working population to mitigate these effects,

3. There should be renovation of Nigerian refineries to reduce the cost of petroleum products

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NEOLIBERALISM, STATE-CAPITALISM AND THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL ECONOMY: AN ANALYSIS OF CHINA-UNITED STATES CONFLICT, 2016 TO 2025

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Abstract
Trade conflict between United States (US) and China has intensified during the President Donald Trump administration with imposition of tariff and counter tariff by the two countries, which affect the exports of the two countries negatively. The US accused China of supporting its companies with subsidy and capital, technology theft, as well as manipulation of its currencies in order to achieve a favouable trade balance. This paper aims at finding out the issues of contention between the two parties. The paper uses documentary research method and utilized World System framework of analysis. The paper argues that the conflict has both economic and ideological dimensions which led to struggle for dominance (economic and political) between the two countries. The paper predicts three scenarios for the future world economic system. First, the neoliberalism exists as rhetoric because even the leading neoliberal states would continue employing different measures to support and protect their industries against competitors while at same time propagating trade and investment liberalization. Second, the emerging economies would adopt state capitalism domestically and continue to support neoliberal policies externally in order to achieve their economic objective. Third, the weaker economies will continue adopting the neoliberal policies as part of their obligations to debt, and aid from the parties in the first and second scenario. The paper concludes that welfare capitalism as the best alternative to neoliberalism and state capitalism for the benefit of states in all the three categories.

Key Words: Neoliberalism, State capitalism, conflict, weaker economies, stronger economies

Introduction

In recent years, conflict between United States and China has intensified especially during the administration of President Donald Trump who assumed office in 2016 and his return for second term in 20th January, 2025. Although President Joe Biden led between 2020 and 2024, who also sanctioned Chinese companies, the focus of this paper is on President Donald Trump administration in the years under study. President Trump as he is called has suspected China of backing and supporting state owned enterprises (using subsidy and protection from foreign firms) and manipulation of its currency among others, which give china a chance of having a fabourable trade balance in its trade relations with the United States (BBC, 2016). The President reacted by imposing tariff on China's export to United State, first in 2018, in order to narrow the imbalance (its annual trade deficit with china, the last $365.7 billion, BBC, 2016) that is in place, and in 2025, after assuming to serve his second term. China retaliated by imposing tariff on United States export to China. This is happening when the global economy is guided by neoliberal policies that got their roots and backing in the West, and led by the United States, which beliefs that trade and investment liberalization, with government intervention in limited areas of the economy (security, financial regulations, etc.) is the ideal system for growth and development. The West has been pressurizing the

protected economies using conditions through the neoliberal institution – World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF), and through the World Trade Organisation (WTO), to liberalise and make markets independent. They also pressurize them through the use of aids.

Though liberalized to some extent, China maintains its unique economic system (state-capitalism, or capitalism with Chinese characteristics) and progresses, where since 1970s when it opened its economy has been accelerating and become the largest economy in 2017, with global GDP share on a purchasing power parity (PPP) basis rose from 2.3 per cent in 1980 to an estimated 18.3 percent in 2017, while the United States share of global GDP on PPP basis fell from 24.3 per cent to an estimated 15.3 percent during the same period (Congressional Research Service, 2019). This paper aims at finding out answers to the following questions: what are the issues of contention between China and United States? Is the conflict ideological? What will likely be the future of the global economic system? The paper is divided into five parts. The first part consists of introduction. The second part covers review of relevant literature and theoretical framework. Third part discusses and analises the contested issues on China-United States trade conflict. The fourth part discusses the ideological dimension of the conflict and the fifth projected the future of the global economic system.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This section consists of conceptualization of state capitalism, neoliberalism, economic globalization and discussion of relevant framework of analysis.

Conceptualising Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is defined "as an ideological system that holds the market sacred, born within the human or social science and redefined in the network of Anglo-American-Centric knowledge procedures, expressed in different ways within the institutions of the post-war nation-state and political field Mudge ((2008). Mudge (2008) further that neoliberalism has three faces. The first face is political field, which has to do with the neoliberal politics of market-centric concept of the role of the authority and constituencies of the state. The second face is the intellectual field. This covers the neoliberal project of free market economics. The third face is the bureaucratic field, the neoliberal policies – privatization, deregulation, liberalization, depoliticisation and monetarism. Although the West, dominated by the Western economic thought were not the first to coin the term 'neoliberalism', they utilized the term but with different meaning. The first scholar that coined the term was Alexander Rustow, who in 1932 coined the term 'neoliberalism' as a result of crisis of 'Manchesterism', and the failure of the economic liberalism (championed by Adam Smith and others) (Rustow in Hartwich, 2009). Rustow suggested a strong state above the economy and above the interest groups where it belongs. What Rustow was suggesting was a limited role for the state (avoiding protectionism, subsidies, and cartels) but emphasizing on welfarism and protection of small enterprises through banning of advertisement in media. He also recommended progressive taxation to businesses. Rustow suggested forcing companies holding patents to license them to their smaller competitors. Rustow recommended that all utilities, all rail companies, all companies with an alleged natural or technical monopoly should be nationalized. The armament industry should also be nationalized (Rustow in Hartwich, 2009).

Rustow was suggesting a free market economy under the guidance of a strong state, backed by laws. Looking at the position of Rustow, although he kicked against state protectionism and subsidies (which is the opinion of the current neoliberals), disbanding of cartels, progressive taxation, nationalization of utilities and industries and welfarism is against the neoliberalism as presently defined and used. The current definition got its roots in the late

1970s through 1980s when classical liberalism re-emerged in both the academic economics and the public policy. Since then, neoliberalism is defined as both economic theory and a policy mechanism. As a theory, it connotes that a large unregulated capitalist system not only bring about free individual choice but also aid the economy to perform as a result of efficiency, technical progress and distribution of justice (Kotz, 2000). As a policy framework, the recommendations include: privatization of public activities and assets, elimination or reduction in social welfare programs, reduction of taxes on business and investing class. At the international level, neoliberalism emphases free movement of goods, services and capital across boundaries (Ibid). Therefore, neoliberalism in its current phase is defined as a system of free market with limited state intervention (mostly in areas like security, finance regulation etc.) that favour a section of the population (reduction of taxes to businesses and investing class) at the expense of others (withdrawal of social welfare programs). At international level is a system that emphases trade and investment liberalization for the benefit of stronger economies with strong institutions and capital, capable of competing in the global market. Supporting this, Kotz (2009) argued that neoliberalidm is harmful for long-run economic performance. Kotz (2009) enumerates three problems associated with neoliberal model. First, it gives rise to a problem of insufficient aggregate demand over the long-run. This occurred as a result of lowering both wages and public spending. Second, it creates instability on the macroeconomic level by abrogating government spending and taxation policy, by shrinking social welfare programs, and by loosening public regulations of the financial sector, which ultimately leads to financial crisis and depression. Third, it tends to intensify class conflict can discourage capitalist investment. However, another implication of the neoliberal model which Kotz did not mention is tendency of the economically strong economies to dominate the global market due to inability of the weaker ones to compete, which in most cases makes them dumping ground, and affect the development of their local industries negatively. Therefore, the concept need to be redefined for all participants in the global system to achieve optimum economic performance and growth and, redistribution of value, while at same time maintaining the economic stability of state internally and at global level.

State Capitalism

Buick and Crump (1986) define state-capitalism as that capital or part of the capital, in the political area of the world concerned has been guided by the state or number of different state enterprises. It is also defined as the wide spread influence of government in the economy, either by owning the majority or minority equity position in companies through the position of subsidised credit or privileges to private companies (Mussacchio and Lazzrini, 2012). It is a system where the market is displaced from the controlling function to coordinate production and distribution (Pollock, 1990). One thing common to these definitions is the removal of the market as the powerful force and replacing it with the state, which manages and guides a given economy. Therefore, state capitalism is a system that allows the state to have dominant role in directing a given economy by determining production and distribution. The state set the policy objectives for the strategic sectors of the economy in order to achieve the major objective of state.

Economic Globalisation

Stiglitz (2002) defines economic globalisation as a closer integration of the countries and people of the world which has been brought about by enormous reduction of cost of transportation and communication and breakdown artificial barriers to the flow of goods, services, capital, knowledge and people across borders. To Stiglitz (2002), globalization is neither good nor bad, but it is dominated by the stronger economies who play a major role in the global economy usually through the neoliberal institutions (IMF, WB, and WTO), which are not transparent in their activities and, favour them to the disadvantage of countries in

poverty. Supporting this, Dunning (2003) after defining globalization as connectivity of individuals and institutions across the globe and that connectivity could be geared toward advancing interest which can be economic, political etc., argued that globalization is neutral on itself, it could only be manipulated to achieve good or bad result. Dunning (2003) continues that for globalization to be good certain questions need to be answered by the system. Individuals, institutions and organizations in the world system must decide on how and where to produce? And how the benefit should be distributed? To him, if these questions are properly answered the economic benefits of globalization will be shared to all the parties involved in the system, otherwise nothing will be achieved.

The fact that countries of the world have varying interest and are in constant struggle for dominance (economic and political), it is difficult if not impossible to have common interest in the global market. The stronger economies always want to maintain their dominance even at the expense of the weaker ones. Example, in area of trade, agricultural and other raw materials (which are the major export products of the developing economies) have been cheap and, attempt has not been made by the WTO and other international financial institutions to help the developing economies develop their local industries for production of manufactured goods. What they always preach is trade and investment liberalization as key to developing those industries and the entire economy. Therefore, economic globalization is a process by which the stronger and weaker economies are more integrated as a result of technological advancement (production, communication and transportation technology) that makes movement of goods, services and capital across the globe easier and faster. It offers an opportunity to the stronger economies to maintain their dominance while the weaker ones have very limited role to play for they have little to offer to the market.

Theoretical Framework

World system theory by Wallerstein is found to be relevant to this study. Wallerstein (1976) define the world system as a social system, one that has boundaries, structures, member groups, rules and regulations, and coherence. Its life is made up of the conflicting forces which hold it together by tension and tear it apart as each group seeks eternally to remold it to its advantage. It has a life span over which its characteristics change in some respect and remain stable in others. Wallerstein (1976) further argues that the extensive division of labour in the system (occupational, geographical etc.) leads to uneven distribution of economic tasks in the system which in the end legitimizes the ability of some groups to exploit the labour of others, that is, to receive a larger share of the surplus. However, this exploitative nature of capitalism is not peculiar to neoliberalism, but also the state capitalism. For instance, in the fast three decades, China experienced one of the fastest increase in income and wealth inequality in the world. Between 1985 and 2014, the Gini coefficient of income distribution increased from 0.38 to 0.47, reaching its highest level (0.491) in 2008 (Shi, 2014). Walerstein (1976) recommended the third possible form of world system – a socialist world government as an alternative for higher productivity and redistribution of value.

The struggle between the US (with its neoliberal ideology) and China (with its state capitalism) is for both economic and ideological reasons. Since the collapse of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the late 1980s and the collapse of communism, with the former communist states embracing market reforms, neoliberalism remains the dominant economic ideology adopted by not only the Western countries but also the former communist states, though some practice it differently from the way the Western countries do. For instance, China practices state-capitalism. The State capitalism practiced by China proved to be a successful model considering the level of economic successes recorded by her. The successes pose a threat (of losing the global leadership position) to the leading state – the US, its economic and political dominance has been threatened. From nowhere in the 1970s, China

accelerated to be the second largest economy in the world, second largest investor, the largest manufacturing power house, the largest exporter and leading in the new technology. Chinese financial institutions (Chinese state owned banks including Chinese Development Bank) also dominate the global finance, having dominated the control of global assets. Therefore, these successes threatened the leading world economic and political power, the US, and the possibility of its decline is imminent. To contain China, the US has been using means at its disposal. Part of that is this the trade conflict. The US now wants to mold the system to its advantage, as the China has been struggling to do. This geopolitical tension will persist until the dominant force is determined.

The Contested Issues on United State-China Conflict

The recent conflict between United States and China has affected their trade relations negatively with reduction in the volume of goods exported by both countries as a result of tariff and counter tariff. For instance, newly introduced tariff affected around 50 percent of US imports from China European Central Bank, 2020). The United States was the first to pull the trigger when President Donald Trump on March 2018 threaten to impose 25 percent of tariff on steel imports and 10 percent on aluminum, and on March 22 same year signed a memo imposing tariff on some 1300 Chinese products worth $50 billion (Jongding, 2019). On February 1, 2025, President Trump imposed new tariffs on imports from China, 10 per cent tariff on all Chinese imports to US. The question is what are the contested issues in this conflict? Marrison (2018) summarized the areas of concern expressed by United States policy makers and stakeholders to include:

> China's alleged widespread cyber economic espionage against US firms; relatively ineffective record of enforcing intellectual property rights (IPR); discriminatory innovation policy; mixed record on implementing its WTO obligation; extensive use of industrial policies (eg. subsidies and trade and investment barriers) to promote and protect industries favoured by the government; and interventionist policies to influence the value of its currency (Mrrison, 2018:45)

Jiming and Yangme (2019) countered these especially the issue of subsidy and manipulation of exchange rate. They argued that this view is ill-founded. That private and foreign-funded enterprise accounted for 46.5 percent and 43.2 per cent respectively, of China's trade surplus; state-owned and other enterprises accounted for only 10.3 per cent. Regarding the exchange rate, they argued that renminbi appreciated significantly against the US dollar since 2005, and the share of China's export in global total exports increased. China's trade surplus with the US also expanded, except in 2015 to 2016, when the renminbi depreciated against the dollar. Therefore, according to them exchange rate is not a determining factor of China's trade surplus. Jiming and Yangme however found the causes of the trade imbalance between US and China to include the following factors:

1. Using dollar as a major trade currency since 1971, resulting in accumulation of excess dollar through export by countries like China, Japan, etc. this give them opportunity to purchase assets and bond in US, and same money is used to buy goods by the US, hence more import.
2. Low cost of labour of China accelerated production and export while at same time traditional manufacturing in US fall drastically due to higher labour cost.
3. Restriction of export of high-tech products to China by the US government limited her chance of having favourable trade balance in its trade with China.

4. High saving rate by China. For instance, saving rate by China rise to 51 per cent of GDP in 2011 and later drop to 46 per cent in 2016. The higher the saving rate the higher the trade balance and vice versa.

Milhaupt and Zheng (2015) opined that Jiming and Yangme's argument has been about the number of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) viz-a-viz the China's trade surplus. They challenge what they called "ownership bias" of analyzing Chinese firms. They argued that the Chinese state has less control over SOEs and more control over privately owned enterprises (POEs) than its ownership interest in the firms suggests. They found that Chinese state capitalism can be better explained by capture of the state than by ownership of enterprises. That due to China's institutional environment, large successful firms regardless of ownership exhibit substantial similarities in areas commonly thought to distinguish SOEs from POEs – market dominance, receipt of state subsidies, proximity to state power, and execution of the state's policy objective. Therefore, it is obvious that the Chinese government in one way or another supports its industries irrespective of ownership, and this gives it opportunity of having more advantage over the US when it comes to trade. However, the conflict between the US and China is not only about the trade imbalance that exists between them but also about a struggle by the competing ideologies – neoliberalism and state capitalism (adopted by the communist state) over the domination of the global economic system. While neoliberalism under the guidance and support of the West (led by US) has been the dominant economic system, the emergence of alternative system – state capitalism led and backed by China is gaining momentum especially when the performance of Chinese economy is considered. This posed a threat to neoliberal state like US because it affects its hegemony and impact on the future of the world economy. This ideological dimension of the conflict is explored in the following section.

The Ideological Dimension of US China Conflict

The world system has been characterized by constant struggle for dominance (both political and economic), with the dominant states trying to increase their power and the dominated trying to change the status quo in their favour. However, the struggle between the two dominant ideologies – capitalism and socialism has been in place since Bolshevik revolution in Russia which begun 8th May 1917. It was the first socialist revolution which resulted in founding Socialist Soviet Union. Since then, the ideology keeps spreading across the world (including Asia, Africa and Latin America). Though most of these states have embraced market reform (eg. Russia itself, China, Venezuela, North Korea, Angola, etc.), they allow private ownership and opened up for flow of foreign capital, some of them still maintain communist party (China inclusive), symbolizing the existence of communist states in global capitalist economic system.

China a communist state has been providing policy direction to its economy by having control not only of the SOEs but the POEs. This system (state capitalism) is an alternative to neoliberal model because it exists and succeed. China open up in the late 1970s, and since then its economy has been progressing, that has been signified by expansion of its economic activities, industrialization, increased purchasing power, increased employment, etc. Externally, China is pursuing leading role in global governance especially by being more committed to international organizations like United Nations and its agencies, and the WTO, at a time when the US is isolating itself from other members of same organizations. China has also been very active in pursuing the position of global economic power, and the progress it has made so far could prove this. For instance, China introduced Belt and Road Initiative, aims at

connecting its economy with other economies in Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America, by road, rail line and sea. It has also been signing bilateral and multilateral trade agreements with countries across the globe. One of the latest of such agreements is the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which includes ten Southeast Asian economies along with China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand and Australia, with members accounting for around 30 per cent of global GDP (New York Times, 15th November, 2020).

China has already assumed the position of the largest manufacturing power house and has tops the world for 15 consecutive years. Its total industrial output in 2024 reached 40.5 trillion yuan (about $5.65 trillion) (Chinadaily, 2025). China has been the largest exporter since 2009. Its total export amounted to $3.51 trillion in 2023 (Investopedia, 2025). China is the second largest investor in the world, second to only the US. However, in terms of control of global assets, China's Development Bank is ahead of World Bank, IMF and the Paris Club, giving it an opportunity of influencing global financial flows. In terms of GDP in purchasing power parity (PPP) China is the largest economy, with a GDP (PPP) of $25.27 trillion in 2020 (Investopedia, 2020). However, by assets size, in 2023, the largest 4 banks in the world are Chinese, they include the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, the China Construction Bank, the Agricultural Bank of China and the Bank of China (S&P Global in Investorpedia, 2025). In technology race however, China is leading the US in all but few fields. It leads in 37 of 44 areas. The fields include electric batteries, hypersonic and advanced radio-frequency communications such as 5G and 6G (The Guardian, 2023).

These achievements by China must be of concern to the US. First, it becomes a challenge to its hegemony (being super power for long). For instance, the former US secretary of state Mike Pompeo once accused China of buying empire by using loan and bribe to leaders to secure contracts in Africa. Also, President Donald Trump signs executive order banning US investors to invest in some Chinese firms, that the Chinese government "exploits United States investors to finance the development and modernization of its military". The banning took effect 12th November, 2021. Second, it is a threat to the neoliberal ideology where the state capitalism model seems to be more promising, considering the progress that has been made by the China. Therefore, although the conflict between US and China has its economic reasons, it also has this ideological dimension. The question to be asked is, what will be the future of global economy?

The Future of the Global Economy

Considering the present situation, it is possible for one to project the future of the global economy. First, China is economically strong and its economy has the full backing of the communist party which provides the policy directions of the economy. If the present trend continues, China would be leading economic and political power, especially with its increasing influence in the global bodies like UN, WTO, and its flows of FDI in form of investment capital, loan and aid etc. to not only the developing economies, but also the developed ones. Second, more states will use China as a model and adopt the state capitalism in one way or another by increasing state role in determining economic direction, supporting local industries, and providing protection, including the use of tariff. This would lead to counter measures to restrict trade using different mechanisms that include standard, quota or specification of products by competitors.

Third, neoliberalism may still exist in the future but the countries that propagate it would also seek to expand their economies (for they would protect their economies using different measure) to the disadvantage of the weaker economies that have no choice due to vulnerability to loan, aid, and assistance from neoliberal institutions and their parent countries like US and Europe. However, emerging economies with strong economic structure, led by China would practice state capitalism and at same time preach neoliberal policies in order to achieve economic objective externally. The third category, the weaker economies with weak economic structure would have no option than to adopt the neoliberal policies because they are trapped with a debt from the two categories. The only best alternative that would be to the advantage of all these three categories is the welfare capitalism. Welfare capitalism is a system that ensures responsible leadership by states and international economic organizations for a more inclusive economic system that focuses not only on the wealth (in form of profit) but also on the social wellbeing of the largest section in the economy (the poor as in the individual countries and poor countries as in the case of global economy) for more stable and prosperous environment.

This system should focus on the reform from both internal and external environments. Internally the state should have a role to play in the economy by not only providing policy objectives and security function, but also participating in the economic activity either as a majority or minority investor in the key sectors of the economy. The sectors include: mining, agriculture, power, arms industry and high technology industries. This is because security and wellbeing of the people depend largely on these sectors, the general public (represented by the state) should have stake in them. Second, progressive taxation should be used so that each pays according to his earnings. Third, social welfare programs in form of health support (insurance), complementing gaps in wages and salaries earned in low wage pay sectors (companies) and businesses and educational support (to those who cannot afford). The money earned through taxation and investments by the state should be used to complement these. This would solve the problem of inequality and exploitation of surplus value in the neoliberal and the state capitalism models (as practiced by China). It would lead to stable economic environment and social security.

Externally, open and transparent system of negotiation bilaterally should be the model used in WTO (where the WTO would remain the custodian of the new rules), supervised by it. States should be allowed to negotiate based on what they need from others in exchange with what they are capable of producing. This is in order to solve the problem of dumping and over flow of goods that could be produce in the receiving state (which could damage its industrial progress), and investment capital should be restricted to areas which the receiving state found relevant. The WTO should ensure that states are not threatened during that negotiations. Other international economy bodies should help the weaker states with interest free loan and support their transition through technical assistance and advice. This would make the system more social, thereby narrowing the wider gap that exists between strong and weaker economies.

Conclusion

The conflict between US and China has both Economic and Ideological dimensions. Neoliberal economic policies though adopted and spread by the US, its actions contradict its position as a supporter of the policies. The US has been protecting its economy against China (with its state-capitalism model) which it perceives as threat to its global economic dominance in particular and the liberal ideology in general. Both models (neoliberal and state-capitalism) have exploitation tendencies. Three scenarios in the future global economic system were predicted and an alternative model ‘welfare capitalism’ has been argued would lead to stable economic environment and social security.

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CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOS), CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACEBUILDING IN NIGERIA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This paper reviews the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in facilitating conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria, a country characterized by diverse and persistent conflicts. The review synthesizes existing research that highlights the critical contributions of CSOs in mediating disputes, promoting dialogue, and enhancing community resilience amidst socio-political challenges. It identifies the shift from state-centric conflict management to a more inclusive approach that recognizes the importance of CSO involvement, particularly in the aftermath of Nigeria's transition to democratic governance. The paper used systematic review of literature and qualitative method in analysing the data collected from secondary sources. It underscores the diverse strategies employed by CSOs, including the integration of traditional, religious, and contemporary conflict resolution mechanisms, to address the root causes of conflict and advocate for human rights. However, it also highlights significant challenges, such as governmental resistance and limited collaboration, which hinder the effectiveness of CSOs in peace building efforts. Ultimately, this review emphasizes the need for a supportive environment that fosters cooperation between CSOs and the state to achieve sustainable peace and social transformation in Nigeria. The findings call for further research and advocacy to strengthen the role of CSOs in the country's ongoing peace building initiatives.

Key words: Conflict, conflict resolution, civil society organizations, peacebuilding

Introduction

Civil society organizations (CSOs) play a pivotal role in global conflict resolution and peace-building processes, and Nigeria is no exception. These organizations, encompassing non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, faith-based groups, and other non-state actors, have been instrumental in addressing the multifaceted conflicts that have plagued Nigeria for decades. The complexity of Nigeria's conflicts, which include ethnic, religious, and political dimensions, necessitates robust engagement by CSOs to foster dialogue, mediate disputes, and promote sustainable peace. Today, CSOs in Nigeria have increasingly taken on responsibilities traditionally held by the state, particularly in areas where governmental presence is weak or ineffective by promoting the idea of community-based conflict resolution approach, facilitating capacity building training, and peace-centered empowerment opportunities among many. (Akinwale, 2018). One significant contribution of CSOs in Nigeria is their ability to operate at the grassroots level, providing a bridge between local communities and broader national and international peace initiatives. These organizations often possess a deep understanding of local dynamics and cultural contexts, enabling them to effectively tailor conflict-resolution strategies.

Despite the critical role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in fostering conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria, their efforts are often hampered by numerous challenges that undermine their effectiveness. Issues, such as funding constraints, political interference, and security risks, have impeded their effectiveness. Moreover, the relationship

between CSOs and government is often fraught with tension, leading to an environment in which collaboration is challenging. Political interference not only restricts the operational space for CSOs, but also undermines their legitimacy and credibility within the communities they serve. In addition, government suspicion and restrictive policies towards CSOs further exacerbate these challenges, creating barriers to effective conflict resolution and peace-building efforts (Akinwale 2018).

Moreover, the relationship between CSOs and government is often fraught with tension, leading to an environment in which collaboration is challenging. Political interference not only restricts the operational space for CSOs, but also undermines their legitimacy and credibility within the communities they serve. Additionally, government suspicion and restrictive policies towards CSOs further exacerbate these challenges, creating barriers to effective conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. This adversarial dynamic is detrimental to the holistic approach needed to address the root causes of conflict in Nigeria, which requires coordinated efforts between state and non-state actors.

However, the resilience and adaptability of CSOs continue to make them indispensable actors in Nigeria's peace quest. Evidently, the collective efforts of CSOs supported by international partners and local stakeholders are crucial for sustainable peacebuilding in Nigeria (Nwankwo & Agu, 2022).

Essentially, this study aims to review the role of civil society organizations in facilitating conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes in Nigeria. Specifically, it intends to analyze the contributions of civil society organizations to conflict resolution and peace-building processes at the grassroots level in Nigeria. Second, it assesses the impact of CSO advocacy and policy influence in addressing the underlying causes of conflict in Nigeria. Third, it identifies and examines the challenges that impede the effectiveness of CSOs in mediating conflict and promoting peace in Nigeria. Fourth, it evaluates successful strategies employed by CSOs in Nigeria to enhance local capacities for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Methodology

This paper uses data collected from secondary sources such as journal articles and published reports searched using online search engines such as Google and Bind. It utilizes other available online libraries and Artificial Intelligence sources in the search, such as Scispace, Perplexity AI, and Google Scholar to search on themes (as inclusion criteria) related to peace building, peace, civil society organisations (CSOs), the role of CSOs in peace building, CSOs and conflict resolution, peace initiatives by CSOs in Nigeria etc. The paper excluded any other theme that is not related to peace, peace building and conflict resolution and CSOs in Nigeria. The data were analyzed using a systematic review and qualitatively presented in the discussions. However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations and potential biases of the collected data and sources.

Conceptual clarification: Conflict, Conflict resolution, Peacebuilding Process and Civil Society Organisations

Conflict is defined as the incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other (Fisher, 1990). According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2023), the term is synonymous with clash, contention, confrontation, a controversy or quarrel, active opposition, strife, incompatibility, meeting in opposition or hostility, contending, being contrary, or being at variance. According to Wallensteen (2002), conflict occurs when two or more parties compete for the same scarce resources simultaneously. Conflict occurs among people in all types of human relationships and social settings (Deutsch, Coleman &Marcus, 2006). Because people have a wide range of potential

differences, the absence of conflict usually indicates the absence of meaningful interactions. Conflict is neither good nor bad in itself. However, whether a conflict is constructive or destructive is determined by how it is handled.

However, conflict resolution is typically associated with efforts to address the root causes of conflict and find mutually acceptable solutions. It comprises the mechanisms of resolving conflicts, disputes, or disagreements between parties in a peaceful and constructive manner (Kriesberg, 2016; Deutsch & Coleman, 2014), involving finding mutually acceptable solutions and restoring relationships (Lederach, 1995; Kriesberg, 2019). It involves finding solutions to conflicts through various methods, such as negotiations, mediation, facilitation, or the use of coercive measures such as military, political, or economic sanctions (Muriuki, 2022). Peaceful measures such as negotiations and mediation are essential for achieving long-term conflict settlement, whereas coercive measures are typically short-term in nature (Muriuki, 2022). However, they are complementary if sustainable peace can be achieved.

Peacebuilding is a complex process involving multiple actors and requires values, goals, and commitment to human rights and needs (Christofis, 2020). Furthermore, it considers structural forms of injustice and violence, as well as the underlying cultures, histories, and root causes of violence. Peacebuilding processes depend on relational skills and have the main goal of healing traumas through relationship building at multiple levels (Christofis, 2020). For peacebuilding to be successful, the process should be founded on trusted relations, partnerships, and interdependence. Finally, peacebuilding is not just about resolving a conflict, but also about establishing durable peace and preventing the recurrence of violence.

Apart from the related concepts defined above, civil society remains a contested concept in the social sciences (Paturyan 2011). According to Edwards (2011), this is in part because it first emerged as a broad concept of a 'sphere of uncoerced human association between the individual and the state […] relatively independent of government and the market' (Edwards, 2011:3). Therefore, civil society organizations (CSOs) are non-state, non-market organizations that represent the interests and will of citizens. They include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), and advocacy groups (Schoenefeld 2021). In this paper, CSOs are those entities actively engaged in initiatives aimed at conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria, working at various levels from local to national.

Civil Society Organizations in Peacebuilding Processes

Globally, civil society organizations (CSOs) play a critical role in peace-building processes, leveraging their grassroots presence and community-based approaches to address the root causes of conflict and foster sustainable peace. According to Nwankwo and Agu (2022), CSOs are at the forefront of reconciliation efforts, facilitating dialogue between conflicting parties and promoting trust-building initiatives. Through community dialogues, peace forums, and mediation efforts, CSOs create platforms for communication and negotiation, enabling conflicting groups to voice their grievances and seek mutually acceptable solutions (Okeke 2020). These initiatives are instrumental in de-escalating tensions and building bridges between communities, thereby laying the foundation for long-term peace and stability.

In Nigeria, CSOs engage in capacity-building activities that empower local communities with the skills and knowledge required to manage conflicts peacefully. Akinwale (2018) noted that CSOs in Nigeria implement training programs and workshops in conflict resolution, peace education, and leadership development, targeting community leaders, youth, and women. By equipping individuals with tools to navigate and resolve disputes, CSOs enhance the resilience of communities against future conflicts. Furthermore, CSOs play a crucial role in advocating policy reforms that address the structural causes of

conflicts. Through public campaigns, research, and lobbying efforts, CSOs influence government policies on issues such as resource allocation, governance, and human rights, thereby creating an enabling environment for sustainable peace (Nwankwo & Agu, 2022).

In summary, civil society organizations are indispensable actors in peace-building processes in Nigeria, working at the grassroots level to foster dialogue, reconciliation, and community empowerment. Their initiatives not only facilitate conflict resolution, but also contribute to the broader goal of building a more just and peaceful society. However, challenges such as funding constraints, political interference, and security risks continue to impede the effectiveness of CSOs in Nigeria's peace-building efforts, highlighting the need for continued support and collaboration among stakeholders to address these obstacles and realize the full potential of CSO contributions to peace and stability in the country.

Relevance of Civil Society Organizations in Conflict and Resolution and Peace-building Processes

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are critically relevant to conflict resolution and peace-building processes because of their unique ability to bridge divides, foster dialogue, and empower communities. As highlighted by Ibrahim (2021), CSOs in Nigeria operate at the grassroots level, where they have intimate knowledge of local dynamics and can directly engage with affected populations. This proximity enables CSOs to facilitate inclusive and participatory peace processes that prioritize the voices of marginalized groups, such as women and youth, who are often disproportionately affected by conflict. CSOs contribute to the legitimacy and sustainability of peace agreements by ensuring that diverse perspectives are represented and considered in peace negotiations (Ibrahim 2021).

Furthermore, CSOs play a vital role in advocating structural reforms and policy changes that address the underlying causes of conflict. According to Amnesty International (2019), CSOs in Nigeria engage in public campaigns, research, and lobbying efforts to promote governmental accountability, human rights protection, and social justice reforms. By advocating equitable resource allocation, good governance practices, and respect for human rights, CSOs create an enabling environment for peace-building initiatives to thrive. Their advocacy efforts not only raise awareness of conflict-related issues, but also exert pressure on policymakers to prioritize peace and reconciliation (Amnesty International, 2019).

Moreover, the adaptability and resilience of CSOs make them indispensable actors in navigating complex and evolving conflicting landscapes. CSOs often employ innovative approaches and creative strategies to address emerging challenges and facilitate peace processes. Technological advancements have enabled CSOs to leverage social media platforms and digital tools for conflict monitoring, early warning systems, and online dialogue facilitation (Nwankwo & Agu, 2022). By embracing these new technologies and methodologies, CSOs enhance their effectiveness in responding to conflicts in real time and adapting to changing contexts, reinforcing their relevance to conflict resolution and peace-building efforts in Nigeria.

Advocacy and Policy Influence of Civil Society Organizations in Conflict and Resolution and Peace-building Processes

Civil society organizations (CSOs) significantly influence conflict resolution and peace-building processes through advocacy efforts and policy influence. CSOs in Nigeria engage in various forms of advocacy, including lobbying, public campaigns, and research to push for policy reforms that address the root causes of conflict and promote peace. According to Osaghae and Suberu (2020), CSOs play a pivotal role in promoting good governance, transparency, and accountability within government institutions, which are essential for fostering an environment conducive to peace. Through their advocacy initiatives, CSOs highlight issues such as human rights violations, corruption, and social injustice, compelling

policymakers to take action and implement reforms that contribute to conflict resolution and sustainable peace (Osaghae and Suberu 2020).

Furthermore, CSOs leverage their networks and partnerships to amplify their voices and influence decision-making processes at local, national, and international levels. As noted by Ikelegbe (2018), CSOs often collaborate with other stakeholders, including governmental agencies, international organizations, and grassroots movements, to advocate for policy changes that advance peace-building agendas. These alliances strengthen the collective impact of CSOs and increase their visibility and credibility in advocating peace-related issues. By mobilizing diverse coalitions and advocating multi-stakeholder approaches to peacebuilding, CSOs contribute to the development and implementation of inclusive and sustainable peace strategies (Ikelegbe, 2018).

Moreover, CSOs utilize innovative strategies and communication platforms to effectively disseminate information, raise awareness, and mobilize public support for peacebuilding initiatives. According to Eboh (2021), CSOs harness the power of social media, digital technologies, and traditional media outlets to amplify their advocacy messages and reach a broader audience. Through targeted advocacy campaigns and public outreach efforts, CSOs generate momentum and public pressure for policy reforms that prioritize peace and conflict resolution. Additionally, CSOs engage in evidence-based research and policy analysis to provide policymakers with empirical data and recommendations to strengthen the credibility and impact of their advocacy efforts (Eboh, 2021).

Role of Civil Society Organizations in Conflict and Resolution and Peacebuilding Processes

Civil society organizations (CSOs) serve as crucial actors in conflict resolution and peace-building processes in Nigeria, utilizing their unique capacities and grassroots connections to address the multifaceted challenges of conflict. As noted by Odinkalu (2020), CSOs play diverse roles ranging from facilitating dialogue and mediation to promoting community-led initiatives for peace and reconciliation. These organizations operate in various conflict-prone regions, working closely with affected communities to identify underlying grievances, build trust, and foster sustainable solutions. By fostering inclusive and participatory approaches to peacebuilding, CSOs can enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of peace processes (Odinkalu, 2020).

Moreover, CSOs contribute to conflict resolution and peacebuilding through their advocacy efforts, pushing for policy reforms and institutional changes that address the root causes of conflicts. According to Ukiwo (2019), CSOs in Nigeria engage in advocacy campaigns aimed at promoting good governance, human rights protection, and social justice, which are essential for sustainable peace. By amplifying the voices of marginalized groups and holding governments accountable, CSOs advocate policies that prioritize peace and reconciliation, contributing to the creation of an enabling environment for peace-building initiatives (Ukiwo, 2019). In addition, CSOs play a critical role in enhancing the resilience and capacity of communities to manage conflicts peacefully. Through capacity-building programs, training workshops, and peace education initiatives, CSOs empower local leaders, youth, and women with the skills and knowledge required to navigate and resolve disputes. This grassroots empowerment strengthens social cohesion, fosters dialogue, and promotes alternative mechanisms of conflict resolution within communities. By investing in human capital and promoting a culture of peace, CSOs lay the foundation for sustainable peace-building efforts rooted in the agency and resilience of the local populations (Ibrahim, 2021).

The position of CSOs in Contemporary Nigeria

In contemporary Nigeria, civil society organizations (CSOs) continue to play a vital role in peacebuilding efforts across the country, addressing a wide range of social, economic,

and political challenges. CSOs have evolved to adapt to changing contexts and emerging conflicts by employing innovative approaches and partnerships to promote peace and reconciliation (Ukiwo 2019).

Moreover, CSOs in Nigeria leverage technology and social media platforms to amplify their peace-building efforts and reach a broader audience. By embracing these new tools and methodologies, CSOs can enhance their effectiveness in responding to conflicts in real time and engaging diverse stakeholders in peacebuilding efforts (Nwankwo & Agu, 2022).

Despite their contributions, CSOs in Nigeria face numerous challenges, including funding constraints, political interference, and security risks, which can hinder their ability to operate effectively (Osaghae &Suberu, 2020). Additionally, there is a need for greater collaboration and coordination among CSOs, government agencies, and other stakeholders to maximize the impact of peace-building initiatives and address the root causes of conflict more comprehensively (Osaghae &Suberu, 2020). However, CSOs remain resilient and committed to their mission of promoting peace, social justice, and sustainable development in Nigeria, reaffirming their indispensable role in the contemporary peacebuilding landscape.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding at the Grassroots Level

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria play a vital role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding at the grassroots level through various initiatives and interventions. One such organization is the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), which has been actively involved in promoting dialogue and reconciliation among conflicting parties in Nigeria (Abdulrazaq, 2020). This was pursued through its conflict mitigation and community reconciliation in northwest Nigeria project that focus on transitional justice in the region (CDD, 2024). CDD's efforts include community engagement, capacity building, and advocacy for inclusive governance structures, which have been instrumental in mitigating tensions and fostering peaceful coexistence in conflict-prone areas (Centre for Democracy and Development 2020).

Moreover, international organizations, such as the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), have recognized the significance of grassroots-level engagement by CSOs in conflict resolution. USIP's research highlights the effectiveness of locally driven initiatives led by CSOs in addressing underlying grievances and building sustainable peace in Nigeria (United States Institute of Peace, 2019). These initiatives often focus on empowering marginalized communities, promoting interfaith dialogue, and facilitating reconciliation processes tailored to the specific needs of the affected populations (USIP, 2019).

Additionally, the role of CSOs in conflict resolution extends beyond Nigeria's borders, with examples from other African countries providing valuable insight. In Rwanda, organizations such as Never Again Rwanda have successfully utilized community-based approaches for healing and reconciliation following the 1994 genocide (Never Again Rwanda, 2021). By adopting similar grassroots strategies, Nigerian CSOs can enhance social cohesion, strengthen trust between communities, and contribute to sustainable peace-building efforts in the country (Rwanda, 2021). These diverse examples underscore the importance of local ownership and community participation in fostering peace and stability and highlight the critical role of CSOs in driving positive changes at the grassroots level.

Advocacy and Policy Influence Efforts of CSOs in addressing the root causes of Conflict in Nigeria

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria play a crucial role in advocating policy changes and influencing decision-making processes to address the root causes of conflict in the country. One notable example is the collaborative engagement of many CSOs with

Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) a subsidiary of the Nigeria's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which actively engages in research and policy analysis to inform Nigerian government policies on conflict prevention and resolution (Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, 2020). Through its advocacy efforts, the IPCR seeks to address systemic issues such as resource competition, ethnic tensions, and governance deficits, which are often underlying factors contributing to conflicts in Nigeria (Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, 2020).

Furthermore, international organizations such as the International Crisis Group (ICG) have highlighted the importance of CSOs in advocating inclusive and participatory governance structures to mitigate conflicts in Nigeria (International Crisis Group, 2021). By promoting transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights, CSOs contribute to creating an enabling environment for peaceful coexistence and sustainable development (International Crisis Group, 2021). Additionally, CSOs collaborate with government agencies, community leaders, and other stakeholders to develop evidence-based policies and strategies that address socioeconomic inequalities and political marginalization, fueling conflicts in Nigeria (International Crisis Group, 2021).

Moreover, the role of CSOs in addressing the root causes of conflict extends beyond national borders, with lessons learned from other African countries informing Nigerian advocacy efforts. Organizations such as the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies (ACSS) emphasize the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration and community engagement in promoting peace and stability (Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, 2022). By amplifying the voices of marginalized groups and advocating for inclusive policies, CSOs in Nigeria contribute to building resilience against conflict and fostering a culture of dialogue and reconciliation (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2022). These collaborative efforts underscore the significance of civil society in driving positive change and in shaping policies that address the underlying drivers of conflict in Nigeria and across the continent.

Challenges faced by CSOs in Nigeria in their efforts to mediate conflicts and promote peace

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria encounter numerous challenges in their endeavors to mediate conflicts and promote peace within the country. One significant challenge is the lack of adequate funding and resources, which restrict the capacity of CSOs to implement effective peace-building initiatives (Oshomah et al., 2020). Limited financial support hampers CSOs' ability to sustain their operations, engage communities, and provide essential services in conflict-affected areas (Oshomahet al., 2020). Additionally, bureaucratic hurdles and restrictive government regulations often impede the registration and operation of CSOs, constraining their ability to mobilize resources and reach vulnerable populations (Oshomah et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the volatile security situation in Nigeria poses a significant obstacle to the work of CSOs engaged in conflict mediation and peace-building activities (International Crisis Group, 2021). Persistent insecurity, including insurgency, communal violence, and banditry, creates challenges in accessing conflict-affected areas and implementing peace initiatives (International Crisis Group, 2021). CSOs face threats to their safety and security, limiting their ability to operate effectively in conflict zones and engage with conflicting parties (International Crisis Group, 2021).

Moreover, CSOs often encounter resistance and distrust from various stakeholders, including government agencies, traditional leaders, and armed groups, which undermine their mediation efforts because of their stance to fairness and neutrality (Oshomah et al., 2020). Political interference and the manipulation of conflict dynamics by vested interests further complicate CSOs' attempts to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation (Oshomah et al., 2020). Additionally, the lack of coordination and collaboration among CSOs and other stakeholders

in the peace-building sector hinders the effectiveness of interventions and leads to duplication of efforts (International Crisis Group, 2021).

Strategies for CSOs in Nigeria for Enhancing Local Capacity for Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria can adopt various strategies to enhance local capacity for conflict resolution and peacebuilding, thereby contributing to sustainable peace in the country. One effective approach is to prioritize community-based peace education and training programs that empower local stakeholders with the skills and knowledge necessary to manage conflicts (Beyers, 2020). CSOs can collaborate with local schools, religious institutions, and community centers to facilitate workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns on conflict resolution techniques and peacebuilding principles (Beyers, 2020). By investing in grassroots educational initiatives, CSOs empower communities to proactively address conflicts and promote peaceful coexistence.

Furthermore, fostering interethnic and interreligious dialogue is essential for building trust and social cohesion among the diverse communities in Nigeria (Akinyemi & Oluwafemi, 2021). CSOs can organize peace forums, cultural exchanges, and reconciliation meetings that bring together representatives from different ethnic and religious groups to foster mutual understanding and promote tolerance (Akinyemi & Oluwafemi, 2021). By facilitating dialogue and promoting cross-cultural exchange, CSOs contribute to bridging divides and mitigating tensions that often fuel conflicts in Nigeria (Akinyemi & Oluwafemi, 2021).

Moreover, leveraging traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms and indigenous knowledge systems can enhance CSOs' effectiveness of CSOs in addressing local conflicts (Okoli &Nwobu, 2020). CSOs can collaborate with traditional leaders, elders, and customary institutions to integrate traditional dispute-resolution practices into formal peace-building processes (Okoli &Nwobu, 2020). By recognizing and respecting indigenous approaches to conflict resolution, CSOs promote cultural sensitivity and strengthen the legitimacy of peace efforts at the grassroots level (Okoli &Nwobu, 2020).

Additionally, harnessing technology and innovation can expand the reach and impact of peace-building initiatives in Nigeria (International Crisis Group 2021). CSOs can utilize digital platforms, mobile applications, and social media networks to disseminate information, facilitate virtual dialogue sessions, and mobilize communities for collective action (International Crisis Group, 2021). By embracing technology, CSOs overcome geographical barriers, reach marginalized populations, and promote inclusive participation in peace processes (International Crisis Group, 2021).

Furthermore, promoting youth empowerment and inclusion is crucial for building a resilient and peaceful society in Nigeria (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2022). CSOs can create platforms for youth leadership, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement that enable young people to contribute positively to conflict resolution and peace-building efforts (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2022). By investing in youth development programs, CSOs harness the energy and creativity of young Nigerians to drive social change and promote sustainable peace in their communities (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2022).

Finally, CSOs in Nigeria can enhance the local capacity for conflict resolution and peacebuilding by prioritizing community-based education, fostering interethnic dialogue, leveraging traditional mechanisms, harnessing technology, and innovation, and promoting youth empowerment. These strategies empower local stakeholders, strengthen social cohesion, and contribute to sustainable peace and development in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Civil society organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria have played a significant role in facilitating conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. They stepped in to fill the gap left by the government's failure to manage conflicts effectively using various instruments. Thus, CSOs are essential actors in addressing the complex and multidimensional conflicts that plague Nigeria, as they possess the grassroots connections, cultural sensitivity, and community trust necessary for effective peacebuilding interventions. Advocacy and policy influence efforts by CSOs are crucial for creating an enabling environment for sustainable peace by addressing structural issues, such as governance deficits, socio-economic inequalities, and human rights violations.

Collaboration and coordination among CSOs, government agencies, international partners, and local communities yielded a positive impact by strengthening peace-building initiatives and helped comprehensively address the root causes of conflict. Their presence as in the case of CDD's Northwest 2023 project on mitigation and reconciliation for example, has empowered local stakeholders, including community leaders, youth, and women, through capacity-building, and peace education programs are fundamental for fostering a culture of peace and ensuring the long-term sustainability of conflict resolution efforts. These successes were recorded because CSOs today have embraced innovative approaches that leverage technology and recognize the value of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. All of these are essential for enhancing the reach, inclusivity, and cultural relevance of CSOs' peace-building strategies of CSOs.

However, despite the achievements recorded in violent conflict intervention, much work remains to be done to ensure lasting peace and social change in Nigeria. The government's perception of CSOs as a threat to their authority has sometimes hindered their efforts.

In conclusion, CSOs in Nigeria have played a crucial role in facilitating conflict resolution and peace building efforts, using various tools and strategies. CSOs have made significant contributions to conflict resolution and peace building in Nigeria, their effectiveness is contingent upon overcoming governmental resistance and fostering collaborative relationships with state actors. Continued research and advocacy are essential to enhance the role of CSOs in promoting lasting peace in Nigeria.

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IMPACT OF CYBERCRIME ON FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT IN NIGERIA: EVIDENCE FROM THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY (2019–2022)

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Abstract
Given the evolving landscape of digital economies, cybercrime presents a significant and growing threat to economic advancement, yet its specific impact on foreign direct investment (FDI) in developing countries remains underexplored. This study investigates the influence of escalating cybercrime on FDI within Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT) from 2019 to 2022. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates data from surveys (n = 150), interviews (n = 20), and secondary data analysis. Guided by Institutional Theory and Risk Management Theory, the study reveals a strong negative correlation between cybercrime incidents and FDI inflows ($r = -0.824$, $p = 0.046$), with ransomware, malware, and phishing identified as primary threats. Findings indicate that 75% of respondents reported a reduced likelihood of investment following cyber incidents, exacerbated by regulatory deficiencies and non-compliance within the public sector ($M = 2.73$), leading to a precipitous decline in investor confidence. By 2022, annual financial losses had surged to ₦2.5 billion, deterring investment and hindering the transfer of expertise. The study concludes that cybersecurity is a critical determinant of investment climates in developing nations. To enhance resilience and sustain Nigeria's economic attractiveness, the research recommends implementing legislative reforms, establishing a public-private cybersecurity taskforce, providing financial incentives for cybersecurity adoption, and launching national awareness campaigns to combat cyber threats through legislation and awareness.

Key words: Cyber, crime, foreign, direct, investment

Introduction

The abrupt, worldwide shift to digital economies has created unprecedented opportunities for growth, connectivity, and innovation, while simultaneously exposing countries to increasing cybersecurity threats. Nations such as Nigeria, aiming to take advantage of digital technologies in order to advance economic growth, are faced with a double dilemma: harnessing these opportunities while securing key digital infrastructure. Foreign direct investment (FDI), one of the leading drivers of employment creation, financing of infrastructure, and technology transfer, is growing increasingly cyber-risk-sensitive as investors weigh the security of their money against potential return. In the largest African economy, Nigeria, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) remains a major economic hub, attracting significant FDI inflows to the tune of $728 million in 2021 alone (NBS, 2022). However, the region's emerging digital environment is marred by a record increase in cybercrime, which rose to 88% from 1,200 in 2019 to 2,847 in 2022, resulting in annual monetary loss of ₦2.5 billion (Nigerian Police, 2022). This study examined how such rising cybercrime impacts FDI in the FCT between the years 2019–2022, answering a pressing economic concern at the nexus of investment and cybersecurity.

Cybercrime, comprising phishing, malware, ransomware, and data breaches, poses a systemic threat to Nigeria's aspirations to market itself as an attractive investment destination. Globally, evidence suggests that high levels of cyber threats diminish FDI through heightened uncertainty and reduced investor confidence (Gupta & Mandal, 2022; UNCTAD, 2021). In Nigeria, where there is global reputation for foreign cyber fraud such as business email scam and romance fraud (Abdullahi & Issah, 2020), the budgetary implication is evident. The precipitous decline in FCT's FDI to $42 million in 2022, following a peak in 2021, is concurrent with this cybercrime surge, indicating a cause-and-effect relationship. Empirical studies of this convergence in developing contexts are limited, with most studies conducted in developed economies or making general global conclusions (Shahzad et al., 2022). This shortfall is particularly critical for Nigeria, where digital transformation has been an economic policy bedrock but cybersecurity frameworks lag behind, undermining investor confidence and future growth prospects.

This research attempts to bridge this knowledge gap by examining the intricate relationship between cybercrime and FDI in the FCT. Its objectives are to: (1) analyze the occurrence, tactics, and consequences of cyber threats facing business enterprises and investors in the FCT, Abuja; (2) analyze the effectiveness of these threats on investor confidence and FDI inflows in the FCT, Abuja; (3) ascertain the effectiveness of Nigeria's regulatory mechanisms in mitigating cyber risks in FCT, Abuja; and (4) propose concrete actions to check the impact of cybercrime on foreign investment in FCT, Abuja. Drawing on a mixed-methods strategy—150 investor surveys, 20 key informant interviews, and secondary analysis of data—the research offers an in-depth examination of a much-overlooked area, comparing qualitative and quantitative trend information.

This study offers significant benefits in two key ways. First, and perhaps most importantly, it provides policymakers with concrete, evidence-based solutions they can use to strengthen Nigeria's cybersecurity defenses. By doing so, it helps safeguard the nation's economic appeal as it navigates the challenges of an increasingly digital world. Second, this study contributes to the growing body of academic literature on the economic consequences of cybercrime in developing nations, adding valuable insights to the global conversation about cybersecurity as a crucial factor in attracting investment. As Nigeria navigates the promise and risk of its digital future, an understanding and engagement with cybercrime's influence on FDI is not only a matter of economic imperative but of sustainable development in a globalizing world

Literature Review

Conceptual framework

Cybercrime is the term used to describe criminal activities carried out through computers or the internet, including hacking, phishing, ransomware, and data breaches (Gordon & Ford, 2006). Phishing is the use of fraudulent tactics, usually through emails or phony websites, to obtain sensitive information, such as passwords or financial details; ransomware encrypts victims' data and demands payment for access; and data breaches are unauthorized intrusions into systems that compromise confidential information (Kshetri, 2013). These crimes pose a threat to individuals, businesses, and governments, with businesses being particularly vulnerable due to their reliance on digital infrastructure. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is defined as investments made by foreign entities in domestic businesses or assets with the goal of establishing a long-term interest (UNCTAD, 2007).

By providing capital, technology transfer, and job opportunities, foreign direct investment (FDI) stimulates economic growth in developing countries. Cybercrime complicates this dynamic and can discourage FDI by raising perceived risks and costs—data breaches can

result in intellectual property theft, undermining a firm's value, while ransomware disrupts operations, heightening uncertainty (Dupont, 2019). On the other hand, robust cybersecurity can boost investor confidence by ensuring a secure business environment (Asongu &Kodila-Tedika, 2022). In Nigeria, cybercrime has increased in tandem with the country's digital expansion, placing it among Africa's most cyber-threatened countries (Symantec, 2019).

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) estimates annual losses at over $500 million (NCC, 2020). The financial sector bears the brunt, followed by technology and manufacturing, with phishing and ransomware as prevalent threats (PwC, 2021; Ojedokun et al., 2023). These trends highlight the urgency of tailored cybersecurity measures to safeguard Nigeria's economic appeal, particularly in investment hubs like the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Theoretical Framework

This study employs Institutional Theory (North, 1990) to examine the relationship between cybercrime and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Institutional Theory posits that institutions—comprising legal, regulatory, and social structures—shape economic behavior by reducing uncertainty (North, 1990). The central argument is that strong, well-enforced institutions foster a predictable and secure environment, encouraging economic activity and investment. Conversely, weak or ineffective institutions increase uncertainty and risk, thereby discouraging investment (Kshetri, 2013).

In the context of cybercrime, Institutional Theory suggests that countries with robust legal frameworks and effective enforcement mechanisms are better equipped to combat cyber threats, creating a safer environment for businesses and investors. Stringent legislation, consistent enforcement, and a culture of compliance can suppress cybercrime, promoting a stable investment climate conducive to FDI.

Conversely, regulatory loopholes, corruption, and a lack of enforcement capacity can entrench vulnerabilities, allowing cyber threats to thrive. Nigeria's 2015 Cybercrimes Act, while demonstrating legislative intent, faces persistent enforcement challenges (Ani et al., 2022), highlighting the complexities of translating legal frameworks into effective institutional practices. Critics of Institutional Theory sometimes argue that it can overemphasize the role of formal institutions while underestimating the influence of informal norms and social networks. However, in the context of cybercrime, the formal legal and regulatory environment plays a crucial role in signaling the government's commitment to cybersecurity and deterring cyber threats.

The relevance of Institutional Theory to this study lies in its ability to explain how the strength or weakness of Nigeria's cybersecurity institutions influences FDI inflows in the FCT. By examining the effectiveness of Nigeria's regulatory mechanisms in mitigating cyber risks, this study assesses the extent to which institutional factors contribute to investor confidence and FDI decisions. The findings provide insights into the institutional reforms needed to enhance Nigeria's cybersecurity profile and attract greater foreign investment.

Review of Previous Studies

As developing economies depend more on digital infrastructure to spur growth, the relationship between cybercrime and FDI has emerged as a crucial research topic. The economic effects of cybercrime, the factors that influence foreign direct investment in poor nations, and the impact of cybersecurity on investment climates are the three main themes of this review, which summarizes previous research in these areas. By evaluating these studies,

this section lays the groundwork for examining the precise effects of cybercrime on foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT), pointing out any gap that the present research aims to fill.

Economic Consequences of Cybercrime

Globally, cybercrime is a significant economic burden, and underdeveloped countries are particularly vulnerable because of their lack of resources and institutional flaws. The economic effects of cybercrime in poor nations were studied by Kshetri (2019), who emphasized how insufficient legal frameworks and enforcement procedures increase losses. Based on data from 50 countries, his analysis showed that economic disruptions were more common in nations with inferior governance systems, including Nigeria, which received a score of 21 out of 100 on the 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2022). Kshetri's study offers a general conceptual framework, but it is devoid of local empirical support; this study fills that gap by concentrating on Nigeria's FCT**.**

Folorunsho et al. (2020) estimated the yearly damages from cybercrime in Nigeria to be $450 million, with phishing and business email compromise (BEC) assaults accounting for the majority of these costs. According to their survey of 200 Nigerian businesses, 60% of them had cyber events between 2018 and 2019 that caused them to lose business and damage their brand. Despite being informative, their study did not examine the crucial relationship that this research explores between these losses and FDI. In a more recent analysis of ransomware trends in Nigeria, Ojedokun et al. (2023) found that attacks increased by 30% between 2020 and 2022. Although their dependence on national aggregates ignored regional variables such as those in the FCT, they projected using econometric modeling that a 10% increase in cybercrime occurrences decreased FDI inflows by 1.2%.

Lewis (2021) evaluated the economic impact of cybercrime in 60 countries worldwide and discovered that FDI declined by up to 2% yearly in countries with high cyber risk ratings. Using data from 2018 to 2020, his study—published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies—emphasized how cyber incidents undermine investor confidence, especially in emerging markets. Similar to this, Gupta and Mandal (2022) used a regression model across 50 countries and found that FDI decreased by 0.5% for every point rise in cyber risk (on a 10-point scale), with decreases being more pronounced in emerging nations. Although both studies provide strong statistical support, their wide scope makes them inapplicable to Nigeria's particular cybercrime environment, requiring a more focused strategy.

This narrative. is reinforced by more recent research. According to a case study of Nigeria's banking sector by Adebayo and Ibrahim (2023), cyber-crime cost banks $200 million in 2022 alone, discouraging international collaborations. Although they do not directly tie these losses to FDI patterns, their findings—which were published in the Journal of African Business—highlight the sector-specific economic cost of cybercrime. This paper investigates this relationship through industry-level analysis in the FCT.

Determinants of FDI in Developing Countries

Economic, political, and institutional issues all play a role in FDI inflows to developing nations, and new research is starting to incorporate digital risks into conventional models. According to a fundamental analysis by Asiedu (2006), the main factors influencing foreign direct investment in Africa are market size, infrastructure, and political stability. Political instability decreased foreign direct investment (FDI) by 1.5% for every percentage point increase in risk, according to her research, which was based on panel data from 22 African

nations (1984–2000). Despite its influence, her work is insufficient for a modern examination because it was written before the emergence of cyberthreats.

Asongu and Nnanna (2021) updated this viewpoint by examining the contribution of digital infrastructure on FDI attraction in 48 African nations between 2000 and 2018. According to their research, which was published in Telecommunications Policy, FDI increased by 1.8% for every 10% increase in internet usage, but only in nations with robust cybersecurity measures, which Nigeria finds difficult to achieve (World Bank, 2023). In a similar vein, Okeke and Nwachukwu (2021) used time-series data from 1990 to 2019 to examine the factors that influence foreign direct investment in Nigeria, emphasizing infrastructure and currency rate stability. However, this study fills a larger gap in the literature by addressing their omission of cyber threats.

More broadly, UNCTAD (2022) reported that FDI flows into developing economies across the world fell by 12% in 2021, partly due to heightened cyber weaknesses exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Their World Investment Report noted that digital security is now at the top of investors' priorities, alongside traditional ones like tax incentives. In Nigeria, Ezeoha et al. (2022) examined FDI trends from 2015 to 2021 and concluded that policy inconsistency and security matters—especially cyber threats—deterred investment in non-oil sectors. The Economic Development and Cultural Change analysis requires examination of specific risk dimensions, which aligns with this paper's focus on cybercrime.

A recent contribution by Mensah and Traore (2023) also simplifies this debate. Their investigation of 15 West African countries, published in African Development Review, discovered that cybersecurity readiness increased FDI inflows by 2.5% for each unit of improvement in readiness scores. Nigeria lagged behind peers like Ghana, though, pointing to a regional disparity this study investigates in the FCT context.

Cybersecurity's Role in Investment Climates

Cybersecurity has evolved from a technological problem to a strategic force behind investment climates, particularly in digital economies. Dupont (2020) argued that proactive cybersecurity policies make a country more attractive to investors by highlighting the success of South Korea in contrast with Brazil's failure. His study, in the Global Policy journal, found that South Korea's mandatory cybersecurity scans increased FDI in technology sectors by 10% between 2016 and 2019. This institutional solution is highly relevant to Nigeria, whose regulatory lacunas persist (PwC, 2022).

In Africa, the African Union (2021) estimated cybercrime on the continent at $4.5 billion annually, with Nigeria alone accounting for 20% of that amount. Their Africa Cybersecurity Report advocated for harmonized laws and public-private collaboration, the same solutions Von Solms and Von Solms (2018) offered to fractured governance in developing nations. Both reports identify systemic weaknesses but do not make empirical links to FDI, a link established by this study.

Sector-specific information also illuminates this dynamic further. Nguyen and Pham (2022) studied Vietnam's manufacturing industry and found that those firms having certified cybersecurity protocols received 18% more FDI compared to their counterparts without, based on data from the period 2019-2021 (Journal of Southeast Asian Economies). In Nigeria, Deloitte (2023) found that 65% of FCT-headquartered firms lack incident response plans, thereby opening themselves more to attacks like ransomware, which grew by 40% in 2022 (NBS, 2023). This vulnerability most likely explained the FCT's FDI reduction from $728 million in 2021 to $42 million in 2022, a trend that this research examines extensively.

Despite all these advances, FCT-centered research is scarce. National-level research dominates, concealing regional processes necessary to understand Nigeria's federated character. This study fills this gap by focusing on the FCT, employing mixed methods to capture both statistical patterns and stakeholders' perceptions.

Research Gap

Literature covered in this review points out the financial burden of cybercrime, its potential for disrupting FDI, and growing regard for cybersecurity when making investment decisions. However, glaring gaps remain. Firstly, research mostly draws from national or cross-national frames and overlooks regional variations like those within the FCT. Secondly, while qualitative research identifies reputational losses based on cybercrime, quantitative evidence for the crime's direct impact on reduced FDI is weak. Thirdly, Nigerian FDI models rarely incorporate cyber risk given their growing relevance.

This study bridges these research gaps by examining the FCT for the years 2019-2022 using surveys, interviews, and secondary data to determine the impact of cybercrime on FDI. With a synthesis of Institutional Theory and Risk Management Theory, it makes an original theoretical contribution by placing cybersecurity as a prime FDI motivator in the evolving economic climate of Nigeria.

Methodology

The study employs a concurrent mixed-methods approach to examine the impact of cybercrime on foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT) from 2019 to 2022. By the integration of quantitative and qualitative data, the methodology facilitates methodological triangulation, which enhances the robustness of evidence on cyber threats, their economic effects, and regulatory effectiveness.

Research Design and Sample

Stratified sampling approach was utilized to sample 150 FCT business owners and FCT investors spanning technology (60%), finance (20%), and manufacturing (13.33%) sectors with firm sizes as SMEs (40%) and multinational companies (33.33%). This helped capture a spectrum of perspectives in the context of cyber threats. Additionally, 20 key informants such as policymakers, cybersecurity experts, and business leaders were selected purposively given their technical competencies and detailed contextual understandings. The research period (2019–2022) captures rising cybercrime and FDI patterns, synchronous with Nigeria's post-pandemic information boom.

Data Collection

Primary data were gathered through two instruments. Firstly, a questionnaire format polled respondents' self-assessed views about the pervasiveness of cyber threats, their impact on investor confidence, and the contribution of regulation, on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The survey, having been pre-tested for reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$), was conducted face-to-face and internet, with 92% response rate. Second, informants were interviewed with semi-structured interviews eliciting qualitative questions such as government response and policy expectations in 30–45 minutes with recording consent. Secondary data pertaining to cybercrime activities (e.g., 2,847 in 2022) and FDI (e.g., $42 million in 2022) were sourced from the Nigerian Police and National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), respectively, for temporal correlation with primary data.

Data Analysis

Quantitative survey data were quantified with descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) to pool perceptions, substantiated by inferential tests: one-way ANOVA and Chi-

square for demographic differences and industry-specific regulatory views, and Pearson's correlation (r) to test the relationship between cybercrime and FDI. Secondary data trends were plotted and correlated to substantiate survey findings. Qualitative interview transcripts were coded thematically, coding responses to themes (e.g., "regulatory gaps," "investor deterrence") using NVivo software, with inter-coder reliability checked (κ = 0.78). Triangulation across sources added causal inferences and contextual richness.

Limitations

The study's focus on the FCT limits generalizability to other Nigerian regions, though its economic hub status mitigates this bias. Potential response bias through self-reported survey information and respondent availability were controlled by using anonymity and stratified sampling. Reliability of secondary data was dependent on official reporting quality, hence tending to underreport unreported cyber-attacks. Despite these limitations, the mixed-methods approach and rigorous analysis yield credible evidence regarding the cybercrime-FDI nexus.

Results and Analysis

This section presents the findings from a mixed-methods analysis into cybercrime's impact on foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT) from 2019 to 2022. Results are organized around the study's objectives: prevalence of cyber threats, their effect on FDI, and regulatory effectiveness. Descriptive statistics precede inferential tests, followed by an integrated analysis of quantitative and qualitative insights.

Cyber Threat Landscape

Table 1: Prevalence of Cyber Threats (Survey Responses, n=150)

Cyber Threat	Mean (1–5 Scale)	Std. Deviation	% Reporting High Concern (4–5)
Phishing	3.45	0.87	62%
Malware	3.53	0.91	68%
Ransomware	3.38	0.95	59%
Data Breaches	3.20	0.89	51%

Source; (Survey Response Compiled by the author,2025)

The most serious cyberthreat, according to survey data (n=150), was malware (M = 3.53, SD = 0.91), followed by phishing (M = 3.45, SD = 0.87), and ransomware (M = 3.38, SD = 0.95). More than half of respondents rated each of these threats as having a high impact (Table 1). With 2,847 cybercrimes registered in 2022 (up 88% from 1,200 in 2019), secondary statistics supported this. The annual cost of these incidents was ₦2.5 billion, or ₦900,000 per incident (Nigerian Police, 2022). Inferential Statistics (Hypothesis 1): A one-way ANOVA investigated variations in threat concern across industries (technology, finance, manufacturing). Technology respondents expressed greater anxiety (M = 3.72) than manufacturing respondents (M = 3.15), indicating a significant effect ($F(2,147) = 4.85$, $p = 0.009$). Tukey HSD post-hoc testing verified this discrepancy ($p = 0.012$). Thus, H_1 is supported and H_{01} (no difference) is rejected.

Impact on FDI

Table 2: Cybercrime Cases and FDI Inflows (2019–2022, Secondary Data)

Year	Cybercrime Cases	FDI Inflows ($M)	% Respondents Reporting Reduced Confidence Post-Incident
2019	1,200	450	62%
2020	1,650	380	68%
2021	2,100	728	71%

Source:(Compiled by the Author,2025)

Secondary data (Table 2) showed a steep FDI fall from $728 million in 2021 to $42 million in 2022, alongside increased cybercrime instances. According to survey results, 75% of participants (n=112) had less faith in investments following occurrences in 2022, compared to 62% in 2019. Knowledge transfer disruptions (M = 3.45, SD = 0.93) and growth worries (M = 3.50, SD = 0.88) were often mentioned.
Inferential Statistics (Hypothesis 2): The relationship between FDI and cybercrime cases was examined using Pearson's correlation. H_{02} (no correlation) was rejected in favor of H_2 (negative correlation) when a strong negative correlation (r = -0.824, p = 0.046, n = 4 years) was found. This implies that FDI inflows are considerably discouraged by cybercrime.

Regulatory Effectiveness

Table 3: Perceptions of Regulatory Effectiveness (Survey Responses, n=150)

Item	Mean (1–5 Scale)	Std. Deviation	% Agreeing (4–5)
Confidence in Regulations	3.53	0.85	65%
Public Sector Compliance	2.73	0.94	38%
Private Sector Collaboration	3.40	0.90	58%

Source:-(Survey Responses, complied by the author,2025)

The table above shows that: only 38% of respondents agreed that the current restrictions were successful, and respondents only marginally trusted them (M = 3.53, SD = 0.85). Public sector compliance, on the other hand, lagged (M = 2.73, SD = 0.94) (Table 3). According to secondary data, by 2022, 70% of businesses did not have required audits (NBS, 2022).
Hypothesis 3: Inferential Statistics The relationship between industry type and opinions of regulatory efficacy was evaluated using a chi-square test. The findings were significant ($\chi^2(4) = 6.15$, p = 0.04), and respondents in the technology sector were more likely to view laws as effective (72%) than those in the banking sector (55%). In favor of H_3, H_{03} (no relationship) is rejected.

Analysis

The finding reveals a stark cyber threat landscape in the FCT, with malware and phishing dominating investor concerns, validated by an 88% case surge and ₦2.5 billion in losses. The significant industry variation (p = 0.009) underscores technology's vulnerability, reflecting its digital reliance. The FDI drop from $728 million to $42 million, coupled with a robust negative correlation (r = -0.824, p = 0.046), confirms cybercrime as a potent economic deterrent, eroding confidence (75% affected) and stunting knowledge transfers—a critical loss for a developing hub. Regulatory trust (M = 3.53) contrasts with public sector weakness

(M = 2.73), with industry differences (p = 0.04) suggesting uneven resilience. Qualitative insights from interviews (n=20) amplify this: informants criticized delayed government responses (e.g., "Reactive, not proactive") and urged public-private synergy, aligning with quantitative gaps. These results highlight cybercrime as a systemic risk, with regulatory and economic implications demanding urgent action.

Discussion

This research reveals the significant impact of cybercrime on foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT) from 2019 to 2022, aligning with global trends while highlighting situation-specific challenge

By combining these findings with current scholarship, this discussion reveals the cost of cybercrime from an economic perspective, regulatory loopholes, and the urgent need for resilience efforts within an emerging digital economy.

The prevalence of malware (M = 3.53), phishing (M = 3.45), and ransomware (M = 3.38) aligns with global trends, where such attacks are the norm in digitized spaces (Tran et al., 2021). In the FCT, an 88% rise in cases—1,200 in 2019 and 2,847 in 2022—mirrors Nigeria-wide trends (Ojedokun et al., 2023) fueled by socioeconomic factors like unemployment and low digital literacy (Abdullahi & Issah, 2020). The large industry difference (F = 4.85, p = 0.009), where technology firms are the most stressed out, is a manifestation of their vulnerability online, a finding consistent with Gupta and Mandal (2022), who identify sectoral vulnerabilities to amplify risk perceptions. This is congruent with Routine Activities Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979), as FCT's growing digital infrastructure provides ample targets with weak guardianship.

The sharp FDI decline—$728 million in 2021 to $42 million in 2022—coupled with a large negative correlation (r = -0.824, p = 0.046) between cybercrime and inflows, confirms global findings that cyber risks discourage investment (Asongu &Kodila-Tedika, 2022; UNCTAD, 2021). The 75% confidence loss among those who reported declining confidence following events aligns with Technology Threat Avoidance Theory (Liang & Xue, 2009), where threatened perceptions trigger avoidance behavior. This fiscal implication extends past immediate losses (₦2.5 billion a year) to slow down knowledge flows (M = 3.45) and steady growth (M = 3.50), which hold the secrets to having a hub like the FCT. Contrasting Shahzad et al. (2022), whose study sees a projected 0.24–0.65% reduction in FDI-to-GDP with each increment of cyber attacks, is Nigeria's sharper decline suggesting more susceptibility in environments with bad institutions.

Regulatory efficacy has spotty credibility. Moderate trustworthiness (M = 3.53) in tools like the 2015 Cybercrimes Act agrees with Eleanya (2021), yet public sector lag (M = 2.73) and differences in the sector ($\chi^2 = 6.15$, p = 0.04) signal enforcement loopholes, in alignment with Ani et al. (2022). Higher more approving answers in the technology sector companies (72%) compared to the finance companies (55%) point to sector-based resilience, tipping towards Institutional Theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983)—truer norms in technology-related sectors reinforce trust. Interviewees' accusation of reactive governance ("Reactive, not proactive") mirrors Von Solms and Von Solms (2018), who assert decentralized control destroys cybersecurity. Unlike Vietnam's proactive stance (Tran et al., 2021), Nigeria's is lacking the coordination displayed by international leaders (NCSC, 2022), which increases investor deterrence.

The findings have harsh implications. Economically, cybercrime is systemic risk, deterring Nigeria's digital development potential through loss of FDI—a lifeline for infrastructure and

employment. Institutionally, regulatory gaps foretell insecurity, contradicting investor expectations of safe environments (UNCTAD, 2021). Behaviorally, the gap between concern (high) and compliance (low) illustrates resilience deficiency, necessitating a change of culture. Unique contributions are the FCT-specific empirical correlation ($r = -0.824$), sector-specific regulation results, and stakeholder calls for collaboration—missing in previous Nigeria-focused studies (e.g., Folorunsho et al., 2020). This detail contributes to the paucity of literature on development contexts, which transcends macro-level assumptions (Shahzad et al., 2022). On the whole, cybercrime in the FCT is not only a technological issue but an economic and institutional crisis with ripple effects on investment and development. It can be combated through bridging regulatory, economic, and behavioral cleavages, an undertaking to which the findings of this research highlight.

Conclusion

Cybercrime is shown through this study as a strong discouragement to FDI in Nigeria's FCT with a precipitous case rise (1,200 to 2,847) and FDI reduction ($728M to $42M) from 2019 to 2022, fueled by malware, phishing, and ransomware. The significant negative correlation ($r = -0.824$, $p = 0.046$) and 75% investor confidence loss reveal an economic crisis, compounded by regulatory loopholes (public sector $M = 2.73$) and asymmetrical industry resilience ($\chi^2 = 6.15$, $p = 0.04$). The findings affirm cybercrime's systemic risk, impacting not just finances (₦2.5 billion lost annually) but also knowledge transfers and opportunities for growth needed for development.

Theoretically, the results validate Routine Activities and Technology Threat Avoidance models, yet practically, they illustrate Nigeria's vulnerability in the presence of digital ambitions. New findings—FCT-specific data, sectoral variations, and stakeholder needs—fill an essential gap in developing-country research. Nevertheless, FCT specificity limits broader generalizability, and future econometric modeling or cross-regional analysis is suggested.

The clarion call is clear: Nigeria must align institutional reforms, economic incentives, and behavioral change to arrest the wave of cybercrime. In the absence of concerted action, FDI will continue to dwindle, stifling economic growth. This study challenges policymakers, business, and citizens to act boldly, making Nigeria's digital future and its position in the world stronger—rather than weaker.

Policy Recommendations

The findings underscore the deleterious effects of cybercrime on FDI in the FCT, calling for interventions aimed at enhancing the economic resilience of Nigeria. With reference to the findings of this study (e.g., $r = -0.824$, $p = 0.046$) and perspectives of stakeholders, three policy pillars—institutional, economic, and behavioral—are proposed to contain risks and recover investor confidence.

Institutional Proposals: Establish initially a public-private cybersecurity task force in the FCT that bridges government institutions (e.g., Nigerian Information Technology Development Agenv, Nigerian Police) and private sector industry heads to optimize the response to threats and enforcement. The lag from the public sector ($M = 2.73$) warrants compulsory cybersecurity orientation for public officers to abide by the 2015 Cybercrimes Act. Second, institute standardized cybersecurity audits for businesses, addressing the 70% non-compliance rate (NBS, 2022), with compliance penalties and rewards, drawing on international templates and addressing interviewees' calls for active governance.

Economic Recommendations: To turn FDI falls ($728M to $42M) around, offer tax relief to businesses adopting advanced cybersecurity practices, e.g., firewalls or encryption, reducing

SME costs (40% of respondents). Establish innovation hubs in the FCT to grow local cybersecurity products, leveraging the high concern for technology (M = 3.72) to create jobs and knowledge spillovers (M = 3.45 disrupted). Facilitate take-up of cyber insurance, underwriting premiums at a discount to early adopters, to save the ₦2.5 billion annual losses and send the signal of stability to investors, replicating 's Vietnam experience Tran et al. (2021).

Behavioral Recommendations: Plan countrywide campaigns among citizens and enterprises on phishing and ransomware prevention, given their high-concern levels (62% and 59%). Integrate cybersecurity into the education curriculum to inculcate long-term defense, fighting root causes like digital illiteracy (Abdullahi & Issah, 2020). Strengthen cooperation globally with Interpol and regional bodies to tackle transnational cyber syndicates, a recurring FCT problem (2,847 in 2022). These measures bridge the awareness-action gap in survey and interview responses.

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FOOD SECURITY: A DOCUMENTATION OF EFFECT OF CLIMATE CHANGE, CROP PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' INCOME IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
Long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns mainly due to human activities across the globe have left devastating effects on agricultural landscape, particularly in the Northern part of Nigeria. Accordingly, this study *documented the effects of climate change on crop production and farmers' income in Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria. Guided by an objective to examine the effects of climate change on crop production and farmers' income, two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were postulated. The study utilized responses from 45 registered farmers who experienced effects of climate change from 2012 to 2022. The primary data elicited with a research instrument known as CCFSQ were used to address the research questions and test for the tenability of the hypotheses. Percentage, mean, standard deviation, Chi-square and Pseudo R^2 logistic regression methods were used. The result of the analysis revealed that climate change associated negatively with crop production as well as farmer's income; and the observed and expected responses of farmers on the effects of climate change on crop production and farmers' income do not significantly associate in Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria. The study concluded that climate change had adverse effects on crop production and farmers' income within the period of the study. It is therefore recommended that governments should build more water-containing-walls around confluence point of Rivers Benue and Niger in order to reduce level of the water overflow.*

Keywords: Food, Climate Change, Crop, Production, Income, Logistic Regression
JEL Codes: C82, C93, O13, Q4, Q14, Q18, Q54

1.Introduction

One of the purposes of having incremental annual budgetary provision to the real sector of the Nigerian economy is to ensure that there is a state of affair that guarantees a reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable and nutritious food for people of any class, gender or religion. A situation that promises all people, at all times, physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Kurukulasuriya and Mendelsohn (2011) note that availability; access, utilization and stability of food are critical focus for food security that reinforces efforts of any country to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. Social security guaranteed by food is critically important because it directly affects individual well-being, societal stability, and economic development (Amfo & Ali, 2020). This goes to suggest that food security is the dream of any economy because it has lots of implications for health and nutrition, economic productivity, social stability, environmental sustainability, global development goals and resilience to crises. No wonder efforts in difference manner are made to address food insecurity which is essential for achieving broader goals of health, equity, and economic development.

However, the dream is not near to realization in Africa. Ojo and Baiyegunhi (2021) assessing food security among young farmers in Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda report that food insecurity remains a serious challenge for many households – a situation that affects the young people more than any other segment of the population as a result of their activeness in

the production processes of goods and services. In fact, a recent report by FAO (2021) indicates that about 21% of the African population faced severe hunger in 2020, doubling the proportion reported by other regions in the World.

Also, over 50% of the population faces moderate to severe food insecurity (Gebre, 2021), representing one-third (799 million) of the estimated 2.37 billion people facing moderate to severe food insecurity in the World (FAO 2021). Compared to other regions, the prevalence of food insecurity is much higher in West and East Africa, where over 68% and 65%, respectively experience moderate to severe food insecurity (FAO, 2021). Food insecurity is a circumstance that has attracted the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) quest to end hunger and ensure food accessibility by all people by 2030. While there have been several national and international efforts to achieve this goal, food insecurity remains a major livelihood challenge in many developing countries, particularly in Africa. The food insecurity situation in Nigeria is getting worse as the country ranked 107th out of 113 countries on the Global Food Security Index (GFSI) in 2022. This position of Nigeria on the GFSI further revealed that the there is a decline of -0.9 in food production from the position the country was as at the year 2012.

A nation that used to be a net exporter of food has continued to experience decline in food production. Niger, Togo, Cameroon, Angola, Zambia, Chad, Sudan, Congo (Democratic Republic), Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Mali and Ghana performed better in terms of the production of food than Nigeria as evidenced by the Global Food Security Index (GFSI) in 2022 where Nigeria scored 42.0 on a scale of 100.0 in terms of adequate food production across the globe. Food prices are on the rise despite government's efforts over the years through various agricultural programmes poised to make food available for the masses (Apata, 2011). The problem of food insecurity in Nigeria is compounded by the adverse effect of climate change in terms of flood (Lele, 2019).

More worrying situation is that Nigeria loses and wastes 40 per cent of its total food production each year on the account of flood (Amfo & Ali, 2020). This loss accounts for 31 per cent of the country's total land use and accounts for 5 per cent of its greenhouse gas emissions. Of much concern is that food insecurity incidence is highest at 0.48 and lowest at 0.33 for the traders and unemployed respectively in Kogi State – which increases with increase in household size. This ranges between 0.27 and 1.00 for those households made up of 1- 4 and greater than 12 members respectively. This is a concerned that has generated debates and attracted research attention (Eregha, Babatolu &Akinnubi, 2014; Eshete, Mulatu &Gatiso, 2020; FAO 2021). However, the body of existing literature is yet to receive contribution as per the effect of climate change on food security with particular emphasis on how flood affected crop production and farmer's income, Kogi State, Nigeria. Consequently, this study is guided by the objective to examine the effects of climate change on crop production and farmers' income in Kogi State, Nigeria through the lens of descriptive survey. Accordingly, the study raised this question; what has been the association between climate change and crop production and farmers' income in Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria. Based on this, it is postulated that the observed and expected responses of farmers on the effects of climate change on crop production and farmers' income do not significantly associate. The rest of the paper addresses, in section 2, 3, 4 and 5, issues bordering on literature review, methodology, data presentation and results and concluding remarks.

2. Literature Review: Review of Theoretical Literature

This section undertakes review of literature in relation to the effect of climate change on crop production and farmers' income. This is done under the sub-heading of theoretical and

empirical reviews. Theoretical review considers climate sensitivity, and sustainability and development theories.

Theoretical Review

Climate Sensitivity Theory

This theory refers to the degree to which the Earth's climate responds to changes in greenhouse gas concentrations. Climate sensitivity is typically measured as the change in global average temperature resulting from a doubling of atmospheric CO2. Understanding climate sensitivity helps predict the potential impacts of different levels of greenhouse gas emissions on temperature and climate patterns, which in turn affect agricultural productivity and food availability. This theory is a key measure of the longer-term climate response to external forcing and impacting objects. In principle, it represents the equilibrium change in mean surface temperature to a doubling of atmospheric CO2 concentration from preindustrial levels and its resultant effect on the environment in both short-and-long-terms.

Nicholas (2023) argues that the theory is normally estimated using some approximate measure, often derived from disequilibrium changes cause by climate variation. Charney (2019) argues that climate change offers changes to how convective precipitation was natural modeled. This varied climate sensitivity is informed largely by human activities; and it in turn the fortune of human beings. Changing the order in which the various parameterized atmospheric modules were naturally updated in of creation remains sensitive to the future of all human affairs (Amfo & Ali, 2020).

Loehle (2014) is of the thought that climate sensitivity summarizes the net effect of a change in forcing on earth's surface temperature – which asserts lots of unpleasant implications on farming and other economic activities. This theory refers to the concept used to understand how the climate system responds to changes in greenhouse gas concentrations and causes negative effects on agricultural and other economic activities. It essentially measures how sensitive the earth's climate is to changes in atmospheric CO2 and other greenhouse gases that impact on farming activities. There are different ways to quantify and interpret climate sensitivity, but the core idea revolves around estimating how much the average global temperature will increase in response to a given increase in greenhouse gas concentrations. Understanding climate sensitivity helps in assessing risks and planning for climate impacts. Higher sensitivity implies a greater potential for warming and associated impacts, which influences policy decisions and adaptation strategies.

Sustainability and Development Theory

Sustainability and development theory was developed through practice and the study of sustainable development issues and tackling environmental issues to deal with the global climate issues. Based on the study of the evolution of sustainable development thoughts and the formation of sustainable development theory (Lele, 2019) posits that issues relating to human-environment are of great concern to the survival of the society in present and future. Thus, food security is a by-product of human environment that requires attention in order to ensure the survival of bother present and future generation. Sustainable development theory emphasizes balancing environmental, economic, and social goals to ensure long-term well-being. It incorporates climate change mitigation and adaptation into development planning. Its core interest is the integrating sustainability principles into agricultural practices and food systems helps address the challenges posed by climate change and ensures that food security is maintained over the long term.

Sustainability of food security is an essential part of facing current and future global challenges, not only those related to the climate change. This theory emphasizes the need for sustainable development practices that balance environmental, economic, and social dimensions to ensure long-term food security. It focuses on integrating climate adaptation and mitigation into development planning. Sustainable development relates to the principle of meeting human development goals while at the same time sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend (Gebre, 2021). It therefore follows that sustainable development practices can help build resilience to climate change by promoting sustainable agriculture, reducing food waste, and improving resource management.

Sustainable development theory (SD) has become a fundamental strategy to guide the world's social and economic transformation. However, in the process of practice, there are still misinterpretations in regards to the theory. Such misinterpretations are highlighted in the struggle between strong and weak sustainable development paths, the confusion of the concept of intra-generational, inter-generational justice and extent of impact of climate change. Sustainable development is the idea that human societies must live and meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The theory explores the intersection between economic development and sustainable management of natural resources. This theory is grounded in the recognition that food security must be pursued in ways that do not deplete or degrade the environment, ensuring that future generations can meet their own needs. In summary, theories of climate change and food security provide frameworks for understanding the complex interactions between climate impacts and food systems. These theories help in identifying vulnerabilities, assessing risks, and developing strategies to enhance food security in the face of a changing climate. The theoretical framework linking climate change and food security encompasses various interrelated theories and concepts that explain how climate change impacts food systems and, consequently, food security. This framework integrates insights from environmental science, economics, agriculture, and social sciences. Climate change theory focuses on how variations in climate variables (temperature, precipitation, extreme weather) influence environmental conditions. Key aspects include global warming, changes in precipitation patterns, and increasing frequency of extreme weather events.

These changes can directly affect agricultural productivity, water availability, soil health, and biodiversity – which are crucial for food production. Thus, this study anchors on climate sensitivity theory and sustainability and development theory which argues that climate change can bring atmospheric variability that affect agricultural activities. While climate change threatens development, sustainability, through food security, provides the tools and strategies needed to achieve long-term economic and environmental balance. Moving towards sustainable development is essential to combat climate change while ensuring food security, economic progress and social well-being.

Empirical Review

Extant body of empirical literature has documented diverse effects of climate change on agricultural activities. Ayo, Omosebi and Sulieman (2014) report that the effect of climate change on food security is found to include decline in agriculture productivity, changes in the quality of land suitable for crop production, changes in precipitation patterns, and increase in temperature (that could lead to longer growing seasons), decreased arability, more pest, risk to fisheries, under nutrition. In a similar thought, Gregory, Ingram and Brklacich (2005) assert that the effect of climate change on food security differs in much way which includes

direct effects on crop production. That is, variations in rainfall result to drought or flooding, or warmer or cooler temperatures leading to changes in the length of growing season. This will automatically result to variation in markets, food prices and supply chain infrastructure.

Devereux and Edwards (2024) are of the opinion that the main effect of climate change on food security is evident in food production. Eregha, Babatolu and Akinnubi (2014) in their study argue that climate change exerts strong effect on food output, and the effects of climatic change variables on food security varies from one food to another, and also depends on the life span of the crop. Apata (2011) reports that hunger-related deaths will most likely rise if grain is produced in the same proportion with the growth rate experienced under a condition of unfavourable climatic environment. The work of Ahmed, Yusuf and Shamaki (2016) investigate the influence of climatic change on food security in Taraba State from 1983 to 2012 and document that change exhibits a strong influence on the production of Cassava in the area under studied. Dhakal, Khadka, Park and Escalante (2022) examine climate change and its effect on farm income and argue that climate change adaptation exerts favourably influence on crop revenue and revenue risk reduction. The result of the Ricardian model adopted by Ojo and Baiyegunhi (2021) reveals that the income of the farmers is affected by climate change perspective in addition to their socio-economic characteristics.

Akbari, Alamdarlo and Mosavi (2020) investigate the influence of climate change and groundwater salinity on the income of farmer in Qazvin region. Finding indicates that a rise in climate change and groundwater salinity demonstrate an inverse connection with the income risk and water shadow prices. This implies that climate change will decline farmer's income risk in the study region. The study of Ojo and Baiyegunhi (2020) revealed that the mean net income of each individual rice farm of those farmers that employed the strategies of adaptation was evidently larger than that of farmers who did not. In a similar study, Amfo and Ali (2020) document that climate change threatens the yield and income of farmers in the study areas. Alam, Taufique and Sayal (2017) report that climatic changes exerts different effect on agricultural output, profitability, income equality, employment, farmer's health, and government subsidy policy. Shrimp farmers are often threatened with shrimp income decline in the study areas in recent time as a result climate change prevalence (Quach, Murray & Morrison-Saunders, 2017).

Bobojonov and Aw-Hassan, (2014) in a study divulge that climate change exerts strong positive influence on income of large-scale commercial farms in the northern regions of Kazakhstan, while for the small-scale farms in arid zones of Tajikistan, the outcome is found to be negative. Abid, Schneider and Scheffran (2016) examine the relationship between adaptation to climate change and its impacts on performance of food output and crop income. The result reveals that the adaptation of wheat crops to climate change strongly favoured wheat productivity and net crop income and thereby indirectly promoting the welfare of the farmers and local food security. Alamgir, Furuya, Kobayashi, Binte and Salam (2018) report that high level of differences in agricultural income among regions is facilitated by the gross income from rice production.

Studies by Dhakal, Khadka, Park and Escalante (2022) and Gibson (2012) have reported mixed resultant effects of climate change on agricultural product, while (Apata, 2011; Lele, 2019; Charney, 2019) have argued that climate change assert negative effect on agricultural produce. However, Ojo, and Baiyegunhi, (2021); Amfo and Ali, (2020) reported otherwise. It is evident that the debate on the effect of climate change on agriculture as an aspect of real sector of the world economy is inconclusive and the field has not been sufficiently researched or addressed in the existing body of literature - suggesting the existence of gap in the body of

extent literature. In view of this, it becomes crucial to extend food security literature by documenting the effects of climate change on crop production and farmers' income in Kogi State, Nigeria.

3. Method of Study

This study adopts descriptive survey research design on the basis that it would allow the use of quantitative approach to describe the events and discover inferences in investigating the effects of climate change on crop production and farmers' income in Kogi State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprises the 45 farmers who are affected by flood from 2012 to 2022 and are active and registered members of the Kogi State Farmers' Association, Lokoja Branch, Kogi State. The study adopts homogeneous sampling as an aspect of purposive sampling method within the orientation of non-probability sampling. On this basis therefore, the population will serve as the sample size.

The study utilizes data primarily sourced with the use of a research instrument known as CCFSQ which represent climate change food security questionnaire. This instrument is utilized to elicit information on issues raised with the aim of achieving the objectives of the study and test the tenability of the hull hypotheses. The instrument is self-constructed and consists of two parts; part A consists questionnaire items of demographic variables while part B consists of questionnaire statements aimed at eliciting responses from the 45 farmers. Both validity and reliability of the instrument were confirmed to have high validity index (0.863) and internal consistency. This was confirmed in a pilot study using 5 farmers in different location within the Kogi State using Cronbach's Alpha correlation statistical tool; and it was administered using through the services of three research assistants.Responses from the research instrument are analyzed using statistical tools of percentage, mean, standard deviation, bar chart for the research questions, while the tenability of the null hypothesis was confirmed using Chi-square and Pseudo R^2 logistic regression methods at 0.05 alpha level.

4. Presentation of Results of Tests of Descriptive Statistics and Hypotheses

Research Question One

Table 4.1: Transformed Data and Result of Descriptive Statistical Test for Research Question One

S/N	AC	Questionnaire Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	N	Sum	Mean	SD	Variance
1.	A	Changes in average temperature affect crop growth, development, and yield.	28 (62.2)	8 (17.8)	4 (8.9)	9 (11.1)	45	149	3.31	1.04	1.08
2.	B	Increased variability in rainfall, including more frequent or intense droughts and floods, affects crop growth.	29 (64.4)	8 (15.6)	4 (6.7)	4 (13.3)	45	149	3.31	1.08	1.17
3.	C	Flooding can damage crops and harvest schedules.	31 (68.9)	5 (8.9)	3 (6.7)	6 (15.6)	45	149	3.31	1.14	1.31
4.	D	Elevated CO2 levels can affect crop growth differently.	10 (22.2)	19 (42.2)	6 (13.3)	10 (22.2)	45	119	2.64	1.07	1.14

5.	E	Persistent decreases in crop yields can be directly linked to adverse climate conditions, such as increased temperatures, reduced precipitation, or extreme weather events.	22 (48.9)	15 (33.3)	3 (6.7)	5 (11.1)	45	144	3.20	.99	0.98
6.	F	Crop Size and Shape: Changes in temperature and water availability can affect the size, shape, and overall quality of crops, impacting their market value and nutritional quality.	22 (48.9)	14 (31.1)	4 (8.9)	5 (11.1)	45	143	3.18	1.01	1.01
7.	G	Changes in the length and timing of the growing season, due to altered temperature and precipitation patterns, can affect planting and harvesting schedules and overall crop productivity.	24 (53.3)	12 (26.7)	2 (4.4)	7 (15.6)	45	143	3.18	1.09	1.20
8.	H	Warmer temperatures and changing precipitation patterns can lead to an increase in pest populations and their range, affecting crop health and yields.	22 (48.9)	14 (31.1)	5 (11.1)	4 (8.9)	45	144	3.20	.97	0.94
9.	I	Increased rainfall intensity leads to higher rates of soil erosion, reducing soil fertility and affecting crop production.	17 (37.8)	20 (44.4)	4 (8.9)	4 (8.9)	45	140	3.11	.91	0.83
10.	J	Changes in climate can lead to soil degradation, reducing the availability of essential nutrients for crops.	26 (57.8)	11 (24.4)	4 (8.9)	4 (8.9)	45	149	3.31	.97	0.95
Average Values			**23.4**	**12.6**	**7.5**	**5.8**	**45**	**142.9**	**3.18**	**1.03**	**1.06**

AC = Analytical Codes. SD = Standard Deviation. SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree.
Source: Extract from SPSS Result Output, 2025.

Table 4.1 presents ten (10) questionnaire items used to assess the impact of climate change on crop production in Kogi State, Nigeria. From the responses, it is evident that questionnaire

item 1 has 28, 8, 4 and 9 responses for SA, A, D and SD respectively. This gives rise to total 45 responses and 149 response-sum, with the mean value of 3.31, standard deviation of 1.04 and 1.08 variance. By the mean value, it is instructive to point out that the item is accepted in favour of the research question. The low values of standard deviation (1.04) and variance (1.08) support this claim by revealing that the data point of responses of the 45 sampled farmers do not differ. Responses on the second questionnaire item of the study show that out of the 45 responses from the sampled farmers, SA, A, D, SD have 29, 8, 4 and 4 responses respectively.

The item has a mean score of 3.31, standard deviation and variance values of 1.08 and 1.17 respectively. From the analysis, it is obvious that the item is accepted in favour of the research question. This acceptance is supported by the low values of standard deviation and variance. Responses to item C of the questionnaire has 31, 5, 3 and 6 for SA, A, D and SD respectively. With a response-sum of 149, the mean score is 3.31, standard deviation is 1.14 and variance stands at 1.31. This shows that item is accepted in favour of the research question. With respect to item D, the responses of the 45 sampled farmers are 10, 19, 6 and 10 for SA, A, D and SD respectively. This gives rise to 119 response-sum, mean value of 2.64, standard deviation value of 1.07 and 1.14 for variance. For questionnaire item E, the responses are 22 for SA, 15 for A, 3 for D and 5 for SD, a response-sum of 144, and the values of mean, standard deviation and variance stand at 3.20, 0.99 and 0.98 respectively. Questionnaire item F has respective responses to SA, A, D, and SD as 22, 14, 4 and 5, giving rise to 143 response-sum, 3.18, 1.01 and 1.01 values for mean, standard deviation and variance. Questionnaire item G of the study has 24 responses for SA, 12 for A, D has 2 and SD gets 7. These responses from 45 sampled farmers give rise to 143 response-sum, 3.18 mean score, standard deviation of 1.09 and 1.20 variance score.

Questionnaire item H of the study has 22, 14, 5 and 4 responses to SA, A, D and SD respectively; with 144 response-sum, 3.20 mean score, 0.97 standard deviation and 0.94 variance scores. All of these point to the fact the questionnaire item is accept accepted in favour of the research question. Questionnaire option responses, SA, A, D and SD, to questionnaire item ‘I’ have 17, 20, 4 and 4 scores respectively; with response-sum of 140, mean value of 3.11, 0.91 for standard deviation and 0.83 for variance. With the value of the mean, the questionnaire item is accepted in favour of the research question. The responses of the 45 farmers to questionnaire item J are in the distribution of 26, 11, 4 and 4 for SA, A, D and SD respectively. The response-sum stands at 149, mean value is 3.31, standard deviation of 0.97 and variance of 0.83.

The acceptance of the questionnaire items following the values of the mean values is strongly corroborated by the values of standard deviation and variance. For the measurement of how spread out or dispersed the value of the item in a data set is, the value of the standard deviation values imply that the data points are close to the mean (average) of the data set. In other words, they do not vary much from the mean values. The value of the average squared deviation (1.03) from the mean known as the variance is equally low – suggesting that the variance is small. This means that the data points are close to the mean, and there is little spread or variability in the data. It is obvious that all the questionnaire items have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50; hence they are all accepted in favour of the research question under consideration. This implies that the impact of climate change on crop production are that changes in average temperature affect crop growth, development, and yield; increased variability in rainfall, including more frequent or intense droughts and floods, affects crop growth and flooding can damage crops and harvest schedules. Also, Elevated CO2 levels affected crop growth differently and persistent decreases in crop yields can be

directly linked to adverse climate conditions, such as increased temperatures, reduced precipitation, or extreme weather events.

Climate change in terms of flooding has made changes in temperature and water availability to affect the size, shape, and overall quality of crops, impacting their market value and nutritional quality. Just like how changes in the length and timing of the growing season, due to altered temperature and precipitation patterns, affected planting and harvesting schedules and overall crop productivity. Similarly, the farmers accepted that warmer temperatures and changing precipitation patterns led to an increase in pest populations and their range, affecting crop health and yields. Increased rainfall intensity led to higher rates of soil erosion, reducing soil fertility and affecting crop production and changes in climate led soil degradation, reducing the availability of essential nutrients for crops. From the analysis, it is instructive to point out that the impact of climate change on crop production is high. This claim earns support from the average statistical values of mean (3.18) – which is greater than the criterion mean score of 2.50, with low values of standard deviation and variance at 1.03 and 1.06 respectively.

Research Question Two

Table 4.2: Transformed Data and Result of Descriptive Statistical Test for Research Question Two

S/N	AC	Questionnaire Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	N	Sum	Mean	SD	Variance
11	**K**	Extreme weather led to complete crop failure and loss of income for the season.	28 (62.2)	10 (23.2)	4 (8.9)	3 (6.7)	45 (100)	153	3.40	.91	.84
12	**L**	Climate-induced variability in crop production led to fluctuations in market prices and did not benefit farmers.	29 (64.4)	8 (17.8)	5 (11.1)	3 (6.7)	45 (100)	153	3.40	.94	.88
13	**M**	Increased variability in weather patterns made farming more unpredictable leading decrease farmers' income.	24 (53.3)	10 (22.2)	6 (13.3)	5 (11.1)	45 (100)	143	3.18	1.05	1.10
14	**N**	Higher temperatures and changing precipitation patterns affected livestock health and negatively impacted farmers' income.	10 (22.2)	20 (44.4)	5 (11.1)	10 (22.2)	45 (100)	120	2.67	1.07	1.14

15	**O**	Adverse weather conditions increased labour costs and reduced net income of farmers	26 (57.8)	10 (22.2)	6 (13.3)	3 (6.7)	45 (100)	149	3.31	.95	.91
16	**P**	Reduced rainfall and increased evaporation led to water scarcity which increased cost of farming and reduced profitability of farmers.	22 (48.9)	16 (35.6)	4 (8.9)	3 (6.7)	45 (100)	147	3.27	.89	.79
17	**Q**	Climate change affected quality of crops and livestock products, and reduced farmers' income.	25 (55.6)	10 (22.2)	6 (13.3)	4 (8.9)	45 (100)	146	3.24	1.00	1.01
18	**R**	Increase in climate led to higher expenses for farmers.	29 (64.4)	9 (15.6)	4 (8.9)	3 (6.7)	45 (100)	164	3.64	1.32	1.73
19	**S**	Climate change forced farmers to migrate due to loss of livelihoods, leading to loss of agricultural income.	20 (44.4)	14 (31.1)	4 (8.9)	7 (15.6)	45 (100)	137	3.04	1.09	1.18
20	**T**	Climate change made farming riskier and reduced farmers' access to necessary capital and incomes.	24 (53.3)	12 (26.7)	4 (8.9)	5 (11.1)	45 (100)	145	3.22	1.02	1.04
Average Mean Values			**23.7**	**11.9**	**4.8**	**4.6**	**45**	**145.7**	**3.24**	**1.02**	**1.06**

AC = Analytical Codes. SD = Standard Deviation. SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree.

Source: Extract from SPSS Result Output, 2025.

Table 4.9 presents ten (10) questionnaire items used to assess the impact of climate change on farmers' income in Kogi State, Nigeria. From the responses, it is evident that questionnaire item A has 28, 10, 4 and 3 responses for SA, A, D and SD respectively. This gives rise to total 45 responses and 153 response-sum, with the mean value of 3.40, standard deviation of 0.91 and 0.84 variance. By the mean value, it is instructive to point out that the item is accepted in favour of the research question. The low values of standard deviation (0.91) and variance (0.84) support this claim by revealing that the data point of responses of the 45 sampled farmers do not differ.

Responses on the second questionnaire item with analytical code of B show that out of the 45 responses from the sampled farmers, SA, A, D, SD have 29, 8, 5 and 3 responses respectively.

The item has a mean score of 3.40, standard deviation and variance values of 0.94 and 0.88 respectively. From the analysis, it is obvious that the item is accepted in favour of the research question. This acceptance is supported by the low values of standard deviation and variance. Responses to item C of the questionnaire has 24, 10, 6 and 5 for SA, A, D and SD respectively. With a response-sum of 143, the mean score is 3.18, standard deviation is 1.05 and variance stands at 1.10. This shows that the item is accepted in favour of the research question. With respect to item D, the responses of the 45 sampled farmers are 10, 20, 5 and 10 for SA, A, D and SD respectively. This gives rise to 120 response-sum, mean value of 2.67, standard deviation value of 1.07 and 1.14 for variance.

For questionnaire item E, the responses are 26 for SA, 10 for A, 6 for D and 3 for SD, a response-sum of 149, and the values of mean, standard deviation and variance stand at 3.31, 0.95 and 0.91 respectively. By the mean value the questionnaire item is accepted in relation to the research question. Questionnaire item F has respective responses to SA, A, D, and SD as 22, 16, 4 and 3, giving rise to 147 response-sum, 3.27, 0.89 and 0.79 values for mean, standard deviation and variance respectively. Also, this signifies acceptance of the item in favour of the research question. Questionnaire item G of the study has 25 responses for SA, 10 for A, D has 6 and SD gets 4. These responses from 45 sampled farmers give rise to 146 response-sum, 3.24 mean score, standard deviation of 1.00 and 1.01 variance score.

Questionnaire item H has 29, 9, 4 and 3 responses to SA, A, D and SD respectively; with 164 response-sum, 3.64 mean score, 1.32 standard deviation and 1.73 variance scores. All of these point to the fact the questionnaire item is accept accepted in favour of the research question. Questionnaire option responses, SA, A, D and SD, to questionnaire item 'I' have 20, 14, 4 and 7 scores respectively; with response-sum of 137, mean value of 3.04, 1.09 for standard deviation and 1.18 for variance. With the value of the mean, the questionnaire item is accepted in favour of the research question. The responses of the 45 farmers to questionnaire item J are in the distribution of 24, 12, 4 and 5 for SA, A, D and SD respectively. The response-sum stands at 145, mean value is 3.22, standard deviation of 1.02 and variance of 1.04. The acceptance of the questionnaire items following the values of the mean values is strongly corroborated by the values of standard deviation and variance. For the measurement of how spread or dispersed the value of the item in a data set is, the value of the standard deviation values imply that the data points are close to the mean (average) of the data set. In other words, they do not vary much from the mean values. The value of the average squared deviation (1.02) from the mean known as the variance is equally low – suggesting that the variance is small, it means the data points are close to the mean, and there is little spread or variability in the data.

It is obvious that all the questionnaire items have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50; hence they are all accepted in favour of the research question under consideration. This implies that the impact of climate change on farmers' income are that extreme weather led to complete crop failure and loss of income for the season, climate-induced variability in crop production led to fluctuations in market prices and did not benefit farmers, increased variability in weather patterns made farming more unpredictable and led to decrease farmers' income, higher temperatures and changing precipitation patterns affected livestock health and negatively impacted farmers' income, and adverse weather conditions increased labour costs and reduced net income. Further, reduced rainfall and increased evaporation led to water scarcity which affected cost of farming and reduced profitability of farmers. Also, climate

change affected the quality of crops and livestock products, and reduced farmers' income; and increase in climate led to higher expenses for farmers. Climate change forced farmers to migrate due to loss of livelihoods, leading to loss of agricultural income and it made farming riskier and reduced farmers' access to necessary capital and incomes. From the analysis, it is instructive to point out that the impact of climate change on farmers' income is high. This claim earns support from the average statistical values of mean (3.24) – which is greater than the criterion mean score of 2.50, with low values of standard deviation and variance at 1.02 and 1.06 respectively.

Table 4.3: Result of Test of Hypothesis on Model Fitting Information
H_{01}: The observed and expected responses of farmers on the effect of climate change on crop production do not significant associate.

Likelihood Ratio Tests						
Effect	**Model Fitting Criteria**	**Likelihood Ratio Test**			**Pseudo R-Square**	
	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	**Chi-Square**	**df**	**Sig**		
Intercept	1.623[a]	.000	0	.	Cox and Snell	.870
I	1.623[b]	.000	3	1.000	Nagelkerke	.988
J	2.808[b]	1.185	3	.757	McFadden	.960
B	1.623[b]	.000	3	1.000		
C	1.623[b]	.000	3	1.000	Model	Model Fitting Criteria
D	1.623[b]	.000	3	1.000		-2 Log Likelihood
E	1.623[b]	.000	3	1.000	Intercept	86.109
F	1.623[a]	.000	0	.		
G	1.623[b]	.000	3	1.000	Final	1.426
H	1.623[b]	.000	3	1.000		
Summary of Likelihood Ratio Tests		74.209	48	0.000		

The chi-square statistic is the difference in -2 log-likelihoods between the final model and a reduced model. The reduced model is formed by omitting an effect from the final model. The null hypothesis is that all parameters of that effect are 0. (a). This reduced model is equivalent to the final model because omitting the effect does not increase the degrees of freedom. (b). Unexpected singularities in the Hessian matrix are encountered. This indicates that either some predictor variables should be excluded or some categories should be merged.

Source: An Extract from Result Output Analyzes With SPSS, 2025.

Table 4.3 presents the likelihood ratio result of test of hypothesis on whether or not observed and expected responses of farmers on the effects of climate change on crop production significantly differ. The test was done using model fitting criteria of -2 log likelihood of reduced model. The opinions of the sampled 45 farmers in Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria on the ten questionnaire items ranging from A to J were used in the analysis. The analysis used the **-2 Log Likelihood** in the context of **model fitting**, for logistic regression – which measures how well a model fits the data with a rule of thumb suggests that lower values generally

indicate a better fit. From the result, it is evident that the items used as analytical codes (AC) have respective values of -2 log likelihood of reduced model. Analytical codes from A to I have 1.623 as the value of -2 likelihood of reduced model, while analytical code of J has 2.808.

The **-2 Log Likelihood (LL)** is a measure of the "badness of fit" – it is derived from the likelihood of observing the data under the model. The lower the value, the better the model fits the data. The result of **1.623** suggests that the model fit is associated with this value of the log-likelihood and it typically means that the model fits the data better. In this case, **1.623** might seem quite low in absolute terms, but the context really depends on the **-2 Log Likelihood** of the other models you are comparing it to. However, the value of J is considered high because it is greater than 2. Following this result it becomes instructive to point out that the questionnaire items raised to address the research questions have reason goodness-of-fit and suitable in examining the subject matter.

In furtherance of the test of hypothesis, the pseudo regression square test was conducted. The result of the test revealed that **Cox and Snell value is $R^2 = 0.870$.** This statistic is used to measure how well a model fits the data, similar to the R^2 value in ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. The Cox and Snell R^2 value of **0.870** suggests that the model explains about **87%** of the variance in crop production, which is considered a very good fit as it explains most of the variability in the outcome variable. However, the result does not represent the proportion of variance explained in a strict sense. It provides an indication of model fit but should be interpreted alongside other metrics, such as the **Nagelkerke R^2** (which adjusts the Cox and Snell R^2 to ensure it has a maximum value of 1.

In order to ensure the robustness of the result, a **Nagelkerke test was conducted and R^2 of 0.988** is produced as an adjusted Cox and Snell R^2 used to address some of the limitations of statistic. This **pseudo-R^2** value assesses the fit of a logistic regression model (or other generalized linear models). The value of Nagelkerke (0.988) is closer to 1 indicating a better fit of the model to the data. It goes further to suggest that the model explains about **98.8%** of the variance in crop production and implies that your model is very well suited to the data, well-calibrated and quite accurate in predicting outcomes. However, it is always a good idea to check for potential overfitting or ensure you're using cross-validation techniques to validate the model's performance. This is done and reported using McFadden R^2. The test of McFadden test produces a value of **$R^2 = 0.960$** – which is another **pseudo-R^2** value used in the context of logistic regression and other generalized linear models. The value of the result means that the model explains **96%**of the improvement in the likelihood of observing the outcome compared to a null model (which only predicts based on the overall mean of the dependent variable). In simpler terms, it suggests that the model is explaining almost all of the variability in the data beyond what would be expected by chance or by using a very basic model. This suggests that the model is highly effective in explaining the variability of the outcome variable.

The table further reveal a chi-square value of 74.209 – which is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between expected and observed frequencies in categorical data with a de**gree of freedom (df) of 48. From the result the p-value is very small (0.000, being less than 0.05)**. This intuitively suggests that the null hypothesis cannot be accepted, suggesting there is a significant difference between the observed and expected values. Hence the null hypothesis of no association between the two categorical variables is dropped. This means that there is enough statistical evidence to conclude that the observed data significantly deviates from what was expected under the null hypothesis; thus, there is a significant relationship between the two categorical variables. This further suggests that the differences in the observed data are unlikely to be due to random chance alone, meaning that some underlying factor is likely influencing the data. However, it does not indicate causation, only association.

Table 4.4: Result of Test of Hypothesis on Model Fitting Information

H_{02}: The observed and expected responses of farmers on the effect of climate change on farmers' income do not significant associate.

Likelihood Ratio Tests						
Effect	**Model Fitting Criteria**	**Likelihood Ratio Test**			**Pseudo R-Square**	
	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	**Chi-Square**	**Df**	**Sig**		
Intercept	1.664[a]	.000	0	.	Cox and Snell	.860
L	1.664[b]	.	3	.	Nagelkerke	.987
M	1.664[a]	.000	0	.	McFadden	.958
N	1.664[b]	.	3	.		
O	1.664[b]	.	6	.	Model	Model Fitting Criteria
P	1.664[b]	.	6	.		-2 Log Likelihood
Q	2.343[b]	.679	3	.878	Intercept	90.07
R	1.664[b]	.000	3	1.000		
S	1.664[b]	.	6	.	Final	1.66
T	1.664[a]	.000	0	.		
Summary of Likelihood Ratio Tests		88.40	48	0.000		

The chi-square statistic is the difference in -2 log-likelihoods between the final model and a reduced model. The reduced model is formed by omitting an effect from the final model. The null hypothesis is that all parameters of that effect are 0. (a). This reduced model is equivalent to the final model because omitting the effect does not increase the degrees of freedom. (b). Unexpected singularities in the Hessian matrix are encountered. This indicates that either some predictor variables should be excluded or some categories should be merged.

Source: An Extract from Result Output Analyzes With SPSS, 2025.

From the result in table 4.4, it is evident that the items used as analytical codes (AC) have respective values of -2 log likelihood of reduced model. Analytical codes from K, M, N, O, P, R, S and T have 1.664 as the value of -2 likelihood of reduced model, while analytical code of Q has 2.343. the reveals that the lower the value, the better the model fits the data. The result of **1.664** suggests that the model fit is associated with this value of the log-likelihood and it typically means that the model fits the data better. In this case, **1.664** might seem quite low in absolute terms, but the context really depends on the **-2 Log Likelihood** of the other models you are comparing it to. However, the value of Q is considered high because it is greater than 2. Following this result it becomes instructive to point out that the questionnaire items raised to address the research questions have a reason goodness-of-fit and suitable in examining the impact of climate change on farmer's income in Kogi State, Nigeria.

In furtherance of the test of hypothesis, the pseudo regression square test was conducted. The result of the test revealed that **Cox and Snell value is R^2 = 0.860. This test is** typically a statistic used in the context of logistic regression or other types of generalized linear models (GLMs). This statistic is used to measure how well a model fits the data, similar to the R^2 value in ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. The Cox and Snell R^2 value of **0.860**

suggests that the model explains about **86%** of the variance in the farmer's income, which is considered a very good fit as it explains most of the variability in the outcome variable. However, the result does not represent the proportion of variance explained in a strict sense. It provides an indication of model fit but should be interpreted alongside other metrics, such as the **Nagelkerke R²** (which adjusts the Cox and Snell R² to ensure it has a maximum value of 1.

In order to ensure the robustness of the result, a **Nagelkerke test was conducted and R² of 0.987** is produced as an adjusted Cox and Snell R^2 used to address some of the limitations of statistic. This **pseudo-R²** value assesses the fit of a logistic regression model (or other generalized linear models). The value of Nagelkerke (0.987) is closer to 1 indicating a better fit of the model to the data. It goes further to suggest that the model explains about **98.7%** of the variance in farmer's income and implies that your model is very well suited to the data, well-calibrated and quite accurate in predicting outcomes. However, it is always a good idea to check for potential overfitting or ensure you're using cross-validation techniques to validate the model's performance. This is done and reported using McFadden R^2. The test of McFadden test produces a value of **R² = 0.956** – which is another **pseudo-R²** value used in the context of logistic regression and other generalized linear models. The value of the result means that the model explains **95%** of the improvement in the likelihood of observing the outcome compared to a null model (which only predicts based on the overall mean of the dependent variable). In simpler terms, it suggests that the model is explaining almost all of the variability in the data beyond what would be expected by chance or by using a very basic model. This suggests that the model is highly effective in explaining the variability of the outcome variable.

The table further reveal a chi-square value of 88.40 – which is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between expected and observed frequencies in categorical data with a d**egree of freedom (df) of 48. From the result the p-value is very small (0.000, being less than 0.05)**. This intuitively suggests that the null hypothesis cannot be accepted, suggesting there is a significant difference between the observed and expected values. Hence the null hypothesis of no association between the two categorical variables is dropped. This means that there is enough statistical evidence to conclude that the observed data significantly deviates from what was expected under the null hypothesis; thus, there is a significant relationship between the two categorical variables. This further suggests that the differences in the observed data are unlikely to be due to random chance alone, meaning that some underlying factor is likely influencing the data. However, it does not indicate causation, only association.

5. Concluding Remarks

The state in which all people, at all times, have **physical, social, and economic access** to **sufficient, safe, and nutritious food** that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. This state relies on four pillars which are availability, access, utilization, and stability – which have been argued to be threatened by c**limate change** (droughts, floods, extreme weather)**. Accordingly, this study was carried out to unravel the effects of** climate change on crop production and farmers' income in Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria by relying on the opinions of 45 affected farmers from 2012 to 2022 using an instrument known as CCFSQ. The responses were analyzed using statistical tools of percentage, mean, standard deviation, bar chart for the research questions, while the tenability of the null hypothesis was confirmed using Chi-square and Pseudo R^2 logistic regression methods at 0.05 alpha level. The result of the analysis revealed that climate change associated negatively with crop production as well as farmer's income; and the observed and expected responses of farmers on the effects of climate change on crop production and farmers' income do not significantly associate in Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria. The concluded that climate

change had adverse effects on crop production and farmers' income within the period of the study.

It is therefore recommended that governments should build more water-containing-walls around confluence point of Rivers Benue and Niger in order to reduce level of the water overflow. Further there should be constant maintenance of water plane by the government, and the farmers should be educated and abreast with the implications of hydrological information on annual basis.

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THE ROLE OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS IN SHAPING GLOBAL POWER DYNAMICS: EFFECTIVENESS AND CONSEQUENCES

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Abstract
Economic sanctions have become a pivotal instrument in international relations, deployed to compel nations into aligning with political, economic, or security-related objectives. Despite their widespread use, the effectiveness of sanctions remains a subject of debate. While some sanctions, such as those imposed on South Africa during apartheid and Iran's nuclear negotiations, have yielded diplomatic successes, others have failed to alter the behavior of authoritarian regimes like North Korea and Venezuela. This study seeks to assess the effectiveness and consequences of economic sanctions in shaping global power dynamics. Using a qualitative research approach, the study employs case studies of U.S. sanctions on Iran, Russia, North Korea, and Venezuela to analyze their impact. The research is anchored in the realist and liberal institutionalist theoretical frameworks, examining how power and cooperation influence sanction outcomes. The findings reveal that while sanctions can exert economic pressure, they often lead to unintended consequences such as economic hardship for civilian populations, the strengthening of autocratic regimes, and the formation of alternative financial networks. Additionally, counter-sanctions and disruptions in global trade have contributed to an increasingly multipolar economic order. The study concludes that while sanctions remain a powerful diplomatic tool, their effectiveness depends on factors such as multilateral enforcement, the resilience of targeted economies, and the adaptability of sanctioned states. It recommends a more strategic and targeted approach, emphasizing diplomatic engagement and economic incentives alongside punitive measures to achieve desired geopolitical outcomes.

Keywords
Economic sanctions, global power dynamics, policy effectiveness, trade disruptions, financial networks.

1 Introduction

Economic sanctions are conceived foreign policy tools used by states, international organizations, or coalitions to influence the behavior of a target country, organization, or individual. They are designed to impose economic hardship as a means of achieving political, diplomatic, or strategic objectives (Drezner, 2015). These sanctions can take various forms, including trade embargoes, asset freezes, travel bans, and financial restrictions. Governments impose sanctions as an alternativetomilitaryintervention,seekingtochangethepolicies oractionsofthetargetedentity while minimizing direct confrontation (Hufbauer et al., 2009). Historically, economic sanctions have played a significant role in global power dynamics, shaping the economic and political landscapes of nations. One of the earliest recorded instances of economic sanctions dates back to ancient Greece when Athens imposed a trade embargo on Megara in 432 BCE, contributing to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War (Baldwin, 1985).

Despite their widespread use, the effectiveness of economic sanctions remains highly debated. Biersteker et al., 2016 argue that sanctions successfully compel states to alter their behavior without resorting to military force. Pape, 1997 contend that sanctions often fail to achieve their intended objectives and instead lead to unintended humanitarian and economic consequences, sometimes strengthening authoritarian regimes ratherthan weakening them. This study explores the evolving role of economic sanctions in global power dynamics, examining their effectiveness and broader consequences.

Economicsanctions have become apreferred tool for global powersseekingto exert influence in international affairs. TheUnited States, the European Union, and multilateral institutionslikethe UN have increased their reliance on sanctions to address human rights violations, nuclear proliferation, and territorial aggression (Elliott, 2017). However, the growing frequency and severity of sanctions have raised concerns about their overall effectiveness and ethical implications. One key problem is that while sanctions are intended to pressure governments and elites, they often disproportionately affect civilian populations. Studies have shown that trade embargoes and financial restrictions can lead to inflation, shortages of essential goods, and economic instability, exacerbating humanitarian crises in target nations (Weiss et al., 2016). For example, comprehensive sanctions imposed on Iraq in the 1990s resulted in severe economic hardship, contributing to widespread malnutrition and health crises (Gordon, 2010). Similarly, sanctions on Iran have led to economic distress but have not necessarily changed the country's strategic policies (Esfandiary & Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Another critical issue is the ability of sanctioned states to adapt and develop alternative economic partnerships. Russia, for instance, has strengthened its economic ties with China, India, and other non-Western nations in response to Western sanctions, reducing the effectiveness of economic pressure (Connolly, 2018). Likewise, North Korea has developed informal trade networks and cyber operations to circumvent financial restrictions (Park, 2020). Given these complexities, it is essential to critically assess whether economic sanctions achieve their intended geopolitical objectives or simply contribute to a fragmented global order. This study is justified by the needto provide a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of economic sanctions, their impact on global power structures, and their unintended economic and political consequences. By analyzing both successful and unsuccessful cases, this research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the role sanctions play in international diplomacy.

The paper is structured into six main sections. Following this introduction, the literature review explores existing theories, case studies, and debates surrounding the effectiveness and consequences of economic sanctions. The methodology section outlines the research design, data sources, and analytical methods used in this study. The findings and discussion section presents an analysis of the effectiveness and impact of economic sanctions based on case studies.

1 Literature Review

1.1 Typologies of Economic Sanctions

Economic sanctions can be categorized into different types based on their scope and intended impact. The most common forms include **trade embargoes**, **financial restrictions**, **travel bans**, and **technology restrictions**. Each type of sanction has distinct consequences for the targeted country and the global economy.

Trade Embargoes

Trade embargoes involve the restriction or prohibition of exports and imports between

countries. They are among the most frequently used economic sanctions, often aimed at crippling the economy of the targeted nation. The U.S. trade embargo on Cuba, which has been in place since 1962, is one of the longest-standing examples of this type of sanction (Hufbaueretal., 2009).

Despite decades of restrictions, the Cuban government has remained resilient, developing alternative economic relationships with countries such as China, Russia, and Venezuela. This case demonstrates that while trade embargoes can impose significant economic strain, they donot always achieve their intended political objectives.

Trade sanctions have also been used against Russia following its invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The EU and the U.S. imposed severe restrictions on Russian oil and gas exports, aiming to weaken the country's economic base (Connolly, 2018). However, Russia has managed to circumvent these sanctions by redirecting its energy exports to China and India, highlighting the limitations of trade embargoes when alternative markets exist.

Financial Restrictions

Financial sanctions target a country's banking system, foreign investments, and access to global financial institutions. These sanctions are often implemented by freezing assets, restricting banking transactions, and limiting access to international financial networks such as SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication). One of the most significant financial sanctions in recent history was the exclusion of Iranian banks from the SWIFT system in 2012, which severely restricted Iran's ability to conduct international trade (Esfandiary & Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Similarly, following its invasion of Ukraine, Russia faced extensive financial sanctions, including the freezing of over $300 billion in foreign reserves held by Western banks (Gould- Davies, 2022). These measures aimed to destabilize Russia's financial system, but the country has developed alternative payment networks and increased its reliance on non-Western financial institutions, such as China's UnionPay system (Connolly, 2018). This adaptation demonstrates how financial sanctions can be mitigated by economic diversification and strategic alliances.

Travel Bans

Travel bans restrict the movement of individuals, often targeting government officials, business leaders, and other influential figures. These sanctions are intended to isolate political elites and limit their ability to engage in diplomatic or economic activities. The EU and the U.S. However, technology sanctions often lead to unintended consequences, such as incentivizing domestic innovation and fostering alternative partnerships. China, for example, has accelerated its efforts to develop an independent semiconductor industry in response to U.S. restrictions (Miers & Morgan, 2020). This highlights the paradox of technologysanctions: while they aim to suppress technological advancements in target states, they can also drive long-term resilienceand self-sufficiency.

1.2 Effectiveness of Economic Sanctions

Economic sanctions have been used as instruments of coercion for decades, with varying degrees of success. Their effectiveness largely depends on several factors, including whether they are imposed unilaterally or multilaterally, the economic resilience of the targeted state, and the role of global institutions in enforcement and compliance. While some sanctions have successfully compelled nations to alter their policies, others have failed, leading to unintended consequences or even strengthening the resolve of the targeted regime.

Case Studies of Successful and Unsuccessful Sanctions

A frequently cited example of successful economic sanctions is the case of South Africa during the apartheid era. In the 1980s, the international community, particularly the United States, the European Economic Community (EEC), and the United Nations (UN), imposed comprehensive trade and financial sanctions on South Africa, targeting its banking sector and export-dependent industries (Hufbauer et al., 2009). These sanctions, combined with internal resistance and diplomatic pressure, contributed to the eventual dismantling of apartheid in the early 1990s. The withdrawal of key investors and international businesses, along with the suspension of trade agreements, created a significant economic strain, forcing the South African government to negotiate political reforms (Cortright & Lopez, 2000).

Conversely, the case of Cuba illustrates the limitations of prolonged economic sanctions. Since 1960, the United States has maintained a strict trade embargo against Cuba, aimed at destabilizing the communist regime and fostering democratic reforms. However, despite more than six decades of sanctions, the Cuban government has remained largely intact, adapting to economic restrictions through alternative alliances, particularly with the Soviet Union (before its collapse),Venezuela, and China (Elliott, 2017).The embargo has had profound economic effects on Cuba but has failed to achieve its primary goal of regime change. Instead,it has contributedto prolonged economic stagnation and reinforced anti-U.S. sentiments among Cuban leaders andthe general population (Biersteker et al., 2016).

Similarly, sanctions imposed on Iran over its nuclear program have yielded mixed results. Between 2010 and 2015, the UN, the U.S., and the European Union imposed harsh economic restrictions on Iran, severely limiting its oil exports and access to global financial markets (Esfandiary & Fitzpatrick, 2011). These sanctions significantly weakened Iran's economy, reducingGDP growth and causing inflationary pressures. However, Iran continuedtodevelopits nuclear program, and only after the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) did it agree to scale back certain nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief. The subsequent withdrawal of the U.S. from the JCPOA in 2018 and there-imposition of sanctions under the Trump administration led to renewed tensions, demonstrating the challenges of using economic pressure as a long-term solution (Connolly, 2018).

Factors Influencing the Success of Sanctions

One of the primary determinants of sanction effectiveness is whether they are enforced unilaterally or multilaterally. Unilateral sanctions, such as those imposed by the U.S. on Cuba and Iran, often lack the global enforcement needed to maximize their impact. In contrast, multilateral sanctions, such as those imposed by the UN on North Korea and Iraq, tend to be more effective because they limit alternative economic partners (Drezner, 2015). However, even multilateral sanctions face challenges when key global players do not fully comply. For example, while theU.S. and the EU have imposed strict sanctions on Russia following its 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Russia has continued trading with China, India, and Middle Eastern nations, reducing the overall impact of Western measures (Gould-Davies, 2022).

The economic resilience of the targeted state is another critical factor. Countries with diversified economies and strong internal production capabilities are better able to withstand sanctions than those heavily reliant on external trade. North Korea, despite being one of the most sanctioned countries in the world, has managed to sustain its economy through state-controlled industries, illicit trade, and strategic partnerships with

China and Russia (Park, 2020). On the other hand, economies that are highly integrated into global financial systems, such as Iran and Venezuela, have experienced severe economic downturns due to sanctions on their banking and oil sectors (Weiss et al., 2016).

The role of global institutions also plays a vital role in sanction enforcement. The UN Security Council, the InternationalMonetaryFund (IMF), andtheWorldBankinfluencethe effectiveness of sanctions through financial restrictions and trade regulations. However, institutional constraints, geopolitical considerations, and diplomatic negotiations often weaken enforcement mechanisms. For example, while UN sanctions against North Korea have been in place for decades, enforcement loopholes and limited cooperation from key regional players have allowed the country to circumvent many economic restrictions (Miers & Morgan, 2020).

1.3 EconomicandHumanitarianConsequences

Economic sanctions not only impact the governments they target but also have profound effects on national economies, trade relations, and civilian populations. While the intention behind sanctions is often to pressure governments into compliance, their unintended consequences frequently result in economic downturns, inflation, trade disruptions, and severe humanitarian crises.

Impact on Economic Growth, Inflation, and Trade Relations

Sanctions have a direct effect on a nation's economic growth by restricting access to global markets, foreign investments, and essential goods. Countries facing long-term sanctions typically experience declining GDP growth, rising unemployment, and weakened industrial output (Elliott, 2017). For example, Venezuela's economy has collapsed under the weight of U.S. sanctions, particularly those targeting its oil industry, which accounts for over 90% of the country's export revenues (Weiss et al., 2016). Similarly, sanctions on Iran have led to currency depreciation, rising inflation, and reduced access to foreign capital, crippling its economic stability (Esfandiary & Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Trade relations between nations are also significantly altered due to sanctions. Sanctioned states often seek alternative trade partners, leading to shifts in global economic alliances. For instance, Russia has deepened its economic ties with China and India as a response to Western sanctions, creating a new trade bloc that challenges Western economic influence (Connolly, 2018). Such shifts not only affect the sanctioned country but also impact global supply chains, particularly in energy, technology, and raw materials.

Humanitarian Costs: Access to Food, Medicine, and Essential Services

One of the most pressing concerns associated with economic sanctions is their impact on civilian populations. Despite being intended to pressure governments, sanctions often disproportionately affect ordinary citizens, particularly in developing economies with weak social safety nets. Sanctions on Iraq in the 1990s resulted in severe shortages of food, medicine, and medical equipment, contributing to widespread malnutrition and increased child mortality rates (Gordon, 2010). Similarly, sanctions on Iran have hindered access to essential medicines and healthcare supplies, exacerbating public health crises despite exemptions for humanitarian goods (Biersteker et al., 2016).

Sanctions can also contribute to political instability and social unrest. Economic hardship caused by sanctions has led to protests, civil discontent, and even regime changes in some cases. However, in authoritarian regimes, economic hardships often strengthen government control as leaders consolidate power and blame external forces for domestic

challenges (Pape, 1997). In North Korea, for example, the ruling regime has successfullyused sanctions as propaganda tools to reinforce state ideology and suppress opposition (Park, 2020).

Overall, while economic sanctions remain a key instrument of international policy, their effectiveness and consequences are highly complex. While they have succeeded in some cases, they often come with significant economic and humanitarian costs that must be carefully evaluated by policymakers and global institutions.

1.4 Geopolitical Implications

Economic sanctions have become a central instrument in global power competition, particularly among major geopolitical actors such as the United States, the European Union, China, and Russia. These economic restrictions are often deployed as strategic tools to assert dominance, counteradversaries, and reinforce international norms.The United States and its allies frequently use sanctions to promote democracy, deter aggression, and punish human rights violations. For instance, U.S.-led sanctions against Iran aimed to curb its nuclear program, while those imposed on Russia following the 2014 annexation of Crimea sought to limit its economic and military expansion (Elliott, 2017). Similarly, the European Union has imposed restrictive measures on various countries, including Belarus, Venezuela, and Myanmar, as a means of exerting diplomatic pressure while avoiding direct military engagement (Biersteker et al., 2016).

One of the significant geopolitical implications of sanctions is their role in shaping international alliances. Sanctions create divisions between states, influencing global alignments and fostering the formation of new political and economic blocs. For example, Russia has sought to mitigate the impact of Western sanctions by strengthening its economic ties with China, India, and other non-Western nations (Connolly, 2018). China, in particular, has positioned itself as an alternative economic partner for sanctioned states, investing in infrastructure and energy projects in countries like Iran and Venezuela, which face restrictions from the West (Esfandiary & Fitzpatrick, 2011). This realignment of global partnerships demonstrates how sanctions can inadvertently contribute to the formation of new power structures, weakening the influence of traditional economic leaders such as the U.S. and the EU.

Additionally, economic sanctions can provoke retaliatory measures, leading to trade wars and broader economic disruptions. In recent years, the U.S.-China trade conflict has highlighted the potential consequences of economic restrictions. While initial measures focused on tariffs and trade imbalances, both nations have also engaged in targeted financial restrictions and technology bans, affecting companies like Huawei and TikTok (Park, 2020). Similarly, Russia has implemented counter-sanctions against Westernnations, restricting agricultural imports from the EU and developing its own domestic industries to reduce dependency on Western goods (Connolly, 2018). These dynamics illustrate how economic sanctions, rather than resolving conflicts, can escalate tensions and create long-term economic fragmentation.

Sanctions also influence regional stability and economic integration. The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada, as well as the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), demonstrate how economic alliances are increasingly shaped by geopolitical considerations. Countries seekingto avoid sanctions-induced disruptions often diversify their economic engagements, reducing their exposure to dominant Western financial systems (Gordon, 2010). For example, the emergence of alternative financial networks such as China’s Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS) and Russia’s System for Transfer of Financial

Messages (SPFS) challenge the global dominance of SWIFT, which has traditionally been used to enforce financial sanctions (Drezner, 2015). These developments suggest that while sanctions remain a powerful tool for influencing global power dynamics, they also accelerate shifts in the global economic order, fostering greater regionalization and financial decoupling.

In the long term, the use of sanctions as a geopolitical weapon could lead to a more polarized world, where economic blocs operate independently of one another. The rise of non-Western financial institutions, such as the BRICS New Development Bank, further illustrates the growing challenge to Western-led economic governance (Biersteker et al., 2016). As a result, rather than enforcing compliance, economic sanctions may contribute to a multipolar world in which countries increasingly rely on regional partnerships and alternative economic systems to circumvent Western pressure. This shift has profound implications for global governance, as it raises questions about the future of institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), which have traditionally supported a Western- dominated economic framework (Cortright & Lopez, 2000).

2.5 **Theoretical Frameworks on Economic Sanctions**

The study of economic sanctions is deeply embedded in international relations theories, particularly within the frameworks of **Realism, Liberalism,** and **Dependency Theory**. These theories, developed by foundational scholars, offer critical perspectives on how economic sanctions function as instruments of power and influence in global politics. While Realism and Liberalism provide contrasting views on the strategic and cooperative applications of sanctions, Dependency Theory highlights the economic vulnerabilities of sanctioned states.

Realism vs. Liberalism in International Relations

Realism, a theory established by Hans Morgenthau in 1948, posits that international relations are governed by power struggles in an anarchic global system where states act in their national interest. John Mearsheimer (2001), a leading realist scholar, argues that economic sanctions are coercive tools used by powerful states to pressure weaker states into compliance. Realists believe that sanctions are most effective when they complement military or diplomatic strategies rather than functioning as standalone measures (Drezner, 2015). A key example is the sanctions imposed on Iran due to its nuclear program, which were part of a broader geopolitical strategy involving diplomatic negotiations and military deterrence (Esfandiary & Fitzpatrick, 2011). The relevance of Realism in this study lies in its ability to explain how dominant states use sanctions as a means of maintaining global power and influence.

In contrast, **Liberalism**, founded by Immanuel Kant in the 18th century and further developed by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye in 1977, views economic sanctions as mechanisms that promote international cooperation and uphold global norms. Keohane and Nye (2012) argue that economic interdependence discourages conflict, making sanctions a preferable alternative to military confrontation. Liberals emphasize the role of international institutions, such as the **United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU),** in enforcing sanctions to maintain peace and stability. The EU's sanctions on Russia following its annexation of Crimea in 2014 illustrate this liberal approach, where economic pressure was used to reinforce international legal norms (Gould-Davies, 2022). However, critics argue that the liberal approach to sanctions often fails due to inconsistent enforcement and the adaptability of targeted states through alternative trade partnerships. This study finds Liberalism relevant as it highlights how economic sanctions serve as diplomatic tools aimed at preserving international order.

Dependency Theory and Its Implications for Sanctioned States

Dependency Theory, formulated by Raul Prebisch in the 1950s and expanded by Andre Gunder Frank (1967), critiques the global economic system for perpetuating inequalities between developed and developing nations. This theory argues that economic sanctions disproportionately harm developing states by reinforcing their dependency on dominant economies. According to Frank, sanctions exacerbate economic hardships, making self-sufficiency difficult for sanctioned nations.

For example, sanctions on **Venezuela** have worsened its economic crisis, leading to hyperinflation, shortages of essential goods, and mass migration (Weisbrot & Sachs, 2019). Similarly, **North Korea** has remained vulnerable due to extensive sanctions, which restrict access to technology, foreign investment, and trade opportunities (Park, 2020). Critics argue that sanctions often fail to change the behavior of authoritarian regimes but instead deepen the suffering of civilian populations, reinforcing the structural inequalities outlined by Dependency Theory. The relevance of this theory in the study is its ability to explain why sanctions may unintentionally strengthen economic disparities rather than resolving geopolitical disputes.

By integrating **Realism, Liberalism,** and **Dependency Theory,** this study provides a comprehensive understanding of economic sanctions as both strategic and coercive tools that shape global power dynamics.

3. Findingsand Discussion

3.1 EffectivenessofEconomicSanctionsinAchieving Policy Goals

The effectiveness of economic sanctions in achieving policy objectives has been mixed, with some cases demonstrating significant success while others highlight their limitations. Successful instances include the **sanctions imposed on South Africa during the apartheid era**, which contributed to the regime's collapse by increasing economic pressure and international isolation (Kaempfer & Lowenberg, 2007). Similarly, **sanctions against Iran led to the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**, as economic hardships compelled Tehran to negotiate its nuclear program (Drezner, 2011).

Conversely, several cases illustrate the **failure of sanctions to achieve their intended goals**.The prolonged **sanctions against North Korea** have not deterred its nuclear ambitions, largely because of its economic resilience through illicit trade networks and support from allies like China and Russia (Haggard & Noland, 2017). Likewise, **sanctions on Venezuela have failed to prompt political change**, as the government has adapted by deepening economic ties with countries outside the Western bloc, such as China and Turkey (Neuenkirch & Neumeier, 2015).

Several factors determine the effectiveness of sanctions. **The level of economic integration of the targeted country** plays a critical role—nations with diversified trade partners can mitigate the impact of sanctions more effectively (Allen, 2005).**The existence of strong domestic institutions** also influence outcomes; in authoritarian regimes, leaders often shift economic burdens onto the population, reducing internal pressure for policy change (Pape, 1997). Additionally, **the presence of international support for sanctions** is crucial. Unilateral sanctions, such as those imposed by the U.S. on Cuba, tend to be less effective than multilateral measures enforced by organizations like the **United Nations (UN) or European Union (EU)** (Drezner, 2003).

The following table summarizes **the effectiveness of key economic sanctions cases**:

Case	PolicyGoal	Outcome	Key Factors
South Africa (1980s)	End apartheid	Success – regime change	International isolation, trade embargo
Iran(2015)	Limit nuclear program	Partial success – JCPOA agreement	Severe economic down turn, multilateral support
North Korea (2006–present)	Halt nuclear ambitions	Failure – continued development	Support from China & Russia, illicit trade
Venezuela(2017–present)	Regimechange	Failure–government remains	Alternative trade partners, domestic adaptation

Source: Adapted from Kaempfer & Lowenberg (2007); Drezner (2011); Haggard & Noland (2017).

3.2 Economic Consequences forTargeted and Imposing Nations

Economic sanctions often have significant repercussions not only for the targeted nations butalso for the countries imposing them. **For targeted nations**, sanctions disrupt economic stability by restricting access to global financial systems, reducing foreign investments, and increasing inflation rates. For instance, **Iran's economy contracted by nearly 7% in 2019 due to U.S. sanctions** that limited oil exports, leading to higher unemployment and inflation (Neuenkirch& Neumeier, 2015). Similarly, **sanctions on Russia after its 2014 annexation of Crimea led to a 50% depreciation of the Russian ruble**, forcing the government to implement economic adjustments (Drezner, 2011).

Sanctions also create **global trade disruptions**, particularlywhen imposed on major economies. The sanctions on Russia following its 2022 invasion of Ukraine affected global energy markets, causing oil and gas prices to surge due to supply shortages (Allen, 2005). This had ripple effects on economies reliant on Russian energy, particularlyin **Europe, where gas prices increased by over 300% in 2022** (Haggard & Noland, 2017).

For the **imposing nations**, sanctions can backfire byharmingdomesticindustriesreliant on trade with sanctioned countries. The U.S. and EU sanctions on Russia, for example, led to retaliatory counter-sanctions that affected **European agricultural exports**, causing an estimated **€5 billion in annual losses** for EU farmers (Pape,1997). Similarly, China's retaliatory tariffs on U.S. agricultural products during the U.S.-China trade war led to significant financial losses for American soybean farmers (Drezner, 2003).

The following table outlines the **economic consequences of sanctions on both targeted and imposing nations**:

Targeted Nation	Economic Consequences	Imposing Nation Impact
Iran	7% GDP contraction (2019), high inflation	Reduced oil supply, increased global prices
Russia(2014)	50% ruble depreciation, trade realignment	EU agricultural losses (€5 billion annually)

Russia(2022)	Energy revenue decline, market diversification	Higher energy prices in Europe, supply chain disruptions
Venezuela	Hyperinflation, economic collapse	Limited impact on U.S. economy, shift in oil trade

Source: Adapted from Neuenkirch & Neumeier (2015); Allen (2005); Pape(1997).

Another key consequence is the **development of alternative financial and trade systems**. Countries facing prolonged sanctions, such as **Russia and China, have developed alternative payment systems** (e.g., China's **Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS)** and Russia's **MIR payment system**) to reduce reliance on Western financial networks like SWIFT (Hufbauer et al., 2007). Similarly, sanctioned nations often shift towards **regional trade blocs**,as seen in Russia's increased economic cooperation with China, India, and Iran (Kaempfer & Lowenberg, 2007).

Overall, while sanctions can effectively pressure targeted nations, they also **create economic spill over effects that impact global markets**. The rise of counter-sanctions and alternative financial networks suggests that long-term sanctions may **reshape the global economic order rather than completely isolate targeted countries** (Drezner, 2011).

3.3 Political and Diplomatic Repercussions

Economic sanctions often have significant political and diplomatic consequences, which can either strengthen or weaken authoritarian regimes. In some cases, sanctions are intended to pressure authoritarian governments into adopting democratic reforms. However, evidence suggests that sanctions may have the opposite effect, reinforcing state control as leaders use them to justify internal crackdowns and consolidate power (Hufbauer et al., 2007). For example, in **Iran and North Korea**, sanctions have been used by ruling elites as propaganda tools to rally nationalist sentiments, portraying Western powers as aggressors (Haggard & Noland, 2017).This has allowed these governments to suppress opposition under the pretense of national security threats.

Sanctions have also contributed to the emergence of **alternative financial systems**, as targeted countries seek to bypass restrictions on international banking and trade. One of the most notable trends is **de-dollarization**, where sanctioned states move away from reliance on the U.S. dollarin favor of other currencies or barter trade. For instance, Russia and China have increased their use of the yuan in bilateral trade to reduce dependencyon the U.S. financial system (Neuenkirch& Neumeier, 2015). Additionally, countries like Venezuela and Iran have turned to **cryptocurrencies** such as Bitcoin to facilitate cross-border transactions despite financial restrictions (Drezner, 2011). This shift poses long-term challenges for the dominance ofWestern-led financial institutions, as it encourages the creation of decentralized and alternative global financial structures.

The diplomatic landscape is also altered by economic sanctions, often leading to the realignment of geopolitical alliances. **Russia's response to Western sanctions following its annexation of Crimea in 2014** provides a clear example. The restrictions imposed by the U.S. and European Union led Russia to strengthen economic and military ties with China, Iran, and other non- Western nations (Allen, 2005). This strategic shift has contributed to the formation of new economic blocs, challenging Western hegemony in international trade and finance.

Key Political and Diplomatic Effects of Economic Sanctions	Examples
Strengthening of authoritarian regimes	Iran, North Korea
Emergence of alternative financial systems	Russia-China de-dollarization, Venezuela's cryptocurrency adoption
Diplomatic realignments and new alliances	Russia-China-Iran cooperation

Source: Hufbauer etal. (2007); Haggard & Noland (2017); Neuenkirch & Neumeier (2015).

3.4 Unintended Consequences

Despite their intended objectives, economic sanctions frequently result in severe unintended consequences, particularlyin humanitarian and economicspheres. One of the most critical issues is the **exacerbation of humanitarian crises and economic suffering**. Sanctions often restrict access to essential goods, including food, medicine, and critical infrastructure supplies, disproportionately affecting civilians rather than government elites (Pape, 1997). In Venezuela, for instance, U.S. sanctions have been linked to worsening shortages of essential medical supplies, contributing to a decline in public health standards (Drezner, 2003). Similarly, **sanctions on Iraq in the 1990s** led to widespread malnutrition and a dramatic increase in child mortality rates, raising ethical concerns about the humanitarian cost of economic coercion (Galtung, 1967).

Another major unintended effect is the **strengthening of illicit trade networks and informal economies**. When official trade routes are blocked, black markets and smuggling operations thrive. This phenomenon is evident in **North Korea**, where economic sanctions have fueled the growth of underground markets, allowing the government to bypass trade restrictions through illicit means (Haggard & Noland, 2017). Similarly, sanctions on Iran have led to an increase in **oil smuggling networks**, with Tehran using indirect routes and intermediaries to sell crude oil despite trade embargoes (Kaempfer & Lowenberg, 2007). These illicit economic activities often empower criminal organizations and corrupt officials, further destabilizing affected regions.

Unintended Consequences of Economic Sanctions	Examples
Humanitarian crises and economic suffering	Venezuela (medical shortages), Iraq (child mortality)
Strengthening of illicit trade networks	North Korea (black markets), Iran (oil smuggling)

Source: Pape (1997); Drezner(2003); Galtung(1967); Haggard & Noland(2017).

In addition to these economic and humanitarian consequences, sanctions can also **undermine long-term diplomatic efforts**. When sanctions isolate a country, they often limit opportunities for engagement and negotiation, reducingthe likelihood of peaceful conflict resolution (Drezner, 2011). This can create a cycle where targeted nations become increasingly resistant to external pressures, leading to prolonged geopolitical standoffs rather than policy changes.The **U.S.-Cuba embargo** serves as a case in point—despite decades of restrictions, the Cuban government remained largely unchanged until diplomatic efforts were pursued in the 2010s (Allen, 2005).

Overall, while economic sanctions are designed as tools of statecraft, their real-world effects often extend beyond their intended goals, reshaping economic systems, strengthening authoritarian rule, and exacerbating humanitarian crises. The long-term implications of these consequences necessitate amore strategicand nuanced approach to theuse ofsanctions in global politics.

5.1 Conclusion

Economic sanctions have become a critical tool in shaping global power dynamics, influencing international relations, economic stability, and political structures. While they are intended to coerce states into compliance with international norms, their effectiveness remains highly contested. Case studies such as **Iran, Russia, North Korea, and Venezuela** demonstrate that sanctions can have mixed results—while they may exert economic pressure, they often fail to achieve their primary policy objectives and, in some cases, lead to unintended consequencessuch as **humanitarian crises, the strengthening of authoritarian regimes, and the rise of alternative financial systems**.

Moreover, the long-term impact of sanctions has fueled **geopolitical realignments**, pushing sanctioned states to form alternative trade alliances and bypass restrictions through means suchas **de-dollarization and cryptocurrency adoption**. In many instances, rather than weakening regimes, sanctions have emboldened them, providing opportunities to consolidate power and justify internal repression. Additionally, the rise of **illicit trade networks** and informal economies has created new challenges, undermining global security and economic stability.

The mixed effectiveness of sanctions calls for a **re-evaluation of their use as a foreign policy tool**. While they remain a preferred non-military strategy, their overuse and unintended consequences suggest that a more strategic and balanced approach is necessary.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations can help improve the effectiveness and mitigate the unintended consequences of economic sanctions:

1. **Adopting Targeted and Smart Sanctions**

Instead of broad-based sanctions that harm civilian populations, **smart sanctions** should be prioritized. These include **asset freezes, travel bans on political elites, and restrictions on military-related industries** rather than general trade embargoes. For instance, **targeted financial sanctions against Russian oligarchs in response to the Ukraine conflict** haveproven to be more effective than broader trade restrictions.

2. **Enhancing Multilateral Cooperation**

Sanctions are more effective when imposed through a **multilateral framework**, as unilateral sanctions often lead to circumvention strategies. Organizations suchas the **United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU)** should coordinate efforts to ensure compliance and limit loopholes. **For example, joint sanctions by the U.S. and EU against Iran** had greatereconomic impacts than unilateral actions.

3. **Mitigating Humanitarian Consequences**

Sanctions should include **humanitarian exemptions** to ensure access to essential goods such as food, medicine, and medical equipment. The case of Iraq in the 1990s highlights the**catastrophic effects of blanket sanctions on public health**. Creating independent monitoring mechanisms can help ensure that sanctions do not disproportionately affect civilians.

4. **StrengtheningDiplomaticEngagementandExit Strategies**

Economic sanctions should be paired with **diplomatic engagement** and clear conditions for their removal. In many cases, **a lack of exit strategies prolongs sanctions indefinitely**, reducing their effectiveness. The U.S. embargo on Cuba, for instance, lasted decades with minimal success due to a lack of diplomatic flexibility. A well-defined pathway for lifting sanctions can incentivize compliance.

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THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON NIGERIA'S PUBLIC AND FOREIGN POLICY MAKING

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ABSTRACT
Individuals, organizations, societies and nations at large are always confronted by various political and socio - economic problems. When attempts are not made on time to address the situations, the consequences is that the problems degenerate into uncontrollable stages and they render the system difficult to manage. This paper explored the influence of religion on Nigeria's public and foreign policy making This paper posits that despite the neglect of religion in the discourse of public and foreign politics and policy-making, religion has come to be recognized as an influential aspect of public life globally. It is a significant attribute of public and foreign affairs whose traditions do not exist in seclusion from the political, economic, social or cultural aspects of human existence. The paper has made use of descriptive and historical methods to ganer relevant information coupled with secondary sources which include books, journal articles and other viable materials from the internet. The paper revealed that the positive values of the existing diverse religions could be harnessed while the negative values of unhealthy competition and exclusive principles be downplayed by the various actors of public and foreign policy making in Nigeria so as to maintain a stable and progressive public and foreign relation in building of strong public and foreign policies in Nigeria. It recommended the need for national interest to remain pivotal in the formulation of public and foreign policies irrespective of the population of citizens that subscribe to it.

Keyword: Foreign, Nigeria, policy, public, religious influence.

Introduction
Religion occupies a crucial place in national and global politics. Nigeria public sees religiosity mostly as a "Nigercentric" affair which influences policy making and decision taking. This Nigercentric describes the public and political dorminance of religion in Nigeria. In other words, the geography of religion influences the geography of politics in all national decisions including elective and appointive offices even in conducting admission to public schools and institutions (Alamu, 2021). In fact, Nigerian society since independence till date is strongly connected to religion in spite of this apparent inexorable secularization. The consistency in the use of religion is attributable to the essentials or fundamentals of virtually all the successive regimes in the country in recognizing the pride of place it has always assumed in the policy and style of government.

It is no gainsaying that religion presents major challenges to peaceful national and international relations in the contemporary societies (Okeke, 2020). Different religious groups and their adherents interpret their scriptures/beliefs in public and international events in different and competing manners. This has been the situation in Nigeria's multi-faith and political landscape. Religion's influence in the interactions of states is one of the great and least understood security challenges of the 21st century (Warner and Walker, 2011).

Several factors conditioned Nigeria's public and foreign policy positions. Among such factors are ethnicity and religions, Nigeria's legacy as an ex-British colony; Nigeria's membership

and commitment to several international organizations such as United Nations, and above all Nigeria's perception of itself as "the giant" of Africa and therefore the potential leader of the black race. This study will focus on the role of religion in the formulation and execution of public and foreign policies in Nigeria.

Evidently, Nigerian public policy is subtly driven by religion as a motivational and trans-national actor in her national security and economic interest. But it clearly shows that religion should be treated independently without bringing it in with other factors. Agbese (1986) made an allusion to the annulled June 12 Presidential Election where Muslim-Muslim ticket was the most eloquent evidence that Nigerian can, and do, see beyond the religious manipulation. It may be dangerous to draw a sweeping conclusion from this, but it provided sufficient indication that a popular candidate is a particular candidate, whatever may be his religion. Nigerian governance through its programmes of undercurrent religious divide has heightened tension by playing off one group against the other. The result of all this is that Nigerians still see themselves along religious and ethnic lines. Kukah (2020) remarks that a clear programme of good governance that works hard to achieve greater national integration will help to channel energies away from the centrifugal forces of ethnicity and regionalism to the centripetal forces of purity.

Nigeria, based on her heterogeneity in culture and religion, must accept a consensus of agreeing to live together as an indivisible nation, void of religious bias and ethnicity. Etanibi and Okoye (2002), call this "Nigerian Project". The Nigerian Project is the discovery that if we are to live peacefully together in spite of our differences, we must develop federalism and democracy in our society. The successful realization of the Nigerian project requires that this process of religious and ethnic sentiments be reserved. In government, every policy must be subjected to critical evaluation. Whether such policy accepts the generality of the populace, or whether such policy is effective, efficient, one-sided and biased. In other words, such evaluative analysis would provide the basis to decide whether a policy needs to be continued, modified or discontinued. Policy evaluation during implementation may also be useful in determining if there is need for any form of modification to its content and implementation strategy, or if there are any operational problems hindering the achievements of policy objectives. (Ojo 1998)

Soyinka (2009: 46) sternly warns the Nigerian nation that religion should be detached from national affairs. According to him: “Nigeria is one enemy of potential nationhood that requires not just a separate address of its own... all of a frank, even brutally frank nature since the intervention of religion in nation being has been of utmost savage, unconscionable and increasingly intolerant kind. No word for it but butchery, waste and devastation. We cannot continue pretending that as long as any one religion aspires to dictatorship on secular matters, we cannot call ourselves a nation. Any religious following cannot evoke parallel but opposing sects of protocols, citing the authority of some unseen and unknowable god in realms that have no perceptible contact with the actual. Religion must therefore submit to community, to nation, otherwise co-existence becomes impossible and the human entity reverts to a state of brutishness.”

Consequently, the dethronement of religion from national policies is the survival of cord that the Nigerian nation largely depends. However, in contemporary religious practice, Lawuyi (1991) strongly argues that religious variables retain their centrality in explicitly unfolding political process because they embodied geographic identifications and cultural responses to specific situations. With this view, religion is rootedly linked with the nature of the state.

Conceptual Clarifications

Here the researcher shade adequate light on the three concepts: Religion, public policy and foreign policy.

Religion

Religion as a phenomenon means different things to different scholars. It is worthy of note to assert that religion as a concept, has been defined by gamut of scholars (Alamu, 2021). But these definitions seem to defy the satisfactory quest for a universally acceptable meaning. Yet, a unanimous definition is not offered. It is therefore essential to examine the various definitions, in order to create a proper background for this work. Etymologically speaking, the root of the word

"Religion" is derived from the Latin word *religare* which means to bind, 'to bring together', 'to come together', 'to exist side-by-side, and 'to fuse (Richmond, 1966). Sequel to the above origin of religion, it is clear that religion is that particular phenomenon or concept that brings or draws people together. In other words, it is a binding force in human society, and as well, has the capability of bringing people together. Over the ages, scholars have begun to look at religion from that vantage position to suggest meanings to the subject matter, which till date, has not been universally accepted. Kenny as quoted by Ayantayo (2002:11) aptly describes religion as any system which relates men to ultimate values, whether God or something else, and which embodies a creed, a code, and a cult. llega (2002) is of the opinion that religion can bring people together, no matter their differences, to appreciate each other, and live peacefully with a common agenda for the progress of the nation. Comte (1986) defined religion as a "collective delusion, a symbolic thinking and an unstable behavior, an imagination and powerful behavior". Spencer (1971) sees religion as "belief in spirit, sacred powers, and magical techniques". "Yinger (1969), "religion is a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with the ultimate problems of human life". Spiro (1966) defined religion as an institution which consists of culturally patterned interactions with culturally postulated spiritual beings". Stark (1981) offers credence to religion as "socially organized beliefs and activities offering solutions to questions of ultimate meaning".

Religion in all ages has come to grips with the existence of all human endeavors, plays a pivotal role in shaping the thought, perception, perception, approach, feeling and history of humankind. Thus, religion embraces all aspects of life and represents the wholeness of all existence, as well as life itself. Apparently, religion is the keystone or cornerstone of the people's lives and cultures. Religion is far more than a believing way of life in the Nigerian context, where a distinction or separation is not made between religion and other areas of human endeavor. It serves the aim of building and maintaining human society. No doubt, with its consciousness and sensitivity, there is no known society existing without religion (Alamu, 2021). Without doubt, religion has all-governing principles of life and infuses discipline and social order. Thus, religion is a cord that binds people together in order to promote social cohesion and communal well-being. As the rule of law is a machinery set in place to guide the conduct of the people, religion is both a social and legal mechanism for harmonious living and co-existent. Besides, religion is a divine law or mechanism that regulates human conduct and as well institutionalized social norms in human society. Religion has the knack of bringing people together where they can presently experience what it means to live the full human society into a community that acts justly. To this end, religion becomes the law of life, pathway to God-realization, absolute value truth, living power, justice and morality.

Public policy

Public policy has been seen by political scientists and administrators as a recent field which evolved in the 1950s (Ojo, 1998) as cited by Salifu (2024) an academic doctrine or discipline, it is all about the quality of policy formulation and implementation, especially in the emerging countries of the world. In which case, public policy is apparent in both organized and unorganized systems. According to Olaniyi (2003) public policy refers to decision-making that arises from interpersonal relationships. He argues that public policy is conterminous with interpersonal and intergroup relationships (Olaniyi, 2003).

The following are the essential characteristics of public policy:

- Public policy is made in response to some sort of problem that requires attention
- Public policy involves decision-making and activity.
- Public policy is oriented towards a goal or desired state, such as the solution of a problem.
- Public policy involves a series of decisions taken over an extended period including an exercise of power or rationality.
- The process occurs within a framework of prescribed organizational roles (public policy involves institutions of state with special legal characteristics).
- It involves exchange of information and resources, discussion, and bargaining between the public, pressure groups. The public policy process generally describes the processes through which a public policy occurs (Nta 2014).

Foreign policy

Man is a social being, so friendships and relations have been in existence between humans since the beginning of creations. This obviously is why the ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle one said that man is by nature, a political animal. Human beings will always relate and interact with one another; at individual and at group levels (Okeke, 2020)

Historically, Nigeria's foreign policy did not just start at independence. It rather dates back to the history of Hausa Emirates, the Igbo Kingdom/ the Benin Kingdom and the Oyo Empires (Adebayo, 2017). These groups did not operate in a completely closed society. They related with themselves at various scales and to a considerable level. Diplomatic relation in Nigeria, however, were established with the advent of Colonial authorities through some establishments like the Consular Authority in 1847, and the famous Amalgamation in 1914. This implies that Nigeria as a colonial state was in introduced into diplomatic world even before her independence. With the understanding that foreign policy is that a state embarks upon in its interaction with other member states in the international environment while struggling to attain its goals and objectives. As we also know that the basic goals of a nation's foreign policy is to safeguard national interest (Okeke, 2020). Nigeria has been governed by several regimes ranging from civilian to military. Each of these regimes has shown interest in the national external relations. In fact, the initial speeches of each administration give priority attention to foreign affairs matters. As both domestic and international environment Continue to undergo charges, each regime in the Nigeria's administration tries to keep up to prevailing circumstances within the global system. In as much as they often ensure that some specific aspects of the country's foreign policy is retained, changes do occur because events do not remain constant and the orientation of the leaders are never the same. These often result to a shift in the behavior and progress of the nation. Albeit, there are principles and objectives enunciated by Nigerian policy elites even in the pre- independence era that are maintained. These revolve around multilateralism, non-alignment, Africa center-peace, non-interference in the internal affairs of states and legal equality of states (Olusanya and Akindele, 1989).

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted two models. These models among others include: Legitimacy Model by John Dowlings and Jefferey Pfeffer in 1975 and Systems theory by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1945.

According to legitimacy model, it is derived from the government which forms the basic upon which public policies assume the profile of legality which commands the loyalty of citizens (Alamu, 2021). Ojo (1998) observe that there may well be policies emanating from other bodies, groups, organizations as associations in society to which individuals may also belong, e.g. religious organizations, professional bodies, ethnic and cultural associations. Such policies are, however, not public policies because they are neither made, implemented nor enforced through government institutions.

System theory perceives public policy as a response of the political system to the demands, pressure, challenges and forces brought to bear upon it from the environment as inputs. Within the context of systems theory, the environment is perceived as any condition or circumstances which can be defined as external to the boundaries of political system. Thus, the systems model when applied to policy analysis portrays public as output of the political system. The idea of system connotes identifiable set of institutions and activities in the society, the elements of which are held together in an interrelated process form that enables the system to respond to environment forces in order to preserve itself (Ojo, 1998:42).

Likewise, on the system variables, policy looks beyond the confines of the political system itself, to social, economic and cultural environments in the search for factors and forces which shape public policy. Public policy often manifests in various forms such as levels of government activities, levels of government spending, taxing and service and other important policy outcomes in areas such as education, health and highways (Ojo, 1998:48). Public policy, being an exercise in power and authoritative allocation of values for society, analysis have shown considerable interest in examining how political variable such as legitimacy may shape public policy. No doubt, system variable as relating to the environment contend with orientation, attitude, beliefs and values towards a political system. This includes what governments should try to do, and what they should not do, how governments should operate as well as what should be relationship between the citizens and government. Public policy may also find useful explanation when analyzed in relations to environment variables such heterogeneity, the level of political integration and stability, continuity, the nature of political succession and regime turnover (Ojo, 1998:50). A policy may arise as a result of the attendant policy questions and problems. Policy makers are likely to ensure that the content and process of public policy are geared toward s policy questions set in the context of such environment problems. In sum, foreign policies differ as countries differ. However, reasons for having foreign policies cut across nations and they include the following:

To achieve national goals, promote economic interests, of the country, to have defined approach towards other countries, tackle global issues through multilateral cooperation, protect the territorial integrity of the country and protect the interests of the citizens, both within and outside the country (Okeke, 2020). It is obviously pertinent for any nation to have foreign relations with other countries as no nation is an island, nor can any nation be self-sufficient.

Influence of Religion on Public Policy in Nigeria

Historically, the Nigerian society since independence till date is strongly connected to religion. In fact, religion is a very powerful tool on Nigerian policy making. Religion is now

turned into a strong political weapon in Nigerian political arenas. This same religions cleaverage has penetrated into all organizations in the country.

The consistency or otherwise in the use of policy is attributable to the essentials and fundamentals of every successive regime in the country in recognizing the pride of place religion has always assumed in the policy and the style of governance.

Without equivocation, tracing the Nigerian policy since the inception of the British imperialists, one could certainly discover that government policies were, and are introduced and subsequently implemented along religious learning. The colonizers invaded Nigeria from the sea in the South, and brown men came in from the desert in the north. The white men brought Christianity and the brown men brought Islam. They meant well for Nigerians. Their good intentions went sore. The two religions became contentious issues of our national geography. The country finds itself divided between Christianity and Islam. The Nigerian politicians have managed to work out a delicate political balancing act, intended to accommodate religious sensitivities, or at least, not to offend them. "Inadvertent tipping of the scale has often brought horrendous consequences, killings and destruction. The manipulation of the religious fault line is as insidious as the manipulation of the tribal line. In both cases, the manipulation is either overt or covert but always Irredentist" (Agbese as cited by Alamu, 2021).

The political heroes of Nigeria traded with religion as past time in the manipulation of government or regional policies. Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Dr. Nnămdi Azikiwe end Ahmadu Bello used religion in determining national politics and policies. However, Ahmadu Bello had a slightly different take on this. He constructed his own political base on the regional fault line, but used religion, Islam as an important part in the final shape of his political base. He was unabashedly a champion of the North and promoter of Northern interest through religion. Agbese as cited by Alamu (2021) remarks that Ahmadu Bello took steps to put the destiny of the region in its own hands. However, he was a past master at exploiting religious fault line, and he had often been accused of a determination to Islamize the Northern Region. He contained religious extremism. His death opened the flood gates of religious extremism and at various times, various parts of the old region have been wracked by bloody religions riots (Alamu, 2021). Till date, subtle or forceful imposition of Islam through Jihad, Boko Haram and other available means have been the order of the day.

In retrospect, Hugh Clifford, Lugard's successor as Governor-General, opened Katsina College in 1922. His inaugural speech at the occasion betrayed the colonial concept of this religious dichotomy even in the northern region. According to Agbese (1986) Clifford says

> This college is designed to serve all Mohammedan Emirates in Nigeria. It is very necessary that the youths who will receive their training in this college and who will thereafter carry the torch of learning and knowledge to all parts of the Mohammedan Emirates in order to thereby enlighten the ignorance of their countrymen... should cherish no other ambition than that of fitting themselves by a long course of training for the great work of teaching others... (and) while living in this college… they should be subjected to no influences which might tend to make them careless about the observances of religious duties.

Thus, Ahmadu Bello graduated from the college and other Northern political cabals. Not long affer he assumed office as Governor of Zamfara state in 1999, Ahmed Sani Yerima imposed Sharia, the Islamic legal system in his state. Other states in the north, where Muslims are in

the majority, gradually followed suit. Nigeria became perhaps the only country where religious and secular laws work in some parts but not in others. This imposition of a religious legal system as a policy shows that the religious fault line remains a potent instrument in our national politics (Alamu, 2021). The Late Aminu Kano was a leftist politician in the conservative, rightwing political territory of Northern Nigeria. He was a different breed as a politician because he constructed his own unique political base on the poor and the downtrodden, known in Hausa as *Talakawa*. He became their champion and a louse in the lack of the Northern aristocracy. Since his death in 1983, his most genuine attempt to establish what could be loosely called a third force in our natural national politics did not feed on tribe or religion, rather as a national policy. It derived its relevance from championing a better national policy for the poor and the oppressed. Agbese remarks that the *talakawa* do not constitute a fault line in our national politics. Everybody loves the talakawa. After all, everyone seeks political power to arguably promote the poor out of poverty by making them well, so that they would not be poor anymore (Agbese, 1986).

Since 1979, the essence of the religious policy of the Nigerian state has been best expressed by section 10 of 1999 constitutions, which carry a short prohibition section stating that: "The government of the federal or of a state shall not adopt any religion as a state religion". While the staunch Christian passionately argued for the adoption of a total secular, the Muslims were pushing towards a pro-sharia constitution. The formulation in section 10 was done by the Obasanjo Administration in 1979 in such a way as to assure each group that the constitution respects its core values (Etanibi and Okoye, 2002). Essentially, the consciousness of political consideration is poised by religious actors, acting in the political terrain. In other words, religions cleaverage informs political decision.

Etanibi and Okoye observe that very many Nigerians have seen the implication of the retention of section 10. To them, a political choice for an ambiguous formulation has been deliberately made to allow political actors have more rooms to make public policy choices on the terrains. Thus, it is this ambiguity that has created the conditions for the current political crisis over the introduction of Sharia, as well as created room for political debate on the implementation, re-interpretation and amendment of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution. All these are powerful tools for public policy making of the government. As a matter of fact, religious groups can systematically influence legislation and administration, particularly on a national scale. They are directed to some stake that their members have in particular political policies. The goal of religious groups is to affect policy and to this, they elect their friends into office to further their course. This is evident in the Nigerian survey when Christians reacted to the purported registration of membership of Nigeria into Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC), in 1986, during Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida's military's tenure. As a Muslim Head of State, establishing such relations went beyond diplomatic tie. Rather, it was allegedly religiously motivated, based on his faith. However, it was received with much criticism from every nook and cranny of Nigeria, especially from the Christian leaders and Christian Organisations. This was seen as divisive policies to perpetuate his stay in office.

Furthermore, religious interest maybe ad-hoc in nature, but they can influence decisions. They also have other purpose apart from lobbying the Government. They also influence policy makers. From the foregoing, we can observe that in Nigeria, that the former Central Bank Governor, Mallam Sanusi Lamido released a bombshell on the generality of Nigeria, when he introduced Islamic Banking. Even before reactions from various quarters as a policy that emanated from CBN, fellow Muslims were divided over the acceptability and durability of Islamic Banking. Muslims who supported Islamic Banking were of the view that was good because no usury was required. While those who were not in support were equally of the opinion that Banking system was all about interest-making and business transaction.

Therefore, Islamic Banking could fit into Nigerian Banking System. In other words, Muslims are divided over this view. In fact, it will not be surprising when non-muslims are opposing its introduction.

Therefore, it would be an error in futility to venture into such banking system. Although, the truth remains that religious consideration is always evident in policies making. Today's policy is centred on religions divide and consideration (Salifu,2024). In sum, Ojo (1998) asserts that an application of group theory or implication of group model for the analysis of public policy includes a linkage that must be done between issues and problems in the society, which pressurise government, on the one hand, and the configuration of groups and group interest in the society on the other hand (Alamu, 2021). In a country such as Nigeria, characterized by group heterogeneity, group model in the analysis of public policy is bound to provide great insight into the basis and consequences of different policies. Such policies include those relevant to the revenue allocation, the education system, appointment into key office positions at the federal, state and local levels, as well as agricultural and industrial development. Group approach as a framework for public policy analysis centers or aggregations of political actors, and it emphasis social forces of relations, which lean heavily upon such relational concepts as power, influence, pressure and authority.

Influence of Religion on Nigeria's Foreign Policy

For several years, religion has been an important factor in Nigeria's domestic and foreign politics, though she claims to be a secular state. Both Nigeria's domestic and foreign policies are being shaped by religion, in fact, Suleiman avers that religion cannot be ignored as it is a major tool in Nigeria's politics. Domestically, Nigeria's politicians make the masses participate in politics on the basis of religious inclinations. Hiding under the guise of religion, they facilitate their grab and retain of power. Internally, the breakthrough of religious intervention in the nation's policies were first witnessed in the establishment of the Sharia Court of Appeal in 1978, despite its heavy criticism by the Nigerian Christian Society. This was followed by an attempt to replace Islamic law with the colonial constitution. (Wara, 2016). These two incidents resulted in serious tension in the religio-political environment of the nation. So much has infiltrated the religious landscape of Nigeria and has rendered most of the concrete domestic and foreign policies useless. For instance, General Ibraham Badamosi Babangida registered the country in the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), not just for religious reasons, but for economic reasons. The membership was strategically obtained to facilitate loan-taking from Islamic Development Bank (IDB). These supposedly patriotic gestures were misconstrued as a result of religious bigotry that has infested Nigeria's polity. Religion is the third determining factor of Nigerian domestic and foreign politics, just behind economy and military (Wara, 2016). Though there is no place in the Constitution, or in any Act where religion is listed as a tool for foreign policy, yet it is secretly or indirectly used as a vital ingredient that determines the foreign behavior of the Nigerian government. Following Nigeria's independence in October, 1960, the country was divided into three major regions-north, south and west, each being under the control of a premier. The northern premier, Ahmadu Bello, having a Muslim population declared an Islamic mission across the zone and the entire West Africa. This did not come as a surprise as he was the great grand-son of Dandofodio, a pioneer propagator of Islam through Jihad in 1804. Thus Ahmadu Bello acquired religious foreign policy with Islam as the centerpiece of northern Nigeria. Religion became a vital instrument that influenced Ahmadu Bello foreign policy agenda. In 1962, he became the second in command to the Organization of World Muslim Leaders, an organization that was by the king of Saudi Arabia. When the organization was later renamed Muslim League, Bello was elected the Vice President in 1964 at Madina, and he declared his religious foreign policy as follows:

> "I promise to commit myself to the propagation of Islam. I was able to convert more than 60,000 non-Muslims to Islam. Within my region and surrounding, I have constructed several mosques and Islamic centers. I hope to propagate the religion of Islam to the entire Nigeria and the rest of Africa. (Sic) (Wara, 2016)."

Consequent upon this commitment, Islamic countries like Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Libya donated books, money and other gifts to Ahmadu for the propagation of Islam in Nigeria. To buttress his commitment, Ahmadu Bello refused any form of assistance from Israel in 1962, claiming that such assistance was a ploy to subjugate and dominate northern Nigeria. And poignantly declared that "it is better that the northern region remained undeveloped than to accept any kind of assistance from Yahud of Israel". Thus religion negatively affected the general foreign policy of the country as the northern region's relations with the rest of the world was tilted or lopsided towards Islamic countries at the risk of whatever benefits that could be derived from the rest of the world.

Another case was the Arab-Israeli war in 1967 which shook Nigeria foreign policy religiously, as Nigerian Muslims called for the support of Arabians and the cancellation of all diplomatic ties between Nigeria and Israel. Expectedly, Nigerian Christians vehemently refused such moves and the situation created serious diplomatic tension in the polity.

The Biafran/Nigerian war was seen as a payback period for Israel. The thirty month war that lasted between 6th July, 1966 and 15th January, 1970 also had an indirect religious undertone. Biafran region was dominated by Christians and they were angling to separate from the rest of Nigerians. The state of Israel supported Biafra by supplying them with military training and financial assistance. Thus the Israeli foreign affairs Minister, Abba Eban noted "My country (Israel) gave greater support to Biafra, if other countries had done the same, the state of Biafra would have been realized". In reaction to the role of Israel towards Biafra, Nigeria had to seek closer relations and assistance from North African countries and Middle-East Muslim countries. The Nigeria/Israeli relations remained sour till 1992, when the Nigerian Christians claimed that the unfriendly relations with Israel is affecting their pilgrimage. This reaction compelled the Nigerian government to renew its foreign relations with the state of Israel.

The assassination of General Murtala Mohammad on 13th January, 1976 was given heavy religious implications. Many muslims thought that he was eliminated with the support of the West because of his Islamic faith. This insinuation arose because his assassinator, Colonel Dimka was found to have hidden in the United Kingdom's embassy in Lagos and more so. London refused to repatriate General Gowon whom the Nigerian government accused of having planned the abortive coup. Consequent upon this, Jumaatul Nasir 'al Islam, a powerful Islamic body in Nigeria called for the cancellation of all agreements and relations between Nigeria and Britain. Thus the relations between Nigeria and England were sour in spite of the fact Nigeria was her Colony. This diplomatic fuse between them became so severe that the successor of Murtala Mohammad, General Obasanjo, never paid any official visit to the United Kingdom all through his military administration as the Head of State.

The emergence of Maitatsine, a fundamentalist Muslim organization headed by a migrate from Cameroun, Mohammad Marwa in 1980 was another religious factor that shocked Nigerian foreign policy. The Maitatsine agenda was to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria with the Quran as the legal document that will replace the existing Constitution. In December 1980, they started a war like guerrilla activities, by attacking police and government properties. Though the leader was killed On 29th December, 1980 by the military, its members continued to carry out rascal operations in the nation that claimed the lives of 4,177

people within a very short space of time. Mohammad Marwa, being a foreigner from Cameroun, was given good attention and assistance from foreigners that were residing in Nigeria (Online Source). This resulted in the Minister of Interior, Alhaji Ali Baba, ordering the expulsion of millions of illegal immigrants in Nigeria. This diplomatic decision deeply touched the agenda of Nigeria's foreign policy as it negated one of the nation's diplomatic cardinal goals, which is the promotion of integration and support of African unity, as it is obvious that most of the illegal immigrants are from African countries. The international society considered the action to be inhuman. In Washington, the action was reported as a shock and a typical violation of human rights. President J.J Rawlings of Ghana asserts that the act was directly against his people, claiming that most of the immigrants expelled were Ghanaians. While the president of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), (President of Benin) tried to intervene by coming to Nigeria and intensely discussing the issue, Pope John Paul 11. Described the action as an incredible drama of the 20th Century. Despite these reactions from the international communities, the Nigerian government did not rescind her decision, rather she gave a compensation of one million dollars to all the affected African states. This diplomatic fuse that ensued in the wake of Islamic fundamentalists' organizations diminished the good image of Nigeria before most African countries and before the world in general, thereby reducing the nation's foreign influence.

The role of religion in Nigeria's foreign policy operations is extraordinarily complex. Wrapped up as it is in political, environmental and economic issues in addition to the theological and cultural issues that naturally accompany religious diversity. The two major religions in Nigeria have always tried to outweigh the other in terms of taking control of major political positions in the country. A contest which has continually shaped and un-shaped the political positions and the direction of foreign policies in Nigeria. Often such religion machinated steps are taken at the expense of the common good, at the jeopardy of national interest, at the neglect of public opinion and ignoring the rights of the minority, and classifying the spirit of togetherness and unity as absurd. There is a serious and urgent need to establish a sense of national identity that could bridge Nigeria's diverse religious, ethnic and linguistic identities. Currently an average Nigerian identifies first with his religion, followed by his family and ethnic group, and lastly with his country. Thus, there is a strong sectarian impulse towards religion and against patriotism in almost every Nigerian. This is contrary to what obtains in America. Patriotism is given the greater premium to religion by any American citizen. This disparity may not be far from being the reason behind America's unwillingness to ally with Nigeria over some important issues. As the world's sixth-largest oil exporter and a leader in the African Union, Nigeria is the United States' most important strategic partner in West-Africa, yet the American government is unwilling to involve Nigeria in monitoring her elections.

Recommendations

It is a well-known fact that Nigeria is characterized by diverse religious inclinations. This has negatively affected her citizens in their struggle with unity issues and in the country's relation with foreign nations. Albeit, the truth still remains that the importance of religion in individuals and the society cannot be overstretched. Religion provides answers for the complexity of the world around human beings to which we earnestly crave explanation. Human beings also seek purpose in life. Without understanding life's purpose, man's existence is void, chaotic and frustrating. However, religion offers man that purpose and motivates him to pursue that purpose. It is a known fact that religion provides human beings with a moral or ethical framework, rules for living a good life and the consequences of living in the contrary. On a larger scale, religion acts as a glue that binds people in the societies and

cultures with common beliefs, practices and rituals, thereby promoting cooperation, love and unity amongst people, including people of different cultures. No religion advocates hatred for humanity, rather love is the song of all religions. Through the message of love and cooperation, religions are expected to provide for a triumph of the whole over the individual, a principle that is a necessity for civilization. A recent archeological finding suggests to anthropologists and sociologists that civilization did not truly begin until man "found" religion (Ujare and Ubietan, 2017). Thus religion is a nation-building mechanism. The Holy Roman Empire got to its enviable heights on religious principles. Europe grew on the religious principles of Protestantism.

Conclusion

In Nigeria, the wrong application of religious ideologies has presented it (religion) as an agent of national disorganization and conflict. Religion is thus presented to be synonymous to hatred, conflict and madness. But in the actual sense religion is for the salvaging of humanity, religion remains connected with God who owns and created the earth and humans, Religion still characteristically represents peace and harmony. This paper advocates the utilization of the positive values of religion in the building of a strong public and foreign policies in Nigeria. This can be achieved through the non-application of religious sentiments in the formulation and implementation of public and foreign policies in Nigeria. When religious sentiments are allowed to influence public and foreign policies, the results are usually divisive and counterproductive. The national interest has always been, and should remain the major consideration in the formulation of public and foreign policies. Any religious consideration that does not promote the national interest should be discarded irrespective of the population of the citizens that subscribe to it.

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ATTAINMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA BY 2030 THROUGH INCLUSIVE, EQUITABLE AND QUALITATIVE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT
This paper examines the possibility of attaining Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4 in Nigeria by 2030 through inclusive, equitable and quality education. The main objective of the study is to determine the current state of educational situation in Nigeria and ascertain the gaps that must be bridged before 2030. Methodologically, a qualitative method of data collection through the content analysis of documents obtained from Federal Ministry of Education, Sustainable, Development Goals office, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Universal Basic Education, World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The findings of the paper show that budgetary allocation to the educational sector in Nigeria is averagely below 8% annually as against the recommended 26% by UNESCO. This is largely responsible for lack of adequate facilities such as; constant electricity, portable water, internet and computers in most schools. Also, there is lack of adequate and qualitative teachers at all levels. Above all, the rate of girl child enrolment in schools when compared to their male counterparts is very low. The paper therefore recommends the budgetary allocation to the educational sectors in Nigeria should be increased from the average of 8% to 26%, attitudinal change and the introduction of free/compulsory education public primary and secondary schools in order to ensure the attainment of inclusive, equitable and quality education by 2030.

Keywords: Sustainable development, education, inclusive education, equitable education, qualitative education

Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) came into existence in September 2000 at the United Nations Millennium Summit held in New York. The 8 goals of MDGs are to eliminate severe penury and starvation, attain global basic learning, encourage gender parity and equip women, decrease infant death rate, enhance motherly wellbeing, fight HIV/AIDS, malaria and other illness, encourage ecological continuity and enhance world collaboration for transformation (UNDP, 2015). However, the implementation of MDGs in Nigeria started late in 2005 after obtaining debt relief/cancellation which enables the government to save US$1bilion annually (Durokifa& Abdul-wasi, 2016). MDGs were not attained by 2015 in Nigerian due to late commencement of the execution process (Emah, 2023).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was introduced after the expiration of MDGs attainment period in 2015. SDGs aim to attain 17 goals, 169 priorities and 232 key performance metrics. Sustainable development entails the attainment of present transformational stride without jeopardizing the hope of making life better for future generation. In the case of Nigeria, the inability to attain MDGs made it difficult if not impossible to attain the SDGs. This is so because there must be development before the idea

of sustainability can become a reality. For instance, SDGs execution was delayed just like the implementation of MDGs was equally delayed (Emah, 2023).
The first phase (2016-2020) of SDGs in Nigeria was intended to build on the established structure by MDGs, the second phase (2021-2026) was designed for the full execution, monitoring and inspection of projects while the third and last phase (2027-2030) was set aside for general assessment of programme implementation and to bridge identified loopholes (Mcdickson 2016). However, the focus of this study is to assess the possibility of attaining the SDGs 4 in Nigeria by 2030. Specifically, SDGs 4 aims at guarantying inclusive, equitable and qualitative education in Nigeria before the expiration of set period.

Inclusive education is one that provides opportunity for all citizens to be enrolled in school irrespective of gender, colour, race, social status, religion, financial capability and physical disability. Equitable education of the other hand refers to a situation whereby learners are given the chance to compete for the attainment educational height without segregation. This means that the standard for assessment must be objective and competitive in nature. Above all, quality education entails the provision adequate facilities, equipment, conducive environment, qualified tutors and instructors for learners.

A review of existing literature reveal that the attainment of inclusive, equitable of and quality education in Nigeria by 2030 is under serious threat due to inadequate funding, shortage of qualified teachers, lack of infrastructure/equipment, discrimination and societal attitude to learning. According to Ayeni (2018), and Olaniyan (2020), inadequate funding is one of the greatest threats to the attainment of SDG. The opinion of the above was corroborated by Ohaegbulem and Chijioke (2023) who observed that the regular annual percentage of budgetary allocation for Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Senegal, Kenya and Morocco were 7.81%, 24.37%, 19.49%, 21.32%, 21.70% and 17.61% respectively in deficit of 26% recommended by UNESCO from 1999-2021). The above record shows that Nigeria that was formally referred to as the "giant of Africa" has the lowest allocation to the educational sector from 1999-2021 when compare to other African countries (Ohaegbulem and Chijioke, 2023).

Consequently, poor budgetary allocation will lead to lack of infrastructure, equipment, quality teachers and facilities needed to guarantee quality education, inclusive and equitable education. For instance, Okebukola (2017) and Ajayi (2019) outlined insufficient infrastructure, defective structure and lack of access to basic facilities as challenges confronting education in Nigeria. Similarly, Fafunwa (2017) and Babalola (2020) opine that shortage of qualified teachers due to lack of proper training to improve their effectiveness is a huge challenge to the attainment of SDGs 4. In the same vein, Afolabi (2020 and Oyadiran (2020) asserted that lack of digital infrastructure to support online learning have hindered access to quality education in Nigeria.

On issue regarding the attainment of inclusive and equitable education, Okoro (2018) & Mohammed (2020) identified wide gaps in access to education by girl child, physically challenged and children with disabilities when compared to boy child and physically normal individuals in Nigeria. Cultural practices and societal belief that girl child are supposed to be house wives and supportive to their husbands are largely responsible for low enrolment of girl child in school. Also, people with disability or physically challenged individuals are not provided with necessary equipment and gargets that will enable them compete favourably with the normal people in the society. In a nutshell, corruption, mismanagement, security challenges and poor upbringing are threat to the attainment of SDGs 4 in Nigeria by 2030 (Aluede, 2017 and Ojo, 2020). The inability of scholars to proffer amicable solution to the

challenges of attaining inclusive, equitable and quality education by 2030 made it imperative for this study to be conducted.

Objective of the Paper

The major objective of this paper is to examine the possibility of attaining Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria by 2030 through inclusive, equitable and quality education. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the current state of educational situation on issues regarding the attainment of inclusive, equitable and quality education in Nigeria
2. Ascertain the gaps that must be bridged in the educational system before 2030.

Methodology

This paper adopted a documentary and analytical methods in examining existing facts and data on issue regarding the possibility of attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) in 2030 through inclusive, equitable and quality education. Subsequently, content analysis was employed in the interpretation of official records, policy pronouncements, circulars and empirical literatures obtained from; Federal Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development Goals Office, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and Universal Basic Education among others. Quality education was determined based on the availability of facilities, qualified teachers and instructors. Similarly, the level of competitiveness and scholarship were used as the yardstick for determining educational equitability while the level of disparity between the girl-child/boy-child and physically challenged in school enrolment were used as criteria for measuring the level of educational inclusiveness.

Conceptual Framework

This aspect of the paper gave insight into the opinions of scholars on some concept considered relevant to study. This became necessary in order to ensure full grasp of the issues under discussion and shed more light on view points of various writers in the field of development administration.

a) Education

In literary term "education" refers to the acquisition of general knowledge in a particular field of study for the purpose of skill development and the ability to offer solutions for societal problems. According to UNESCO (2000), education refers to the total process of developing human ability and behaviour. This means that the goal of education is to build capacity of individuals for the purpose of acquiring skills and character development. In other words, education is a tool that can be used for the purpose of improving the ability of individuals in order to make the world a better place to live. It is the process of acquiring both formal and informal training in order to development ability of individuals to deal with physical, mental, psychological and emotional problems. In the opinions of Holborn and Haralambos (2004), education is an institution that enables individual to think freely and rationally which makes social progress and innovation possible. By implications, education enhances the ability of individuals to think outside the box or introduce innovative and creative way of doing things for the purpose of societal development

In a more brother perspective, Fafunwa (2004) conceived education as an important curriculum which is used in developing a child's physical skill, character, intellectual skill as well as vocational skill. This means that education performs the role of personality development and acquisition of technical and expert knowledge for the purpose of becoming professional in a chosen career. In-fact some scholars are of the view that education will not only make an individual useful to themselves alone but it will go a long way in promoting societal growth and development. For instance, Ochoyi and Donald (2008) argued that

education is a veritable tool for the development of both the individuals and the state. Similarly, Etuk, Ering, and Ajake (2012) defined education as a basic tool for achieving development at all levels. In other words, they posit that education is the process of acquiring new values and skills for the purpose of effective functioning in the society. For the purpose of this paper, education refers to general acquisition of knowledge and skills at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) for the purpose of developing the character and ability of individuals toward proffering innovative and creative ideas aimed at solving societal problems.

b) Inclusive Education

The concept of "inclusive education" presupposes that every child has right to education irrespective of his social status, gender, financial capability, race, age, language, marital status, creed, ability, capability, colour, culture or physical disability. For instance, that somebody is blind, deaf, deformed, poor or aged cannot deny him/her from have access to education. In the opinions of Florian and Black-Hawkins (2020), inclusive education is not just about physical assimilation but also creating a conducive atmosphere that cherishes and encourages diversity. In other words, every child has rights to acquire education no matter his place of origin, race, ethnicity, language or creed. However, the concept of inclusive education is practicable in developed countries of the world such as United State of America, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Australia and Japan due to conducive environment and stable economy.

In developing nations of the world such as Africa, some part of Asia and Latin America, the idea of inclusive education is elusive to them due to cultural practices, traditional belief, mindset and the level of economic development. For instance, (Booth and Ainscow (2022) opine that inclusive education is one that promotes high intellectual output, facilitate social skills, boost confidence for students with disabilities, encourage a culture of acceptance, compassion and understanding among learners . For the purpose of this study, inclusive education refers to a situation whereby education is made accessible to every child in a given society without any discrimination or prejudice.

c) Equitable Education

Equitable education refers to a situation whereby learners are give equal opportunities or a level plain ground to compete favourably with another. In other words, education is considered equitable when there is equal treatment for learners in the style of teaching, provision of facilities, mode of examination and assessment criteria. Equity in education may refer to equality of treatment, equality of achievement or academic success. The first is more an input measure while the second two are more output oriented (Demeuse et al.2003). Nevertheless due to data limitations and/or theoretical considerations, most studies equate equality of opportunity with equity. An additional issue of policy concern is that perfect equality of opportunity (i.e. no effect of social background on attainment), or perfect intergenerational mobility (i.e. disassociation of the class of children from that of their parents) does not exist; this "would require a degree of intervention into the lives of the children and families that most societies might find untenable." (Corak 2006, 14)

Furthermore, some argue that inequalities in opportunity can be separated into "ethically offensive" and "ethically acceptable" parts (Checchi and Peragine 2005), meaning that differences in educational achievement can be attributed to factors within and beyond one's personal responsibility. By implications, it is difficult if not impossible to completely eliminate inequality in education. However, efforts can be made to minimize and not to

completely overcome inequalities since individuals have preferences for what they considered important no matter how invaluable such matter may look like

d) Quality Education

Quality education in literary meaning refers to situation whereby learners have access to adequate facilities, equipment, conducive environment, qualified tutors and instructors. It is a kind of education that gives room for personal self development instead making learners dependent only on what is being taught in school. However, scholars are in dilemma on what constitute quality education since the standard or yardstick for measurement differ from one environment to another. For instance, quality education is one that enhances life time learning, acquisition of latest skills and knowledge due to rapidly changing world (World Bank, 2022). Similarly, Sachs, 2020) asserted that quality education aims at fostering logical reasoning, ingenuity, originality, surmounting challenges and enabling individuals to contribute to sustainable development. This implies that quality education require thinking outside the box in order to turn problems to opportunities. Conversely (Ainscow, 2020) was of the opinion that quality education enhances equal rights and privileges to learners without discrimination on the bases of place of birth, capability or socio-economic status. This means that everybody is given free access to education without any form of discrimination. According to the paper, quality education is one that enables learning acquire skills for expanding the frontal of knowledge and providing solutions to identified problems.

e) Sustainable Development

Development is a situation whereby there is improvement in the quality of life of the people in a given environment of a given period of time. Therefore, development can only become sustainable when the transformation in the quality of life of average citizen is sustained and maintained without mortgaging the hop of future generation. For instance, Bruntland Commission, (1987) defined sustainable development as "the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs." By implication, sustainable development cannot be attained based on current situation alone but such transformation must meet future demands and expectations

In opinion of Munasinghe (2004), sustainable national development is a process of improving the range of opportunities that will enable individual humans and communities to achieve their aspirations and full potential over a sustained period of time while maintaining the resilience of economic, social and environmental systems. Age (2005), identified some objectives which sustainable national development is expected to realize: increase capital income and employment, promoting human welfare satisfying basic needs; protecting the environment. Considering the path of future generation, achieving equity between rich and poor and participation on a broad basis in development and decision making is important. For the purpose of this paper, sustainable development refers to a situation whereby there is sustained improvement in the standard of living people in a given society due to the provision all necessities of life such as; food, shelter, clothes, shoes, electricity, pipe born water, quality education, qualitative health care services and social insurance scheme.

Education and Sustainable Development

There is interconnectivity between education and sustainable development. This is so because; no country can grow above the standard of its learning capacity. As a matter of fact, education is the bedrock of any national developmental initiative. For instance, development is geared towards producing or creating something new or more advanced for the society and its members. On the other hand, education is a tool for initiating social change, value re-orientation, injective of new ideas and innovation. In view of the above, Umoh (2005) opines that learning is synonymous to uninterrupted transformation. Education provides

consciousness, awareness and enlightenment to individuals in order to properly pursue their aspirations and yearnings while development focuses on making life better for members of a given society through provision of life's safety net. Olubadewo (2006) opined that it is only educated population that can command skills necessary for sustainable economic growth and a better quality of life. Sustainable national development therefore refers to a situation whereby members of a given society have access to basic necessities of life for a long period of time while education is the engine which drives the vehicle of development to the required destination.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopted the human capital approach as a theoretical underpinning since investment on the development of human capital through quality, equitable and inclusive education has the potential of enhancing sustainable development at the long run. The exponents of this theory are Adam Smith, Gary Becker and Harry Becker. The thesis of human capital theory rests on the assumption that formal education is highly instrumental and necessary to improve the productive capacity of a population.

The human capital theory is applicable to this paper since education and sustainable development are interwoven, interconnected, interconnected and interrelated. In attempt to draw a line between the concepts of education and sustainable development would be an exercise in futility because one of them must lead to another. Therefore, any resources committed to the development human capital through qualitative education should not be seen as expenses but as a worthwhile investment that would eventually commutate into sustainable development at the long run. This is the more reasons why increase in budgetary allocation to the educational sector is inevitable for any government that aim to attain sustainable development by 2030.

Attainment of Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Education in Nigeria by 2030

The attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 4 in Nigeria by 2030 appears difficult if not impossible owing to several challenges confronting the effective execution of the programme in Nigeria. They include shortage of qualified teachers, overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, poor funding, low enrolment of girl child and examination malpractice. Detailed analyses of the possibility of attaining, inclusive, equitable and quality education in Nigeria by 2030 are discussed below:

1. Attainment of Inclusive Education

The goal of inclusive education is to ensure that all girls and boys have access to free primary and secondary education through effective learning outcomes by 2030. It equally aims at eliminating gender inequalities at all level of education including vocational training for destitute by 2030. In the case of Nigeria there is great disparity in the rate of boy-girl child enrolment in school due to religious /cultural practices and endemic poverty that places more priority on the education of boy child at the expense of their female counterparts. The table below demonstrates the poverty head count rate and gender ratio in Nigeria within the urban and rural areas.

Table 1: Poverty Head count Rate by Household Head's Education Level and Sex

State	Education/Less than Primary Education		Primary Education		Secondary Education		Post-Secondary Education	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Nigeria	66.17	34.72	41.25	26.93	25.00	14.08	18.13	5.66
Urban	43.14	24.66	19.16	19.35	12.97	11.20	8.86	3.42
Rural	70.82	39.17	50.33	jki32.74	35.87	18.96	31.20	10.15

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2019), Poverty and inequality in Nigeria: Executive Summary

The results in table 1 above reveal that the male child has 66.17 score as against their female counterparts in the enrolment for preprimary education. In the case of primary education, 41.25 are male while 26. 93 are female. At the secondary level, 25.00 are male while 14.00 are female. Similarly, 18.13 are male while 5.66 are female in the case of post-secondary education. On the whole, the result exhibited that the rate of male child enrolment in school is higher than their female counterparts in 2019. According to UNICEF, 2020, the primary school completion rate between boys and girls was 59% (boys) and 51% (girls). However, the secondary school completion is lower with boys at 42% and girls at 36%. At the tertiary level, it was 14% for men and 10% for women (UNESCO, 2024).

Similarly, most physically challenged children in Nigeria lack access to education due to lack of awareness, discrimination, alienation, stigmatization, inadequate sensitization, negative attitude, poor health care delivery, violence and inferiority complex. According to Ayub & Abubakar (2022), 25 million (15%) people are physically challenged, disable, invalid or incapacitated in Nigeria. Accordingly, only 5% of physically challenged people are literate while 98% of children with disabilities did not have access to pre-primary or elementary schools (Ayub & Abubakar, 2022). The above statistics reveal that a lot still needs to be done for Nigeria to attain the level of inclusive education by 2030.

2. Attainment of Equitable Education

The goal of ensuring equitable education is to eliminate all forms of disparity in access to education and make education competitive at all levels at by 2030. In the case of Nigeria, the high level of insecurity experiences in North East (Borno, Yobe, Adamawa and Taraba States), North West (Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara) and North Central (Benue, Niger and Plateau States) has led to the displacement of large number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). These displaced children are often denied access to education due the destruction of school properties by insurgents and bandits (World Bank, 2019). The above scenario has made it difficult if not impossible for children from less educationally disadvantaged states to compete fovaourably with those of other states who have access to all necessary facilities.

3. Attainment of Quality Education

The goal of attaining quality education by 2030 is to ensure higher learning output including learning and literacy skills for all categories of pupils and students. This goal can only be achieved through the availability of adequate facilities, equipment, qualified teachers and conducive learning environment. In the case of Nigeria, the in-take of pupils and students at

the primary, secondary and tertiary level is above the carrying capacity of educational institutions. This has led to congestion and overcrowding of pupils and students in school. According to UNESCO (2000) and FG (2013) recommended that the number of students in a single classroom should not go beyond 1:30 or at an average of 35 (teacher-student ratio, 1:35). However, the teacher-student ration in most public schools in Nigeria is at the average of 1; 200. This situation has contributed to the falling standard of education in Nigeria. Secondly, most schools in Nigeria lack basic facilities such as; whit board, projector, public address system, computer set, laboratory, tables, chair among others.

The structure in most schools is dilapidated while others are in bad shape. In some public schools, pupils usually sit on bear ground to during lessons while others hang around to receive lectures. The lack of access to basic facilities and inadequate quality teachers is due to low budgetary allocation to the educational sector by successive governments in Nigeria. For instance, the UNESCO recommended 26 percent allocation to the educational sector but the allocation to the educational sector in Nigeria has been below 8 percent (Ohaegbulem and Chijioke, 2023).

Similarly, the rampant and pervasive cases of examination malpractices at the primary, secondary and tertiary level in Nigeria constitutes a warning signal is due to low quality or standard of education. According to Ogwo C. (2022), the research report indicates that in 2018, out of 1,572,396 candidates that sat for the WAEC examination, 102,058 results were withheld over exam malpractice, while in 2019, out of 1,590,173 candidates, 180, 205 results were seized; in 2020, 215,149 results out of 1,538,445 candidates that sat for examination were withheld. The above statistics reveals that there is a major threat to the attainment of quality education in Nigeria by 2030 if urgent steps are not taking towards the speedy implementation of SDGs programmes.

Conclusion

The outcome of this study reveals that the possibility of attaining the SDGs (4) by 2030 is quite slim owing to the slow pace in the implementation of policies and programmes by successive administrations. For instance, the government is yet to fully commence the second phase of the implementation of let alone transiting to the third stage. The challenges of lack of adequate and qualified teachers, overcrowding, poor funding, dilapidated structure, poor enrolment of girl child/people with disabilities and examination malpractices are yet to be addressed. The inability to address the above issues has made it difficult if not impossible to attain the height of equitable, qualitative and inclusive education in Nigeria by 2030.

Recommendations

In the light of issues discussed, observations made and findings established, the following recommendations are considered fundamental towards ensuring the attainment of SDGs by 2030:

1. The issue of attaining the height of qualitative education requires increased budgetary allocation the educational sector in line with the recommendation of 26% by UNESCO. This will boost the welfare of teachers, strengthening the capacity of laboratories and enhance the provision of adequate infrastructure.

2. The attainment of inclusive education can be achieved through public enlightenment programmes on the benefits of education to the girl child and physically challenged individuals in the society through the print and mass media. This will encourage increase enrolment of girl child and disabled in school.

3. The goal of equitable education can be attained through the introduction free/compulsory education at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) in public schools. This will encourage both the children of the rich and poor to have equal access to quality education. Similarly, government should provide tax holidays and enabling environment for private school owners to enable them reduce tuition fees for pupils and students at all levels.

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HISTORICISING THE EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF EJIGBO LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OSUN STATE, 1991-2021

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Abstract
The main thrust of this paper is to historicise the evolution and development of Ejigbo Local Government in Osun State between 1991 and 2021. It critically interrogates thirty (30) years of the existence of Ejigbo Local Government under Osun State, which was created in 1991. Although Ejigbo Local Government had been in existence since 1976, when old Oyo State was created, this study is limited to its continuity in the newly created Osun state. It argues that between 1991 and 2021, Ejigbo Local Government came under the administration of both civilian and military administration. While under the military rule, the local government was controlled and managed by sole administrators appointed by successive military governors in Osun State, under the civilian administration, the local government was administered by both elected council members and appointed council members (through caretaker committee system). It concludes that the existence of local government as a third tier governmental system in the Nigerian federation cannot be overemphasized. The methodological approach adopted in this paper is historical, thematic and qualitative. Sources of information include primary and secondary materials derived from oral interview and extant literature. The interviewees comprised some officials, political office holders and residents of the local government.

Keywords: Democracy, development, government, local government, leadership.

Introduction

Prior to the introduction of western form of local government administration into Nigeria by the British, each ethnic group in the country evolved its own distinct political system of governance. For instance, while Sarauta system of government and later Emirate system after the Uthman Dan Fodio Jihad of 1804 emerged in Hausaland, Ogiso dynasty and later Eweka dynasty emerged in Benin Kingdom. There was the existence of Old Oyo Empire in Yorubaland and Council of Elders (known as Ama-ala) among the Igbo. These were the prevailing political systems prior to the imposition of British rule. Nigeriaparticularly the Yoruba in the West, Hausa/Fulani in the North and the Igbo in the East (Etebom and Wijaya, 2022: 2). With the successful amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria in 1914, the British introduced indirect rule system (native administration), which was a form of local government administration to govern the country. Its introduction was made possible through the promulgation of Native Authority Ordinance No.4 of 1916 (Ogunna, 1996:63). The British used the traditional rulers (Obas in Western Nigeria; Emirs in Northern Nigeria; and Warrant Chiefs in Eastern Nigeria) as intermediaries between the British and the Nigerians. They were empowered by the ordinance to maintain lawand order, collect taxes, prevent crimes and apprehend criminals in their various areas of jurisdictions.

The situation remained until the 1950s Local Government Reforms caused by the agitations of the Nigerian nationalists. The 1950 local government ordinance marked the birth of responsible and democratic Local Government system in the country". Commenting on the local government ordinance of 1950, Wraith (1972) explains that, it was a pioneer measure which foretold the end of philosophies and practices that held the stage for nearly fifty years. While the Eastern Nigeria led the way in 1950, it was followed by the Western Region in 1952. In 1954, the Northern Region enacted Native Authorities Law (Adeola, 2009: 161).

Having attained political independence in 1960, the independent government inherited the British model of local government which was predominantly the "county" system. Thus, between 1960 and 1976, several local government reforms were introduced by successive civilian and military governments that emerged in the country. Of these reforms, the 1976 reform, which was introduced by General Olusegun Obasanjo was the most spectacular. It recognized local government as the third tier system of government in the country, and was inserted in the 1979 Constitution (Alex, 1987:175). The reforms also gave practical application which in December 1976, made nine of the nineteen states (Bendel, Imo, Benue, Rivers, Kwara, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo and Oyo States) to conduct direct election into the councils (Alex, 1987:175). Thus, since 1976, local government has continued to be recognized as a third tier system of government governed by either elected council members, sole administrators or caretaker committees. This development was facilitated by the creation and conduct of local government elections by successive governments. For example, in 1985, Buhari/Idiagbon administration set up a 21-Man Committee headed by Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki. The objective was to depoliticise Local Government activities, make it efficient as the third tier of government (Awotokun, 2001:45). Also, Babangida's regime began its political transition programme with elections into the local government councils, first on non-party basis in December 1987 and later on party basis in 1990 and later introduced a Sole Administratorship in 1989. The Babangida's administration eventually created 149 new Local Governments Council thereby bringing the total to 453 (Akindele and Olaopa, 1998:100-105). It is against this background that this paper historicises the evolution and development of Ejigbo Local Government under Osun State between 1991 and 2021

The Land and People of Ejigbo in Osun State

Ejigbo town in Osun State is one of the prominent and ancient towns in Yorubaland. According to oral tradition, Ejigbo town which is one of the ancient towns in Yoruba land is dated back to around 15th century. Geographically, Ejigbo town is found in Osun state, it is located around 7.902920 latitude and 4.314190 longitudes and it is situated at elevation 353 meters above sea level. Ejigbo town has population of 138,357 making it the 9th biggest city in Osun State (Nwanchukwu, etal, 2020:1). The history of Yoruba people is associated with the town of Ile-Ife, it was there they first became conscious of themselves. Ejigbo town was formally one of the towns under Oyo State but its now one of the towns in Osun State after Osun State was carved out of old Oyo State in 1991 (Oloyede, 2020:33). Also, the town is about 40 kilometers from Osogbo, the capital of Osun State. According to the 2006 population census, the estimated population of 138,357 making it 9th biggest city in Osun state. Ejigbo town area falls within the Tropical Savannah climate and has an average temperature of 29 degrees centigrade, the humidity level of Ejigbo town area averages 62 percent while the average wind speed in the area is 13km/h (Ashimolowo et al, 2017:10).

According to oral history, Ejigbo is one of the ancient settlements in Yorubaland founded by AkinjoleOgiyan. Ogiyan has a rich pedigree been a descendant of Oduduwa and the ruling family of Ife. Together with his brother, particularly the Akinrere, the founder of Ikire Ile, they both left lle-Ife with Oranyan (Oranmiyan) the founder of old Oyo, to establish their own towns (Tella, 2025:4). The fact that Ogiyan, is from Ile-Ife is confirmed by EjigboMekun' the name of a market in Ile-Ife. Akinjole settled many other villages spread

around Yorubaland. He is the paramount ruler and prescribed authority over many, if not all of them. The following towns and villages, among others were under him, Ika, Igbon, OlosinOlogede, Inisa, Aato, Ijimoba, Afake , Ilawo, InisaEdoro, Isundunrin, Olia, Ado Ori-oke, Ayegunle, Idigba, Ibogunde, Songbe, OlorinOsuntedo and Iwata (Tella, 2025:4).

Historically, around 1835, Ejigbo came under Ibadan, when the Ibadan army moved to protect Osogbo from Ilorin invaders. In fact, detachments from Ejigbo assisted the Ibadan army in the ijaye, jalimi, and kiriji wars between 1860 and 1866. Ajayi Ogboriefon, balogun and leader of the Ibadan army in the Jalumi war circa 1860 and 1878 was a native of Ejigbo from the Akala compound and his mother, Alagbabi was the daughter of an Ogiyan of Ejigbo. In 1934, when the then government retained to the terms of the 1893 treaty which recognized Ibadan's independence and gazettes the bale and divisional council of Ibadan as an independent native authority, five district Obas including the Ogiyan were made members of the Divisional Council (Abigbinde, 2016:10). Ejigbo town is located in a warm tropic region of the rain forest of South Western Nigeria. The town also located in plain and hilly terrains with beautiful climate and favourable vegetation is noted for agricultural activities and located in plain and hilly terrains with beautiful climate and favourable vegetation is noted for agricultural activities (Abigbinde, 2016:9). The people of Ejigbo are very fashionable, most especially their women also specialized in palm oil productions and trader within Ejigbo and outsider. Also, most of their women like to dress in Ivory coast style which include Ginea, Brasel, aside from their native dress which include, Buba, Sokoto, Agbada, Iro and others. Apart from the above mention, there is also no Ivory Coast product that one cannot find in Ejigbo. it is important to note that there is no way one will talk about Ejigbo town without making reference to Ivory coast and also it very rare that there is no family that is now in Ejigbo town that does not have any relative in Ivory coast not too common in Ghana and Togo. The social engineering of the Ejigbo people in French West Africa and how the ability of the Ejigbo – Yoruba to quickly assimilate into their new environment have influenced and contributed to shaping the culture in Ejigbo and its environment to the extent that colloquial Abidjan French and France have become legal tender in Ejigbo, Osun State (Tella, 2025:7).

A History of Ejigbo Local Government under Oyo State, 1976-1991: An Overview

The history of the existence of Ejigbo Local Government was traced to the colonial period. Then, it was referred to as the Ejigbo District Council, which was created as a result of the Western Regional Local Government Law of 1952. The Council, which operated under Western Regional Government between 1952 and 1966, came under the Western State, created General Yakubu Gowon in May 1967. In that year, twelve states were created. Ejigbo District Council came under the Western State, with its capital in Ibadan. Also, with the creation of nineteen states in 1976 by General Murtala Mohammed, Ejigbo District Council came under the control of old Oyo State. The defunct Western State was polarized into three states, namely Oyo, Ondo and Ogun States. With this development, the defunct Ejigbo District Council of Osun West Division, was later transformed into Local Government status in April 1st, 1976. Thus, between 1976 and 1991, Ejigbo Local Government existed under old Oyo State. During this period, the local government was under successive sole administrators and Chairmen (both elected and caretaker). Ejigbo Local Government building was officially commissioned by the then military Governor of old Oyo State, Colonel Adetunji Idowu Olurin on Monday 19th October, 1987 (Jayeola, 2023). The table below shows the list of former chairmen of Ejigbo Local Government under old Oyo State.

TABLE 1: LIST OF EJIGBO LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHAIRMEN UNDER OLD OYO STATE

SN	NAME	DATE
1	Chief Bisi Akinpelu	1976-1979
2	Hon. Folorunso A Adeyemo	1979-1983
	Hon David Oyedele Alabi	1983-1985
	Mr. Femi Osunro	1985-1988
5	Mr. K. O Bolaji	1988-1989

Source: Tella, O.A. 2025. Leadership, Management and Stewardship in Local Governance in Ejigbo, 1991-2021. Unpublished M.A Thesis, Department of History and International Studies, Osun State University, Osogbo

A Historical Trajectory of Ejigbo Local Government under Osun State, 1991-2021

The period between 1991 and 2021 marked a new phase in the political history of Ejigbo Local Government. This phase was characterized by the creation of Osun State out of the old Oyo State by the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida. On 27 August 1991, General Ibrahim Babangida created nine states, namely Abia, Delta, Enugu, Jigawa, Kebbi, Kogi, Osun, Taraba and Yobe states. Ejigbo Local Government, which hitherto was under old Oyo State fell under the newly created Osun State. With the creation of Osun State, a military governor, known as Col (later Major General) Leo Segun Aborisade, was appointed by General Babangida to govern the state. Prior to the creation of Osun State, the then military governor of old Oyo State, Colonel SaseniaOresanya had already appointed Mr Toni Osanyin as a sole administrator, over Ejigbo Local Government in 1989. MrOsanyin served as the sole administrator of the local government up till when Osun State was created in 1991 as well as when the local government election was conducted in December 1991. However, with the successful conduct of local government election in December 1991 by the National Electoral Commission (NEC) under the chairmanship of Professor Humphrey Nwosu, across the country, democratically elected local council members took over the administration of local governments. With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, the election was won by the candidate of Social Democratic Party (SDP) in person of Alhaji Abdu Salam Abbas. Thus, Alhaji Abbas became the first democratically elected Executive Chairman of Ejigbo Local Government under the newly created Osun State. He governed the local government up till the overthrown of the Interim National Government (ING) by General Sani Abacha in November 1993 (Adewuyi, 2023).

With the demise of the aborted Third Republic occasioned by the emergence of General Sani Abacha as the military Head of State of Nigeria, military governors were appointed to govern all the states of the federation. In Osun State for example, Navy Captain Anthony Udofia was appointed in December 1993 as the third military governor. Having taken over the reins of power, he appointed sole administrators over all the local government areas in the state. In Ejigbo Local Government for example, three different sole administrators were appointed to govern the local government, namely Major Ademola Abayomi, 1993-1994, Prince Oyeweso Akande, 1994-1995 and Mr Michael Ajibade Falade, 1995-1998. The two of them were in charge of the management of Ejigbo local government between 1993 and 1995 during the military governor of Navy Captain Anthony Udofia (Ayegbayo, 2023). With the reshuffling of the military governors of the thirty states in the country in August 1996 by General Sani Abacha, Navy Udofia was replaced with another military governor known as Lt. Col. Anthony Obi. He was the fourth military governor of the state and served between August 1996 and August 1998 (Ademola, 2020). Although Lt. Col Obi appointed some new sole administrators to govern some local governments, with respect to Ejigbo Local Government, he retained the sole administrator appointed by Navy Captain Udofia known as Mr. Michael Ajibade Falade (Ademola, 2020).

Prior to the mysterious death of General Sani Abacha on 8 June 1998 and the appointment of General Abdulsalam Abubakar as the new military head of state of Nigeria, General Abacha government initiated a transition programme, which affected the administration of local government. In 1995, General Abacha regime drew a three year transition programme, which was to end in 1998. In a bid to implement this new transition to civil rule, the regime through Decree No. 9 of 1997 set up new electoral commission known as National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON). With this, ban on politics was lifted. Out of fifteen political associations that showed interest in participating in the transition programme, only five political parties were eventually registered by NECON. The five political parties were National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN), Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN), Grassroots Democratic Party (GDP), United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP) and Congress for National Consensus (CNC). Following the conduct of primaries by all the registered five political parties, elections were conducted into Local Government councils, state and National Assemblies and Governorship positions. In Ejigbo local government, the chairmanship election was contested by four major political parties, namely Hon Bada Buade of Congress for National Consensus (CNC), Deakin Simon Adebowale of the United Nigeria Congress Party (UNGP), Mr. Rasaaq Akande of the Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN) and Hon Michael Falade of the Grassroots Democratic Party (GDP). At the end of the election, Hon Michael Falade of the GDP was declared winner with Prince Jubreel Afolabi as the Vice Chairman (Adewuyi, 2023). Hon. Michael became the second democratically elected Executive Chairman of Ejigbo Local Government in Osun State between 1997 and 1998 (Adewuyi, 2023).

With the emergence of General Abdulsalam Abubakar, the elected local council officials were removed. General Abdulsalam reshuffled the cabinet and appointed new military governors for the thirty-six states of the federation. In Osun State for instance, Lt. Col. Anthony Obi was removed and Col. Theophilus Bamigboye was appointed as the new military governor of the state. Col Bamigboye later appointed sole administrators for all the local government areas. In Ejigbo Local Government for example, Mr. Moses Tokunbo Sadejo was appointed as the sole administrator. He remained the sole administrator of the local government until the conduct of local government election in December 1998 across the country by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) under the chairmanship of Professor Maurice Iwu, marking the birth of the Fourth Republic, which began on 29 May 1999 (Adesote&Ofogbor, 1998:222). The local government election (which involved chairmanship and councillorship) was the first election to be conducted by INEC. The election which was held on 5 December 1998 across the federation was mainly contested by the three registered political parties by INEC. These political parties were All People's Party (APP), Alliance for Democracy (AD) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) (Akinbi and Adesote, 2014:99). With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, the Chairmanship election was contested between Hon. Kunle Jayeola of the PDP and Hon. Jamiyu Olarewaju of the AD. At the end of the election, Hon. Kunle Jayeola of the PDP was declared as the winner of the election with Hon. Yinka Adigun as his Vice-Chairman (Akindele, 2022).

After the 1998 local government election, which was conducted by INEC, subsequent local government elections across the 36 states of the federation in general were handled by the State Independent Electoral Commission of each state. This development was in line with the Section 197 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) which establishes for each state, State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC). Third Schedule Part II of the Constitution establishes the functions of SIEC to include the commission shall have power to organize, undertake and supervise all elections to local councils within the state {1999 Constitution (as amended)}. By this provision, the successive administrations that emerged in Osun state between 2003 and 2021 oversaw the administration of local government areas through the appointment of Caretaker Committee and the conduct of local government elections. The

details of these administrations vis-à-vis the administration of Ejigbo Local Government during this period would be discussed subsequently. Between 1999 and 2021, Osun State was governed by four successive Executive Governors namely Chief Bisi Akande (1999-2003, Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola (2003-2010), Engr Rauf Aregbesola (2010-2018) and Mr. Gboyega Oyetola (2018-2022).

The emergence of Chief Adebisi Akande as the first civilian governor of Osun State under the Fourth Republic was facilitated by the conduct of the 1999 gubernatorial election, which was held across the 36 states of the Nigerian federation on 9th January 1999. With respect to Osun State, the election was contested by Chief Adebisi Akande of the AD and Senator Olu Alabi of the PDP. At the end of the election, Chief Adebisi Akande of the AD was declared by INEC as the winner of the election, securing a total votes of 295,557 against the PDP candidate who had 136,105 votes. He was inaugurated on 29 May 1999, thus becoming the second civilian governor of Osun State as well as the first executive governor of the state in the Fourth Republic. During Chief Bisi Akande administration, Hon. Kunle Jayeola served as the Executive Chairman of Ejigbo Local Government. Other elected council members of the local government were Hon. GafaruOyolola (Ward 2), Hon. Samson Owalude (Ward 1), Hon. Taiwo Ogundapo (Ward 4), Hon. Deloye (Ward 3), Hon. Taiwo Ogunwobi Baba (Ward 8) and Hon. Jacob Olateju (Ward 6) (Ayegbayo, 2023). After the expiration of the administration of Hon Jayeola, rather than the state government to conduct another local government election, Caretaker Committees headed by Caretaker Chairmen were appointed by Chief Adebisi Akande administration to govern all the 30 local government areas in the state. In Ejigbo for instance, Barrister WaliuSalimon was appointed. He was administered the local government between 2002 and 2003 (Ayegbayo, 2023).

The second civilian governor of Osun State during the Fourth Republic was Prince OlagunsoyeOyinola. His emergence was made possible by the 2003 gubernatorial election. In the build up to the 2003 governorship election in the state in particular and general elections in Nigeria in general, INEC registered some new political parties such as National Conscience Party (NCP), All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) and so on. Unlike the 1999 governorship election, which was contested by only three political parties, the 2003 election was contested by several political parties. Although several political parties participated in the election, the contest was mainly between Chief Bisi Akande of the AD (incumbent governor) and Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola of the PDP. At the end of the election, which was held on 19 April 2003, the candidate of the PDP was declared winner by INEC polling 493,509 votes to defeat the AD candidate, who polled 237,041 votes. Other political parties polled 13,669 votes (African Elections Database, 2003). On 29 May 2003, Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola was inaugurated as the third Executive Governor of the State. Following the emergence of Prince Oyinlola as the governor of the state, he dissolved all the appointed Caretaker Chairmen by the previous administration and appointed new Caretaker Chairmen to manage all the 30 local government areas of the state. In Ejigbo Local government for instance, Hon. Yinka Adigun was appointed as the Caretaker Chairman. He was in control of the local government between 2003 and 2004. However, in April 2004, the government of Prince Oyinlola conducted the second local government election during the Fourth Republic. The election was mainly contested by two major political parties namely the PDP and the AD. In Ejigbo Local government, the election was won by the then incumbent Caretaker Chairman, Hon Yinka Adigun. He administered the local government between 2004 and 2007. After the expiration of Hon. Adigun's tenure in 2007, Hon (Prince Jacob Oladipupo Oyetunde was appointed as the Caretaker Chairman of Ejigbo Local government by Governor Oyinlola. He administered the local government between 2007 and 2008 (Ayegbayo, 2023).

On 14 April 2007, the third governorship election was held in the state and was mainly contested by Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola of the PDP and Engr. Rauf Aregbesola of

the Action Congress (AC) (Olakunle and Ogundele, 2018). Although INEC initially declared the candidate of the PDP as the winner of the election and was sworn in, the candidate of the AC and his party challenged the result of the election in the court of law, first at Election Tribunal and later at the Court of Appeal. The judgments of the two courts were favourable to the candidate of the AC. With the Court of Appeal judgment on 26 November 2010, which nullified the election of Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola, Engr. Rauf Aregbesola, the AC candidate was declared the winner of the 2007 governorship election. Prior to the swearing in of Engr Aregbesola on 27 November 2010 as the Fourth Executive Governor of Osun State, the second local government election under the administration of Prince Oyinlola was conducted in 2008 by the Osun State Independent Electoral Commission (OSSIEC). With respect to Ejigbo local government, the election was worn by the Hon Samuel Ajiboye Adegboyega of the PDP. He was in control of the local government until he was sacked in December 2010 by the Supreme Court judgment led by Justice Maria Aloma Mukhtar. With the sacking of the elected local government chairmen of the state in December 2010, Governor Aregbesola appointed caretaker chairmen to administer all the 30 local government areas.

On 9 August 2014, the fourth governorship election was held in Osun state. Although twenty political parties fielded candidates for the election, in reality, the contest was between the APC and PDP candidates (Egwemi, 2015). These political parties and their candidates were Engr. Rauf Aregbesola of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Senator Iyiola Omisore of the PDP, Senator Sunday Fajinmi of the AD, Elder Olusegun Akinwusi Male SDP, COM. Afolayanka O. Jimoh of the NCP, Alhaji Fatai Akinbade of the Labour Party (LP) and so on. According to the election results released by INEC on the morning of August 10, 2014, the APC candidate won the majority vote and was declared the winner of the election. Engr. Rauf Aregbesola who won in 23 local government areas polling a total vote of 394,684, was re-elected as the Executive Governor of the State, while the PDP candidate, Senator Iyiola Omisore, who came second won in seven local government areas with a total vote of 292,747 (Durotoye, 2014:5). Engr. Rauf Aregbesola became the first Executive Governor to serve for two terms, making a total of eight years as the civilian governor of the state. Between 2010 and 2017 that Engr. Aregbesola was in control of Osun State, he did not make any attempt to conduct local government elections. The state government adopted caretaker system of administration to govern the entire 30 local government areas during this period. With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, between 2012 and 2017, the local government was under the leadership of two different leaders namely Hon Tiamiyu Abiodun Akinwale as the caretaker chairman and Alhaji Hassan Olaniyi as Executive Secretary (Ayegbayo, 2023). However, after ten (10) years, the state government constituted a new State Electoral Commission known as Osun State Independent Electoral Commission (OSIEC) under the Chairmanship of Otunba Segun Olaitan and charged the commission to conduct parliamentary election in all the 30 local government areas including 31 Local Council Development Areas created by the administration of Engr Rauf Aregbesola. The election was conducted on Saturday 27 January 2018. With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, at the end of the election, Hon. Ayegbayo Gbenga Olafimihan was elected as the Chairman of the local government under the platform of All Progressives Congress (APC). He remained the Executive head of the local government up till the emergence of a new administration under MrGboyega Oyetola. He died in 2020 and was succeeded by his Deputy in person of Hon Ogunmola Teslim Sola (Aderohunmu, 2024).

Importantly, the leadership of Ejigbo Local Government was also affected by the emergence of new administration in the state under Mr Gboyega Oyetola. The emergence of Mr Gboyega Oyetola was facilitated by the 2018 gubernatorial election held on 22 September 2018. The election, which was the fifth governorship election in the state, was contested by forty-eight political parties (Tella, 2025). Of these political parties, five were the major

actors. These five political parties and their candidates were Mr. Gboyega Oyetola of the APC, Senator Nurudeen Adeleke of the PDP, Senator Iyiola Omisore of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Fatai Akinbade of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), and Adeoti Moshood of the Africa Democratic Party (ADP). The election, which was under the supervision of the Returning Officer, Prof Joseph Fuwape, the Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA) was declared inconclusive (The Punch 2018). Quoting INEC's Standing Rules, Prof. Afuwape said the reason behind the decision was that margin between the two leading candidates (that is candidates of the PDP and APC) was lower than the registered cancelled votes. While the PDP candidate polled 254, 698 votes, the candidate of the APC polled 254, 345 votes. While the number of votes in which the PDP candidate had ahead of the APC was 353, the number of cancelled votes was 3,498. As a result, a rerun election was fixed for September 27, 2017 in seven polling units in Ife North (one polling unit), Ife South (two polling units), Orolu (three polling units) and Osogbo (one polling unit) local government areas, where elections were initially cancelled due to electoral irregularities, malfunctioning of card readers and ballot box snatching (The Punch, 2018). At the end of the rerun election, which was mainly contested by two major leading political parties, PDP and APC, the candidate of the APC was declared winner, polling 255,505 votes against PDP candidate who polled 255, 023 votes (The Vanguard, 2018). The declaration of the APC candidate as the winner of the governorship election was later challenged by the PDP candidate at the Election Petitions Tribunal. On 22 March 2019, the Election Petitions Tribunal sitting in Abuja ruled in favour of the PDP candidate (The Premium Times, 2019). However, the ruling of the Election Petitions Tribunal was later challenged in the Court of Appeal by Mr. Gboyega Oyetola and his party. On 9 May 2019, Appeal Court ruled in favour of the APC candidate (The Premium Times, 2019). The PDP candidate also challenged the ruling of the Appeal Court at the Supreme Court. On 5 July 2019, Supreme Court affirms Mr. Gboyega Oyetola of the APC as the winner of Osun State governorship election held in September 2018 (The Premium Times, 2019). Following the expiration of the administration of the elected Chairmen in 2021, Mr. Oyetola appointed new caretaker chairmen for all the 30 local government areas. With respect to Ejigbo Local Government, Hon. Gbolahan Muyiwa Ayegbayo was appointed as the caretaker Chairman. (Ayegbayo, 2023). See below the list of sole administrators/chairmen of Ejigbo Local Government between 1991 and 2021.

TABLE 2: LIST OF EJIGBO LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOLE ADMINISTRATORS/CHAIRMEN UNDER OSUN STATE, 1991-2021

SN	NAME	DATE
1	Mr Toni Osanyin	1989-1991
2	Alhaji Abdu Salam Abass	1992-1993
3	Major Ademola Abayomi (retd)	1993-1994
4	Prince Oyeweso Akande	1994-1995
5	Mr Michael Ajibade Falade	1995-1998
6	Mr Moses Tokunbo Badejo	1998-1999
7	Hon. Kunle Jayeola	1999-2002
8	Barrister WaliuSalimon	2002-2003
9	Hon Yinka Adigun	2003-2007
10	Hon (Prince) Jacob Oladipupo Oyetunde	2007-2008
11	Hon Samuel Ajiboye Adegboyega	2008-2010
12	Hon. Tiamiyu Abiodun Akinwale	2012-2015
13	Alhaji Hassan Olaniyi	2015-2017
14	Hon. Ayegbayo Gbenga Olafimihan	2018-2020

15	Hon Ogunmola Teslim Sola	2020-2021
16	Hon. Gbolahan Ayegbayo,	2021-2022

Source: Tella, O.A. 2025. Leadership, Management and Stewardship in Local Governance in Ejigbo, 1991-2021. Unpublished M.A Thesis, Department of History and International Studies, Osun State University, Osogbo

Concluding Remarks

The foregoing has critically examined the evolution and development of Ejigbo Local Government between 1991 and 2021. It argued that the history of local government administration was not new to the Nigerian peoples. However, the western system of local government was traced to the British, which took the form of native administration that was introduced to govern the country after the 1914 amalgamation. It witnessed new reform in 1950s, occasioned by nationalist agitations. Following the attainment of political independence in 1960, several local government reforms were introduced by successive governments. Local government wore a new garment as a result of the 1976 Local Reforms leading to its recognition as a third tier system of government within the federation. It was this reform that led to the creation of Ejigbo Local Government, which was formerly known as Ejigbo District Council. The local government initially existed under the old Oyo State between 1976 and 1991. However, with the creation of Osun State in 1991 out of old Oyo state, Ejigbo Local Government came under the newly created state. Between 1991 and 2021, the local government was governed by elected council members, sole administrators and caretaker committees.

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DEMOCRACY AND MILITARY TAKE-OVERS IN WEST AFRICA: AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT
This paper is on Democracy and Military Take-Overs in West Africa: An Analysis. African countries, West Africa in particular have witnessed series of military intervention into politics that abruptly ended the democratic regimes. The recent military take-overs in West Africa countries such as Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Niger have been an issue of concern. Therefore, the paper specifically analysed the nature of the military take-overs with reference to the selected West African countries, the causes and it determined the implications and the possible remedies to reverse the trend for a sustainable democratic regime. Data for the study were gathered from the secondary sources which include relevant articles, documents and online materials. The data were presented and analysed thematically based on the research questions of the study. Systems Theoryis adopted for this study. It was revealed among others that West African turbulent democracy that led to the resurgent of the military coups is being related to bad leadership, high rate of poverty, pervasive corruption, weak institutions and insecurity among others. The paper concludes that democracy is ideally a good system of government towards realising good governance. Nevertheless, the practice in West African countries is far from realising its ideal tenets. Therefore, the paper suggests among others that the West African countries that were affected by the recent coups should develop a blueprint for smooth transition programmes into democratic rule. Also, the African Union and Economic Community for West African Countries should lead the struggle toward ensuring that the tenets of democratic governance are entrenched.

Keywords: Democracy, military, take-overs, West Africa

INTRODUCTION
Democracy has been regarded as a modern system of government especially in developed countries. Some of the features of democratic settings include ensuring the conduct of elections, guaranteeing fundamental human rights, allowing the practice of a multiparty system, ensuring that civil society groups are part of the process of governance, broadening political participation, promoting accountability and transparency in governance among other laudable features of democracy.

However, the early 1980s witnessed the return of stability in Africa's democracy following the first coup era of the post-independence period in Africa. It can be recalled that in the period between the 1960s and 1980s, numerous democratically elected governments saw their regimes toppled by military forces which led to the overthrow of elected governments in Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, and Uganda, among others (Clark, 2007 cited in Christian, 2024).

Africa has seen more coups or military interventions in polity than any other continent in the world both in the 20th and 21st centuries (Falola, 2022). Historically, coups in Africa began

most, immediately after independence in the 1960s. And so far, the continent has experienced over 200 hundred coups – both successful and failed coups (Barka & Ncube, 2012). The general manifestations of coups in Africa in recent times have been attributed to several issues such as the absence of democratic practice, leadership failure, economic crisis, the greed of military officers, youth and citizens' discontents (Isilow, 2022).

To put it into context, Mwai (2022) opined that a coup is any illegal and overt attempt by the military or other civilian agencies to unseat sitting leaders. It is instructive to note at this juncture that a study by two US researchers, Jonathan Powell and Clayton Thyne, has identified over 200 such attempts in Africa since the 1950s.

In Africa, West Africa has been the epicentre of military coups on the continent (Suleiman, 2021). The region accounts for 51.3 per cent of coups in the early period of Africa's postcolonial phase between 1960 and 1969, 49.5 per cent from 1970 to 1989, and a shocking 53.7 per cent from 1990 to 2010. In total, West Africa accounted for 104 coups (failed and successful) out of the 200 coups that Africa has experienced (Barka & Ncube, 2012; World Atlas, 2022).

This resurgence of coups in the region has been implicated in the failure of democracy to be intensified and deepened in West Africa (Falola, 2022). There have been several cases of poor governance indices across the region ranging from corruption, lack of free and fair elections and pervasive security crisis, among others.

Therefore, the resurfacing of coups in West Africa has come with several political, economic and security implications for ECOWAS. One evident implication has to do with the capacity of ECOWAS in preserving democracy in the sub-region. Scholars have argued that the increasing spate of coups in West Africa is a signpost that democracy has continued to fail in the region (Barka & Ncube, 2012; Falola, 2022; Suleiman, 2021; Suleiman &Onapajo, 2022). The failure of democracy in the region comes with a serious implication for ECOWAS in maintaining regional peace and security.

Based on the foregoing, the pertinent questions that need to be raised are: what are the natures of military take-overs in the West African countries? What are the likely causes, implications and possible remedies? The study focuses on selected countries such as Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea. Data for the study were sourced from available published and unpublished written texts and articles in journals, newsletters and other documented materials and were reviewed with the aid of thematic analysis.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section concentrates on the conceptual review and theoretical framework for the study.

Conceptual Review

Attempt is made here to conceptually review the key concepts of democracy and military take-overs or coups from scholarly perspectives.

Democracy

Democracy which is viewed as the government of the people by the people and for the people by Lincoln is also seen in different perspectives by scholars. According to Frempong (2012), democracy means different things to different people, but what the concept represents is ultimately the expression of the will of the people. However, democracy is a system of government in which authority to exercise power is derived from the will of the people. He further opines that democracy as a system of government in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realms of citizens acting indirectly through competition and co-

operation of their elected representatives. But certain procedural and institutional conditions must be met and civil and political rights must be recognized and observed for democracy to triumph.

The features of democracy include popular sovereignty, the conduct of free and fair elections that lead to a regular and peaceful transition of power, political pluralism, the rule of law, independence of the judiciary, free and independent press, accountability and transparency, independent election body, checks, and balances, and protection of individual rights and liberties as well overall good governance and development (Ayoola, Ojo &Kugbayi, 2024).

Military Take-Over/Coup

The concept of military take-over is otherwise known as coup or rather coup d'état in this paper. Scholars in political science and related fields define coup d'état as a sudden, illegal, and often violent change of government, particularly by a faction of the armed forces. It involves the unconstitutional takeover of power by the military or other state security actors, either against a civilian-led government or the military itself, irrespective of the regime type, be it monarchical, democratic, authoritarian, or ideological.

According to Powell and Thyme (2011), coups are "overt attempts by the military or other elites within the state apparatus to unseat the sitting head of state using unconstitutional means. The term military resurgence has been used by scholars to refer to the renewed emphasis on military power in Africa, particularly in the context of the resurgence of conflict and instability on the continent (Nyovani, 2021). It is argued that the resurgence of military power is being driven by a combination of internal and external factors, including domestic power struggles, competition for resources, and the legacy of colonialism and imperialism (Mohammed & Adamu, 2022). It may lead to the suspension of the constitution and the installation of a new government, frequently headed by the coup plotters themselves (MO Ibrahim Foundation, 2023).

With reference to this paper, military take-over or coup is defined as a renewed incursion by military into the politics of West African nations, which is regarded as illegal, because it is often violent change of government, particularly by a faction of the armed forces. It involves the unconstitutional takeover of power by the military or other state security actors. It is used mainly with reference to Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Niger.

Theoretical Framework

The theory underpinning this study is the Systems Theory. The Systems Theory is related to the David Easton (1973). According to Easton, the political system functions by getting inputs from its environment. These inputs then undergo a conversion process within the political system as outputs promulgated by the authorities, these decisions now hit the environment as outcomes and from the outcomes, feedbacks are received (Enemou, 1999). Other elements or assumptions of the theory include that organisations can be regarded as open or close system. The open ones interact with the environment.

In terms of application, the system theory therefore, presupposes that the whole is not greater than the parts and the parts cannot be greater than the whole, that each component within the political process plays a very important role to ensure the survival of the system as a whole. The theory suggests that when a part of the system (Democratic regime of government) malfunctions or if it is not working up to optimal, it inevitably affects the functionality of the entire system. The crux of the matter is, it is difficult for the military to intervene into politics when there is a working system, therefore, the failure of the system (leadership under the democratic regime) itself is one of the most legitimate credentials that military politicians use

as justification to involve in politics. Therefore, the West African countries that recently experienced coup as a result of the system failure.

The theory submits that citizens' support for authoritarian alternatives to democracy is spurred by their disillusionment with the performance of elected office holders and representative institutions, which includes parties, elections, and parliaments. "In virtually all African societies, there exist forms of political challenge arising from conjunctures of dysfunctional political structures such as failure of the leadership to meet the demands of its citizens" (Anyoko-Shaba, 2022).

This therefore leaves the door open for authoritarians to attack democratic norms and practices and the emergence of strongman leaders. This is evident in the pattern of the coup resurgence in Africa. As citizens feel disillusioned with democracy and seek alternatives, the members of the military therefore see it as an opening for them to legitimize their attack on democracy. For instance, Tuki (2023) found out that in Niger, 50% of the population either at least "approved" military rule and about 70% either at least "agrees" with the military intervening if the democratically elected government is corrupt.

Scholars criticised the theory for emphasising on stability and equilibrium at the expense of social inequalities, power dynamics and change. Also, the elements of the theory which include input, process output and feedback are too broad and vague, hence, they are difficult to be operationalized.

Nevertheless, the theory is relevance to the study as it suggests that when a part of the system which is the case of this study is related to the democratic regime of government malfunctions as reflected in failure to conduct free and fair election, insecurity, unemployment and poverty among others, it inevitably affects the functionality of the entire system which eventually lead to the resurgent of military takes-over especially in the West African countries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section focuses on the results and discussion. It covers the nature of the recent military coup in some West African countries, causes and implication.

Nature of Recent Military Take-Overs in West Africa

The first indication of military take-overs took place early on March 22, 2012, when reports of a military resurgence in Mali surfaced. The main justification given by the coup leaders for their action was a lack of sufficient tools and resources to combat Tuareg insurgents in the country's north. Amadou Toumani Toure's presidency of Mali is essentially over with the coup leaders' declaration made on public television. The 2021 coup in Mali ousted the government of President Bah N'Daw and the military took over the government citing ongoing security concerns as the reason for the coup. The 2021 coup was the second of the two coups that occurred in Mali in the period between 2020 and 2021. The military after the 2020 coup agreed to cede power to a civilian-led interim government that would oversee an 18-month transition to democratic elections in February 2022.

Tension however ensued between the civilian leadership and the military (ABC News, 2023; Zulueta-Fulscher, 2021). The process which began in Mali quickly appeared to be a recipe that worked well, and was duplicated almost identically in Burkina Faso and Niger.

With respect to Guinea, in September 2021, the government of President Alpha Conde was ousted by a military coup led by Colonel Mamady Doumbouya. They cited poverty and endemic corruption as the justification for their overthrow of the government. Colonel

Doumbouya however installed himself as interim president with a promise of transitioning to democratic elections within three years. Less than three weeks later, on April 12, 2012, the military in Guinea-Bissau overthrew the government amid reports that the former was planning to reduce the number of the armed forces. It's interesting to note that just a few weeks before the planned presidential elections, both coups took place. He went further to suspend the constitution and detained President Conte. All regional governors were replaced with military commanders and the function of the executive was temporarily delegated to the National Rally and Development which he established (Zulueta-Fulscher & Noel, 2021).

Before the military coup, the democratic election of 2010 that brought President Alpha Conde into office was Guinea's first democratic election since it gained independence from France in 1958 (Chin & Kirkpatrick, 2023). This manipulation of the constitution and the subsequent manoeuvre of the election by President Alpha Conde heated the polity in Guinea (Rosenje, Onyebuchi & Adeniyi, 2021). In the same vein, Alpha Conde's attitude to democratic principles, institutions, and culture was regarded as disappointing and was a threat to democratic consolidation.

In Burkina Faso,between January 2022 and September 2022, two successful took place. The government of President Roch Marc Christian Kabore was ousted by a military coup. Consequently, Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba was installed as interim President. However, he was also ousted by another military coup. Martin and Lebovich (2022) noted that for months, grievances existed within the armed forces, in addition to tension between the military and the democratically elected government. Later, in January 24, President Kabore was detained by soldiers, with the government and national assembly dissolved. The coup plotters declared him unfit to lead Burkina Faso in the face of new challenges such as the rise of the Jihadist insurgency that had accounted for the loss of lives of thousands of people (Munshi, 2022).

Eight months after the installation of Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba as the interim President, another coup happened in Burkina Faso on September 30, 2022, in what MacDougall (2022) described as a "coup within a coup." Mutinous soldiers blocked roads near the presidential palace and the state television broadcaster RTB subsequently went off the air for a brief period (Maclean, 2022).

In Niger, following a period of democratic rule in Niger since the previous coup of 2010, in July 2023, a military coup led by General Abdourahamane Tchiani toppled the government of President Mohamed Bazoum. ABC News (2023) reported that "members of Niger's presidential guard detained President Mohamed Bazoum inside his palace and appeared on national television saying they were seizing power to end the deteriorating security situation and bad governance in the country." The July 2023 coup in Niger, according to Choudhury (2023), is a mix of simmering tension and historical underpinnings. Furthermore, he stated that before the coup, electoral fraud and considerable disenchantment and dissatisfaction were on the front burner of the allegations levelled against the government of President Bazoum.

Causes of the Military Take-Overs/Coupin West Africa

The internal causes of Africa's military resurgence in politics vary from one nation or area to the next and are intricate and multidimensional in character. For instance, the recent military resurgence in Africa's politics has been attributed to a number of issues, including poverty, insecurity, corruption, and weak democratic institutions. In addition to the aforementioned, factors such as political factionalism, debt dependency, military dominance, and ethnic variety and rivalry all indicate an African military resurgence in politics (Yusuf, 2023; Chukwuemeka, 2023).

Leadership Crisis: The return of military officers to politics in various African nations was linked to leadership vacuum. Military resurgence occurs when a nation experiences a leadership crisis, that is, when its president exhibits incompetence, tries to hold onto power despite opposition from within the government, or when the populace loses faith in the ability of their leaders to rule and provide for their needs (Chukwuemeka, 2023; Singh, 2022). For instance, in August 2020, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita of Mali was toppled by the military due to the country's fragile democratic institutions.

Corruption: Corruption has remained a cankerworm that permeated the African countries. The African military had resurgence in politics due in part to economic challenges and corruption. For instance, the military deposed President Alpha Condé of Guinea in September 2021 on the grounds of corruption which has the multiplier effects on the government's inability to deal with the nation's social and economic issues (Vanguard, 2023). Therefore, the frequency of military resurgence in politics in Africa was exacerbated by corruption which is a proxy of leadership failure to bring about decent governance as well as growing institutional deterioration (Yukawa et al., 2019).

Weak Institutions: The predominant presence of weak institutions is connected with democratic backsliding in Africa (Akinyetun, 2022). Africa is represented by fifteen of the top twenty countries on the Fund for Peace's index of fragile states for 2021 (FFP, 2021). Many African countries continue to struggle to expand and institutionalize their democracies and effectively deal with abuse of executive power and human rights violations. Human rights, the rule of law, and citizen engagement in government are unquestionably important democratic ideals that may be protected by a strong institution, promoting good governance (Mbaku, 2020). In countries with weak institutions, it is difficult to meet any of these values, including the ability to prevent or resolve conflict, prevent state capture, guarantee the provision of public services, and fight corruption.

Insecurity: A security void brought about by insecurity and the growth of armed groups in some African nations encouraged a military resurgence in politics. In an environment where extremist groups were threatening the country's security and planting the seeds of instability and fear, then there was justification for military resurgence in politics since the government's attempts to resolve internal conflicts and safeguard its citizens were hindered, leaving the most vulnerable communities at the whim of violence and uncertainty (Saaida, 2023).

Growing armed conflict and threats from non-state actors, inter- and intra-state conflict, political repression, and human rights violations have all combined to destabilize several African states, derail the democratization process (undermining the legitimacy and capacity of democratic regimes), and exacerbate domestic instability in other countries (Perez, 2021). The rise of military regimes in the West African sub-region has been linked to these variables (Al Jazeera, 2023), which often time result in the displacement of millions of people, the death of thousands, and the escalation of humanitarian crises in various parts of the continent.

Poverty: It was revealed that Burkina Faso, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and Chad all had GDPs of less than $22 billion in 2022, according to a World Bank projection (2022), while Sudan had a GDP of $52 billion. Despite Gabon's abundant natural oil, manganese, and timber resources, its citizens experience widespread poverty (Archibald and Murray, 2023). Meanwhile, Niger is one of the world's poorest and least developed countries (CRS, 2023).

Tenure Extension: The military's take-overs in politics to the continent were also caused by African governments' attempts at unconstitutional tenure extension. Leaders that try to stay in power longer sometimes cause dissatisfaction and tensions that could spark military

resurgence in politics. For instance, in April 2021, President Idriss Deby of Chad, who had been in government for 30 years and was running for a sixth term, was slain in combat with rebels. Elections were scheduled to take place in 18 months by the military council that assumed power after his death (Yusuf, 2023; Rosenje, Onyebuchi, & Adeniyi, 2022).

Power Mongering: African military resurgence in politics is influenced by a combination of hunger for power and military frustration. Any nation's military is essential to its sovereignty because it defends its borders against outside threats, upholds law and order, and acts as a deterrent to prospective aggressors and discontent. Thus, the military may take steps to reverse these activities by seizing power as a result of growing unhappiness with pay, policies, and mounting corruption (Emina &Ikegbu, 2020). For example, politicians start a military resurgence in order to take control of the state machinery and increase their political power throughout the nation and the surrounding area (Yukawa et al., 2019).

Regional organizations like the African Union and ECOWAS encounter significant challenges in handling threats to peace and security that impact their member states. ECOWAS, for instance, has continually struggled to contain a democratic backslide in West Africa, and previous appeals to the military juntas in Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Mali to return political power to democratic government were not headed.

In the heat of the Niger crisis, the military regimes in neighbouring Guinea, Mali, and Burkina Faso pledged their support to the new regime. Specifically, they warned, "that any military intervention against Niger would be tantamount to a declaration of war against Burkina Faso and Mali" (APA News, 2023).

The convergence of the views of the leaders of these countries led to the announcement of their coordinated and simultaneous withdrawal from ECOWAS in January 2024 (Westcott 2024), which had taken restrictive measures against them in response to the coups. These countries had already announced the creation of their own regional structure, the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), in September 2023 (TV5 Monde 2024).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study is An Analysis on Democracy and Military Take-Overs in West Africa: An Analysis. It is concluded that the abrupt of constitutional order caused by the military take-overs or resurgence in politics in many African countries rocked the fundamental foundations of democracy, which the nations had fiercely defended.

It is also concluded that the experience of coups in West Africa can also be traceable to the general manifestations of coups in Africa. Some of the reasons include the need for political stability, addressing the failure of leadership, the growing discontent of citizens in civilian rule and administration, the poor level of development despite the abundance of natural and human resources, electoral malpractice, political corruption, elections without credibility among other socioeconomic and political anomalies among others.

Therefore, the paper recommends that ECOWAS should as a matter of fact intensifies their efforts at deepening democracy in the region by ensuring smooth transitional programmes that will bring back the democratic regime. As a corollary to that, there should be effective monitoring of the election process to make the exercise credible. Again, the regional body should strengthen economic development through coordinated policies targeted at improving the conditions of the citizens.

Also, African political elites should intensify their efforts at tackling the issues and challenges of democratic regimes in Africa that the military always leverages to overthrow

their governments. These ranges from political instability, bad leadership, corruption, sit tight syndrome, poverty and insecurity amongst others, to legitimize their unlawful overthrow of the government.

Finally but not the least, Africa's democratic institutions should be reformed and strengthened so that democracy can achieve the desired results in the region. Strong institutions engender good governance.

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SOCIAL-RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MEDIA IN REPORTING POLITICAL OPPOSITION: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract
Political opposition in Nigeria is generally weak due to widespread party defections among opposition party members. These defections are often attributed to socio-economic and political factors, with the media's influence frequently overlooked. Little attention has been paid to exposing the media's clandestine role in contributing to these defections. It is on this basis that this paper examines the role of the media in reporting political opposition parties during internal crises, using the theoretical perspectives of framing theory and social identity theory. Through qualitative analysis of data derived largely from secondary sources, this paper argues that negative media framing of opposition parties is one of the contributing factors responsible for widespread defections among opposition party members in Nigeria, as it erodes their social identity. The paper concludes that the Social Responsibility Theory of the press guides on the role of socially responsible media in reporting opposition parties in Nigeria. The paper also recommends among others, that stakeholders, including journalists, academic experts, and policymakers should advocate for a definite national communication policy that will serve as a guide and operational frame work for Nigeria media.

Keywords: Defection, Framing, Opposition, Social identity, Social responsibility theory

INTRODUCTION

In an open, democratic, multi-party system operating country like Nigeria, the range of political parties that can be formed is typically large. Political parties are traditionally the most significant intermediary organization in democratic societies (Aduku &Imoru, 2014). The most common route to elected offices is through political parties. One notable reason why most nations adopted a multi-party system is to provide representation for diverse interests. The number of politicians seeking public office exceeds the available positions, creating a competitive landscape. The unwavering determination of politicians to secure political power, regardless of the cost, can spark intense opposition, ultimately leading to internal crisis. When this internal crisis is not properly managed, it breeds full-blown political

conflict, a major determinant of news. Notably, Botes (1996:2) affirms, 'conflict is the bread and butter of journalism'.

Prevalent cases of party defections are a common phenomenon among major opposition parties in Nigeria. These defections are largely attributed to socio-economic and political factors, with the media's influence often overlooked. The media's reporting on opposition parties, during times of crisis is crucial for democratic growth. It is essential to acknowledge that favourable depictions of a particular group (the ruling party) can promote positive impressions and enhance its image. Conversely, negative depictions of a group (the opposition party) can damage its reputation. Unfavourable media coverage can have profound negative effects, impacting the individual's or party's social identity. This drives party members to seek a positive identity by switching parties because they want to be associated with a party that has a positive image (social identity theory). Social identity theory suggests that part of our self-concept relies on the significance and relevance of group memberships (Turner & Oakes, 1986).

In Nigeria, unfavourable media coverage has contributed to widespread party defections among politicians and supporters seeking to protect their ambitions, offices, and reputations. Identity shapes our sense of self, encompassing core beliefs, values, and group affiliations, which we tend to protect. When individuals' identities are threatened or challenged through conflict, they respond in ways that reinforce their allegiance to these affiliations. Our sense of identity is deeply connected to our group memberships. Additionally, our self-esteem largely depends on how we and others perceive the groups we belong to (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Therefore, negative media framing of opposition parties would determine how others associate themselves with the party which may also contribute to the defection of existing party members to a more favourable party to enhance their social reputations.

Empirical Works on Media Reporting on Political Opposition in Nigeria

Saka, Adebiyi and Bakar (2019), in their work titled 'Political parties and opposition politics in Nigeria's Fourth Republic' through qualitative analysis of data derived largely from secondary sources discovered that political opposition in Nigeria is generally weak due to some factors which are attributed to the fear of losing political office, lack of ideology, low level of political party institutionalization, and godfather politics among others. Nnenna, Alexander and Paul (2017) further issues of political opposition from the angle of media coverage.

Nnenna, Alexander, and Paul (2017) conducted research titled 'Newspaper Coverage of Political Opposition in Nigeria from October, 2014 to March 2015,' which revealed the nature of newspaper coverage on political opposition in Nigeria towards the 2015 general election. The researchers carried out a content analysis of selected newspapers based on their ownership structure and found out that the media were used as oppositional tools. Their findings showed that The Daily Sun owned by Orji Uzor Kalu, former governor of Abia state and also a member of the then-ruling party as at then was more favourable in their reporting of issues related to the then ruling party (PDP). Their findings also show that The Nation newspaper owned by Ahmed Bola Tinubu, (a former governor of Lagos state and a national leader of APC) was more apologetic towards its cause and also found out that some certain amount of its political messages are unfavourable towards PDP. It is evident in the work of Nnenna et al, that the media play a crucial role in the political struggle and ambition of political leaders/elites. It is also crucial to note that the way, the selected media outfits framed and covered the activities and policies of the two political parties positively towards the 2015 general election go a long way to promote more positive impressions and upsurge

their images and a negative depiction of them also discredit their reputation. (Social Identity theory).

As an empirical study, Adegboyega (2018) carried out a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of selected newspapers in Nigeria to ascertain their coverage of the crisis that rampaged the Peoples Democratic Party (as an opposition party between 2016-2017). He discovered that most of the selected newspapers contributed to the escalation of the political conflict that rampaged the opposition party by using more of a conflict frame than peace framing that advocate for conflict resolution. Adegboyega (2018) approach confers importance on Critical Discourse Analysis, which is the supplementary research method adopted in his study. Discourse Analysis proves valuable in unearthing and ascribing meanings to the contents of newspapers selected for the study. He examines how words are deployed and mobilized used of outbursts, abusive words and defamatory languages between major players in the political conflicts were published and therefore contributed to the collapse of peace initiatives in resolving the crisis. Therefore, in line with social identity assumptions, Adegboyega (2018), found that the nature of newspapers framing of PDP crisis (as an opposition party) such as naming calling, inciting reports, as well as stressing some specific social context such as groups' differences as against group agreement and common interest, visible effects of conflict as against invisible effects, reactive framing against proactive/preventive framing, demonizing languages, and the presence of good or bad tagging intensify the conflict to a point that it appears the crisis will stay longer than usual mostly till the 2023 general election. In other words, the newspapers frames affect the political party's identity as a dying political party; with different political office holders and supporters of PDP defecting to the Ruling party (All Progressives Congress) citing the ongoing division in the party and the failure of the party to project their political ambition as the reason for their defection.

The work of Popoola (2015) in his book titled 'A Discourse on Personality-induced Conflicts in Nigeria's Politics. The Media and their Narratives' also address the insights of this study in some respects. This work exposes various cycles of sensationalism in media reportage of political entanglement between some political leaders of the state which resulted in cases of defections (Ladoja and Adedibu, with the former defecting to another party at the later stage of the political fracas, Attah and Akpabio; Lawal and Saraki and many others). All these related works seem to have focused on media reportage of political conflicts but less insight is given to how this may have contributed to party defections among politicians and their followers. This study, through its theoretical insight suggests the way the media frame political opposition between individuals or the ruling party versus the opposition party goes a long way in shaping the identity of the party or the individual involved.

Societal Implications of Media Reportage of Opposition in Nigeria

Based on the above and a thorough analysis of media texts, it is essential to note the Nigerian media's involvement in reporting opposition parties. Within the context of framing political opposition and conflict, their reporting has become increasingly acrimonious, affecting the political system.

Over the years, the mass media have been alleged to be one of the contributors to the political pitfalls of Nigeria's democracy by looking at issues through the prism of ethnicity and religion (Popoola, 2015). It is common in Nigeria for the ruling party to exploit crises within opposition parties to its advantage. This often leads to members defecting, which weakens the opposition party's resolve by destabilizing its structures. The ruling party typically achieves this using state resources and controlled media. According to Olaniyan and Amao (2015, p. 80), 'Democracy thrives in the presence of genuine and vibrant opposition. Any threat to the

existence of opposition is therefore a threat to democratic sustenance". Beyond the power struggle, genuine and vibrant opposition offers several benefits. These include unmasking the ill-conceived policies and agendas of the ruling party/government that have little or no importance to the general public. A strong opposition also acts as a watchdog, holding the ruling party accountable to the public. Furthermore, it ensures that the ruling party remains innovative and focused, delivering its promises to the electorate.

As stated in the European Commission for Democracy through Law draft report, opposition is seen as an essential component of a well-functioning democracy as it offers a reliable political alternative to the majority in power by providing other policy options for public consideration. Lastly, preparation to form the next government by making their points and demonstrating how their policies might have achieved better results.

The implication of a weakened or failed opposition is that it leans the country towards a one-party system. Since the end of the 2023 general elections, a host of elected opposition figures have defected to the ruling All Progressives Congress, APC, with more, including governors expected to jump ship, ahead of the 2027 polls. For instance, the Labour Party, which emerged as the Third Force after the election, has lost no fewer than 18 lawmakers to the APC. The main opposition Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, has also lost scores of elected officials including 27 members of the Rivers State House of Assembly, some members of the House of Representatives and senators. The inability of Nigeria's opposition to provide a credible opposition to the ruling party has hurt governance, leading to a lack of accountability, wide-scale corruption, weak institutions, and inefficiency. The lack of a vibrant and robust opposition emboldens the ruling party, allowing it to govern unchecked and unchallenged.

According to Abrams and Giles (2007) when it comes to negative images, it may be the case that viewers actively work to buffer themselves from the harmful effects of exposure to negative images of their ingroup in the mass media. The implication of this is that leaders and party followers often defect to be on the winning side of politics. This leads to a political space that becomes less beneficial to the citizenry, weakens opposition parties, and ultimately moves the country towards a one-party state. According to Gambo (2013) research has long established a close relationship between the media and social change. Nowhere are the media desperately needed to support political, economic and social development than in developing countries like Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is theoretically grounded in framing theory and social identity theory. Framing theory is important to underpin this study because one of the ways through which the media can influence their target public is through News Framing. Herman and Chomsky (2000) cited in Saleem (2007) maintain that media framing plays a vital role in presenting, shaping, and destroying the picture of an event or story. Saleem (2007, p.134-135) further states that literature on framing indicate that:

1. Media frames can play a vital role in stimulating opposition to or support for an event or issue,
2. Media frames provide moral judgment, causal interpretation and remedy/solution for media-focused problems,
3. Media frames generally represent a specific ideology,
4. Media frames including attractive words, metaphors, phrases etc also help to determine the "tone" of media coverage of an event or issue.

Based on Salem's postulations, this study submits that the way the media frame opposition parties during crises goes a long way in influencing the perception and understanding of the public about the conflict.

Rooted in the principles of Social Identity Theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s, the theory posits that individuals within an in-group tend to highlight negative traits of an out-group as a means of enhancing their self-image. The dynamics between in-groups and out-groups provide a useful framework for understanding how media framing influences opposition parties and shapes public perception of them.

Exposure to negative or positive media messages is a valuable tool to shape or destroy group(s) social identity through media framing. The media do not just affect the perception of the public about an issue or group but also go a step further in affecting the relationship of members (ingroup) and members of other groups (outgroup). Social identity theory posits that a portion of one's self-concept is dependent on the importance and relevance placed on the group membership(s) to which an individual belongs (Turner & Oakes, 1986). The theory suggests that individuals' drive for positive identity and esteem influences the social comparisons they make.

For example, favorable representations of APC in fact, promote overall positive attitudes and impressions about the party. Negative depiction of PDP (an opposition party) also discredits the reputation of the party. By promoting certain representations (which feature particular aspects of groups) and ignoring others, the media play a role in creating shared norms and activating the use of these constructs in subsequent evaluations (Harwood & Roy, 2005). According to Mckinley, Mastro and Warber (2014, p.1051), media messages have the potential to:

1. Influence the importance/relevance of, and ability to prime, different group memberships;
2. Contribute to viewers' perceptions about the features/dimensions that characterize different groups;
3. Provide norms of treatment for different groups;
4. Define the status and standing of different groups; and ultimately;
5. Normalize these notions by suggesting that media representations are consensually accepted.

According to Warber et al. (2014) research suggests that exposure to positive media images can improve the majority of peoples' attitudes towards a group along a variety of outcomes ranging from general support and positive judgments to sympathy regarding issues of discrimination. Therefore, with positive media representation of groups, people are motivated to maintain distinctions towards such group and vice versa.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the way the media set the agenda and frame opposition parties during crises goes a long way in determining party members' drive for positive change and identity, self-esteem, and social comparisons. To a large extent, negative media representation of opposition parties contributes to the defection of party members seeking to protect their political reputations.

Social-Responsibility of Nigeria Media in Reporting Opposition

Media narratives of conflict have been indicted in fanning the ember of conflict by multiple studies because of sensationalism and passive interests. According to renowned scholars of communication Sierbert, Peterson and Schramm (1956); Kunczick (1988); McQuail (2005) cited in Popoola (2015, p.326) "the notion of the socially-responsible media is contained and

unveiled in the concepts, assumptions and propositions of the Social Responsibility Theory of the press". The Social Responsibility Theory as propounded by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm emerged from widespread criticism of the American newspaper press, especially because of its sensationalism and commercialism, but also its political imbalance and monopoly tendencies (McQuail, 2005).

A responsible press according to 1947 Hutchins commission should 'provide a full, truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning'. It should serve as a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism and be a 'common carrier of the public expression'. The press should give a 'representative picture of constituent groups in the society' and also present and clarify the goals and values of society (Igboanusi, 2006; McQuail, 2005). McQuail (2005, p.171) affirm that "social responsibility theory support the concept of a diverse, objective, informative and independent press institution which would avoid causing offence or encouraging crime, violence or disorder". Buttressing this position further, Daramola (2005) avers that the media must be responsible enough to maintain the stability of the society; to him, the main theme of the message embedded in social responsibility theory is "in public interest". Therefore, the main principles of the theory according to Daramola (2005) are:

1. The media should accept and fulfil certain obligations to society;
2. The obligations are mainly to be met by setting high professional standards of informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance;
3. In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self-regulating within the framework of the laws of the land;
4. The media must avoid whatever could lead to crime, violence or civil disorder or give offence to minority groups;
5. The media should be pluralistic and reflect the diversity of society, giving access to various points of view and right of reply;
6. Journalists and media professionals should be accountable to the society as a whole.

Puddephatt (2006) did not mince words to assert that the power of the media coverage (and the concern it aroused in public opinion) proved stronger than the will of governments. In other words, the media affect public thinking by setting an agenda of discussion as well as what to think about as expressed by Cohen (1963). Therefore, the idea of responsibility is that the media should be self-regulatory in the course of carrying out their normative functions. The media have a herculean task in providing an accurate account of an event as it unfolds in the society and according to Puddephatt (2006, p.23) "there will inevitably be commercial pressure to focus on the immediate, most violent or dramatic incidents, at the expense of explaining the background and issues that may underpin the conflict". In this case, objective, balanced, truthful account of event should be the basis of media reportage.

Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956), Kunczick (1988), McQuail (2005) and Folarin (2006) cited in Popoola (2015) added to these facts that the chief duty of the socially-responsible media is to raise conflict to the plane of discussion with proposals for resolution to bring about development, realizing that societal peace is a strong condition for development. Social responsibility of the media assumes that the media of communication should be responsible to the public and at all times serve the interest of its audience, without allowing the ruling party to exploit the media as a tool to destabilize opposition parties.

Conclusion

Based on the preceding analysis, opposition parties face systematic bias in mainstream media coverage. This has profound implications for Nigeria's democratic stability, as an

undermined opposition weakens political competition and reduces accountability. Negative framing of opposition parties can indeed have a detrimental impact, similar to socio-economic and political factors previous researchers have highlighted to be causes of prevalent political defections among Nigerian politicians. In summary, media's framing of opposition parties during crises, driven by ownership interests, government influence, and sensationalism, negatively impacts their social identity. This, in turn, undermines members' drive for positive change, as politicians often associate themselves with a party that has momentum.

Recommendations

Therefore, to improve the role of the media in reporting political opposition, the following recommendations are made:

The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and other regulatory bodies should operate independently, avoiding politically motivated sanctions. A transparent and non-partisan media regulation mechanism should be established to ensure balanced coverage. Therefore, stakeholders, including journalists, academic experts, and policymakers, should advocate for a comprehensive national communication policy to serve as a guide and operational framework for media operations.

Media should also monetize their online platforms to generate more revenues, and become self-reliant to avoid overreliance on advertisers and politicians who may influence their reportage.

Legal frameworks should be reinforced to protect journalists from political intimidation and ensure press freedom. Journalists must also display professionalism by making sure they do not allow the sentiments of political affiliations, political and economic factors to determine the direction of their reports. They must be guided with the tenets of conflict sensitive, responsible and peace journalism which demands balanced, fair and factual reports. This will help create proper understanding of the issues at stake in order to facilitate early resolution of conflict.

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TRENDS OF SCHOOL KIDNAPPING AND HOSTAGE TAKING IN NIGERIA: A REFLECTION OF A FAILED STATE

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Abstract
Nigeria is under a severe internal security threat, as the threat has political and socioeconomic dimensions. Each of these dimensions has critically affected the stability of the nation and can be traced to many factors in which kidnapping and hostage taking is one of them. This paper takes a look at school kidnapping and hostage taking in Nigeria: a reflection of a failed state. the objectives of the study are to look into the causes of school kidnapping and hostage taking in Nigeria and the effect of school kidnapping and hostage taking in Nigeria. The study was anchored on failed state theory and relies on secondary sources of data collection. The findings reveal that, a lot of factors are responsible for school kidnapping and hostage taking ranging from high level of insecurity, unemployment, poverty and so on. The study also reveals that the effect of school kidnapping and hostage taking on the children, community and the attitude of the affected parts cannot be under estimated. The study therefore recommends that, Nigeria government should provide good security measures in the country and make sure all the security measures put in place are working effectively.

Key words: Failed State, Hostage Taking, Nigeria, School Kidnapping

Introduction
The issue of insecurity ranging from militancy group, boko haram insurgency, kidnapping for ransom, killing for rituals, hostage taking and banditry attack continues to threaten the existence of Nigeria as a nation state. This has made national security threat to be a major issue for the government and has prompted huge allocation of the national budget to security. In order to ameliorate the incidence of crime, the federal government has embarked on criminalization of terrorism by passing the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011, installation of Computer-based Closed Circuit Television cameras (CCTV) in some parts of the country, enhancement of surveillance as well as investigation of criminal related offences, heightening of physical security measures around the country aimed at deterring or disrupting potential, strengthening of security agencies through the provision of security facilities and the development and broadcast of security tips in mass media (Azazi, 2011). Despite these efforts, the level of insecurity in the country is still high. In addition, Nigeria has consistently ranked low in the Global Peace Index (GPI, 2012), signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the country. Hence, Adagba, Ugwu, and Eme, (2012), Uhunmwuangho and Aluforo (2011) are of the view that the efforts of government have not yielded enough positive result.

Terrorism is one of the most dangerous and deadliest threats to human security in Nigeria (Abodunrin, Adeyeye and Oloye, 2021). With the lingering security challenges and the inability of the security apparatus of the government to guarantee safety and security in the country, the question that borders everyone in Nigeria today is that "can there be security?" Is security of lives and properties achievable? Apparently, the security situation in Nigeria appears or at least have remained insurmountable and many people have argued that government at all levels has not done enough by not confronting the situation head on and dealing with it decisively, others have argued that the situation has a political undertone or inclination calculated to serve the interest of certain political gods, who have been dissatisfied and disgruntled about the political manifestations in the country (Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpor-Robaro, 2013).

Over the years, civil unrest has become a recurring decimal in Nigeria (Abodunrin, 2019). Terrorism has become one of the most dangerous threats to lives and property in the world (Abodunrin and Alaba, 2019). Kidnapping and hostage taking is a global crime with similarities and differences in its occurrence from the global North to the global South (Surtees, Tankebe& Bland, 2019; Attah, Sambo, Sule, Bello &Saragih, 2021). Forest (2012) asserted that the exact count of kidnapping statistics is rather impossible due to its complexities necessitating different interventions and strategies across the globe. In that light, the concept of kidnapping andhostage taking interchangeably to mean the abduction of an individual forcefully or by trick from his immediate environment to a secluded place in demand for money, use for ritual, trafficking, slavery, baby making or political purposes.

The issue of kidnapping and hostage taking in Nigeria is one of the criminal activities that have continued to pose serious security threat to the Nigerian State. According to Chukwurah (2011), kidnapping is conceived as the act of illegally taking someone away and keeping him as a prisoner for the purpose of receiving ransom (money in return). Historically, kidnapping in the South-East zone and some other parts of Nigeria, could be traced to the hostilities, conflicts, crises and violence in the Niger Delta region (Igbokwe, 2009). The challenges posed by this criminal dimension of Nigeria's perennial internal security checklist painted negative image of the country nationally and internationally. This ugly situation explains why Arizona-Ogwu, a Nigerian Residing in the United States of America bluntly describes the attitudes of the Federal Government of Nigeria toward the menace of crime as follows:

> *Owing to the government cold-feet attitude to certain crimes in Nigeria, there is an outcome of thousands of cases signifying the brutality wrought on the innocent Nigerians with the help of local collaborators. Besides kidnappings and murders, there are millions of cases of torture, rape, arson, looting and other crimes (Arizona-Ogwu, 2010:18)*

Education is a panacea for national development across the world. There is no society that does not give adequate attention to her educational growth and development. Apart from the paltry budgetary allocation by the government, the Boko Haram insurgency, banditry has been an obstacle to educational development in Nigeria. By implication, Boko Haram translates to war against western education especially in northern Nigeria. In Borno state the attacks had destroyed over 882 classrooms as of August 2013, in Yobe state all schools were shot from June to September 2013. On 6 March 2014, the federal government closed five Federal Colleges (Unity Schools)
in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states, ordering their estimated 10,000 students to relocate to other schools (Daily Trust, 10 March 2014). Parents fearing attacks have withdrawn thousands of children from schools in a region already the most educationally backward in the country (Awortu, 2015)

The kidnapping and hostage-taking of students, particularly those attending boarding schools, has posed a severe threat to Nigeria's educational system. Both insurgents and bandits have assaulted numerous educational institutions since the Boko Haram terrorist group's 2009 breakout, killing numerous professors and students. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) reported that the violence in northeastern Nigeria has resulted in the deaths of over 2,295 teachers, the displacement of 19,000 people, the destruction of 1,400 schools, the majority of which are unable to reopen, and more (www.unicef.org). Since many of them have been kidnapped, female students are the worst victims. The threat of kidnappings at schools has spread beyond of northeastern Nigeria. Unfortunately, it has managed to hold sway over the whole northern region of Nigeria (North-East, North-West, and North-Central).

This study takes a look at school kidnapping and hostage taken in Nigeria: A reflection of a failed state.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

With differing degrees of effectiveness, several scholars have defined kidnapping. The first definition of kidnapping is the "act of seizing and detaining or carrying away a person by unlawful force or by fraud, and often with a demand for ransom," according to Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014, P.132). It is the practice of forcibly removing someone from their family without that person's consent in order to hold them as a hostage and obtain money (ransom) from them. Kidnapping, according to the criminal law perspective described in Abdulkabir (2017), is the act of transporting someone against their will, usually in order to hold them in false custody without a court order.

This conduct may be performed largely to obtain ransom or in connection with child custody as a fall out of marital disagreement (Okoye, Joe-Akunne and Chire, 2016). "Kidnapping is the forceful or fraudulent abduction of an individual or a group of individuals for reasons ranging from economic, political, and religious to (struggle for) self-determination," according to Fage and Alabi (2017), referenced in Bello and Jamilu (2017). The authors then clarified that political circumstances can also lead to kidnapping, even though people who are forcibly or fraudulently abducted are taken as hostages for ransom. However, the most frequent reason for kidnapping is financial.

Another definition of kidnapping is provided by Inyang and Abraham (2013), who defined it as a legal restriction of another person's freedom that goes against the Federal Republic of Nigeria's constitution, which serves as the model for all other laws. According to Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014), kidnapping is the act of capturing, holding, or removing a person or people using coercion or illegal force, frequently with a ransom demand. In order to detain someone as a hostage and profit from their families and places of official duty, it entails forcibly removing them from their home or other area of interest without their agreement. According to the aforementioned, there is no one perfect way to define kidnapping; nonetheless, it is evident that an act must involve the forcible removal of a victim, whether they be an adult or a child, from one location to another, as well as their imprisonment or seizure.

For this reason, Inyang and Abraham (2013) noted that it is legally considered to be a restriction of another person's freedom, which is against the Federal Republic of Nigeria's constitution, which serves as the model for all other laws. Furthermore, political or financial gain are typically the driving forces behind kidnapping. Therefore, abduction can be used by criminals as well as political and freedom fighters to illegally get money or raise awareness of their demands. The objective of kidnapping is criminal motivation, regardless of its origins in social science or business. Abdulkabir (2017), kidnapping, abduction, or hostage-taking might be done to obtain a ransom from the victim's

family, obtain ritual money, or serve as an excuse to gain political freedom or appointment. Here, two assertions are crucial: (a) that money of some kind is always involved in kidnappings, and (b) that ransom money is paid.

According to Hoffman (2006), hostage taking is a type of terrorism in which a person or organization kidnaps one or more persons in order to accomplish particular political, social, or economic objectives. This strategy is used to put pressure on organizations, governments, or private citizens to abide by the demands of the hostage-taker. According to the United Nations, hostage taking is "the unlawful seizure or detention of a person or persons against their will, often with the intention of demanding ransom, concessions, or other benefits" (United Nations, 2005). Kidnapping, kidnapping, and hijacking are some of the ways that hostages might be taken. The reasons behind kidnapping hostages can differ greatly. While some hostage-takers may demand monetary compensation or the release of incarcerated comrades, others may aim to raise awareness of a specific cause or issue (Crenshaw, 2000). A perceived opponent may occasionally be the target of hostage-taking as a form of retaliation or revenge.

For the victims, their relatives, and the larger community, hostage kidnapping can have dire repercussions. Long-term psychological and emotional harm might result from the traumatic experience of being held captive (Danieli, 2009). Furthermore, taking hostages can have serious negative effects on the economy and society, especially if the hostages are detained for a long time. Terrorist groups and other non-state actors have been using hostage-taking more frequently in recent years. Hostage-takers now have an easier time communicating with their target audience and promoting their demands thanks to the growth of social media and other digital technologies (Weimann, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

One of the proponents of failed state theory is Robert I. Rotberg. He stated that Nation-states fail because they are convulsed by internal violence and can no longer deliver positive political goods to their inhabitants. Their governments lose legitimacy, and the very nature of the particular nation-state itself becomes illegitimate in the eyes and in the hearts of a growing plurality of its citizens.

Failed state theory is germane to the study of school kidnapping and hostage taking in the sovereign state of Nigeria, as it helps to explain reasons for its intensity and longevity in the state. According to Max Weber, a state is defined as maintaining a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force within its borders. When this is broken (e.g., through the dominant presence of warlords, paramilitary groups, armed gangs, or terrorism), the very existence of the state becomes dubious, and the state becomes a *failed state*. Weber explains that only the state has the means of production necessary for physical violence. A state is adjudged to have failed when it is unable to effectively maintain all or some of the essential characteristics of the state. Failed state means that the state has been rendered ineffective and is not able to enforce its laws uniformly or provide basic goods and services to its citizens because of (variously) high crime rates, insurgency, extreme political corruption, an impenetrable and ineffective bureaucracy, judicial ineffectiveness, military interference in politics, and cultural situations in which traditional leaders wield more power than the state over a certain area.

However, there is no real consensus on the definition of a “failed state”; the subjective nature of indicators that are used to measure state failure has led to an ambiguous understanding of the term (Olivier, 2013). Some scholars focus on the capacity and effectiveness of the government to determine if a state is failed or not (Patrick, 2007). Other indices such as the Fund for Peace’s Fragile States Index underline the democratic character of state institutions to determine its level of failure. Furthermore, other scholars focus their argument on the legitimacy of the state (Kaplan, 2008) on the nature of the state (Gros, 1996)

on the growth of criminal violence in a state (Rotberg, 2004) on the economic extractive institutions, or on the states' capacity to control its territory. Robert H. Bates (2008) refers to state failure as the "implosion of the state", where the state transforms "into an instrument of predation" and the state effectively loses its monopoly on the means of force. According to Charles T. Call (2010) the concept of "state failure" focuses on three gaps that the state is not able to provide when it is in the process of failure: capacity, when state institutions cannot effectively deliver basic goods and services to its population; **security**, when the state is unable to provide security to its population under the threat of armed groups; and **legitimacy** when a "significant portion of its political elites and society reject the rules regulating power and the accumulation and distribution of wealth.

Account of the dynamics of the different forms of school abduction

The Chibok girls school Kidnapping

On the night of 14 – 15 April 2014, 276 female students age from 16 to 18 were kidnapped by the boko haram terrorist from the Government Girls Secondary School at the town of Chibok in Bornu State, Nigeria. Prior to the incidence, the school has been closed for 4 weeks due to deteriorating security conditions but the girls were I attendance in order to take final examination in English.

Dapchi girls school Kidnapping

On Monday, February 19, 2018, Boko Haram insurgents invaded Government Girls Science Technical College in Dapchi, Yobe state, abducting 110 of the 906 students' population. It was yet another tragic day for a nation that is yet to get over a similar incident that took place on April 14, 2014 in Chibok, Borno state, when the insurgents invaded Government Secondary School, carting away as "ready luggage" 276 schoolgirls.

Kankara Boys, Katsina

On the 11th of December, 2020, Banditry took 203 students of Government Science Secondary School, Kankara, Katsina into captivity. A week after the students were taken into captivity, their abductors released them.

Dandume Foiled Kidnapping Attack

On the 19th of December 2020, less than two days after the kidnapped Kankara students released, some gunmen abducted more than 60 Islamic School students in the same Katsina State. The students were quickly rescued by security forces after a fierce gun battle according to the police.

Bandit Abduct 41 in Kagara, in Niger State

On the 17th of February, 2021gunmen invaded a school in Niger State kidnapping 41 students. The gunmen raided The Government Science College Kagara, Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State capturing students, teachers and their family members from the school. 27 students were among the abductees.

317 Female Students Abducted in Zamfara State

On the 26th of February 2021, less than 10 days after the bandit raided Kagara, gunmen kidnapped 317 school girls from the Government Girls' Science Secondary School Jangebe, Zamfara State.

College of Forestry Alaka, Kaduna

On the 11th of March 2021, the Alaka kidnapping took place. Gunmen attacked Federal College of Forestry Mechanization, Alaka Igabi Local Government Area, Kaduna State and kidnapped 39 students just weeks after a similar in Jangebe. The abducted comprised 23 females among with 16 males. Security forces were able to rescue 180 staff and students the next day.

Greenfield University Kidnap

On the 28th of February 2021, the Greenfield University kidnapping took place. At least 20 students and 2 staff were kidnapped in Kasarami Village, Chikun Local Government Area, Kaduna State during an attack by suspected armed bandits at Greenfield University. Kidnappers demanded 600 million naira ransom. On the 23rd of April 2021, the kidnappers killed 3 of the students. On May 29th 2021, after 40 days in captivity the remaining 14 students were freed. Their parents also said they paid a ransom of 150 million naira and 8 brand new motorcycles to the bandits.

Niger Muslim School Kidnap

On the 30th of May 2021, an armed gunmen abducted dozens of students from an Islamic School in Niger State. One of the school officials disclosed that the attackers initially took more than 100 children but later sent back those that are considered too small for them.

Effect of school kidnapping and hostage taking

The negative implication of school kidnapping and hostage taking on the academics, political, social, economic and environment cannot be underestimated due to the level of hardship inflicted on the concerned parties ranging from loss of lives and displacement. Ilugbami and Saka – Olokungboye (2021) opined that regardless of the nature and purpose for its perpetration, kidnapping has major social effects on victims, especially when such victims are school students. The psychological effect on the school children is pretty terrible as they are traumatizing and feeling continually dejected owing to the ugly ordeal they experience in the hand of their abductors. Buba (2015) asserts that emotional trauma, including rape, child marriage, slavery, and torture, is experienced by the abducted children. In such a situation, these schoolchildren might develop drug and alcohol dependence, experience suicidal thoughts, and become unable of functioning normally.

In Northwestern Nigeria, the abduction and hostage-taking of schoolchildren has also resulted in a rise in the number of youngsters quitting school. According to Onyido (2019), who referenced Okobiah (2002), education in the northern region of Nigeria has historically lagged behind that in the southern region. Religious beliefs, cultural customs, and the conviction that education influenced by the West is incompatible with Islamic principles have all contributed to the rise in kidnappings. Since one-third of primary-aged children in the area already do not attend school, some schoolchildren's educational prospects are in jeopardy (Ruth, 2021).

Given the frequent attacks on schools and the abduction of schoolchildren, no parent would want to put their child's life in jeopardy for no other reason than education, so the wave of attacks on schools portends a double assault on education in the area. Due to the frequent abduction of schoolchildren, students' attendance has decreased out of dread of such incidents (Ovuorie, 2015).

There are social repercussions in the area when academic activities are disrupted and the calendar is extended. Nduka (2021) claims that while certain schools in Zamfara state were recently closed due to insecurity, officials in Kano and Yobe states ordered the closure of over 20 institutions.

The massive gains made in recent years from the Federal Government of Nigeria's school feeding program to entice schoolchildren in Northwestern Nigeria back to school are being

seriously threatened by the ongoing disruption of the school calendar and activities due to the ongoing kidnapping of schoolchildren in a region with a high rate of out-of-school children. Attacks on schools have the potential to deter students from attending formal education and contribute to the rise in Almajiri syndrome, a disease that Northern Nigeria has been dealing with for many years.

Conclusion

The study has established that the effect of school kidnapping and hostage taking on the affected communities are too numerous to mention with it impact felt across Nigeria at large. The resources that are expected to be used for developmental projects are been diverted to security sector with little or no result. Nigeria which is being regarded as giant of Africa has not been able to prove to the whole world that, they are indeed giant of Africa due to the series of attacks and civil unrest on schools which has bedeviled the country which has put some cities, towns and villages into pandemonium in which institution of learning are not exempted from this barbaric attack. Series of school kidnapping and hostage taking has shown to the whole world that Nigeria is a toothless barking dog when it comes to the issue of maintaining security of life and properties of their citizen and non-citizens living in their country.

Recommendations

The study therefore recommends that:

- The federal government should work closely with the state and local government with the aim of ensuring that factors contributing to school kidnapping and hostage taking are addressed so as to prevents the re-occurring of the incidence.
- Nigeria government should provide good security measures in the country and make sure all the security measures put in place are working effectively. Also, the federal government should allow each state to have their own security force. This will enhance security of the country.

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PARTICIPATION AS A MEANS AND END FOR EMPOWERMENT IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

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ABSTRACT
The paper brought to light the connection that exist between participation and empowerment in community development. Participation and empowerment are relevant terms in any development discourse. Community development is aimed at empowering people including uplifting the quality of life they live. However, achieving this goal is challenging if community members do not actively participate from the planning stage to project execution. Different types and models of participation exist in development parlance. This paper takes a look at participation as a means and participation as an end. It demonstrates the nature of involvement which can result to empowering of community members, believing that participation as an end ensures direct involvement in project execution and enables community take charge of decisions that have direct impact on their lives. It is therefore concluded that any project that the people actively participate would lead to empowering the community. Also, different strategies exist in the development of community such as up-to-down, down-to-top and joint strategy. The paper therefore concludes that empowerment and participation are directly linked, and it is the down-to-top strategy of development in community which engenders sustainability through inclusivity.

Keywords: Participation, empowerment, development, community.

Introduction

Community involvement and upliftment of the standard of life of the people are the major focus in every community development discourse. Improving the wellbeing of people living in a particular locality is a community development strategy adopted by the masses as an alternate means since the State cannot provide all their needs. It is aimed at securing the active participation and cooperation of the people in every community project, designed to raise their standard of living and promote their development in all forms (Nnana, Abonor, Tiku, & Rita, 2024). It is a strategy or process that lay emphasis on what happen to the people socially, economically, and psychologically in the process of changing or moving from a smaller unit to a larger unit or from a pre-industrial to industrial society (Omoruyi, 2001). As a movement, it also links to authority of local governments to uplift the lives of the masses of the entire community with the active involvement of the people in the planning and execution of projects (Lazarus, Augustine, and Brian, 2024). In this sense, community development

takes the posture of a crusade or a cause to which the people are wholeheartedly committed. It lay emphasis on self-help among the people, and seeks to secure the active participation of the masses (Udoye, 2012). It involves bringing together of the people to bring their community to the path of progress.

Participation is a major part of self-help in community development programme. According to Robert and Okorie (2015), the concept emphasizes the initiative of the people as a means of stimulating the active involvement of all members of the community in the work of developing their community (Abonor, Fidelis, Paul, & Eyang, 2024). It is argued that, the main idea in community development is to enable the people make progress desired by them, through the effective use of material resources at their disposal. The success in community development programmes is therefore a function of the participation of the people voluntarily or involuntarily, mentally and physically, to create emotional attachment to the projects or facility identified as their felt-needs. Participation creates faith in common understanding among the people, and it enhances the possibility of success in the execution of programmes designed for a better condition of living in the communities. Participation has the benefit of increasing project efficiency, promote projects effectiveness, help to build the capacity of beneficiaries and also enhancing and empowering members of the community. According to (Echegu, 2018), participation promotes or builds confidence and creates a sense of belonging in the people. It is a process in which beneficiaries of development projects influence the direction and execution of such projects rather than just receiving a share of a completed projects (Ofem, Abonor, & Ubi, 2024). With this process which gives pride of ownership to the people, sustainability of projects or facilities is always assured since all major stakeholders in the community are carried along. It is on this background that this paper believes that, empowerment of community members depends on the approach adopted and the degree of involvement of the people in the community development initiatives.

Different Strategies or Approaches in Community Development

There are different strategies adopted in the development of community depending on the needs, context, and resources of the community. There is the grassroot approach (down-to-top), the top-to-down approach or expert approach, multiple approach; asset-based approach, area-based approach, spiritual-psychological approach, participatory approach, self-help and empowerment approach, and advocacy approach. Nevertheless, all these approaches are broadly classified into three namely: top-to-down, down-to-top, and partnership (Echegu, 2018). In the top-to-down approach, programmes for community development are sponsored by the government or agencies and impose on the community without much input from the community. It is an approach where the people of the community are not directly involved because everything is initiated and controlled by external experts and organizations, hence, it is a centralized planning model.

However, the down-to-top approach to community development is a model where activities are initiated and managed by members of the community for the benefit of the community (Udoye, 2012). The approach involves members of the community coming together and actively identify their needs and develop solutions to fix them. Most times, members of the community appoint or elect someone who is trusted among themselves to represent the community in handling activities and report back from time to time. In that way, government and agency including service providers only play a supportive role either as facilitators or consultants where necessary (Joann, 2017). On this note, the community plays the major role in the process of initiating development, based on the felt-needs of their community.

On the other hand, when community development is planned by both the external experts and the community people, it is referred to as the partnership approach of community

development. In his opinion, Onyekunle (2015), argued that, it is a collaborative and inclusive strategy of community development that involves building relationships between members of the community and the external experts to achieve common goals. All these strategies can be adopted by different communities at different times base on their capacity, awareness and different circumstances of the communities, including the resources at their disposal (Nnana, Abonor, Tiku, & Rita, 2024). When a community is able to define their own problems, have the ability and capacity to delve into solving it through organizing and direct participation by community members themselves, the down-to-top approach is in place (Ofem, Abonor, & Ubi, 2024). This strategy emphasizes mass participation, grassroots movements and local decision making (Abonor, Bassey, &Obue, 2024). It is an assumption that, there are benefits attached to peoples' involvement in initiating ideas since it gives rise to promoting participatory decision-making and build confidence and sustainability (Ottong, 2006). Nevertheless, anytime a community does not have the capacity to take necessary actions in developing their community, relevant agencies of government and stakeholders are advised to take over the process of development for a particular time to enable the community to upgrade in terms of awareness, acquire necessary training relevance to move the community forward in terms of development (Kanazawa, 2014). Therefore, the expert approach which is government sponsored of community development is a temporary alternative. The, joint or participatory approach comes into existence when the action of external stakeholders is joined with that of a community to improve the standard of living of the whole community with the active participation of the members of the community. It is however argued that, community development is better and closer to members of the community through the down-to-top approach instead of the other strategies or methods.

The Concept of Participation

Participation is a major concept commonly used in community development discourse. It is a central concept that directs levels of involvement and empowerment of members in community development programmes. It connotes the active involvement of individuals, groups, and communities in identifying their needs, planning, implementing, and evaluating development programmes and projects (Onyekunle, 2015). Lazarus, Augustine, and Brian argued that, participation is a cornerstone of sustainable development as it ensures communities initiatives and contribution to success (Lazarus, Augustine, & Brian, 2024). Participation ensures empowerment, builds local capacity, and promotes social inclusion, while fostering development to align with the community's needs, values, and priorities. Arguing in support of the relevance of participation in community development, Omoruyi (2001), sees participation as a process by which beneficiaries of development project influence the direction and execution of such projects rather than merely receiving a share of project benefits. It is people's involvement in decision-making process, in initiating, planning and implementing programmes, sharing in benefits of development programmes, and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programmes (Agbo, 2000). Participation involves general effort of those who are beneficiary, pooling the needed resources to achieve their goal. On this note, participation is regarded as a process where the people initiate action, motivated by what they are able to provide and have control over. The idea of passive involvement of the people which only take place when other people have taken decisions and are in control is not acceptable in this case (Abonor, Fideli, Paul, & Eyang, 2024); this is because, the idea of participation is to encourage collaboration, mutual trust, and shared responsibility among community members. Almost every development agency emphasized participation as key in community development and it is believed that sustainable development would not be possible without active participation (Robert& Okere, 2015). It helps bridge the gap between communities and external agencies such as governments or non-government, fostering collaboration and trust. It is a pivotal aspect of development

thinking and practice. The World Bank, donor agencies, International Development Partners, funding agencies, and major stakeholders have all agreed that development cannot be sustainable without the active involvement of the benefitting community (Aguene, 1998). However, the type of participation employed depends on the project goals, the community's capacity, and the level of collaboration desired between stakeholders.

Participation as a Means

Participation in this case is viewed as the means of achieving a target objective or goal. In this context, participation is used as a tool or method to achieve specific development goals (Abonor, Uzoh, Amokeye, &Takwan, 2024). It involves engaging community members in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development projects to ensure that these projects are more effective, efficient, and sustainable. On the other hand, Omoruyi (2001), argued that, it is a way of using the resources available in a community to achieve predetermined objectives. The outcome of participation to achieve the set objectives are more considered than participation itself. Those outcomes could perhaps result to significant improvement in the overall social and physical environment, and could meet the desires of the people. Agencies of development see community participation as a means to enhance efficiency in service delivery (Bayen, 2017). Participation in this sense is utilized to achieve predefined objectives, such as improving project outcomes or gaining community buy-in. Participation as a means improves decision-making, increase ownership and commitment, enhance legitimacy and credibility, and fosters empowerment and capacity building of members of a community (Panda, 2007). Participation as a means is common in community development activities and programmes. In this case, it is seen as an input required for objectives to be achieved. Experts have argued that development programmes would benefit if the people concerned directly participate. However, Abonor, Bassey, and Obue (2024), declared that it is also necessary for such participation not to be a mere way to facilitate attainment of development objectives, but a means to enhance the personal capacity of members of the community who are the beneficiaries. This top-to-down approach of community development, mobilizes to achieve specific development goal which is mostly directed by Government or external body. Such situation makes participation to become a mere exercise without a strong sense of purpose by the participants. Sometimes, participation is made compulsory by the agent of government just to achieve their specific goal (Joann, 2017). However, for development to be sustained, there could be strategies that can complement and nurture participation as an end through a deliberate effort of the change agent or the government.

Participation as an End

Participation as an end, emphasizes participation as a process where trust and a bond of unity among the people are built. As a process, participation is powerful, unmeasurable and in essence unable to be predicted (Bassey, Victor, Nnana, & Lazarus, 2022). As an end in itself, participation is anchored on the belief that every target group bears the primary responsibility for its own development and participation in this case is guided by the principle of self-reliance Pillay (2013). In this sense, participation is the meaningful involvement of the community which enables them to respond to` their felt-needs and change the narratives in their community (Udoye, 2012). In a more general terms, as an end in itself, participation assumes initiating active involvement of people from the down to the top. Therefore, when participation is taken as an end in itself, a programme's objectives are related to the enhancement of the capacity of the target groups to solve problems and improve their standard of living. As a result, this form of participation has been associated with developmental activities outside government circle, and the concern is to build up pressures from the community as to bring about positive change in the various structure in their

community (Zastrow, 2014). Omoruyi (2001), has maintained that, participation as an end in itself is about the process where members of a community are actively involved in the planning, utilization, and assessment of the social amenities or facilities designed for the improvement of their welfare. It is such participation that gives the people the pride of ownership of projects completed in the process of community development. In this case, success of the development objective is not of utmost essence, but the process whose outcome is the active or direct participation of the people in the development process (Agbo, 2000). In his view, Ajayi (2019), asserted that, participation in some circumstances is seen as a process of achieving individual's, personal development, self-awareness and some immediate satisfaction. Indeed, the process of participation as an end is generally believed to motivate members of a community to become more committed and ready to take part in community activities.

Table 1: Comparison of participation as a means and an end

Aspect	Participation as a means	Participation as an end
Purpose	Achieving specific project outcomes	Empowering communities for self-reliance and long- term development
Focus	Project goals and outputs	The process and capacity-building
Engagement duration	Limited to the project's timeline	Continuous and sustainable over time
Decision-making	Primarily control by external agencies	Controlled by the community itself
Outcome	Enhanced project efficiency and effectiveness	Empowered and self-reliance communities

Source: Self constructed

From the table, participation as a means is designed to achieve specific development objectives, engage community to contribute to enhance success of project, and participation is limited to duration of the project. However, as presented above, participation as an end empowers individuals and communities to build skills and capacity.

Empowerment

Another term in community development is empowerment. It is one of the cardinal goals of community development; empowering the people and improve their living condition. The concept of empowerment involves helping individuals to acquire a sense of power, or the ability to affect outcome in people's lives (Ottong, & Bassey 2009). It is a process that enables individuals, groups, or communities to gain control over their lives, circumstances, and decisions. It involves building capacity, confidence, and self-esteem to participate in and influence decisions that affect their lives. Empowerment gives people the ability to stand their ground and take position on issues (Akpomuvie, 2010). It encompasses a way of standing firm and having confidence in affairs that concern personal life and standing on one's rights (Ife, & Tesoriero, 2006), posits that, by empowerment we mean the ability of individuals, groups, and communities to take charge of their situations and accomplish their goals. By so doing, they are able to enhance the quality of their lives. Empowerment is also seen as the ability for people to recognize their strength and weaknesses, including interest. It encompasses gaining total control over one's life, socially, politically, economically, and psychologically by having access to information, knowledge, and skills. It focuses on having the freedom to make choices and take action, and having a supportive network of people, organizations and sometimes, policies that impact one's life and entire community.

Table 2: showing relationship between different Approaches to community development and their connection to empowerment

Approach	Description	Level of empowerment	Key contribution to empowerment
Top-down approach	Development led by external authorities with minimal community input	Low	Provides infrastructure or services but lacks community ownership and decision-making
Bottom-up approach	Community driven development with active participation and decision- making	High	Encourages community ownership, local leadership and problem-solving and empowerment
Participatory approach or partnership	Collaboration between communities and external agencies for planning and implementation	Moderate to high	Builds trust and inclusiveness, allowing communities to influence decisions
Needs-based approach	Focuses on addressing immediate deficiencies or gaps in resources and services	Low to moderate	Solve urgent problems but may foster dependency and overlook long-term empowerment
Asset-based community development (ABCD)	Focuses on identifying and leveraging existing community strengths and resources	High	Recognizes local potential and builds on existing capabilities for sustainable growth
Empowerment approach	Focuses on building community capacity, leadership and self-determination	Very high	Directly enhances self-reliance, decision-making power, and local leadership

Source: Self constructed

From the table above, the down-to-to Approach, Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), and Empowerment Approach are most effective in promoting sustainable empowerment as they build capacity, foster ownership and strengthen leadership.

Discussion and Conclusion

The paper took a look at two different types of participation namely: participation as a means and participation as an end. As shown on table 2, participation as a mean does not focus on building long-term capacity, and people are sometimes passive and do not have any control over their lives. It does not encourage sustainability because participation always ends when project is concluded. However, participation as a means encourages project efficiency. But in participation as an end, the people are directly involved in the process, and communities are empowered and self-reliant, getting power and control over decision that affects their lives.

Thus, it is participation as an end that leads to real empowerment of community members hence the general acceptance of the down-to-top approach.

Neilmank (2014), viewed participation along a spectrum with passive participation at one end and self-mobilization at the other end. Passive participation is where people are told what to do. On the other end is self-mobilization where the local people themselves are in total command. At one end of the spectrum, passive participation, and people's control is almost non-existent while at the other end. Self-mobilization, and people have almost total control over the processes while the role of outsiders is at best minimal. So, it is concluded that participation by manipulation and passive participation can't empower community, but both interactive participation and participation by self-mobilization can be highly empowering.

It has been observed that different school of thoughts are of the belief that empowerment is a function of participation, even though this is closely related to a belief in which participation is viewed as an end in itself (Neymark, 2014). However, Keyane(2014), has demonstrated that empowerment could be made possible if community participate. This is because whenever participation is used mainly as a means to create awareness, its purpose is majorly as a political tool, which does not concretely address development issues adequately.

In relationship between approaches of community development, as was addressed above, in the top-down approach, the agency in charge of development is always in control of the community's efforts. Such agency, be it government or non-government organization, always work according to their specifications and purpose with little or no input from the benefitting community. Since members of the community are not involved in the planning and execution of projects, both skill and knowledge will always elude the community as they depend on the benevolence of government or outsiders. Bearing in mind that the principle and philosophy of community development is membership participation, it therefore means that this approach or method cannot guaranty sustainable development nor empowerment. From the point of view of some development experts, this approach may be useful tentatively for a short period of time since it does not lead to empowerment of members of the community.

In the joint, cooperative or partnership approach, both the community and the government or other agencies work collaboratively to achieve development in the community. Community sometimes has more control over projects than the government or the other way round. This approach gives rise to empowerment, and moderate skills acquisition. The Community and Social Development Agency operated in most States in Nigeria is a good example of the partnership approach. In this Agency, communities apply for assistance from the Agency to enable them execute an identified project. If approved, the community provides ten percent of the total cost of the project while the Agency provides ninety percent with strict monitoring after some levels of training on project planning, implementation, and sustainability.

The next approach is the bottom-up. In this case, community members are in charge of planning of project to the evaluation, based on their felt-needs. Members have control over their decisions, their projects or programmes and are implemented by them and for the benefit of the community. Sustainability of development is assured by this approach since the community is not dependent on neither the government nor any Agency.

The bottom-up or down-to-top approach of community development is a demonstration of participation as an end, since the people are empowered and take charge of the development process directly. Many Scholars have asserted that the bottom-up approach leads to empowerment of community members and enhance community wellbeing. In the opinion of (Ofem, Abonor, & Ubi, 2024), empowerment encompasses awareness creation, self-reliance,

and decision-making power. Other approaches to community development and empowerment as shown on table two above, have different levels of impact on development and empowerment.

Summary/Conclusion

Participation is viewed as both a means and an end in the development of community. As a means, it is a tool used to achieve specific goals or outcomes, such as improved decision-making, increased accountability, or enhanced community engagement. In this case, participation is a mechanism for achieving desired results. On the other hand, participation can also be seen as an end in itself. This perspective emphasizes the inherent value of participation, regardless of the specific outcomes or goals. Participation is seen as a fundamental human right, essential for individual and collective empowerment, and a key component of democratic governance. Participation as a means and as an end are interconnected, as the process of participation can lead to outcomes that reinforce the value of participation itself.

In conclusion, participation is a complex and multifaceted concept that can be viewed as both a means and an end. Understanding the interconnectedness of these two perspectives is essential for harnessing the full potential of participation to drive positive change and promote human empowerment. By recognizing the inherent value of participation, we can create more inclusive, equitable, and just societies.

Policy Implications/Recommendations

1. Meaningful participation requires investment in capacity-building initiatives; Policies must allocate resources for training, education, and infrastructure to support active community engagement.
2. Policies should address systemic barriers that prevent marginalized groups from participating. This includes creating frameworks that promote gender equality, social justice, and the inclusion of diverse community voices.
3. There should be established guidelines that define the extent and nature of community involvement in development projects, ensuring that participation is both meaningful and goal-oriented.
4. Training programmes to equip community members with the necessary skills for effective participation, thereby enhancing their ability to contribute to and benefit from development initiatives should be implemented.
5. Establish mechanisms for open communication and feedback between authorities and communities to build trust and ensure that community inputs are valued and acted upon.

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FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NIGERIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract
This study interrogates the existing administrative and judicial approaches to the fight against official corruption in Africa's two largest economies - Nigeria and South Africa, and proposes a more functional, more pragmatic approach. The study relies on primary and secondary sources for its data, and utilizes Comparison, Ratio, Frequency and Table for data analysis. **Fighting, Corruption**, **National Survival**, and **Growth** and **Development** are the key words used in the paper. The failure of regimes to win the corruption war in the surveyed countries is examined against the backdrop of the contradictions inherent in policy and strategy. The study reveals, for instance, that rather than take practical steps to eradicate corruption, the State actually played a key role in promoting the cankerworm, with the trial of corruption suspects dragging for decades, or corruption suspects being offered political appointments or national honours, especially in Nigeria. It also examines the success factors in South Africa's anti-graft war, especially in the last one and a half years. The study reveals, for instance, that while corruption is now being severely punished in South Africa, the Nigerian case remains hopeless, because the government only pays lip service to fighting corruption. Practical recommendations are offered by the study, towards a total eradication of the corruption pandemic in the surveyed countries.

Keywords: Corruption, Africa, Nigeria, South Africa

INTRODUCTION:

This study has the singular objective of interrogating the causative factors for high levels of official corruption in the largest two economies of Africa – Nigeria and South Africa. It is imperative that issues around the war against corruption in these countries be explored in some dialectical detail, to identify the reasons behind governments' persistent failure to combat corruption, and thereby save the resources required for development. Therein lies the study's significance.

Statement of the Problem

Africa's two largest economies - Nigeria and South Africa - have grappled with corruption since their attainment of independence. Whereas successive leaders in the two countries have on several occasions vowed to stamp out corruption, the pronouncements are largely seen as mere rhetoric, with no significant success in government's anti-graft war. At 46 points, Nigeria ranked 146th among 180 countries of the world in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index for 2019, the 145th in 2023, and the second most corrupt in the West African region.

South Africa's Corruption Perception Index has similarly remained below 50 since 2012, and dropped to its lowest level ever in 2023, at 41 points. https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023.

Corruption has impacted the social and economic wellbeing of the surveyed countries in the following ways:

- *Less revenue is collected, with a loss to government;*
- *Policies are manipulated or distorted to maximize personal gains;*

Resources are diverted away from social and developmental priorities;

Society becomes unstable, because People become angry, particularly the poor who cannot afford to pay bribes and who get hurt the most;

The rich provoke resentment, through wanting more riches and flaunting their corrupt;

The society becomes unsafe in the process, as bribes protect criminals and facilitate crimes.

Corruption has also systematically weakened the State, damaged key institutions and eroded the social fabric in the surveyed two countries. Constitutional experts acknowledge that corruption is the antithesis of the open, accountable, democratic government required by the Constitution of these countries.

Materials and Methods

Interviews and review of relevant literature are the major tools employed in this study. I consider this approach to be the most reliable and most certifiable sources of data for a study of this nature. Table, Ratio, Comparison, Frequency and Percentage have been employed to analyze the data.

Theoretical Framework

Several factors would make reaching a consensus on the causes of, and solutions to corruption a bit problematic. Writing in the volume 3 edition of IFRA on *Corruption in Military and Civilian Regimes in Nigeria since 1999*, Edger Agubamah (2009), lists some of these factors to include (i) the uniqueness of each society and or country; (ii) the dynamic or changing nature of the socio political and economic interactions within the global community; and (iii) the differences in the perception of corrupt practices by different academic disciplines. Consequently, there have been as many approaches to the study of corruption as the number of opportunity costs of corrupt behavior.

Functionalist/Rational Choice Theories

To date, functionalist and rational choice explanations have been the dominant theoretical approaches to the study of corruption. Both approaches, however, face a number of challenges in explaining corrupt behavior, as we shall see shortly. Angell (1907) posits that functional psychology and behavioural functionalism emerged within psychology in the first half of the 20th century, to explain patterns in human behaviour as the result of response to external stimuli and adaptation to one's environment. In political science, functionalist explanations of corruption appeared in the work of scholars such as Samuel Huntington (1968), who viewed corruption as a way to "grease the wheels" to get things done, especially for investors and companies (Marquette and Pfeiffer 2015; Manzetti and Wilson 2007).

According to this view, corruption is a way of quickly cutting through burdensome regulatory requirements, distributing resources, and generating economic growth. Rooted in methodological individualism, rational choice theory models human behaviour as the result of individual, self-interested preferences. People are calculating and strategic, and they carefully weigh the costs and benefits of certain actions before undertaking them. Moreover, individuals have fixed, well-defined, ranked, and consistent preferences, and they behave instrumentally to achieve those preferences. The ultimate goal for

individuals is to maximize utility: to attain whatever goal makes them happier, more satisfied, or better off, such as power or money.

Second, corruption may (also) be a *principal-agent problem*. This is a function of organizing cooperative behaviour, which often requires delegation of responsibility for tasks both to and within formal institutions and organizations. Principals (i.e. citizens) give power to agents (i.e. bureaucrats) to act on their behalf, for instance to produce public goods like environmental protection or security. Agents are more likely to act in ways that maximize their own interests rather than those of the principal, particularly when information asymmetries exist and the principal cannot fully monitor the agent's behaviour.

Robert Klitgaard's famous formula explaining corruption also adheres to rationalist logic: "Corruption equals monopoly plus discretion minus accountability" (Klitgaard 1998, p.4; see also Klitgaard 1988). This is particularly relevant in the public sector, where government authorities (agents) often enjoy high levels of monopoly and discretionary authority over state resources and decision-making functions. As "corruption is a crime of calculation, not passion" (ibid), the ample information advantages enjoyed by government officials as rational actors provide them with opportunities to abuse their entrusted power for private (self-interested) gain. The advocated solution to such a situation is to reduce monopoly powers through transparency measures, broaden authority via participation, and ensure accountability through enforced penalties (sanctions) for bad behaviour. Current anti-corruption measures largely mirror this logic.

Corruption has also been modelled as a different type of collective action problem, the function of prevailing norms. Corruption may be systemic and widespread not because the institutions that constrain unethical behaviour are weak, but rather because of the existence of pro-corruption social norms. In this context, corruption is the expected form of behaviour, the accepted way of doing things that reflects a logic of appropriateness rather than of consequence, akin to accepted forms of greeting or other behaviours in social groups or driving on the right (or left) side of the road.

Rather than being a form of "rule-breaking," corruption is instead a form of rule-following that depends on the behaviour of other players. The likelihood of sanctioning corrupt behaviour is low or non-existent, since there is no normative preference for holding violators to account, even where accountability institutions exist.

My research on this subject suggests, however, that neither the functionalist, institutional nor modernization models seem to fully explain the pervasiveness of corruption in Africa. Functionalist explanations for corruption are generally unsatisfying and raise more questions than they appear to answer, since they often result in tautological arguments. For instance, it is very hard to know *ex-ante* when corruption will or will not be functional or useful; if corruption is functional, why do some people act corruptly while others don't, etc.

It is, therefore, imperative that we look for alternative models which could satisfactorily explain why people in privileged positions in every society indulge in corrupt practices.

Neo-patrimonialism

Neo-patrimonialism, as defined by Clapham, is "a … form of organization in which relationships of a broadly patrimonial type pervade a political and administrative system

which is formally constructed on rational-legal lines" (It is a system in which an office of power is used for personal uses and gains, as opposed to a strict division of the private and public spheres. Neo-patrimonialism may underlie or supplant the bureaucratic structure of the state in that only those with connections have the real power, not those who hold higher positions.

Origin and Definition

Neopatrimonialism as a distinct term is generally held to have originated with Samuel N. Eisenstadt, in his 1973 book *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neo-patrimonialism*, deriving it from Max Weber's term, 'patrimonialism', who used the term to describe a system of rule based on administrative and military personnel, who were responsible only to the ruler. Neopatrimonialism, which is a modern form of the traditional Patrimonial form of rule, is a mixed system. Here, elements of patrimonial and rational-bureaucratic rule co-exist and are sometimes interwoven.

As noted by Adefulu Razaq in his treatise on Neo Patrimonialism, the Modern African State and Corruption Syndrome (2007), the basic features of neo-patrimonialism include: (i) officials who hold positions in bureaucratic organizations exercise such power not as a form of public service, but see their position rather as a matter of private property relationship with other members of society; (ii) the relationship between officials and their clients or underlings then becomes one of personal subordination, as state officials treat their posts as personal fiefdom, use them to extract bribes or to appoint relatives to lucrative offices, even where the latter are not qualified. (iii) On their part, the subordinates cannot take official decisions without referring them upwards, because to do otherwise would be tantamount to slighting the authority of the boss. (iv) Because this system of social relations breeds subordination, it is often easy for common folks to worship political office holders, even as the latter are daily enriching themselves through corrupt means.

It would thus become difficult to eliminate corruption from the society, since almost everyone looks forward to partaking in the proceeds thereof.

Relevance of Neo-patrimonialism

Being the vertical distribution of resources that give rise to patron-client networks based around a powerful individual or party, neo-patrimonialism was once argued as necessary for unification and development after decolonization (see Nicolas van de Walle, in *Democratic Reform in Africa, 2005).* Though neo-patrimonialism seems like a form of corruption through coercion, it is not regarded as corrupt behavior by most countries where neopatrimonialism is present.

Neo-patrimonialism is not a synonym for corruption, but a distinct form of acquiring legitimacy and of dealing with difficulties in statecraft specific to a continent that is deeply rooted from pre-colonial times. For the weak state institutions left behind from colonial rule to gain legitimacy from the population, state leaders are left to either gain legitimacy through force or by paying off people and giving government positions in exchange for support of the ruling leader. Neopatrimonialism is the latter and was seen by governments attempting to gain legitimacy as a less violent and brutal way to rule, though often unstable.

Van de Walle (2005) also argues that neopatrimonialism is very prevalent in Africa since the departure of colonialism. African regimes are presidential, which facilitates clientelism since power is concentrated in a single individual with ultimate control of networks. As Joel S. Migdal (1998) puts it in his *Strong societies and weak states: state-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World,* the state in African countries seems omnipresent in all

aspects of people's lives, from the very local to the central government levels. Van de Walle introduces the notion that in Africa, states are hybrid regimes where patrimonial practices and bureaucracies coexist to a higher or lesser degree. African states have laws and constitutional order and in parallel are ruled by patrimonial logic in which political authority is based on clientelism and office holders constantly appropriate public resources for their own benefit.

Shortcomings of the Model

One of the main issues with neo-patrionialism is that it undermines economic reform in contemporary Africa on multiple levels. Another problem is that neo-patrimonial States in and outside Africa have pursued a wide range of policies including some that are squarely developmental. In other words, other than indicating the style of governance, neo-patrimonialism does not tell us much about what policies a state will pursue and with what success.

Commonality and Difference

Corruption, defined here as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain, has increasingly become a global epidemic in the 21st century. For instance, over two-thirds of countries scored below 50 out of 100 in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2023; this strongly indicates that these countries have serious corruption problems.

Nigeria is the 145th least corrupt nation out of 180 countries, according to the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International. The country's position in the global Corruption Perception Index varied during the period 2012 – 2021, with 2021 as the worst ever. South Africa's TI Corruption Perception Index has similarly remained below 50 since 2012, which signifies that corruption is a serious issue in that country, as can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Nigeria & South Africa's Corruption Perception Index 2012 - 2022

NIG	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
	27	25	27	26	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	25
SA	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
	43	42	44	44	45	43	43	44	44	44	43	41

Source: Transparency International

Although successive regimes in both countries have acknowledged the negative effects of corruption on society, the Nigerian State has relatively paid, and continues to pay lip service to fighting corruption.

The two countries surveyed in this paper are notorious for high profile official corruption. However, the South African State has demonstrated the political will to punish offenders in recent times, while the Nigerian State still pays lip service to fighting corruption. For instance, the trial of corruption cases drags in the courts for decades, and suspects are eventually let off without punishment. It is on record that only a handful of politicians were convicted for corruption in thirty-nine years (1984 to 2023), despite all the noise about fighting corruption. The Table below provides more details in this regard. It also shows that, before one politician is incarcerated for corruption in Nigeria, 8.4 more politicians would have been jailed in South Africa.

The list of Politicians ever convicted for corruption in Nigeria since the country returned to democratic rule does not include any former President. Rather, Ministers and other Appointees who served under the number one citizen, as well as State Governors were the only officials convicted. The list includeDiepreyeAlamiesiegha, James Ibori, Lucky Igbinedion, Umaru Dikko, James Bala Ngilari, Orji Uzo Kalu, Joshua Dariye, Jonah David Jang, Olisa Metuh, and Ike Ekweremadu. The paper will now discuss the conviction and subsequent jail of these politicians in more detail.

Diepreye Alamieyeseigha was detained in London on charges of money laundering in September 2005. At the time of his arrest, Metropolitan police found about £1m in cash in his London home. Later they found a total of £1.8m ($3.2m) in cash and bank accounts. He was found to own four homes in London worth an alleged £10 million. On 26 July 2007, he pleaded guilty before a Nigerian court to six charges and was sentenced to two years in prison on each charge.

On Tuesday 12 June 2018, the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory, Gudu, Abuja, sentenced a former governor of Plateau State, Joshua Dariye, to 14 years' imprisonment, on charges of criminal breach of trust and misappropriation of funds (1.6 billion naira.Dariye's successor, Jonah Jang, was also charged to court alongside Yusuf Pam, a former Cashier in the Office of the Secretary to the Plateau State Government, for embezzling 6.2 billion naira from the Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) and SUBEB funds.

James Ibori, Governor of Delta State from 1999 - 2007, was similarly alleged to have abused his office to get rich and laundered millions in Britain and elsewhere. He was convicted by a British court on July 21, 2017 for money laundering, with assets worth 101.5 million pounds ($130 million) confiscated by the British government.There was also the case of Bala Ngilari, a former governor in Adamawa State, who was arraigned at the Adamawa State High Court sometime in 2016, for allegedly conspiring with the Secretary to the State Government and the Finance Commissioner to award contract for supply of 25 units of Toyota Corolla saloon cars 2015 model to the tune of N167,812,500.00 without following due process.

Furthermore, Kalu Uzor Kalu was convicted by the Lagos Division of the Federal High Court on Thursday, 5 December 2019 and sentenced to 12 years in prison for a N7. 65 billion fraud while he served as governor of Delta State for eight years. He was convicted for defrauding the government of Abia State using his company, Slok Nigeria Limited.In a rather comical case, Lucky Igbinedion, former Governor of Edo State, pleaded guilty to a one count charge of embezzling 2.9 billion naira in December 2008 but asked to pay a paltry sum of $25,750 in fines.He was also invited by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission over alleged criminal diversion of public funds to the tune of 1.6 billion naira, but was never charged to court.

In comparison, a former President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, and dozens of other Politicians who served before him were convicted for corruption. They are:
Leon de Beer, Ruth Bhengu, Allan Boesak, Bathabile Dlamini, Beauty Dlulane, Ross Henderson, Rhoda Joemat, Kenny Kunene, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Mavis Magazi, Sophie Maine, Nana Mnandi, Garth Mngomezulu, Rubben Mohlaloga, Craig Morkel, Mildred John Ncinane, Robert Charles Redcliffe, Rodney Rhoda, EschelRhoodie, Jackie Selebi, Alice Sigcawu, Bangilizwe Solo, Jabu Sosibo, TsekoTaabe, Barbara Thomson, Abe Williams and Tony Yengeni. Interestingly, a good number of the convicted individuals were members of the ruling African National Congress (ANC). For example, 16 out of the convicted twenty-seven Politicians were members of the ruling ANC who pleaded guilty to

charges of defrauding the Parliament in what became known as the Travelgate Scandal.This is unlike Nigeria where corruption charges are often slammed on only the opposition.

Jacob Zuma's Conviction

While Nigeria and South Africa are still among the most corrupt countries on the black continent, the latter appears to have demonstrated greater commitment in the fight against theft of public funds, especially in recent times. Perhaps the most dramatic corruption trial in Africa's recent history is the former president's corruption trial. Jacob Zuma was indicted for Arms Deals in June 2005, and later charged with two counts of corruption, one count each for racketeering and money laundering, and twelve counts for fraud, all arising from his receipt of 783 bribe payments from businessman Schabir Shaik and a French Arms Company, Thales.

In the aftermath of the judgement, President Thabo Mbeki fired Zuma as deputy president, and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) instituted formal corruption charges against him. However, the charges were struck off the court roll in September 2006 because the NPA was not ready to proceed with the trial.

On 16 March 2018, just over a month after Zuma resigned as president, the NPA announced that Zuma would again face prosecution. His first court appearance was on 6 April 2018 in the Durban Magistrates' Court, but the trial was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and by what commentators dubbed Zuma's Stalingrad defence. In the interim, in a separate legal matter, he was imprisoned for contempt of court.

The Table below shows the ratio of Politicians convicted for corruption in Nigeria and South Africa in the last forty years.

Table 2: Ratio of Politicians jailed in Nigeria and South Africa (1999 - 2023)

Country	Nigeria	South Africa
Total Number Jailed	8	28
Ruling Party Members	None	16
Members of the Opposition	8	12

Source: Findings from the Study

Corruption is Rewarded in Nigeria, Not Punished

History shows that the short-lived General Murtala Muhammed regime initiated many nationalist projects. These projects were completed by General Obasanjo, Muhammed's successor; however, these projects became conduit pipes to distribute favors among Obasanjo's cronies, or to enrich highly connected politicians. For instance, Obasanjo's *Operation Feed the Nation Program*, and the *Associated Land Grab* under the Land Use Decree were largely used to reward loyalists of the regime. Obasanjo's famous Otta Farm Nigeria (OFN) was alleged to have been borne out of this scandal.

Shagari's modest regime of 1979 – 83 was not spared of corruption charges either, as a number of federal buildings mysteriously caught fire during the period, after investigators started to probe the finances of officials working in these buildings. In late 1985, investigations into the collapse of the defunct Johnson Mathey Bank of London shed light on some of the abuses perpetrated during the second republic. The bank allegedly acted as a conduit to transfer hard currency for some party members in Nigeria. A few leading officials

and politicians allegedly amassed large amounts of money, which they sought to transfer out of the country with the help of Asian importers, through the issuance of import licenses.

Shagari's regime was toppled by Buhari in 1983, with the latter leader accusing the former of large-scale official corruption. Ironically, 53 suitcases were ferried through the Murtala Muhammed Airport by soldiers working under General Buhari's aide-de-camp, Mustapha Jokolo. Atiku was at that time the Area Comptroller of Customs in charge of the Murtala Muhammed Airport".

It can be said that corruption was institutionalized by General Ibrahim Babangida. His administration failed, for instance, to give account of the Gulf War windfall, estimated at $12.4 billion. He routinely disbursed vehicles and cash gifts to people to earn loyalty, and the discipline of the military force was eroded.

Like Obasanjo, Babangida used various government privatization initiatives to reward friends and cronies. which allegedly gave rise to the class of *nouveau riche* in Nigeria. From banking to oil, and to import licenses, Babangida allegedly used these favors to raise cash for himself and his family, and is regarded as one of the richest ex-rulers of Nigeria. The ex-ruler has significant investments in Globacom, one of the largest telecom operators in Nigeria.

The year 2000 saw the greatest revelation about the global nature of graft. French investigations of bribes paid to officials in Sani Abacha's government to ease the award of a Gas Plant construction in Nigeria led to the freezing of accounts containing about $100 million United States dollars.

Two years after Abacha's death in 2002, a Swiss banking commission report indicted Swiss banks for failing to follow the compliance process when they allowed Abacha's family and friends access to his accounts, and to deposit amounts totaling $600 million US dollars into these accounts. The same year, more than $1 billion US dollars was found in various accounts throughout Europe.

Although General Abdusalami Abubakar's regime was short-lived, it has been recorded as one of the most corrupt in Nigeria's history. Suspicions remain about huge amounts of wealth acquired by him and his inner circle in such a short period. Abubakar's regime was implicated in the Halliburton Scandal, and this might have financed the opulence he enjoys today in an exquisite mansion adjacent General Babangida's residence in Minna.

Similarly, various corruption scandals allegedly broke out under Obasanjo's civilian presidency, including the one in which his Vice, Atiku Abubakar, was caught in cahoots with a US Congressman stashing cash in freezers. There were also the KBR and Siemens Bribery scandals which were investigated by the FBI. According to reports, a Japanese Construction Firm, Marubeni Corporation, agreed to pay a $54.6 million criminal penalty for allegedly bribing officials of the Nigerian government to facilitate the award of a $6 billion liquefied natural gas contract in Bonny to a multinational consortium, TSKJ. They allegedly paid bribes to Nigerian government officials between 1995 and 2004.

President Yar'adua was accused of frustrating the corruption-related trials of his friends - James Ibori, Lucky Igbinnedion, and Peter Odili - who previously served as Governor in their respective States. Through Yar'adua's influence, the then Attorney General of the Federation, Michael Aondakaa, could not obtain a conviction for these corruption suspects, even as the UK and other foreign courts successfully tried and convicted Nigeria's corrupt Governors who had served under Obasanjo's government. In addition, leaked diplomatic cables revealed that some Supreme Court Justices were bribed to legitimize the corrupt elections that saw Yar'adua's emergence as President.

Like Babangida before him, President Jonathan's regime was characterized by high profile corruption. Let us take a look at one epic example: Nigeria's then Central Bank Governor Sanusi Lamido Sanusi reportedly informed Jonathan in late 2013 that the nation's main oil company, NNPC, had failed to remit US$20 billion in oil revenues owed to the State. Jonathan, however, dismissed the claim and sacked Sanusi for allegedly "mismanaging the central bank's budget".
After the conclusion of the NNPC's account audit by the Senate, it was announced in January 2015 that NNPC's non-remitted revenue "is actually US$1.48 billion, which it needed to refund to the government". Upon the release of both the PwC and Deloitte report by the government on the eve of its exit, it was determined that truly, close to $20 billion was either missing, or misappropriated, or spent without appropriation.

Goodluck Jonathan's regime was also linked to several other scandals, including the 255 million naira BMW purchase by his Aviation Minister, as well as award of Security Contracts to Militants in the Niger Delta. Extensive kickbacks were also observed in the Ministry of Petroleum, in addition to the Malabu Oil International and other scandals too numerous to be listed here.
Series of scandals were also revealed in the wake of Buhari's civil rule. The Nigerian Senate's *ad hoc* Committee on the "mounting humanitarian crisis in the North East" indicted the then Secretary to the Buhari regime, Mr. Babachir Lawal, in a N200 million contract scandal. This was linked to the clearing of "invasive plant species" in Yobe State by Lawal's own company, Rholavision Nigeria Limited.

In the same year, Buhari was reportedly presented with evidence that his Chief of Staff, Abba Kyari, took a N500 million bribe from MTN to help the company slash the $5 billion dollar fine slammed against it for violation of Nigeria telecommunications regulations bothering on national security. MTN fired the staff involved in the scandal, but Abba Kyari remained in his position as Chief of Staff, despite public outrage. Even when Kyari was later probed by Buhari, the findings were not made public.

Abdulrasheed Maina was yet another sad case. He served as Head of the Task Force on Pension Reforms during the Goodluck Jonathan-led administration, but fled Nigeria in 2015 after claims that he had embezzled two billion naira ($5.6 million, 4.8 million euros).Despite the fact that an Interpol arrest warrant was issued, he managed to return to Nigeria and enjoyed protection from the Buhari regime.

It is instructive to note that many of the politicians who worked hard for the re-election of Muhammadu Buhari had corruption cases hanging on their necks. A Punch Newspaper report on 1st September 2018 revealed, for instance, that "eight politicians with N232bn corruption cases are working for Buhari's re-election". One of such politicians is Abdullahi Adamu, who served as Governor in Nasarawa State from 1999 – 2007, and was alleged to have stolen 15 billion naira from the State. Adamu was appointed a member of the National Advisory Committee for the Buhari 2019 Presidential Support Committee after his defection to the APC, and later elected Chairman of the new Party.

It is imperative, at this juncture, to ask the following questions. 1. Why has it become very easy to divert or steal public funds in Nigeria? 2. Why is it that holders of public office no longer think of rendering service? 3. Can Nigeria ever become great in a situation where serving the common good is often sacrificed on the alters of self-aggrandizement? 4. What indeed is the solution to the problem of corruption in Nigeria? Answers to these questions have been provided in a recent Focus Group interaction between the author and Anti-

Corruption officials in two Federal HRD Agencies in Jos. Echu's 2024 study on *The Impact of Corruption on Public Service Deliveryin Nigeria* is quite revealing. It shows how official corruption has systematically denied citizens basic services such as education, health, road networks, food and social security. Respondents in the interview sessions preferred to remain anonymous for security reasons. Below is a summary of their responses.

1. The incidence of corruption is on the rise in Nigeria due mainly to the non-enforcement of extant anti-graft laws;
2. Public officials in Nigeria enrich themselves at all cost because the entire society itself is corrupt, and respects only individuals who have money;
3. Patriotism is not on the agenda of a great majority of politicians, so they do as their individual or collective greed dictates. Respondents also expressed concerns about the actions of some top executives who interfere in their anti-graft work;
4. The only way to stop corruption in Nigeria is to strengthen anti-graft agencies, and to strictly enforce the relevant laws.

Findings and Lessons from the Study

We have seen from the foregoing that, rather than take practical steps to eradicate corruption, the State (especially in Nigeria) has actually played a key role in promoting the cankerworm. Hence, the trial of corruption suspects has dragged for decades, and the accused are either forgiven and the case closed forever, or are jailed for only a few months and let off. This is a far cry from the exemplary experience of the Southern African country, as discussed above.

No President of Nigeria that I know of, either alive or dead, has been convicted or jailed by the judiciary till date, despite the massive looting of the national treasury under their watch, as the study has demonstrated. As reported in this paper, Nigeria lost N21. 63 trillion to looters between 1999 and 2011, and $47.4 billion between 2011 and 2015. Obasanjo, Yar'adua and Jonathan respectively served as President for those 15 years of unbridled theft of public funds.

This study shows that, a considerable number of elites who held important positions of power in Nigeria have abused their offices by indulging in corrupt practices. Besides, the reward for official corruption, especially in Nigeria, has been so enticing that it is often hard to resist the associated temptation. Also, merely imprisoning convicted suspects has proved to be insufficient as deterrent for indulging in corrupt practices, as the crime is on the increase in the surveyed countries, but more especially in Nigeria. The specific lessons taught by this study are listed below:

1. Rather than take practical steps to eradicate corruption, the State (especially in Nigeria) has actually played a key role in promoting the cankerworm. Hence, the trial of corruption suspects drags for decades, while the accused are either forgiven and the case closed forever.
2. Whereas the government of Nelson Mandela could jail the President's wife for corruption, Nigerian presidents have consistently protected corruption suspects from the wrath of the law, as exemplified by Musa Yar'adua, Goodluck Jonathan, Olusegun Obasanjo, and Muhammadu Buhari.
3. Public officials (including members of the Ruling Party) and other persons who indulge in fraud are punished in South Africa irrespective of their rank, or the political party they belong to. Thus, Jacob Zuma was convicted for corruption and contempt of court, and subsequently jailed. On the contrary, no President of Nigeria has been convicted or jailed by the judiciary till date.
4. No member of the business community has ever been jailed for corruption in Nigeria.
5. Unlike the Nigerian State, South Africa is steadily moving closer to winning the war against corruption, with its judiciary having convicted one thousand, three hundred

corruption suspects in a period of four years. Comparatively, only nine politicians convicted for corruption-related offences in Nigeria during a 29-year period (1983 - 2022).

Recommendations and Conclusion

The survival of Nigeria and South Africa will continue to be at stake for a long time to come, due to the pervasiveness of official corruption. I, therefore, offer the following practical recommendations for ending massive stealing of public funds in both countries.

1. The punishment for high profile financial crimes should be a minimum of 20 years' imprisonment with hard labour, and without option of fine. Offenders should also be banned from holding public office for life. Convicted officials and their collaborators in the business community should be ostracized by the whole society, such that no church or mosque would accept donations from these criminals.
2. Similarly, citizens who are caught paying bribe to public officials should be severely punished by local courts of competent jurisdiction. They should also be discouraged from worshipping persons who are alleged to have looted the treasury at one time or the other.
3. Anti-corruption institutions should be strengthened to be more effective in the fight against corruption. Nigeria should borrow a leaf from South Africa, with regard to establishment of the National Prosecuting Agency, Anti-corruption Tribunals, Anti-corruption Task Team and the National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council.
4. The so-called *Immunity Clause* in Nigeria's Constitution, which seeks to protect a sitting President, Governor or Law Maker from being prosecuted, should be removed, since it encourages people to steal as much as they can while in public office.
5. The judicial process should be fast tracked such that there are no delays in the trial of people suspected of grand looting. All the pending cases of corruption should, therefore, be concluded within three months.
6. Anti-corruption programmes should be incorporated in the curriculum of universities in the surveyed countries. These programmes should be mandatory courses of study, since politicians who eventually become leaders in their countries are graduates of these institutions.
7. It is also recommended that the Nigerian government takes urgent steps to reduce the cost of governance, especially in regard to the law making arm of government where each of the 109 members of the upper Legislative House is currently paid the sum of N250, 000,000.00 per annum.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN NIGERIAN POLITICS: EVALUATING REVENUE ALLOCATION

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Abstract
Nigeria comprises the Federal government, 36 states, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and 774 local government areas that relate with one another in various ways. The relationship that exists among these various levels of governments is known as inter- governmental relations. One of the major areas of their relationship is the accruals and allocations of revenues to the various levels of governments.Though the 1999 Nigerian constitution as amended specifies how the generated revenues should be allocated to the governments, yet it remains contentious and has several challenges that affect national developments. The paper evaluates the concept of intergovernmental relations in Nigerian politics focussing on revenue allocation and identifies the challenges associated with it in nigeria.. The paper is qualitative research and relied on a secondary source of information with system theory as its theoretical framework of analysis. The paper employs a descriptive method to analyse the subject under discussion. The paper revealed that in Nigeria's inter- governmental relations, revenue allocation has been one of the problems affecting her national development The paper recommends that the 1999 constitution of the federal Republic of Nigeria as amended should be reviewed and Government should give the National Council of Intergovernmental Relations enough attention that will enable it performs her mandatory functions.

Key words: ***Revenue allocation, intergovernmental relations, national development, fiscal federalism, commissions***

Introduction

The term Inter-governmental relations originated from the United States of America in the 1930s. Since then, countries all over the world started the usage of the concept. However, it gained popularity and necessity because it became obvious that only national governments cannot effectively and efficiently handle the demands of social services to the citizens. According to Erunke and Mbumega (2014) no sole government could deliver radical improvements in service delivery on its own, which means that coordination, cooperation and collaboration are essential prerequisites. Nwankwo and Aja (2018) notes that intergovernmental relations becomes imperative in view of the fact that no level of government could meaningfully actualise its mandates without the cooperations of the other levels of governments. Inter-governmental relations in Nigeria could be traced to the Lyttleton Federal Constitution of 1954 but it started gaining proper attention in the 1970s. It could be proudly said that since the Gowon's regime in Nigeria, the Inter-Governmental Relations in Nigeria has transited from one government to the other. Nigeria's various leaders have discovered that a stable political atmosphere cannot be maintained without well organized inter-governmental relations. It therefore means that no meaningful development can be achieved under an unstable political environment. Political process includes how resources and dividends accrued to a nation are distributed. Presently, the inter-governmental relations in Nigeria are the relationships that exist among the various levels of government in

Nigeria which comprises the Federal Government, the 36 states, the Federal Capital Territory Abuja and the 774 Local Government Areas. Several issues have emanated as a result of these inter-relationships which have been affecting our national development. One aspect of it is referred to as revenue allocation which has dominated Nigeria's political landscape since the 1970s. Revenue allocation among the three tiers of government in Nigeria has been a subject of attraction and generates hot debate of political nature. Many attempts were made by different governments in Nigeria any time they came on board to have a generally acceptable revenue allocation formula for the country but it has not materialised.

This paper interrogates the patterns and the management of the inter-governmental relations in Nigeria focussing on Revenue allocation and the challenges emanating from inter-governmental relations. The paper is qualitative research and relies on a secondary source of information for data collection which involves use of library books, journals, magazines, newspapers, etc. It applied the use of descriptive and content analysis and anchored on system theory as a theoretical framework of analysis. It is hoped that this research effort will not only benefit policy makers, political actors and students of lGR but also contribute to general knowledge.

Conceptualization of Inter-Governmental Relations

Inter-governmental relations have been existing but not popular until it gained currency in the 1930s, especially in the Western world. However, up till 1970, scholars in Nigeria have not given much attention to the study of this important subfield. Many scholars have defined intergovernmental relations from various perspectives and not reached a consensus. Erunke and Mbumega (2014) notes that the multiplicity of efforts at conceptualising intergovernmental relations has been largely responsible for the philological entanglement that intergovernmental relations has found itself. According to Wright (1974) inter-governmental relations is a complex network of transactions and interaction among the constituent governments of a political system. The above definition seems to agree that inter-governmental relations can be located in all political systems, be it federalism, con-federalism or unitary. Eleazer (1968) defined inter-governmental relations as the series of financial, legal, political and administrative relationships established among all units of government which possess varying degrees of authority and jurisdictional autonomy. Dare (1980) on his own part, posited that inter-governmental relations are the whole array of activities that intended to iron out the conflict inherent in a federal arrangement. He remarked that federalism and intergovernmental relations go hand in hand. Akindele (1995) seems to agree with the above when he posits that inter-governmental relation is one of the operational paraphernalia of federal political arrangements. He remarked that inter-governmental relations are, strictly speaking, not synonymous with federalism even though one may concede to the fact that any serious study of a modern federal system must focus essentially on inter-governmental relations. However, Dare and Akindele seems to undermine the existence of inter-governmental relations in other political systems such as con-federal and unitary states. Olugbemi (1980) defines inter-governmental relations as a system of transactions or behaviour patterns among managers of a hierarchically structured level of government in a state. From the above definitions one can therefore define inter-governmental relations as simply the various relationships that exist among different levels of government in a political system such as federal, con-federal or unitary system.

Forms of Inter-Governmental Relations

The intergovernmental relations are in different forms According to Dalhatu (2014) the pattern of intergovernmental relations can be grouped into two models which are vertical or horizontal models. Tarlton (1967) classified forms or channels of inter-governmental

relations as symmetry and asymmetry. He asserted that relationship is symmetry if there is uniformity in the profile of such relations and it is asymmetry if disparity is inherent in the pattern of relations. Ayoade (1980) identified nine channels of relationships in Nigeria's inter-governmental relations, which are

1. Federal-state
2. Federal-Local
3. Federal-Civil group
4. State-State
5. State-Local
6. State-Civil group
7. Local-Local
8. Local-Civil group
9. Inter civil group

Thirteen channels of inter-governmental relations in the present democratic dispensation in Nigeria could be identified:

1. Federal-State
2. Federal-FCT
3. Federal-Local
4. Federal-Civil group
5. State-State
6. State-Local
7. State-Civil group
8. Local-Civil group
9. Civil group-Civil group
10. State- FCT
11. Local-FCT
12. FCT-Civil group
3. Local-Local

Intergovernmental relations could be characterised in different ways. It could be vertical which is between a devolved or local government and the central government or horizontal which is between governments that operate at the same tier of governments. Onuigbo and Eme (2015) notes that intergovernmental relations both vertical (between levels of governments) and horizontal (within levels of governments) are important for the development and operation of an efficient and effective public sector. The existence and management of intergovernmental relations affects the overall development of every nation.

Systems Theory

The system theory maintains that a given phenomenon is made of an organized whole consisting of inter-related functional parts which function collectively to sustain the existence of the entire system. It therefore means that any malfunctioning of a part or subsystem will affect the existence of the entire system. The system theory is therefore quite relevant here because it not only identifies the diverse inter-governmental structures in the Nigerian political system, but also serves as a most fundamental basis of analyzing how the interplay

of these structures have tended towards stability or instability and the developmental process of the system.

Revenue Allocation

A great deal of work had been done on revenue allocation in Nigeria political processes yet it continues to feature in Nigeria's body polity as an issue that has not been attended to in any form. Revenue allocation which has been usually one of the major sources of the federal, state and local government disagreements in Nigeria has been defined severally by different scholars. According to Chukwujekwu (2004) revenue allocation refers to the principles and methods by which money that is earned by the federation is shared between the central government and the constituent government that make up the federation. Dalhatu (2014) notes that revenue allocation or revenue sharing is the system of allocation or sharing of fiscal resources between the different levels of government to allow them carry out the development of their respective areas of jurisdiction through the provision of social services and functions. Revenue allocation simply refers to the distribution of any income or revenue accruing to or derived by the nation among the constituting sub-nationals. Nigeria's IGR which gained prominence only in the 1970s was dominated by revenue issues, an aspect of fiscal federalism, resulting in conflict and competitions. According to Oyeleye et al (1990) revenue allocation refers to the attempt by a central government to reduce the inequalities among its different units, with available to them. Nnaemeke (2014) defined revenue reallocation as a method of sharing the centrally generated revenue among the different tiers of government and how the amount allocated to a particular tier is shared among the components. Adewale (1995) observed that revenue allocation is an aspect of finances which has dominated IGR's scene in Nigeria since 1964 and even before. Mbanefo and Egwaikhide (1998) remarked that the issue of revenue allocation has been a recurring theme in Nigeria's fiscal federalism. According to them, despite the profound and lengthy discussions that have taken place on the subject for over four decades now, consensus reached concerning the formula to adopt. Nnaemeka (2014) notes that the question of an acceptable formula for revenue sharing among the component tiers of the Nigerian nation is one of the most protracted and controversial debates in the political and macroeconomic management of the economy. Chukwujekwu (2004) and Obikeze (2004) stated that the principles of revenue allocation used in Nigerian fiscal federalism since colonial days included among others, Derivation, Need, National Interest, Even Development, Population, Equality of Units and Minimum Standards.

Right from the time of the colonial masters the issue of revenue allocation has been designated as important to the survival of Nigeria as a nation and subsequently her development. This informed the various commissions that had been set up to fashion out an enduring and acceptable method of allocating revenues to the constituting units of the federation. In 1946, Phillipson commission was set up to determine the method of allocating the revenues accruing to the federal government among the regions. According to Adebayo (1988) although the constitution was not strictly federal, the creation of the regional level of government immediately raised the question of allocating revenue among the central government, the new regional centres and the old native administrations. Hicks Philipson commission of (1951), Chick commission of 1953, Raisman and Tress commission of 1957, Binn commission of 1964, Dina commission of 1969 Aboyade Technical commission of 1977, Pius Okigbo commission of 1981 among others were set up at various turbulent times to come out with recommendations that will show fairness in allocating resources. These various commission's works have not yielded acceptable results. This is arguable from the view point that Nigeria's IGR today is still engulfed by the smoke of agitation arising from unfair and inequitable distribution of revenue in Nigeria federation. This is in line with

Olatayo (1998) argument that from Nigeria's independence in 1960 to 1981, Nigeria's revenue allocation system was neither efficient nor equitable; rather it manifested a wide spectrum of vulnerability.

In the words of Chukwujekwu (2004), the fiscal federalism principles are observed more in violation than in implementation in Nigeria federal fiscal practice. According to him, what we operate Nigeria seems to be a hierarchy of oppression or a centre-periphery of exploitation, where the central government retains a lion share of revenue which is often wasted on ill prioritized, selfish projects e.g. National stadium Abuja which gulped fifty billion Naira while seventy percent of Nigerians live below one dollar a day (IMF Report 2003). The major problem of revenue allocation and fiscal federalism in Nigeria is not necessarily that of the equitability of the formula used, but the management of the resources so generated and the poor generation of resources at all levels of governance.

Federal government is the principal revenue controller in the country. This means that the federal government has control of the resources that goes to other levels of government as stipulated in the 1999 constitution as amended. According to Soremekun and Obi (1993) the federal government as the very vortex of power thus became the ultimate prize in politics and all attention shifted to the contest for access to power and the capacity to allocate revenue at the centre.Decree N0 49 of 1989, later amended by Decree 98 of 1993 and presently RMAFC Act CAP R7 LFN 2004 under Section 153(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the federal Republic of Nigeria. The Bill for an Act to repeal and Reenact the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission Act 2023 has passed the second reading in the National Assembly. The new law seeks to strengthen the Commission to carry out its duties of monitoring and disbursement of revenue inflows more effectively. Section 162 of the 1999 constitution empowers the National RevenueMobilisation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), an agency of the federal government; to determine the appropriate revenue sharing formula among the different levels of government in the country. In consonance with this constitutional provision, President Obasanjo, set up the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) headed by Engr. Hamman A. Tukur with members drawn from all the 36 states of the federation. The commission on August 16th 2001 presented a new revenue proposal to the federal government in the following manner:

i. Federal Government-41.3 percent
ii. The states- 31 percent
iii. The local government-16 percent
iv. Special fund-11.7 percent
v. Federal capital development fund-1.2 percent
vi. Ecological fund-1 percent
vii. National reserved funds-1 percent
viii. Agriculture and solid mineral fund-1 percent
ix. Science and technology-1.5 percent
x. Basic education and skill acquisition (BESA)-7 percent

The report met with strong criticism across the country, especially from the South-South geopolitical zone where the oil is situated. The increase in the spate of struggle for resource control began earlier on with the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). However, the federal government interfered and undermined the recommendation formula of the commission. Agidi (2008) noted that the incessant interference by the executive arm of

the central government has continued to aggravate the problems of revenue allocation in Nigeria's IGR. The RMAFC had rejected on several occasions the interference of the Presidency and federal ministry of Finance on the formula for revenue sharing, rather the RMAFC had insisted on the proper interpretation of the constitution. Olutayo (1998) remarked that the federal government has been so powerful and capable of holding states or local governments to ransom as a result of acts of the Revenue Allocation Commission. For example, in January 2004, RMAFC wrote a letter to the federal Ministry of Finance, disagreeing with the Ministry on non-compliance with the provisions of section 162 of 1990 constitution as amended. The President through his executive powers as provided for in the constitution has consistently declined and interfered in the duties of the RMAFC. According to Adeyemo (2004), the President responded to the letter written by RMAFC by using constitutional powers to undermine it and therefore continue with the non compliance attitude. Changes and recommendations in the vertical allocation formula: 1999-2004

	*1 Revenue allocation of Order 2002 Beginning May1999	*2 Revenue Allocation Order 2002	*3 Ministry of Finance Allocation Formula January 2004
1. Federal Government	**(i) 56%	**(2) 54.68%	*8(3)52.68%
Federal Government	48.5%	48.5%	
General Ecology	2.0%	-	
Fed Cap. Territory	1.0%	1.0%	
Stabilization	1.5%	7.25%	
Account Dev. of	3.0%	3.05%	
Natural Resource			
Derivation (Ecology)		1.46%	
2. State Governments	(ii)24.0%	(ii)24.72%	(i)24.72%
3. Local Governments	(iii)20.0%	(iii)20.60%	(iii)20.60%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: *National Revenue Mobilization and Fiscal Commission (NRMAFC), Abuja*

Note:

1. Consequent upon the decision of the court in the "Resource Control Suit' the President invoked the provision of Section 315 to bring the provision of Cap.16 into conformity with the provisions of the constitution.

The Federal Government allocated 48.5% for itself and distributed the balance of 7.5% on General Ecology and FCT.

2. Proposal Re-Modification Order by the President which the NRMAFC disagreed with on the ground that the earlier modification Order was the Act of the National Assembly by virtue of section 315 and therefore any amendment to it must follow due legislative process.

The Federal Government allocated 48.5% to itself. The 2% for General Ecological problems is to be shared in all three tiers of government on the basis of the existing Formula.

3. Modification on the sharing formula through a letter of 15th January, 2004 from the Honourable Minister of Finance, authorising 2% Grant to the state which the NRMAFC disagreed with because of its non compliance with the provision of section 164(1) of the 1999 Constitution.

The problem of resource control which emanated from the issue of revenue allocation is still yawning for a solution in Nigeria IGR. According to Nnoli (1980) the problem of revenue allocation and resource control plagues the country and it has remained an emotional, sensitive and highly politicised issue. Ekpo (2004) also remarked that the issue of resource control phenomenon rose to an unprecedented dimension such that the struggle for political power became resource control.

Resource control that has been usually a major source of federal, state and local government's conflict has been defined by Segun (2001) as acquisition of direct political power over resource production, management and utilization in the area of location to ensure regeneration of the environment and overall sustainable development of the people. The 17 southern states governors of Nigeria defined resource control as the practice of true federalism and natural law in which the federating units express their rights to primarily have control over the natural resources within their borders and make agreed contributions towards the maintenance of common services of the government at the centre. (Guardian on Sunday April, 8, 2001). Dafinone (2001) sees the quest for resource control as a clamour for adequate compensation, a cry for redistribution of the revenue allocation formula and nothing more. He stressed further that the only thing the government should do under this situation is to impose tax to be used for the welfare of the community.

Clark (2003) asserted that resource control does not mean that we want to own all the resources formed in our area, but rather, the people of the area should be involved and not excluded in either the exploration or the exploitation of the resources. Issues of constitutionality and demands for greater state shares of revenue to enable them discharge their constitutional responsibilities, were advanced in the opposition to the Revenue Allocation Bill of 1981 by Cross River State, where the Governor argued that the allocation formula in the Bill was at variance with the huge responsibilities of the state. According to Osaghae (1998), the 1981 Revenue allocation Bill allocated 58.5 percent of federally collected revenue to the federal government, 31.5% to the states and 10% to the local government. The above bill was opposed and challenged in the court by some progressive governors like Late Ambrose Alli of Bendel State and Jim Nwobodo of Anambra State.

During President Buhari's administration, RMFAC presents a new revenue sharing formula proposal to the President indicating slashes from 52.68 to 45.17% for the Federal Government, an increase for states from 26.72% to 29.79% while Local Government increases from 20.60 to 21%.04%. Also in June 2023, the Commission recommended a 114% increase in salaries of political office holders and Judges. the recommendations came at the point when the subsidy removal on Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) had hiked transportation costs (Yusuf, 2023)

Challenges to Intergovernmental Relations and Revenue Allocations in Nigeria

1. One of the major challenges of intergovernmental relations and revenue allocation in Nigeria is interdependence on the three tiers of government. Adeyemo (2004) argued that there could not be absolute autonomy because of the interdependence on the three tiers of government. All the levels of government in Nigeria, federal, state and local government rule over the same population. For example, the state capitals cities belongs to a local government and sometimes has some states and Federal government properties
2. Most of the local governments exist only for payment of salaries as they depend on the federal allocations which in most cases are subjected to various forms of deductions by the state through the joint account policy. According to Osaghae (1998), although the constitution provided for a three tier (federal, state, and local government) IGR system, the local government was subjected and tightly controlled by state governments.
3. The issue of revenue allocation has given rise to the agitation for resource control which has further given rise to restiveness, hostage taking and pipeline vandalisation.
4. There is over centralization of power at the higher levels of government in terms of revenue sharing. This was why the federal government could tamper with the statutory duties of RMAFC

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the concept of intergovernmental relations as viewed by various scholars. The systems theory was used as the theoretical framework relevant to the analysis of IGR, not because it is superior to the other theories but because of its appropriateness to this work. Revenue allocation as one of the contentious issues in Nigeria's IGR that is inhibiting development was also examined. Intergovernmental relations in Nigeria have not received impressive management and studies judging from the scanty literature available. Agidi (2008) noted that it was only in 1992 through Decree 89 that the National Council for IGR was established. As a contentious issue in Nigeria IGR, revenue allocation had continued to feature and necessitated the constitution of various commissions by various governments to bring out a fair method of revenue sharing.

Revenue allocation has been a major source of federal, state and local government's disagreements. No meaningful development can take place under the atmosphere of rancour in any country, especially a plural nation of over 250 ethnic and tribal groups like Nigeria. It is obvious that revenue allocation is a corollary of development. Therefore, to tackle the problem of revenue allocation and achieve the task of goals of service delivery to the citizens, the paper recommended the following policy options.

1. Government should give the National Council of Intergovernmental Relations enough attention that will enable it to perform her mandatory functions. Revitalization of the Council by bringing into it dedicated officers will go a long way to help ameliorate the IGR problems.

2. The National Council of Intergovernmental Relations should be converted into a Commission or a full-fledged Ministry that will enable it to perform optimally and maintain a peaceful environment for cooperative IGR and fairer revenue allocation.
3. The Nigerian government should make constitutional amendments of the 1999 constitution to achieve a co-operative IGR and fair allocation principle. The constitutional amendments should be well clarified and devoid of vagueness so as to achieve good intergovernmental relations.
4. There should be well organised International and National conferences on Intergovernmental Relations and Revenue allocations that will afford the country the opportunity to articulate and aggregate the problems of IGR and revenue allocations in Nigeria. The implementation of the blue prints on the various revenue allocations conference papers will go a long way to ameliorating the inherent issues associated with IGR and revenue allocation in Nigeria.
5. As a matter of policy, creating a veritable, fair and acceptable principle of revenue allocation should be done without having tribal sentiments.
6. There should be Constitutional amendments or reforms that will specify the devolvement of the power from the centre down to the local government. Arguing in support of this, Olowononi (1998) stated that the power of the federal government to vary the proportion of the federally collected revenue, which goes to the federation account, must be checked. This will bring about the much talked about "true federalism" where the federating units of a federal system have adequate power in terms of the control of their resources and further reduce the control from higher levels of government. This will prepare a good platform for steady economic growth and possible development.

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METAMORPHOSIS OF INSECURITY: FROM DISPLACEMENTS TO STREET BEGGING IN ABUJA, THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY

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Abstract
The study investigates the connection between insecurity and increase in street begging in Abuja. Street begging has become a menace in Abuja, efforts by successive administration at curbing it has not yielded significant result as street begging continue to increase. Objectives of the study include; investigating the trend of insecurity and the increase in street begging, identifying those that has been displaced due to insecurity and turned to street beggars in Abuja; designing means through which beggars can be decongested from FCT. It employed the use of interview on the beggars around Dei-Dei and Zuba, in which 20 of them were interviewed, the responses were interpreted in themes. It adopted the vicious cycle of theory as its theoretical framework. The study found that there is a relationship between crises ridden states such as Borno, Katsina, Zamfara, Yobe and Bauchi which triggered the influx of street begging in Abuja. Attempts at re-integrating beggars to their original homes have been very limited, due to inadequate social welfare of the beggars in FCT and the states where the original homes of the beggars. The study recommends that Federal Capital Territory Administration should increase funding and proper monitoring of the rehabilitation center in Kuchiko, FCT, Abuja, there should be a synergy between the states where the beggars were displaced to FCT, establishment of vocational skill center in those states and it should be headed by a rehabilitated beggar who understands the consequence of street begging.

Key Words: Street begging, Insecurity, Displacement, Rehabilitation and Repatriation

Introduction

Nigeria is currently grappling with perennial and deepening security challenges, manifesting in forms of armed banditry, insurgency, kidnapping, farmer-herder conflict, armed robbery, ethno-religious cleansing, with attendant consequences of wanton destruction of lives and property. The country is ranked 5th out of 141 countries in 2022 and it worsened to 104 out of 121 countries of the world, making Nigeria one of the unsafe countries of the world to live in (Safety Perceptions index, 2022 &2023). Survivors of insecurity are confronted with demeaning and compounded conditions such as displacements, hawking, living in ramshackle refugee camps, fending for themselves by becoming bread winners at tender age (Eneji& Agri, 2020) and some turning into street beggars.

Street begging is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria, it predates the colonial era; the "Mabaretas" were known as beggars and have promoted begging by asking people for money (Amman, 2009). Street begging is not however peculiar to Nigeria, it's a global socio-economic problem that exists even in developed countries, Fatai, Rasheed, Abdulrahaman &Kunnu (2020, P.20) submits that, globally, street begging has been practiced with similar spatial pattern in the distribution of beggars and varied socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of beggars. In spite of this assertion, the causes and rates of street begging differs from one country to another. Nigeria's case is pathetic due to natural resources that abounds, it is rated as the largest producer of oil in Africa and 15 in the world, but lag in developmental strides.

Street begging as defined by Fatai et al (2020) is a systematic effort because those who engage inbegging are well-organized, using different tactics and strategies for enhancing sympathy from the general public, towards soliciting for alms. However, in recent times the northern states are being ravaged by insecurity such as Boko Haram insurgency, ethno-religious killings, armed banditry which has displaced thousands of people from their homes into refugee camps and migration from crises ridden areas to relatively peaceful areas such as Abuja where they seek succor. Some of these displaced persons on arrival at these new settlements seek for coping strategies, particularly street begging.

Statement of the Problem/Justification

Street begging has become a widespread socio-economic problem in Nigeria, particularly in northern part of the country,instead of abating it has increased astronomically without solutions. Numerous studies have been conducted investigating the causes and effects of street begging in Nigeria (Fatai et al, 20020; Bokuye,2014; Eneji& Agri, 2020; Mesele 2020) most of these studies concentrated on the socio-economic effects of street begging on security in Nigeria, while much attention has not been accorded to the impact of insecurity on displacements and street begging in Nigeria, particularly in Abuja. As it stands today the rate of street begging in FCT, Abuja has become alarming, efforts are in place in social Development Secretariat to repatriate street beggars to their homes, in the year 2022, this led to the repatriation of 2,017 beggars to Kaduna, Jiggawa, Kano, Katsina, Niger and Borno states (Social Development Secretariat Report, 2022) but this has not yielded significant improvement as beggars continue to increase in FCT, Abuja with attendant consequences on environmental and social-economic disorderliness. The study, therefore seeks to investigate the impact of insecurity on street begging focusing on FCT, Abuja.

This study is therefore relevant for new researches and policies on addressing street begging as a major metamorphosis of insecurity. It is also significant in the sense that policies of government and other researches will identify those that are displaced from the crises ridden areas of the Northern States such as Borno, Katsina, Yobe, Zamfara, Plateau states, among others and have become street beggars in Abuja Federal Capital Territory (FCT), will be relocated to their original homes, consequently decongesting the state and FCT, Abuja.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate the impact of insecurity on street begging focusing on FCT, Abuja.

i. Investigate the impact of insecurity on increase in street begging in Abuja.
ii. Identify those that has been displaced from their communities due to insecurity and has become street beggars, in Abuja.
iii. Assess the efforts by the Federal Capital Territory Administration at decongesting beggars from Abuja.
iv. Suggest means through which beggars can be decongested from FCT, Abuja and be relocated to their original communities.

Methodology of the Study

The study adopted the primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source of data which was based on eliciting data from the beggars. The study focused on the beggars at Zuba and Deidei which have a chunk of them. In order to select a sample of the beggars, the purposive sampling also known as judgmental; which entails individuals who may have special characteristics that qualifies the individual or group to be sampled Biereenu-Nnabugu, (2006), was adopted as a sampling technique to select 20 of beggars. Also, during the head of rehabilitation center for beggars and destitutes, Kuchiko, Abuja was selected. An interview schedule was adopted to conduct interview the beggars and the head of rehabilitation center,

Kuchiko, FCT, Abuja, using a recording device. The researcher speaks Hausa and English language; hence he was able to interpret the interview questions to the beggars.

The data generated through interview were descriptive and interpretative in nature. Therefore, the interview was first transcribed, then reading and re-reading transcript gotten from interviews. This involved severally reading through the interview, highlights plot and story, identification of recurrent patterns, words, phrase and contradictions in the text. The transcript was organized into themes and subthemes based on each question asked in the interviews. This was done to provide the avenue for presenting the details and particularity of each one of the individual respondents' experiences and the overall picture of the samples as whole.

The secondary data includes, the use of literature review such as text books, articles, internet among others.

Conceptual Clarification

Street Begging

In order to make a holistic conceptualization of street begging, it is pertinent to explore the meaning of begging. Fawole, Ogunkan&Omoruan (2014), perceives begging as an act of soliciting for money food, and clothes by individuals and organizations or even countries.Taking it further,Olubusola (2020) conceptualizes street begging by contextualizing it within the, street beggar, thereby centralizing it around the individual who seek for alms such as money or any other help in public places such as shopping areas, banks, public offices, churches, mosques, and busy streets, among others.

From above definitions, this study perceives street begging as individuals who wanders from one place to the other in public places to seek for material gains such as money, clothes and other assistances.

Insecurity

Security and insecurity are two sides of a coin, therefore, in order to understand insecurity, it is appropriate to define the term security. Security is multi-dimensional in nature therefore it is perceived from different approaches; some perceives it from the military stand point while others perceive it from non-military perspective (Krahmann, 2003). These various perspectives indicate the elusiveness of the term.

Adofu& Alhassan (2018), submits that security is an all-encompassing situation in which the armed forces protect not only the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a country but also from internal crises such as hunger, diseases, unemployment, starvation and socio-economic injustices. Insecurity on other means the absence of guarantee of sovereignty of Nigeria, where there is presence of harm, danger, hazard, uncertainty, unemployment, poverty, insurgency, militancy, banditry, loss of material possessions and loss of lives (Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Robaro, 2013; Hacker, 2020).

Human Displacement

The concept of displacement is multidisciplinary and covers areas in physical science and natural science. It is worthy of note to state clearly that the displacement refers to in this study is human or population displacement. In the context of this study that deals with insecurity and street begging the concept of forced displacement is more applicable.

Forced displacement happens when people and group of individuals involuntarily leave their place of abode consequent upon to avoid the effects of events or situations such as armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights abuses, natural or man-made disasters, and/or development projects (Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons). Shamsuddoha, Khan, Raihan & Hossain (2011), puts it that displacement is a definite type of migration, in which individual or group of individuals are forced to move against their will,

where people are forced to move within their country of origin, this is referred to as internal displacement.Gurer& Akgul (2020), opines that forced displacement is also connected with economic, political, technological and other systemic changes at the global level.Tremenski (2012) submits that contemporary internal displacement in many countries is often monocausal; based on four basic categories (development-induced displacement, conflict-induced displacement, disaster-induced displacement and environmentally-induced displacement).

This study is mainly concerned with individuals that has been displaced victims as a result of conflict, therefore displacement deals with individuals or groups who left crises ridden areas to avoid the effects of conflicts to seek succor in areas that are relatively peaceful.

Metamorphosis

Metamorphosis is a biological science concept which was adopted by this study. The concept of metamorphosis depicts a particular life history transition in multicellular organisms, from a larval to a juvenile (or adult) stage, accompanied by dramatic morphological, physiological, and ecological changes. Such changes typically include a major restructuring of morphology, and often involve a transition from a non-reproductive to a reproductive state, dispersal and settlement to a new habitat, and a shift in nutrition and feeding behavior, Metamorphosis is a life-history transition that involves radical changes in habitat, morphology, and physiology (Bishop, Flatt, Erezylimas& Georgiou, 2015).

Borrowing a leave from the above concepts, this study argues that insecurity is capable of changing and producing other complex phenomena in the society, hence it is metamorphosis in nature.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Vicious Cycle of Poverty by Ragnar Nurkse

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is vicious of poverty theory propounded by Ragnar Nurkse (1953). It means a circular constellation of forces tending to act and react upon one another in such a way as to keep poor country in a state of poverty. The submission by Nurkse (1953) is that poverty does not exist in vacuum but occur as a result of myriads of interacting factors, and the tendency for the poor to remain poor in other activities that they do. Succinctly put, the poor is inescapable of poverty in what they do. Nurkse's shows the vicious of cycle by submitting that a poor man my not have enough to eat; being underfed, his health may be weak; being physically weak, his working capacity is low. There is a chain connection in the consequences of poverty. Olubusola (2020), opines that attributes of poverty are inescapable, these include, poor health care services, malnutrition, lack of physical asset or borrowing power, dependence on others, among others. However, issue of insecurity as one of the major attributes of poverty was not identified. One of the major causes of poverty in Nigeria, particularly in the north is insecurity, which has displaced victims of insecurity and forces them into other activities such as street begging. Therefore, the theory is relevant to this study in the sense that insecurity has a vicious life, it doesn't end as insecurity, it leads to poverty and consequently engendering street begging

Nexus between Insecurity, Displacementand Street Begging

Street begging is multidimensional in nature, this is the reason it is elusive to perceive it from a single approach. Some literature approached begging from the perspective of a permanent business, others see it as a temporary measure to escape from their poverty conditions (Odejokun&Aderinto, 2020, P. 13). Fawole, Ogunkan&Omoruan (2014), perceives street begging from sociological perspective, the study focused on the implications of street begging on social, economic and environmental survival of the country, it submits that street begging as a means of seeking for alms negates standard conduct of behavior, and submits

that begging occurs as a product of urban poverty, product of urban ecology and social deviance.

Osa-Edoh & Ayano (2012) focused on the prevalence of street begging in Nigeria and counseling intervention strategies. The study submits that street begging has become a major issue in urban centers in Nigeria, it did not focus on any particular city rather it took Nigeria as a whole, this makes the methodology of the study to deficient.

Study conducted by Babangida, Nathan & Yusuf (2001), focused on factors responsible for street begging in Kaduna state, it argues that beggars are the most neglected people in the society. The study opined that the polygamous nature of families in Northern has impacted negatively on children who roam the street as "Almajiri" who turned to street beggars to survive due to lack of parental care. The study identifies causes of street begging as; street begging, homelessness, breakdown of the family system, mental illness and unemployment while the consequences of street begging as sexual abuse, kidnapping and prostitution, and illegal trade, police harassment.

Studies such as Gomment& Esomchi (2017), submits that the consequences of begging include carnage, kidnapping, indecent assault and a significant threat to National Security. Most studies concentrated on street begging as a major driver of insecurity (Olaniyi, 2009; Tambuwal 2010, Fatai, 2017; Eneji& Agri, 2020;Mesele, 2020), while few attentions have been accorded to insecurity as a major driver of street begging in the country, it is this lacuna in literature that the study hopes to fill.

Street begging is more widespread in the northern states, than other parts of Nigeria, it is driven byreligious beliefs, poverty, exploding population without corresponding socio-economic development. The northern states have been experiencing challenges of security such as Boko Haram insurgency, armed banditry, ethno-religious clashes which has displaced people from crisis ridden areas to relatively peaceful areas. Efforts at curbing street begging in Abuja, FCT, has not yielded significant result, due to the fact that attention has not been accorded to holistic approach of viewing the phenomena from human displacements due to insecurity that has increased street begging.

Data on the number of displaced people and death rates have been captured by various scholars and institutions indicating that thousands of Nigerians has been victims of insecurity in the Northern Nigeria; particularly the North-West and North-East Nigeria with attendant consequences of severe humanitarian crisis. For example, United Nations High Commission for Refugee (UNHCR), submitted that between December 2018 and January 2019, number of Internally Displaced Persons in Maiduguri increased from 79,000 to 113,000. Displacement Tracking Matric (DTM), submits that between December 2022 and February 2023, in 2,482 localities in the six states of north-east Nigeria (Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Gombe and Bauchi)) as of February DTM identified 2,388,703 in 4888,163 households, while Mathew Kukah stated that over 12,000 people have lost their lives to insecurity in the North-West (Natsa, 2025).

Victims of war ridden zones flees to refugee camps and areas where they seek succor in order to earn a living through demeaning activities such as street begging. Hence, the major driver of migration is economic motive, most of which the migrants assumed they can get in large urban slums, dubs by (Shamsuddoha, Khan, Raihan & Hossain (2011), as urban poverty pockets. FCT, Abuja is an urban area with slums which falls under the urban poverty pockets category, which is house to beggars, these areas include Dei-dei and Zuba.

Discussion of Results on Street begging and Insecurity in Abuja

The discussion of the interview is under the following themes:

Beggars' state of origin: From the interview conducted, out of the 20 beggars 15 of them are from the north east and north west, the rest are from Nasarawa state and Niger state. The data supplied by the Destitute center, Kuchiko, FCT shows that from 2019 to 2024, states such as Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna, Bauchi, Yobe and Kano were top among beggars brought to the center. According to the head of destitute, Kuchiko, Abuja, the rate of beggars in FCT increased over time, most of them are from north east and north west. He also submitted that from the data of the beggars that they profiled; the rate of beggars in FCT increases astronomically; it was 2,500 beggars in 2021, in 2022 it increased to 3,700 in 2023 it was put at 4,200, in 2024. The rate of beggars have become alarming in Abuja, FCT to the extent the minister of FCT, Nyesome Wike declared that they should be evacuated from the streets of Abuja (Sanusi, 2024).

Efforts at curbing street begging by FCT Administration: Over the years successive administrations have made different efforts at evacuating beggars from the streets of FCT, Abuja but this has not yielded positive results. From the respondents, at Social Welfare Secretariat, Abuja; there are issues of inadequate financing of home for destitutes with attendant poor infrastructure, diversion of funds meant for the rehabilitation of beggars and handling beggars with kid gloves due to religious biases and inconsistencies in policies of different FCT administrations are the major challenges hindering the evacuation of beggars from FCT, Abuja. A personal visit by the researcher to the home of destitute in Kuchicko, it was noticed that the place is in shamble with paucity of infrastructure.

The nexus between insecurity and street beggars: According to data generated from the office of destitutes and beggars, there are other factors that causes street begging, these include, poverty, illiteracy, religious factors. They also submitted that issues of insecurity and flooding (particularly 2024 flooding) has the high tendencies to increase street begging.

This study extrapolates from the states of origin of beggars and states with high level of insecurity that there is a connection between insecurity, displacements and street begging. This was buttressed by Consumer News and Business Channel (CNBC), reported that Borno and Katsina are the most insecure states in Nigeria and identified such as Borno, Katsina, Adamawa, Kaduna, Yobe and Zamfara as the highest states with issues of insecurity, such as kidnapping, terrorism, banditry, herder's militia which has impacted food security and living conditions.

Suggestions on how street begging can be curbed: First and foremost, beggars are groups of people that are economically deprived who seek succor on the streets and Abuja is considered as place where a better life can be sought. From the data generated it is indicative that most of the beggars are from other states that are considered volatile, succinctly, a holistic approach is adopted to nip the menace of street begging in the bud. This should begin by providing adequate infrastructure at home of destitutes particular training facilities that will empower the beggars. The fact that street beggars are mostly victims of displacements and insecurity, there should be synergy between FCT and beggars state of origins on the relocation of beggars, this has to do with establishing training centers that will take the beggars off the streets. Also, the head of such training beggars should be a rehabilitated beggar who has made some progress in education and skills, so that the individual can be a model to other beggars.

Conclusion

The study examined the nexus between insecurity and street begging in FCT, Abuja and submits that insecurity results to displacements and street begging. The study discovered that most of the beggars are also from volatile states with high security risks, in the north and

have found a place of succor in slums in FCT such as Dei-Dei and Zuba, this has increased the number of street beggars in FCT and has become complex socio-economic problems, those involved in street begging do so to survive their present condition.

Government's attempts at re-integrating beggars to their original homes have been very limited in scope due to its inability to address the social welfare of the beggars before returning them to their original home. The lack of empowerment of street beggars by government has made the beggars to refuse to be reintegrated into their original home. If they are properly empowered, they are ready to return home,therefore more resources should be deployed to the home of destitutes. The attempts by government should include free education for the beggars. The beggars are ready to return home if given proper empowerment such as skills acquisition.

Furthermore, the study also recommends that there should be synergy between the state of origin of beggars and the FCT on the repatriation of beggars, the states should build and equip the rehabilitation centers with training facilities that will empower the rehabilitated beggars. Also, the head of the centers should be headed by a rehabilitated beggar who can be a model to beggars.

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