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**Social Media and the Increase of Advertisement of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
by Youths of Makurdi Local Government Area, Benue State, Nigeria**

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Abstract

Deployment of social media has significantly changed the strategies and tools individuals, groups and companies use for communicating with customers. In recent times, it has further eased the promotion of SMEs especially among young Nigerians who have been found to be the dominant users. This study sought to ascertain the level of usage of social media for advertisement of small and medium scale enterprises by youths of Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria; find out the social media platform that conveys more product and or service advertisement messages of Makurdi LGA youths; determine the advantages of the use of social media for advertisement by youths of Makurdi LGA and investigate the challenges of the use of social media for advertisement by youths of Makurdi LGA. The study is anchored on the Resource Mobilising Theory of Social Media (RMTSM) and supported by the Uses and Gratifications Theory. Survey was deployed as methodology and a questionnaire which served as research instrument was administered to 388 respondents within Makurdi Local Government Area. Generated data were analysed using SPSS. Findings revealed that Makurdi youths' usage of social media for advertisement of their SMEs was very high; Facebook and WhatsApp were most commonly used by them for their business advertisements; their deployment of social media for advertisement was advantageous as they saved costs on advertisement, it gave their messages a wider outreach and also ease and steady accessibility of advertisement messages were guaranteed. The study also found that its most significant disadvantage however was that the social media platforms were susceptible to fraud, advertisement messages were not regulated and the platforms were flooded with non-professionals. The study recommends that owners and operators of SMEs should, on a daily basis, post new relevant messages that promote their enterprises on their social media platforms; they should operate several social media accounts to forestall fraud and to reach all demographics; they should intentionally adopt the testimonial approach by ensuring that their efforts strengthen word of mouth marketing through user-experience; besides, they should support their social media use by deploying cost effective conventional means of promoting their businesses, such as distribution of well-made out flyers, placement of classified advertisements in newspapers and the use of radio jingles. Investors should focus on helping SMEs tap the potential that comes with social media through training and the provision of business solutions that bridge the existing gap where many SMEs are not using social media as a result of various limitations.

Keywords: Advertisement, Messages, Social Media, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Youths, Social Media Marketing

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The emergence of social media has brought about important changes to the operation of the business environment. Business operators are now able to access to resources which were not available to them prior to the emergence of these platforms. Jagongo and Kinyua (2013) observe that social media has also enhanced the worthiness of businesses, cultivated strategic partnerships and expanded their contact with patrons and suppliers. According to them, it is important for people who own businesses and marketers to understand the workings of social media as a communication and marketing tool and how they can significantly grow their businesses.

Businesses and societies are being moulded with technological innovations and this has affected the way interactions are facilitated. Laudon and Traver (2016) state that, e-Commerce has become possible due to the convenience, affordability and portability in the use of smartphones. Such dynamism sparked by technology has evolved and challenged the status quo of the traditional way of conducting business: marketing, advertisement, and innovation, among others (Wright, Robin, Stone & Aravopoulou, 2019). Social media has become an enabling factor that has catalysed this evolution, with varied impacts on businesses (Asiodu, Waters, Dailey, Lee & Lyndon, 2015). The basis of the growth of businesses, especially small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs), largely depends on marketing and the promotion of their products and services as they are noted to mostly have challenges with obtaining external finances for their businesses (Amoah & Jibril, 2021). Therefore, marketing activities have the potential to speed up the exchange process of products or services to money or other benefits. The advent and utilisation of information and communication technology (ICT) provide opportunities for the promotion of products and services of SMEs.

According to Hassan, Nadzin and Shiratuddin (2015), social media equips SMEs to efficiently advertise products and services. Social media has increased the prospects of SMEs to promote their goods and services globally (Wardati & Er, 2019). According to Crammond, Omeihe, Murray and Ledger (2018), social media mediates the communication between SMEs and their customers, providing opportunities for consideration as the preferred advertising tool for their promotion activities. Thus, the SMEs-customer relationship is enhanced as they are freely allowed to communicate directly with the companies, and also receive feedback within the shortest possible time at a lower cost and higher efficiency as compared with traditional communication networks like radio and TV.

Deployment of social media in the realm of marketing is about the latest "excitement " in marketing. Lakshmi, Mahboob and Choudhary (2017) observed that in recent times, organisational reasons have taken the place of social cause; now, organisations seek to engage with their audience through the online platforms. All business outfits who wish to be taken seriously must have online presence. Patrons seek a regular website, a blog, a Facebook page, shopping cart, e-brochures, and so on. Ninety-two per cent of micro and small businesses are of the view that social media is an effective marketing technology tool (Lakshmi *et al*, 2017). They are evenly split on the effectiveness of social media for attracting new customers and engaging existing customers (e-Strategy Trends).

Globally, consumers are more and more getting aware of the high degree of influence which the social media wields. However, business owners in Nigeria, generally, use Facebook and WhatsApp for social interactions and interpersonal communication, not being mindful of their potentials as equipment for financial advancement. Apparently, the Internet showed up along with the instrumentality of social media (Omojola & Morah, 2013). Jagongo & Kinyua (2013) insist that social media enables business outfits to connect with their customers mutually. They posit that social media networks can do a lot to help small outfits to handle connections with customers through vigorous marketing, off-centre communication and supply channels, improved selling of specialised products, technical support and online interactive community.

According to Morah & Omojola (2018), numerous researches have revealed that the media has a prime role in governance, economic, religious, educational and political development. More so, most of the aforementioned works in this study have done much in spotlighting the impact of social media marketing on business organisations. None of these studies, however, has done much in examining the role of social media in the economic development of sole proprietorship/individual businesses, especially among young people in Nigeria who are perceived to be the dominant users of the medium. This forms the crux of this study.

Statement of the Problem

Morah, Omojola and Uzochukwu (2016) show that Nigerians are currently seeing the strength of social media and this is obvious in their dynamic civic vitality. This is more so in matters of politics and in social interactions. People have been benefiting from social media in areas such as education

(Ekwenchi, Morah & Adum, 2015), politics, religion, health communication (Morah, 2012) and so on and so forth. Papachariss (2002) (as cited in Kenechukwu, Morah & Uzochukwu, 2012) asserts that new technologies are very well able to provide information and means which extend the function of the public in the social and political arena. Morah and Omojola (2018), reveal that several studies have affirmed the diverse uses of Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter; however, the emergence of WhatsApp, has highlighted new aspects of social media. The effectiveness of WhatsApp in commercial transactions happens to be one of such areas. There is the general belief that WhatsApp is the most widely used social media platform among the youth in tertiary institutions (Ekwenchi, Morah & Adum, 2015) which opens up opportunities for educational publishers.

It is abundantly clear that social media has spread throughout every human endeavour and has become the most widely used technology in the 21st century (Morah & Omojola, 2018). Not only so, its use is crucial to the survival and success of small businesses; but this is an area that has received very little research attention. Even though the use of social media in Nigeria is perceived as common, the extent of use in SMEs activities requires to be properly determined. Since previous studies seem not to have exhaustively examined the role of social media in the promotion of sole proprietorship businesses as well as its use in entrepreneurial activities among Nigerian youths, this study will be relevant so as to fill the seeming gap of study.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. ascertain the level of usage of social media for advertisement of small and medium scale enterprises by youths of Makurdi LGA.
- ii. find out the social media platform that conveys more product and or service advertisement messages of Makurdi LGA youths.
- iii. determine the advantages of the use of social media for advertisement by youths of Makurdi LGA.
- iv. investigate the challenges of the use of social media for advertisement by youths of Makurdi LGA.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Clarification

Social Media Marketing

Social media has caused a significant change in the strategies and tools companies use for communicating with their customers. Mangold and Faulds (2009) express their position that social media combines characteristics of traditional IMC tools (companies talking to customers) with a highly magnified form of word-of-mouth (customers talking to one another) whereby marketing managers cannot control the content and frequency of such information. Companies are limited in the amount of control they have over the content and distribution of information. Business organisations cannot afford to ignore such user-generated content. Companies must be able to monitor and respond to conversation, both positive and negative, surrounding their products and services.

Companies can deploy certain definite means to exert influence on discussions in ways that coincide with their mission (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Social media marketing positions companies to achieve a better understanding of customer needs so as to build effective relationships. Safko and Brake (2009) explain that social media has to do with efforts, activities, practices, and behaviours among groups of people who gather online to share information and views using conversational media. Weinberg (2009) says that social media refers to the sharing of information, experiences, and perspectives throughout community-oriented websites. He goes further to explain that social media is content that has been created by its audience. Safko & Brake (2009) on their part, inform that social media refers to online applications, platforms and media which are operated to handle interaction, collaboration, and the sharing of content.

Having defined social media, providing an accurate definition social media marketing is possible. A basic definition is using social media channels to promote an organisation and its products” (Barefoot & Szabo, 2010). Again, social media marketing can be described as a process that equips people and organisations to promote their websites, products and services through online social channels and to communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available through traditional advertising channels (Weinberg, 2009; Adegbuyi, 2013). Currently, social media marketing and especially social networks are becoming more important in consumers’ purchasing decisions, chiefly because they amplify word-of-mouth. They could get

more important than advertising as a credible source of information. However, it is noteworthy that, in social media marketing, marketers have less control over messaging and positioning.

Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs)

Small scale business, small scale industries and small-scale entrepreneurship are used interchangeably to mean small scale industry firms. In Nigeria and globally, it seems that there is no particular definition of small business. Different authors, scholars, and schools of thought have different notions about the differences in outlay, staffing, sales turnover, fixed capital investment, available plant and machinery, market share and the rate of development.

Nigeria and Nigerians are not strangers to small scale industry orientation. According to Ayozie, Oboreh, Umukoro and Ayozie (2013), evidence to this abounds in our respective communities of what successes our great grandparents made of their respective agricultural and commercial activities — yam barns, iron smelting, farming, food processing, cottage industries and the likes. It is evident then that the secret backing their success of a self-reliant strategy is not in any particular political ideology, so much as in the people's attitude to enterprise and if the right incentive is enough to make business ventures and decisions worth taking. In Nigeria, the government policies accorded and gave priority to the country's small-scale enterprises. Anyanwu (2001) says that this has been in recognition that they make up the fountain head of vitality for the national economy, and consequently their problems have been regarded as those of the nation, due to their number, diversity, penetration in all sectors of production and marketing contribution to employment and to the economic advancement of the areas in which they operate.

Small scale industries make up a greater percentage of all registered companies in Nigeria; besides, they have been existing for a long time. Obitayo (2001) observes that the greater majority of the small businesses developed from cottage industries to small enterprises and from small scale, to medium and large-scale enterprises. More so, many business ventures in Nigeria are categorised as small business. According to Ayozie *et al* (2013), the majority of them are operated in the commercial sector and now there is also a trend towards the service industry like hotels, restaurants, fast foods, and the like.

Promotion of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises through Social Media

Social media is a communication phenomenon that is pervading and it will remain with humanity. It accommodates connectivity hither to unknown and also interactions between web users; it also encourages contributions and feedback from members of a virtual community. Anaeto, Ojunta & Lakanu (2017) establish that as at June, 2016, Nigeria was said to have 92 million users, being the largest internet population in Africa, which ranked her 7th in the world. Pew Research Centre (2016) similarly revealed that 76% of internet users utilise social networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. Owning social media accounts enables SMEs to reach existing and prospective customers all around the world and show their products/services. These audiences are large, apparently waiting to be reached and explored by discerning businesses and organisations.

Social media marketing has proffered dynamic ways through which business personnel and establishments are able to reach their prospective targets, especially with the possible creation of their own niche online. Cohen (2011) in Anaeto *et al* (2017) succumb to this view when he affirms that social media is a novel marketing tool that offers businesses the opportunity to know their customers and prospects in ways that were previously impossible. On these social media platforms people are able to hold conversations; business owners are able to connect with their audience, customers and prospective customers and build strong relationships with them. As a matter of importance, SMEs should make a selection of social media platform(s) where their customers are, to ensure that these customers can easily have access to their business pages all the time.

It is advisable for businesses to own more than one account or be on various social media platforms. This will give them high visibility and social media presence and enable them reach a wider audience. For example, a business organisation can have a Facebook account to interact with the community and to build it further; it can own a Twitter account or a blog, drive conversations around the products and services and then maintain an Instagram account for picture sharing of its products and services. Lending support to the notion that social media offers visibility to businesses for effective operations, Gregorio (2014) states that visibility is required for the existence of effective sales in business; there must be a high degree of brand visibility and awareness of products and services by the target market, and social media provides these.

How beneficial social media becomes to SMEs depends on how effectively and how efficiently they use the various outlets. In other words, if owners and operators of SMEs use social media well, they will reap the benefits and if they do not use them well, they will not reap the benefits. According to Anaeto *et al* (2017), the benefits of social media can be grouped into three broad categories: increased connectivity, knowledge sourcing and customer engagement.

Facebook and WhatsApp as Platforms for Sustainable Business

Morah (2012) informs that, “Facebook users will link common-interest user groups and categorise their friends to fit their business objectives”. According to Jisha and Jebakumar (2014), the WhatsApp messenger was introduced by Brian Acton and Jan Koum to offer a more effective and quicker communication and the sharing of multimedia messaging. The scholars explain that WhatsApp operates with the assistance of internet connectivity enabling users communicate mutually with their contacts. It also assists the creation of groups, sending of images, video and audio messages.

Currently in existence are WhatsApp Messenger and Facebook Messengers with chats, audio and video call facilities that are helping Africans grow economically. A study by Ekwenchi, Morah and Adum (2015) has revealed that WhatsApp is about one of the most popularly used instant messengers by the youth currently. It is obvious that Facebook and WhatsApp are the most widely accessed social media platforms on smartphones in Nigeria.

The widespread adoption of social media has surpassed the stage of just socialising heterogeneous users across different parts of the globe, and has further promoted entrepreneurship and engendered the evolution of a “connected economy”. In a similar vein, Durker (1984) in Morah and Omojola (2018) shares his position that not only is innovation the specific instrument of entrepreneurship, it is what gives resources new capacity to create wealth. Today, people who operate businesses are utilising the innovations of the social media to connect with opportunities and wealth. They also use social media platforms to improve their lives in several ways. Jisha and Jebakumar (2014) notice that to a large extent, many young people have WhatsApp as part of their lives, by which they interact with friends and family.

The features of popularly used social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp make them a potential marketing tool. According to and Jebakumar (2014), entrepreneurs can also use

WhatsApp to advertise their business activities and this influences their businesses positively. Benwell (2014) expresses his view to the effect that social media could very well be substituted for costly and time-consuming marketing campaigns engaged in by small-scale businesses for effective management. Wally and Koshy (2014) in Niranjala (2020) also are of the opinion that social media strengthens awareness of a brand. This then means that SMEs will find adoption of platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp highly advantageous. Onete, Dina and Vlad (2013) concur that social media very much influences business organisations and makes communication and customer relations more effective.

Related Empirical Works/Studies

Solo-Anaeto, Ojunta and Oyinkansola (2017) carried out a study titled, “Evaluation of Social Media as Promotional Tools for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Yaba, Lagos State, Nigeria”. Their research sought to determine the effectiveness of social media as promotional tools for SMEs in Yaba, Lagos State, Nigeria, using the qualitative method. The Uses and Gratification Theory and Technology Determinism Theory were deployed to drive the discourse. The researchers purposively selected and interviewed 19 SME owners in the location of study. The major findings showed that Instagram was the most widely used social media platform for promotion. It was also found that social media networks met the promotional needs of SMEs and that they were effective as promotional tools as they contributed to an expansion in patronage. Many small business owners selected social media as their choice of promotion compared to traditional promotional media because they are easy to use, relatively affordable and convenient. It was recommended that SMEs should use multiple social media platforms for increased visibility for their business and products and they should keep their social media pages active and interesting by putting up posts daily and by using attractive posts.

Oladokun and Morah (2018) also conducted a research titled, “Social Media Use and Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria: Lagos and Onitsha in Focus”. The research investigated Facebook and WhatsApp and how they enhance the growth of SMEs in Lagos and Onitsha. Anchored on the Diffusion of Innovations and Technological Acceptance Models and deploying the descriptive survey research design, the research investigated 300 SMEs in the selected areas using a questionnaire as research instrument. Findings revealed a very high degree of *WhatsApp* usage, leading to greater market accessibility and enhanced customer relations. These outcomes

significantly influence the development of the SMEs. In spite of the potentials for increased visibility of the two interactive social media platforms, many business owners are oblivious of their existence. They would need to be enlightened about the usage of social media as a component of their economic growth strategy. It was recommended that media initiatives in the country that enlighten small business owners and marketers in Nigeria on the usefulness of social media in entrepreneurship development should continue.

Theoretical Framework

In this study, Resource Mobilising Theory of Social Media (RMTSM) by Eltantawy and Wiest (2011) with a focus on how social media as a network resource, influences firms' performance, was used. Also deployed was the Uses and Gratification Theory, articulated by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch in 1974.

Resource Mobilising Theory of Social Media (RMTSM)

The Resource Mobilising Theory of Social Media (RMTSM) by Eltantawy and Wiest (2011) borrows from the work of scholars on RMTSM such as Jenkins (1983) and Buechler (1993) which state that resources such as time, money, organisational skills, and certain social or political opportunities are very central toward success in any social movement. According to Icha and Agwu (2015), the RMTSM posits that business organisations with access to and effective use of social media have competitive advantage over the others who are indifferent to such networking resource.

The theory contends that social media can be well used by operators of small enterprises to inform their customers about their offerings and create a two-way communication; and they can enjoy the benefit of social media which influences the performance of their businesses and employee performance in terms of knowledge, skills, ability, qualification, productivity and motivation level. Also, the RMTSM, according to Ashraf (2014) reveals how businesses must regard communication media and their impact by understanding the nature and characteristics and changing buying patterns of their customers in the modern society, as social media focuses on the modernising technology that encourages their business process which will transform their relationship with customers.

The RMTSM theory has become apt and useful for two main reasons: first, it is a social media related theory; secondly, the theory seeks to establish how much social media marketing can offer much more than other conventional media forms in terms of promoting businesses. In that light, this theory shall serve as a roadmap towards unveiling the factors that make social media a very dynamic and viable channel of small-scale business advertisements especially by youth entrepreneurs who have been characteristically classified as the most dominant users of the medium.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

The Uses and Gratification Theory was propounded by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch in 1974. The theory advocates that people use certain media based on the gratification derived from them. The theory holds that it is not the people who exist for the media but instead that it is the media that exist for the people. The fundamental question here, Katz asks is: “What do people do with media?” The response he provides is that people are very rational in patronising the media. They use the media due to the social and psychological benefits they can derive from them. According to the theory, mass media can only influence people on the basis of how appealing they are to their needs. The uses and gratifications theory simply advocates that people use certain media based on the gratification derived from them. Specifically, the theory directly places power in the hands of the users. This study reveals that respondents derive benefits (gratifications) from the use of social media for their business advertisements.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The survey research method was adopted for this study. Nwodu (2006) states that, “The survey research works on the premise that a given population is too large for any researcher to realistically observe all the elements of the population”. The method, which is quantitative in approach, is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analysing data from only a few people considered to be representative of the entire population. The projected population of the study is 422,478, the sample size is 400. The sample size was statistically determined using Taro Yamane’s sampling size formula. The formula is used thus:

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

Where S = Sample Size , N = given population, e = Margin of error (0.05)², 1 = Constant

$$\text{Hence } S = \frac{422,478}{1+422,478(0.05)^2}$$

$$S = \frac{422,478}{1 + 422,478(0.0025)}$$

$$S = \frac{422,478}{1057}$$

S= 399.6

S= 400 approximately

Makurdi Local Government Area (LGA) of Nigeria’s Benue State notably comprises 8 council wards, but for the sake of even distribution and reach, the researchers wrote the names of these council wards on separate slips of paper, folded them, placed them in a box and shook the box vigorously, in a bid to randomly select 4 council wards, while ensuring that each council ward had a chance to be selected. Consequently, 100 copies of a questionnaire were distributed to each of the four selected council wards of Makurdi LGA. Also, primary and secondary sources were used in this study, while simple statistics was used for data analysis.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaire were distributed but only 388 were valid and used for data analysis. Five (5) copies were not duly returned while seven (7) copies were not appropriately filled thus, making up a total number of twelve (12) unused copies of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Gender

Gender	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	186	47.9%
Female	202	52.1%
Total	388	100%

Source: Field survey, 2021.

Table 1 offers a distribution of respondents according to their gender. As can be seen from the table, 186 respondents (47.9%) were male while 202 respondents (52.1%) were female. This demonstrates a fair representation of both genders.

Table 2: Age

Age	Respondents	Percentage (%)
18-25	146	37.6%
26-35	210	54.1%
36-45	24	6.2%
46 years and above	8	2.1%
Total	388	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 2 shows a distribution of respondents according to age. As seen from the table, 146 respondents (37.6%) fell within the range of 18-25 years; 210 respondents (54.1%) ranged from 26-35 years; 24 respondents (6.2%) ranged from 36-45 years, while 8 respondents (2.1%) indicated that they ranged from 46 years and above.

Table 3: Occupation

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Trader	103	26.5%
Farmer	5	1.3%
Civil servant	42	10.8%
Student	238	61.3%
Total	388	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 3 presents a distribution of respondents according to occupation. As evident from the table, 103 respondents (26.5%) were traders, 5 respondents (1.3%) were farmers, 42 respondents (10.8%) were civil servants, while 252 respondents (64%) were students. Significantly, an absolute majority of 238 respondents (61.3%) were students.

Table 4: Rate at Which Respondents Access Social Media

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Hourly	198	51%
Daily	163	42%
Bi-weekly	27	7%
Weekly	-	-
Total	388	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 4 presents a distribution of respondents according to the rate at which they access social media. The responses on the table show that 198 respondents (51%) indicated that they accessed social media on an hourly basis, 163 respondents (42%) indicated that they did on a daily basis, while 27 respondents (7%) indicated that they accessed social media bi-weekly.

Table 5: Respondents' Level of Social Media Use for Advertisement

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very high	184	47.4%
Above average	121	31.2%
Average	62	16%
Below average	21	5.4%
Total	388	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 5 presents a distribution of respondents according to their level of social media use for advertisements. From the responses on the table, a marginal majority of 184 respondents (47.4%) specified that it was very high, 121 respondents (31.2%) specified that it was above average, 62 respondents (16%) indicated that it was on the average, while 21 respondents (5.4%) indicated that their level of usage of social media for business advertisements was below average.

Table 6: Social Media Platform that Conveys More Product and or, Service Advertisements

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Facebook	142	36.6%
Twitter	9	2.3%
Instagram	59	15.2%

WhatsApp	135	34.8%
Blogs	6	1.5%
YouTube	37	9.5%
Total	388	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 6 presents a distribution of respondents according to the social media platform that conveys more product and or, service advertisements. From the responses on the table, 142 respondents (36.6%) indicated that it was Facebook, 9 respondents (2.3%) indicated that it was Twitter, 59 respondents (15.2%) indicated that it was Instagram, 135 respondents (34.8%) indicated that it was WhatsApp, 6 respondents (1.5%) indicated that it was blogs, while 37 respondents (9.5%) indicated that it was YouTube. Therefore, the social media platforms that convey more product and or, service advertisements are Facebook as indicated by 142 respondents (36.6%) and WhatsApp as indicated by 135 (34.8%).

Table 7: The Most Significant Advantage of the use of Social Media for Advertisement

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Saves cost	139	35.8%
Ensures wider outreach	36	9.3%
Easy and steady accessibility	134	34.5%
Popularity of the medium	60	15.5%
Permanence of advert messages	19	4.9%
Total	388	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 7 presents a distribution of respondents according to the most significant advantage of the use of social media for small scale business advertisements. From the responses on the table, a marginal majority of 139 respondents (35.8%) indicated that it saved cost of advertisements, 36 respondents (9.3%) indicated that it ensured a wider outreach, a marginal majority of 134 respondents (34.5%) indicated that it guaranteed easy and steady accessibility of advert messages, 60 respondents (15.5%) indicated that it was the popularity of the medium, while 19 respondents (4.9%) indicated that it was the permanence of advertisement messages.

Table 8: Most Significant Challenges of the Use of Social Media for Advertisements

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Susceptibility to fraud	201	51.8%
Inability to regulate advert messages	73	18.8%
It is flooded with non-professionals	57	14.7%
Network constraints	45	11.6%
It reaches selected demographics	12	3.1%
Total	388	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 8 shows a distribution of respondents according to the most significant hindrances related with the use of social media for small scale business advertisements. Two hundred and one (201) 51.8% respondents being in the majority, indicated that the use of social media for small scale business advertisements was susceptible to fraud, 73 (18.8%) indicated that the challenge they had with it was its inability to regulate advert messages, 57 respondents (14.7%) indicated that was flooded by non-professionals, 45 respondents (11.6%) indicated that it was network constraint, while 12 respondents (3.1%) indicated that it was restricted to members of selected demographics.

Discussion of Findings

This study sought to examine the social media and the proliferation of advertisement messages of small and medium scale enterprises by the youths of Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State in Nigeria. The first objective of the study sought to ascertain the level of usage of social media for advertisements by youths of Makurdi LGA; and findings indicated that the use of social media for business advertisement by Makurdi youths was very high. This is deduced from the fact that over half of those surveyed indicated that they accessed social media platforms hourly and almost half of them accessed the platforms daily. More importantly, 47.4% indicated that their usage of social media for advertisement of their businesses was very high; 31.2% said theirs was above average while 16% said their use of social media for advertisement of business was below average. Social media is a communication situation that is penetrating human operations and from all indications, will remain, allowing more connectivity and interaction between web users; again, it encourages contributions and response from all members of any virtual community. Anaeto, *et*

al (2017) in the reviewed literature, established that as at June, 2016, Nigeria was said to have the largest internet population in Africa (with 92 million users) and ranked seventh in the world.

The second objective of the study sought to find out the social media platform that conveys more product and or service advertisement messages of Makurdi LGA youths. Findings revealed that the social media platforms that conveyed products and or, service advertisement messages of Makurdi youths are Facebook and WhatsApp. In a related finding, Pew Research Centre (2016) similarly reports that 76% of internet users use social networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. By having social media accounts, SMEs get to reach existing and prospective customers all around the world and they get to see the products/services. Similarly, a study by Ekwenchi, Morah and Adum (2015) has even shown that WhatsApp has become one of the most popularly used instant messengers by youths today. Relatively too, Jisha & Jebakumar (2014) observe that WhatsApp has greatly become part of young people's lives where they connect and interact with friends and family. This gratifies their information, entertainment and educational needs. This suggests that WhatsApp is invaluable in the hands of young entrepreneurs as an economic enhancer. The features of popularly used social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp make them a potential marketing tool. According to Jisha and Jebakumar (2014), entrepreneurs can also use WhatsApp for online advertising and other promotional activities which influence their businesses positively.

The third objective of the study sought to determine the advantages of the use of social media for advertisements by youths of Makurdi LGA. Findings revealed that it saved costs on advertisement, it provided a wide outreach and also guaranteed easy and steady accessibility of the advert messages.

The fourth objective was to investigate the challenges of the use of social for advertisement by youths of Makurdi LGA. The most significant challenge indicated is that it was susceptible to fraud, as almost 52% of respondents indicated this position and adverts were not regulated. Also, social media for advertisement was said to be flooded with non-professionals. Indeed, the widespread adoption of social media has surpassed the stage of just socialising with heterogeneous users across different parts of the globe, and has further promoted entrepreneurship and engendered the evolution of a "connected economy". In a similar vein, Durker (1984, p.30) in

Morah and Omojola (2018) argues that “innovation is the specific instrument of entrepreneurship. It is the act that endows resources with a new capacity to create wealth.” Today, business people are utilising the innovations of the social media to harness opportunities and wealth.

Significantly, the Resource Mobilisation Theory of Social Media (RMTSM) has become apt and useful as it seeks to establish how much social media marketing can offer much more than other conventional media forms in terms of promoting businesses. This is highly visible from the findings of this study, as well as other previous ones (indicated in the reviewed literature), which demonstrate the very many advantages derivable from the use of social media for advertisement and advancement of small-scale businesses by young people. In a similar vein, the Uses and Gratifications Theory is also significant as we have deduced the rationales and benefits (gratifications) derived by youths in their adoption of social media for business advertisements.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to examine the social media and the proliferation of advertisement messages of small and medium scale enterprises by the youths of Makurdi Local Government Area of Nigeria’s Benue State. It was evident that the youth in Makurdi LGA accessed social media frequently, precisely, every hour; usage of social media for disseminating advertisement messages for their small and middle scale enterprises was very high. It was also evident that Facebook and WhatsApp were most commonly used by them for business advertisements. Some of the most significant advantages of this were that they saved costs on advertisements unlike other conventional media forms, their messages were provided with a wide outreach and were guaranteed ease and steady accessibility. Its most significant disadvantage was that advertisement on the social media was susceptible to fraud, non-regulation and that it was flooded with non- professionals. The study therefore, recommends the following:

- i. As much as possible, Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) owners should visit their social media accounts daily and make posts; they should have accounts on a variety of platforms (such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Twitter) for wider visibility and in order to reach all demographics. SME owners should keep their social media accounts active with relevant content. Content should be exciting; such that prospective patrons will look forward to posts. This should be in the form of articles,

images, infographics, and videos to provide details about the business, products and service. This would forestall fraud or misinformation on the products and services; messages will be spread across various demographics and also reach prospective customers that may not be present or active on some selected platforms.

- ii. Apart from navigating the social media, owners of SMEs should support their social media use by deploying cost effective conventional means of promoting their businesses, such as distribution of well-designed flyers, placement of classified advertisements in the newspapers and use of radio jingles.
- iii. Owners of SMEs should intentionally adopt the testimonial approach by ensuring that their efforts strengthen word of mouth marketing through user-experience.
- iv. Investors should focus on helping SMEs tap the potential that comes with social media through training and provision of business solutions that bridge the existing gap where many SMEs are not using social media as a result of various limitations. The investors can further help in the adoption of social media by offering funding and technological solutions, and also rewarding SMEs that grow as a result of incorporating social media in their operations.

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Civil Society and Peacebuilding in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria is one of the developing economies and fragile democratic nation-state in the world that has been constantly faced with conflicts. The incessant conflicts have contributed to underdevelopment and political instability which need to be ameliorated if not totally eradicated. A civil society is a social and nonviolent group often referred to as the politics of ordinary people, due to its mass based. It is a group of people acting with some level of continuity to either promote or resist a change in their society or the social group of which they are members. In other words, it is a goal-oriented group of individuals who seek to promote peace and justice in society. Civil society globally, is goal driven either to promote or resist certain change or belief or behaviour. The prime trust of this paper dwells on investigating the roles of civil society in peacebuilding in Nigeria. Based on the methodology, this study adopted qualitative method of data collection and analysis using interdisciplinary approach to historical research due to the nature of the investigation. The paper employed descriptive research design which seeks to describe the existing status of what is being investigated in relation to its past. Theoretically, the structural-functionalism theory is adopted as the theoretical framework of analysis. The paper found many anti-democratic forces inherent in Nigerian state since military junta have affected civil society organizations and peacebuilding in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study posits tentative recommendations on ways to reorganize and strengthens core principles of civil societies as agents of peacebuilding in Nigeria.

Keyword: Nigeria, Civil Society, Democracy, Change, Social Movement, Peacebuilding, Conflict.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The history of the 20th century is characterized by the emergence of pragmatic civil society and civil rights movements across the global especially in North America. Civil society is notable by its non-violent change approach which for ages has showed non-violent resistance against unjust power systems, dictatorship, human rights abuses, etc. Discourse on civil right movements provides useful references such as popular groups like: “Gandhi’s struggles in India and South Africa, Martin Luther King Jr.’s civil rights campaign in the US, National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) campaigns for the return to civil rule in Nigeria”.

From time immemorial, civil society organizations (CSOs) have been prominent non-state and not-for-profit agents of liberation movement burden with the versatile responsibilities like rendering welfare services, empowering people economically, prevention of human rights abuses, humanitarian services, political socialization/orientation, political participation, promotion of rule of law (Ikelegbe, 2013).

As voluntary and autonomous associations, the CSOs often direct their roles in peacebuilding and national emancipation to support the state. Ikelegbe (2007), notes that between the state, politics, and the people's interaction, civil society supplies the lubricant. He further opined that without a robust and active civil society, nascent democracies especially those in Africa and Nigeria cannot be sustained or consolidated. (Ikelegbe, 2007). Civil society organizations are not only in Nigeria sine qua non to democratic governance but also enablers of conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Through its various activities, civil society has ameliorated many ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. In Nigeria and many fragile democratic nations, state is infamously known to represent the parochial ideas and interests of the ruling class and the notables whose premium interest is to maintain status quo by endlessly control the apparatus of state power and machinery of government at all cost, the interest of the mass is of lesser concern to them that is why civil society remains the beckoning hope for the people.

The study aims to examine CSOs in Nigeria and their effort towards peacebuilding from historical standpoint. What the study sets to accomplish is to appraise the level to which civil society organization in Nigeria, has been able to facilitate and entrench sustainable peace and peacebuilding in Nigeria.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Clarification

Civil Society

Civil society as a social science term has been explained in different ways. *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics* defines it as “the set of intermediate associations which are neither the state nor the (extended) family; civil society therefore includes voluntary associations and firms and other corporate bodies” (Mclean & McMillean, 2003). According to Chukwuma (as cited by Abah

and Adihikon, 2017: 2) CSOs are not the same thing as society. Civil society can be “seen as a set of institutions, organization and behavior situated between the state, business world and family”.

Social Movement

According to Igbo and Anugwom (as cited in Eze, 2015) social movement is “a group of people acting with some level of continuity to either promote or resist a change in their society or the social group of which they are members”. In other words, it is a goal-oriented group of individuals who seek to promote their ideology (belief) and also to protect the interests of their members. Eze (2015) noted that social movement is ideologically inclined either to promote or resist certain change or belief or behaviour. Social movements are usually revolutionary in nature because they are ideologically grounded and are ready to do anything lawful in order to achieve their aims of existence. Unlike mob groups which may have little or no reason for their spontaneous act, all social movements have direction and purpose.

Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding mechanisms are often adopted in post conflict society in order to prevent the society from relapsing into another conflict. Peacebuilding aims to promote and sustain peace either to prevent brewing conflict or to mitigate conflicts from regenerating by identifying and reducing the primary causes of the conflict. The goal is to ensure steadiness, restitution and stabilization of state institutions. It also aims to address the socio-economic dimensions of conflict, reconciling past trauma and resolving present conflict.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this work is “ex-post facto design” which often called “after the fact or retrospectively design”. The ex post facto research design, outlined in this paper, is an alternative method for establishing causal relationships between events and circumstances (Lord, 1973). This study adopts the ex-post factor research design, because the scenario under investigation is already in existence and also it explains the relationship between the variables. Hence, in some cases, experiments cannot be utilized to study causation; thus, one must turn to the causal comparative method or the ex post facto research design. The study assessed data through qualitative method depending mainly on secondary method sources like textbook, journal articles, newspapers, magazines and other resourceful internet materials.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts structural functionalism as a framework of analysis. Structural functionalism is a notable sociological theory that elucidates why society functions the way it does based on the interaction between the various social institutions that make up society (like: government, civil society groups, law, education, religion, etc). Almond and Howell are among notable scholars that have researched scholarly on structural-functional theory since 1966 which they construed as the observable activities which make up a system. As functions deal with the consequences involving objectives as well as processes of patterns of action. Ntete-Nua (2004) notes that “functions deal with the consequences of action while structures refer to those arrangements, which perform functions and roles”. The socio-political setting like Nigeria, where there is work (function) to be performed, there must be structure (capable hands) to perform the function. Structural functionalism explains the “interconnectedness and relationship in a political system which needs the active cooperation of the two to fix the system, which in this context means the integration of resources by Government and civil society organizations in assuring peacebuilding in Nigeria” (Eze, 2015).

The stability and peace expected in Nigeria is a function of synergy and unity of purpose between the state and the civil society organizations which are the two most important structures in every political and social system. The structural-functional theory sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. Society is guided by social structures, which are relatively stable patterns of social behavior. Social structures define and give shape to our lives - for example, in families, the community, civil society, and through religious organizations. Each social structure has assigned social functions, or consequences for the operation of society as a whole. For instance, education is a social institution which function primarily to educate and socialization members of society. Structural-functionalists see society as an organism, made up of diverse parts that work together. Thus, one of the key ideas in structural functionalism is that society is made-up of groups or institutions, which are cohesive, share common norms, and have a definitive culture.

Applicability, there are a number of key postulations of structural functionalist theory which makes suitable for this study. One of prepositions is that every society strives toward equilibrium. This can vividly explain the reason for emergence of civil society organizations in Nigeria especially

during military junta and when Nigeria returned to democratic rule in 1999. Another proposition is that “institutions are distinct and should be studied individually”. Functionalists look at institutions individually as though they are divorced from other institutions but work together for a common purpose. This entails that conflicts that have engulfed Nigerian states for years are not self-driven and are interlinked with dysfunctional structures in Nigeria.

Finally, the appraisal of structural-functionalism theory shows it explains why certain aspects of current Nigerian society as it continues to be ravaged with multifaceted conflicts. However, structural functionalism falls short in explaining opposition to social institutions and social structure by those being oppressed.

The Emergence of Civil Society Organization in Nigeria: A Historical Overview

According to Abah and Adihikon, (2017), “there is acute paucity of literature, especially quantitative and statistical data on the growth and development of civil society organization in Nigeria since independence”. This study aims to identify and chronicle the major activities, success, challenges of civil society organizations towards peacebuilding in Nigeria. For proper understanding, a historical analysis will be done on the emergence and various activities of CSOs and how it has led to sustainable peace and development in Nigeria.

The activities of CSOs can be traced to the nationalist movement and quest for decolonization which can be described as a golden age of civil society in Nigeria. Pre-Nigerian political independent, the activities of CSOs centered on national liberation through non-violence method. The attainment of political independence marked a paradigm shift in scope of CSOs in Nigeria.

Thus, from 1966 to 1979, Nigeria was under successive military regimes that were highly dictatorial and anti-civil society (Abdul, 2001). Few civil society organizations existed during the military junta. They were very vocal and confrontational despite military intimidation, summary execution, censorship, and imprisonment. With support from international civil society organizations, many civil society organizations in Nigeria began to agitate for the return to civilian rule (Ikelegbe 2001). Members of civil society groups organized mass campaigns and encouraged civil disobedience across the country which left military with no other option other than to return to civil rule. As a result of that, the then military head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo, returned Nigeria to a democratic government following the election of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as President

of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 1979 which ushered in second republic. Administration of Shagari witnessed proliferation of civil society organizations. Many civil society organizations did not leave up to their expectations before another military coup in 31st December 1983 thereby terminating the second republic. The change in regime led to the emergence of Muhammadu Buahri as a military head of state (Abah & Adihikon, 2017).

Still according to Abah and Adihikon, (2017), “Buhari hurriedly banned all political parties and associations including public gatherings, jailed some politicians and human activists and stymied press freedom”. Buhari regime did not last long before it was overthrown by another military coup in 1985. The 1985 coup installed General Ibrahim Babangida as new head of state. Babangida’s regime “marked a turning in the history of civil rights movement in Nigeria” (Abah & Adihikon, 2017). In 1990 following increased agitation for the return to civil rule where human rights and social justice reign, Babangida agreed to organize free and fair elections. Elections were held but result was annulled which led to popular June 12, 1993 uprising.

According to Ikelegbe (2007), the relief that civil rights organizations had clamoured for in Nigeria did not come with the military's withdrawal. This was due to the fact that he chose a kangaroo Interim National Government (ING) led by Chief Ernest Shonekan instead of ceding control to the projected victor of the presidential election held on June 12, 1993. The formation of an ING angered many CSOs and many went to court to challenge the legitimacy of the ING. This led to the ruling of a federal high court in Lagos that declared the Shonekan led ING as illegal and declared that the mandate of Abiola should be validated.

Unfortunately, this never came to end result as General Sani Abacha, the only military member of, and secretary to the ING ceased power from Chief Ernest Shonekan after three months and returned the country to another era of dictatorial leadership which led to the arrest, killings of activists; and deliberate infringement of human rights (Ikelegbe, 2007).

During the dictatorial regime of Abacha many CSOs like Civil Liberties Organization, the Movement for National Reformation (MNR), the Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), the National Democratic Coalition of Nigeria (NADECO) were formed. One of the notable groups was the National Democratic Coalition, (NADECO). It was formed by an amalgamation of

principal civil society and pro-democracy groups that often organize massive protests to defend the democratic transition program. The activities of civil rights groups remained prominent till when power was finally handed over to civil administration in 1999. Though, it did not mark the end of civil rights movement in Nigeria, instead it marked the beginning of new era which we can call an era of democratization and non-violent peacebuilding.

Activities of some Civil Society Organizations towards Peacebuilding in Fourth Republic

In 1999, Nigeria achieved her fourth republic status after military returned power to civil rule. This marked a new page in history of civil society organizations in Nigeria. Since 1999, CSOs have been playing vital roles in sustenance of Nigeria democracy and peacebuilding despite the common pessimism held by many people that fourth republic will suffer the same fate first, second and third suffered. Under Olusegun Obasanjo, civil society checkmated many uncivil actions and inaction of government. In the general election on April 21, 2007, Umaru Yar'Adua was elected President and Obasanjo handed over power to him on May 29, 2007. Following the death of Umaru Yar'Adua on May 5, 2010 and the pocket of power tussle that followed it, Goodluck Jonathan became the third president and later won the election the following year through non-violence means. When political gladiators were warming up for 2015 general elections, many local and foreign political analysts predicted that it will not only be violent but also the end of the corporate existence of Nigeria as a nation-state. The outcome of the election surprised many people as the candidate of All Progressive Congress, Muhammadu Buhari won the general elections on March 28, 2015. On May 29, 2015 power was peacefully handed over to him.

In the fourth republic the activities of CSOs have continued to remain non-violent towards their demand for civil and endurable peaceful society. Primarily, the role of civil society in peacebuilding as highlighted by scholars revolve round advocacy, civic engagement, sensitization, election monitoring provision of socio-economic services, legislative advocacy, promotion of inter and intra ethnic peace, among others (Diamond, 1999; Fadakinte, 2013; Mercy, 2012). This section identifies some CSOs in the fourth republic and their roles in ensuring sustainable peace in Nigeria. The following are some of the notable present CSOs in Nigeria:

Action Aid Nigeria

Action Aid is a global movement of people working together to further human rights for all and defeat poverty. The group priorities work with the poor and excluded, promoting values and commitment in civil society, institutions and governments with the aim of achieving structural changes to eradicate injustices and poverty in the world. Action Aid Nigeria is a member of Action Aid global federation. Who maintain a strong relationship of interdependence and mutual accountability within the international federation while ensuring a strong balance between self-rule and shared-rule. Registered in Nigeria, in 1999 as a Country Programme of Action Aid International. The movement have transformed into an autonomous national organisation with a strong national governance structure (Actionaid Nigeria, n.d.).

Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC)

Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) Association. The Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) was formed in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1993 in response to various human rights abuses committed against Muslims in Nigeria and elsewhere around the world. It is an Allah-given rights organization. In its little way and limited resources, the body project, promote and protect the rights of Muslims. MURIC is a human rights organization which promotes, protects and projects the rights of Muslims. This group condemns terrorism and all acts of violence. Its motto is 'Dialogue, Not Violence'. The organization has employed peaceful different means to resolve socio-political and religious conflict (Nigeria Directory, n.d.).

The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP)

The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) is a Nigerian non-profit promoting socio-economic rights, transparency and accountability in Nigeria. Established in 2004, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) promotes human rights, transparency, and accountability in governance, using training, advocacy, research, and strategic litigation. It is one of Nigeria's foremost accountability organizations and a long-time grantee of the Foundation. With this award, SERAP is strengthening its anti-corruption and accountability work by continuing to document corruption cases by state and non-state actors (Serap, n.d.).

Center for Democracy and Development (CDD)

According to Abah and Adihikon, (2017), since 1999, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) has played immense roles in civic engagements, research and documentations. Also, it has organized seminars and symposia for elected representatives, political parties and members of the public on several issues bordering on democracy and development. The staff of CDD also joined other civil society organizations in advocating for peace in Nigeria.

Save Nigeria Group

The Save Nigeria Group founded by Pastor Tunde Bakare of Latter Rain Church (2010) has helped to demand for strict adherence to constitutionalism and enduring peace in Nigeria. Through its various activities, the group have intervened in many community-based civil unrest in Nigeria. Other civil rights groups include: Occupy Nigeria Group (ONG), Citizens for Good Governance (CGG), Arise for Change (AFC), Women Arise for Change Initiatives (WACI), Ideological Revival Movement, the Youth Initiative for advocacy, Growth and Advancement (YIAGA), etc.

Common Methods Employed by Civil Society Organizations in Promoting Peacebuilding in Nigeria

One of the most effective instruments CSOs have effectively deployed in their pursuit of peace in Nigeria is “nonviolent action” which entails acts of protest and persuasion, non-cooperation and civil disobedience, and intervention. Nonviolent acts of protest and persuasion are symbolic actions performed by a group of people to show their support or disapproval of something. The goal of this kind of action is to bring public awareness to an issue, persuade or influence a particular group of people, or to facilitate future nonviolent action. Hence, Strategies or Methods includes:

- i. Advocacy
- ii. Lobbying
- iii. Ultimatum or threat of strike
- iv. Work to rule
- v. Protest or demonstration

4.0 SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

There is no doubt that civil society organizations in Nigeria especially in this current republic has contributed much in conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Civil society organizations in Nigeria have also helped in stabilizing democracy in Nigeria. In the areas of elections, civil rights groups have helped to promote and advocate for a free fair and credible elections in Nigeria since 1999.

Hence, despite the success CSOs have made in Nigeria since 1999, there are several problems that are confronting the organizations. The major problem of the civil society organizations is that of factionalism. This is traceable to a number of inherent factors like lack of internal democracy and centralization of power in some of these organizations. Leaders often behave as charismatic and commander in chief whose motives and logic are so evidently obvious that there is no need to go through the rigours of following laid down procedure (Abah & Adihikon, 2017). Another cause is the struggle for financial gains, particularly when foreign funding is involved. Corruption and bribery are great canker worm that has eaten deep into the social fabrics of Nigeria. The cancerous nature of corruption makes it difficult for any part of the Nigeria polity to be immune from it. The present civil rights groups in Nigeria unlike that of 1980s can be highly influenced by financial inducement by politicians. In other words, they are not immune from corrupt system in Nigeria. The nefarious system of sharp practices has affected the body.

Other challenges include harassment, intimidation, denial of permission for rally or procession, arrest and detention. These acts of unprovoked arrest and detention of CSO leaders have derailed their non-violent approach. This is because in some cases lives were lost and properties worth millions of naira were damaged. Though, these problems notwithstanding, CSOs have played a very positive role in checking the excesses of militarism in Nigeria.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Civil society organizations, no doubt, have been critical agents of change and participants in peacebuilding. When popular India civil right activist, Gandhi said that "the means may be likened to the seed, the end to a tree," he expressed the philosophical kernel of what some refer to as pre-figurative politics. In order to ensure that CSOs play more viable and pragmatic role in instituting

peace in Nigeria especially now Nigeria is entangled with socio-cultural, religious and ethno-political crises, prominence must be geared toward advocacy and proper funding of the group to reduce their over dependence on foreign donors often with skewed interests. Also, the training and retraining of CSOs leaders, advocates, and non-members is highly imperative and germane in the peacebuilding mechanisms in Nigeria. The paper notes that civil society organizations (CSOs) have played immense role in conflict transformation and peacebuilding, but they have not done enough to curtail incessant ethno-religion, political and socio-cultural violence in Nigeria.

Recommendations

To achieve optimal result, CSOs in Nigeria need to be properly repositioned and strengthened. Strengthening civil society is therefore imperative so that they can improve upon the current poor existing structures and leadership styles. Thus, for Nigeria to have virile civil society organizations, the following recommendations should be considered.

- i. **Funding:** Poor financing has been a significant issue draining the imperativeness of civil society in Nigeria and Africa overall. Almost every civil society associations in Nigeria rely largely on foreign aid.
- ii. **Urban and elitist nature of some CSOs in Nigeria:** Some of these associations are extraordinarily profoundly moved in metropolitan and being manned by elites. This has created wider gap between the bourgeois and proletariats which civil society ought to bridge.
- iii. **Civil Education:** The important of civil education in any state cannot be overvalued. The effects of these can be help in reducing proportion of civil unrest in Nigeria.
- iv. **Leadership:** The issue of dearth of quality and proactive leadership is one that affects the entire polity of Nigeria and not just the civil society alone. For the body to achieve its aim, it must ensure transparency leadership at all time. The members should be trained and retrained.

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Influence of On-Air Personalities on Listenership of Radio Stations in Osun State

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Abstract

Radio is one of the media used to communicate with a large heterogeneous audience. One of the features of radio programmes is the use of On-Air-Personality (OAP) to attract listeners and advertisers. With the use of strong personality, powerful voice, dexterity, among other attributes, an On-Air-Personality has a great influence on radio listeners. In radio, both audience and On-Air-Personality (OAP) are actively involved in the conversation and relationship that deserves intellectual interrogation. In view of this, this study examined the influence of OAPs on radio listenership in Osun State. Survey method was used. 300 copies of questionnaires were administered. The objective was to elicit answers that would reveal the influence of On-Air-Personalities on radio listenership in Osun State. Data collected were presented, analyzed in tables and simple percentages with heavy reliance on the Uses and Gratifications and the Role theories. It found, among other things, that OAPs wield a significant influence on the listeners' choice of radio stations as well as lifestyle choices. A significant percentage of the sampled population also favoured certain programmes due to the image of the OAPs presenting them. The study recommends that radio stations and OAPs should understand the needs and expectations of the listeners and create programmes that meet those needs. Radio station management should sponsor their OAPs on training, workshops and seminars that will improve their professional ethics and skills. OAPs should also improve their character, social interaction and maintain a good relationship with the audience while on air and off air. It concludes that versatility is germane to the OAPs' trade as audiences seek OAPs who know a thing about everything.

Keywords: Influence, On-Air-Personality, Radio, Listenership, Uses and Gratification Theory

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The mass media are impersonal communication sources that reach large audiences. The primary function of the mass media system is to provide information to large heterogeneous audience simultaneously. It can be broadly classified into two – the print media and electronic media. Radio is a form of electronic media. It is the most versatile, cheapest and most pervasive medium of mass media. Radio is everywhere, easy to use. For radio to perform its functions of informing, educating and entertaining its listeners, it needs the service of some professionals. One of such professionals is On Air Personality (OAP).

On-Air-Personality is a person with an on-air position in broadcasting. The OAP on radio is the host or presenter who boosts the image of the station and helps to pull a large number of audiences. He/she hosts radio programmes and shows. They can discuss the different musical genres, conduct interviews with celebrities and important people, take phone calls from radio listeners, talk to guests, report news, provide information about weather forecasts, traffic and sports (Tersoo, 2018). Nowadays, On-Air-Personalities need to have a pleasant voice, likeable personality and skills like, clear thinking, accuracy, intelligence and patience. This job of OAP is really important for the radio station because OAP's voice is what audiences hear and get used to. OAP's voice is what helps listeners distinguish one station from another (Elmo, 2005).

There are some radio OAPs that also host promotional events and other social events. This is because those OAPs have become acquainted with their audience and well known. Good radio personalities are known for their oratorical prowess and vast knowledge of current issues. They help to create a large audience for the programme and also the station. However, some OAPs have lost their audience because they do not have a good relationship with them. Also, more than half of radio listeners feel their favourite radio personality influences their opinion and have considered or purchased product/service advertised during their favourite radio personality show (Davis, 2019 & Woodley & Morius, 2012). The audience care about what is important and beneficial to them. Ajaebu, Akintayo and Akinjiyan (2015) and Akintunde and Ganiyu (2020) noted that the audience listen to radio programme to satisfy their own wants and desires. Thus, this study examines the relationship between On-Air-Personalities and the audience and the influence they have on them.

Statement of the Problem

The role of radio cannot be over-emphasised in spreading information, entertainment, educating and enlightening people, strengthening national integration and creating national identity. OAPs assist in achieving these through molding of opinions, thinking, attitudes and behaviours. Because of its reach, radio is more powerful with the help of On-Air-Personalities and their impact is greater in the life of the audience. One basic truth generally expressed by the public is that people want to be informed and they want to know. Radio presenters are considered so knowledgeable and socially appealing on average that people want to rely on them to be informed and educated. “I heard it on the radio” than, “my teacher or doctor told me” is a common assertion that underscores the importance of radio (Woodley & Morius, 2012).

Among the concerns raised by scholars on OAPs influence on radio audiences is advertisers’ exploitation of personality reliability to endorse food supplements with a concern that such endorsement portends risk to the health of the consumer as presenters are professionally inadequate to recommend those products (García, Perelló, & Muela. 2021). The growing influence of OAPs on radio stations in Spain has also been established by reducing the ethical separation of editorial contents and advertising with Radio Mention (RM) of advertising contents by personalities to seek audience endorsement regardless of journalism ethical consideration or ownership editorial ideology (Perelló & Muela , 2017)

Arising from the above observation, it becomes obvious that presenters are important factors in radio programming. Studies like Woodley and Morius (2012) and a few others have paid attention to the importance of radio as a medium of communication while attempts were made to examine the role of OAPs. Yet, there is little or no empirical evidence on the influence of On-Air-Personalities on listeners’ programme preferences. There is almost absolute silence on OAPs influence on radio listenership in Osun State. Thus, this study seeks to fill the gap by unravelling whether radio listeners in the state prefer a particular programme or station because of On-Air-Personalities vis-a-vis the relationship between OAPs and the audience and the influence of OAPs on the audience.

Research Questions

The research questions of this study are:

- i. To what extent do On-Air-Personalities on radio in Osun State influence their audience?
- ii. Do On-Air-Personalities influence audience choice of radio programmes in Osun State?
- iii. Do On-Air-Personalities influence the choice of audience radio preference in Osun State?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

- (1) To examine the extent to which On-Air-Personalities influence radio audience in Osun State.
- (2) To determine the influence of On-Air-Personalities on audience choice of radio stations in Osun State.
- (3) To ascertain the influence of On-Air-Personalities on audience choice of radio programmes in Osun State.

2.0 THE NATURE OF RADIO

Radio is an important medium for information dissemination. Efforts at making this important medium more viable has remained topical. Radio, according to Wehmeier, (2000) cited in Idebi, (2010) is the method of sending and receiving signals through the electro-magnetic waves. Radio connects with listeners in ways no other media can match. It engages and influences listeners. (Woodley & Morius, 2012 & Hasling, 1980). Also, Baran (2010) notes that radio is a versatile medium that, provides information and entertainment to the listeners. Furthermore, Keuwumi, (2009) notes that radio “is a blind medium but one can stimulate the imagination such that as soon as a voice comes out of the loud speaker, the listener attempts to visualize what he hears and to create in the mind’s eye the owner of the voice. Also, Chioma, Solo-Anaeto & Jegede (2015) observed that radio was a companion to listeners because it advocates or appeals to them individually apart from reaching many people simultaneously. Radio is interactive in nature.

It is a medium that allows the listeners to see and imagine in their minds what they hear. It affords both the technical crew and the on-air performer the opportunity to make information available on first time basis without the complexities of film processing or visual consideration. All the

performer needs to do is speak intelligently on the sensitive part of the microphone while the audio console operator provides technical support. The medium in other words is a medium of immediacy where fast breaking news is relayed first to thousands of people in different places in a matter of minutes. Information about an occurrence can be filed in by listeners via cell phones, text messages and fax to the presenter who immediately relays such information with caution by calling for more information from other witnesses around the event.

Also, with modern technology its feedback mechanism is spontaneous. There are avenues for people to inform the station and presenter about events and occurrences through phone calls, text messages, email, visitation to the station, social media etc. However, the radio station and its personnel have to verify the information before relaying it to the public. Radio is affordable to purchase and portable to move around. It also lends itself to educational broadcasting particularly in the area of oral interpretative reading because on radio, the listener's interest can be heightened and the level of understanding increased.

Radio is universal. According to Onabajo, (2012) radio is the leading mass communication medium. By that, Onabajo meant it is the most pervasive receiving sets in the world especially in the developing world of part Asia and Africa, and in America according to Dominick, (2009) said "virtually every household has at least one working radio. In fact, the average household has about six. Almost every car is equipped with a radio. In an average day, about 75 percent of Americans listen to the radio." Many are today seeing the medium of radio broadcasting as selective in the sense that the trend in the radio industry today is to become a niche medium. In other words, most radio owners are moving away from the serve-the-general-audience kind of broadcasting to a more defined, narrow audience. Radio has no boundaries; hence, Keuwumi, (2009) said it can be accessed in almost any location. Radio can reach the farthest places and rural areas. It also relays current events. It is simple to use in broadcasting. There is immediacy in radio in that it relays instant messages.

Radio airs programmes that are relevant to almost every community and this allows development, especially in rural areas. It also allows for national unity. According to Watson (2021) and Koech (2017) radio is one of the most popular and widespread tools of communication in rural areas where the majority of the population lives. This is because it is the most accessible and affordable

mass media and it can disseminate important information to rural audiences through it, they get entertained, receive the latest news and enjoy listening to various programmes. Radio has a wide coverage with a higher persuasion and influence compared to other media of communication. It can be used in educating society on various issues important issues like health, development, family etc.

According to *BusinessDay* (2021), 75 percent of households in developing countries have access to radio out of the many options for traditional media. Thus, radio has become Nigeria's most popular broadcast medium. Also, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in a study conducted in 2015 disclosed that Nigeria was home to hundreds of radio stations, consisting of about 40 state-operated national stations and a growing number of private, regional and language specific stations. Furthermore, BBC (2019) affirmed that Radio is a key source of information.

In spite of all the benefits of radio broadcasting, it is a transient medium. Listeners' span of attention varies, and as such, can easily be distracted by other activities in the environment or even the activities they are involved in and at that point, they may lose track of a statement or response on a program on the radio.

On-Air Personalities (OAPs) on Radio

An On-Air-Personality (OAP) is a professional who performs only on-air duties in a broadcast station be it a television or radio station. OAPs can engage in other production roles such as working on the console, programme scheduling etc. The word "On-Air-Personality" was just being used recently to refer to radio presenters. A radio personality is someone who announces, introduces and hosts various programmes like music, talk, or game show. Radio personalities may broadcast live or transmit prerecorded programmes. An On-Air broadcast personality must have a passion for radio and in addition, a determination to be an on-air announcer. The role of an On-Air-Personality is so vital to the acceptance and rejection of a programme or a station that Giger (2014) advised that for the intending radio personality to make a success of his/her profession must have the compulsory five Ps - Passion, Personality, Pace, Presence and Preparation.

Working as an on-air-personality means the individual has a passion for his work and by extension, his/her listeners. Anything short of this would bring an end to the individual's career in radio

broadcasting. Passion allows the personality to connect with his/her audience (Onabajo, 2002). Connecting with the audience means that the presenter is real and not trying to be another person. Some of the roles of an On-Air-Personality in a radio station differ based on the programme policy of the station he or she works for. Some OAPs anchor talk shows on different programmes, host discussion programmes, presentation of general information to the audience, play musical selections, presentation of news, introduction of performances and events on Radio. In some stations, radio presenters generally act as producers as well. They introduce and conclude the programme to listeners and host talks.

On-Air-Personalities can work as one of the following, with each title having its distinct functions: Duty Continuity Announcer (DCA), Announcer, Combo Operator or Disc Jockey, Newscaster, Interviewer, Presenter, Anchors person, Sports Commentator.

Features of a Good Radio Personality

Many radio presenters have developed good relationships that the audience now sees them as their companions. This is because what the presenter broadcasts is relevant and personal to the audience. However, there is a relationship between what information and the presenter's style of presentation (McLeish, 2000 cited in Keuwumi, 2009). Listeners depend on their favourite presenters to get information, entertainment and also to be educated. As a result, some people don't feel complete until they have listened to their favourite presenters (Davis, 2019).

The presenter and the audience are not independent of each other because they are both required to create the relationship. The following are attributes of a good OAP according to Cunsolo (2020) and Perelló-Oliver and Muela-Molina (2017):

1. A good radio presenter must be able to use his life experiences to make interesting programmes. In the course of the programme, he/she can cite instances from his past experiences. He can use his life experience to encourage the audience.
2. He/she must know his target audience. Knowledge of the target audience will go a long way in achieving the programme's objective. The presenter will be able to formulate and create scripts that will satisfy the needs of the audience. He/she must know his target

audience, what they do; their lifestyle, characteristics and he must be able to engage with them in all circumstances.

3. A good radio presenter knows what interests his audience, their likes/dislikes, what they want to hear, their hobbies and their needs. The OAP/presenter must know what he and his audience have in common and how he can use it to be relevant and relatable.
4. The OAP/presenter must be vast in different areas. He must know everything about something and something about everything. He must be fluent in program presentation.
5. He is courteous, polite, humble and friendly. He is patient in order to deal reasonably well with his audience. He is calm, even under pressure and be able to work with strict deadlines. A good radio personality is conversant with the rules and regulations of his organization, the regulatory body and trade association. He avoids vulgar words, always careful with the language and the tone he uses.
6. A good radio personality is dynamic and enthusiastic. Good radio presenters are creative. The radio presenter must be able to surprise his listeners pleasantly.
7. He also focuses his attention on his audience when on air. He is disciplined and avoids distractions. A good radio personality has a good reputation because he has a good character. Radio personalities must have good relationship with their audience and members of the production team. They must be able to get along with people from different backgrounds.
8. A good OAP must be able to ad-lib or deviate from the script only when necessary. However, he must discuss only relevant topics. He has a good memory for recalling facts, figures and scripts. He is able to recall details.

The creativity of the presenter attracts audience to him. His ability to present programmes in attractive ways goes a long way in building large audiences. His manner of presentation is very important in handling programmes. The presenter's charisma, good attributes personality and popularity among the populace which amounts to his prestige in the society are very vital in attracting a large audience.

How the Media Influence the Audience

Many media effect theories explain the impact the mass media have on the audience. For instance, the Hypodermic Needle Theory assumes that the audience is passive with no thought of their own. It explains that the mass media have a direct immediate and influential impact on the audience. For the theory, the mass media has a direct one-step effect on the audience. The theory assumes that the media could have influence on a very large audience directly by ‘injecting’ them with the appropriate messages designed to evoke a desired response. Meanwhile, the Two-Step Flow Theory sees the media audience as interacting, active and responsive individual. This theory also believes that messages flow from the media to people who form opinions. As a result, the majority of the media audience received the original message in a form passed through influential people in the primary group to which they belonged.

But the Uses and Gratification theory sees the media audience as active users who have the ability of selecting the media messages they want and rejecting the ones they don’t need. This theory sees the audience as individuals who do not just accept what the media presents to them. The audience here seen as people who only accept what they want. The Cultural Effects Model views the media as a very powerful ideological influence that is mainly concerned with transmitting capitalist values and norms. It is believed that media content contains strong ideological messages that reflect the values of those who own, control and produce the media. They believe that the long-term effect of such media content is that the values of the rich and powerful are unconsciously shared by many people.

The Mass Media Dependency Theory which was developed by DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, (1975) holds that media influence lies in the nature of the relationship between the social system, the role of the media in that system, and the relationship of the media and the audience. This theory explains that the greater the need the audience has for information provided by the media and the more functions the media serve, the greater dependence individuals in that society will have on the media and the greater the media’s influence will be on that media audience (McQuail, 2000).

The Radio Personality as an Influencer and Professional

According to Davis (2019), in a study conducted in the US, “75% of respondents said they turn on the radio because their favourite personality is on, while 72% said they talk to their friends about their favourite personality or what they heard on their show”. Personality comprises character, attitude and manner. However, the voice of the radio personality is important too. Through the voice, the personality has an influence on the audience. From the moment the radio starts speaking, he begins to create in the minds of the hearers an image of his personality. Speech is a chief factor in personality. Speech is the chief professional tool of radio personality. Personality is central to the role of a radio presenter must be outgoing, confident, friendly and enjoy with their audience.

Radio connects with its listeners in a great way. One of the features that distinguish radio from other media is the listener’s connection with the radio personalities. Presenting relevant, clear, and concise and customer focused messages to the audience makes the radio personality to have great influence.

Also, from an industrial research perspective, Clear Channel Media (2014), study cited in Perello-Oliver and Muela-Molina (2017), confirms the presence and use of radio personalities in audience persuasion particularly in advertising arguing that radio audience equate an on-air personality endorsement to relatives, family or associate’s recommendations by trusting the opinion of the host. According to the findings of the study, respondents developed confidence on services, products and brands based on the communication attachment with On Air Personalities. This implication of this type of acceptance is that the OAPs have developed a powerful relationship to a level that listeners take messages to mind and initiate expected action by the presenter.

However, one of the first ways of having positive influence on the audience is by identifying the target audience (Segbenya, Antwi-Konadu, Adu-Poku, & Peniana, 2022). As stated earlier, the job of a radio personality is prestigious. A radio personality impacts the lives of thousands of people touching directly their private lives and healing their emotional pains. As a radio personality, he may not even be aware of the help he is rendering to people through his programmes but his audience who has listened to him continuously will feel that they know him personally. When he finally meets him personally, they begin to recall his expressions and delivery styles to him. There

is this joy that flow from within them illustrating their appreciation. In summary, On - Air Personalities are important influencers of contents on radio programmes.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Uses and Gratification Theory and the Role Theory.

Uses and Gratification Theory: It was propounded by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch. Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso (2008) explained that the theory assumes that the audience influences the effects that the mass media have on them. According to them, the audience selectively choose, attend to, perceive and retain the media messages on the basis of their needs, beliefs etc. This theory explains that the audiences have many reasons for using the media and they can decide how to use it and how it affects them. The theory is concerned with what the audience sees in the medium and the reasons why they use it. The audience uses the media to satisfy their needs. The theory perceives the recipients as actively influencing the effect process, since they selectively choose, attend to, perceive and retain the media messages on the basis of their needs, beliefs etc. The focus was thus shifted from media production and transmission functions to the media consumption function.

This theory explains how people use the mass media to satisfy their needs. It is based on the fact that people have certain goals and aspirations and how they use the mass media to achieve such goals. As a result of this, they decide which media to use, what they see, hear or read. Thus, the different mass media engage in a competition to be one to satisfy the individual needs of the audience. Baran (2010) notes that the Uses and Gratification theory claimed “that media do not do things to people; rather, people do things with the media”. It explains that the audiences have motives for making specific consumption choices and the consequences of such choices.

The Role Theory

The Role Theory as propounded in Broom and Smith (1979) assumes that people’s behavior can be predicated on the social and occupational roles they occupy. Role is the point of intersection between the individual and the society. Based on the pioneering works of the Sociologist Ralph Linton and George Herbert Mead in Social Psychology, the concept refers to the social

expectations and the social scripts of family role - how roles have been shaped by cultural conventions and by the collective ideologies of a society.

One aspect of role theory studies how roles are learned during the process of social interaction. That is, people interact with others, they see themselves and others as occupants of particular statuses, and they learn guides for action. In other words, there are certain social scripts or expectations associated with certain roles. The theory implies the expectations made on the holder of a given position. The theory yields a major insight into how and why OAPs are expected by audiences to give good impression about the station. They are expected to endear the audience to the station through their presentations.

Brief History of Osun State

Osun State was created in August 27th, 1991, from part of old Oyo State by the then regime of General Ibrahim Babangida. Its capital is Osogbo. Located in South West Nigeria, Osun State is landlocked and occupies 9,256 square kilometers. It is bounded in the North by Kwara State, in the East partially by Ekiti State and partially by Ondo State, in the South by Ogun State and in the West by Oyo State. The States' name is derived from the River Osun, the venerated natural spring that is the manifestation of Yoruba goddess of fertility and purity. There are 30 Local Government Councils and one Area Office. It has three (3) Senatorial District and nine (9) Federal Constituencies.

Radio Stations in Osun State

Osun State has an interesting broadcast media landscape with radio dominating the terrain (Adebiyi, 2019 and Akintunde & Ganiyu, 2020). Unlike in the television broadcasting where Osun State has only two (2) stations- OSBC and NTA in Osogbo, radio stations spread across the state.

Below is the list of radio stations in Osun State, their frequencies, location, years of establishment and owners.

Figure 1: Radio Stations in Osun State

S/N	Radio Stations	Frequencies	Locations	Year of Establishment	Owners
1.	Orisun FM	89.5	Oke Itase, Ile-Ife	1991	Osun State Government
2.	Living Spring FM (OSBC Radio)	104.5	Oke Baale, Osogbo	2000	Osun State Government
3.	Gold FM	95.5	Iloko Ijesa Rd, Ilesa	2003	Federal Government
4.	Uniq (Ara) FM	103.1	Okesa, Ilesa	2010	Mr. Rauf Aregbesola
5.	Odidere FM	96.3	Sky Limit Area, Iwo	2013	Osun State Government
6.	Crown FM	101.5	Eleyele, Ile-Ife	2014	Senator Iyiola Omisore
7.	Rave FM	91.7	Oroki Estate. Osogbo	2015	Prince Femi Adefila
8.	Ray Power FM	95.1	Oke Pupa, Osogbo	2015	Chief Raymond Dokpesi
9.	Oodua F.M.	90.9	Toll Gate Area, Ile-Ife	2016	Hon. Rotimi Makinde
10.	Great FM	94.5	O.A.U. Ile-Ife	2020	O.A.U. Ile Ife
11.	Timsel FM	94.1	Ijebu-Jesa	2019	Chief Rotimi Obiesun
12.	Tungba FM	100.9	Oke Oja, Igbajo	2020	Prince Odo Gbolahan
13.	Fresh FM	104.9	Biket Junction, Osogbo	2021	Evang. Yinka Ayefele
14.	Bowen Radio, Iwo	101.9	Iwo	2017	Bowen University
15.	Redeemer's FM, Ede	103.5	Ede	2018	Redeemer's University
16.	Diamond FM Ilesha	88.5	Ilesa	2022	

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork 2022

Below are some prominent On Air Personalities in Osun State

Figure II: Names of Some On - Air Personalities in the Radio Stations in Osun State

S/N	NAMES OF OAPs	RADIO STATIONS	TITLE OF THEIR PROGRAMME
1.	Lateef Agboola	<i>OSBC FM, 104.5</i>	<i>Oselu Wa</i>
2.	Olaniyan Idris	<i>OSBC FM, 104.5</i>	<i>Kugu Aye</i>
3.	Babatunde Onilewura	<i>OSBC FM, 104.5</i>	<i>Mukulu</i>
4.	Samuel Babawale	<i>OSBC FM, 104.5</i>	<i>Weekend Vibes</i>
5.	Ogunleye Sola	<i>OSBC FM, 104.5</i>	<i>Aye Odo</i>
6.	Segun Makinde	<i>Rave FM, 91.7</i>	<i>Alejo Wa</i>
7.	Olubukola Omoboriowo	<i>Rave FM, 91.7</i>	<i>Egbeyewo</i>
8.	Adewale Dada	<i>Rave FM, 91.7</i>	<i>Wale Dada on FM</i>
9.	Muyiwa Afolabi	<i>Rave FM, 91.7</i>	<i>Ojo Oluwa</i>
10.	Adeyemi Olabode	<i>Rave FM, 91.7</i>	<i>Igbimo Ajoro</i>
11.	Joseph Atewe	<i>Rave FM, 91.7</i>	<i>World of Sport</i>
12.	Olufemi Olanipekun	<i>RaveFM,91.7</i>	<i>Frank Talk</i>
13.	Iyinoluwa Alabi	<i>Ray Power FM, 95.</i>	<i>Lunch Time</i>
14.	Modasola Alapepe	<i>Ray Power FM, 95.1</i>	<i>Akoto Ogbon</i>
15.	Sunday Oluwaremilekun	<i>Ray Power FM, 95.1</i>	<i>Kaso layo</i>
16.	Demilade Abeke	<i>Ray Power FM, 95.1</i>	<i>Loode Wa</i>
17.	Olugbenga Kolade & Alaka Saheed	<i>Ray Power FM, 95.1</i>	<i>Kari Aye</i>
18.	Adekunle Adeyemo	<i>Timsel FM, 94.1</i>	<i>Ori Apata</i>
19.	Olusola Adesoye	<i>Timsel FM, 94.1</i>	<i>E maa Rocky</i>
20.	Olusola Idowu	<i>Timsel FM, 94.1</i>	<i>Ile-Iwe irorun</i>
21.	Ayobami Kareem	<i>Timsel FM, 94.1</i>	<i>Lori Papa</i>
22.	Seun Olowoyo	<i>Uniq FM, 103.1</i>	<i>Sport Issues</i>
23.	Bode Adewale	<i>Uniq FM, 103.1</i>	<i>Majiyagbe</i>
24.	Dele Ajayi	<i>Uniq FM, 103.1</i>	<i>Issues</i>
25.	Oladapo Ojo	<i>Gold FM, 95.5</i>	<i>Agba wa Bura</i>
26.	Gideon Aluko	<i>Gold FM, 95.5</i>	<i>Ayoka</i>
27.	Funmi Kalejaye	<i>Orisun FM 89.5</i>	<i>Lawujo Obinrin</i>
28.	Omolade Olanipekun	<i>Uniq FM, 103.1</i>	<i>Ife Alarede</i>
29.	Olu Akindele	<i>Ray Power FM 95.1</i>	<i>Oga Landlord</i>
30.	Waheed Saka	<i>Fresh FM 104.9</i>	<i>Freshly Pressed</i>
31.	Adekunle Abolade (Dodoede)	<i>OSBC FM 104.5</i>	<i>E maa Gbadun</i>
32.	Rasaq Waheed	<i>Crown FM 101.5</i>	<i>Yungbayungba</i>
33.	Kelani Obisesan	<i>Crown FM 101.5</i>	<i>Iriri Nla</i>

34.	Olusola Ajala	<i>Fresh FM 104.9</i>	<i>Point Blank</i>
35.	Akinkunmi Alabi	<i>Fresh FM 104.9</i>	<i>O ya to</i>
36.	Babajide Oluwaseun	Diamond FM	<i>Sports Tracker</i>

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research design used for this study was survey. This provided a quantitative basis on which analysis was carried out. The study population was 5,521,901 estimated population of Osun State (*Nigerian Informer*, 2021) radio listeners residing in Osun state, Nigeria. The sample size was 381 residents of the state, after the population was subjected to the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size formula. The sample size (n) is calculated according to the formula:

$$S = X2NP (1-P)/ d2 (N-1) + X2P(1-P)$$

$$n = [z2 * p * (1 - p) / e2] / [1 + (z2 * p * (1 - p) / (e2 * N))]$$

Where: z = 1.96 for a confidence level (α) of 95%

p = proportion (expressed as a decimal)

N = population size

e = margin of error.

$$z = 1.96, p = 0.5, N = 5,521,901, e = 0.05$$

$$n = [1.962 * 0.5 * (1 - 0.5) / 0.052] / [1 + (1.962 * 0.5 * (1 - 0.5) / (0.052 * 5,521,901)]$$

$$n = 384.16 / 1.0005 = 383.965$$

$$n \approx 384$$

The sample size (with finite population correction) is equal to 384.

Thus, 384 copies of questionnaire were administered on the respondents drawn from the three senatorial districts in the state. To ensure a systematic selection of the sample to be studied, the study employed two sampling techniques: clustered sampling and simple random sampling techniques. The two sampling techniques were employed to ensure an equal representation of the variables for the study. Using the simple random sampling technique, two Local Government councils were randomly selected from each of the three senatorial districts in the state. The councils

selected were Osogbo and Boripe (Osun Central), Iwo and Ede North (Osun West) and Ilesa West and Ife Central (Osun East).

Data collected were analysed through simple frequency count and percentages. From each randomly selected senatorial district in Osun State, 10 streets were selected systematically, and houses were selected on the space of 1 to 5, (i.e., house number one (1) was selected followed by house number five, then house number 10, etc.). From each street, available respondents were served copies of the questionnaire based on the sample size. This method, gave equal chance to members of the sampled population selected for the research through the sampling frame.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

From the 384 copies of questionnaires that were administered to respondents, 312 copies were returned. Out of the 312 copies of the questionnaires that were returned, 17 copies of the questionnaires were invalid, thus leaving this study to analyse 295 valid questionnaires.

Analysis of the Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

Research Question One: To what extent do the OAPs on Radio in Osun State influence their audience?

Table 1: Table showing OAPs Influence on Respondents

Do OAPs influence you?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	245	83.1
No	50	16.9
Total	295	100.0

Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of how many respondents is influenced by OAPs 83.1% or 245 of the respondents are influenced by OAPs while 16.9% or 50 are not influenced by OAPs. Therefore, Kuewumi (2009) asserts that radio has impacts on the listeners and this can be proven by their responses to the broadcasters' programmes and feedbacks.

Table 2: Table showing the Extent OAPs Influence Respondents

To what extent?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To low extent	09	03.1
To a very low extent	10	03.4
A high extent	101	34.2
A very high extent	125	42.3
No extent	50	17.0
Total	295	100.0

The above table shows the extent to which the respondents are influenced by OAPs. 3.1% or 9 of the respondents are influenced to a low extent by OAPs and 3.4% or 10 of the respondents are influenced to a very low extent, 34.2% or 101 of the respondents are influenced to a high extent and 42.3% or 125 of the respondents are influenced to a high extent by OAPs while 17% or 50 of the respondents are influenced to a no extent by OAPs from this table it can be inferred that majority of respondents are influenced by OAPs in a very high extent.

Table 3: Table showing the Ways the Respondents are being Influenced

If yes, in what way?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Opinion molding	81	27.5
Decision making	47	15.9
Lifestyle	89	30.2
By listening regularly	50	17.0
Others	28	09.4
Total	295	100.0

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of the ways by which respondents are influenced by OAPs 27.5% or 81 of the respondents' opinions are influenced by OAPs, 15.9% or 47 of the respondent are influenced by OAP in their decision-making, 30.2% or 87 of the respondents' lifestyles are influenced by OAPs, 17.0% or 50 of the respondents are influenced by OAPs to always listen to the programme regularly and 9.4% or 28 of the respondents are influenced by OAPs in other ways. Majority of the respondents, 30.2% are influenced by OAPs in their lifestyle, followed by those who chose opinion molding 27.5% by listening regularly respondents 17.0%. Next are 15.9% respondents that are influenced by decision making followed by those who are influenced by OAPs in other ways.

This finding agrees with Munson (1993) assertion that the mass media impact people’s daily lives and help to frame their reality. He further notes that consumers’ choice and interpretation of contents mediate this influence. As a result, the impact reflects an interactive relationship. Munson also submits that talk radio offers its listeners an opportunity for conversational and interpretational involvement which is seen in listeners motivations to listen, interpersonal attraction to the host and parasocial interaction with the host.

Research Question Two: Do Listeners Listen to Radio Programmes because of OAPs?

Table 4: How OAPs Influence Respondents’ Choice of Programmes

OAPs influence on choice of programme	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	196	66.44
No	44	14.92
Partly	55	18.64
Total	295	100.0

Table 4 shows the frequency distribution of respondents who are influenced by OAPs in their choice of Radio programmes 66.44% or 196 of the respondents are influenced by OAPs in their choice of radio programmes, 14.92% or 44 of them are not influenced by OAPs in their choice of radio programmes and 18.64% or 55 of the respondents are partly influenced by OAPs in their choices of radio programmes. Majority of the respondents are influenced by OAPs in their choice of radio programmes while both respondents that are not and partly influenced in their choice of radio programme are 33.66% or 99.

This contrast with the finding in the studies carried out by Owen-Ibie and Ogwezzy (2011) titled “The use of gratification of call-in programmes in Nigeria’s transitional telecommunication system” where more respondents stated that it was the issue discussed that attracted them to call-in programmes. Also, in the study carried out by Woodley and Morius (2012), 75% of the respondents report that they turn on the radio because they know their favorite OAPs in on air.

Table 5: Table showing the Extent OAPs Influenced Respondents’ Choice of Programme

Extent of Influence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To a low extent	09	04.6
To a very low extent	03	01.5
No extent	00	00.0
A very high extent	95	48.5
A high extent	89	45.4
Total	196	100.0

Table 4.22 shows the frequency distribution of the extent to which the respondent choice of radio programmes is influenced by OAPs 4.6% or 09 or the respondents are influenced to a low extent by OAPs in their choice of radio station programmes, 1.5% or 03 of them are influenced to a very low extent by OAPs in their choice of radio station programme and 0.0% or 00 of the respondents are not influenced by OAPs in their choice of radio station programme at all. 48.5% or 95 of the respondents are influence to a very high extent by OAPs in their choice of radio station programme while 45.4% or 89 of them are influenced to a high extent by OAPs in their choice of radio station programme.

Research Question Three: Do OAPs influence the choice of audience radio station preference in Osun State?

Table 6: Table showing How OAPs Influence Respondents’ Choice of Radio Station

OAPs influence choice of radio station	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	215	72.9
No	80	27.1
Total	295	100.0

Table 6 shows the frequency distribution of the number of respondents whose choice of radio station in Osun State is influenced by OAPs 72.9% 215 of the respondents are influenced by OAPs in their choice of a radio station in Osun State while 27.1% or 80 of the respondents are not influenced by OAP in their choice of a radio station.

The finding is in line with the observation of Keuwumi (2009) when he stated that radio presenters (OAPs) are often found presenting views and not imposing them on the audience. He stated that when radio presenters engage in a dialogue with the audience and finish their discussion on air leaving the audience to make their own judgment, the audience can easily identify and trust the

station because they see that they have opportunity to reason things out and make decision independently. As a result, a listener takes a particular presenter as his favourite if what he decides to do after the dialogue, he had with the presenter turn out to be of benefit to him. Owen-Ibie and Ogwezzy (2011) submitted that some presenter has the power to command large audience and possess the ability to retain their listeners even when they move to a new station.

Table 7: Table showing the Extent to which OAPs Influence Respondents' Choice of Radio Station

Extent of influence on station's choice	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To a low extent	06	02.8
To a moderate extent	133	61.9
To a high extent	76	35.3
Total	215	100.0

Table 7 shows the frequency distribution of the extent to which the respondent choice of radio station is influenced by OAPs 2.8% or 06 of the total respondents are influenced to a low extent by OAPs in their choice of a radio station. 61.9% or 133 of them are influenced to a moderate extent by OAPs in their choice of a radio station while 35.3% or 76 of them are influenced to a high extent by OAPs in their choice of a radio station.

Discussion of Findings

This study was conducted to find out the influence of On-Air-Personalities on Radio listeners/audiences in Osun State. This research was aimed at finding out if presenter/OAPs influence the audience choice of radio programme and stations. The study shows that the respondents are influenced by OAPs. The finding reveals that 83.1% of the respondents are influenced by OAPs in their lifestyle, opinion molding, listening regularly, decision making and in other ways, while 16.9% of the respondents are not influenced by OAPs. This indicates that OAPs have a significant influence on the audience.

Much akin to David's (2019) submission where 75% of respondents said they turn on the radio because their favourite personality is on, while 72% said they talk to their friends about their favourite personality or what they heard on their show” the study found that OAPs' influence on

radio listenership is significant. Also, a study by Spangardt, Ruth and Schramm (2016) buttressed this finding. Also, it is revealed that majority of the respondents, 66.44% are influenced by OAPs in their choice of radio programmes, while 14.92% are not and 18.64% are partly influenced by OAPs in their choice of radio programmes.

From this, we can infer that OAPs influence listener/audience choice of programmes. This study shows that majority of the respondents (72.9%) are influenced by OAPs in their choice of radio station while 27.1% are not. This finding tallies with the position of Segbenya, Antwi-Konadu, Adu-Poku and Peniana (2022) who found that the professionalism of presenters influenced the choice of campus radio in the Central Region of Ghana. From this, we can infer that OAPs influence audience choice of a radio station.

5.0 CONCLUSION

From the findings of this work, the researcher concludes that OAPs have significant influence on radio audiences in their lifestyle, opinion moulding, by listening regularly, etc. It can also be concluded that OAPs have influence on audience choice of programme. It can be deduced from the findings that programme nature/contents also influence audience choice of programme. We can therefore, conclude that programme nature and contents are a major determinant of audience choice of programme. Also, it can be deduced that OAPs influence audience choice of radio stations, this is because they are satisfied with the programme which attracts them to the OAPs and then to the stations.

Recommendations

- i. Radio stations and presenters/OAPs should sustain the efforts in producing quality programmes that meet listeners needs, lifestyle and be consistent in their programming.
- ii. Radio station management should sponsor their OAPs on training, workshops and seminars targetted at identifying their listeners' expectations as a way of maintaining effective delivery and retain listenership and patronage of the station.

- iii. OAPs and stations should also conduct studies to identify listeners' expectations from them in order to improve their character, social, professional skills, professional ethics and maintain relationship with the audience.
- iv. OAPs should pay attention to the audience by recognizing those that are calling in or sending messages. This helps to strike the needed bond with listeners and help retain listenership.
- v. Listeners of radio stations in Osun State should look beyond being influenced by OAPs' lifestyle, opinion molding, but rather they should be influenced by the quality of the programme contents and credibility of the OAPs and Radio station.
- vi. OAPs should maintain their positive character, social, professional skills, professional ethics and maintain relationship with the audience in a bid to boost listenership and patronage of the station.
- vii. OAPs should make sure they are abreast of the happenings around them in order to give timely, adequate and correct information to their audience.

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Effects of Kidnapping on Education: An Analysis of Northern Nigeria’s Experiences

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Abstract

In recent years, armed groups have frequently abducted students from schools, colleges and Universities in Nigeria making such learning institutions unsafe and very dangerous for teachers and learners as well as throwing the vital education sector into jeopardy. Between April 2014 and April 2022, more than 1800 students were kidnapped in several raids by Boko Haram, its splinter faction known as Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and armed criminal gangs locally called ‘bandits’. This research analyses the impact of these kidnappings on education with northern Nigeria as the case study. Marx’s theory of capitalism was adopted for the study with a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis employed. The quantitative data were gathered using questionnaires administered to students, parents and staff of learning institutions in four sampled states with incidents of kidnappings (Borno, Niger, Kaduna and Zamfara states). For qualitative data, In-depth Interview (IDI) guide was used to get information from other stakeholders including security officials, education officials, security analysts, community leaders and victims of mass abductions. This study suggested that the Nigerian authorities must give the education and security sectors greater priority because of their great significance to development. Similarly, the socio-economic and political root causes of the kidnapping epidemic must be addressed while ransom payment must be eliminated from the criminally lucrative kidnapping industry because it fuels the problem.

Keywords: Kidnapping, Education, Northern Nigeria, Ransom, Class struggle.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Kidnapping for ransom is a global problem with thousands of people falling victim every year. In Nigeria, it has reached a crisis level – some call it an epidemic because of how rampant it is both in terms of frequency and the high number of victims. It’s happening in the context of widespread incidents of insecurity including terrorism, banditry and criminality.

However, this research focuses on the kidnappings of students and their impact on education in Nigeria, with particular attention on the northern part of the country. This is the region worst affected by the kidnapping crisis, and the education of children and adults is most fragile compared to other parts of Nigeria. More than 1800 students were kidnapped between 2014 and 2022 - with the scourge spiking since the end of 2020. In some of the attacks, hundreds of students are herded into forests by armed groups who raid schools in broad daylight and in the dark of the night. This has made places of learning some of the most vulnerable and unsafe places in the country – with little or no protection from the authorities, especially in the northern region. Groups behind the spate of kidnappings include Boko Haram and its offshoots such as the Islamic State West Africa Province as well as armed gangs locally known as bandits.

However, kidnappings have recently become a free-for-all venture in Nigeria with criminal opportunists who do not belong to any organized groups also seizing people for ransom. In one of the extra-ordinary cases of school abduction that caused national and international outrage, a school owner Abdulmalik Tanko allegedly kidnapped and killed his five-year-old pupil called Hanifa Abubakar as well as buried her in a shallow grave in the city of Kano in early December 2021. The suspect was arrested in January 2022 after demanding a ransom of six million Naira from her family, according to BBC News Online (2022). This has shocked many including parents who became worried about the safety of their children even in the hands of their school officials. On the 28th of July 2022, a Kano State High Court sentenced Abdulmalik and his friend Hashim Isiyaku to death by hanging for the kidnapping and murder of Hanifa. Victims of kidnappings suffer from trauma and other excruciating experiences. In some cases, women and girls experience cruel sexual violence. This research makes a deep dive into the kidnapping crisis as it affects education. Therefore, this study has been carried out against the backdrop of frequent kidnappings of students and their teachers and the continued vulnerability of schools to violent attacks by armed groups in Nigeria, particularly in the north of the country.

Kidnapping for ransom is now arguably the number one security problem in Nigeria and perhaps the most lucrative criminal enterprise in the country. It has been happening for decades. The problem is affecting all parts of Nigeria – the south, the west, the east and the north. It did not spontaneously engulf the entire country; instead, it snowballed gradually to the current crisis level.

The current menace began in the oil-rich Niger Delta region in the south of the country - in the late 1990s when people in the region – particularly the youth, felt they were not benefitting enough from the vast oil wealth in their communities despite the fact that Nigeria’s economy heavily relies on oil revenues. In fact, they complained they were wallowing in abject poverty and their land and fishing resources were seriously damaged by the activities of oil companies operating in the area. Armed groups and individuals in the region started targeting oil workers in 1999 when Nigeria returned to democracy from years of military rule. ‘‘The Niger-Delta militants saw the political transition as an opportunity for them to renew their pressure of getting the Nigerian state to listen to their grievances.’’ (Albert, et al 2020).

Armed groups like the Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force and the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta became the main forces behind the militancy in the region targeting oil installations as well as kidnapping expatriates, local politicians, businesspeople and their families for ransom. For example, between 2006 and 2007 more than 200 expatriates were abducted in the Niger Delta in various attacks by armed militants demanding ransom and a greater share of the oil wealth in the region. (Reuters News, 2007)

The first known mass abduction of students in Nigeria was in 2014 when Boko Haram militants attacked a government secondary school in the town of Chibok in Borno state seizing more than 270 girls. Since then, the country has seen many more kidnappings of students as insecurity continues to deteriorate. Apart from students, armed groups abduct people from their homes, on the roads, in markets and places of work as well as places of worship including churches and mosques. There are currently about 120 different gangs behind kidnappings in Northwestern Nigeria with estimated 30,000 bandits. The first gang was formed by two bandits, Undu and Buharin Daji, both from Fulani pastoralists’ backgrounds - in response to incessant cattle theft and perceived injustice against the herders’ community (Rufa’i, 2021).

Raising of armed thugs by politicians to achieve their political gains and conflicts among illegal gold miners in the region have also helped in breeding armed gangs (Mahmoud et al, 2021). He opined that ‘‘today kidnapping is all over Nigeria and it is a national problem that has eaten so

deep (into) the tissues of the nation. It is a problem that must be tackled nationally. Kidnapping is growing deep in Nigeria.

This criminal commerce paints an ugly image of the already battered image of Nigeria''. Research by a security firm Beacon Consulting Limited (December 2021), found that 5018 people were kidnapped in Nigeria in 2021 – 88.9% in the north of the country. More than 8, 372 people were killed – 79.1% in the north.

Another set of figures shows that in the Northern state of Kaduna alone, for example, 2,553 people were abducted and 888 killed between January and September 2021, according to the state ministry of internal security and home affairs (Blueprint Newspaper, 2021). It's just one of many states in Nigeria grappling with a wave of kidnappings for ransom and so far, it's the only state in Nigeria that publishes quarterly statistics on insecurity. Nigeria; Africa's most populous country has grabbed international news headlines in recent years for a bad reason – mass abductions of students. The country is grappling with widespread insecurity.

2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has employed a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data collection. The quantitative data has been gathered using survey instruments (questionnaires) while qualitative data has been gathered using In-depth Interview (IDI) guide. Both probability and non-probability sampling methods have been used for data collection in this study.

The target populations of this study are people in Northern Nigeria – specifically students, parents and teachers. They are sampled to read, understand, and respond to the questionnaire.

The Northern region is divided into three clusters where each geopolitical zone represents a cluster. States with the highest reported cases of student kidnappings have been purposively or conveniently selected. In the northeast, Borno State has been selected, in the Northwest Zamfara and Kaduna States have been selected while Niger State has been chosen in the Northcentral. Two States have been selected in the northwest because it's the region with the highest number of student kidnapping cases and it has the highest general population in Nigeria.

In each of the selected States, fifty (50) respondents have been recruited for this study making it a total of two hundred and ten (200) respondents. The selection of these respondents has been done using convenient or purposive sampling strategy to allow the researcher to meet the respondents based on their experience and willingness to respond to his questions.

The use of the purposive method is geared towards ensuring that people with experience and knowledge of the kidnappings of students in northern Nigeria respond to the research questions. The respondents for the qualitative data collection include two police officers, two military officers, two traditional rulers, two security analysts, two education officials and two students directly affected by the kidnapping crisis.

Other stakeholders including police officers, military officers, traditional rulers, security analysts, education officials and students directly affected by the kidnapping crisis were interviewed for qualitative data. Existing relevant literature – including texts, audios, and videos - were also reviewed.

Theoretical Framework

The kidnapping crisis in Nigeria fits well into the theory of capitalism – a political and economic system that focuses on class or individuals’ struggle to amass wealth and control the means of production and distribution in the society as well as putting one’s profit interest above the interests of others including those of the entire community. Individuals struggle to acquire wealth – including by committing crimes or breaking existing laws- regardless of the implications on other individuals or the society at large. In his critique of capitalist ideology and practice, Karl Marx (1818-1883), points out that during the struggle for resources in capitalism, crime emerges - as those at the bottom contend for social, political and economic equality. In a capitalist society, those on the top pay as little as possible to their workers thus choking the flow of products to the needy. It is this unmet need created by capitalists that drive those at the bottom to resort to crime (Poortvliet, 2021).

According to Benjamin Diara (2010), the current spate of kidnappings for ransom is a ‘revolutionary effect of capitalism.’ He says: ‘the problem of the contemporary spate of kidnapping in Nigeria is presently horrendous and worrisome. This dastardly act is perpetrated with the aim of amassing wealth in the context of mass unemployment among the nation’s youth.

This is certainly a capitalist-oriented problem.” He further opines that abduction for ransom also underscores the greed and inordinate ambition to become wealthy even among the employed adding that “kidnapping for ransom had no place in the traditional communalist African society, hence there was no such thing during the era of communalism when Africans were their brothers’ keepers and economic production was carried out on the basis of the extended family system.”

Conceptual Framework

Kidnapping - Kidnapping is the illegal act of taking a person or a group of persons against their will either by force or by luring or deceit from one location to another and holding them hostage in order to achieve economic, political, social or ideological objectives. Kidnappings illegally deny the victims their freedoms and rights. Kidnapping is “the forceful seizure, taking and unlawful detention of a person against his/her will. It is a common law offence and the fact is that it is an unwanted act on the part of the nation”. (Ojonugwe et al, 2020).

Writing in African Journal on Terrorism, Murtala Ahmed Rufa’i (2021), conceptualizes kidnapping as an act of “rustling of humans” likened to cattle rustling. According to him, kidnapping for ransom is essentially an economic activity. This is because the underlying motivation is economic. Other forms of kidnapping such as hostage-taking, may be politically or ideologically motivated; but kidnap-for-ransom is characteristically driven by the quest for economic accumulation. Therefore, kidnap-for-ransom is both extortive and accumulative. Between December 2020 and December, 2021, around 1500 students were abducted mostly from their learning institutions for ransom - notably in Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna, Kebbi and Niger states.

Ransom – Ransom refers to money or any economic material or service(s) demanded by and or given to a kidnapper or a group of kidnappers to secure the release of abductee(s), captive(s) or hostage(s). It’s a form of extortion by kidnappers. The issue of ransom payment is key in discussing the kidnapping crisis in Nigeria. According to the International Speciality Insurance Company, Catlin Group (2012), globally, ransom payments to kidnappers could be up to US\$500 million annually (Peter, 2021). In Nigeria, seeking ransoms is believed to be the main driving force behind the rising cases of kidnappings. Even the cases of kidnappings by armed groups with ideological motives, there have been some sorts of economic interests. It’s difficult to know the exact amount

of money paid to kidnappers as ransoms in Nigeria in the last decade, but a report by SB Morgen, a Nigerian consulting firm indicates that between 2011 and 2020 Nigerians paid at least \$18.34 million as ransoms to kidnappers with \$11 million extorted from victims just between 2016 and March 2020 (Campbell, 2020). This at least gives a rough view of the money involved in the industry- though the amount may be smaller than the actual ransoms paid - given that many cases of kidnappings go unreported and ransom payments are not usually disclosed.

Education- Education is the process of receiving and or giving systematic instruction, knowledge, skills and awareness, especially at a learning institution or setting. It is also such instruction, knowledge, skills and awareness required to maintain, improve and develop individuals, society as well as human and natural environment.

The importance of education to human life cannot be overemphasized. It transforms individuals and societies to attain a high level of development in all aspects of life. ‘‘Education is a human right, a powerful driver of development and one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty and improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability. It delivers large, consistent returns in terms of income, and is the most important factor to ensure equality of opportunities’’ (World Bank, October 2021).

Therefore, there is a critical need for massive and effective investments in education and protection for students and teachers to develop the human capital of the society, help people –children and adults – to have the skills they need to succeed in life. Such education and skills give people great opportunities for decent employment. Therefore, over the years, various communities, individual countries and the international community through various bodies like the United Nations and development agencies have been trying to ensure access to education to all. In recent decades, the UN came up with development goals like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ended in 2015 and then the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) replaced them. Education is central to these global development goals. In the SDGs, target number 4 is ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all – that’s children and adults and irrespective of gender.

According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, (UNESCO), (2021) “education enables upward socioeconomic mobility and is a key to escaping poverty”. The UN agency says despite the importance of education and the progress made in the last ten years, there were still 260 million children out of school in 2018 – representing one fifth of the global population of school age children. The covid-19 pandemic has made things worse since 2020 as most countries closed schools temporarily in an effort to curb the spread of the virus.

Education in Northern Nigeria - Generally speaking, Nigeria’s education system is weak and the sector is suffering from serious challenges including poor funding which affects the quality and quantity of manpower and infrastructure with attendant negative consequences. However, the situation is even worse in the northern region.

Northern Nigeria currently has 19 out of the country’s 36 states that form its federating units. It has a higher population compared to the south and by far, larger in terms of land mass. However, in terms of education and school enrolment, the south is far ahead and the gap appears to be widening. According to UNICEF, there are more than 13 million out of school children in Nigeria – the highest number in any country in the world. In a statement marking the 2022 International Day for Education on 24th January, it said one third of Nigerian children were out of school while one fifth of the entire out of school children in the world are in Nigeria. Most of the children not attending schools are in the north of the country where there are an estimated ten million children known as Almajirai on the street – not attending formal schools. They attend poorly regulated traditional Qur’anic schools and beg on the streets for food. UNICEF (2020)

To understand some of the reasons why Northern Nigeria is educationally backward, it is important to give a brief history of how western-styled education came into Nigeria. Before the coming of British colonialists and the western education system to present day northern Nigeria, the region was part of the Sokoto Caliphate under the Usman Shehu Danfodio jihad in the early 19th Century – with Islamic system and Arabic as well as the local languages of Hausa and Fulfulde being the formal means of communication and education. At that time the European missionaries and British colonialists were already in present day southern Nigeria. According to Madiha Afzal (2020), after the British established political control over southern Nigeria in the late 19th century, they then moved towards the north and established what is called indirect rule – using the region’s Islamic

emirs to control the people and strengthen the colonial rule and establish western education. The northern and southern regions (protectorates) were amalgamated in 1914 to form a single united country - Nigeria. English was already the main official language of communication and instruction in schools in southern Nigeria because of the early contact with the Europeans.

3.0 THE IMPACT OF KIDNAPPINGS ON EDUCATION IN NORTHERN NIGERIA.

At the heart of the entire kidnapping crisis, is its danger as well as huge short-term and long-term negative consequences for students, education, and the development of northern Nigeria and the entire country. According to the human rights group; Amnesty International, as a result of the recent wave of kidnappings targeting learning institutions, Nigeria risks losing an entire generation due to the authorities' failure to provide safe schools for children in the north of the country – a region already devastated by Boko Haram atrocities. Amnesty International's director in Nigeria, Osai Ojigbo urged the government to investigate the attacks on schools and hold those responsible to account (Al Jazeera News, 2021).

“These horrific abductions often result in the immediate closure of all schools in the affected states - putting an abrupt halt to the education of affected students,” said Peter Hawkins, UNICEF Representative in Nigeria. He added, “even when schools re-open, it discourages parents from sending their children to school and leaves children traumatized and fearful of going to classrooms to learn” (UNICEF, 2021).

At least 1, 803 students had been kidnapped from the 14th of April 2014 to the 13th of April 2022. Out of this total number of students kidnapped, 1376 representing 76.3% were abducted in just one year - from December 2020 to December 2021. The numbers show 1782 students representing 98.8% of the total were kidnapped in northern Nigeria (Khalid, 2022). The upsurge in student kidnappings was witnessed just as the covid-19 pandemic also had a huge negative impact on education because learning institutions were closed during lockdowns to prevent the spread of the virus. Thus, the spate of mass abductions of students made things worse.

According to a researcher with the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, Bulama Bukarti, for some girls, this is the end of the road — they are married off during the school closures by parents

who have always regarded education as an inconvenience. Even where schools remain open, fear and apprehension negatively affect effective teaching and learning. (Bukarti, 2021)

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari has himself highlighted the negative impact of the kidnapping crisis on education. Addressing a conference on safety in education in Abuja on 26th October 2021, President Buhari said that the growing cases of school kidnappings have scared off millions of children from attending schools – particularly girls. According to the Nigerian leader, “there are more than 12 million children currently traumatized and afraid of going to school” (Agence France Presse, 2021). This serious concern about the future of education in Nigeria has prompted calls both within and outside the country for drastic action to be taken - with the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres saying “schools must remain safe spaces for children to learn without fear of violence or kidnapping or any attacks on them. He urged the Nigerian authorities “to safeguard schools and to ensure the right to education in a safe environment” (United Nations, 2021).

Let’s now take a look at some of the mass abductions of students in the four states selected as cases for this study – abductions in Chibok, Jangebe, Kaduna and Kagara.

Chibok mass abduction – The first known mass abduction of students in Nigeria happened on the 14th of April, 2014 in the northeastern state of Borno state - when Boko Haram militants attacked the Government Girls’ Secondary School Chibok seizing at least 276 girls. Out of those kidnapped, 57 managed to escape, seven were found by the Nigerian security forces in the forests during operations while 103 were freed after negotiations between the Nigerian government and Boko Haram (Nwabuani, 2022)

The militant group targeted the school purely to demonstrate its sheer hatred for western education – one of its core principles. The extremists want to destroy education. According to Orjinmu, (2021) Boko Haram and other similar extremist groups in northern Nigeria target schools to kill or kidnap students because they oppose western education and western civilization. They regard western or secular education as “forbidden.” Therefore, they deliberately target schools to cripple or destroy education.

Boko Haram released dozens of schoolgirls in exchange for their members detained by the Nigerian authorities. (Onuah, 2017) This means the group had recouped its fighters and commanders bolstering it.

The more than one hundred kidnapped girls – now young women – still in captivity have lost any opportunity to acquire an education. There are other clear indications that this mass kidnapping of students has negatively affected education. The school and many other schools in Borno state were immediately closed by the government to prevent further attacks by Boko Haram. This has disrupted the education of thousands of students.

Kagara abduction – Another abduction that targeted schools was carried out by armed kidnappers on 17th February, 2021. The gunmen raided Government Science Secondary School, in the town of Kagara, Niger state kidnapping 27 male students, three staff and twelve members of their families. They also killed one student (Hazzad, 2021). After about ten days in captivity, they were released following negotiations.

But ransom was reportedly paid by their families. A mother had told BBC Hausa radio, on February 27, 2021, that she had to sell her property including earrings to raise the money she contributed to the pool of ransom money given to the abductors. But the government had said no ransom was paid and it also denied reports that prisoner swap was part of the deal with the abductors.

The kidnapping had discouraged students and parents from education pursuit with some parents saying they would not allow their children to attend a boarding school again. One of the students, Mahmood Mohammed, while in captivity they had “faced hell. It was not easy. I did not know that I would come back. They didn’t take care of us. I am very happy because God has given me the opportunity to be reunited with my family. My decision to go back to the school is in the hands of my parents, as well as the level of concern the government might show towards the security of the school,” (Daily Trust Newspaper, 2021). This is a clear indication that the mass kidnapping has affected the education of the students.

Jangebe mass abduction - One of the biggest mass kidnappings of students in Nigeria happened in the early hours of February 26, 2021, when armed men stormed the Government Girls Science

Secondary School in the town of Jangebe, Zamfara state. It happened just weeks after two other mass kidnappings of students in Northern Nigeria – the kidnappings of students from Kankara in Katsina state and the abduction of students from Kagara in Niger state. This adds to the shock and serious concern over safety in schools in the region already struggling to support education (Kabir, 2021)

The kidnapping forced the closure of that school and other schools in Zamfara state, disrupting the education of thousands of students. The Jangebe students were later released on March 2, 2021, following negotiations with the armed kidnappers locally called “bandits.” There were reports that ransom money was paid to the abductors but the governor of Zamfara Bello Matawalle said ‘no ransom was paid’ but said some ‘repentant bandits’ helped to mediate and secure the release of the girls. (BBC Hausa, March 2, 2021).

Kaduna Federal College of Forestry kidnapping – Kaduna state has seen several mass abductions of students from learning institutions including that of the Federal College of Forestry Mechanisation. Gunmen raided the college overnight on March 11, 2021 opening fire and kidnapping 39 students as they prepared for their exams. This forced the college to close. Studies resumed a year later. This has affected the education of many students – some couldn’t graduate on time and new students could not be admitted. This is in addition to the trauma and anxiety the kidnapped students and their families experienced.

The students were released after nearly two months in captivity following negotiation facilitated by an Islamic cleric, Sheikh Abubakar Gumi. According to Daily Trust Online Newspaper (2021), the families of the victims and the college management paid an undisclosed amount of ransom which led to the initial release of 10 of the students. It says the ‘abductors had initially demanded N500 million ransom from the Kaduna State Government but Governor Nasir El-Rufai ruled out the option of negotiation, saying bandits deserve to be killed.’

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section presents information and responses of the sampled population on the impact of kidnapping on the education sector in Northern Nigeria and specific interest in how kidnappings have affected school enrolment in northern Nigeria as well as teaching and learning for those still

attending schools in recent years. It also looks at the role of ransom payment in the kidnapping crisis, the reasons students are particularly targeted and the nature of security at schools, colleges and universities in Northern Nigeria. 200 respondents participated in the quantitative survey – including students, parents and members of staff of learning institutions who answered the research questionnaire. The collected quantitative data is presented in tables while qualitative data collected through direct interviews with some stakeholders has been used to complement the qualitative data in the interpretation.

Table 1: Impact of kidnapping on the education sector in Northern Nigeria

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Kidnappings have reduced school enrolment in northern Nigeria in recent years	Yes	178	89.0
	No	22	11.0
	Total	200	100.0
The kidnapping crisis has prevented millions of students from completing their education in northern Nigeria	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	174	87.0
	No	26	13.0
Total	200	100.0	
The kidnapping crisis is now the biggest threat to education in northern Nigeria	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	177	88.5
	No	23	11.5
Total	200	100.0	
Fear of attacks and kidnappings is hampering teaching and learning even in places where students attend classes	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	184	92.0
	No	16	8.0
Total	200	100.0	
Whether one’s school or the school of one’s child/ward has ever been closed because of the insecurity	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	122	61.0
	No	78	39.0
Total	200	100.0	

Table 1 shows that most of the respondents (89.0 percent) have confirmed that kidnappings have reduced school enrolment in northern Nigeria in recent years. This is connected to the number of schools and colleges closed in several states in the region especially schools located in volatile areas as well as fears among students, parents, teachers. The table shows that 61.0% of respondents have confirmed that their schools had been closed at least once due to the kidnapping crisis.

The implication of such findings is that millions of students had their education disrupted across Northern Nigeria. The data shows that 87.0% of respondents said the kidnapping crisis has

prevented millions of students from completing their education programme or had it shattered in northern Nigeria because of the frequent mass kidnapping of students. Some parents especially on the outskirts of cities had no option than to withdraw their children from schools because of the official closure or because of concerns over the safety of their children. Some students have had to abandon education, others relocated to relatively safe places to continue pursuing an education.

Table 2: Impact of kidnapping on the education sector in Northern Nigeria

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
The insecurity has discouraged people from going to school or sending their ward/child to school in northern Nigeria	Yes	81	40.5
	No	119	59.5
	Total	200	100.0
The kidnapping crisis in northern Nigeria is further widening the education gap between the north and the south of Nigeria	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	171	85.5
	No	29	14.5
Total	200	100.0	
More female students are now being withdrawn from schools and married off by their parents instead of allowing them to continue pursuing education	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	148	74.0
	No	52	26.0
Total	200	100.0	
kidnapping crisis in northern Nigeria has affected students, school staff and parents psychologically	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	129	64.5
	No	71	35.5
Total	200	100.0	

Data from Table 2 reveals that 85.5% agree that the kidnapping crisis is further widening the education gap between the north and the south of Nigeria.

In addition to the above finding, majority of the respondents (74.0 percent) say more female students are now being withdrawn from schools and married off by their parents instead of allowing them to continue pursuing an education. The implication of this finding is that the girl-child will be denied access to formal education. This means the education gap between males and females in Nigeria will further widen and a future generation of uneducated mothers will be created unless the trend is reversed.

Similarly, the study has found that 64.5% of respondents agreed that the kidnapping crisis in Northern Nigeria has affected students, school staff and parents psychologically.

An education official who did not want to be named told this researcher that:

“This kidnapping crisis has certainly exacerbated the problem of school enrolment, especially for girls. The kidnapping has killed our boarding secondary schools, particularly in areas where we have a high rate of this kidnapping or banditry. On the psychological impact, students are worried, parents are worried, and we in government are worried.” (Education official, Niger State).

This psychological impact is connected with the trauma of witnessing or experiencing violent attacks on schools firsthand or the fear of such attacks happening. Many students, teachers and parents also live in perpetual fear of attacks. A female student who was kidnapped during a raid on their school in Kaduna state told this researcher:

“I was kidnapped along with other students. We were taken to a forest. We trekked for a long distance. No good food, no water, and the kidnapers were even shouting at us. I got scared after the attack. I still want to continue with my education. But I am not going back to that school because I am scared. I want to change school.” (Female student, Kaduna State)

Table 3: The role of ransom payments in the kidnapping crisis in Northern Nigeria

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Your loved ones, either student or non-student ever been kidnapped.	Yes	107	53.5
	No	93	46.5
	Total	200	100.0
Aware of someone (not necessarily your relative or friend) who has ever been kidnapped	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	148	74.0
	No	52	26.0
Total	200	100.0	
You have been kidnapped	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	22	11.0
	No	178	89.0
Total	200	100.0	
Ever paid ransom to secure release from kidnapers	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	57	28.5
	No	143	71.5
Total	200	100.0	
The primary motivation for kidnappings by armed groups in Nigeria is to get ransom	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	146	73.0
	No	54	27.0
Total	200	100.0	
Awareness of any kidnapping case in which a ransom was paid	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	159	79.5
	No	41	20.5

	Total	200	100.0
Ransom payment encourages kidnappings in Nigeria	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	180	90.0
	No	20	10.0
	Total	200	100.0

Table 3 reveals that more than half of the respondents (53.5 percent) have had their loved ones - either students or non-students – kidnapped. The table also shows that 74.0 percent of the respondents knew someone (not necessarily their relative or close friend) who has been kidnapped. These findings have highlighted and confirmed how widespread the kidnapping crisis has been in northern Nigeria directly affecting many families in the region.

However, 89.0% of the respondents sampled for the survey said they had never been kidnapped while 11% said they had been kidnapped and had had personal experience of the kidnappers’ den. Linking the above finding, the majority of the respondents (71.5 percent) said they have never paid a ransom to secure the release of their loved ones from kidnappers.

The survey also discovered that ransom payment plays a huge role in the kidnappings of students. The table shows 73.0% of respondents believe ransom is the primary motivation for kidnappings by armed groups. This indicates how central the issue of ransom payment is in the kidnapping crisis. The research findings also indicate the majority of the respondents (79.5 percent) knew first hand some kidnapping cases in which ransoms were paid to secure the release of the victims. An overwhelming majority of the respondents (90.0 percent) believe ransom payment encourages kidnappings in Nigeria. In accordance with the above findings, kidnapping in Nigeria will continue to be a lucrative but illegal and harmful trade if ransom payments continue. This is because kidnappers are motivated by the millions of naira or dollars they extort from the hostages, families or the government.

Findings from the qualitative study corroborated the quantitative data on the primary motivation for the kidnapping of students and other individuals. Stakeholders highlighted that ransom payments do not only motivate the kidnappers because of the wealth they get, but they also worsen the general insecurity because the armed groups use the money to acquire more weapons. A security risk management expert, Dr Kabiru Adamu, told these researchers:

“There are several reasons for kidnapping including financial reasons, political reasons and cultural reasons. But ransom is one of the things that fuel kidnapping. Ransom plays a huge role. It provides them with money to buy more weapons. And for the terrorists among them, ransom provides them with more wherewithal to continue carrying out their terrorist activities. It is a huge incentive that drives the whole thing. Without it, the problem will most likely wither away or we will just be left with the political and cultural ones” (Adamu, 2022).

Judging from these findings, it’s clear that ransom payment is the key driver of the current kidnapping crisis affecting education although there are other reasons including political, cultural, legal factors and the failure of the authorities to ensure the protection of lives and property of the citizens.

Table 5: Why are students targeted?

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty, unemployment, and lack of proper education are driving the kidnapping crisis	Yes	190	95.0
	No	10	5.0
	Total	200	100.0
Hatred for western education and challenging the government are other reasons for kidnapping of students by armed groups	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	152	76.0
	No	48	24.0
Total	200	100.0	
Lack of punishment for kidnapers is emboldening them and encouraging more people to engage in kidnappings	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	193	96.5
	No	7	3.5
Total	200	100.0	
Kidnappings of students in Nigeria are politically motivated to embarrass the government.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	162	81.0
	No	38	19.0
Total	200	100.0	
Students are targeted by kidnapers to extort huge sums of money from the government and families.	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	162	81.0
	No	38	19.0
Total	200	100.0	

Table 5 shows that most of the respondents (95.0 percent) agreed that poverty, unemployment, and a lack of proper education are driving the kidnapping crisis. Northern Nigeria has a higher poverty rate compared with the southern part of the country according to various local and international

development indices. The region with a massive population is plagued with extreme poverty, unemployment and little access to proper western education with millions of children and young people roaming the streets.

The table also shows that 76.0 percent of respondents agreed that hatred for western education and challenging the government by armed groups are other reasons for the frequent kidnapping of students. The kidnapers want to embarrass the government and prove that it is incapable of ensuring the security of lives and property, which is its first and primary constitutional responsibility. This instills fear in the minds of parents and students who feel they're not safe even in the custody of the government while in schools.

Hatred for western education is also linked to the fact that many of the gunmen carrying out kidnappings had no opportunity to acquire western education talk less about valuing it, others hate it because of wrong religious teachings and misinterpretation. This hatred translates into the targeting of students for kidnapping or even outright killings.

Similarly, in a BBC Africa Eye documentary titled: "The Bandits Warlords of Zamfara" aired on 25th July 2022, a notorious bandits' leader Abu Sani said they kidnapped nearly 300 schoolgirls from the town of Jangebe in 2021 in order "to make the government angry" because of what he described as injustice against them. He said the government didn't listen to their complaints about years of unfair treatment in the society – instead, it sent the military to bombard them. (BBC, 2022)

Nigerian schools are seen as among the so called "soft targets" in the country's security context. This is because they're poorly protected with little or no security guards or even fences, and the schoolchildren are generally weak and defenceless making them easy prey for kidnapers. According to security analyst Aminu Bala quoted by the BBC news online, "if there is general insecurity, then it is difficult to secure everywhere, especially vulnerable places like schools with thousands of them" (Orjinmo, 2021).

Table 6: Security in learning institutions in Northern Nigeria

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Believe in the Nigerian government and the security agencies in protecting schools, and universities from attacks by armed groups	Yes	90	45.0
	No	110	55.0
	Total	200	100.0
The Nigerian authorities do not have the capacity – in terms of equipment and number of personnel - to secure all learning institutions in Nigeria	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	145	72.5
	No	55	27.5
Total	200	100.0	
Nigerian schools, colleges and universities cannot be protected from attacks unless the general security situation in the society improves greatly	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	176	88.0
	No	24	12.0
Total	200	100.0	
Schools be given special attention and priority in terms of security given their importance to the development of society	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	180	90.0
	No	20	10.0
Total	200	100.0	
The temporary closure of schools by some state governments for fear of kidnappings is a setback to education	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	171	85.5
	No	29	14.5
Total	200	100.0	
The temporary closure of schools by some state governments in northern Nigeria for fear of kidnappings is a wise decision	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	102	51.0
	No	98	49.0
Total	200	100.0	

Table 6 reveals that 55.0% of respondents do not believe the Nigerian government and the security agencies are enough in protecting schools, and universities from attacks by armed groups. This is not unconnected with the fact that kidnappings have continued to happen despite repeated claims by the government and the security forces that they are doing their best.

In addition to this low level of trust in the government’s handling of the kidnapping crisis, a vast majority of the respondents representing 72.5% believe the Nigerian authorities do not have the capacity and adequate resources in terms of equipment and personnel to be deployed to all learning institutions in the country. This is clear given there are thousands of schools, colleges and universities across Nigeria and the number of police and military personnel would not be adequate to cover each institution. This is more so considering the fact that other sectors of the society also need protection.

In addition to the aforementioned findings, 88.0% of respondents agree that Nigerian schools, colleges and universities cannot be protected from attacks unless the general security situation in the society improves greatly. This implies that schools in Nigeria, particularly those in the northern part of the country, remain defenceless and vulnerable largely due to the general insecurity in the society. Because of the importance of education and its destruction by armed groups in northern Nigeria, 90.0% of respondents say schools, colleges and universities should be given special attention and priority in terms of security.

One of the measures being taken by the governments in several states is shutting down of schools and sending students home as a precaution against mass abductions of students. In this study, 85.5% of respondents say the temporary closure of schools is a setback to education because it disrupts academic activities. However, despite such a temporary measure being a blow to education, a little over half (51.0 percent) of the respondents consider it a wise decision in the current predicament. This is in line with the findings that the authorities do not have the needed security personnel to secure all schools and prevent the kidnappings of students.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Education is wholeheartedly considered the bedrock of the development of individuals and society. Therefore, any country that aspires to attain economic, technological, cultural, political and moral advancements must safeguard and promote its educational sector especially the safety and well-being of students and teachers. However, this study has concluded that kidnappings targeting schools are destroying education in northern Nigeria. The safety and security of teachers and learners in schools, colleges and universities are not given the needed priority by the government while armed groups deliberately target them to kill or kidnap students mostly in the north of the country. Women and girls are often sexually assaulted by gunmen while in captivity as evidently seen in some of the Chibok schoolgirls – who gave birth in captivity. This crisis is having a huge negative impact on education as learning institutions are closed by governments for fear of mass abductions of students, while the psychological impact of the insecurity is also impeding teaching and learning both in volume and quality.

The study has also concluded that ransom is now the biggest motivation for kidnappings in Nigeria and eliminating ransom payments will go a long way in addressing the kidnaping crisis. But this is a very difficult decision as the government has failed to guarantee the security of citizens while families of hostages often pay ransom to kidnapers as a last resort to desperately save the lives of their loved ones. The root causes of the kidnapping crisis in Nigeria include endemic poverty, unemployment, lack of proper education, impunity, official corruption, the proliferation of small and light weapons, historic social and economic injustice, bad governance, decades of unresolved conflicts between farmers and herders, and fighting among rival gold-mining groups in north western and north central regions of the country.

This research finding is also in line with a report by UNICEF (2021) which revealed that horrific abductions of students often result in the immediate closure of all schools in the affected states - putting an abrupt halt to the education of affected students, and even when schools re-open, it discourages parents from sending their children to school and leaves children traumatized and fearful of going to classrooms to learn. The finding is also in line with the view of the international child education activist, Malala Yousefzai, who in a speech at the UN in 2013 said “one child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world” and that “education is the only solution. Education first” She said “the extremists were, and they are, afraid of books and pens.” (BBC News Online, 2013).

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are made:

- As Nigeria continues to grapple with widespread insecurity including kidnappings, schools, colleges and universities should be given special attention in terms of security to prevent mass abductions of students and staff - because of their vulnerability and the great importance of education to the development of society. This will ensure education does not stop.
- Governments at both federal and state levels must genuinely focus on boosting the education sector by providing the needed funding, facilities, staff, training and encouragement to students and parents because education is the bedrock of the development of every society. Such massive investments of human and material resources

in education had helped several countries such as China and Malaysia to overcome development challenges they had faced - similar to those being faced by Nigeria now.

- The ambitious Safe Schools Initiative launched by the Nigerian government with support from the United Nations in the wake of the 2014 mass abductions of schoolgirls in Chibok must be resuscitated and sustained. If implemented adequately, it will ensure the safety of students and staff in schools across northern Nigeria as well as improvements of the facilities in learning institutions.
- Payment of ransom to kidnappers must be discouraged because ransom is the biggest driving force in the kidnapping crisis. It fuels the problem and as long as kidnappers get the economic reward they desire, kidnappings are likely to continue. But the authorities must live up to their responsibility of guaranteeing the security of lives and property of the citizens.
- To eradicate banditry and kidnappings, there is also the need for property coordination among the various security agencies including the police and the military --as well as their various commands and units in confronting armed groups. Such coordination and adopting a common and uniform approach should also exist between the various levels of political leadership (federal and state governments).

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Tourism and Hospitality Industry: Implications on National Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

This article examines the impact of the tourism and hospitality industry on national development. The exploratory research utilises a structured questionnaire as a tool for data collection from primary sources using the purposive random sampling method entailing sixty (60) sample size. Data gathered are presented on tables and analysed by employing GNU Statistical Analysis Software (PSPP) simple percentages. The study's findings reveal that employment, social amenities, and salary significantly impact national development. Therefore, this paper recommends that policies be enacted and focused on developing the tourism and hospitality industry. Additionally, the government needs to invest in training and capacity building to bridge the gap between indigenous and multinational hospitality and tourism operating sectors.

Keywords: Hospitality, National Development, Tourism

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The tourism and hospitality industry is known for the vast opportunities that a nation can explore. Its transformation power to change society into an accommodating environment makes it a standout sector that contributes immensely to economic development. When talking about dynamism in the development of a nation, the industry cannot be left out of the economic plan of such a nation. The sector is essential for developing many parts of the world (Sanni, 2009). In some regions, income from it is one of the primary sources of foreign exchange (Adeola & Ezenwafor, 2016; Baker, Huyton & Bradly, 2001; Batra, 2016).

Nigeria, a monoculture economy, neglects the potential inherent in the tourism and hospitality industry. Although Nigeria is a rich nation, a study (Ajani & Kalu, 2017) reveals that Nigeria's

economy has solely depended on oil proceeds for several decades. As such, many sectors of her economy suffer major setbacks due to over-dependence on the oil sector. As a nation of over 200 million residents, her economic potentials include cultural, manmade, and natural but lacks adequate infrastructure and enabling environment required to develop, grow and promote the tourism sector (Ayeni, 2013; Ekundayo, 2014; Fagbolu, 2022). However, the government is making efforts geared towards diversification to other sectors with tourism inclusive.

According to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2014), the tourism and hospitality industry plays a vital economic role in local communities throughout the world as it helps to transform those communities from a state of inactivity to a commercial and accommodating environment. People are directly or indirectly employed in the industry to offer services to the customers of hotels, restaurants, guesthouses, resort centres, tourist destinations, etc. Many accommodation and destination managers have subsidiaries providing other services for them in the form of supplies of materials needed to serve their customers better. The industry's economic importance can be seen in foreign exchange generation and employment creation, which will eventually transform into economic growth and development.

Research Objective

- i. To explore the impact of the tourism and hospitality industry on national development.

Research Question

- i. How does the tourism and hospitality industry affect national development?

Statement of Research Problem

Tourism and hospitality being a global phenomenon has been discussed by many researchers. The discussions seem to have covered its impact on economic growth and the industry prospect, among others. The tourism and hospitality industry is providing a high yield in investment returns worldwide (Fagbolu, 2021a; 2021b). A nation must know the contribution of such a sector to

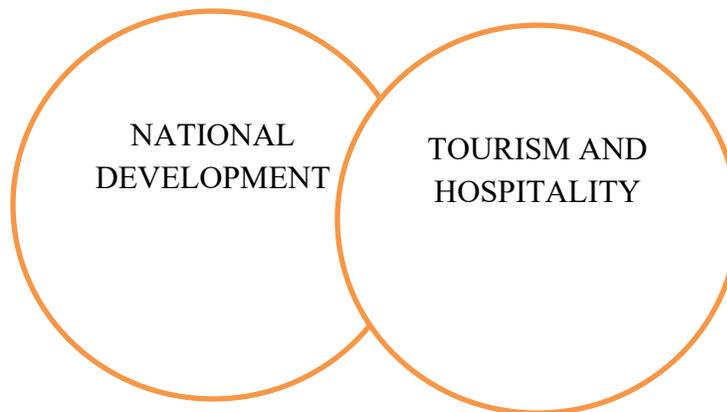
economic growth as this would facilitate its effect and evaluation of its effectiveness on her economy.

Nigeria over dependency on crude oil buttresses the negligence of the tourism and hospitality industry. Documentary evidence of the sector's growth in the country is few, which may be due to the poor management records as in many other early industries in the nation (Adeola & Ezenwafor, 2016; Fagbolu, 2021b; Ofobrukuh, 2012; Omodero, 2019). Consequently, this study seeks to explore the impact of the industry on national development in Nigeria. This research is imperative to explore the industry's significance in curbing the unemployment problem to boost the nation's economy by increasing its gross domestic product (GDP).

Conceptual Framework

The following sections showcase the conceptual framework for the study comprising national development, and tourism and hospitality.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Designed by the researchers (2022).

2.0 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Development as a concept is a difficult word to define. However, attempts have been made by scholars to conceptualise development. Gboyega (2003) captures development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. It implies improvement in the material well-being of all citizens, not the most powerful and the rich alone, in a sustainable way such that today's consumption does not imperil the future.

The concept of National development is very comprehensive, and it includes all aspects of the life of an individual and the nation. Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2011) define national development as the

overall development of a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. National development is a country's ability to improve the people's social welfare, e.g. providing social amenities like quality education, potable water, transportation infrastructure, medical care, etc. (Adesina-Uthman, 2022).

It is a reconstruction and development process in various national and individual dimensions. The overall concept and goal of national development can be seen four-fold. First is the rapid growth of incomes of the population in general. Next, poverty alleviation/reduction. Third, a satisfaction of basic social and economic needs, and lastly, the sustainment of a democratic and fully participatory society.

Tourism and Hospitality Development

The Figure below presents the structure of the tourism and hospitality industry. In the tourism

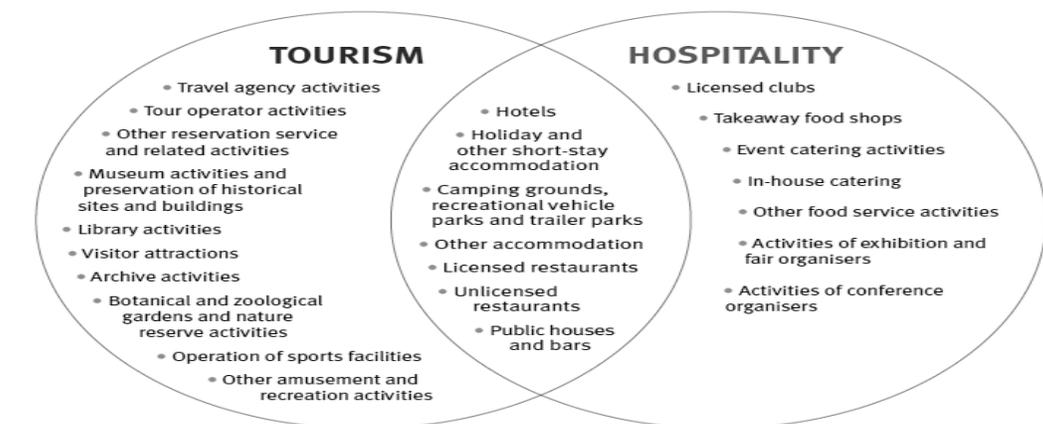


Figure 2: Structure of Tourism and Hospitality

Source: British Hospitality Association (2011).

industry, foreign tourists bring the generation currency into the destination country (exchanged in the overseas country), or they exchange theirs with tourism and travel being an integral part of it as an engine of growth, taking into account the multiplier effect. Thus, in terms of balance of payment, the industry contributes to the advantage a country gets over other countries in form of positive balance of payment.

Hospitality, as friendly and generous behaviour towards visitors and guests intends to make them feel welcome: food, drink, room, and entertainment given to customers by a company or

organisation. The industry has to do with providing comfort and security to guests through services which depend primarily on the availability of leisure time and disposable income (Adesina-Uthman, 2022; Oyibo, 2013).

The connection between the operating sectors of the tourism and hospitality industry cannot be overlooked. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) confirms that 70% and 75% of international tourists' expenditure goes to tourism and hospitality services annually (Adeola & Ezenwafor, 2016; Akpabio, 2007). Hence, it can be said that the hospitality industry is a prerequisite. In some countries, a significant part of the citizens depends on tourism. 83% in the Maldives, 21% in Seychelles and 34% in Jamaica. Malta has only 380,000 residents, it received over 1.2 million tourists in 2009, and tourism generated more than \$650 million in foreign exchange earnings accounting for 25% of its GDP. Malta's high dependence on tourism and a limited number of export products make its trade performance vulnerable to shifts in international demand. Also, in the Gambia, for instance, 30% of the workforce depends directly or indirectly on tourism (WTO, 2014; Yamamura, 2004).

According to British Hospitality Association (2011), capital investment in the industry in the last decade has reached £25bn with the construction of over 1,100 new hotels, much refurbishment of existing properties and the opening of many new restaurants and attractions. This is the equivalent of two years of industry turnover and equal to 4.2 per cent of total investment in the economy, almost identical to the industry's share of Gross Value Added. World Data Info (2019) reveals that the Indian tourism and hospitality industry has materialised as one of the critical drivers of growth among the services sectors in India. It contributes to 6.23 percent of the National GDP and 8.78 percent of the total employment in the country. Constant transformation, functional growth and improving standards have gained the industry of India's approval worldwide.

In terms of balance of payment, the tourism and hospitality industry contribute to the advantage country gets over other countries in the form of a positive balance of payment. Tourists bring the destination currency into currency in the destination. This means that the money spent by the tourist in the destination is credited to the receiving country's economy and 'debited' from the tourist's own country. The host country is receiving more money from outside its borders which is

highly beneficial to countries receiving tourists from high-value currency countries, such as the European Union Zone, the United States, and the United Kingdom (United Kingdom Essay, 2003).

The onus lies on the public sector (government), private sector, and non-governmental (NGOs) to embrace investment and development in the industry. The government may want to develop the area by investing in the infrastructure and superstructure of a destination, to make it more accessible and attractive for tourism through the construction of new roads, airports and telecommunications. Many companies, particularly multinational companies (MNCs), may see the area as an attractive place to set up operations (Adesina-Uthman, 2022).

The multiplier effect can lead to further investment from other notable organisations investing in the area. The industry creates money in the economy through employment in the local area (directly, indirectly or induced), with local businesses making money from the hotels and their other forms. Income is also created from accommodating tourists and migrating workforce. The public purse also benefits from tourist expenditure, in the form of taxes, either a local or a national tax, such as Value Added Tax (VAT), which can then go towards further investment in the local or national economy.

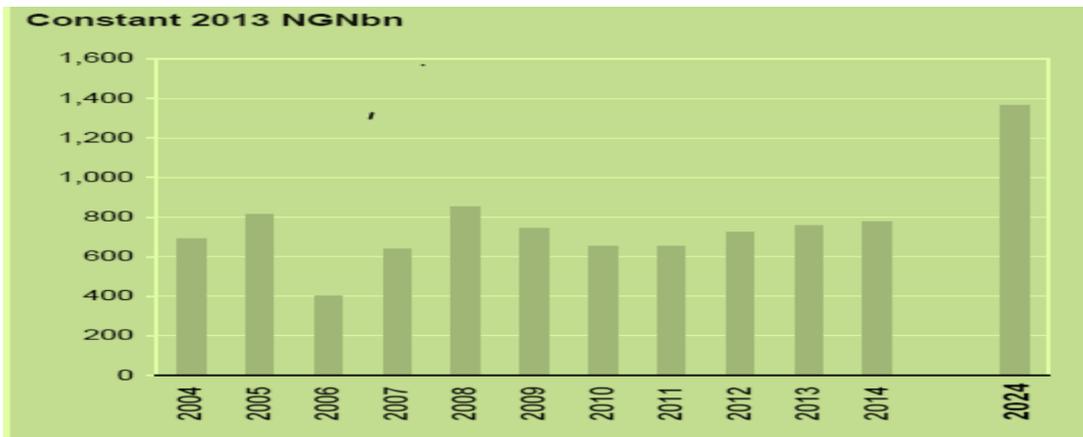
The tourism and hospitality sector is one of the world's largest industries, employing 200 million people and generating more than 10 percent of global GDP. Tourism is a highly varied sector that includes tour operation, accommodation providers, transport, caterers, leisure activities and entertainment. The hospitality industry is a part of tourism that aims to meet the needs of tourists during their holiday or trip (Fagbolu, 2021a). Tourists are provided accommodation and meals, even as tourists need a delightful manner of spending their free time, which is attended to by organising entertainment activities.

The world trend for international tourism rebounded strongly for international tourism with an estimation of international tourists' arrivals up to 6.6% over 2009 to 940 million. Tourism exports globally account for as much as 30% of the world exports of commercial services and 6% of overall exports of goods and services (UNWTO, 2014). As an export category, the tourism industry ranks fourth after automotive, chemicals, and fuels. The onus lies on developing countries hoping for

primary reliance on foreign exchange income to activate such through tourism and hospitality by creating employment opportunities for development and reduction of poverty.

Tourism and Hospitality Industry in Nigeria

Marimuthu, Arokiasamy & Ismail (2009) opine that economic perspective transaction cost shows that the organisation's accumulated human capital gives a competitive advantage when such skills are firm-specific. The Figure below showcases travel and tourism's contribution to Nigeria's GDP at NGN757.3bn (1.6% of total GDP) in 2013, to rise to 2.5% in the 2014 forecast. Additionally, the projection is likely to rise by 5.8% per annum from 2014-2024 to NGN1, 366.0bn (1.6% of total GDP) in 2024. There has been significant development in the Nigerian tourism and hospitality sector in the last few years. The majority of the branded hotels are mostly located in Lagos and Ogun and South West Nigeria, which is categorised as the Atlantic Gateway cluster categorised under five clusters in the Tourism Master Plan, namely, Capital conference cluster, Tropical



Source: Metilelu, O. O. (2016).

Figure 3: Direct Contribution and Travel and Tourism to Nigeria's GDP

Rainforest cluster, Scenic Nature cluster, and Sahara Gateway cluster (Adedipe & Adeleke, 2016; Bassey & Egon, 2016; Marimuthu, Arokiasamy & Ismail, 2009; Metilelu, 2016; Tourism Development International, 2006).

The Nigerian economy is witnessing tremendous growth in the industry leading to the emergence of hotels, fast food restaurant chains, nightclubs, cultural, ecotourism, religious tourism attractions,

etc. These positive trends, in no small measure, can help to redefine the face of the industry in Nigeria. The information shows that the industry is booming. However, the country though endowed with diverse natural resources and tourism potentials that give it an edge over other countries, gives less attention to the multiplier effect of this sector.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This exploratory study employs a descriptive approach. The study's target population comprises tourism and hospitality operating sectors operating in the Ikeja area of Lagos. The sample size of sixty (60) employees is arrived at utilising the Yamane Taro formula (Yamane, 1967). The purposive sampling method was employed during the survey to encourage an unbiased selection of participants. In order to provide possible answers to the research question, a structured and close-ended questionnaire on Five-Point Likert Scale is employed to gather data through primary source during this study. The study presents the quantitative data on tables and analysed utilising simple percentages PSPP statistical analysis, a free software tool (GNU PSPP Statistical Analysis Software, 2018).

4.0 RESULTS

The total number of questionnaires used for this research is sixty (60), out of which fifty (50) were answered correctly and utilised for the analysis.

Profiles of the respondents

This section contains the socio-demographic distribution of the respondents, as showcased in the Table below. The Table shows the gender distribution of the respondents. 30 (60%) respondents are male, while 20 (40%) respondents are female. The age distribution of the respondents reveals that 12 (24%) are within 18 – 25 years, 20(40%) fall within 26 – 30 years, 10 (20%) aged between 31 – 35 years, 7(14%) are within 36 – 40 years while 1(2%) respondent is above 40 years. On the educational qualification, 7 (14%), 19 (38%) and 24 (48%) have primary education, secondary education, and tertiary education, respectively. On work experience, it further shows that 21 (42%) respondents have spent less than five (5) years, 15 (30%) respondents have spent between 5 – 10 years, 4(8%) respondents have spent between 11 – 15 years, 4(8%) respondents have spent between 16 – 20 years, and 6(12%) respondents have spent above 20 years. The profile indicates

that the industry generates employment for working-class citizens from 18 years with informal and formal educational backgrounds. The industry can reduce unemployment among the citizens by providing income, social amenities and welfare.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Statistics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	30	60
Female	20	40
Total	50	100
Age		
18 – 25 years	12	24
26 – 30 years	20	40
31 – 35 years	10	20
36 – 40 years	7	14
Above 40 years	1	2
Total	50	100
Educational Qualification		
Primary Education	7	14
Secondary Education	19	38
Tertiary Education	24	48
Total	50	100
Work Experience		
Below 5 years	21	42
5 – 10 years	15	30
11 – 15 years	4	8
16 – 20 years	4	8
Above 20 years	6	12
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey (2022).

SECTION B

From the Table below, the results of the increase in the tourism and hospitality industry influences employment show that 22 representing 44% of the respondents strongly agree, 20 (40%) respondents agree, 4(8%) respondents are undecided, while 4(8%) and no respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively. 25(50%) strongly agree, 11 (22%) agree, 11 (22%) are undecided, 2(4%) disagree, and 1(2%) respondent strongly disagree with the existence of the industry and its operating sectors create job opportunities for the locals presents respectively. The responses on remuneration in terms of wages and salary are attractive to workers express 15 (30%) strongly agree, 23(46%), 9(18%) are undecided, 3(6%) disagree, and none strongly disagree.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage distribution results on the nexus between tourism and hospitality industry and national development

S/N	Label/Descriptive Statistics	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1	The increase in the tourism hospitality industry influences employment table 7						
	Frequency	0	4	4	20	22	50
	Percentage (%)	0	8	8	40	44	100
2	The existence of the industry and its operating sectors create job opportunities for the locals						
	Frequency	1	2	11	11	25	50
	Percentage (%)	2	4	22	22	50	100
3	Remuneration in terms of wages and salary are attractive to workers						
	Frequency	0	3	9	23	15	50
	Percentage (%)	0	6	18	46	30	100
4	Job security is guaranteed except if an employee wants to leave the organisation						
	Frequency	3	10	7	13	17	50
	Percentage (%)	6	20	14	26	34	100
5	The relationship and working conditions in the industry increase the inflow of customers						
	Frequency	0	3	9	17	21	50
	Percentage (%)	0	6	18	34	42	100
6	The tourism and hospitality industry contributes to the development of its immediate environment						
	Frequency	3	9	4	13	21	50
	Percentage (%)	6	18	8	26	42	100
7	The industry is involved in discharging Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to the locals in the host communities						
	Frequency	0	5	11	16	17	50
	Percentage (%)	0	10	22	32	34	100
8	The existence of the industry and its operating sectors help to improve the standard of living of people in its environment						
	Frequency	2	5	5	22	16	50
	Percentage (%)	4	10	10	44	32	100
9	There is transparency in the payment of tax to the government by the organisation						
	Frequency	0	0	0	20	30	50
	Percentage (%)	0	0	0	40	60	100
10	The development in the tourism and hospitality industry equates to development in the economy						
	Frequency	3	16	7	13	11	50
	Percentage (%)	6	32	14	26	22	100

Source: Field Survey (2022).

Furthermore, the results in the Table above declare that 17(34%) strongly agree, 13(26%) agree, 7(14%) are undecided, 10 (20%) disagree, and 3 (6%) strongly disagree on whether job security is guaranteed except if an employee wants to leave the organisation or not. Significantly, the responses on if the relationship and working condition in the hotel increases the inflow of

customers declare that 21(42%) strongly agree, 17(34%) agree, 9(18%) are undecided, 3(6%) disagree, and 0(0%) strongly disagree. The Table above shows respondents' responses to the industry's contribution to developing its immediate environment. The results present that 21(42%) strongly agree, 13(26%) agree, 4(8%) are undecided, 9 (18%) disagree, and 3 (6%) strongly disagree.

Progressively, the outcomes depict that 17 (34%) strongly agree, 16 (32%) agree, 11(22%) are undecided, 5 (10%) disagree, and none strongly disagree. Imperatively, the above Table shows respondents' responses on the impact of the industry on the standard of living improvement of the locals in the host communities. The responses depict that 16(32%) strongly agree, 22(44%) agree, 5(10%) are undecided, 5(10%) disagree, and 2(4%) strongly disagree. On the issue of transparency in the payment of tax to the government by the organisation, the results portray that 30(60%) respondents strongly agree, 20 (40%) respondents agree, and none of them is undecided, disagree and strongly disagree, respectively. Lastly, 11(22%) respondents strongly agree, 13(26%) respondents agree, 7(14%) respondents are undecided, 16(32%) respondents disagree, and 3(6%) respondents strongly disagree on whether the development in the tourism and hospitality industry equates to development in the economy or not.

The industry remains an adept source of foreign currency exchange and the largest employers to employ the workforce, bringing different cultures together in the global community. Countries suffering from trade balances look the hospitality and tourism to close the gap. Therefore, tourism and hospitality is not just a concept and phenomenon but has become a driving force in the global market. But not only is the industry significant to the economic success of local economies, but it also plays an essential role in communities' social and cultural life. A vital strength of the tourism and hospitality industry is its wealth, and job-creating potential spread throughout the country, with towns, cities and rural areas benefiting from the activities of hotels, restaurants, pubs, other catering businesses and events.

Discussion

The responses showcase the descriptive statistics of the research respondents on the nexus between the tourism and hospitality industry and national development. This research aims to

examine the impact of the tourism and hospitality industry on national development. Although diverse responses were gotten from the study respondents, the result still showed that the tourism and hospitality industry has prospects that can lead to economic growth. The responses to the inquiries depict that the development of the tourism and hospitality industry is highly significant to national development. An increase in the existence of the industry and its operating sectors is encouraging employment opportunities for locals and foreigners. Even though job security is guaranteed to some extent, remuneration and welfare packages are still not attractive.

Nevertheless, the industry is contributing to the development of host communities. Meanwhile, it seems that the development in the industry is yet to equate to national development. The industry is recognised as a viable source of revenue, employment generation, tax, environment and national development. This can be seen in market creation for the society, tax payment to the government, and provision of social amenities to the community. However, it was noted that the hospitality industry's benefits are not evenly spread in society. Some respondents' responses show that development in the hospitality industry is not felt in the economy.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The contribution of the tourism and hospitality industry to the economy cannot be overlooked. Its spillover effects are felt in the community in which they are situated. Establishing tourism and hospitality operating sectors in different parts of the economy aids identification of business opportunities in every community, country, region and continent. The industry provides employment opportunities to many citizens of the country. The significant positive impact of the sector on economic growth project its ability to create a job. The development of policies toward building a good business atmosphere will cause an upsurge and rapid economic growth, influencing improvement in the standard of living of the locals in the host communities regarding national development.

Going by findings, the following recommendations are made

1. Local investors in the tourism and hospitality industry should study foreign enterprises to adopt their system of operation that enhances the sector in their countries. If applied effectively in Nigeria, it will lead to rapid economic transformation within a short time.

2. Policies should focus on developing the operating sectors to achieve high economic growth. The flexibility of these policies will increase investment in this sector by local and foreign investors.
3. Local companies and governments should consider investing in training and capacity building that can bridge the gap between Nigerian hotels and global tourism and hospitality outfits and make the industry in Nigeria less dependent on foreign investments.
4. Government must live up to its responsibility by providing necessary infrastructure, beefing up security, and giving incentives to investors in the industry. The factors mentioned above are needed for the survival and sustainable growth of the hospitality industry.
5. The operating sectors in the tourism and hospitality industry should raise their service delivery to match the latest trend in the market through consistent research to be updated with the latest development around the globe.
6. The scope of this current research was limited to the tourism and hospitality industry in general. Future studies should consider gathering statistical data to examine the impact of each sector on national development.

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**An Assessment of National Assembly’s Constituency Development Fund Policy Framework
on Constituency Projects in Nigeria**

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Abstract

The National Assembly has suffered criticisms of embezzling public funds in the name of constituency development funds/projects, high turnover after election due to inability to win over projects to constituents and poor public perception on the role of the legislature in governance. This paper examined the policy/legal framework of constituency projects in Nigeria. Utilizing descriptive approach and cross-country analysis, the paper scrutinizes the frameworks of constituency development funds/projects from a few countries and Nigeria, evidence shows that there are constituency projects across Nigeria funded by budgetary allocation which are executed by the executive arm without a credible accountability instruments and weak community involvement. The situation is compounded by political manipulations in siting projects, poor quality work, poor maintenance of executed projects, etc. These can be attributed to weak policy guidelines/legal framework for constituency development fund/projects, which open-up the funds/projects to abuses with negative consequences and undermine the role of the legislature in promoting grassroots development and accountability in Nigeria. The paper recommended a legislature - executive and constituency/community-based model to guide and uplift the sustenance of constituency funds/projects in the country.

Keywords: Legislature, Legislators, Constituency Development Fund, Constituency Development Project, Accountability

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since the return of democracy in 1999, the National Assembly has suffered criticism from the media and members of the public on the allocation and use of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). This is rooted in the much-desired quest for accountability in governance and pro-poor projects by the legislature in supporting or managing CDF in the country for good. Constituency projects or Constituency Development Funds (CDF) generate issues in the polity, leading to media hype against the National Assembly (NASS) as it relates to the continuity or otherwise of CDF in Nigeria. Disturbingly, the Nigerian Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) chairman, Bolaji Owasanoye was quoted as saying in one of the project tracking reports that as of 2019, an

estimated N2 trillion had been budgeted for constituency projects since 2000. The report revealed that a series of violations were allegedly committed by federal lawmakers with the complicity of some officials of the executing ministries, departments, and agencies of the federal government (Ejekwonyilo, 2022). The legal framework for CDF at the national level was almost passed during the 7th National Assembly but for the failure to meet-up public expectations owing to procedural problems and the challenge of time. The reality is that if an acceptable, transparent and accountable mechanism on CDF is not put in place by the legislature, it may affect the little chance legislators have to showcase their commitment to the development of their senatorial districts and constituencies. It is worth to note that there haven't been a fair sharing of distribution CDF among different sectors that fall under social infrastructure (Lemanika, 2019; Sow, 2014) which raises serious concern of the need for a CDF framework in a polity. The CDF as a vital support tool for legislators' is geared to improve the welfare and well-being of their constituents and continue to face an undaunting challenge for reasons that are obvious or rooted in poor accountability processes in the management of public funds by elected representatives in the country.

Constituency Development Projects (CDP) or Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is an innovation that emerged to support the parliamentary cause, where public funds are allocated in the budget to benefit specific geo-political sub-divisions for projects that will touch on the specific needs of constituents. While it is seen by critics as a traditional, undemocratic, and breeding ground for corruption that greatly impedes development, it also suffers from the problem of transparency, poor administration, oversight or accountability, monitoring and evaluation, and lack of an effective legal framework (Baskin, 2010a; Baskin 2010c; Baskin, 2013; Ludeki, 2009). Constituency Development Projects are supported by proponents as a tool that strengthens cooperation among constituents, representatives, public officials, community stakeholders, etc. thereby enabling citizens to gain some degree of control over specific local needs or initiatives. Likewise, CDP proponents argue that the hallmark of a legislator's role especially in developing countries and even advanced democracies is reduced to nothing if the legislator has no project to showcase to his or her community a pro-people project as part of the contribution to their development. I.e., the electoral value of a legislator is hinged on the number and quality of projects he/she wins over to the constituents.

The paper, therefore, utilizes a descriptive approach and cross-country method of analysis to examine the role of CDF frameworks in promoting credible pro-people projects nominated by the legislature for execution in Nigeria. The paper seeks to examine the policy and legal framework for CDF/CDPs in other jurisdictions and recommend model forms for accountability that the National Assembly or legislature may adopt to maximize CDF in Nigeria.

2.0 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUNDS/PROJECTS IN NIGERIA

Annually, National Assembly legislators nominate projects for their constituencies/senatorial districts, which is done with the allocation of a specific amount into the federal budget for the executive arm to execute projects in their constituencies. It has been reported by the media in Nigeria that CDPs hurts accountability and service delivery (THEWILL, 2015). These among others leading to the quest for legislative considerations of the vexed issue of CDP as a way of complementing the development efforts of the government (Baskin, 2010a), since the outcome of any government is to provide and guarantee public welfare and services or projects that will enrich the lives of the citizens. Senator Femi Okuronmu stated that the CDF is a mechanism that:

... Legislators were merely required to identify projects which they wished to be sited in their constituencies for inclusion in the budget, with a financial ceiling for the budgetary provisions for such projects in each constituency. The award of contracts for, and the supervision and payments for such contracts were left completely in the hands of the appropriate executive agencies of government.... (2009).

The 1999 Constitution gave the National Assembly powers to appropriate funds for government spending as highlighted in sections 80 (2) (3) and (4) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN). While the legislators are expected to recommend projects based on the needs of their constituents and enjoy powers of oversight in the implementation of such projects, Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) oversee the implementation. Precisely, arguments against CDP range from accountability and governance matters, to participatory and practical issues (Tshangana, 2010, Baskin, 2010b). Such as the violation of the separation of powers between the legislature and the executive, poor or lack of oversight of CDPs, the overlap of function by legislators to emphasis on constituency projects, the politicization of development

projects based on non-priority projects due to MP's influence or nepotism, ethnicity, religious factors, poor comparative data on design and practical impacts of constituency projects, the establishment of parallel systems at the state or local level (Baskin2010b; Baskin, 2010a; Lemanika, 2019), to mention but a few.

The National Assembly has powers to appropriate or make policy inputs or nominate projects in the budget, while the executive branch administers or executes the budget law. Although the CDPs are financed from the annual budget, there is no enabling legislation on CDP in Nigeria. This has opened the legislature to critique amidst an opportunity to develop their political district and self-image towards improving the welfare of their constituents in the country. Nigerians' have continued to express reservations that huge funds are allocated to constituency projects, but very little is achieved due to fraudulent moves by some contractors in collaboration with lawmakers and civil servants i.e., CDF is seen as a conduit pipe that drains the nation's resources.

However, CDF has a positive impact on Nigerian society, especially in sectors where projects have successfully been implemented; such as; education, health, Infrastructure (feeder roads, water projects, etc.), security (e.g., solar street light, training, job creation, and poverty reduction), etc. CDF enables the state to address projects in the polity that ordinarily may be overlooked in National Development Plan e.g., Schools, Clinics, etc. Sequel to the premium given to the provision of democracy dividends, Nigerians score legislators who can attract several CDF projects during their four-year tenure based on the CDP the elected representative can attract to his/her community. And, if the legislator seeks re-election, they go out of their way to ensure that such candidates emerge. The number of bills such legislator was able to sponsor remains a secondary consideration. While CDF projects have given some respect to the legislature, little is commented by the public or media on how much effort is needed or how can CDF be sustained for the good of the citizenry.

Studies from other jurisdictions show that there are policy frameworks or legislation that guides CDF, but such is not the case with Nigeria. How does CDP fare in other jurisdictions, and are there lessons that can be drawn for Nigeria?

3.0 CDF CROSS COUNTRY POLICY/LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Legislators are getting increasingly involved in community development efforts across the world. This is especially so in most developing countries, e.g., Kenya, Pakistan, India, Uganda, Bhutan, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea Nigeria, Jamaica, Philippines, etc. One policy tool for this involvement is Constituency Development Projects/Funds, which dedicate public funds to benefit specific political subdivisions through allocations and/or spending decisions influenced by legislators or representatives in the national parliament (Baskin, 2010c). While the strategy or tactics employed in one jurisdiction may differ significantly or look similar to another jurisdiction, the result is the actualization of electoral mandate or improvement in the welfare or needs of communities. The table below gives a picture of the legal framework and administrative mechanism of CDF in a few jurisdictions i.e., how CDPs are carried out and getting relevance in the below countries of the world.

Table 1: Cross Country CDF Framework

Country	Legal Framework	Means of Project Administration
Kenya	Constituencies Development Fund Act, 2003 (amended 2007 and 2013). Constituency Account, Procurement of Services and Works, Audit, Constituency Projects Submission Form, Project Description Form, Re-allocation Form, borrowing money or making investments, 5 per centum "Emergency Reserve",	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Projects implemented by management committee with assistance of relevant department. ■ Management of fund is indirect i.e.; CDF Board approves project selection; National Management Committee dispenses funds. Projects permitted includes; healthcare, education, security, electricity, sanitation, water treatment. ■ Oversight of fund by the CDF Board; Constituencies Fund Committee; National Management Committee; i.e.

		<p>Stakeholders in implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Constituents represented with one being a youth
India	<p>Launched in December 1993, Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS). Projects permitted are; water treatment, healthcare, infrastructure, sanitation, emergency assistance. District Authority of MPLADS serves as implementing agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MPs have a choice to suggest to the Head of the District works each year, to be taken up in their constituencies, MPs are expected to make themselves accountable for disbursements. Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD India) plays role in oversight.
Zambia	<p>Established in 1995. Article 224, clause 3, of the Draft Constitution The ultimate goal is to use CDF to speed up development at community level by providing the much-needed infrastructure such as roads, markets, schools and clinics etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The government allocates development funds on an annual basis to all constituencies under the control of the local MP.
Ghana	<p>The District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF) is a pool of resources created under Article 252 of the 1992 constitution of Ghana and institutionalized by the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) Act 1993 (455)</p> <p>A minimum of 7.5% of the national revenue set aside to be shared among all District Assemblies in Ghana with a formula approved by Parliament.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ DACF administrator is appointed by the President with prior approval from parliament. ■ DACF Administrator tasked with fund disbursement based on approved formula, checks and monitor projects and issues reports (i.e., required by law to present an annual report to parliament on all activities of the Fund during the year.) to Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD). ■ Projects includes education, health care delivery, potable water supply, market infrastructure, sanitation, roads and drains construction among others.

<p>Tanzania</p>	<p>Constituencies Development Catalyst Fund (CDCF) Act, 2009, amended 2015. Constituency Development Catalyst Committee (CDCC) for each constituency is convened and chaired by the MP. However, it is limited to 6 members, including the District Planning Officer who serves as Secretary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Each ward generates a list of priority development projects which is submitted to the CDCC of the constituency for consideration and approval. ■ Projects approved for financing by the CDCC are implemented by the relevant Council, overseen by the Council Planning Officer. ■ Two signatories are responsible to fund management: i.e., Council Director or Planning Officer, and the second signature must be from the Council Treasurer (appointed by the Council Director) or the Council Accountant (They must be public servants).
<p>Philippines</p>	<p>General Appropriations Acts 1990. I.e., Priority Development Assistance Fund - (PDAF) i.e., CDF or Pork Barrel is captured under the constitution Congressional districts are entitled to “soft” and “hard” (infrastructure) projects in equal amounts per district to be identified by the district Representative concerned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amount appropriated is used to fund priority programs and projects under the Ten-Point Legacy Agenda of the national government, released directly to government implementing agencies. ■ Parliament directs the publication of all projects and programs on congressional website, with progress status and accomplishment projects. ■ PDAF fund small infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, footbridges, pathways, multipurpose buildings, school buildings, potable water systems, flood control, drainage systems, irrigation facilities and electrification projects.

South Sudan	Constituencies Development Fund Act, 2007. 3% percent of national government revenues for constituency-level projects to promote development and poverty alleviation. MPs submit project proposals for their constituencies, i.e., MP's proposals are prioritized by a Constituency Development Committee convened by the MP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proposed projects are scrutinized by both a management committee (formed mainly by ministries and their nominees) and a Constituency Fund Committee (formed of MPs). ■ Approved proposals are passed to the finance minister for inclusion in the government budget. Projects are implemented by relevant ministries.
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Source: Namano, 2014; Constituencies Development Fund Act, Laws of Kenya, No. 30 of 2013; The United Republic of Tanzania Chapter 96, Revised Edition 2015; Laws of Southern Sudan, The Constituencies Development Fund Act, 2007; Sow, 2014; Tsubura, 2013; Constituency Development Funds Workshop, 2009); CDF Accountability Project, 2008. Constituency Development Funds Act 2013 (No. 1 of 2013) National Parliament of Solomon Islands.

The above table shows the framework for CDF/CDPs in seven different jurisdictions as a platform for Nigeria to learn. Though there are similarities, gaps exist with the Nigerian case where lack of a legal framework or contentious (informal) policy on CDF/CDPs dominates the allocation and execution of legislators’ constituency projects in the National Assembly. That is, the process of budgetary allocation is shrouded with lack of transparency as there is little or no community or constituents’ involvement in the nomination and execution of the CDPs. Though there are instances where political party representatives or community leaders are involved, this does not confer a right as there is no agreed policy document or legal framework for CDPs at the national level. Little wonder why numerous allegations are labelled against members of the NASS, and series of cases under investigation by the Independent and Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) on CDF/CDP in the country (ICPC, 2022, Aziken, 2012). From the above, one can notice that while some of the jurisdictions based their operations on MDAs of the state, others rely heavily upon community involvement to support the nature and execution of the project. Lessons from Nigeria show that some legislators find it easy to exploit the CDF/CDPs project for personal gain due to a lack of articulate accountability frameworks to support constituency projects i.e., having a framework puts accountability checks and promotes transparency towards sustainability of the pro-poor projects and improvement of the welfare or better life of the populace.

4.0 CHALLENGES AND OPTIONS FOR VIABLE CDF/CDPS IN NIGERIA

The lack of articulate frameworks creates a series of challenges that reduce the visibility, accountability, and acceptance of CDF projects in Nigeria. Also, among the leading challenges faced by CDPs, is that they suffer maintenance problems due to the non-allocation of funds for servicing and re-servicing for sustainability. E.g., the moment a new parliamentarian is elected his/her focus is usually what he/she struggles to execute for constituents as a sizeable number of the electorates judged legislators by developmental projects, they are able to attract to the constituency than the act of law making or oversight in the legislature. Above all, previously executed CDPs in some constituencies suffer neglect and maintenance problems such as the case of numerous solar powered street lights, boreholes etc. executed by former members of NASS across Nigeria. Furthermore, other challenges include among others the separation of powers problem i.e., between executive and legislature, public or community participation, selection of non-priority projects due to MP influence, absence of coherent long-term planning, intergovernmental coordination (to avoid project duplication), corruption and mismanagement of funds (ICPC, 2022), administrative costs and conflict with local authorities, and transparency and public access to information on CDF.

From the table above, it is clear that CDPs are institutionalized in the annual budget process and cut across party lines and over the objections of the executive (Baskin, 2010a). Critical features of CDFs which vary from country to country and have a direct bearing on the performance of the program include the quantum of funding available per constituency; the method for allocating funds between constituencies (degree of targeting); and the existing legislative framework (Tshangana, 2010). The central issue that revolves around CDF is accountability and fairness on the part of the legislature. In Nigeria, while some legislators are up and doing in CDPs others are alleged to conspire to make CDPs an avenue of making money (Aziken, 2012; THEWILL, 2015), leading to low or poor public perception of the legislature. Though trends in Nigeria show that despite the process which symbolizes that CDF is an executive responsibility based on the legislative proposal, people tend to put the entire blame on legislators for failure to see the implementation of CDF in their community. Likewise, most CDF projects are criticized for not meeting up quality, and locations where such projects are sited or executed, are not in some cases

where the populace may wish to have such projects. Of course, the parliament cannot run away from this accusation as it enjoys the powers of oversight on the approved budget, couple with the fact that a committee on constituency outreach exist as a standing committee of the legislature to guarantee credible execution of CDFs in the country. Put together, one is compelled to accuse the legislature of the lack of legal framework for CDF projects in Nigeria. Such a framework will not only guarantee accountability of CDF projects but also open room for constituents to have input on what belongs to them as shown from the cross-country experience of the above table. Furthermore, a penalty can be another strategy to curb abuses or ensure that CDFs don't suffer neglect or poor-quality projects. The options outlined below may add value to any proposed policy or legal framework that will enrich and sustain CDF in Nigeria towards improving the lots of the populace. Among the options are:

1. Nigeria needs to adopt the principle of direct fund management by parliament or indirect (continue the current practice) through the use of MDAs that have jurisdiction over the nature of the project earmarked in the budget for execution.
2. There is a need to categorically spell out the kind of projects that will constitute CDF/CDFP and identify relevant agencies that should be held accountable for its supervision/execution.
3. The parliament should take responsibility for the identification of the project and its implementation with the active collaboration of the community to strengthen the accountability aspects of CDF/CDFPs.
4. There is little of a CDF where modalities for allocation are not clearly stated i.e., either base on population, poverty level, etc. This, should guide the process of project nomination in Nigeria.
5. There is a need to include project servicing or repairs or maintenance or completion into any policy or legislation of CDF projects in Nigeria; as lots of CDF projects are greatly challenged by issues such as lack of maintenance or completion due to changes in cost after awarding of the contract.

To address the numerous gaps in CDF/CDPs in Nigeria, the below three forms can be used to mitigate the procedural process for CDF allocation, project description, and re-award or completion/maintenance. The below forms structured from lessons of other jurisdictions may assist towards project nomination, completion, servicing, etc. in developing a coherent CDF policy/legal framework in Nigeria.

FORM A: CONSTITUENCY PROJECTS PROPOSAL FORM

Constituency No.....

Constituency Name.....

Financial Year.....

Representative/charge de affairs at Constituency.....

Date.....

Serial	Name of Project	Amount Allocated	Cost of Project
Total for the Financial Year			

Name and Signature of Submitting Representative.....

FORM B: PROJECT DESCRIPTION FORM

Constituency No:

Constituency Name.....

State

Project Number

Project Title

Sector.....

Status of Projects (tick one) New Extension..... On-going

Rehabilitation

Brief Statement on project status (feasibility where applicable: attached evidence)
.....

Financial Year: FromTo

Original Cost Estimates in Nairadated

Amount Allocated Last Financial Year.....

Name of Person Completing Form:

Signature

Name of Honorable Member/Senator.....

Position in Parliament.....

Name of Ward or Community Head.....

Tel/GSM No of Community Head.....

Supervising Ministry/Agency.....

Name of Supervising Officers in Ministry/Agencies.....
.....

(Rank of Officers)

Project Consultants (where applicable)

.....

Comments.....
.....

Member/Senator’s Signature & Date

**FORM C: PROJECT RE-ALLOCATION/MAINTENANCE FORM
(RE _ALLOCATION/COMPLETION)**

Constituency No.....

Constituency Name.....

State.....

Financial Year.....

Project No	Project Title	Amount allocated (Naira)	Amount disbursed (Naira)	Balance (Naira)	Unspent to be re-allocated	Title of New Project	Cost of New Project

Honorable Member/Senator’s Signature & Date.....

The above three forms are model or construct that may serve to mitigate the challenge of accountability in building up credible CDF/CDPs towards managing transparency issues of NASS in the Appropriation Act or execution of CDF projects.

The first form is a model constituency projects proposal form that can serve the purpose of nominating projects by elected representatives in the legislature. The second form is a project description form that gives a picture of the nature of CDF/CDPs that will be executed. This, serve to open up the project to monitoring and evaluation tool so as to establish the likely outcome of CDPs. The third form is the project re-allocation/maintenance form or reallocation/completion form that seeks to address issues of under cost projects for increment and completion, alongside matters of maintenance that have crippled most CDPs in Nigeria. This last form explains that elected representatives can use the model to address projects that need servicing or maintenance. Summarily, the three forms will go a long way in easing the pains of CDF/CDPs in Nigeria. It may even serve as a guide to state assemblies where CDF is at crossroads to exploit its benefits for the good of the people.

5.0 CONCLUSION

CDF is crucial to political representation in many respects, it is crucial in a state where the government wants to ensure that development reaches the targeted populace with speed, ease and specificity as in the case of Nigeria. In particular, CDF project can be said to be successful if it enjoys public involvement and support, is transparently managed and answers the basic needs of

constituents. It has the tendency of bridging the wide gap between the legislature and constituents, especially in an era where basic needs dominate the yearnings of constituents. Legislation to back CDF will surely impact on the institutionalization of the legislature and strengthened it against the challenges of grassroots development. Failure to take necessary steps may negatively affect the public perception of the legislature as representatives of the people and weaken the accountability mechanisms and execution of constituency development projects in Nigeria.

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**COVID-19 and Students' Academic Performance in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic,
Sokoto**

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Abstract

Covid-19 was devastatingly destructive around the world and the effects on the performance of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto students remain worrisome and a major concern to stakeholders of education. This paper examined the spread of the virus in the Polytechnic and a comparative analysis of the student's academic performance in the pre, during and post-Covid-19 periods with a view to providing an option for cushioning the effects and establishing a control measure for the future. The study adopted descriptive survey research design with questionnaire instrument designed in a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agreed, Disagree and Strongly Disagree options. The instrument was supplemented with individual interview and inferential statistics served as a method of analysing the relationship between variables under investigation. Random sampling technique was utilised to select respondents. Findings revealed that there was mass failure resulting from Covid-19 school shutdown because 22.4% of the students scored lower grades among various students. The research recommended the establishment of online studies and extra class to take care of the future and ameliorate the low performance respectively.

Keywords: Covid-19, Students, Academic Performance, Umar Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Toward the end of 2019, the whole universe was confronted with an unprecedented outbreak, a pandemic of deadly one, the novel human coronavirus, SARS-Cov2 (Severe Acute Respiration Syndrome-coronavirus2) which is the causative agent of COVID-19 disease. Scientifically, the virus is believed to be originated in China's Wuhan city, Hubei province in December 2019 (Adeyemi, 2020). The disease began as a symptom of pneumonic cases in that province and later it was reported to the World Health Organisation, which after investigation discovered to be a new strain of the SARS-CoV virus of 2002. As a result of that, on 11th February, 2020 WHO declared the virus as COVID-19 (meaning Corona Virus Disease of 2019) (Oluwaseun, 2020). The virus's symptoms are common, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, and loss of smell. Various studies indicated that both symptomatic and asymptomatic infected persons are infectious and can transmit it to other humans (Oluwaseun, 2020). The virus continues spreading from one continent or region to another morbidity and mortality. Apart from that, the consequences of the virus

outbreak cannot quantify in terms of economic destructiveness, social destabilization, educational backwardness and the disruption of life globally (Gonzalez, 2020).

The whole world is suffering and still counting the cost and losses in all ramifications. This is because there is no static date with which the virus could finally eradicate due to its dynamic form from one stage to another sequentially. According to WHO Director-General Dr Tedros, in his media briefing on 23rd April 2020 at 10:00, declared that:

“We have a long way to go. This virus will be with us for a long time”. He added that “the world cannot go back to the way things were. There must be a “new normal” -a world that is healthier, safer and better prepared”(Organization, 2020).

So based on this pronouncement various strategies and actions were necessitated by different nations and states in order to contain the spreading of the virus pending a vaccine being provided. Some of the measures strategically applied by several governments around the world in order to counteract the risk of disease spreading include travel restrictions, mandatory quarantines for travellers, social distancing, ban on social gatherings, and schools, tertiary institutions as well as universities were closed. This action extended to some other sectors such as business, self-isolating people were asked to remain in-door and also work at home, curfews and lockdowns were strategically adopted. The spreading of Covid-19 into Nigeria did not come as a surprise as the pandemic can be traced back to the early twentieth century. The previous researches show that the first outbreak of the devastating influenza was in October 1918 with an estimated over fifteen thousand deaths recorded in Lagos. The impact of this outbreak was cut across strata of social, economic, political and administratively, to a point where Native Courts and Schools were indefinitely shut down. All activities such as trade standstill and made it impossible to access basic needs and essential amenities for life survival. The second wave of the pandemic was in the 1930s which brought about the need for more hands in the healthcare systems (Adeyemi, 2020). The third outbreak of the pandemic was confirmed on 24th February, 2020, by Infectious Disease Centre, Yaba, Lagos State, Nigeria that an Italian national arrived at Murtala Muhammad airport from Milan, Italy. After reporting to work at his company’s site in Ogun State and by the following day developed some symptoms of pneumonic, therefore, seek the attention of medical personnel at the company’s staff clinic (Control, 2020). After being diagnosed, he was then referred to Infectious Disease Hospital where his status was finally confirmed as Covid-19 virus. This confirmation brought an alarm that the virus arrived in the country, therefore, a speedy action of response through contact tracing of ‘Persons of Interest’ especially those on flight manifesto as well as people who had close contact with the index case in Lagos and Ogun States respectively(Oluwaseun, 2020; Control N. C., 2020; Control N. C., 2020). After its first emergence in Ogun State, two weeks later another cluster of virus cases was detected in Lagos, Abuja and since then that was the beginning of its spreading nationwide. As a result, the Federal Government

through the Nigerian Civil Aviation (NCAA) took a proactive measure as a quick response by restricting international commercial flights into the country effective from 23rd March, 2020 (Onyeji, 2020; Oluwaseun, 2020). As soon as the virus continued to be discovered, the Federal Government set up a 12-member Presidential Task Force committee for the control of COVID-19 (PTF), chaired by Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Boss Mustapha and Dr Sani Aliyu as the National Coordinator of the Group.

As the Nobel virus continued spreading, the Nigerian government made an announcement of lockdown of major cities on Sunday March 29, 2020. In his address to the nation, President Buhari ordered a ban on social gatherings, economic activities and any other gathering of people in the capital Abuja, the commercial hub Lagos, Ogun and surrounding cities in order to curtail the spreading of the virus. The president said:

“I am directing the cessation of all movements in Lagos and Federal Capital Territory. Abuja, for an initial period of 14 days with effect from 11 p.m. {2000GMT} on Monday, 30th March 2020”. “This restriction will also apply to Ogun State due to its close proximity to Lagos and heavy traffic between the two states” (Olaewaju, 2020).

Another phase of lockdown was put in place in September 4, 2020, by the Federal Government as phase 3 and was extended in January, 2021. The announcement was contained by the Chairman of the Presidential Task Force on Covid-19 and Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Boss Mustapha. The new guidelines were reviewed that all Government employees on grade level 12 and below are to continue working from home. All Bars, event centres and other recreational venues are to be closed for the period, while public gatherings have been restricted to 50 persons (LEGIST, 2021). In this case, most State Governments adopted Federal Government guideline procedure of restriction of public gatherings and inter-state movement including the closure of schools, tertiary institutions as well as state universities. In line with these, academic institutions were closed leading to the destabilisation of the educational system, students remained restive, and lecturers were left with uncertainty as there was no online learning programmes to supplement the conventional one. When academic institutions were reopened there was a huge gap in terms of the learning process as a lot of students could not remember what they were taught before the closure. Lecturers have to revisit their lecture notes to start afresh to avoid mass casualties during the examination assessments. It is on this background that this research intended to carry-out a study on the effect of the closure of academic institutions on students’ academic performance.

Problem Statement

Researchers in multi-disciplinary approaches, scientists and health practitioners concentrated their energy, resources and ideas on finding-out measures to curtail the spreading of the virus.

Covid-19 and students' academic performance in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto. This is because, during the lockdown, academic activities were disrupted and as a result, many students engaged themselves in a social milieu due to the temporary closure of tertiary institutions for almost a year precisely. Therefore, this research intended to fill the vacuum left in the field of academic discourse with the view to finding out how the Covid-19 lockdown deeply affected students' academic performance at Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto.

Research Questions

- Is there a spread of Covid-19 pandemic among students of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto?
- To what extent does Covid-19 affect students' academic performance of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto before, during and after the lockdown?

Objectives of the study

- To examine the spreading of Covid-19 pandemic among students of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto.
- To evaluate students' academic performance before, during and after the covid-19 periods in a comparative analysis

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Covid-19 in Perspectives

The concept is a new phenomenon in public safety which conceptualized analytically. Coronavirus disease 2019 (CONVID-19) is conceptualized as illness cause by a novel coronavirus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2(SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China (David, 2022). In another perspective, Coronaviruses have been described as belonging to the Coronaviridae family in the Nidovi-ales order. Corona represents crown-like spikes on the outer surface of the virus; thus, it was named a coronavirus. Coronaviruses are minute in size (65-125 nm in diameter) and contain a single-stranded RNA as a nucleic material, with sizes ranging from 26 to 32kbs in length (Muhammad, 2020). Coronaviruses are a group of viruses belonging to the family of *Coronaviridae*, which infect both animals and humans. Human coronaviruses can cause mild diseases similar to a common cold, while others cause more severe diseases such as MERS - Middle East Respiratory Syndrome and SARS – Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome). A new coronavirus that previously has not been identified in humans emerged in Wuhan, China in December 2019 (Organization, World Health, 2019).

Covid-19 Lockdown

Covid-19 lockdown was a measure introduced worldwide to contain the spreading, transmission of COVID-19. In view of that, no single conceptual definition has been coined by academic researchers simply because the pandemic was unprecedented during the period. However, the term ‘lockdown’ is not well-defined. Indeed, the WHO’s reference to ‘so-called lockdown measures’ indicates the absence of a clear and universally acceptable definition of the term ‘lockdown’. The use of defining ‘lockdown’ was based on a two-by-two matrix that categorizes different communicable disease measures based on whether they are compulsory or voluntary; and whether they are targeted at identifiable individuals or facilities, or areas. By using this concept, it describes the design, timing and implementation of lockdown measures globally (Najmul, 2020).

Empirical Review

Covid-19: An Overview

The corona virus has created a vacuum in the field of academic research, especially on the aspect of students’ learning process in tertiary institutions concerning their academic performance as a result of the closure of the institutions. There were not many studies done exploring the effects of COVID-19 on the academic performance of students in tertiary institutions. Many studies were given greater emphasis on secondary school students’ effect on the learning process during the Covid-19 lockdown in Nigeria. The Nobel COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of educational activities ever in the history of mankind. It posed an unprecedented universal impact on learners, teachers and academicians around the globe ranging from pre-primary to secondary schools, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, universities, adult learning, as well as skills development establishments. Moreover, it had been reported by United Nation policy that 94 per cent of learners worldwide were affected by the pandemic, representing 1.58 billion children and youth, from pre-primary to higher education, in 200 countries. Also, the report indicated that in the higher education sub-sector, online learning has generally substituted the conventional one in some advanced countries, through recorded lectures and online platforms. But in some less advanced ones, their universities have postponed learning and teaching until further notice, due to the inadequate information technology (IT) infrastructure for both students and lecturers to utilize effectively (NATION, 2020).

Several studies by scholars and researchers from multidisciplinary approaches brought about different variables resulting in their findings. A study conducted by Gonzalez and Rubia, (2020) evaluated the impact of COVID-19 confinement on the performance of students at the higher education level. They used field experimental research with 458 learners in two groups that are control and experimental respectively. Their research indicated that COVID-19 confinement marked a positive impact on the performance of the students and helped them to enhance their learning strategies of the students. Similarly, in his research exploring whether environmental factors affect students’ academic performance during COVID-19, (Realyvásquez-Vargas,

Maldonado-Macías, Arredondo-Soto, Baez-Lopez, Carrillo-Gutiérrez, & Hernández-Escobedo, 2020) revealed that students' academic performance has been affected by environmental factors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Elhadary (2020) examined the impact of COVID-19 on the academic performance of science and social science students in Turkey and concluded that many factors affected the academic performance of the students during the COVID-19 crisis. Despite that, their study also revealed that both teachers and students are satisfied with the application of online learning and teaching. Loton (2020), studied online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic with their satisfaction and performance. The result of their findings showed that there is a significant impact on both performances of the students and their level of satisfaction with online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 outbreak. Another study conducted by Fatani (2020) in the Indonesian context where he explored the solution, advantages and constraints of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. They discussed their participant's satisfaction with the performance of the students during the COVID-19 outbreak. Hence, based on the aforementioned research carried out on the effects of COVID-19 on the performance of students, one can infer that there is a great impact of COVID-19 on academics (Hashemi, 2021).

Perceptively, Victor cited in Hashemi's work opined that the human brain functions more effectively when constantly engaged in activities. Therefore, in effect, the closure of schools due to COVID-19 has the tendency to reduce the learning ability of students. In his empirical study, Victor believed that some students may not likely read their books as long as the school is not in operation. Some may be engaged by their parents in domestic/house chores, street hawking and other activities that may distract them from studying. In that case, some of the students while constantly at home may engage in certain social vices such as stealing, keeping bad friends and indulging in drug abusive activities (Hashemi, 2021). Lindzon examined the process differently because to his perception educational institutions provide essential learning activities to the learners and when school activities are disrupted resulting in their closure, students are deprived of opportunities for social, cognitive and psychomotor growth and development with the period affecting them even beyond the period of closure. He also concluded that the closure of schools disrupts the well-planned and articulated academic calendar and activities which were supposed to have been covered within the specified period. This unprecedented disruption caused a delay in the graduation of students at all levels. Lindzon further states that there could decline in the learning ability of students from poor homes; as their parents may not afford to provide them with lesson teachers or engage them in e-learning platforms or strategies. The accumulation of financial costs for parents may affect students from poor economic background because their parents may be unable to pay the accumulated fees and other levies thereby resulting in a high rate of school dropout. It is beyond reasonable doubt that the global lockdown and closure of schools, colleges and universities not only interrupts the teaching of students around the world but the closure also coincides with a key assessment period being postponed or cancelled (Opera, 2020; Lindzon, 2020).

Conceptualizing Academic Performance

Academic performance has been described in terms of examination performance. In this study academic performance was characterized by the overall performance in each year which culminates in a Grade Point Average (GPA). The GPA score would take into account students' performance in tests, course work and examinations. The method of computing the GPA is as shown below (Reporter, 2003). Past research studies have identified several factors that affect academic performance of students in various centres of learning. Some of these factors include class attendance (Romer, 1990; Crosnoe, 2004), age, learning styles or preferences, gender, class size, entry qualifications and family income (Santhi, 2014). It has been examined that there is nothing more practical than a good theory. Given the importance of student success in college, using instructive perspectives to guide research and practice is essential. Fortunately, a handful of sound approaches are available, though as we shall see no single view is comprehensive enough to account for the complicated set of factors that interact to influence student and institutional performance (Dhufera, 2015). What Braxton, Sullivan, and Johnson (1997) call 'the student departure puzzle.' The most often cited theories define student success in college as persistence and educational attainment, or achieving the desired degree or educational credential. These perspectives emphasize to varying degrees the importance of academic preparation and the quality of student experiences during college. This section is organized around theoretical perspectives of demographical, sociological, organizational, psychological, cultural, and economic, all of which contribute to our understanding of student success in college. Taken together, the different theoretical perspectives on student success and departure provide a holistic accounting of many of the key factors that come into play to shape what students are prepared to do when they get to college and influence the meanings they make of their experiences (Santhi, et al., 2014; Braxton, 1997; Hashimu, 2021).

Many researchers have discussed the different factors that affect student academic performance in their research. There are two types of factors that affect students' academic performance. These are internal and external classroom factors and these factors strongly affect the students' performance. Internal classroom factors include students' competence in English, class schedules, class size, English textbooks, class test results, learning facilities, homework, class environment, the complexity of the course material, teacher's role in the class, technology used in the class and exams systems. External classroom factors include extracurricular activities, family problems, work and financial, social and other problems. Research studies show that students' performance depends on many factors such as learning facilities, gender and age differences, etc. that can affect student performance (Hansen, 2006). It equally stated that the most important factor with positive effect on students' performance is student's competence in English. If the students have strong communication skills and have strong grip on English, it increases their performance (Harb, 2006). The performance of the student is affected by communication skills; it is possible to see

communication as a variable which may be positively related to performance or the student in open learning. A major distinction of this study from previous studies is that it focuses on open learning (Khan, 2012).

A Brief History of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto

The historical antecedent of present polytechnic originated from the then State College of Arts and Science before it was renamed to Haliru Binji College of Arts and Science which was established in 1st October 1976 under the edict No 4 of the same year. The institution started its academic activities at a temporary site in Unguwar Rogo before it finally moved to its permanent site in 1993 at Nana Asma’u road Arkilla Kalambaina road Wamakko Local Government, Sokoto. After decades running as State College of Arts and Science later the Sokoto State government upgraded it to The Polytechnic Sokoto at Birnin Kebbi in 70s. When Kebbi State was created from Sokoto in 1991, the state government established another one this time around at Talata Mafara and finally another one was situated at Sokoto metropolis in July 2001 via law No. 2 of 2002 after the creation of Zamfara State in 1996 respectively. The Polytechnic started with five colleges and later it became seven (State, 2014). The Polytechnic of Sokoto has been renamed to Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto by the state government after the demised of the former Director of State Security Service Umaru Ali Shinkafi in 2017 (Hashimu, 2018).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research used a quantitative research method in which a survey questionnaire was adopted as an instrument to assess Covid-19 impact on students’ academic performance of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto. The data obtained were analysed through descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The reason for employing descriptive statistics is to identify the frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation of the respondents’ demographic profile and to evaluate the effect of Covid-19 on tertiary institutions’ temporary closure on the students’ academic performance. At the same time, inferential statistics were used in order to examine the impact of Covid-19 lockdown on students’ academic performance.

Study Area

Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic is the area where the study is conducted. The polytechnic is part of the educational institutions in the State where vocational and technical educational learning processes is taking place. The Polytechnic is located within Wamakko local government in the metropolis.

Research Design

A survey research design was used in this study. It is a research technique that is concerned with the ways of getting data from the respondents by asking about their opinions or views on a

particular subject matter. An important instrument used in survey research design is the questionnaire. The survey research design is very important and it is considered as the most popular research technique that is used by a very large number of people most particularly social scientists such as sociologists, political scientists, economists, geographers, criminologists etc. This study, therefore, is about Covid-19 and students' academic performance in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto. The study sees covid-19 as an obstacle to the learning process. It focused on two (2) main objectives and the first objective is to examine the spreading of Covid-19 pandemic among students of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto. The second objective is to evaluate students' academic performance before, during and after the covid-19 periods in a comparative analysis. The researcher was able to do this through the administration of questionnaires to the respondents.

Population of the Study

A population simply refers to the total number of people that are living in a specific geographical area. The population of this study area comprises persons in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Wamakko as well as the communities around the environ respectively.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Sample: Since not all of the population in the study area can be contacted, a sample is needed. The sample of this research work was based on a fraction of 240 respondents based on Covid-19 and Students' Academic Performance in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto and the sampling size for the study was 240 respondents from various Diploma programmes within the polytechnic therefore, 30 respondents were selected from eight Departments which gave 240 respondents.

Sampling Techniques: there are various methods of sampling, however, for the purpose of this research work, simple random sampling was used. This is because of the fact that the simple random technique helps in giving each member of the study population the chance of inclusion and for that reason, it can be said that it is very important

Data Collection Instruments

In this study, two methods of data collection were employed. The first data was obtained from the students' semester results with a comparative analysis to ascertain the different effects on the academic performance among the students in the Department. The research also used designed a questionnaire as an instrument with 5-point Likert scale of strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed, Strongly Disagree and Neutral scaling responses. This instrument was used in order to obtain enough data from various lecturers who lectured in the various diplomas within and outside the department. Section 'A' of the questionnaire consists of the demographic profile of the lecturers containing three items. Section 'B' of the questionnaire also comprises five items aimed at finding out whether Covid-19 spread among students. Section 'C' of the questionnaire focuses on the

impact of Covid-19 on the academic performance of the students before, during and after the temporary lockdown

The Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

The validity of the questionnaire instrument was given to experts in test and measurement in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of Polytechnic of Sokoto State to establish its content validity. This was done through scrutiny of the initial set of questions formulated and made available to them leading to the formulation of these final set of questions. The reliability of the instrument was established using a test, retest method. The instrument was administered and re-administered after two weeks to the selected sample population.

Techniques of Data Analysis

The techniques of data analysis used in this study include the simple percentage. Under the primary data which involved the administration of questionnaire to the respondents, a simple percentage of 0.87 was obtained, applying Pearson Product Moment, showed that the instrument was reliable and used in the analysis of the data. The reason of doing that was simple because normally simple percentage does not involve many mathematical calculations and it helps in easy computation of data

Limitation of Methodology

Covid-19 and students’ academic performance in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto is the topic of this research and its methodology is concerned with the different methods that the researcher used in conducting the study. There are important issues that can be considered as the limitation of the study. Firstly, the study was limited to a public institution and no private educational institution was used under the population of the study. Secondly, Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto and community around were used for the study. Finally, the study was limited to the use of simple percentage.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 2.1: Distribution of Questionnaire

Departments	Diplomas	Distribution of Questionnaire	Returned Questionnaire	Percentage of Questionnaire Returned
Computer	NDCS II	30	30	12.5
Business	NDBS II	30	28	11.6
Administration	NDPA II	30	29	12
Masscom	NDMC II	30	28	11.6
Engineering	NDNCE II	30	30	12.5

Agriculture	NDAPH II	30	30	12.5
Environmental	NDBT II	30	27	11.25
GNS	DCSS	30	30	12.5
Total	8	240	232	96.45

Source: Questionnaire Administered 2022

The table 2.1 shows the distribution of questionnaire to various departments. Two hundred and forty (240) questionnaires were administered among the eight (8) departments while only 232 were completed.

Table 2.2: Respondents based on evaluation of students’ academic performance before, during and after the covid-19 periods in comparative analysis

S/N	Options	Responses	Percentage
1.	The fact that Covid-19 reduced academic performance during the closure	40	17.24
2.	Covid-19 caused restiveness and diminishing of academic activities	48	20.6
3.	Covid-19 change social interactions among students in the school	39	16.8
4	Covid-19 school closure create wide gap in academic activities	53	22.8
5	Covid-19 led scoring low grades among students	52	22.4

Source: Questionnaire Administered 2022

Table 2.2 shows the respondents based on students’ academic performance. As the responses indicate that majority of the respondents 40 representing (17.24%) percent consider covid-19 reduce academic performance during the closure because there was no provision for online studies in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto. It also revealed that 48 respondents (20.6%) strongly agreed that covid-19 caused restiveness and diminishing of academic activities during the closure in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto, however, 39 of respondents, representing (16.8%) shows that covid-19 changed social interaction among students in the school. Again, 53 respondents representing (22.8) revealed that covid-19 school closure creates a wide gap among students in terms of academic activities and 52 respondents representing (22.4%) strongly agreed that covid-19 led to scoring lower grades among various students. Conclusively, the table revealed that there is a relationship between covid-19 school closure and student academic performance at Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto.

Table 2.3: Respondents based on the spreading of Covid-19 pandemic among students of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto

S/N	Options	Responses	Percentage
1.	Covid-19 spread rapidly among students in the school	20	8.6

2.	Covid-19 scares your life and future education	90	38.7
3.	Are they aware of the symptoms of covid-19	80	34.4
4	Did you make contact with covid-19 while in school?	17	7.32
5	Do you take your vaccine	25	10.7

Source: Questionnaire Administered 2022

Table 2.3 shows the respondents based on the spreading of Covid-19 pandemic among students of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto. The table show that covid-19 spread rapidly among student in the school. The result indicate that 20 respondents representing 8.6% believed that Covid-19 did not spread rapidly among the students since school was closed by then, 90 respondents representing 38.7% strongly agreed that Covid-19 scared the their future education while 80 respondents, representing 34.4% revealed that they are aware of the covid-19 symptoms because there was mass awareness in the country. 17 respondents representing 7.32% that they did not make contact with the Covid-19 in the school, however, 25 respondents representing 10.7% believed that they took the shut of Covid-19 vaccine.

Summary of Major Findings

From the research finding shows that Covid-19 pandemic had affected the student performance based on the report on their respective end of the semester results compare to other previous results. However, many students believed that Covid-19 school closure had made them restive and unproductive. Some students and lecturers believed that academic activities were stranded without academic certainty. The lecturers affirmed that there were mass failures in many courses as a result of the long period of school shutdown which created a wide gap in students' academic performance as many had more than five carryovers.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research concluded that the Covid-19 pandemic created a wide gap, particularly in students' academic performance at Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic during the period. It also affected the academic activities of the institution and it will take some years to recover fully. Going by the findings, the study has the following recommendations:

- In order to prevent academic activities from suffering in the event that something similar to Covid-19 occurred, the school administration should offer online courses.
- Students need a backup plan in case a new epidemic breaks out, so they will engage in learning interactions through social media.

- To avoid mass failure in students' academic performance, the government could also offer another method to combat the epidemic without long-term school closures.

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ECOWAS' Mediation Intervention in the Protracted Political Conflict of Guinea Bissau (2014-2019)

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Abstract

Guinea Bissau has witnessed a protracted political conflict since 1974 when it gained independence. The return to civil rule in 2015 hyped citizens' hopes of a prosperous nation in a near future. But this was not to be. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) negotiated the Conakry Agreement in order to end the crisis and promote peace and stability in the country. The crisis arose from political contestation among key actors, especially leaders of the ruling African Party for Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC). This paper attempts to dissect the political events that led to the cyclical conflicts and the cardinal role played by ECOWAS to resolve them. To do this, the paper utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources were obtained using in-depth interviews from personnel of ECOWAS, staff of Guinea Bissau Embassy in Nigeria, journalists and diplomats. Secondary data were sourced from books, journals, internet materials, newspapers and conference papers. The paper submits that the quagmire in Guinea Bissau was originally caused by the political struggle between former President José Mário Vaz and his incumbent Prime Minister, Domingo Simoes Pereira over the control of the soul of the ruling party. The intervention of ECOWAS took the forms of a mediation process, which was used to facilitate the Conakry Agreement and helped key actors comply with its terms. The paper concludes that for a lasting peace to be achieved in Guinea Bissau, ECOWAS, the government and other stakeholders should continue to push for the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement.

Keywords: ECOWAS, Political Conflict, Mediation, Conakry Agreement

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of the 20th century, more than 20 out of the 53 African countries had witnessed fratricidal wars and by the 1980s, the continent had recorded that almost half of the war-related deaths in the world (Bolle as cited in Adams, 2013). Consequently, Bolle submitted that Africa accounted for over 8 million of the 22 million refugees worldwide. These conflicts have devastating consequences on Africa in terms of societal fragmentation and the regionalization of domestic civil wars that further undermine regional peace and security. Indeed, some western media commentators like Riz Khan of Aljazeera among others have described contemporary Africa as the 'Heat of darkness, hopeless continent and the coming anarchy' that is capable of

threatening international peace and security (Satgneth, 1996). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is one of the largest and most sophisticated political and economic platforms in Africa that now venture into managing regional security. It was founded in 1975 with the signing of the Lagos treaty as a sub – regional organization bringing together 15 West African countries (Adebayo, 2002). The headquarters is in Abuja, Nigeria. ECOWAS was created to promote regional integration and foster economic development in a sub-region inhabited by more than 250 million people and home to some of the poorest nations in the world. The fortunes of ECOWAS have been significantly affected by Nigeria’s political trajectory and dynamics.

The conflicts in the sub-region in the early 1990s especially the Liberian and Sierra Leone civil wars, changed the philosophy and direction of ECOWAS’ cardinal role in the region. The organization’s involvement in these two conflicts and in the guinea Bissau through the deployment of its ceasefire monitoring group (ECOMOG), led to the realization that the economic integration and development could not be achieved without political stability, security and good governance. As a result, the 1990s witnessed series of new and revised treaties and protocols to create a more political and security-oriented role for ECOWAS. While two earlier defense-related protocols existed - the 1978 Protocol Relating to Non-Aggression and the 1981 Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defense– their scope was limited and lacked critical political support. In 1993 ECOWAS revised its Treaty, by which it sought stronger economic and political cooperation. This was followed by the Declaration of a Moratorium on Importation, Exportation, and Manufacture of Light Weapons in West Africa in 1998. Despite considerable opposition, this Moratorium was renewed in 2001 for another 3 years and has recently been transformed into the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Ammunition and other related Materials, which was signed in June 2006.

The protracted crisis in Guinea Bissau that made the government unstable has lasted for almost a decade. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) negotiated the Conakry Agreement which proposed to end the crisis and promote stability in the country (ECOWAS, 2016). The conflict arose from a political impasse that had to do mainly with irreconcilable political differences and lack of trust between the President of the Republic, José Mário Vaz and his former prime minister and leader of African Party for Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde

(PAIGC), Mr. Domingos Simões Pereira. Despite the intervention of ECOWAS, which negotiated the Conakry Accord to end the impasse, disagreements persisted on its implementation. This paper contends that the root cause of the conflict remains the political struggle between elites within the PAIGC, as well as an incomplete transition from state-controlled economy to a liberal democracy with market economy.

However, the dearth of scholarly works on ECOWAS mediation within the sub-region particularly, in Guinea Bissau largely informed this article. This paper, therefore, interrogates ECOWAS' intervention in Guinea Bissau with the aim of proffering actionable solutions to the problem. In order to guide this paper, the following questions become necessary: what are the components of the ECOWAS mediation strategy in Guinea Bissau? How effective are the mediation strategy in Guinea Bissau? What are the challenges of the ECOWAS in their mediation roles in Guinea Bissau? And how can the peace process be enhanced for effective conflict prevention, management and resolution? Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized for the paper. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews of security analysts, a member of ECOWAS monitoring unit, international media correspondents and senior academics of international relations. Secondary data were sourced from books, journals, newspapers' reports and internet sources. The data gathered were content analyzed.

2.0 CLARIFICATION OF BASIC CONCEPTS

It is very important to clarify some key concepts as used in this paper. These terms shall be explained briefly under this section. They include conflict, mediation and ECOWAS.

Conflict: The term 'conflict' often assumes a multi-disciplinary dimension, cutting across the fields of English language, psychology, military, politics, sociology, administration and literature. Conflict is certainly an inherent and foreseeable part of human existence. It is also the pursuit of incompatible interest and goals by different groups. Conflict can be constructively positive in the form of social conflict or destructively negative in the form of armed or violent conflict. Peace and conflict are two sides of the same coin. It is the absence of peace that ushers in conflict and the vice versa. Conflict sometimes resorts to the use of force and violence in the pursuit of individual or group interest and goals. The worst form of conflict is the armed or violent conflict which

includes mass murder and genocide against unarmed civilians. Conflicts arise from the pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individuals and or groups in defined social and physical environments (Otite & Albert, 1999). This definition emphasises the opposition or incompatibility at the heart of the conflict, and initially leaves open the exact nature of these incompatibilities. Conflict is not always characterised by violence. Yet, conflict might escalate and lead to destructive results, in particular in the form of physical violence that is increasingly seen as legitimate as the situation intensifies. However, conflict can also lead to a new social or political order and therefore be productive if the parties involved are able to deal with it constructively. In Guinea Bissau, the conflict is represented by deep rooted political differences which were rooted complex individualistic interests.

Mediation: Picard (2000) explained that the word ‘mediation’ is derived from the Latin word ‘mediare’, which means to be in the middle. Hence, Goldberg et al (1992) defined mediation as a process that employs a neutral impartial person or persons to facilitate negotiation between disputing parties with an effort to reach a mutually acceptable resolution. Traditionally, the mediator is conceived as a neutral and impartial arbiter, whose main goal is to facilitate the amicable resolution of the dispute between the parties. However, international mediation takes a slightly different approach in the sense that the role of a mediator goes beyond the simplistic approach of being neutral, non-coercive and non-binding diplomacy. In other words, most mediators at the international level function as self-interested, exhibiting biases and could indeed adopt the posture of a coercive third-party intervenor. This is even more probable in situations of multiple third parties, whose motivation and interests can be multifaceted. As a summary, Vukovic (2014:63) states:

Insights from domestic mediation are still fundamental for our understanding of international mediation, with a great deal of overlap in their theoretical understanding of both dynamics. The particular differences that can be found between two processes are direct results of the context within which they are conducted. In an international system that is deprived of central authority, various international actors conduct mediation activities in conditions that greatly differ from those found on the domestic level. Although there are still strong similarities between the processes of internal and domestic mediation, lack of a clear structure on the international level, where actors seek to preserve their independence, made the international mediation more susceptible to the

particular self-interest that drives various international actors in mediating a particular international conflict. While in certain domestic settings, mediation is by rule conducted by a single trust-worthy that has no stake in the dispute, international disputes usually attract and bring into the mediation process different types of actors, that are just as numerous and frequently as diverse in their interest as the warring parties themselves

Hence, International Mediators are therefore no longer seen as being passive or merely facilitating communication between disputing parties but as an interested party whose specific characteristics directly affect the outcome of the process (Vukovic, 2014).

ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional authority formed in 1975 by the treaty of Lagos to promote economic trade, intergovernmental cooperation and a common currency among its members. ECOWAS is comprised of Benin, Cote D’ivoire; Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mail, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde. However, ECOWAS’ mandate has expanded to include intervention in disputes as embedded in its 1999 Protocols on conflict prevention, management and resolution (Okom and Ugbe, 2016).

3.0 THE NATURE OF GUINEA BISSAU’S CONFLICT AND ITS HISTORICAL CONJECTURES

Guinea – Bissau is located between Guinea and Senegal in West Africa, and it is known to be the first Portuguese colony to attain political independence. The People’s Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARP), as it is still known today, fought from 1963 until 1974 in a frequently brutal war of independence against Portuguese rule. Upon the attainment of independence from the Portuguese in 1974, Guinea – Bissau was dominated by strong political actors who built a self – reinforcing system that concentrated power in the state capital, Bissau (Adebajo, 2002). The country is also known to operate a multi – party political system and had its first multi-party elections for president and parliament in 1994. The contestation for power among the political actors led to a protracted political logjam in the country. Regan & Thompson (2013) observed that the institutional shortcomings, which had to do with political rivalry between the Head of Government and the Head of State contributed to a worsening political atmosphere in the country.

In an interview with Mr. Francisco Mendes, the secretary to the Guinea Bissau consulate in Nigeria, he stated that:

The PAIGC became the ruling party in both Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde after independence, and in fact this remained the situation until the party split in 1980 following a coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau, into the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and PAICV in Cape Verde with both parties subsequently embraced multiparty democracy in the early 1990s. The quest/ tussle for power amongst the political parties have led to the continuous political crisis in the state. The state is known to have quite a number of political parties which include African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), Democratic Convergence Party (DCP), Democratic Party of Progress (DPP), Democratic Social Front (DSF) and so on. (Personal Interview with Mr Mendes: 2018/07/20, 3:00PM; Abuja)

The military interference through a coup culminated into a civil war in 1998. The then Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, General Asumane Mané launched the first attack in 1998 after he had been sacked by then President Vieira for allegedly trafficking arms to support Le Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance (MFDC), a rebel group in Senegal. It later became obvious that President Vieira was also actively involved in arms trafficking. He relied on 2,000 troops deployed for a counter – attack supported by ECOWAS who invited Senegal and Guinea to contribute troops to the crisis zone after Mané launched the attack. With most of the people supporting him, General Mané eventually emerged victorious in 1999. He ultimately exiled the unpopular authoritarian President João Bernardo “Nino” Vieira, bringing an end to the civil war in 1999 (Toupane, Kante and Faye, 2019).

After the civil war, elections for the parliament and the presidency were held in 1999 and 2000, respectively, and General Mané did not present himself as a candidate in the election. The elections brought Kumba Ialá and his Party for Social Renewal (PSR) into power as President. However, it became apparent that Mané was reluctant to relinquish his newfound role as the kingmaker, which might insulate the military from future dominance of the democratic system. Shortly after the presidential elections in 2000, bill-boards were erected above Mané’s offices declaring him “co-president.”. Eventually, President Ialá ordered the arrest of Gen. Mané for subverting his authority. Consequently, Mané was murdered in November 2000 by a group of soldiers loyal to Mané’s

successor and military Chief of Staff General Veríssimo Correia Seabra (Toupane, Kante & Faye, 2019).

In September 2003, General Seabra overthrew the increasingly unpopular President Kumba Ialá, who was widely blamed for superintending over a dysfunctional and inefficient government. Like Mané, Seabra midwived a return to civilian rule and elections, but fragmentation within the armed forces worsened as groups began to align with different senior officers and military factions. General Seabra became a victim of this deterioration when he was killed in a revolt in 2004. General Batista Tagme Na Wai rose to the top military hierarchy after Seabra's death. Na Wai's selection, which was largely determined by military elites as opposed to the civilian government, was a sign of deep contradictions within the military hierarchy. He was a member of former President Ialá's ethnic group, the Balanta, but many of his deputies and newly promoted officers were closely aligned with former President Vieira in a delicate effort to balance competing groups in the armed forces and civilian political class. In March 2004, legislative elections were held but in October 2004, another military coup a faction of the military resulted in the death of the Head of the Armed Forces and caused widespread unrests in the state, preparing the ground for the Guinea - Bissau political logjam. According to Alberto (2008), presidential elections were held in June 2005 for the first time since the coup that deposed Ialá. The elections were described as calm and organized despite some reports of electoral disturbances and attacks by unidentified gunmen. However, it was noted that before the election, the AU, ECOWAS and the UN engaged in preventive diplomacy in which a powerful delegation comprising the former Mozambican President Joachim Chissano as UN special envoy, the AU chairperson, the Chairperson of ECOWAS and its Executive Secretary and heads of other regional bodies were deployed as delegates (World Peace Foundation, 2017).

At the initial stage, the involvement of the International Community witnessed a relative peace and cooperation among the major political contenders. But this was short-lived. A soldier was killed when a mutinous troop attacked the presidential palace in November 2008, and General Na Wai survived an "accidental" gunfire directed at his motorcade by members of Vieira's security detail (Birgit 2012). On March 1, 2009, Na Wai was killed in a bombing incident orchestrated by unknown persons. On the second day, (2 March 2009 precisely), however, Vieira was also

assassinated by a suspected group of soldiers avenging the death of the head of Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Batista Tagme Na Wai, who had been killed in an explosion the day before. Vieira's death did not trigger widespread violence, but there were signs of looming danger in the country. It was later reported that the device used to kill Na Wai was more sophisticated than anything previously seen in Guinea-Bissau. The explosive might have connections with Latin American drug cartel in Thailand, who were Na Wai's rivals in Bissau and high-profile weapons trafficking. Military leaders in the country pledged to respect the constitutional order of succession. National Assembly Speaker, Raimundo Pereira was then appointed and sworn in as the interim president until a nationwide election on 28 June 2009. It was won by Malam Bacai Sanhá of the PAIGC, against Kumba Ialá, who was the presidential candidate of the PRS. In January 2012, President Sanhá died of complications from diabetes (Toupane, Kante & Faye, 2019). After Sanhá's death, an election was held in March, but there was no clear winner and Raimundo Pereira was again appointed as an interim president. He was, however, ousted by another coup after which Manuel Serifo Nhamadjo formed a transitional government. He later supervised two rounds of presidential elections that produced Jose Mario Vaz as President. Jose Mario took over the rein of governance on June 23, 2014 and served the nation until the expiration of his tenure on February 27, 2020, when President Umaro Sissoco Embaló succeeded him. Although his tenure was not without major political upsets. Since 2012, there have been several forms of peace interventions in Guinea Bissau. These were majorly led by ECOWAS and the UN. They appointed President Condé of Guinea to mediate. In August 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari, the then Chairperson of the ECOWAS Regional Contact Group on Guinea Bissau appointed former President Olusegun Obasanjo as a Special Envoy to mediate the perennial conflict in order to secure a truce among disputing parties. In pursuant of this objective, the 49th Ordinary Summit of Authority of Heads of States and Government in June 2016 also urged all parties in the conflict to adopt dialogue as key mechanism for resolving the crisis. In summarizing the root cause of the crisis, a diplomat and renowned international relations expert, Professor Akinjide Osuntokun summited that:

The major cause of the conflict was the power tussle between the political parties in Guinea Bissau. The rivalry and hatred that came from losing and winning elections was one of the factors that fueled the political crisis as well as the long time hatred the parties had towards the PAIGC".(Personal Interview: 2018/06/12, Ibadan)

Understanding the components of the ECOWAS mediation strategy in Guinea Bissau.

Several conflict management mechanisms were deplored by the International Community in an attempt to resolve the cyclical crisis that rendered Guinea–Bissau politically unstable. However, this paper primarily focuses on the mediation efforts of ECOWAS in stabilizing the embattled nation. These interventions took different dimensions and later dovetailed into what is now popularly referred to as the Conakry Agreement.

First and foremost, it is important to understand that ECOWAS’ mandate regarding the adoption of mediation resolution as captured under the 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security focuses primarily on three key components, which included: (1) the Mediation and Security Council (2) Defense and Security Commission and; (3) Council of the Wise. To be precise, the Council of Elders consists of eminent persons from various political, traditional, and religious spheres who act as “mediators, conciliators and facilitators. According to International Peace Academy (2002), ‘the strength of the Council of Elders lies in its reliance on the power of personal relationships to bring aggrieved parties to negotiate a peaceful end to conflicts’. The Defense and Security Commission component of the ECOWAS intervention focused on the establishment of the ECOWAS Commission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) in 2012 to manage the fragile security situation of the country, support the transition process and offer technical assistance on the nation’s security reform agenda. Hence, ECOMIB was one of the key strategies of mediation strategy in Guinea-Bissau. Over 500 troops of the commission were contributed by Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Senegal. Its mandates ranged from military operations to community dialogue processes to de-escalate the political tension in that country. The roles of ECOMIB include:

- Military and police patrol all over the country and discussions with populations to address security challenges;
- Secure the presidency and prime minister’s offices and houses, provide a military escort to VIPs, and secure the national electoral commission’s office;
- Provide health care assistance to the population;
- Initiate the demobilization, reconversion and socio-economic reintegration of the security forces and develop a training plan for military and police (Toupane, Kante & Faye, 2019).

The ECOMIB took place in three special phases: ECOMIB 1, ECOMIB 11 and ECOMIB 111 from 2012 to 2018. The phases became necessary as the mission was extended by the Commission as the situation arose. According to an independent Researcher, Gbemi Aduroja:

The reformation of ECOWAS from being just an economic – advancing body to a political, peace and security body led to the development of some of the glaring interventionist programmes embarked upon by PAPS department under the commission which falls within the mandate spelt out in the extant Normative Frameworks includes conceptualization of reform measures for the long-term stability and development of Guinea Bissau. This in turn contributed immensely to the resuscitation of the International Contact Group on Guinea Bissau (ICG-GB) as one of the platforms for mobilizing partners’ support for the implementation of the reforms, thus ensuring the consolidation of peace, stability and development”. (Personal Interview: Abuja, 2018/10/08).

On the 14th of August 2016, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, His Excellency, Marcel de Souza paid a two-day visit to Guinea Bissau from 14th to 15th August 2016. During the visit, President de Souza met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Soares Sambú, and paid courtesy calls on key political actors including the Prime Minister BaciroDja, the Speaker of the Parliament, Cipriano Cassamá and the President of the Republic, José Mário Vaz. President de Souza’s visit to Guinea-Bissau came at a moment that the country was stalled in institutional crisis among the Republic’s main institutions which has led to lack of dialogue among the main political stakeholders, with deep impact on the people’s daily life. The President of the Commission urged the authorities in Guinea-Bissau to do their best to ratify the ECOWAS protocols, especially the Protocol on Free Movement of People and Goods. President de Souza added that the foundation of the Community was linked to the ideal of the free movement of citizens within the Region. President de Souza also discussed with the Country’s leadership on a number of other issues, among which is the Community Levy arrears. He urged the financial authorities to address the issue and to honor the country’s commitment by approaching the Commission and rescheduled the payment plan.

The President of the Commission was deeply briefed on the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) and was pleased to see the contribution of ECOMIB in the stabilization of the country.

However, Mr. DeSouza informed the national authorities on the decision of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government during the last Summit in Dakar on the 4th of June, 2016 to end the Mission within a year, hence the need to immediately train the Country's defense and Security forces within six months to adequately equip them to maintain stability and ensure the security of lives and property in Guinea-Bissau. The President of the Commission took advantage of the visit to introduce the new Permanent Representative of the President of the ECOWAS Commission to Guinea-Bissau Mr. Blaise Diplo to the Authorities. On the situation in Guinea Bissau, during the 74th council meeting in 2015, the need for dialogue to consolidate peace and democracy in Guinea Bissau was relived. The council urged all stakeholders, including political parties, to be resolutely committed to dialogue for the enhancement of the country's political stability; and also reiterated its appeal to the Guinea Bissau authorities to expedite action on the review of the country's Constitution, as well as to the ECOWAS bilateral and multilateral partners, which includes the international contact group, for their physical and financial support to continue exercising the ECOMIB mandate. This meeting identified MackySall, President of the Republic of Senegal and Chairman, Alpha Condé, President of the Republic of Guinea and YahyaJammeh, President of the Republic of The Gambia, (who served as leaders and mediators) Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chairman of the Regional Contact Group, and Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Special Envoy to Guinea Bissau, for their significant contributions for their critical efforts at ending the crisis. In an interview with Mr. Francisco Mendes, the secretary to the Guinea Bissau embassy in Nigeria, he reasoned that:

The continuous political uprising led the president to seek help from the international community. This made the ECOWAS commission appoint the President of Guinea to head a team of mediators, alongside three (3) ministers of foreign affairs of Liberia, Senegal and Guinea Bissau. The mediators headed by president Alpha Conde of Guinea called for a meeting in Conakry, Guinea from the 11th to 14th of October 2016 for consultations on how to end the political crisis in Guinea Bissau, following the six- agenda road map. The meeting was attended by the Prime minister, the speaker of the national assembly, the five categories of the political parties (PAIGC, PRS, PND, PCM, UM), religious leaders and the civil society representatives. The meeting was to ensure an agreement was reached on the consensual selection of a prime minister till the

2018 legislative election, formation of an inclusive democratic government, adoption of a stability pact, constitutional reformation and reintegration of the group of 15 into PAIGC. The agreement is what is known as the Conakry Agreement (Personal interview: 2018/07/20, Abuja)

The summary of the Conakry Agreement focused on the following key elements:

- a) Consensus on the choice of a Prime Minister who has the confidence of the President of the Republic. The Prime Minister should be in office until the 2018 legislative elections
- b) Formation of an inclusive government based on an organogram agreed upon by all political parties in the National Assembly, in line with the principle of proportional representation
- c) Possibility of appointing independent prominent figures and civil society leaders to the inclusive government.
- d) The inclusive government will implement a programme prepared by a national roundtable dialogue within thirty days following the appointment of the Prime Minister.
- e) Compliance with the existing principle for the appointment of senior officials of the Republic.
- f) Preparation and adoption, by the national roundtable dialogue, of a Stability Pact signed by key political and social stakeholders, and structured around the principles of: i. Accountability and transparency in institutional decision-making; ii. Constitutional reform aimed at establishing stable relations between the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary; iii. Reform of the electoral law for the organization of legislative and local elections in 2018; iv. New political party law including public funding of political parties on the basis of their representation in the National Assembly; v. Defence, security and justice sector reform vi. Take-off of the implementation of a development programme in line with vision “Terra Ranka”.
- g) ECOWAS, African Union, CPLP, United Nations and EU’s support for the development, implementation and monitoring of the Stability Pact, in particular through the provision of high-level expertise as well as other substantial financial resources and logistics.
- h) Establishment of a 3-level monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure the stability of the process: - At the level of ECOWAS Council of Ministers - At the level of the ECOWAS

Commission, in conjunction with international partners - At the level of the Mediator who will report to the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government.

- i) The constitutional reform will be conducted as part of a nation-wide consultation taking into account existing review structures. ECOWAS and the United Nations will provide high-level constitutional experts.
- j) The unconditional reintegration of the 15 radical MPs into PAIGC, albeit in consonance with existing texts within PAIGC”. (Conakry Agreement On The Implementation Of The ECOWAS Roadmap For The Resolution Of The Political Crisis In Guinea Bissau, 2016).

The Conakry Agreement was consequently abridged into a six – point agenda that focused on actionable solutions to the lingering crises as follows:

- a. That the stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to the Conakry Agreement;
- b. Encourage the stakeholders to accelerate the reintegration of the 15 “dissident” MPs into the PAIGS, in compliance with the Conakry Agreement;
- c. The appointment by the President of the Republic of a consensual Prime Minister without further delay, who has the confidence of the Republic;
- d. The formation of all-inclusive government, taking into account the parliamentary representations of the political parties;
- e. The convening of parliamentary sessions in the shortest possible time;
- f. The organization of a national dialogue roundtable to discuss the ‘Stability Pact’ meant to articulate key constitutional and institutional reforms before 2018 legislative elections as stated in Conakry Agreement (Toupane, Kante & Faye, 2019:8).

From all indications, the agreement summarized the road map to peace and stability for the embattled country to overcome its lingering crisis as soon as possible. Francisco Mendes, abridged the content as follows:

The Conakry agreement stated that a new Prime Minister be elected again with the supervision of the commission and other regional bodies and a government of consensus from members of the categories of the 5 political parties plus the group of fifteen (15), this meant that the prime minister that would be selected must be accepted by all the people. Subsequently, President Sirleaf of Liberia led a Presidential Mission to Bissau on 5th November 2016 accompanied by

Foreign Minister Marjon Kamara to provide the opportunity that would lead to a decisive progress in solving the persisting crisis in Guinea Bissau. The Mission recognized that the current political stalemate puts at risk Guinea Bissau's stability and development; and this must be overcome by the swift appointment of a consensual Prime Minister without delay who has the confidence of the President of the Republic, in accordance with the Conakry Agreement; knowing fully well that despite the consensus clause stated, the parties would not agree, so the president was asked to bring three prospective names of which one of them would be appointed under a consensus.”. (Personal Interview: 2018/07/20, Abuja)

The key role of the international mediators remained at best facilitative. This was evidenced in their limited involvement in the appointment of the three nominees for the office of the Prime Minister. The power of nominations was left to the President to decide, probably in concordance with the established status or electoral due process, from electing a prime minister, as mediation is known to be facilitated negotiation. However, instead of the power of appointing the substantive Prime Minister, he was required to come up with three nominees, which he should present to the coalition of the political parties and other stakeholders to decide the substantive Prime Minister.

4.0 DIFFICULT ROUTE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONAKRY AGREEMENT

Rather than addressing the endemic political impasse, the Conakry Agreement further incensed the fragile peace processes in several ways. The first issue was associated with the rejection of the President Vas' three nominees for the position of the Prime Minister. All the political parties did not agree on the process that led to the emergence of the new Prime Minister. The President had nominated three candidates including Mamadou Joao Fadia, Umaru Sissoco Embalo and Augusto Olivais in accordance with the Conakry Agreement. He, however, went ahead to pick Umaru Sissoco Embalo as the substantive Prime Minister without the due consultation with the political parties as stipulated by the Conakry Convention. Most of the political parties believed the action of the President did not only violate the terms of the Conakry Agreement, but it also contradicted the constitutional provision that requires the parliament's approval for a substantive Prime minister to emerge (Toupane, Kante & Faye, 2019). Secondly, the disagreement on the substantive Prime Minister escalated the political climate among the major political parties within the assembly as they refused to support or participate in the government led by the new Prime Minister Sissoco

Embaló. All the programmes of his government including the national budget and other public policy proposals passage were stagnated. In fact, most of the members of the parliament literally withdrew from the government. Conakry Agreement became an object of diverse misinterpretations. According to Toupane et al (2019):

The negative reactions of to Sissoco's appointment by many political parties including the PAIGC were therefore predictable. Apart from the PRS, the other political parties refused to participate in the government led by Sissoco arguing that he is a close relative of Vais, without any particular legitimacy. Having neither the inclusiveness nor representation stipulated in the Conakry Agreement, the Sissoco's government like that of Dja's, failed to have its programmes approved by the assembly. (Toupane et al, 2019: 22)

Again, the government under President Vais' watch hit a stalemate as he continued to keep an unpopular Prime Minister as the head of government. Several calls for the immediate implementation of the Conakry Agreement raised more tension to the extent that ECOWAS had no choice than to impose a month deadline on the President Vais and his team on December 16, 2017 to resolve the impasse or risk sanctions. Barely few days to the expiration of the deadline, 12th January 2018 to be specific, Sissoco resigned his appointment as the Prime Minister. The President's attempt to replace Sissoco with Autor Silva was again resisted by some political parties, including some elements of the ruling PAIGC that boycotted the discussions that led to the emergence of Silva. ECOWAS was left with no other option than to whip the stick by imposing severe sanctions on 19 key erring actors of the entire process. About five members of President Vais' political camp, especially his son, Emerson Goudiby Vais were affected by the sanctions. The sanctions targeted the suspension of affected persons from ECOWAS activities, freezing their financial assets and their being denied visas with their immediate family members (Toupane et al, 2019).

5.0 CONCLUSION

The political impasse in Guinea Bissau was a true reflection of the complex transition processes that are associated with to most African states. The political impasse stagnated governance to the extent of precipitating regional instability within the West African Sub-region. It drew the attention of ECOWAS and other international bodies. It was ECOWAS that took it upon itself to intervene using some of its diplomatic instruments that included the use of dialogue/mediation to unite major

political actors. This culminated into the Conakry Agreement. The implementation of the Agreement became so problematic that ECOWAS had to initiate other diplomatic actions including deadlines and sanctions. While the deadline was used to pressurize President Vais to extend the consultation (to other political parties) in the appointment of the Prime Minister, sanctions were deployed to pressurize erring parties to accept the terms of the Conakry Agreement.

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Circulation as a Quagmire in Newspaper Business in Nigeria
(A Study of selected Newspapers)

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Abstract

The study investigated the challenges facing newspapers in Nigeria, especially circulation, using selected newspapers. It aimed at understanding the causes of the challenges, the effect of the challenges on newspaper organizations and to proffer solutions to these challenges. The study adopted the Systems Theory to and to achieve the objectives of this study, an in-depth interview was conducted individually on the Circulation Managers of the selected newspaper organizations. It was discovered that high cost of living, advent of social media, bad roads, ethnic and religious sentiments, cost of transportation, late printing, high cost of production materials, armed robbers attack among others are the causes of the challenges. While some of the respondents suggested likely solutions to the challenges, by enjoining the newspaper organizations to have proper planning, prepare ahead of eventualities, introduction of prepaid policy, adequate maintenance of the materials, others said strategic investments on online papers are the way out. This study is recommended for newspaper and magazine organisations to adjust and get solutions to the challenges facing the circulation of their copies to potential readers.

Keywords: Challenges, Newspaper circulation, Newspaper revenue, political economy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Many newspapers published in Nigeria are general interest titles intended for a mass audience, including both the general public and academics. A typical Nigerian newspaper has news, articles, stories advertisements and feature articles Nigeria had a buoyant newspaper industry until 1986 when the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – inspired Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was introduced. Before the introduction of SAP, newspaper circulation in Nigeria peaked at about two million copies daily (Igwe, 2004). Also, Advertisers Association of Nigeria (ADVAN) (2011) in their report, which was done over a period of six weeks, between March and April 2011, portrayed an alarming slide in the patronage of newspapers. According to the study done across the country on about 15 newspapers, the daily sales figure of all the newspaper was less than 300, 000, meaning that only one in every 470 Nigerians buy newspapers daily. That ratio apparently

doesn't consider persons and organizations that buy between two to 10 newspapers daily. By this, it may be more appropriate to say that one in every 500 Nigerians buy newspaper daily.

Also, with the coming of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the Ibrahim Babangida government, the middle class, a potential newspaper reading class disappeared, thus leading to decreasing demand for newspapers. These factors, among others, caused a strain on newspaper businesses, leading to a decline in circulation, readership and revenues. Newspaper circulation in Nigeria has since been on a sharp decline (Sanni, 2022). In many developed countries, newspaper circulation is falling due to social and technological changes such as the availability of news content and other newspaper contents on the internet.

Newspaper circulation in Nigeria is gradually on the decline with newspaper organisation now selling fewer copies. The problems are not far-fetched as majority of Nigerian readers are poor in reading and finance thereby finding it difficult to buy a copy of newspaper at the rate of 200-300 Naira. They resort to looking for a newspaper stand to read free or pay just a token amount of 20 to 50 naira to read as many newspapers as possible. Another contributing factor is the fact that people can now read news on a daily basis online.

The study, therefore, examines the challenges of circulation in newspaper production in Nigeria with a study of *Punch Guardian*, *Leadership* and *Daily Trust* newspapers.

Statement of the Problem

Circulation of Newspaper in Nigeria has been on a sharp decline. It is assumed that the newspapers in Nigeria presently are recording loss of readership and revenue in circulation. For instance, the total circulation figure quoted for 2009 when the survey by ADVAN was conducted was 295, 000 copies. However, since household sizes are usually used for this estimate and if Nigeria has a household size of 4.6, the suggestion here is that the newspaper is selling more than 217,000 copies per day (Olaniyan, 2019). This figure was extremely low considering that even Nigerian Concord was circulating over 131, 000 daily by 1982 while it operated (Obi, 1984 as quoted by Sanni, 2013).

According to Sanni (2013) the year was a non-election year, hence the slide in the figure compared to 530,000 recorded in 2007 which was an election year, and 570,000 in 2003 another election year. A further pointer to this is that no newspaper in Nigeria presently makes the list of the first 100 newspapers in the world concerning ranking. Newspapers in the world have circulation figures ranging from 14.2million to 5.6million daily especially in Japan and China (Ashong & Henry, 2017).

According to Ray Ekpu (former Editor-in-Chief of Newswatch magazine), as reported in Guardian (Sept. 2, 2002), there is hardly any newspaper in Nigeria today that prints 100,000 copies, which shows that the business is shrinking, even though there are more publications and increase in cover price. Ashong & Henry (2017) said that all the newspapers in Nigeria today have combined circulation figure that is far less than 500,000 copies per day of *Daily Times* of Nigeria in 1980 when the population of Nigeria was about half of what it is today. Presently the stockpile of unsold copies of newspapers and magazines in the circulation departments of most print media organizations is a vivid sign of this challenge. Ekeng (2010), disclosed that *Punch* as the number one selling national daily only circulates 34, 264 copies,

The *Sun* was ranked third with 25, 632 unit sales. *Vanguard* got 25,241, while *Guardian* and *Thisday* came 5th and 6th respectively, with 25, 222 and 21, 703 daily sales. *Daily Trust*, the most popular newspaper up North has 11, 672 daily unit sales. *Tribune*, the oldest surviving newspaper in Nigeria, was another surprise, managing only 8, 314 daily sales. The above mentioned dailies constitute what is known as the top 8 in the standing. The others combined, include *Daily Independent*, *Leadership*, *National Life*, *New Nigerian*, *Mirror* could barely rake up 1,600 daily sales. (Ekharefor, 2013)

This research has, therefore, been instituted to find out the major challenges faced by the newspaper in the process of circulating copies to potential readers, using *Punch*, *Guardian*, *Leadership* and *Daily Trust* Newspapers, being well established newspapers, which have capacity to print as many copies as demanded (Adewakun, 2010). Also, in accordance with the above, the study seeks to examine the challenges facing the circulation of newspaper in Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The study is based on the following objectives:

- a. To identify the major challenges facing selected newspaper organisations in Nigeria in the area of circulating copies to readers.
- b. To unearth likely causes of these challenges.
- c. To situate properly the effects of dwindling circulating figures by selected Nigerian newspapers.
- d. To proffer solutions to the challenges militating against circulation of newspapers in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions that guided the study:

- a. What are the major challenges facing circulation of copies of selected newspapers in Nigeria?
- b. What are the causes of these challenges?
- c. What are the effects of the challenges on the selected newspaper organisations?
- d. What are the possible solutions to the identified challenges?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The press in Nigeria dates back to 1846 when a printing press was established in Calabar. It was established by the Presbyterian Church and the essence was to print religious books and pamphlets. The establishment of the first newspaper in Nigeria can be traced back to 1859 when Reverend Henry Townsend of the Anglican Mission (A missionary) established a newspaper that was called “Iwe rohin Fun Awon Ara Egba Ati Gbogbo Yoruba” meaning, “the newspaper for the Egba people and all Yorubas”. The Next newspaper to be established after Iwe Irohin was the Anglo African Newspaper. It was the second newspaper that was established in Nigeria by a foreigner West Indian immigrant called Robert Campbell. The newspaper was established in Lagos in 1863 to promote the interest and welfare of Lagosian (Duyile, 1985, cited in Sanni, 2013)

Newspaper's circulation is not sufficient to support a newspaper unit. Conversely, a newspaper unit cannot get adequate revenue from advertising unless the circulation of a newspaper is extensive. Extensive circulation also enables a newspaper unit to keep its 'freedom' intact. Circulation is the blood of a newspaper. It is an index of the influence of a newspaper. (Newspaper's image in the public mind and its value.) Survival and expansion of a newspaper unit depend upon to a great extent on the revenue from advertisements which may be little or nil. Marketing department looking after sales and distribution of newspaper looks after the vital problem of circulation.

It is assumed that the newspapers in Nigeria are presently recording loss of readership and revenue, but the extent of the loss is unknown. This is evident as no newspaper in Nigeria presently makes the list of the first 100 newspapers in the world regarding ranking (WNA, 2022). Many scholars have defined the challenges facing newspaper circulation in various aspects, in journals and published books. (Olukotun, 2018, Aina, 2002, Tejumaiye et al, 2005)

According to Esimokha (2014), various problems of newspaper circulation in Nigeria include: low literacy level among Nigerians, poor newspaper reading culture, the review of the newspaper on radio and television stations in the morning affecting the circulation of the newspapers. He also averred that high cost of transportation and lack of maintenance culture by the newspaper organisations are factors. The activities of free readers association and “vultures” (going from one newsstand to another, stretching their neck to read newspapers) also affect the circulation of newspaper production. (Esimohka, 2014)

A largely disputed 2009 survey by the Advertising Association of Nigeria (ADVAN) even put the circulation figure at 295,000 copies, with figure fluctuating between 500,000 in 1999, 570,000 in 2003 and 530,000 in 2007, until the fall in 2009, said to be as a result of the year not being an election year (Newspaper Circulation Check 2009:17-18).

Another factor that causes loss of readership and revenue is the internet and the explosion in new technologies, particularly the GSM phones. The Nigeria National Communication Commission (NCC) in 2009 recorded 132.7 million mobile telephone subscribers, a 50% increase over the previous year (Ekwo, 2011).

According to (Vision 2020:26), A further pointer to this is that no newspaper in Nigeria presently makes the list of the first 100 newspapers in the world in terms of ranking. Newspapers in the world have circulation figures ranging from 14.2million to 5.6million daily especially in Japan and China.

Another factor that causes loss of readership and revenue is the internet and the explosion in new technologies, particularly the GSM phones. Newspapers often have a stable circulation, but declining market penetration becomes a problem when there are a large number of competing products. Advertisers will usually go for newspapers with a more extensive circulation, meaning that newspapers with lower circulation, if not catering to a niche market, will be starved of advertising. Newspapers are constantly facing new threats from new technologies escalating the cost of production or upgrading existing facilities.

In a study “The Effects of Online News on Print Newspaper Circulation in Nigeria: A Study of Daily Trust Newspaper by Isyaku, Mohd-Nazri, and Engku-Suhaimi (2015) findings showed that the overall effect of online newspaper on the circulation of newspaper is significant. The study took into consideration the fact that even the newspapers under study had more subscribers requesting for the e-copy than those who subscribed to the print copy. The study however recommended that newspapers should pay more attention to the growing online requests by the subscribers.

Anyanwu, Chibuzor and Agwu (2017) found out in their study on newspaper problems in Nigeria, that, circulation is a major problem of newspaper in the country. They submitted that the figures attached to circulation was daily dropping and called on the different newspaper organisations to strategise towards improving the circulation figures.

Theoretical Framework

The first call for a general systems theory came from Ludwig von Bertalanffy’s research in the 1940s-50s. In 1968, he published “General System Theory: Foundations, Development, Applications.” The goal of this book was to outline certain basic laws that can be applied to virtually every scientific field. From his perspective, the way individual components within a complex system cyclically are both affected by and causing an effect on the system can be applied

and reveal crucial information in multiple settings. Following this thought process, Bertalanffy reasoned there ought to be universal guidelines or principles that are applied across the sciences and within educational settings to further unify certain fields—specifically the natural and social sciences—and relate them to one another, rather than looking at them individually.

The systems theory of management was used to drive this study. It is the interdisciplinary study of systems. A system is known as a body with related and dependent parts, and its boundaries define it. As companies grow, they develop more and more complex subsystems that must coordinate with each other in the process of transforming inputs to outputs (McShane and Von Glinow, 2003). These interdependencies can quickly become so complex that a minor event in one subsystem may amplify into severe unintended consequences elsewhere in the organisation.

All the parts involved in the system are interdependent, as when changes occur in one piece of the system it affects other components and the whole system. The most common use of the system in media is in the system structure of media or newspaper organisation on how they gather, process, and circulate their production to potential readers.

All system in the newspaper organisation is interdependent. Through the gathering of news by a body in the system, process (edit) it by another body and circulated by the circulation department which is another body in the system, and this will then influence the progress of the system. In the absence of this production flow in the system, whether by a particular body of the system, this will lead to the decline of the set goals. Also, the situation where a body in the newspaper system is moving towards the deterioration, i.e. the reporting unit did not provide needed and relevant information and also there is a backward and ill-doing from the circulation unit, this will also develop destruct and affect the running of the system and this will build loss of readership to the productions by the system.

Based on this, this theory is, however, buttressing and substantiating how the decline in one part of the system causes destruct to the system entirely, i.e. the challenges of newspaper circulation in Nigeria.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted in-depth interview research method. It is used to capture rich and in-depth descriptive data about people's attitude and perception, and unfolding complex processes. The instrument employed in gathering data for this study was interview guide, which assisted the researcher in getting data from the interviewees concerning various challenges of newspapers circulation in Nigeria. The population of this study covers all the national newspapers in Nigeria, which is 39 (Thirty- Nine).

The sample of this study comprises the circulation managers of *Punch*, *Guardian*, *Leadership* and *Daily Trust* newspapers. The study adopted purposive sampling technique in selecting the newspapers according to the two main regions in Nigeria- South and North. Respondents (circulation managers) for the interviews were also purposively selected as the researchers think that they are in the best position to provide answers to the research questions. The researchers carried out the investigation independently, by conducting the interviews face to face and one after the other on the sample of the research, which are the circulation managers of *Punch* and *Guardian* Newspapers in Lagos/Ogun States, South-West Nigeria, *Daily Trust* and *Leadership* Newspaper in Abuja, North-Central of Nigeria.

The data collected was presented in descriptive and narrative data analysis method, as all the data gathered were vividly narrated and well described.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Research Question 1: What are the major challenges facing the circulation of copies of newspapers in Nigeria?

The various challenges faced during the circulation of newspapers were discussed by the respondents interviewed, which include, timing and delivery. The time it takes to deliver the paper to newsstands after printing can be delayed by unforeseen circumstances, which may consist of bad roads, traffic, vehicles developing fault, scarcity of fuel or hike in price, which affects the cost of transportation and also vehicles being attacked by armed robbers. It was stated in the interview by the Senior Copy Sales Officer of *Punch* newspaper that, "we have cases of some of our drivers being attacked on the road by armed robbers on the highway, that one is quite rampant, now and

then especially around Ore expressway we get attacked”. Also the Circulation Manager of *Leadership* newspaper said that “armed robbers attack of our transporters when conveying papers to different locations in the federation”.

Circulation was also faced with some other challenges as submitted in the interview which includes, late printing due to the breakdown of machines, the high cost of production materials. Also, some organisations may not have newsprint (papers use in printing) which is also applicable to delaying or avoiding the newspaper organisations to go to market for that period. Another challenge is the advent of social media or online media where all reports or news available in the hard copy are also present on the online media.

As it was stated by *Guardian* newspaper Circulation Manager that “Parts of the country experience high sales and low sales dependent on sentiments. E.g. *Daily Trust* is loved in the north because it is seen as a northern paper, *The Sun* in the East, *Vanguard* in South-South, and *Tribune* in many parts of the South West ...”

It is evident that newspaper organisations face numerous challenges when circulating their copies to potential readers.

Research Question 2: What are the likely causes of the challenges facing newspaper circulation in Nigeria?

From the analysis and reply on what causes the challenges of newspaper circulation in Nigeria gotten from the Circulation Managers, it was discovered from the data obtained from the in-depth interview that, the causes can be pinned down to late printing which can also be caused by lot of things like, delay from any process of news making or reporting (gathering of story, prepare the story to be newsworthy, pass to the editor to edit, move to typeset guy, prepare printing plate and print papers) so delay from any of these processes can hinder late printing, which will cause the paper to probably not circulate for that day. Another cause can also be narrowed down to lack of maintenance of printing materials. However, it was also indicated by the interviewees that when transporting the copies to the readers there are some factors that can also cause the papers not to be circulated to readers. These include terrible roads, cars get accident that leads to loss of drivers and the copies, breakdown of vehicles used in transporting, increase and scarcity of fuel that may

leads to not circulating the papers to some particular locations, fluctuation in the exchange rate of naira which has led to expensiveness of materials require for printing and also returning of unsold copies from the vendors and distributors. The Circulation Manager of *Daily Trust* newspaper, declared that: "... you see I just met with the vendors, you see vendors and distributors will take your paper to sell it and come back and tell you stories give your outstanding, you will not see the paper because they sold it but if it is not sold they will bring it unsold, but since they didn't bring unsold its means they have sold it, but they will tell you they have not been paid, either they are telling series of lies or all sort of stories, those are the kind of specific challenges that affect us directly."

Technological advancement or embracing modernization in the industry is also seen as a cause of challenges facing circulation of newspaper in Nigeria, as it was stated by the Circulation Manager of Leadership newspaper that, "the cause of this challenges is technological, leadership newspaper like any other print media does not want to be regarded as local champion or an organization that is not ready to embrace modernization in the industry, therefore decided to go digital by establishing online newspaper and or uploading news stories online immediately they are being developed".

Therefore, it is evident that all the challenges facing the circulation of newspaper in Nigeria have severely affected the circulation of newspapers in many newspaper organisations, during the process circulation and the circulation entirely, which is then affecting the revenue generation and service of the organisations.

Research Question 3: What are the effects of the challenges on the management of newspaper organisations?

The effect of challenges facing circulation of Nigerian newspaper to potential readers has drastically affected the service and funding of many newspaper organizations, as discovered from the in-depth interview administered to the circulation managers of four different National Newspapers that, the topmost effect of the challenges is the reduced revenue generation, that is lack of getting funds for the organization through the sales of little or fewer copies daily.

The reduced revenue generation which was as a result of tremendous decline in copy sales whereby the organizations do not sell enough copies in a day, has really affected the funding of many newspaper organizations, as it was said by Leadership Newspaper respondent, that “decline in sales has led to poor revenue generation for the organization.” The decline in sales revenue also serves as a source of debt to the organisations which are held by the distributors and vendors, and it is a diminution of the revenue to the organisations.

Another effect is on the service of the organisation. If there is the occurrence of any challenge as it was found out in the study, it will affect the function of the organisations, in which the service of the organisation will not be run smoothly. From the analysis and report, it is evident that the challenges of newspaper circulation have extremely affected the service and revenue generation of the newspaper organisations.

Research Question 4: What are the possible solutions to the identified challenges?

From the data gotten from in-depth interview on the respondents of the selected newspapers, on the causes and effects of the challenges facing the circulation of newspaper to potential readers, the solution to the challenges was argued, which includes proper planning ahead/thinking ahead. Planning ahead will give no room to any form of challenges as it means provision of needed material for future use, it will also avoid making the newspaper not to go to the market for that period. Another solution is the quick use of the nearest commercial printing press; this will also serve as a solution when there is the occurrence of running out of material for printing.

Writing of sound, standard, human angle stories, stories that people can relate well with, stories that serve the interest of the people, can also aid quick and high demands of the newspaper by the people and it will be well circulated, as this will solve the problem of circulation challenges.

Another solution as gathered from the in-depth interview administered on the respondent of Leadership newspaper is an investment of online newspapers, for the recovery of the loss encounter from the lack of circulation and copy sales.

The introduction of prepaid policy for the payment of newspapers given to the vendors and distributor before they have been supplied has curbed to a large extent the issue of returned copies. Therefore, it is evident that, thinking ahead, proper planning, availability and maintenance of

materials for printing are seen as vital act to solve the challenges of newspaper circulation and also working together in circulation of newspapers and higher investment on the online papers, in other to replenish the lost revenue from the sales of hard copies.

Discussion of Findings

Analyzing the in-depth interview with the respondents of the selected samples (*Punch, Guardian, Daily Trust, Leadership* Newspapers), it was discovered that, there are enormous challenges facing the circulation of newspapers to the readers, which negatively affect the revenue generation of the organizations, this fact is supported by Dapo Olorunyomi, the Managing Editor of *Premium Times* Newspaper, in 2016, said “Nigeria newspaper circulation has collapsed”. There are lots of factors indicated by the circulation managers, which are regarded as the challenges facing the circulation of newspapers to the readers, these include, late delivery time, traffic, bad roads, this fact is supported by (Asogwa & Asemah, 2012) where he stated that large circulation of a newspaper is the result of construction of road linkages, modern sources of transportation and significantly extended home delivery of a newspaper at the reader’s door.

The study find out that, identified faults from the delivery vehicle, issue of fuelling the vehicles, cost of transportation, late printing due to break down of printing machine, high cost of printing and production machine, also as the factors that hindered the challenges facing the circulation of papers, as supported by NUJ (1996) that “other costs of materials, machinery and equipment needed for production and circulation of newspapers and magazines also rose correspondingly, the effect was that cover prices rose astronomically reducing readership and circulation figures. The armed robbers attack, the advent of social media, economic challenges, high cost of living that makes individuals not to purchase newspapers, ethnic and religious sentiment are also seen as other factors that lead to challenges facing the circulation of newspapers.

However, the study also identified the following as the causes of the challenges of newspaper circulation, which includes, lack of materials for production and transporting, networking of vendor, lack of printing materials (ink, papers, standard machines), lack of maintenance for the equipment, delay from any of the newspaper production process either from the event or the editor or the press guys.

It was also identified that advent of social or online media which can also be refer to as technological advancement, where many of the media houses also don't want to be regarded as an organisation that is not ready to embrace modernization in the industry, so they advance to establishment of online media, this statement was supported by (Zubair, 2015), who said, another factor that causes loss of readership and revenue is the internet and the explosion in new technologies, particularly the GSM phones. With these technologies and the free news on the internet, readers seem to be moving online, thus creating a loss of revenue for the newspapers. Another cause is the returning of unsold copies by the vendors and distributors, where they take the paper from the organisation and come back to give the papers unsold.

The effect of the challenges is also seen to affect the service of the organization, whereby workers and actions in the organization may not operate efficiently. This leads to a significant decline to the organization and make it not possible for them to compete with other organizations in the higher level. This point was supported by (Vision 2020:26) which stated that a further pointer to this is that, no newspaper in Nigeria presently makes the list of the first 100 newspapers in the world in terms of ranking.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, the decision-making process does not take place in isolation. It is influenced by the psychological, observational and situational factors. Newspaper organisations can assist the prospect of their organisation through the adaptation of the listed solutions to the challenges of newspaper circulation to make the effect of the challenges less confine on the organisations. Following the findings of the study, it was concluded that proper planning and availability of printing materials and other solutions giving by the interviewees would serve as a means of correcting the loss of revenue and decline in activities of the newspaper organisations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis made, it was discovered that the circulation of newspapers in Nigeria is on a free fall due to some challenges indicated by the respondents. The study then recommends that the newspaper organisations should concentrate more on proper planning and thinking/preparing ahead of eventualities.

Also, recommended that the organisations should be active in working together to circulate their copies to potential readers. Introduction of prepaid policy whereby the distributors pay before being supply is also recommended.

Moreover, the study recommends that the organisations should allocate more funds to purchasing and maintenance of printing materials and other materials needed for circulating the newspapers because delay or fault from the transport will hinder the newspaper circulation for the day and will lead to loss of revenue.

Lastly, the study recommends that the newspaper organisations should also work towards investing in online media, to regain the damage from the decline in hard copies circulation.

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**Sustainable Development Goals and Tourism Development in Nigeria:
A Study of Old Oyo National Park Tourism Activities**

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Abstract

This paper examines the crucial role and significance of sustainable development goals on tourism development in Nigeria. The study administers the research instrument entailing 28 close ended questions to the respondents. The responses to each item are presented on tables and analyzed using simple percentages and mean. The research hypothesis is tested using a Chi-square statistical tool with the degree of freedom of 3 at 0.05% level of significance. The study concludes that Old Oyo National Park tourism development goals and the economic development are positively related. It is hereby recommended that Nigerian government should support the integrity of local tourism activities by favoring businesses which conserve wildlife, tourism heritage and traditional values. The government needs to consciously supporting local economics by encouraging purchase of local goods among other things capable of creating a suitable premise for sustainable tourism development. Furthermore, the government is expected to set up some relevant institutions and organizations in charge of security, infrastructure development and maintenance to foster tourism development.

Keywords: Tourism, Sustainable tourism, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Destination

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities (Edgell Sr, 2016; United Nations, (UN) 2002; Yfantidou & Matarazzo, 2017). According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), tourism covers the activities of people travelling to and staying in places apart from their usual place of abode for not less than 24 hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes unrelated to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited (WTO, 2000; Yu, Kim, Chen & Schwartz, 2012).

The focus of sustainable tourism is to make an impact on the environment and local culture as low as possible while helping to generate future employment for local people. The aim of sustainable tourism is to ensure that development brings a positive experience for local people, tourism companies and the tourists themselves (Ajani & Kalu, 2017). It is the concept of visiting a place as a tourist and trying to make only a positive impact on the environment, society and economy.

Tourism can involve primary transportation to the general location, local transportation, accommodations, entertainment, recreation, nourishment and shopping. It can be related to travel for leisure, business and what is called visiting friends and relatives (VFR) (Peeters & Dubois, 2010). There is now broad consensus that tourism development should be sustainable. However, the question of how to achieve this remains an object of debate (Ayeni, 2013; Johnson, 2002). Besides its impact on economic growth and sustainable development, tourism is one of the sectors better positioned to deliver on jobs, perhaps the single most common issue of concern at this time. Tourism creates opportunities for entrepreneurship and provides millions of direct jobs worldwide, as well as countless more through its multiplier effects on related sectors such as trade, manufacturing, construction or agriculture. It is already one of the largest employment sectors in many countries and a fast entry vehicle into the workforce for young people and women in both urban and rural communities (Adedipe & Adeleke, 2016; Ashley, Roe & Godwin, 2001; Fagbolu, 2022)

In striving to prevent disorderly tourism development, and in order to successfully overcoming the daily changes that occur in turbulent surrounding, planning of sustainable tourism development becomes the only way possible to do it successfully. Therefore, sustainable development refers to the use without exploitation of natural, cultural and all other tourist resources from the current generation. It means preserving them for future use by future generations (United Nations (UN), 2002). Since the development of tourism in a certain area largely depends on the natural and anthropogenic attractiveness located in the surrounding, the practicing of sustainable development gets more and more important. In case these resources are to be destroyed or degraded, the attractiveness of the destination will be reduced as well, also it will lead into questions for tourism development in the region, because potential tourists are only interested in visiting attractive and clean destinations which offer services with high quality (Fagbolu, 2021; Gboyega, 2003).

However, an environment that has no quality attributes is not only unattractive to tourists; it also does not supply comfortable domestic population. Planning of sustainable tourism development actually concerns planning to preserve the environment, and it encompasses a variety of research and analysis before making a decision on any determination of the direction of development. All these activities are done in order not to allow intensive exploitation of resources in some specific areas, without care about the preservation of resources (Agba et al., 2010; Eja et al., 2011).

Every state of the federation must identify indicators and devise strategies that accord with the resources and capabilities at its disposal. It is unfortunate to note that there is really no serious commitment to collected tourism data, because there is little agreement on the importance of the industry. Another strategy is to link work on MDGs to work on tourism development. The most effective work on tourism development takes place when there is adequate understanding of how policy frameworks are influenced by global trends and agreements. These are the bases for the construction of proposals for policy alternatives, which would lead, to the achievement of goals such as poverty eradication, advances in education, improved health, and environmental protection of the SDGs (Akpabio, 2007; Bassey & Egon, 2016; Tourism Development International, 2006).

In other words, there is a need to link the needs with the SDGs. In order to benefit from the high profile attention received by the SDGs as the new consensus framework for development discourse and assistance, all those committed to the fostering of tourism development need to develop strategies for monitoring and measuring progress towards the achievement of the NEEDS objectives, and building this into work on the SDGs.

Nevertheless, tourism can be effectively used to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (SDGs) and will also focus on the (economic) development of the industry in Nigeria. It is imperative to identify problems and suggestions for possible measures to take the identified problems (Novelli & Hellwig, 2013; Omodero, 2019; Saarinen & Rogerson, 2014). This paper, specifically attempts to reexamine the crucial role and significance of Old Oyo National Park tourism activities to sustainable development goals and tourism in Nigeria for Nigeria's development effort.

Research Questions

1. What are the desirable effects of Old Oyo National Park activities on tourists?
2. What are the Old Oyo National Park developmental strides in **Saki, Iseyin, Igboho, Sepeteri and Tede** ?
3. What is the relationship between Old Oyo National Park developmental goals and the economic development of the areas?

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no positive relationship between Old Oyo National Park Developmental goals and the Economic Development of the Area

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a potentially powerful tool for economic development. Though the industry is fraught with certain challenges, which are seemingly insurmountable, it has a crucial role to play in helping Nigeria to achieve the 2015 anti-poverty SDGs (Ferguson, 2013; Novelli & Hellwig, 2013; Omodero, 2019; Rasoolimanesh, et al., 2020). As Nigeria is becoming keenly aware of the substantial development potentials of tourism, this paper presents some recommendations to be considered in order to reap these potentials and facilitate the process of achieving the SDGs.

Economic significance tourism is a non-agricultural, economic sector. Tourism has a substantial role to play in the expanding and diversifying Nigeria's economic base. Among other contributions, the tourism sector has been shown as providing income-earning opportunities for a large number of people. Tourism employment will touch almost every aspect of the Nigerian economy, from the taxi drivers to bank managers (Adesina-Uthman, 2022; Vanguard, 2014; Yamamura, 2004). The industry has a multiplier impact on such other sectors as transportation, hotels, financial institutions, hospitals, aviation and environment.

According to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) (2010), experiences on tourism development and growth in tourism services could result in certain sustainability positive and

social impacts. These comprise positive impacts on macro-economic indicators such as contribution to GDP, export earnings, government tax revenues and opportunities in employment to develop professional skills. Social impacts of tourism promotion include a high risk of over-reliance on one sector and therefore increasing vulnerability. Higher risks of social problems such as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and not necessarily better working conditions (seasonal jobs) which does not significantly alleviate poverty. A risk of worsening environmental damages due to the development of hotel construction and increased tourist arrivals exist but so do opportunities for transfer of environmentally sound practices. The nature and degree of these impacts depend on a range of variables; the type of tourism (land-based or cruise tourism, and niche markets), investments (hotels, construction, management, contracts and environmentally sound investments) types of jobs created, tourist behavior (expenditure activities) and the institutional framework (social programs, environmental management) (Saarinen, Rogerson & Manwa, 2011; Yamamura, 2004).

Performance and Potentials of Tourism

Tourism has performed impressively in many developed countries and the newly industrialized Asian nations (Adesina-Uthman, 2022; Bankole & Odularu, 2006; Bricker, Black & Cottrell, 2013; Ekundayo, 2014; Ferguson, 2013). One can sum up the performance, role or potential contributions of the tourism sector in the following eight (8) perspectives. First, tourism provides a major source of employment opportunities for a large majority of people, being labor intensive with higher capacity for employment generation. Second, the majority of those willing to work about (70– 80 %) because operations in the tourism industry are mainly labor intensive and the industry includes hotels, airlines, travel agency and all tourism related organizations. Next, serves as a valuable training ground for the creation and development of local entrepreneurs and hospitality managers in several areas of economic activity. Fourth, they serve in some ways to aid the process of income redistribution as they impact more positively on the bulk of low-income people. Up next, tourism is the most effective means to bring about structural transformation in the rural areas. Sixth, tourism possesses better capacity to reduce poverty, inequality and social vices. Seventh, the contribution of tourism to the economy in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) has relatively been on the increase since independence. Lastly, entrepreneurial development – provides good preparation ground for the development of indigenous entrepreneurs, which drive

the wealth creation process at all levels (Bankole & Odularu, 2006; Bricker, Black & Cottrell, 2013).

In Nigeria, it has the potential to absorb a high percentage of teeming millions of people who are not gainfully employed. Tourism in the country centers largely on cultural events, due to the country's ample number of ethnic groups, but also includes rain forests, savannah, waterfalls and other natural attractions (Archibong, 2004; Bankole & Odularu, 2006; Sasidharan & Hall, 2013). In recent times, governments at both federal and state tiers have made significant impact on tourism development, by solely or in certain cases partnering with the private sector in special resorts of international standard for tourist attractions. Some major factors that tend to inhibit tourism development efforts of the country include poor electricity supply, deplorable condition of roads, religious intolerance, Security; militancy, incessant bombings, and kidnappings.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Area

As revealed in Figure 1 below, Old Oyo National Park is one of the national parks of Nigeria located across northern Oyo State and southern Kwara State, Nigeria (*Nigeria National Park Service*, 2014; Ogunjinmi et al., 2016). The park has a total land mass of 2,512 km² and is located in the South Western part of Nigeria, specifically northern Oyo State at latitude 8° 15' and 9° 00'N and longitude 3° 35' and 4° 42' E. The location has inevitably placed the park at a vantage position of abundance land area as well as diverse wildlife and cultural/historical settings. It covers eleven local government areas out of which ten falls within Oyo State and one in Kwara State surrounds it. The Administrative Head Office of the park is located in Oyo, Isokun area along Oyo-Iseyin road, where necessary information and booking could be made. The landscaping and organized space within the large yard has made the facility very endearing to the public. It is rich in plant and animal resources including buffaloes, bushbuck and a variety of birds. The park is easily accessible from southwestern and northwestern Nigeria. The nearest cities and towns adjoining Old Oyo National Park include Saki, Iseyin, Igboho, Sepeteri, Tede and Igbeti which have their own commercial and cultural attractions for tourism. The park is a dense forest park that is rich in plants and animals' activities. Situated just about 51 km north of Ibadan city, and it harbors Nile crocodile, rock python and land tortoise. The top attractions of the park which are of historical and

archaeological value, are situated at the northern end of the park and these include the relics of the old city walls of Oyo Ile, the great Agbaku cave which has evidence of stone age, the **Kosomonu** hill, the old Akesan Market, Alaafin's Palaces with crucibles of pottery used some centuries ago (John, 1999).

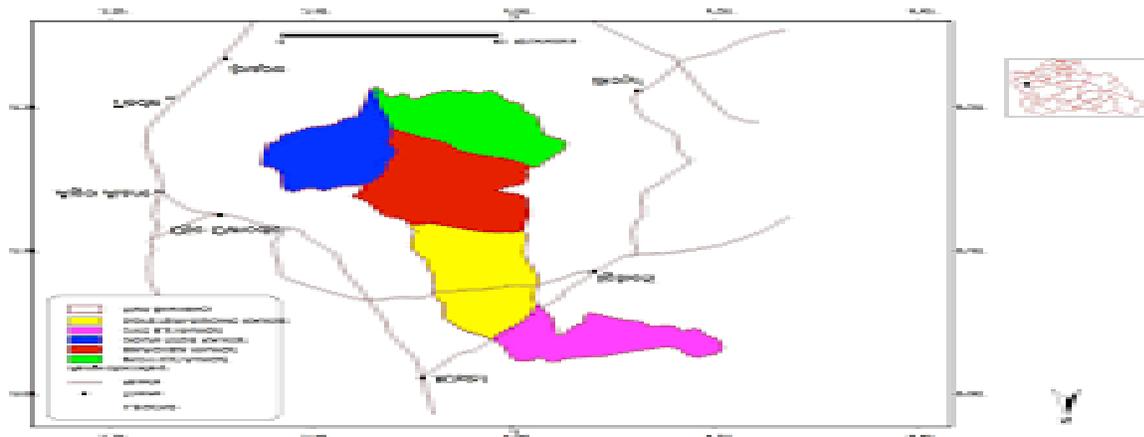


Figure 1: Map of Showcasing Old Oyo National Park

Source: Ogunjinmi et al (2016).

Sampling and Data Collection

The population of the study is drawn from Saki, Iseyin, Igboho, Sepeteri and Tede. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select forty (40) respondents from each of the areas accounting for two hundred (200) sample size. The instrument for this study was a questionnaire of 28 item structured on the modified four (4) point Likert scale of strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD). To ensure the validity of the survey, each item in the questionnaire was cross-matched with the research questions. The researcher employed the face validity method. In this respect, the instrument was scrutinized and considered by experts knowledgeable in the area. After a careful study of the instrument, observations made were used to modify the instrument. Based on this, the instrument was considered valid enough for the study. Furthermore, a test-retest method was adopted to assess the reliability of the instrument. By this method, twenty (20) copies of the instrument were administered on twenty (20) people outside the sampling area. After one-week, fresh copies of the same instrument were re-administered to the same people. The scores of the test were correlated to determine its reliability.

During the main study, the research instrument was administered to the respondents of various settlements. Tabular method is adopted to present the data collected. A total of one hundred and ninety (190) respondents were used in this study. The responses on the items on the research instrument were collated while percentages of the responses to each item were analyzed using simple percentages. Moreover, the hypothesis was tested using chi-square statistical stool. Therefore, ideal mean= $10/4=2.50$. The decision rule is that if the mean score is less than or equals to the ideal mean then, respondents do not agree to the fact while the score greater than 2.50 indicates the acceptance.

Results

The table below portrays the outcomes of the study. In the Table below, items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9 and 13

Table 1: Tourist Activities, Park Developmental Strides and Tourists

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Mean	Decision
Tourists Activities		Research Question 1: What are the desirable effects of Old Oyo National Park activities?						
1	Create jobs	130x4=520	60x3=180	-	-	700	3.68	Accepted
2	Improve transportation system?	30x4=120	160x3=480	-	-	600	3.16	Accepted
3	Improve sanitation facilities	-	100x3=300	60x2=120	30x1=30	450	2.36	Rejected
4	Reduce poverty	60x4=240	80x3=240	25x2=50	25x1=25	555	2.72	Accepted
5	Encourage businesses accessibility to residents	30x4=120	30x3=90	40x2=80	90x1=90	380	2.00	Rejected
6	Generate income for the local community through visitors' expenditure	140x4=560	25x3=75	25x2=50	-	685	3.61	Accepted
7	Diversify community economic activities	15x4=60	35x3=105	120x2=240	20x1=20	425	2.24	Rejected
8	Bring about a real sense of pride and identity to communities	-	-	180x2=360	10x1=10	370	1.95	Rejected
9	Are environmentally friendly	50x4=200	40x3=120	60x2=120	40x1=40	480	2.53	Agreed
10	Encourage local businesses patronage	25x4=100	65x3=195	50x2=100	50x1=50	445	2.34	Rejected
11	Set up educational programs or scholarships for students in the area	-	29x3=60	120x2=240	50x1=50	350	1.84	Rejected
12	Destroy existing cultures, freezes culture as performers, loss: language, religion, rituals, material culture	-	-	150x2=300	40x1=40	340	1.79	Rejected
13	Employment is seasonal	41x4=164	62x3=186	62x2=124	25x1=25	499	2.63	Accepted
Developmental Strides		Research Question 2: What are the Old Oyo National Park Developmental strides in the area?						
14	Provides infrastructures	110x4=440	40x3=120	15x2=30	25x1=25	615	3.25	Accepted
15	Encourage development	100x4=400	55x3=165	35x2=70	-	635	3.34	Accepted

16	Encourages preservation of traditions	130x4=520	50x3=150	10x2=20	-	690	3.63	Accepted
17	Provides financial support for the conservation of ecosystems and natural resource management	90x4=360	60x3=180	20x2=40	10x1=10	590	3.11	Accepted
18	Encourages social vices	50x4=200	70x3=210	30x2=60	40x1=40	510	2.68	Accepted
19	Supports cultural diversity	20x4=80	40x3=120	40x2=80	90x1=90	370	1.05	Rejected
20	Provides marginal employment	108x4=416	32x3=96	25x2=50	25x1=25	587	3.08	Accepted
21	Brings unrealistic expectations (divert young people from school and brighter futures)	132x4=528	18x3=54	25x3=75	15x1=15	672	3.54	Accepted
22	Decisions made outside of the area	10x3=30	20x3=60	62x2=124	98x1=98	312	1.62	Rejected
Tourists		Research Question 3: What is the relationship between Old Oyo National Park developmental goals and the economic development of the study area?						
23	Engaged in development and activities that are drawn from local traditions and add value to the community	140x4=560	30x3=90	20x2=40	-	691	3.63	Accepted
24	Practiced neo-colonialism	65x4=260	100x3=300	25x2=50	-	610	3.21	Accepted
25	Developed illegal and/or destructive economic activities (markets for drugs, endangered species, etc.	-	48x3=144	122x2=244	20x1=20	408	2.14	Rejected
26	Land controlled by the elite.	28x4=112	13x3=39	48x2=96	101x1=101	408	1.83	Rejected
27	Diverted and concentrated development (airport, roads, water, electricity to tourist destinations, development not accessible to locals	5x4=20	30x3=90	25x2=50	130x1=130	290	1.52	Rejected
28	Trained and educate people in local culture, history, natural science, etc.	137x4=548	23x3=69	20x2=40	-	657	3.46	Accepted

Source: Field Survey (2022).

means are greater than ideal mean (2.50). This is an indication of acceptance while 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12 are rejected. Items 14, 15, 16, 18, 20 and 20 mean are greater than ideal mean (2.50). Consequently, they are all accepted while 19 and 22 are rejected. Furthermore, items 23, 24 and 28 mean which are greater than ideal mean (2.50) are all accepted while 25, 26 and 27 are rejected. In calculating the chi-square, the expected frequencies are calculated based on the questions 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 and displayed in the Tables below.

Table 2: Analysis of Questions 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 for Chi-Square

Opinion	SA	A	D	SD	Total
23	140(62.50)	30(40.67)	20(43.33)	-	190
24	65(62.50)	100(40.67)	25(43.33)	-	190
25	-	48(40.67)	122(43.33)	20(43.50)	190
26	28(62.50)	13(40.67)	48(43.33)	101(43.50)	190
27	5(62.50)	30(40.67)	25(43.33)	130(43.50)	190
28	137(62.50)	23(40.67)	20(43.33)	10(43.50)	190
Total	375	244	260	261	1140

Source: Field Survey (2022).

Calculation: SA=375x190/1140, A=244x190/1140, D=260x190/1140, SD=261x190/1140

Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no positive relationship between Old Oyo national Park Developmental goals and the Economic Development of the Area.

Table 3: Chi-Square

Opinion	SA	A	D	SD
F_0	375	244	260	261
F_e	62.50	40.67	43.33	43.50
$F_0 - F_e$	312.50	203.33	216.67	217.50
$(F_0 - F_e)^2$	97656.25	41343.09	46945.89	47306.25
$(F_0 - F_e)^2 / F_e$	1586.50	1016.55	1083.44	1087.50
$\sum (F_0 - F_e)^2 / F_e = 4773.99$				

Source: Field Survey (2022).

Calculating the degree of freedom (df) we have $(r-1) (2-1) = (2-1) (4-1) = 3$. Thus, the degree of freedom is 3 at 0.05% level of significant, tabulated value is 7.82. Meanwhile, calculated X^2 (4773.99) is greater than tabulated value. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and the study conclude that Old Oyo National Park tourism development goals and economic development in the study area are positively related.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There is still much to be done by Nigeria – states on integrating Tourism fully with the international development policies. Effort of a country like Nigeria should be geared towards practicing sustainable tourism via anticipating and respecting tourism cultures, expectations and assumptions. The pillars of sustainable tourism are environmental integrity, social justice and economic development. These are capable of creating a suitable premise for sustainable tourism development.

Going by findings, it is hereby recommended that:

- i. Nigerian government should support the integrity of local tourism activities by favoring businesses which conserve wildlife, tourism heritage and traditional values.
- ii. The government needs to consciously supporting local economics by encouraging purchase of local goods among other things capable of creating a suitable premise for sustainable tourism development.
- iii. The government should encourage development of the capacity building programs that meet the needs of tourists.
- iv. The government should provide equitable distribution of revenues through participatory and democratic processes that engages people at all levels in the areas.
- v. The government should urgently tackle the problem of infrastructure development and maintenance including electricity, water and efficient transportation system, which have considerably positive impact on tourism operations.
- vi. There is a need to set up more relevant institutions and organizations to foster the development of tourism such as institute for tourism studies; center for responsible tourism, ecotourism studies and research program; institute for hotel and hospitality studies, etc.

- vii. The Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) must not relent in its efforts to create awareness for what tourism is and the benefits that flow from it.
- viii. Nigeria should exploit the full opportunities afforded by its being a member of ECOWAS to promote its tourism destinations as a regional package since tourism is no longer operated on country – by – country basis, but rather on regional platform.

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Reflective Student Engagement: A Necessity for Effective Open Distance Learning (ODL) Delivery

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Abstract

Education providers need to be effectively engaged with their students in order to better understand their expectations and therefore tailor their deliveries to meet their needs accordingly. In a normal conventional, face-to-face small class arrangement, this is feasible and even sufficient but not so in an era of mass education delivered through open and distance learning methods coupled with student diversity and less homogeneity in their class composition. This arrangement presents a challenge for teachers to understand the peculiarities and expectations of their students. To achieve better inclusive engagement with students and to deliver learning content based on their expectations, a more formal means to understand students as learners become necessary. This calls for a method that can enable teachers to learn and understand students' expectations of teaching, learning and assessment as well as their conceptions and views of learning, their belief system and their reflective thinking capabilities. Survey was used in this study and 100 students of National Open University of Nigeria, were randomly selected with a sixteen-item questionnaire administered while 56 were returned. Results showed effective engagement of students occurs through class participation, interaction and collaboration with peers, attentiveness in class activity, and emotional connection – and were found necessary for effective open and distance learning delivery. Management needs to also make a deliberate effort to enhance students' engagement by being responsive to their (students') needs as expressed from time to time, such as extra-curricular activities and the creation of physical interaction between and among staff and faculty.

Keywords: Mass Education, Face-to-Face, Distance Learning, Student Engagement, Reflective Thinking

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Are students at a university to be seen as products, consumers, clients, or customers? The answer varies. To some people, students are consumers, not customers, because consumers use a product or service. Others say, unlike a “client,” a “student” is responsible for earning his or her education. This applies in the classroom and when students and college applicants seek guidance and tutelage from private counsellors, advisers, tutors, and educational consultants (Council of International Schools, 2017). Certainly, many students both pay for and use the product of higher education.

However, because higher education in the United States was created to produce an informed citizenry for a democratic society, students are the consumers (Council of International Schools, 2017). Similarly, Obermiller, et al., (2005) surveyed faculty and students and found that each category saw the issue differently: while faculty saw students as products, students preferred themselves as customers.

At the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Management views students as customers, without whom the whole effort of the university would be in vain (Peters, 2021). The foregoing underscores the importance of students in any given institution of higher learning and therefore calls for measures by education providers to highlight, underline, and optimise that mutual relationship. Whether they are consumers, products, clients or customers, it is clear that students are integral to any educational institution, nay, university. Consequently, education providers need to be effectively engaged with their students, to better understand their expectations and therefore tailor their deliveries to meet their needs.

In a normal conventional, face-to-face small class arrangement, this is feasible and even sufficient but not so in an era of mass education delivered through open and distance learning methods coupled with student diversity and less homogeneity in their class composition. In the National Open University of Nigeria where learning is delivered over and across distance, unhindered by time and place, the arrangement presents a challenge for teachers to understand the peculiarities and expectations of their students. To achieve better inclusive engagement with students and to deliver learning content based on their expectations, a more formal means to understand students as learners and their expectations become necessary.

This calls for a method that can enable teachers to learn and understand students' expectations of teaching, learning and assessment as well as their conceptions and views of learning, their belief system and their reflective thinking capabilities. The survey method comes handy to achieve this milestone. Regular and diverse outcomes from these surveys hopefully will enable teachers, institutions' managers and content creators to constantly construct more effective learning materials and a conducive environment for their diverse students of varied demographics.

Statement of the problem

What does it take to engage students? As easy as it sounds, how feasible is it for an educator to have a classroom full of diverse students all actively engaged and paying full attention? In a conventional institution, this may be challenging, but it can be done with adequate planning. In a face-to-face teaching arrangement, some strategies have been suggested as ways of engaging students. Yaluma (2017), suggests: first making the content relevant to students' lives; second, putting the students in the role of a teacher and, third, fostering a positive – yet challenging – learning environment. At the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Management views students as customers – without whom the whole effort of the University would be in vain (Peters, 2021). The foregoing underscores the importance of creating student engagement in any given institution of higher learning and therefore calls for measures by education providers to highlight, underline and optimize that mutual relationship and therefore justifies this study.

Research Objectives

The objectives that underlie this study are:

- a) To determine the extent to which students strive to succeed
- b) To determine the extent of engagement of students of the National Open University of Nigeria;
- c) To determine the extent to which students of NOUN participate in educational/learning activities
- d) To determine the extent of NOUN students' interaction and collaboration with one another
- e) To determine what motivates students of NOUN to study harder

Research Questions

- a) What effort do students of NOUN make towards succeeding?
- b) What is the extent of academic engagement of students of the National Open University of Nigeria?
- c) To what extent do students of NOUN practically participate in educational/learning activities?
- d) To what extent do the NOUN students interact and collaborate?

e) What motivates the NOUN students to study harder?

Significance of the Study

Studies about student engagement in higher institutions may be few and far in between; this study present study is about the students of an Open and Distance Learning institution which operates a different teaching and learning mode. This study, therefore, is significant as it may be one of the very few that will provide empirical justification for examining that idea as it concerns the National Open University of Nigeria. The institution operates as a pure business entity; hence its students' (customers') reflection and engagement ability are factors necessary for its sustenance. hence the outcome of this study will be important to the Management.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptually, student engagement refers to a meaningful engagement throughout the learning environment – more or less - that relationship between the student and the school, -teachers' peers, instruction and curriculum. The term is historically anchored on a body of work related to student and teacher involvement, with particular reference to North America and Australasia situation where it has been firmly entrenched (Trowler, 2010). According to Ciric and Jovanovic (2016), in the contemporary conceptualizations of education, students' and teachers' engagement is considered an important attribute of behaviour because of the connection with the quality of teaching and learning as well as with the development of the potential of all the previously mentioned actors.

In their study, Fredericks, et al., (2004) found that student engagement is in three dimensions, namely, Behavioral, Emotional, and Cognitive. While behavioural engagement refers to students' participation in academic and extracurricular activities, emotional engagement refers to student's positive and negative reactions to peers, teachers and school. Cognitive engagement talks about students' thoughtfulness and willingness to master difficult skills.

Some studies have linked student engagement with success in the classroom. For instance, Reckmeyer's (2019) Gallup study, which involved 128 schools and more than 110,000 students found that student engagement had a significant positive relationship with student academic achievement progress (growth) in math, reading, and all subjects combined. Abbing (2013) advises

that in order to understand the relationship between student engagement and achievement, one has to consider the different components of engagement in the context of the student's stage in their school career.

Coates (2005), explains that student engagement is an important construct necessary for understanding the behaviour of students towards the teaching and learning process. This understanding of students' behaviour in academic institutions helps in explaining how the instructions and academic practices go on in the university. Coates explains further that teachers and academic supervisors use the tool to design an effective pedagogical technique to maximize-the-learning- experiences of the students. Moreover, such information from the engagement process has been found useful in providing information on what students are actually doing. The data so gathered has a broader significance for the management of institutions, students and academic programmes. Rather than work from assumptions about student activities, institutions can make decisions based on more objective information and empirical data (*Schmidt, et al., 2015*).

For the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) with about 500000 students and 103 study centres across Nigeria (www.noun.edu.ng, 2022), student engagement should be a top priority because, with accurate and reliable information on what students are actually doing, institutions can move beyond taking student activities for granted. Appleton et al. (2008) linked student engagement to the improved-academic-performance-and demonstrated it to be a predictor of achievement and behaviour among students.

Courtner (2014) examined various students to consider the impact the level of student engagement had on the quality of relationships with other students, faculty, and administrative personnel. Furthermore, the study sought to determine if there was a significant difference in the quality of relationships with other students, faculty, and administrative personnel between traditional and nontraditional college students. He found a significant difference between traditional and nontraditional students based on academic performance and level of student engagement – with traditional students having higher levels of student engagement while nontraditional students had higher levels of academic performance. The level of student engagement had a significant impact on the quality of relationships with other students, faculty, and administrative personnel for both traditional and nontraditional students. Student engagement is beneficial to not only the academic

status of the school but also its financial life too. As described by Markwell (2007) at a time when universities and colleges are increasingly focused on the importance of outreach to alumni and other potential friends of the institution for the purpose of greatly increasing philanthropic support for higher education, it is becoming more widely recognized that how engaged students are and feel themselves to be during their student years will have a great bearing on how connected and supportive towards the institution they are likely to be in later years.

3.0 METHOD OF STUDY

In this study survey method was used to gather data. The population of the study comprised all registered and active students of National Open University of Nigeria who are scattered in the-108 study centres around the country. At the time of this study, the total number of students was put at about 500,000. Again, due to time constraints and bureaucracy, all their contacts could not be obtained, hence a few available ones were targeted for this preliminary study. For this study, a sample of 100 students from the available number were randomly selected for administration of questionnaire using a Google form sent to their email addresses. Data for the study were gathered with the aid of 16-item questionnaire which solicited responses about the students' engagement statuses.

The questionnaire sought to establish the efforts students of NOUN make to make success in their careers; the extent of their academic engagement; the extent to which they participate in educational/learning activities; the extent they interact and collaborate with one another and what motivate/s them to study harder.

The questionnaire consisted of both close-ended and open-ended types and required the respondent to describe their views on particular questions. Out of the 100 students that were targeted, with the questionnaire sent out through Google forms, 56 (56%) responses were received for this analysis.

4.0 RESULTS

Below is the presentation of relevant data in the order of the research questions.

1. *What effort do students of NOUN make towards succeeding?*

Respondents were asked to state the extent to which, as ODL students, they make reasonable efforts to achieve success. Individual effort is considered a very crucial element in the struggle to succeed. The majority of the respondents (48%) said their effort is to a great extent while 37% said to some extent. This means that over 80% of the respondents are not just aware that they need to make efforts, but they actually do it, in order to succeed. This is in spite of the about 15% that are not enthusiastic about the idea of making reasonable efforts.

Table 1: Efforts made by students towards succeeding

Extent of students' efforts	Percentage
To a great extent	48
To some extent	37
Just some reasonable extent	15
Total	100%

2. *What is the extent of academic engagement of students of National Open University of Nigeria?*

Under this research question, respondents were asked to describe what they consider their emotional engagement in class. They described their respective feelings in three key levels as shown in table 2 below. Thirty-seven percent (37%) affirmed that they sometimes felt bored; 33.3% said they found themselves excited in class while five percent (5%) said they feel so much bored in class every time. These emotional symbols speak a lot about how and why students can be effectively engaged in school.

Table 2: Which of these describes your emotional engagement in class?

Description	Percentage % n = 56
Every time I feel so much boredom	5%
Sometimes I feel bored	37%
I find myself excited in class	33.3%
I feel a sense of anxiety most time	18.5%
I feel anxious sometimes	6.2%
Total	100%

3. To what extent do students of NOUN practically participate in educational/learning activities?

The research question examined students’ attentiveness and attitude to learning activities. As shown in table 3 above, out of the 56 respondents, 51.9% claimed that they always attend class and promptly too; another 29.6% said they sometimes attend class but not promptly and nearly 15% said that they hardly attend class/academic activities promptly. In total, a good number of the respondents do not attend activities promptly. In another related question about the respondents’ attitude to class/academic activities, 70.4% were attentive while 29.6% were always very attentive.

Table 3: Students’ Practical participation in activities

Description	Percentage % n = 56
I always attend class promptly	51.9%
I sometimes attend classes but not promptly	29.6%
I hardly attend classes/academic activities promptly	14.8
I do not attend classes/academic activities promptly	3.7%
Total	100%

4. To what extent do NOUN students interact and collaborate with one another?

This research question sought to know the frequency with which students interact with one another; data shows that most of the students (40.7%) interact with one another on a weekly basis; some students (22.2%) said they interact with fellow students on monthly basis and another 22.2% also said they see themselves on a daily basis while 14.8% of them said their interaction takes place twice weekly. Evidently, despite being an ODL institution, students manage to create an interactive forum for themselves. Interaction and collaboration are important backbones of university life.

Table 4: Extent of NOUN Students’ interaction with others

Description of students’ interaction in class	Percentage %
Interaction on weekly basis	40.7
Interaction on monthly basis	22.2
Interaction on daily basis	22.2
Total	100%

5. What motivate/s NOUN students to study harder?

This research question sought to know things that motivate students to give in their best. While recognition and getting high grades in examinations rank fairly high (25.9%) and (22.2%), the most prominent motivating factor is the need to understand and master the subject matter (48.1%).

Table 5: What motivates students

Description of what motivates student	Percentage %
Need to understand subject matter	48.1
Need for recognition	25.9
Need to get high marks in examination	22.2
Total	100%

Discussion of Findings

The study set out to determine, among others, the extent to which students strive to succeed; the extent of engagement of students of National Open University of Nigeria; the extent to which students of NOUN participate in educational/learning activities, the extent of NOUN students' interaction and collaboration with one another and what motive/s students of NOUN to study harder.

Research Question 1: The majority of the respondents said that they may individual efforts to succeed; this implies that the ODL nature of the university may have informed their attitude to put in their individual efforts to ensure success. It is also believed that with that level of effort, reflective student engagement would be possible and operational.

In **Research Question 2** their responses revealed the multidimensional nature of students' motivation in terms of emotional, behavioural, and cognitive engagement (Olson & Peterson, 2015). The 43% (in total) feeling of boredom and 33.3% feeling of excitement are both elements of student engagement which have been referred to as, "the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education (Olson & Peterson, 2015). The data suggests lower levels of motivation, hence, engagement among these students. This much is revealed in Research question 3, where 52% of the respondents indicated that they always attend class while the rest indicated that they either "sometimes I attend classes but not

promptly,” “I hardly attend classes promptly,” to “I do not attend classes promptly” – all of which are indications of negative engagement by the students.” The low level of engagement revealed in this data is an indication of the degree to which students value the tasks they are asked to do. This view is supported by Appleton, Christenson, & Furlong (2008) who aver that, in order for a challenge to be motivating-the-actor-has to perceive some value in the challenging task.

On **Research question 3**, students’ interaction and engagement as shown by the data, appear to be high as some interact on a weekly, daily and bi-weekly basis. Despite being an ODL institution, students manage to create an interactive forum for themselves, perhaps virtually or physically. Interaction and collaboration are important backbones of university life. According to Cavinato, Hunter, Ott and Robinson (2021) students must actively develop their capabilities to become better in what they do. The use of small-group, active learning exercises in the classroom leads to improvements in academic achievement, better reasoning and critical thinking skills, increased retention of students, and improved relationships with faculty and other students.

Motivation of students is important in their success hence, factors suggested by data include; recognition and getting high grades in examinations which had (25.9%) and (22.2%). However, the most prominent motivating factor is the need to understand and master the subject matter (48.1%).

Reamen (2015) agrees with this view as she posits that some students seem naturally enthusiastic or motivated about learning, but many need or expect other factors to inspire, challenge and stimulate them – in relation to and depending on the interest that brought students to the course.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Student engagement has been proved, from extant literature and the present study, to be an important factor in their academic performance. In the ODL environment, this fact is even more to be desired due to the nature of open and distance learning where students learn on their own. This study has found that reflective student engagement through class participation, interaction and collaboration with peers, attentiveness in class activity, emotional engagement as well as specific motivators are - necessary for effective open and distance learning delivery. There is a feeling among students that while they have striven to keep themselves motivated and reflectively

engaged, management should do much to improve and enhance their level of engagement and by implication, their overall performance.

Arising from the foregoing, therefore, this study recommends the following:

- i. Students should enhance and improve their individual efforts to succeed in their studies including being attentive in class or other academic activities. Open and Distance learning is student-focused, hence individual effort is paramount.
- ii. Students should build their emotional resources by eliminating a sense of boredom and anxiety but increasing their excitement in their learning effort. To achieve this, effective participation in academic activities is highly recommended;
- iii. Students should develop their sense of collaboration and mutual partnership in the course of their studies
- iv. Students should develop or sharpen their sense of motivation, especially regarding the need to better understand and master their subject matter.
- v. Management needs to also make deliberate effort to enhance students' engagement by being responsive to students' needs as expressed from time to time, including the need for extra-curricular activities and the creation of physical interaction between and among staff and faculty.

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Citizens' Perception of Illiberal Governance and its Nexus with Conflict: The Nigerian Dimension

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Abstract

An understanding that civil rights are essential for good governance, democratic development and ultimately peace. This study, therefore, investigated the citizen's perception of illiberal governance with the aim of understanding its nexus with conflict in Nigeria. Using descriptive survey research design in the collection and analyses of both the qualitative and quantitative data, educational qualifications, understanding of liberal democracy, and the elements of illiberal democracies were examined. The study found that 61.25% of our respondents had a clear-cut understanding of what illiberal governance means. Only about 12.5% of our respondents understood the meaning of illiberalism. Similarly, majority of our respondents view electoral mal-practice (31.2%); violation of their freedom of expression (18.8%), illegal use of force (16.3%) and ethno-religious favouritism and nepotism (15%), as the greatest violation of their rights. Consequently, other important elements of illiberalism such as secrecy and disinformation (6.3%), obnoxious laws (6%), regime perpetuation (3.8%) and digital threats to citizenship rank (1.3%) mattered least to our respondents with regards to liberal governance. The implication of this is that citizens cannot demand for better governance. It was concluded that there are linkages between citizen's perceptions of illiberal governance and conflict in Nigeria. It was recommended that there must a conscious drive to engage in political education for Nigerians, especially on the tenets of liberal governance, as this will enable citizens will boldly make demands for better governance and ultimately ensure a more peaceful and cohesive Nigeria.

Keywords: Civil Right, Governance, Democracy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since independence in Nigeria and by extension Africa, there has been a contestation between authoritarian regimes and democratic governance. Expectedly, democratic developments (in various forms) have been advanced to be the solutions for the mirage of conditions that bedevil African countries. Additionally, the failures of authoritarian African leadership to reposition the country and continent in spite of the available enormous human and material resources have made the prospect of democratisation more appealing. Thus, democracy is seen as good in that it can guarantee peace and political development. However, contrary to what the assumption was in the

West, choosing leaders through democratic electoral processes does not necessarily mean civil liberties and equity will be assured for the electorates.

As Zakaria (1997: 22) noted over two decades ago: “for almost a century in the West, democracy has meant liberal democracy – a political system marked not only by free and fair elections, but also by the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and prosperity”. He further declared that constitutional liberalism and democracy do not necessarily go hand in hand and that illiberal democracy exists in many parts of the world. He argued that while it is relatively easy to impose elections on a country, it is more difficult to push constitutional liberalism on a society. The idea is that the authorities can allow elections to take place, and central authorities of a country may place institutional restrictions or disregard civil liberties and hamper other political activities that come naturally with the democratic process.

Interestingly, illiberalism has also become an ideology that has and is still inspiring not only Asian politicians but also a number of African and Latin American political elites. This is because they have been awestruck and inspired by internal political stability (devoid of mainstream western political ideology and influence) and accompanying economic/political development. This is why illiberalism has become a powerful ideology. As Glasius and Michaelsen (2018) noted, illiberal practices can possibly constitute threats to a country’s democratic process and therefore, typically threaten the autonomy and dignity of the individual. This thus emphasizes the existence and growth of illiberalism. The case in Nigeria and Africa is worse because the threat is subtle. This is because representative democracy is regarded as mostly the existence of the processes of choosing and regularly changing the political institution of a country.

This has had dire consequences for the country, chief among them being the declining capacity of the state to cope with a range of internal political and social upheavals. Indeed, government after government has failed to meet the expectation of citizens. Presently, no part of the country is spared from conflict (both violent and non-violent), as the country as a whole is ravaged by terrorists attacks, banditry, herder-farmer conflict, militancy, cultism, ethno-religious conflicts, secessionism, kidnapping, food insecurity and even intra personal conflict. Indeed, intra personal

conflicts had become so heightened that suicide has become common place in a country that was known to have the happiest people on earth.

In dealing with illiberalism, the perspective of the citizens who are at the receiving end of must be understood. De Regt (2018) posited that in order to understand illiberal democracy, it is important to understand how know-how citizens define democracy. The broad two ways in which this can be measured are i) the minimalist definition of democracy, which the belief that free elections are the only real requirement for democracy and ii) the liberal definition of democracy, which is the belief that a country can only be said to be democratic “democratic” when civil liberties and human rights are respected.

In countries such as Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands citizens are politically enlightened enough to understand that civil rights are essential in democracy. In other countries such as Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon and Singapore citizens less strongly believe that democracy is defined by rights to civil liberties. In other countries like Iraq, citizens do not really believe the idea that civil rights are essential in a democracy (De Regt. 2018). It, therefore, becomes necessary to investigate citizens’ perception of illiberal governance in order to determine linkages between dysfunctional democracy and conflict that is age old and pervasive in the country since its independence in 1960.

In order to achieve the above, the under-listed research questions are raised.

1. Do higher educational levels translate to greater political education and socialisation in the study area?
2. Do respondents have a good knowledge of what illiberal governance entail?
3. What are the most essential elements of liberal governance in Nigeria to respondents in the study area?

2.0 CONCEPTUAL DISCOURSE AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The concepts of liberal and illiberal democracy

The concept of illiberalism is often attributed to Zakari (1997), leaving out such other scholars as Fukuyama (1995, 1997) and Bell, Dutse, and Othman (2017). However, the debate about illiberalism originated from political development in East Asian. As Bertrand (1998) explained, the uniqueness of the region was clear from unprecedented economic growth and a blend of authoritarianism that seemed to co-exist with collective public consent. Thus, ideas of “Asian

Democracy”, “Guided Democracy” and “Asian forms of Human rights” are advocated by political leaders in predominantly Malaysia and Singapore (Emmerson, 1999). These ideas focus on the necessity to restrict democracy, particularly civil liberties. In order to do so illiberal regimes tended to develop a whole range of different mechanisms for societal control. Such attributes included dominant party systems, vote-buying, legal fine-tuning, ethnic affirmative action, co-option, restrictions on the right to organise, debate and voice opinions, emergency laws and so on.

This has not gone without some contention. Some scholars have criticized Zakaria (1997) separation of liberalism and democracy. Krastev (2008) critiqued Zakaria’s conceptualization of liberalism and democracy, insisting that it cannot explain the façade of democracy, such as Russia’s “managed democracy”. Krastev (2008: 54) insist that instead of showcasing the “victory of electoral majoritarianism over liberal constitutionalism”, “democracy’s doubles” are conscious efforts of the ruling elites to use the media, elections and political parties, etc., to maintain a monopoly and perpetuate themselves in power. He further noted that elections can be held regularly in a country but that does not provide an opportunity to transfer but legitimise power.

Generally, scholars stress equality when conceptualizing liberal democracy but put down or even neglect socio-economic rights. Adejumobi (2000: 9) stressed the importance of this when he noted that “liberal democracy especially as it canvassed for Third World countries, weighs high in the claim for civil and political rights, but very silent, if not against socio-economic rights.” Similarly, Awa (1991) addressed this, stating that democracy must be made to deliver some economic empowerment and a higher state of living for the citizens. This is perhaps not a concern for most scholars from the more advanced democracies because; economic justice is to a large extent guaranteed by their societies.

This means that for Africans, democratic governance should not only focus on ending repressive and/or autocratic governance but on the advancement of their socio-economic conditions. According to Edigheji:

Citizens are able to exercise real choice after they have overcome poverty, squalor or ignorance, as these constitute constraints on freedom and equality. In other words, social, economic and political empowerments are mutually inclusive.

Embedded in such conception is citizens' active participation as a necessary requirement in the development and governance process (Edigheji, 2005: 5).

In sum, Illiberal democracies may meet minimum requirements of democratic governance such as elections, but display a low degree of respect for liberal political values including “the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property” (Zakaria, 1997: 22).

Global Practice of Illiberal Governance

In spite of the fact that illiberal democracy took root in Asia, and became popular in Africa, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) (particularly some new member states) were not spared. Neofitov (2015) pointed to the fact that “the conceptual notions of “illiberal democracy” and “democratic backsliding” have become rejuvenated in recent times due to attempts by new member states of the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, to change the direction of democratic reforms even after the attainment of full membership. Examples include illiberal developments in Poland (2006/2007), Hungary (post-2010) and Bulgaria and Romania.

The rise of illiberal governance in Eastern and Northern Europe seen above may come as a shock to many, who before now may see illiberalism as an African and/or Asian affair. Dekker, Cleiren and Ballin (2018) share this sentiment that an onlooker who believes in democracy under the rule of law may feel disheartened by the European situation today. Dekker et. al. (2018) argued further that those countries in Eastern and Central Europe may be particularly vulnerable to this trend, due to their communist past and the rapid liberalizations pursued after its fall.

Cho (2012) believed that illiberal states join multilateral international institutions because they want more power and wealth in areas affecting the potential of their international reach in a way deemed appropriate and legitimate. It also affirmed that multilateral organisations provide illiberal states with the best venue for pushing for the politics of numbers and facilitate their efforts to extract resources from their own societies to achieve various foreign policy goals. It further opines those great powers like China and Russia use multilateralism most times as a means, rather than an end of achieving desired goals such as the preservation of their spheres of influence particularly (with particular reference to reducing U.S. presence).

Illiberalism is often manifested in digital terms, especially in today's information and communications technology-enabled world. Glasius and Michaelsen (2018) pointed to how illiberal governance can evolve into authoritarian tendencies. Using concepts from new media studies the study identified three main threats citizens may be exposed to in the new digital world as: (i) arbitrary surveillance, (ii) secrecy and disinformation, and (iii) violation of freedom of expression, they argued that illiberal practices infringe on the autonomy and dignity of the person. The use of a massive secret data-gathering program by the U.S. National Security Agency was said to constitute illiberal and authoritarian practices in the digital sphere.

Liberal Democracy in Africa

Ibrahim (2013), examined the reason liberal democracies in the Sahelian countries have failed to produce resilient institutions capable of preventing state collapse. He opined that liberal democracy failed in the Sahel as there was a disjuncture between the formal liberal democratic institutions imported from the West and indigenous institutions. This was due to diversities such as values, norms, culture and traditions of the Sahelian societies. As Ibrahim (2013: 3) emphasised, the fact that “communal ties are stronger than individual ties make political competition centred along ethnic, tribal, and linguistic line”. This is the case with most countries not only in the Sahel but in Africa at large. Thus, the liberal democratic institution is in constant struggle with illiberal cultural norms and values.

Similarly, Jotia (2012) argued that even with post-colonialism, the neo-patrimonial nature of African states still remained hostile to the entire process of democratization and development. This assertion is supported by Nzungola-Ntalaja and Lee (2014). They argued that the current African democracy rather than developing Africa, has adversely affected the social and economic wellbeing of the people and has exacerbated the political tensions and conflicts in Africa. Ubi and Ibonye (2019), raised the critical question: is liberal democracy failing in Africa or is Africa failing under liberal democracy? They noted that some African states where liberal democracy was thought to have become established have been truncated either through military encroachment and/or social revolutions. For Erdmann and Engel (2006), patron-clientelism along with some other patrimonial customs are deep-seated in African society, extending beyond the spheres of

tradition and permeate modern institutions. This to them is why liberal governance continues to fail in Africa.

Liberal democracy in Nigeria

A number of studies on liberal democracy in Nigeria do not examine the core tenets of liberalism or constitutional liberalism or its antithesis, illiberalism. Often times, the regular problems of the Nigerian state are factored in and made out to be some of the ills associated with liberal democracy consolidation. While this may be true in some instances, this is however not the core issue. Oreoluwa (2015) highlighted some of these gaps, noting that liberal democracy in Nigeria is bedevilled by corruption, election rigging, and ill-preparedness among others.

A number of other studies on the subject of liberal democracy in Nigeria such as (Odion-Akhaine, 2009), are mostly only election specific. Many even focus on elections of specific years. This gives the idea that a number of scholars view liberal democracy slickly in the minimalist sense, which portends the conduct of elections. In reality, these election-based studies on liberalism really examine just an angle of democratic liberalism. However, their methodology and summation may lead one to conclude that for them, the illiberal practices of the democratically elected governments are thus of no consequence to illiberal governance. This becomes the limitation of such studies and leaves huge gaps that need filling. Yunusa (2013) position on the tenets of liberal democracy was more on point on issues of liberal democracy. The study rightly noted that liberal democracy should guarantee citizens a much broader “spectrum of social and economic rights”.

Theoretical Background

Government, governance or whichever term is chosen to qualify the near faceless powerful State actor, does not operate in a void or by itself. It is usually controlled by an equally faceless but subtly more powerful entity known as the *elites*. For this reason therefore, Elitist theory of democracy is appropriate for this study.

Elitism is traceable to Western political thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Notable early apostles of Elite theory were Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941), and Robert Michels (1876–1936). Indeed, classic texts of elitism are undoubtedly Pareto’s *The Mind and Society* (1935) and Mosca’s *The Ruling Class* (1939). Also, Henry (2001: 299)

posited that the classic expansion of elite theory can be found in Wright Mills' *The Power Elite*. Essentially, they saw the limitations of majority rule and insisted it was practically impossible. Elite theory is therefore the theory which seeks to explain the power relationships in contemporary society between a small minority (consisting of members of the economic/political elite) and the generality of the citizenry.

Elites are the highest stratum within a society, composed of persons who are outstanding and considered leaders in their various fields of competence. Osakwe (2002: 182) explained that the elites are considered to be the best or most important group any country can boast of because of their power, talent and wealth. The elite theory stipulates that public policy reflects the values and preferences of the elites of the society and not the demands of the masses. Thus, the theory is successful at attempting to give a realistic explanation of the source of policy predicated on the elites and for their benefit.

Historically, procedural democracy developed from two main traditions, republicanism and liberalism. Republicanism focuses on the active role of the citizens in their collective governance. A variant of liberal democracy on the other hand has minimalist trends such as voting for citizens in elections, while the elites are then given the prerogative of governance (Carter and Stokes, 2002:2). Lyn (1999) opined that liberal democracy driven by capitalist economic system tends to become problematic since capitalism simultaneously undermine democracy as it compels most people to transfer their natural powers of self-development to economic 'overloads' which in turn control capital and other resources. The elites are of course in control of this overload. Ake (2000: 29) has lamented the role African elite' play in the democratization of Africa. He noted that the elites have defined and redefined (democracy) in an endless process of appropriating democratic legitimacy for political values, interests and practices that are in no way democratic.

The impact of elitism on Nigeria's socio-cultural and political space is huge and has been variously given some attention by scholars (Ayandele, 1974; Omeje, 2007; Amadi, 2011; Ebohon and Obakhedo, 2012; Edigheji, 2013). Kuka (2012) blamed the Nigerian elites for the socio-economic and socio-political challenges of the country, describing Nigeria as a nation flying without a black box. In Nigeria, elitism is so far-reaching that, according to Arowolo and Aluko (2012:799), it dominates the formal institutions of government and is the determining factor in governance and

decision-making processes. Ultimately, Ihonvbere (2013) opined that Nigeria's power elite appears to have a pathological fixation on subverting the foundations of the state. This they do by collaborating with "undemocratic forces to abridge democratic rights, and designing dubious and diabolical strategies to close political spaces, suffocate civil society, enthrone a culture of anti-intellectualism, and rusticate opportunities and possibilities for progress and development" (Ihonvbere, 2013: 3-4).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Research design

The research utilized descriptive survey research design in the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. According to Kosie & Lew-Williams (2022), descriptive survey design enables a researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from a sample of respondents in a chosen population.

Area and Population of the study

Awka in Anambra State, Nigeria was chosen as the study area largely for research convenience and majorly because it also houses the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Study Area. This was necessitated by the fact that the study required the inclusion of various levels of educational qualification in the understanding of illiberal governance. Additionally, Awka was generally found to have comparatively good neighbourhood characteristics (Okafor, 2022). Localities included in this survey include Ifite, Okpuno, Amawbia, and Nibo.

Sample and sampling techniques:

Simple random sampling technique was used to select and distribute questionnaires to 500 respondents identified for the field survey. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed. Eventually, 472 of them returned for analysis. This represented 94.4 per cent return rate.

Data Collection

Data for the study was collected from the 472 respondents' questionnaires. Additionally, qualitative data were collected from interviewees using semi-structured interviews.

Data Analysis

Primarily, quantitative data collected from respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods such as frequency and percentages. Similarly, qualitative data from interview sessions were analyzed with the aid of thematic content analysis.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES

Educational qualifications, political education and socialisation

The willingness of respondents to participate in political activities is indicative of their political education and socialisation. This trend in education qualifications and gender for our respondents is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by educational qualification and gender

QUALIFICATION	Male		Female	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Secondary	74	24.0%	44	26.67%
Graduate	135	44.0%	66	40.0%
Masters	61	20%	44	26.67%
PhD	36.7	12%	11	6.67%
Total (100%)	307 (65%)		165 (35%)	

Source: Field Survey (2022)

From above, it can be seen that higher levels of education do not necessarily translate to greater political participation, education and socialization. For male respondents, higher levels of participation were recorded at the secondary (24.0%) and university graduate (44.0%) levels. Similarly, female participants showed higher percentages at the secondary (26.67%) and university graduate (40.0%) levels. This is indicative of the fact that elites actively use Nigerian youths to carry out all kinds of political violence to perpetuate their political interests (Ihonvbere, 2013). This is also supported by Okeke and Odey (2020). This could also be reflective of the lower number of citizens at the higher levels of education such as Masters and PhD levels of education. The above result is however not desirable as the most educated in the society are supposed to champion political education and society and the reduction of conflict in the society.

Understanding of the tenets of illiberal governance

It is thus also important to gauge citizens understanding of the concept of illiberalism, as this is linked with various forms of conflicts.

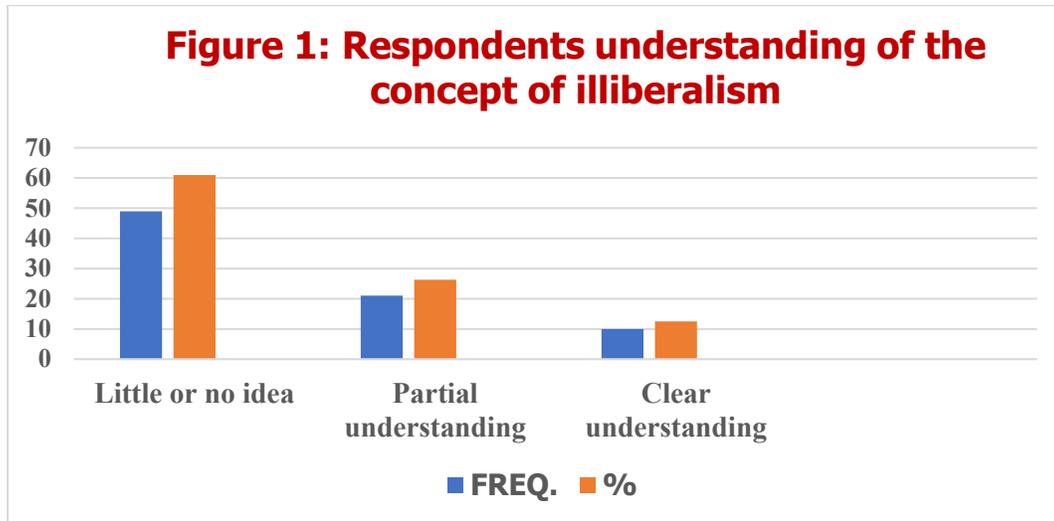
Table 2: Respondents understanding of the concept of Illiberalism

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Little or no idea	289	61.25%
Partial understanding	124	26.25%
Clear understanding	59	12.5%
Total	472	100

Source: Field Survey (2022)

From the above, it is obvious that 61.25% of our respondents had a clear-cut understanding of what illiberalism means. Also, only 26.25% of our respondents have a partial understanding of our major concept. Ultimately, only about 12.5% of our respondents fully understand the meaning of illiberalism.

Findings from our field survey show that there is a poor conceptual understanding of respondents and by extension, citizens of the country. This also means a poor political education for Nigerians in general. Because of the low levels of political education and socialization, illiberalism and generally bad governance is likely to continue as citizens would not know any better and therefore cannot make demands from the political leadership of the country. This is in line with De Regt (2018) position that understanding of illiberal democracy is important for the citizens of a country. This is also represented in the bar chart below.



Analysis of Perception of Illiberal Governance in Nigeria

From the review of related literature and elementary content analysis of secondary data and deductive reasoning, the following factors were deduced to be some of the elements of illiberal governance in Nigeria:

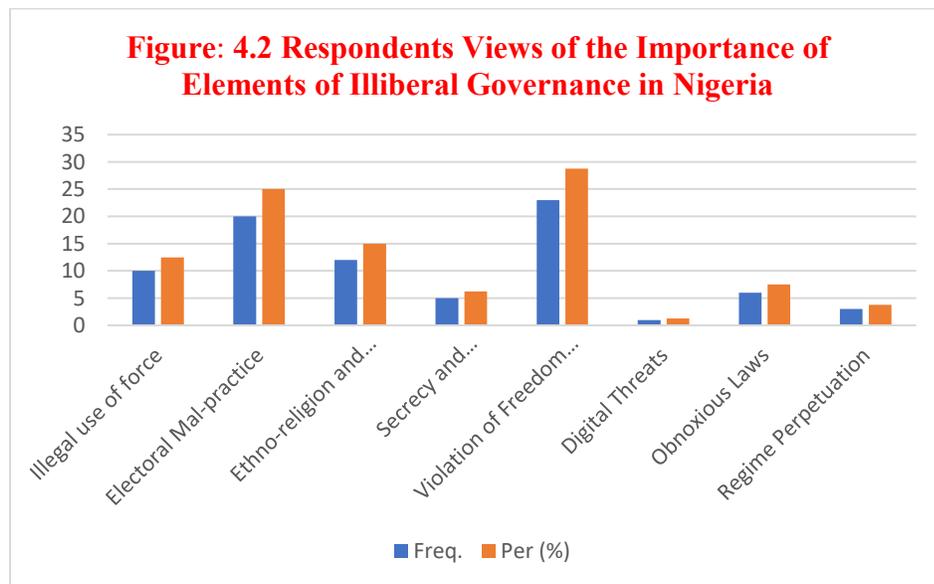
- i. Obnoxious laws; ii. Illegal use of force; iii. Use of electoral malpractice to engender self or desirable government; iv. Regime perpetuation through various means; v. Ethno-religious and nepotism-based governance; vi. Digital threats to citizens; vii. Secrecy and Disinformation; and viii. Disabling Voice (Violating freedom of expression).

Respondents Views of the Importance of Elements of Illiberal Governance in Nigeria

FACTORS	Freq.	Per. (%)
Illegal use of force	76	16.25
Electoral mal-practice	147	31.25
Ethno-religious favouritism the and nepotism	70	15.0
Secrecy and disinformation	30	6.25
Violating freedom of expression	88	18.75
Digital threats to citizens	6	1.25
Obnoxious laws	37	7.5
Regime perpetuation	18	3.75
TOTAL	472	100

Source: Field Survey (2022)

This is represented graphically below:



From the above, it can be seen that majority of our respondents (Freq. of 147 and percentage of 31.2), view electoral malpractice as the greatest violation of their rights. Violation of their freedom of expression (Freq. of 88 and 18.8%) comes second. Illegal use of force and ethno-religious favouritism and nepotism follow in their order of significance at 16.3% and 15% respectively.

The consequence of this is that important elements of illiberalism such as secrecy and disinformation (6.3%), obnoxious laws (6%) and regime perpetuation (3.8%) rank low. Interestingly, digital threats to citizenship rank lowest at 1.3%. This is in spite of the importance of social media in contemporary society. A good example of this effect can be seen in the Twitter war between the federal government of Nigeria and Twitter.

Indeed, arbitrary surveillance is an illiberal practice that infringes on the autonomy and dignity of citizens and invades privacy. Thus, sustained and organized patterns of secrecy and disinformation are major characteristics of authoritarian practice and this culminates in digital threats and the violation of freedom of expression.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that our respondents, regardless of educational qualifications, do not have the right perceptions of what liberal democracy really means. A respondent (with a master's degree in Political Science), rated Nigeria's democracy highly with regard to liberal democracy. According to him,

Nigeria has come a long way and is currently one of the best democracies in Africa. Since 1999, when there was a return to civil leadership, there has been constant elections and the military has continued to pledge support and commitment to staying away from politics. In fact, the new electoral laws further guarantee our liberal democracy will continue to strive and ensure there is peace and security in our security (SI Respondent).

As far as the respondent is concerned, regular elections were enough to score the country highly on the practice of liberal democracy.

In a research publication titled "Why Liberal Democracy is a Threat to Nigeria's Stability" (Ochonu, 2019);

Election-related expenditure is expected to rise in the near future as INEC implements a wider slate of digital technologies to combat manipulation and improve the integrity of the electoral process... Is this expensive, periodic democratic ritual called election worth its price? Elections conducted in Nigeria

since the return of civilian rule in 1999 have brought with them anxiety, tension, death, violence, and dangerous rhetoric that, taken together, have frayed the national political and social fabric. I can recall no electoral cycle since at least 2003 that was not been accompanied by fears of Nigeria's disintegration or at the very least the acceleration of its demise. (Ochonu, 2019: 2)

Thus, liberal democracy or governance is restricted here to just concerns with only elections. (Odion-Akhaine, 2009).

This is however far from it. As Adejumobi (2000: 9) pointed out. liberal democracy must include (for the Third World countries especially), civil, political, and socio-economic rights. The respondent above only perceived the political right of voting as the yardstick for liberal democracy. Liberal governance in Nigeria must thus include social and economic rights. This can be projected to include equitable distribution of the country's resources, including opportunities for all ethnic groups and all classes of citizens. This is one of the major causes of non-violent and violent conflicts in Nigeria (Uchendu, 2020). Agara and Ibebunjo (2022) linked secessionism and other ethnic agitations to the lack of socio-ethnic rights in Nigeria's democratic space.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the foregoing, it can be seen that there are linkages between citizens' perceptions of illiberal governance and conflict. Nigeria's case is further complicated by citizens' poor perception of the tenets of illiberal governance. political elites in the country's political landscape, therefore, take advantage of this ignorance to perpetuate their political interests, resulting in various dimensions of conflicts (violent and non-violent).

Sadly enough, all the efforts by countries of the West to foist democracy on the countries of the south (in Africa and elsewhere), are not met with adequate organised political education for citizens of the recipient country. There must therefore be conscious efforts to engage in political education for Nigerians. When there is a clear understanding of the tenets of liberal governance, citizens will boldly make demands for better governance and this will ensure a more peaceful country.

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