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Engaging Yoruba Traditional Festivals as Resilience Building Strategy, Peacebuilding Platform and Peace Education Pedagogy

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Abstract

Yoruba indigenous knowledge system is diverse cutting across religious, political and economic spheres. Unfortunately, western mechanisms, pedagogies and orientations have relegated them to the background in peace process, general education and peace education curriculum in particular. This study examined three Yoruba traditional festivals with the objective of unveiling their essence and relevance in resilience building, peacebuilding and peace education endeavours. Non-Participant observation, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were utilized as instruments of primary data collection. These were complemented with extant literature. Using propitiation as a concept and situated learning as the theoretical standpoint, findings reveal that ‘Egúngún’ (masquerade) in Ekiti, ‘Ogiyan’ (yam) in Ibadan and ‘Olojo’ (creation) festivals in Ife promote peaceful co-existence. The protagonists at the festivals are seen as the representatives of the ancestors and the living members of the community and they are peace harbingers whose statements during the festivals are divinely revealing, predictive and compelling. The festivals enable neighbouring villages and towns to interact, settle their differences, initiate joint development programmes and assess relationships for community growth and individual welfare. The rituals, the merriments and social exchanges during the festivals engender equanimity between the mundane and spirit worlds. It is, therefore, proposed that traditional festivals of these kinds should be infused into peace education pedagogy in all levels of education in Nigeria with a view of using them to promote communal spirit and build resilience of the young ones in overcoming pervasive conflict triggers in contemporary society.

Keywords: *Festival, Peace Education, Pedagogy, Protagonists, Rituals*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Africa is a tradition rich continent with abundant platforms for display of material and non-material cultural heritage. Music, poetry, drama and other literary genres pervade her social, economic, political and spiritual engagements. These literary genres have ritualistic, entertainment, educational and didactic functions. The episodic landmarks, wherein they come to fore, range from religious performances to social initiation of rites of passage and graduation

from one stage of development to another. In a typical traditional Yoruba society, for example, literacy was celebrated through verbal arts and remembrance (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014) while written word was of a later date. In specific terms there are ceremonies, festivals and sports that were used as platforms for displaying achievements of individual. The verbal and performance arts were used to expose dominant narratives and empower change in human psyche (Oyebode & Adewumi, 2021).

Yoruba indigenous knowledge system is wrapped in creative, verbal and performance arts. In the context of this study, indigenous knowledge refers to the local knowledge that is unique to a given cultural setting, acquired by local people through the accumulation of experiences, informal experiments and transmitted to generations (Chikaire, Osuagwe, Oguebuchulam & Ejiogu, 2012). In modern African societies, most of the valuable pedagogical tools offered by indigenous knowledge system are now consigned to anthropological explorations and sparingly informal access by children of rural communities. Most of the useful settings for training the young minds are excluded from school curriculum. This is because Africans are generally confused about what parts of their cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge system should be part of the school curriculum. Untoward tag of paganism is pinned on some of them by Christian and Islamic adherents. This is consequent upon religious dualism in Africa and erroneously perception of traditional practices, especially those grounded in African belief system, as retrogressive (Oyebode, 2017). For instance, festivals of socio-cultural, religious and socialisation import are now tagged as pagan practices and are no longer featured in school curriculum.

The undermining of traditional conflict management mechanisms which are replete in African indigenous knowledge has been argued to be one of the main reasons for the high number of communal conflicts in Ethiopia (Abbink, 2006). Despite decades of education and decolonization of western pedagogies, there still remain the pessimists who think conflict prevention through infusion of traditional practices in school learning is antithetical to modernity. However, the optimists of which this paper aligns with maintains that conflict could be prevented if the right tasks are carried out which include among others peace education through school curriculum integrated with the social environment. In the light of the argument of optimists, transformative pedagogy is apposite in a conflict infected environment of Africa.

Extant debates in African scholarship vigorously question the continued dominance of white, colonial, even racist scholars, trope, archives and knowledge in education enterprise and recommend epistemological shift to accommodate African indigenous knowledge system (Haliso, Nwogwugwu & Ntiwunka, 2021). These scholars argue that African values can be accounted for, mainstreamed and applied for the transformation of teaching, learning and practice in modern educational system. In the same light, Falola (2018) insists that through investigation of oral source to deconstruct evidence and ideas emanating from the West painting Africa as a dark continent should continue. This type of engagement will, no doubt, help to unearth African past and her rich cultural values.

Nigeria is faced with conflicts arising from Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast, banditry in the northwest, secessionist in the southeast, kidnapping in the north-central and ritual killing in the southwest. Herders-farmers conflict envelopes all parts of the country. In different parts of Nigeria there is grave insecurity and palpable fear. Probably, this is why Atu (2019) avers that violent conflicts have almost become encultured in the psyche and social behavior of the people.

We may then ask about how we got here? Many scholars have blamed the decadence on the failure of our educational system that focuses on certification at the expense of moral values. For example, Shahanaz (2019) expresses concern over the pathetic decay in Nigerian education system in general and the higher Technical Education in particular. Njoku's (2015) study reveals that social sins, pursuit of wealth without character, engaging in pleasure without conscience and lack of morality have engulfed Nigerians' psyche. Also, Omonijo et al. (2017) opines that crave for material wealth has compounded the already existing violent conflicts in African countries.

As a way forward, Sari (2013) advocates strategies that can be character-building in which the activities are arranged to increase the students' emotional quotient. Emotional quotient is better impacted to learners in situations that engage interaction with social beings and reality. Also, Gulcan (2015) avers that in order to be a good human, ethics should be placed above certification in schools and this must be done consciously by integrating social values into school activities.

UNESCO-IICBA (2017) also posits transformative pedagogy in teaching peace-building. Thus, it is apposite to bring the gown and town to a synergic relationship in the design and application of knowledge for holistic socialization of individuals.

Several attempts have been made to examine the veracity of western pedagogy in teaching peace. The conclusion that is rampant in literature is the inadequacy of western pedagogy. Thus, the need to infuse cultural values that emphasise communalism as opposed to individualism has been campaigned in scholarship. For instance, Ojo and Oyeboade (2018) explore the possibility of using peace education to address farmer-herder conflict in Nigeria and come to the conclusion that paucity of peace education anchored on traditional practices over the years has influenced distorted orientation and narratives among conflicting parties, thereby exacerbating the endemic nature of the crisis. Thus far, the answer to our poser has been non-affirmative; therefore, there must be paradigm shift. This is why the need to rework our school curriculum to lay more emphasis on collective well-being has been echoed in scholarship. In the light of this orientation, Oyeboade and Adewumi (2021) investigate how resilience building through performance and creative arts has helped in managing Ife/Modakeke internal crisis which assumed protracted social conflict status for decades. They posit that post-conflict engagement in art-based forms was used to create fun, ease tension, teach lessons in tolerance, and promote intimacy and resilience.

There are many cultural and religious festivals in Nigeria. They include Eyo festival, Ogiyan (New yam) festival, Ogun festival, Osun festival, Argungu fishing festival and a host of others. The entertainment and educational values of these festivals have been emphasized in literature. However, there is paucity of literature on the use of cultural festivals as forums for resilience in facing conflict situations, peacebuilding and peace education. The broad aim of this study is to investigate festivals of socio-cultural, religious and socialisation import in Yorubaland and link their roles to education for peace, resilience building and the prevention of violence. Thus, Egúngún, Ogiyan and Olojo festivals are chosen for investigation with the objective of unveiling their relevance in resilience building in the face of conflict, peacebuilding endeavours and peace education curriculum. Therefore, attempts are made to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the essence of festivals in Yorubaland?
2. How are festivals used to build resilience and peace in conflict situations?
3. How can festivals be used for peace education?

2.0 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Attempts are made here to clarify resilience building, peace education, peacebuilding, Nigerian belief system, Yoruba knowledge system, propitiation, art-based performance and festival, as concepts drawing from scholarship and pinning them to their usage in this study.

Resilience building is construed as a wider collective and social representation of what it means to endure and wriggle through difficulty by humans with emphasis on communal living (Oyebode & Adewumi, 2021). Vagaries of nature and human activities impose some difficulties on the living condition of man and it behooves on human beings to design coping mechanisms to deal with such untoward situations. Thus, any device of overcoming limitations and forge ahead is conceived in this paper as resilience building. It may be in form of social interaction, proclamation of rules, communication or accommodation devoid of avoidance. Resilience building is important in peacebuilding in post-conflict societies. Peacebuilding is seen as the totality of activities undertaking to address the root causes of conflict. In the past, construction of physical facilities to address shortages and rebuild damaged infrastructure was uppermost. The focus of peacebuilding activities has been diverted from mere physical reconstruction and short-term relief to the development of socio-economic and political aspects of post conflict societies (Donais, 2009). However, the restoration of peace in post-conflict situations often become limited because of lack of local content.

Peace Education includes information that gives the students a full range of opportunities to make the best choices in their interaction and communication in a society. Acquisition of values, knowledge, attitudes and skills for peaceful living in the society through teaching and learning is central to peace education (Atu, 2019). Exposure of students to such values that promote peaceful co-existence is to be done in and outside a classroom or school environment.

Thus, peace education aims to formally and informally equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to prevent and resolve conflicts and promote peaceful coexistence (Sheikh & Akhter, 2023). It is therefore important that every facet of human interaction must

add value to peace education. Therefore, the main goal of teaching peace is to unlock in students the ability to be autodidactic, and to have a powerful understanding of their role in promoting peace in all spheres of the world (Bolarinwa, 2006). In a nutshell, the importance of peace education can be put thus:

- Understanding their responsibility for elevating the collective human experience in their engagements with others irrespective of race, culture, language or religion.
- Unlocking in students the ability to be self-reflective on impact of actions and inactions on others
- Promoting peaceful relationships at all levels of social interactions.
- Learning about the tools to constructively deal with the problems in socio-cultural environment

In pursuit of peace education, the African Union (2019) envisions that Africans will pursue knowledge system that is indigenous in content and pedagogy to overcome endogenous and exogenous conflicts while not losing focus of global integration. This is deriving from the fact that no meaningful development can take place in a chaotic or conflict ridden geo-political space. It is acknowledged through this pronouncement that internal conflicts that have ravaged African states since independence have impeded their economic growth and that alien solutions have achieved limited results. To change this narrative peace education must be used to change the narrative. Africans can only do this by looking inwards into both traditional and modern tools that are of African origin.

Peacebuilding has become a popular concept and activity in peace studies and practice because of its propensity to address root causes of conflict. Thus, the United Nations (2022) conceptualizes peacebuilding as a process that involves engaging in peace initiatives to prevent violent conflicts and their escalation by addressing root causes of conflicts which fundamentally lies within human's inability to cater for divergent needs and interests which most of the time are incompatible. This insufficient provision of basic human needs has had complex social repercussions and exacerbated violent disputes, slowing progress toward addressing inclusion for long-term peace.

Reychler and Langer (2020) see peacebuilding as a complex process that incorporates operational ideology meant to ensure that violent conflicts are prevented or eliminated by fostering durable peace.

Peacebuilding is a multi-faceted task that includes conflict transformation model that emphasizes the significance of tackling the underlying causes of conflict to prevent the consequential effects of conflict that eventually leads to conflict recurrence. Peacebuilding involves all external and internal interventions planned to avert the outbreak of potential disputes that can lead to kinetic display of armed conflict, it also includes all such interventions aimed at preventing a lapse or relapse of violent conflict.

Fanny et al (2022) assert that peacebuilding is construed as an activity which aims at resolving injustice in non-violent ways and to transform the cultural and structural conditions that generate deadly or destructive conflict into progressive one. Therefore, peacebuilding is a constructive engagement involving actions and provisions that transform personal, group, and political relationships by fulfilling needs, interests and aspirations of actual, perceived or potential belligerents.

Belief system is an aggregation of human perception of himself in relation to the world around him. It is anchored on the recognition of the existence of transcendental forces anchored on a knowledge system that taps from a cosmological view that consists of the seen and the unseen (Oyebode, 2017). Speaking on belief system, Bolarinwa (2006) asserts that the indigenous Africans see human existence as unified, interlinked, and integrated in a web that spreads between the terrestrial and the celestial.

Yoruba cosmology in particular acknowledges the presence of both seen and unseen forces as critical elements for maintaining social harmony, controlling contest for terrestrial and celestial spaces, and ensuring dominance of the earth space (Oyebode, 2017). Before the spread of Islam and Christianity to different parts of Nigeria, there existed a variety of traditional worships to express this belief system that generally revolved around a big distant god, deities and ancestors. Today, Nigeria is a multi-religious society. There are two dominant groups, namely, Christians and Muslims, along with these main groups exists those who are referred to as traditional worshippers (Bolarinwa, 2006). Notwithstanding adherence to new faiths, many Nigerians still hold traditional practices sacrosanct and their obeisance to unforeseen forces remains noticeable in their daily conducts.

Propitiation as a concept has been defined as the art of appeasing a god, spirit, or person. It is aimed at gaining or regaining the goodwill of something or somebody who has some level of

control over one's affair. In conflict studies, the synonym close to the idea of propitiation is conciliation as it is aimed at appeasing the aggrieved (Warner, 2020). He sees it as customs and beliefs rooted in ancient practices of affecting reality and averting danger through appeasement. Art-based approach is the expression of human conception of life in dramaturgy in such a way that members of a community can collectively seek and share knowledge, tactics and experiences through participation (Oyebode & Adewumi, 2021). Participatory arts and performances act as social web upon which communication is strengthened. Art-based performances are useful in re-enacting shared experiences of a human community in relation to her ecological environment. Thus, art-based approaches are veritable tools for social learning. Epskamp (1999) rightly asserted that both the process and product of art-making could be used as tools to support reconciliation, rehabilitation, commemoration, and community building. This assertion is apt in view of the fact that such for a provide interactivity that support conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Festival is an art-based performance. Festivals are African traditional heritage that has ritualistic, entertainment and didactic values. Festival is an example of a large traditional interactive and communication setting which brings about inter-cultural and cross-cultural fertilization that make a society a better one (Wilson, 1987). It is a periodic assemblage of believers or worshippers of certain cultural or spiritual entity for social or spiritual rejuvenation. Festival is usually the heights of ceremonials for worship and ritualistic expression of faith in the cosmological view of a people.

Institution and celebration of festivals are a common practice in Yoruba indigenous settings. The social virtues of harmonious living, honesty and collective existence were extolled in songs and other oral renditions during the festival. Rituals and scarifies are performed to the deities and ancestors for peace, protection, good works, fertility and equanimity with the spiritual realm.

Theoretical Background

The transformative pedagogy which borrows largely from situated learning theoretical construct is used in this study. Situated learning theory (SLT) emerges from a belief that effective learning needs to be embedded in real learning situation where the learners engage in more complex learning process in their real social communities (Norainna & Besar, 2018). Situated

learning theory holds that effective education requires learning that is embedded in authentic contexts of practice, wherein students engage in increasingly more complex tasks within social communities. Situated cognition or situated learning was first defined Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989) and then expounded by Lave and Wenger (1991). Since then, it has had a significant effect on educational thinking.

SLT has emerged as an alternative to dominant cognitive perspectives on learning. Situated learning theorists posit that knowledge should be delivered in real life context. Again, Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning occurs when individuals are members of the communities in which they are acculturated and at the same time participate actively in the diffusion, reproduction, transmission and transformation of in-practice knowledge. SLT shared some characteristics with Social Learning Theory. Social Learning Theory posits that behaviours can be learnt through observation, imitation and social interaction. According to Lyons and Berge (2012), humans can learn to imitate the observed behaviour and reap the rewards or they can learn not to imitate a particular action and thereby avoid the negative repercussion. In the light of this argument, the re-enacted experiences during festivals have socialization values that are useful in preventing or managing conflicts. Thus, social interaction and collaboration within the “community of practice” is helpful as a pedagogical technique for novel learning situation. Imitation, definition, differential associations, and differential reinforcement are useful in human relations.

In view of the fact that festival is a situational enactment of the totality of a people’s culture in a community, using it as avenue for teaching and learning makes SLT very relevant to this study. In contrasting participatory and acquisitive learning models as they apply in classroom settings with situated learning, it is discovered that students have a more robust and varied real live learning experience, students arrive at a new level of knowledge and understanding based on their experience as a real practitioner in a group or community.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive survey. The study area is the entire Yorubaland and three festivals are the major focus of the study. Primary data are sourced through observation, interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs).

The researcher participated in these festivals as non-participant observer. Thirty interviews were conducted on key informants who cut across traditional leaders, cultural protagonists, elders, age-grade leaders and women. Six FGDs were held; each comprise five participants. The data obtained through the primary sources are complemented with secondary sources such as books, journal articles and archival materials.

In order to ensure reliability of study outcome, data sources are triangulated and multiple informants are engaged. Findings from each of the festivals are coded in themes and compared to make inferences.

Descriptive analysis of the data was carried out through thematic categorization and immediate discussion of findings.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Essence of Selected Festivals in Yoruba Cosmology

Egúngún is a Yorùbá masking culture in which the spirits of long-dead ancestors are believed to manifest in bodily form (Akande, 2019). According to interviewees *Egúngún* festival is aimed at establishing and maintaining contact between the living and the dead members of a lineage. Field observation revealed that it is a popular festival in all sub-cultures of Yorubaland. Invocations, dramatic performances, rituals of sacrificing of materials and spilling of blood to the spirit of the dead were observed during field study. The *egúngún* culture of the Yoruba is perceived as a means of accessing the benevolence and avoiding the wrath of departed souls for the benefit of the living members of a lineage (Oyebode, 2017). *Egúngún* (masquerade) festival in Ekiti is a yearly ritual to celebrate the ancestors of the indigenous people. *Egúngún* festival among the Ekiti people of southwest Nigeria is popular. Among them are Ede, Aborogi, Okotorojo, Owi and Agbe. They all share the characteristic of weird dress ornamented with charms. They come out once in a year and lineage members from far and near come to celebrate for three or seven days as peculiar to each of them.

Ogiyan (yam) festival is an annual pomp and pageantry associated with the harvest of yam. It is used to commemorate annual harvest of yam to venerate the god of fertility and plenty for his benevolence on the people. According to Odey (2020) it is associated with man's quest for safety in his geographical environment, food security, and metallurgical purification. It is an

event to mark the end of a farming season, acknowledge bountiful harvest, celebrate life, display accomplishments of a community and propitiate for the well-being of the community. In some communities no full-grown or mature man eats new yam before celebration of this festival. Interviewees maintained that yam festival is celebrated across all cultures and sub-cultures in the southwest, southeast and north-central where yam is grown. There is always a rise in tourism support services and income of the community members.

Olojo (creation) is a festival to acknowledge the day of creation of human beings. Olojo Festival held in Ife is to celebrate the Creator, the gods and deities whose role in human existence cannot be undermined (Oyebode & Adewumi, 2021). In Ife, it is particularly attached to the heroic deeds of Ogun, the god of iron. It is marked with a lot of fun and pageantry. It is celebrated for seven days and Ooni receives a large number of people, including visitors, tourists and culture enthusiasts from across the world. Respondents to interviews reported different acts of propitiation, libation and incantation as rituals for cleansing of the land. Observation of the festival all showed interaction among communities, neighbours and guests from far and near.

Resilience and Peacebuilding through the Festivals

According to interviewees, the festivals are used to entrench the collective spirit in humans. This is similar to the Ubuntu practice of collective personhood or member of the human family in South Africa (Bolarinwa, 2006). The festival enables members of the community to share in the successes and burdens of members as individuals and groups.

From observation during the festivals, the participatory nature of these ceremonials engenders peace by bringing together at least once in a year people who may be nursing grudges against one another. The platforms provided by these festivals enable family members who are at home or are in Diaspora to come together and discuss family matters. These discussions may range from conflict resolution, sharing of heritage, handing out sanctions and reiterating family values.

It is also revealed in the study that the festivals enable neighbouring villages and towns to interact, settle their differences, initiate joint development programmes and assess relationships for community growth and individual welfare. This is attainable because invitation is extended to them to witness different performances, wine and dine and exchange gifts during the ceremonies.

The entertainment components of the festivals have resilience building values. The different genres of oral renditions, songs and drumming are potent weapons for teaching values of harmony and peaceful co-existence. Anecdotes, proverbs, wise-sayings, songs, praise-songs, incantations and oracle divinations replete in this ceremonial are full of pieces of admonition on non-adversarial settlement of existing conflicts.

The propitiation involved in the festivals provides opportunities for spiritual purification from guilt arising from conflicts or crimes. These cleansing rituals offered perpetrators of evil acts avenue to confess and get relieved of the burden of their guilt while the victimized opt for forgiveness after justice is served. The height of purification is attained when individual worshipper has a sense of relief from his worries and believes he is reconciled with his spirit and creator. As earlier revealed in a study by Oyeboade (2017), these rituals reduce anxiety by providing confidence and a feeling of control over social adversity such as conflict.

Focus group discussion emphasized the view that the protagonists at the festivals are the representatives of the ancestors and the living members of the community and they are peace harbingers whose statements during the festivals are divinely revealing, predictive and compelling. Festivals are used for peacebuilding to reconcile warring parties. Peacebuilding in this instance aligns with Hussain and Naz's (2021) view that activities around peacebuilding are not merely to abate conflict rather they are activities that aim to resolve the practices of injustice in peaceful ways and transform the socio-economic and structural conditions that cause conflicts. Issues that cause structural imbalance are brought to fore during festivals because they provide fora for collective dialogue and engagements with people in that socio-cultural environment. They are levellers for the rich and poor, old and young, males and females. The transfigured member of the lineage represents the ancestors and his utterances during transfiguration are sacrosanct and divinely honoured. Learning of peace through the platform of festivals has the capability of re-enacting African lost values of communal living and equality before unseen forces that drive the cosmos.

Import of the Festivals to Peace Education

It is rightly argued that since conflicts do not exist in a vacuum they must be understood and tackled in their social-cultural and political contexts which involve values and beliefs, fears and suspicion, interests and needs, attitudes and actions, relationships and networks (Brock-Utne,

2001). In the light of this, conflicts and their resolution are better handled in the context of individual community social values.

The school curriculum should promote the right attitudes that should be cultivated to nurture the young ones into becoming loving and empathetic members of the society. These traditional festivals can be used to provide narratives on positive attitudes. In the light of this, FGD participants in this study agreed that performances and contents of festivals can be used as a tool for social learning to change perception, attitude and behaviour. This finding corroborates Oyebode and Adewumi's (2021) findings on the importance of theatre in conflict infected Ife/Modakeke.

Teachers or field trip guides need to call attention to naming and shaming used by festival drummers to castigate those wanting of social etiquette. Mbagwu (2021) submits that personal shaming is part of internal control measures of deterrence in African society. This provides mechanisms for curbing conflicts and crimes that come through sinister practices.

The transfigured protagonist of the dramaturgy in festival celebration gives warning to conflict parties and those who may harbour animosity. This finding corroborates Oyebode's (2017) earlier submission that during Obalufon festival, a devotee is transfigured who speaks from the spiritual realm to reveal, expose, condemn and admonish conflicting parties and he prescribes moral and ritual necessities to foster equanimity with self, others and the spirit world. Conscientious-building, social bridge reconstructions and enactment of order in the society are crucial to peace processes in Africa (Ajayi and Buhari, 2014). In the light of this finding, Atu (2019) recommends engagement of youths in community peacebuilding activities that entail innovative curricular approaches in addressing different conflict challenges ravaging the country.

Interviewees submit that through exposure to festivals students may become aware of transcendental beings outside themselves. The transcendental beings are perceived as cosmic forces that reside in Yoruba cosmological beliefs and philosophy. This awareness may curb bad behaviour having it in mind that they are quick in meting out punishment to sinners.

Ceremonies involved in festivals provide the corridors for educating the young ones in collective communication. Yearly *Egúngún* festival, for example, offers ample opportunities to collectively address issues that touch on wellbeing of the community. Other issues relating to infidelity, theft, arrogance, failure to honour agreement, violation of sacred beliefs of a lineage and struggle for political recognition.

Re-enactment of legendary acts of ancestors is a way of infusing in the young ones the need to be public spirited in their conduct. It is designed to enjoin them to emulate such heroic deeds. The experience also offers guidance for them in their actions or inactions, consolation in grief, fortitude in bearing loss and vitality of hope of a brighter and promising future.

In view of the findings of this study, we align with the proposition that the postcolonial afflictions ravaging Africa require an exploration of African indigenous knowledge in order to design alternative and sustainable paradigms for the burgeoning population (Haliso, Nwogwugwu & Ntiwunka, 2021). In the light of this, we propose integration of festivals into peace education curriculum through field trip or excursion. A field trip or excursion is a journey by a group of people to a place away from their normal environment. Recorded episodes of the festivals can be packaged as flipped learning materials for viewing at home or during class session for critical analysis. Flipped learning is a methodology that helps teachers to prioritize active learning during class time by assigning students lecture materials and presentations to be viewed at home or outside of class, As found in earlier study by Zembylas and Bekerman (2019), using festival as peace education tool can help to promote empathy and understanding among students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds in post-conflict settings. Exposing students of other cultures to cultural practices of Yoruba people will promote inter-cultural and inter-ethnic understanding and appreciation.

FGDs participants opined that most traditional practices have suffered neglect in peace process in Nigeria in general and Yorubaland in particular. They rejected too much emphasis placed on Western developed models in peacebuilding in post-conflict environment. Incompatibility of peacebuilding to local culture has been a major obstacle to achieving durable peace and preventing resurgence of conflict. Likewise, it is observed that in the teaching of peace, teachers have usually emphasized theoretical exposition at the expense of practical interaction with phenomena and activities that can promote peace. Interviewees emphasized a new paradigm

shift that requires looking inward into traditional engagements that have been used to promote peace, douse tension and provide avenue for reconciliation after conflicts.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Annual enactment of festivals is tied to African cosmological view of the terrestrial and celestial worlds. Festivals are used to bring people together. Festivals provide avenue for socialization and it is a living tradition among the Yoruba people. They promote understanding and peaceful co-existence. The purgatory values in festivals enhance resilience to social adversities. The rituals, the merriments and social exchanges during the festivals engender equanimity between the mundane and spirit worlds. They are avenues for reconciling warring parties.

The foregoing points to the immeasurable values of festival as resilience building mechanism and veritable platform for peacebuilding which if factored into peace education curriculum can achieve a lot. First, it can disabuse the learners' minds on the present misgivings about festivals as a pagan practice because they will see themselves that festival is an extended form of drama relating to real life experiences. Second, it will tie the learners to cultural practices that can change their world view. Three, providing situated learning experience through non-participant observation of festivals has a more permanent impact on learners' memories.

Interaction with grassroots through attendance of festivals will help learners to analysis the root causes of peculiar African violence and conflicts between and among communities and to develop the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to mitigate and resolve such conflicts more professionally. It is, therefore, proposed that infusion of traditional festivals into peace education pedagogy in Nigeria is beneficial. Using them to build resilience of in the youths will help them to overcome pervasive conflict triggers they experience daily. The values of tolerance, empathy and mutual respect tolerance which are fundamental to building peaceful societies are better guaranteed through practical experience offered by these festivals.

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United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UN SDG) 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth in the Context of Commercial Hospitality in Malete, Kwara State, Nigeria

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This article focuses on proffering possible solutions to curb challenges facing the operators of commercial hospitality business in Malete, Kwara State Nigeria. It discovers issues affecting commercial hospitality business operations in the area. The paper employs a qualitative method comprising observation and literature through search engines comprising Emerald, Google scholar and JSTOR. It discovers that the commercial hospitality business is growing globally in changing multicultural environment. Although, the business makes significant psychological and economic impacts but not without challenges to achieve sustainable decent work and economic growth. As a result, this paper explores and recommends a management theory by Poster Carol as a suitable medium to improve the operations of the business owners and as well promote the business to become sustainable decent work for economic growth.

Keywords: *Commercial Hospitality, Service Promotion, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), Strategy*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The importance of hospitality is a global political discourse. Hospitality requires the guest to feel that the host was being hospitable through feelings of generosity, a desire to please and a genuine regard for the guest as an individual (Lashley et al., 2007; Mackenzie & Benny, 2012). Hospitality is therefore more than just about the host providing food and accommodation to the guests but also about entertaining the guests. The product purchase is often either intangible or the perceived quality of the product purchase is impacted by the service method in which it was

received (Jones, 1996; King, 1995). Hospitality industry as a service organization or companies provides food and beverage, accommodation, and other recreational activities to customer who are way from their home. This industry's task is to create shareholders wealth by servicing and satisfying guest across hotel, restaurant, private club, event planning, tourism related business, travels provider and commercial hospitality outfits (Arora, 2011; Hemmington, 2007).

When discussing the importance of hospitality there is less emphasis on the aspect of commercial hospitality establishments. Several authors (Abidan, 2015; Fagbolu & Ogunlana, 2022; McMillan et al., 2011; Zbigniew, 2013) have extensively explored positive impacts of commercial hospitality on the lives of operators and communities. Study, Fagbolu and Ogunlana (2022) carefully recommend commercial hospitality businesses as a medium of employment generation and revenue generation but unable to identify challenges facing the commercial hospitality business operators. This study, therefore, explores issues facing the business owners and possible strategies to tackle the challenges. It is significant to commercial hospitality operators, customers and achievement of decent work and economic growth sustainable development goal. The article is an embodiment of research objectives, research questions, decent work and economic growth sustainable development goal (SDG), issues affecting commercial hospitality business, commercial hospitality service promotion, *observations* and recommendations.

Research Objectives

- i. To discover issues affecting commercial hospitality business operations.
- ii. To offer possible strategies to curb challenges facing the commercial hospitality business.

Research Questions

- i. What are the issues facing operators of commercial hospitality businesses?
- ii. How can the commercial hospitality business operators manage the challenges facing the business?

2.0 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL (SDG)

In the discourse of development, work has been recognized as a critical issue, but it remains unclear development from its start on how work is related to the issue of sustainable goals. To end poverty worldwide, world scientists, philosophers and political leaders came to a consensus on different goals and targets as a developmental goal in 2000, and these goals and targets are institutionalized in the UN Millennium Declaration and became the MDGs. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), however, evolved from the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) (Bandyopadhyay, 2020).

Littig (2018) argues that a fundamental reorganization and reassessment of the critical society-nature relationship and a new conceptualization of sustainable work is pertinent. In 2015, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly to guide international cooperation on the elimination of poverty and to strengthen universal peace over the next fifteen years adopted 17 (seventeen) SDGs. Goal 8 in this framework is to promote sustainable economic growth and decent work for all and sundry with full and productive employment. It was stressed that the international community has overlooked the centrality of decent work to human well-being contrary to what was comprehended in 1919 and 1948.

Goal 8 of the SDGs aimed to promote decent, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth and full/productive employment for people. Sustainable economic growth is foregrounded where benefits exist for all and sundry equally and inequalities are reduced while sustaining the environment. Furthermore, inclusive economic growth requires decent work, that is, work that is secure, safe, with fair wages, and equally accessible to all (Bello-Bravo & Lutomia, 2020).

Lapinskaitė and Vidžiūnaitė (2020) evaluated the economic growth and decent work environment in G20 countries during 2013–2018. The author recognized G20 countries as the fastest-growing countries in the world because their economy describes the lion's share of the global economy. The qualitative research data analysis on the theoretical aspects of goal 8 of SDG decent work and economic growth was based on the comparative analysis of interpretation, scientific literature, comparison, content analysis and grouping used to analyze the theoretical aspects of sustainable development and its goals, especially goal 8: decent work and economic growth. The results

revealed that during 2013–2018 Japan reached the most significant economic growth and the best work environment. The United States of America (USA) and the Republic of Korea are in second and third position respectively while the last three are Argentina, Brazil, and South Africa. The study disclosed that it is challenging to recognize the achievements of the economic and work environment development but could lead to future insights that will create value for policymakers, economists and other stakeholders.

Singh, Singh, Alam and Agrawal (2022), as a proxy for economic well-being in Saudi Arabia, investigated the correlation between the UN SDGs and GDP growth rate. The authors also investigated the role of education and training in accomplishing SDGs in accordance with the Saudi Vision 2030. That emphasizes the knowledge economy. To explore the relationship between the SDG variables and the GDP, the study adopted multiple regression analysis. The outcomes showed that education and training, gender equity or women empowerment, greenhouse gas emissions, and decent employment are positively and significantly correlated to GDP growth, but poverty, hunger, and health tend to be negatively correlated. The study indicated that education and training without compromising environmental goals can promote socioeconomic and health goals.

Raimi (2020) discussed the imperative of transition to decent work and economic growth in the region as a move expected to lead to the achievement of goal 8 of the SDGs. The study utilized a mixed research method. Based on secondary data, it was discovered that the 2000 - 2019 per capita GDPs of Sub-Saharan Africa were very low when compared with the minimum per capita GDP for the Upper-middle-income countries. The continent also manifested a low tendency towards decent work because of worsening unemployment rates and higher vulnerable employment in the workforce. The study validated the United Nations' targets on economic growth and decent work and opined that to sustain per capita economic growth, the least developed countries must have at least 7 percent gross domestic product growth yearly including providing decent work for every woman and man.

Discussions over the last decade has been trending and increasing on the significance of sustainable development and the quest to achieve sustainable economic development that does not harm the environment, conserve natural resources or exacerbate tensions in society. SDGs are intended to be attained as a balanced whole in the national and international communities.

Nevertheless, especially in developing economies, critical interactions between the SDGs have caused the need, to identify and pursue the goals in line with their peculiar developmental needs. Undoubtedly, indecent workplaces pose serious threats to profits, plants, and people including the achievement of SDG in Sub-Saharan Africa and Maleta, Kwara State Nigeria.

Issues Affecting Commercial Hospitality Business

The industry is segmented into commercial and non-commercial service sectors. Thus, a distinction to what a local commercial hospitality meant from the general context of a hospitality industry. The local commercial hospitality industry refers to the sector of the hospitality industry meeting basic need of food (Kaur, 2013). The business engages in public selling food and beverage to customers for profit making in a remote area or in a particular location having a high range in rural areas. This is a business that can be set up with a small amount of money and with time will grow big if nurture very well (Ariffin et al., 2011; Ariffin et al., 2018; Fagbolu & Ogunlana, 2022). Business is used as a tool to reduce the level of poverty with a minimum level of innovation and creativity.

Commercial hospitality business creates employment. However, involvement in the production of hospitality services is particularly opposite to hospitality service providers because of illiteracy and low levels of education (Fagbolu & Ogunlana, 2022; Oyibo, 2013; Walker et al., 2001). Poor formal educational background of these service providers often limits their scope of operation, management and sustainability. As a result, leading to low regard for other values attached to their services and reasons why people consider the business, a low-class business (Langhorn, 2004; Lashley, 2008; Lashley et al., 2005; Mackenzie & Benny, 2012; Pfeifer, 1983).

Significantly, low educational level poses more effect on the customer than the service providers in terms of communication skills, grooming, staff orientation, customer loyalty and retention, service presentation, environmental and food hygiene (Langhorn, 2004; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) argue that to obtain satisfaction without satisfactory hosting behaviour, customers would not be delighted or impressed with the overall service quality even though the functional needs are fully satisfied. Langhorn (2004) found that guests are less impressed with surface acting performances of the customer contact operators or staff who tried to hide their true emotions in the service encounters. But this should not be seen as a stigma to name the business a low-class business as these people can be enlightened to improve and provide strategies to tackle

the challenges (Ariffin et al., 2018). Hence, this study aims to explore possible strategies to curb the challenges facing commercial hospitality business owners.

3.0 COMMERCIAL HOSPITALITY SERVICE PROMOTION

The figure below portrays Poster Carol Management Theory of service value promotion (Poster, 2018). The theory as an embodiment of unique selling elements, company culture, build customer service culture, customer profile and set customers' expectations denotes strategies for decent work and economic growth in the context of commercial hospitality.

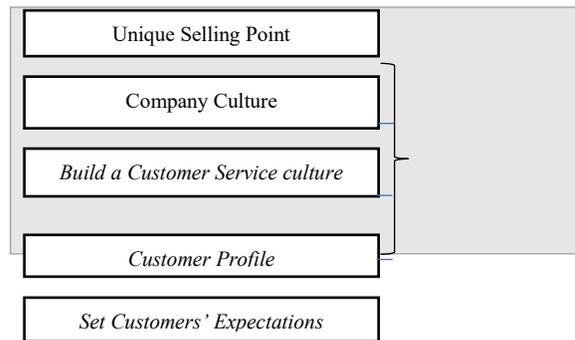


Figure I: Service Value Promotion

Source: Poster, C. (2018). *Management Theories & Practices in the Hospitality Industry*. *Small Business-Chron.com*.

http://smallbusiness.chron.com/management-theories-practices-hospitality_industry41708.html

Unique Selling Elements

The theory of Unique Selling Elements analyzes how to produce and provide a unique product. According to Kompaniets and Rauhut (2013), unique selling point refers to a part of a particular object that distinguishes it from like objects. This in essence means that businesses if they want to gain competitive advantage need to a position and distinction among other businesses.

Ng'Ang'A (2017) opines that new business models are increasing competition. The study sought to establish the impact of unique selling propositions on purchasing decisions of customers. Using quantitative method, data were collected using questionnaires from the participants through emails. The author discovered that price and place are the significant factors impacting the buying decisions of customers. The features pf products are related to service quality and promotion. The

paper concluded that the emphasis should always be on price and location but not on overlooking product quality.

Unique selling point as a marketing concept serves as a practical and straightforward model for analysis of differentiation in business marketing (Miller & Henthorne, 2007). Talabi, Chile and Abubakri (2012) discussed the use of unique selling propositions and slogans in advertising. The research relied on secondary data and relied on the theory of selective attention and arousal to examine the significance of unique selling propositions and slogans in advertising. The authors concluded that the usage of excellent and effective unique selling proposition and slogans in advertising can greatly serve a real driving force in establishing and running a successful business. Thus, a unique selling element is fundamental in every type of marketing including commercial hospitality business.

Company Culture

Poster (2018) identified five Cs comprising communication, coaching, collegiality, cooperation and compromise to foster best practices for creating a productive corporate culture. McGregor and Doshi (2015) declared that a great culture is not easily built, Hence, the reason why high-performing business cultures are powerful competition. Meanwhile, establishments that establish great cultures can meet customer-centric and fast-paced demands. Cultures need to be treated by leaders to engineer discipline. Every commercial hospitality establishment need to be totally committed to delivering consistently high standards of service to gain and retain customer loyalty. The service owner must first understand how to provide excellent customer service as this is the cornerstone of the business and this will help guide the service operation toward the customer in this regard, they can then teach the employee to foster the business. Commonly, a common agreement exists whereby that innovation is driven by the people at the centre of any organization's innovation activity.

Kratzer, Meissner and Roud (2017) expressed that organisational innovation culture comes in five main types. First, closed innovation which is driven by internal capabilities. Second, doing, using, and interacting that has to do with ad hoc processes, no link to knowledge providers. Next, outsourcing genuine innovation capabilities. Up next, is extramural innovation. Fifth, no matching internal culture or procedures and proactive innovation for matching internal and external openness.

Thus, comprehending the world perspectives of businessmen and women and the cultures of their establishment demands comprehensive analysis (Dellheim, 1987).

Creating a customer service culture within a company can help build success. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are inextricably linked to the quality of customer service and, ultimately, to the company's profitability. The local commercial service owners, therefore, can enhance their customer satisfaction and loyalty if they practice good communication skills and ensure it has been taught to their employees. They should ensure good collegiality streaming top- down in their business and the service owners should create a good working atmosphere for their employees. For instance, adding incentives to their work, it could be free breakfast and lunch or a top up for hardworking employees as this will encourage their interactions and services with the customers because a happy employee will do anything to satisfy customers.

Build a Customer Service Culture

Tien, Anh, Vu, On, Duc and Hung (2021) opined that customer dissatisfaction at times does not originate from a substandard product but instead from a sad experience. Customers' feelings about a business are not only the product bought but also the customer service rendered to them. The service owner must first understand how to provide excellent customer service as this is the cornerstone of the business and this will help guide the service operation toward the customer in this regard, they can then teach the employee to foster the business. A good customer service culture attracts and retains loyalty and patronage by building optimal value, meeting needs and expectations. For instance, greeting the customers immediately they are sighted to make them feel comfortable and during their food and beverage presentation, they should always be in a good mood, also, the service owner must set the best payment method for their customers normally the local service payment is either payment before service or after it should be made clear to the service providers the specific payment method to avoid conflict in service. A good customer service culture tends to manage customer portfolios, basic data and information including names and contacts among others. All of these help sales personnel find useful information to sell products fast and provide better service to customers (Tien et al., 2021).

Ali, Iraqi, Rawat and Mohammad (2018) examined the role of customer service skills on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction. The research investigated the impact of problem-solving skills, customer service culture, Nonverbal and verbal communication skills, and

reputation building, on which customers intend to select the best banks in Pakistan. It utilized a sample size of 350 (three hundred and fifty) participants to test the hypothesis while exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis were utilized to test the measurement model while structural equation modelling was adopted to test the hypothesis. The study discovered that reputation building skills (RBS), Problem solving skills (PSS), Customer service culture (CSC), nonverbal and verbal communication skills (NVCS) show positive and significant impact on customer satisfaction (Ali et al., 2018).

Ngacha and Onyango (2017) in Rwanda assessed the influence of customer-oriented service in the hotel industry culture on customer retention. The mixed method study entailing descriptive comparative and correlation used a survey of 152 (one hundred and fifty-two) participants. The paper discovered an average rating of customer orientation practices across various categories of hospitality establishments studied. The customer retention rating was average for lower rated hotel categories and the higher star rated hotels respectively. In addition, it noted a lack of strong bonds and true customer loyalty in low grade hotels. There was a positive and moderately significant correlation between customer orientation practices and customer retention. However, noted were deficiencies across the customer orientation practices examined which comprised management of staff, development of customer-oriented culture and designing service processes for quality service delivery.

Hence, corporate culture in every enterprise is an intangible asset. Organizations need to ensure a reasonable level of cohesiveness and consensus to be successful and customer-focused. 7Cs framework to enhance customer-focused culture building includes customer insight, collaborative approach, competitor awareness, compensation strategy, competition strategy, customer value creation and criteria for decision making (Madhani, 2018).

Customer Profile

This theory analyzes how to make a bond between a company and a customer by generating customers' profiles (Tien et al., 2021). Traditionally, the local service owners lack keeping customers' records. According to Syakur et al (2018), small and medium enterprises (SMEs) tend to have a variety of customers but lack mapping of their customers. As a result, it is difficult to discover loyal customers. However, customer mapping encourages grouping and profiling customers to facilitate the analysis and policy of SMEs in the production of their products.

Clustering is utilized to mine and analyze data that has variations and different numbers of lots. It is imperative to group data into a cluster. It contains data similar as possible and different from other cluster objects.

Significantly, generating more revenues by driving the loyalty of guests is the most important factor in business success for hospitality operators. Numerous underlying factors and determinants lead to customer loyalty including the significance of customer loyalty, high service quality and customer satisfaction (Myo, Khalifa & Aye, 2019). A customer profile is critical to different commercial hospitality business segments (Bojanic 2007; Hardjono & San, 2017). It serves as a tool to store a comprehensive history of transactions and interactions with existing and potential customers.

Set Customers Expectations

Wonglorsaichon and Wiriyakitjar (2013) measured and compared differences in the desired service quality expectations of hospitality customers and identified the service dimensions that matter most to guests of family-run and owner-operated hotels in Chiangmai, Thailand. The study employed a modified SERVQUAL scale as the questionnaire and utilized an exploratory factor analysis with oblique rotation. The scale consists of five categories: confidence, professionalism, empathy, tangibles, and competitiveness. The findings indicated that competitiveness was the highest-ranking dimension which the hotel customers expect among the five service dimensions. This indicates that the customers are concerned with the provision of a standard of service equivalently within the industry. With respect to the service expectation, there are significant differences among hotel customers due to different patterns of visit, age ranges, and levels of income.

The service owner can set a realistic expectation for their customers using the information gathered from the customers' profiles. As customer complaints are based on the environment, the service owner should always ensure a clean and tidy environment by avoiding stocking their waste bin in front of their shops or canteen, washing of plate in front of the canteen and try as much as possible to distant their kitchen from the dining area. The service owner can also have a regular contact of their retained customers to inform them when food is ready and/or provide convincing service for them by order taking and prompt delivery.

Ariffin and Maghzi (2012) attempted to narrate the effect of personal and hospitality factors on the level of expectation and proposed a scale to measure commercial hospitality for hotel services. With a total of 101 local and international respondents, the results revealed that the expectations are influenced by personal factors comprising gender, purpose of stay, nationality, and private domain of hospitality. The author concluded that hospitality can be explained by five dimensions, viz; warm welcoming, personalization, special relationship, comfort and straight from the heart. Meanwhile, the level of expectation on hospitality is by personal factors such as gender, purpose of stay, nationality and private domain of hospitality influence hospitality level of expectation. Although customer expectations vary according to background, it is still unknown whether this is still the case across different trip modes. Several efforts have been made to analyze these parameters in terms of the background of customers. Liu, Law, Rong, Li and Hall, (2013) used a complete analysis of customer profiles and their contrast by trip mode was then conducted using association rule mining. The authors, by imputing missing values, obtained an eWOM dataset from an online source and sentiment mining was used to improve its quality. The results declared differences in both customer expectation and satisfaction when the same traveller engages in different trip modes.

Mills and Thomas (2008) examined information expectations of restaurant menus and analyzed responses from 276 restaurant customers. The author used the guidelines outlined in the Truth-in-Menu Law and tested using a confirmatory factor analysis approach to develop. Customer's past experiences are one of the issues that influence what is on their mind, perceptions, their service quality standard and expectations. In a study, Saarnivaara (2021) focused on expectations and how pet hospitality businesses respond to the expectations of their customers. The author conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews, analyzed the results and supported it by the existing literature. It was discovered that customer satisfaction is strongly connected to services and expectations. However, Improper presentation of information on restaurant menus tends to lead to customer dissatisfaction, a loss of profitability, and influence the ultimate failure of a restaurant operation.

4.0 OBSERVATIONS

This paper notes that the hospitality industry is adding value to the economic growth of various countries and serving as a driving wheel in various spheres. In the last decades, the hospitality

industry has gained much importance due to the vigorous process of expansion. The industry is promoting communities in terms of sustainability, awareness, economic multiplier effect, employment, infrastructural development, and social amenities. Nevertheless, the business is faced with issues affecting its decency and economic growth sustainability. Further in-depth into the findings reveals that a key strength of the commercial hospitality sector of the industry includes the potential for wealth and job creation throughout towns, cities, communities, and rural areas.

To deliver high quality services, it is pertinent for service providers in the commercial hospitality industry to understand what customers of various market segments expect from a hospitality outfit. Considering economic growth, the ideology of neoliberalism has infused national and international development planning with an approach that fails to place humans at the centre of development (Frey & MacNaughton, 2016). Commercial hospitality is imperative to improving the livelihood in the communities creating opportunities for empowerment as a profitable business for SDG decent work and economic growth.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Commercial hospitality business provides a certain level of customer satisfaction and expectation. Significantly, commercial hospitality is important to the economic success of local economies. It also plays an immense role in the social and cultural life of their communities. Even though the business owners contribute immensely towards improving the means of livelihood in the communities, they are identified with low or poor formal educational backgrounds. The business operators do not deeply apply the required service sequence of a fundamental hospitality industry. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are inextricably linked to the quality of customer service and, ultimately, to the company's profitability.

The local commercial service owners, therefore, can enhance their customer satisfaction and loyalty if they practice good communication skills together with their employees. Even though commercial hospitality service providers operate locally; they can apply the theory to enhance customer loyalty by studying what the customer wants and giving it to them in the best way that will satisfy them (Ariffin et al., 2018; Fagbolu & Ogunlana, 2022).

It is imperative to ensure good collegiality streaming top- down in their business and the service owners should create a good working atmosphere for their employees. he service owners should create a good working atmosphere for their employees.

For instance, adding incentives to their staff such as free breakfast and/or lunch or a top up for those that are industrious. Undoubtedly, this could encourage them and increase their interactions and services with the customers because a happy employee will do anything to satisfy the customer. The local service payment is either payment before service or after. The preferred and specific method of payment should be made clear by the service providers to avoid conflict in service. The operators can get to know what the customer expectations are by profiling them. As customer complaints are based on the environment, the service owner can also have regular contact of their retained customers to inform them when food is ready and/or provide convincing service for them by order taking and prompt delivery. Commercial hospitality operators can get to know what the customer expectations are by profiling them.

The service employee can be taught to ask polite question as how was the meal today? Is there anything you wish we can do to promote your satisfaction? In this way service owner can have day to day details of what the customer like and dislike about their product and service and they should lay emphases on their best area. For example, in the context of the study area, steam-boiled (white) rice is the regular food that most local service providers offer to customer in the locality. However, they can modify the unique selling of the product by adding ofada rice, Nigerian jollof rice, including fruit to the menu and have it attached to their payment. Undoubtedly, additional varieties will give a new meaning to their service and attract more customers promoting sustainable decent work for economic growth.

Study Limitation

The study concentrated on exploring the issues and strategies using qualitative methods mainly from literature with the aid of research engines and observations due to the time lag for the study.

Recommendations

- Commercial hospitality business owners need to modify the unique selling of their products by adding other products to create variety to give a new meaning to their service and attract more customers.

- The business owners should be creating a customer service culture within their business to aid in building success.
- They should embrace the culture of greeting the customers immediately when they are sighted and set the best payment method for them.
- It is pertinent for the business operator to be keeping day-to-day details of likes and dislikes of their customers regards to their products.
- The commercial hospitality operators should distance their kitchen from the dining area maintain a clean and tidy environment by avoiding washing of plates and stocking of waste bin in front of their stands, shops, or canteen.
- This study should be conducted by future researchers in other geographical areas and possibly using quantitative method or mixed methods.

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African Union and the Governance Question in Africa

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Abstract

The research study explored the transition from the Organisation of African Unity to the African Union, identifying the key factors driving this change. It examined the concept of governance, focusing on the relationship and development of governance, 'good' governance, and democracy. The study delved into governance issues at the state level and the collective role of the AU in African governance. Utilising existing literature, the study adopted Neo-functionalism, arguing that economic cooperation among member states would create pressures and incentives for political integration, leading to a more unified and cohesive continent. The study concluded that the AU's ineffectiveness primarily benefits African leaders who have fostered environments where civil wars, nepotism, corruption, disease, and famine thrive. Consequently, the AU has been unable to establish an improved socio-economic and political system envisioned by the concept of African Unity.

Keywords: *Ancient Continent, Democracy, Development and Global Politics.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is interesting to note that conflict, the various attempts at either ending it or preventing further occurrence and the need to engender international cooperative efforts among states and alliances among state entities have led to the birthing of virtually all of the world bodies or organisations in existence today. The history of Inter-governmental Organisations (IGOs) will recall that what can be referred to as the first IGO was established in 478 B.C. when the Greek city-states established the Delian League to create a unified response to the threat from Persia (Rourke, 2008). The 1648 Peace of Westphalia which ended the Thirty Years War and also ended the secular authority of the Pope led to the emergence of a sovereign and independent territorial state system. By the 1950s when the European states started to integrate and later in February 1992 when the Maastricht treaty

on European Union (UN) was signed, another step was taken; a step away from the absolute sovereign control of states over their territory towards the assertion of authority by supranational institutions or organisations.

The history of world politics since the inception of the Westphalia Treaty has largely been one of interactions among them in the form of cooperation (political, economic and cultural). Nevertheless, states have remained the dominant political organisations in the world and their interests, capabilities and goals have significantly shaped world politics. However, states dominance of world politics is increasingly being challenged as world affairs are now being influenced by organisations that transcend national boundaries; universal, continental and regional organisations such as the United Nations (UN), World Trade Organisation (WTO), UNESCO, European Union (EU), African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and many others. Diverse in scope, size, purpose and membership, these organisations as actors in world politics perform independent roles and are increasingly exerting global influence. The cooperative activities of these “networks of interdependence” (Jacobson, 1984) span the entire range of global issues such as trade, defence, disarmament, economic development, agriculture, health, culture, human rights, the arts, illegal drugs, tourism, labour, women’s plights, education, debt, the environment, crime, humanitarian aid, civilian crisis relief, telecommunications, science, globalisation, immigration and refugees, (Kegley, & Wittkopf, 1999) just to name a few prominent ones.

Many reasons have been given for the growth of IGOs prominent of which are six (6) reasons such as increased international contact among states, increased global interdependence, the expansion of transnational problems, the failure of the current state-centred system to provide security, the efforts of small states to gain strength through joint actions and finally, the successes recorded by existing IGOs. The appeal that IGOs have is summed up by Abbot and Snidal that through IGOs, countries “can achieve goals that they cannot accomplish alone” (Abbott, and Snidal, 1998). As Hoffman has also put it, “the very complexity of the current international scene makes a fair and effective system of world governance more necessary than ever” (Hoffman, 2003: 132, pp. 27-35). Thus, going by the number of such IGOs and their reach, it would be fair to say that the world is moving and should continue to move toward a more established form of international government (Tabb, 2004).

Despite this, there are critics against global governance. First is the issue of practical barriers posed by the fact that nationalism has too strong a hold and that neither political leaders nor the masses would be willing to surrender substantial sovereignty to a universal body. Second is the issue of political objections that global governance would entail the concentration of power on one body that would be necessary to enforce international law and to address the world's monumental economic and social problems. Third is the doubt whether any such government, even given the unprecedented power, could succeed in solving the world's problems any better than states can. Fourth is that the centralisation that global governance would engender would inevitably diminish desirable cultural diversity and political experimentation in the world. Fifth is the worries about the preservation of democracy which goes contrary to the centralisation of power in a central body and which makes the seizure of government by an authoritative force a possibility, thereby rolling back the years of democratic evolution (Rourke, 2008).

This research study is divided into six sections. Following the introductory section is the section that takes a historical look at the transition from OAU to AU pointing out the factors responsible for this. The next section attempts to explain the concept of governance, especially the trajectory and relationship between governance, 'good' governance and democracy. The next section looks at the problems of governance from the context of democracy (using the African Peer Review mechanism) at the state's level before looking at the role of the AU in governance in Africa and thereafter, the conclusion. However, Neo-functionalism, is adopted as the theory for the study. The theory as introduced by Ernst B. Haas in 1958 and later expanded by Leon N. Lindberg in 1963, is a theory that explains regional integration. It posits that economic integration in one sector creates pressures and incentives for further integration in related sectors, a process known as spill-over. This theory emphasises the crucial role of supranational institutions in driving integration by promoting common interests and mediating between national conflicts. Additionally, Neo-functionalism highlights the socialisation of elites, who shift their loyalties from the national level to the supranational level, fostering a shared identity and purpose.

Applying Neo-functionalism to the African Union (AU), initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) can be seen as initial steps towards economic integration that could lead to greater political cooperation and integration. By strengthening supranational bodies such as the AU Commission, and encouraging African leaders and elites to develop a pan-African identity,

the AU can leverage functional and political spill-over effects. This would mean that as member states cooperate economically, there would be increasing pressures and benefits for them to integrate politically, leading to a more unified and cohesive continent.

2.0 THE TRANSITION FROM OAU TO AU: FALSE START TO FRESH START?

It is now a historical fact that on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, when the representatives of 32 governments met, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) emerged as a consensus. To date, a further 21 states have joined gradually over the years, with South Africa becoming the 53rd member in 1994. OAU was formed against the backdrop and realisation that this organisation was necessary to liberate African states and the entire continent from the ravages of colonialism and racism. To realise this, it was concluded that African states must be united under an umbrella organisation that will seek their interests first and above all other considerations. Since then, OAU has helped in fostering solidarity among the newly emerging independent states and preserved the idea of sovereign borders. However weighed down with debts and bureaucracy and as a result of its policy of non-interference in the domestic and internal affairs of its member states, the OAU has grossly failed to prevent both internal genocidal conflicts and between members, or even challenge dictatorial regimes and governments.

Given these perceived inadequacies of OAU to effectively monitor its members, 53 years later, specifically, on July 9, 2002, 43 African heads of state met in Durban, South Africa, to dissolve OAU and transform or rename it the African Union. The newly renamed organisation aims to unify its 53 member states politically, socially, and economically, to attract foreign aid and investment through the promotion of democracy, human rights and good governance. In his opening speech, the first chairman of the Union, Thabo Mbeki, the president of South Africa, stressed how democracy, good governance and respect for human rights are prerequisites for development. Thus, given the recognition of the need for development, the path towards it became a source of controversy among the leaders. For instance, while Mbeki and Nigeria's Obasanjo envisaged that Africa may not be able to do away with foreign aid, they insisted that the aid will be attracted under the purview of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), through peer review committee system ensures that members comply with standards of good governance and fiscal responsibility. Thus, implicit in their vision of the new organisation is the fact that NEPAD would play a key role.

In a counterbalance to the views of Mbeki and Obasanjo, Gaddafi and others felt that NEPAD would put Africa's needs at the whims and caprices of the West. Gaddafi's alternative vision was that the AU should be a shield against Western imperialism and encroachment on Africa and urged that African states should look inward for development and reject foreign aid; "we accept help, but we refuse conditions. We are not pupils who need someone to teach us" (Carbone, 2002). Gaddafi's prominence in the newly formed AU came in the wake of his failures in the Arab League and his ambition to be the first president of a United States of Africa with the headquarters of the AU in Sirte (Libya) was not hidden (Agara, 2009). African leaders convened on September 9, 1999, for an extraordinary session of OAU in Sirte and what is now known as the Sirte Declaration became the Constitutive Act that is now to govern the Union. Of equal importance was the acceptance of the tenets and philosophies of liberal democracy by the leaders at Durban. The leaders committed to holding periodic fair and free elections, allowing opposition parties to campaign freely and set up independent electoral commissions to monitor polls. This has led to the emergence of a new crop of African leaders who not only have adopted democracy as a vehicle for development but have also made open commitments to its establishment in their respective countries.

Perhaps in a show to this commitment, Africa has witnessed in the 1990s, 42 out of 48 sub-Saharan states conducting multiparty elections as against only 4 states in the 1980s. Modelled along the lines of the European Union, the various organs, procedures and institutions of the AU were also agreed upon at the Durban Summit. For instance, it was agreed upon that the AU would comprise all African states except Morocco which had earlier withdrawn from OAU in 1982 when the body recognised and accepted the Saharawi Democratic Republic. The newly formed AU will have an Assembly, a Central Bank, a Commission, a Court of Justice and eventually a Parliament and single currency. The Assembly, which will be the supreme organ of the organisation, will be composed of all the heads of state and government forming the Union. The Commission will assist the Assembly in the government of the Union. Its mandate should cover both political and economic integration, but its actual power as well as the role of the chairman will depend mostly on the resources it will receive. An important decision was made at the last minute: it was decided that five of the 10 Commissioners would be women. This represents a change from past and present practices: indeed, at the moment none of the 53 African heads of state is a woman. Women

were completely absent from the structure of the OAU. Africa has thus become the only continent in the world that has made such a commitment towards gender equality. Of crucial importance in the establishment of the organs of the Union is the challenge to move away from the overly state-centric character of the OAU and its concomitant lack of civil participation. The cooperation of African NGOs, civil societies, labour unions, and business organisations is essential in the process of cooperation and implementation of the Abuja Treaty, as was expressed in the Ouagadougou Declaration and provided for in the Sirte Declaration.

Whereas the OAU was in principle a political organisation that also discussed matters of economic and social concern, the African Union should be an organisation aimed at economic integration and social development, which should lead to political unity. An important new institution is the 15-member Peace and Security Council. Structured along the model of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, the Council is tasked with the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts among member states. Its composition is made up of five semi-permanent members (one per region) and ten elected members for two-year terms. Unlike the OAU, the AU will have the right to intervene in cases of gross violations of human rights and crimes against humanity. For this reason, the formation of a peacekeeping force drawn from African armies has been planned. Only time will be able to judge whether the present AU is the right means to shape Africa's future.

The enormous challenge the AU is already facing confirms the fact that change cannot happen overnight. The African Union succeeds an organisation that was widely criticized for its inability to mediate the continent's conflicts. The most critical element of the AU is its authority to intervene in the internal affairs of member states. The issue now is whether the AU will be able to use its new powers or whether the competing interests of its leaders will paralyse it. But, regardless of some initial scepticism, the African Union opens a new era for Africa, where peace, democracy, and good governance are finally considered the necessary prerequisites for development.

3.0 CONCEPTUALISING GOVERNANCE

It must be appreciated from the onset that governance is differently conceptualised in the literature. As Pierre and Peters have noted, it is a concept that is notoriously slippery, frequently used by social scientists and others without a concise definition or agreement on its precise meaning (Pierre, and Peters, 2000). However, the range of usage of the term makes it possible to categorise

its definition into two types. The first is the use of the term in a technical sense which is borrowed from the corporate world and therefore is used to imply the efficient management of state institutions. Included in the technical definitions of governance are the issues of public accountability, transparency in government procedure, rule of law and public sector management. These restricted but technical definitions have been adopted by the World Bank. These definitions focus on governance as a means of disciplining the state and its institutions for economic purposes. In this respect, governance becomes the political construct of a minimalist state.

The second category in the use of the term points to governance as a holistic concept that transcends the state and its institutions. In this respect, governance is seen as the process of steering the state and society towards the realisation of collective goals. These second types of definitions stress the dynamic but problematic and sometimes contradictory relationship between the state and the society (Balogun, 1998). In this respect, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has defined governance "as a process of social engagement between the rulers and the ruled in a political community." The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in 1997, viewed governance as "the totality of the exercise of authority in the management of a country's affairs, comprising of the complex mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, and mediate their differences. It encompasses the political, economic, legal, judicial, social and administrative authority and therefore includes; government, the private sector and the civil society." At another level, governance has been seen as "decisions that define expectation, grant power or verify performance" (World Bank, 2012).

Implicit in this conceptualisation is the fact that governance enjoys some form of legitimacy and is participatory because its decisions are based on shared or collective expectations which can only be realised through the active participation of all citizens. In this respect, there seems to be a corollary between governance and democracy at least to the extent that the citizens grant power to their representatives whose performance they assess through either renewal or denial of mandate at regular intervals. To scholars of democracy, this fact is reified as one of the main pillars of democracy (Diamond, et al, 1988). The World Bank has also defined governance as the "exercise of political authority and the use of institutional resources to manage society's problems and affairs, the use of institutions, structures of authority and even collaboration to allocate resources

and coordinate or control activity in society or the economy" (World Bank, 2012).

This definition emphasises the structural perspective of society but recognises that institutions of government derive their power legitimately from the people and have a central role to play in governance. Implicit in this definition is that while governance is exercised by institutions of the state through the use of legitimate political authority in the deployment of the resources of the state, nevertheless, they are expected to collaborate with other stakeholders in allocating these resources and solving societal problems. Hence governance is not individualistic but collective even though in Africa it has acquired this unfortunate individualistic character. However, it is extremely difficult to separate governance which may be seen as a purely political activity from the management of the economy of a state. Manu has defined governance as "the way in which socio-economic power is exercised in managing affairs within a community" (Manu, 2002). This definition links governance with the socio-economic management of the state. Thus, to talk about governance a state must include the structures and institutions put in place to manage every sphere of public affairs and the people manning these structures and institutions. Put concisely, "when we talk about governance, we are talking about policy formulation, execution and evaluation. We are talking about regulations, rules, performance, participation, accountability in general terms, not only limited to financial matters"(Saliu, 2010).

As it relates to Africa and Nigeria in particular, scholars have attempted to make a distinction between governance and 'good' governance thus implying that one is better and more desirable than the other. For instance, Adejumobi (2004) argued that good governance flows logically from the concept of governance, implying that governance may be 'good' or 'bad'. But Ahmed Mohideen (1997), opined that governance becomes good when it is operated by legal and ethical principles as conceived by society. As Adejumobi (2004) has further explained, good governance is a normative concept by which society seeks to provide a guide and direction to itself through standards and norms embedded in the governance idea. Thus, inclusive in the notion of good governance should be the urge to steer the state, its institutions and the whole society according to stated and defined rules, procedures and regulations which would ensure that governance serves the best interest of the greatest number of people in society by involving them in the process involve in governance.

The linkage between governance and the state is apparent because every state system has institutions that steer, direct or propel the state in a particular direction. However, the concept of

governance goes beyond the state because the state merely constitutes one of the actors in governance analysis, albeit a significant actor. There is also the recognition of the various stakeholders in governance which may be corporate or individuals, the private sector and the civil society. Despite this, governance is central to the smooth running of the state system because it provides a sense of direction to all other sectors of the political economy. However, scholarly debate has been generated as to which governmental or political system is compatible with and can reinforce good governance.

The debate has generated the need to classify democracies as social, socialist and (neo) liberal, each claiming through their differences to be the 'true' democracy. Claude Ake has pointed out that democracy in the real and classical sense is very precise because it connotes popular power; it is not representative governance or delegated authority. Rather it is about popular expression of power by the people (Ake, 2000). Liberal democracy and its variants are premised on government by the consent of the people. Power is not directly exercised by the people but through their elected representatives (Agara, 2007). This makes liberal democracy substantively differ from classical democracy even despite the former's notion of egalitarianism, inalienable human rights, popular participation, accountability and the rule of law. As Nairn has rightly observed; "the representative mechanism converted real class inequality into the abstract egalitarianism of citizens, individual egoisms into an impersonal collective will, what would otherwise be chaos into a new state legitimacy" (Nairn, 1977: 13). Indeed, Ake (2000:10) has also observed that "instead of collectivity, liberal democracy focuses on the individual whose claims are ultimately placed above those of the collectivity. It replaces government by the people with government by the consent of the people. Instead of the sovereignty of the people, it offers the sovereignty of law. In the final analysis, liberal democracy repudiates popular power."

However, the "third wave of democratisations" which Huntington (1991: 15), had rightly observed and which is sweeping through Africa was due partly to the propagation and African state's acceptance of this propaganda by the international community, (donor nations, international organisations such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)) who made it a precondition for assistance to the African states. Implied in this insistence is the fact that there is no substitute for liberal democracy. Equally implicit in the acceptance of the liberal democratic system is its economic equivalent which is capitalism which manifests in the form of free market

economy, private property and accumulation. Thus, liberal democracy upturns the classical democratic tenets and instead, as Adejumobi has noted, puts market, private property and accumulation first before distribution and the issues of equality and rights. This partly explains why social tensions and contradictions reflected in aggression, violence, police brutality, murder and arson are part of the social culture of Western liberal democracies and are manifested in democratic African states also (Adejumobi, 2004).

4.0 PROBLEMS OF GOVERNANCE AT STATE LEVEL IN AFRICA

The imposition of liberal democracy as the only form of governance capable of bringing about the much-desired development by the international community on African states has constituted a major problem of good governance for African leaders. The problem is two-fold. First is with liberal democracy itself as both a concept and a practice. Second, it is the tenets and principles that need to be on the ground before liberal democracy can be instituted and effectively practised. In Western societies, the adoption of liberal democracy as a governmental format was the result of a logical continuation or outgrowth of their historical development in which private property and a market-driven economy and society were created as a result of and accentuated by the industrial and technology revolution. The existence of a market-driven society and economy with its numerous inadequacies and inequalities engendered the need for a political structure or format that will service and protect the base; that is, the economy. Hence, liberal democracy becomes compatible with a market-driven economy. Thus, Ake's observation that to equate liberal democracy with classical democracy is to devalue and trivialise the concept of democracy basically because while democracy seeks the realisation of human potentialities through active participation in rulership, liberal democracy offers only protection.

In the former, freedom is positive and activist, in the latter; it is a passive acceptance of immunity. The former enables and empowers while the latter prevents and protects (Ake, 200). Thus, liberal democracy evinces similar values to the society in which it was spawned. The values of the market-driven economy have now become the core values of liberal democracy; egotism, private property, acquisitive tendency, formal freedom, equality and more importantly, limited government. The current drive to enforce democracy of the liberal type with its economic concomitant such as market, private property and accumulation on African states had once again forced an unprepared African continent into a current flow it is ill-prepared to fit in. African states

and their leaders have adopted the 'letters' of liberal democracy but without its 'spirit' which is necessary for to effective installation and institutionalisation of democracy. What passes as indices or actual manifestations of democracy and good governance in African states that have accepted and adopted liberal democracy are diametrically different from what obtains in Western societies. The question then is why the difference? It will seem therefore that the problem of good governance in Africa goes beyond the mere adoption of liberal democracy to more fundamental issues.

Like every form of political format, liberal democracy has its institutional framework and procedural and behavioural dimensions. The structural or institutional dimension stipulates that a democratic government must include a constitution and political parties as well as structures of government that incorporate the three arms made up of an independent judiciary, legislature and an executive. On the other hand, the behavioural dimension includes the critical attitudes and qualities found in the people which underpin the proper conduct of a democratic political system. This has been referred to as the "civic culture". Thus, apart from the elements of tolerance of opposition and compromise that made up the civic culture, democracy of the Western liberal bourgeois type also has certain desirous effects.

First is that it increases the probability that government will follow or be guided by the general interest. This is because, "how governments act is affected by the constitutional systems through which they emerge...and democracies will ensure that governments pursue policies in the general interest or for the common good" (Lively, 1975: 111). In both parliamentary and presidential systems of government, political parties compete with each other and victory is only ensured if a political party can produce good policies that will satisfy the majority of the citizens. Thus, the dictates of the democratic system, therefore, require that the government submit itself to periodic assessment and renewal of the mandate. Within the framework of choices, this implies that the government in power and which wishes to retain power must be responsive to the wish of the governed.

Second, the liberal democratic form of government also imposes some restraint on the state. The state's right is limited by certain constitutional provisions that assure the rights of individuals and groups in society. Thus, in this regard, the "temptation of the political leadership to wield absolute power is restricted by the competitive nature of democracy" (Perry, 1969:145). This imposes some

restrictions that make liberal democratic government a limited government as arbitrary use of power is curtailed. This probably provides us with one of the reasons that endeared liberal democracy to the bourgeoisie, and this is that it protects them from arbitrary state interference in their pursuit of and acquisition of wealth. Third is that a competitive democratic system compels attention not just to the form of government but also to the substance of politics in as much as political parties compete based on what they have to offer to the electorates. A fourth one is that democracy provides the citizenry with more opportunities to get involved in political decisions.

The literature on mass society and political participation suggests that citizens' participation in decisions can be either as individuals or as members of groups. It is only in this sense that representative democracy encourages "a belief by the masses that they exercise an ultimate self-determination within the existing social order...a credence in the democratic equality of all citizens in the government of the nation" (Anderson, 1977:30). Finally, the primary concern of democracy with the formal political equality of all citizens, majority of whom are economically disadvantaged, provides for the economically advantaged and powerful groups to dominate and often hijack the system thereby undermining the notion of political equality. Perhaps more than any other reason, this particular advantage made democracy quite attractive to the bourgeois. The absence of all these desirable results, principles and nuances of liberal democracy in African states has compounded the problem of governance.

The insistence by Western policymakers for the institutionalisation of liberal democracy and good governance as a basis for development in Africa implies that there is a synergy between the two. However, a contrary view has emerged that argues that the attempts to link liberal democracy with good governance are to ideologies and prevent the latter. The argument is premised on the fact that good governance is not about a mode of polity or a procedural arrangement, but a holistic and consequential variable. It is not about forms of government but the result of governance. It is not the process or course of a political rule but its effects. Good governance is all about effective and productive governance. Therefore, it is anti-ideological and best defined ostensibly rather than by semantic prescriptions (Dunn, 1986). As Adejumobi (1999) has further noted, good governance at the micro level denotes organisational effectiveness which is the capacity of an organisation to achieve tasks assigned to it within set rules and regulations and favourable environmental conditions. At the macro level, good governance is about engendering public welfare and

promoting the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. The anomaly within the liberal democracy as practised by most African states is that most of the state institutions whose workings would have made for good governance such as the bureaucracy, judicial system, police force and military, are largely undemocratic in terms of how they are organised and run, especially in areas of promotion, appointment and operational procedures.

All these constitute basic contradictions in the governance system of African states that in most cases have denied citizens access to the so-called dividends of democracy and development which liberal democracy harnessed with good governance should have delivered. The existence of strong informal patron-client politics has permitted the diversion of resources and foreign aid from productive ends to meet the needs of individual politicians, their hangers-on and the godfather-broker and godfather-patron (Agara, 2010). The failure of good governance is therefore responsible for the spate of conflicts, wars and genocides being experienced in Africa today. Rebel groups and militias have sprung up, political succession has become problematic, elections are rigged, corruption is vet rife and criminality and inordinate political ambition now characterise the governance environment of virtually all of the African states as the present instability in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have shown. All these are despite the resolution of the AU.

5.0 ROLE OF AU IN GOVERNANCE

Although democracy has been accepted by virtually all leaders at the AU summit, the actual practice of it in the respective states has thrown up a plethora of problems as enunciated above. The peaceful resolution of these internal problems has led to the need to question seriously the role of AU in governance. If the different states have failed in effectively practising democracy, should AU also fail in ensuring that governance is not an issue in the African continent? What role should AU play in this regard? The role which AU is expected to play in governance cannot be divorced from its mandate. As stated earlier, although the most critical element of the AU is its authority to intervene in the internal affairs of member states in cases of gross violation of human rights through its peacekeeping force, the Summit concluded on 9 September 1999 with the Sirte Declaration aimed at:

- i. Effectively addressing the new social, political and economic realities in Africa and the world;

- ii. Fulfilling the people's aspirations for greater unity in conforming with the objectives of the OAU Charter and the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community;
- iii. Revitalising the Continental Organisation to play a more active role in addressing the needs of the people;
- iv. Eliminating the scourge of conflicts;
- v. Meeting global challenges; and
- vi. Harnessing the human and natural resources of the continent to improve living conditions.

To achieve these aims Summit, inter alia, decided to:

- i. Establish an African Union in conformity with the ultimate objectives of the Charter of our Continental Organisation and the provisions of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.
- ii. Accelerate the process of implementing the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, in particular:
- iii. Shorten the implementation periods of the Abuja Treaty,
- iv. Ensure the speedy establishment of all the institutions provided for in the Abuja Treaty; such as the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Union, the African Court of Justice and in particular, the Pan-African Parliament.
- v. Strengthening and consolidating the RECs as the pillars for achieving the objectives of the African Economic Community and realising the envisaged Union.
- vi. Convene an African Ministerial Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in the Continent, as soon as possible.

Although the OAU has served its mission and was due for replacement by a structure geared towards addressing the current needs of the continent and although the objectives of the AU are different and more comprehensive than those of the OAU, they nevertheless serve as the base for the new and improved objectives of the AU and are still relevant to the workings and philosophy of the current AU. The aims of the defunct OAU are:

- i. To promote the unity and solidarity of African States;

- ii. To coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa;
- iii. To defend their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence;
- iv. To eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa; and
- v. To promote international cooperation.

Comparatively, the objectives of the African Union, as contained in the Constitutive Act, are to:

- i. Achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;
- ii. Defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;
- iii. Accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
- iv. Promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
- v. Encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- vi. Promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;
- vii. Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;
- viii. Promote and protect human peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;
- ix. Establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations;
- x. Promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;
- xi. Promote cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples;
- xii. Coordinate and harmonise the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;
- xiii. Advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in science and technology; and
- xiv. Work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent.

At the Durban meeting, the Presidents of South Africa, Senegal, and Nigeria insisted that sovereignty can no longer be used to hide misconduct by leaders and to ensure acceptability by the West and debt relief for African states, they promised that a peer review committee would be set up to ensure that members comply with standards of good governance and fiscal responsibility. Thus, an Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) was set up and this constitutes the main mechanism used by the AU for governance and empowers the AU to intervene and monitor the activities of member states. Unlike the OAU, the AU now has the right to intervene in cases of gross violations of human rights and crimes against humanity. For this reason, the formation of a peacekeeping force drawn from African armies was approved and adopted as a technique for militating and controlling the possible excesses of leaders.

This has raised two important issues territorial sovereignty and humanitarian intervention. In International Law, nations are supreme within their boundaries; they are the absolute regulators of matters, persons and properties contained therein. Hence no person within the territory of a nation can assert more rights than those accorded him by that nation. This is because there is no higher superior power than the sovereign (Halpan, 1969). Thus, the way a nation conducts itself within its territory cannot be the business of another nation and as such interference by another nation will be viewed as an infringement on the territorial sovereignty of that nation. However, the apostles of humanitarian interventionists have argued that infringing on a nation's territorial sovereignty to curb human rights abuses is a violation that is justifiable and is based on reasonable good cause. Put differently, intervention in a nation's sovereign territory is permissible for humanitarian reasons, whereas proponents of territorial sovereignty are adamant that human rights violation is not a sufficient reason for this violation. The humanitarian interventionists argue that no nation is the absolute determinant of the rights of its citizens since these rights transcend the level of territorial recognition to embrace international recognition therefore nations are obliged to uphold these rights and there are numerous international organisations created to ensure their observance by nations. Given this scenario, therefore, humanitarian intervention can either be collective or unilateral. Collective humanitarian intervention arises when such is carried out by and with the authorisation of a recognised international organisation such as the UN or the AU. It becomes unilateral when it is carried out without the authorisation of such bodies. Clear examples of this are the US intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Governance Evaluation Using the African Peer Review Mechanism

The Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is a self-monitoring tool to promote and reinforce high governance standards across the continent. Its mandate encourages policies, standards, and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development, and accelerated regional and continental economic integration. The APRM evaluates governance in Africa, particularly democracy, through a comprehensive framework that assesses various governance dimensions, including political, economic, corporate, and socio-economic governance. While this mechanism is instituted, the APRM has found that while many African countries have made strides in holding regular elections and enhancing political participation, challenges persist in areas such as electoral integrity, political violence, and the concentration of power. In some countries, such as Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Sudan, Cameroon, Chad and some others, the APRM has noted the existence of dominant-party systems where opposition parties face significant barriers, leading to weakened democratic processes, issues with electoral integrity, human rights violations, suppression of political opposition, government's control over the media and the judiciary further undermines democratic governance. For instance, Eritrea has been criticized for its lack of democratic processes, with no national elections held since its independence in 1993. The country operates under a single-party system with severe restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and the press. Eritrea's human rights record is among the worst in the world, with reports of arbitrary detention, forced labour, and severe restrictions on civil liberties.

Similarly, since the independence of South Sudan in 2011, South Sudan has struggled with internal conflict, corruption, and poor governance. The ongoing civil war has resulted in significant human rights abuses, undermining any efforts towards democratic governance. The conflict has severely weakened state institutions, making the practice of democracy virtually non-existent. Similarly, Sudan has a history of authoritarian rule, although there have been recent leadership changes, the country continues to struggle with issues related to democracy, including restrictions on freedom of speech, political repression, and the lack of a clear path to democratic transition. The ongoing instability and the military's influence in politics continue to hinder democratic progress.

Equatorial Guinea is another country where democracy is severely lacking. President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo has been in power since 1979, making him one of the longest-serving

leaders in the world. Elections are often criticized as being neither free nor fair. The concentration of power, corruption, and human rights abuses are rampant, with little space for political opposition. Again, Cameroon has faced significant challenges with governance, particularly regarding the marginalization of the Anglophone regions, electoral fraud, and restrictions on political freedoms. The ongoing conflict in the Anglophone area has exacerbated the country's democratic deficits, with frequent reports of human rights abuses by both government forces and separatist groups.

Chad has experienced decades of authoritarian rule, with limited political freedoms and regular human rights abuses. The political landscape is dominated by the military, and elections are often marred by irregularities, the governance structure in Chad severely restricts democratic participation, with opposition parties facing significant hurdles. The Central African Republic is plagued by ongoing conflict and instability, which have severely undermined democratic governance. The state's control is limited, and armed groups exert significant influence over large parts of the country. These examples highlight the varying degrees of challenges faced by African nations in meeting the democratic governance standards set by the APRM. While there has been significant progress, ongoing challenges such as corruption, weak institutions, and political exclusion continue to hinder the full realization of democratic governance across the continent.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The African Union succeeded an organisation that was widely criticized for its inability to mediate the continent's conflicts. The most critical element of the AU is its authority to intervene in the internal affairs of member states. The issue now is whether the AU will be able to use its new powers or whether the competing interests of its leaders will paralyse it. But, regardless of some initial scepticism, the African Union opens a new era for Africa, where peace, democracy, and good governance are finally considered the necessary prerequisites for development. The problem of governance presently faced by the AU even though more African countries are beginning to sow the seeds of genuine democracy, is that the growth of these infant democracies has been dwarfed by the problem of reoccurring conflicts in Africa. These problems have stretched the AU's capacity to monitor and ensure that African nations stick to the tenets of good governance and in some cases have rendered the AU a mere spectator on the sidelines since the majority of Africa's problems occur within the borders of member countries.

The people of Africa are the ones suffering from the consequences of AU's ineffectiveness. That ineffectiveness of the AU, which is based on an illogical perversion of its laws, is what has condemned the people of Somaliland to the failed state of Somalia. Somaliland, a young nation that has a legitimate claim to regaining its sovereignty, has been hindered and shunned by the AU as there have not been enough African leaders who can see beyond the issue of sovereignty. The AU's ineffectiveness is only benefitting and abetting the African leaders that have for the most part created the fertile environment for which, civil wars, nepotism, corruption, disease, and famine flourish. The AU has been unable to transcend the status quo and keeps upholding the same pro forma that had abased the Organization of African Unity (OAU) bureaucratic system. The AU does not have the luxury of blowing out reoccurring fires like the current coup in Niger, as there are more daunting problems on hand. The reasons given at the time of the name change from OAU to the AU was to implement better ways of operating and that would question the prevailing customary notions that had justified its laws. Without drastic change, the AU and its summits will only continue to be upstaged by problems that it does not have the mandate to tackle like in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, where Mugabe and the Zimbabwe power-sharing were the centre stage and before that was the Kenyan presidential turmoil. The AU seldom asked if the policies it relentlessly propped up were helping or hindering the people it serving. The AU's name change or a flag change will not remit anything tangible; worse, the AU will lose its credibility and further erode its legitimacy. These superficial touch-ups and political hyperbole will not get to the root of the re-emerging problems that have derailed African hopes. If the sovereignty issue is unchallenged it will be the fertile source for further troubles for all Africans.

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Exploring passengers' perspectives on commercial drivers' attitude: Implication for sustainable cities and communities for tourism industry growth in Kwara State, North Central, Nigeria

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Abstract

This research seeks to explore perspectives of passengers on commercial vehicle drivers' attitude and the implications of driver's attitudes on sustainability of cities and communities. It employs descriptive research design and utilizes quantitative method. The population of the study comprises commercial vehicle passengers in all the commercial vehicle parks in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. A purposive sampling, a probability sampling method is employed while administering an adopted structured research questionnaire to two (200) respondents in four selected commercial vehicle parks and collected on the spot with the assistance of research assistants. This paper discovers that passengers perceive over speeding, reckless driving, dangerous overtaking, overloading, and driving under the influence of alcohol among commercial drivers. Others include using mobile phone while driving, abusing the passengers, driving against traffic rules, and pursuing another vehicle. Furthermore, the findings reveal that these attitudes can cause accidents leading to loss of lives in our cities and communities. This study concludes that the commercial drivers' attitude towards passengers, communities and cities is pertinent to movement from various origins to destinations. The authors recommend that government needs to intensify campaign through print and electronic media for commercial vehicle drivers not only in the study area but also across Nigeria for sustainable communities and cities in the nation. In the same vein, road safety officials should continuously organize education and training in form of seminar and workshop for commercial vehicle drivers on road safety tips.

Keywords: *Attitude, Commercial drivers, Sustainability, Tourism.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Driving is a kind of psychomotor activity that demands combination of good visual functions and mental orderliness. However, incessant deviation in the driving attitude of commercial vehicle drivers is disturbing and poses a danger to the sustainability of cities and communities for tourism

destinations (Odufuwa, Salisu, Fasina, Ogunseye & Omoniyi, 2019; Zheng, Gao & Fang, 2022). The history of road transport in Nigeria dates to the first decade of the 20th Century when existing bush paths were widened into routes for motor vehicles. These routes were intended to reduce the strain of providing porters for the colonial officials and to link them to their destinations. Road transportation in Nigeria accommodates all modes of transport, namely buses, cars, trailers, and others (Adedeji, Olafiaji, Omole, Olanibi & Yusuff, 2014; Usman, 2014). It is an undeniable fact that mobility is part of the daily round of activities and as such an essential component of the life of every human being (Olubomehin, 2012; Nwafor & Onya, 2019).

The nature allows a combination of alternative transport modes, various types of passengers such as students, workers, leisure travellers and passengers with different travel purposes, different travel frequencies and times. The existence of various transport modes makes it possible for passengers to transition between those modes. In such an environment, the demand or patronage is also dynamic and volatile. Unsafe driving behaviours and attitudes account for crashes in Nigeria, including inappropriate speeding and speed-related factors, a lack of understanding of traffic regulations, including road signs and markings, drunk driving, dangerous driving, driver fatigue, and inappropriate overtaking. Individuals' quality of life, social and economic activities and the nation's overall economic activity are all affected by crashes.

Traffic accidents have been linked to human, mechanical, and environmental elements in studies (Iversen & Rundmo, 2004; McHugh, 2011; Afolabi & Gbadamosi, 2017; Odeleye, 2007; af Wählberg, 2007). Indeed, the human component, which is the subject of this study, encompasses a wide range of driver characteristics, including age, medical fitness, mental health, alcohol intake, and educational level, among others. Driver's abnormal driving habits appear to be greater and more direct predictors of road crash risk than driving anger. Risky and aggressive driving behaviours and attitudes, such as speeding or running red lights.

To satisfy the need to move, commercial transport has recently become the most used mode of transport. Therefore, the way commercial transport services are delivered as well as their qualities is important because of their effect both on the attitude and behaviour of travellers and the demand for services. Its services are mostly delivered either by private or public organizations. Regardless of the party that delivers them, commercial transport services require substantial investment and high operating costs such as service productivity and efficiency are essential in this respect as they

influence commercial transport demand and patronage (Palhares, 2003; Afolabi & Akibo, 2020; Zheng, Gao & Fang, 2022).

Some commercial vehicle drivers are fond of harassing the passengers, driving recklessly, smoking, and drinking while driving, unsafe driving, poor identification of road signals, poor maintenance of the buses, kidnapping of passengers and all other forms of illicit actions. Whereas the transportation industry is a key industry in the development and growth of any industry including tourism, it links the production with the consumers or end users. Therefore, it signifies the only sector that connects cities to cities, families with families and city to village maintaining sustainable communities and cities (Bashiru & Fagbolu, 2022; Fagbolu, Orimaye, Ayoola, Ajudua, & Omotoba, 2022).

Although, commercial driver behaviour and attitude have been studied extensively in various aspects. These comprise their physical and psychological health, accident involvements, driving performance, and bus fuel consumption (Iversen & Rundmo, 2004; Odeleye, 2007; af Wählberg, 2007; McHugh, 2011; Afolabi & Gbadosi, 2017; Olorunfemi & Adeniran, 2018; Okafor & Wusu, 2021). However, there is dearth of research on discovering perceptions of passengers on attitudes of commercial drivers. Hence, this study seeks to explore passengers' perspectives on commercial drivers' attitudes towards enabling sustainable cities and communities for tourism industry growth in Kwara, North Central, Nigeria. This research, therefore, is significant to the government, road safety organizations, transport companies and owners, commercial vehicle drivers, passengers, and tourism operators.

Research Questions

- i. What are the perspectives of passengers on commercial vehicle drivers' attitudes?
- ii. What are the implications of driver's attitudes on the sustainability of cities and communities?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Commercial Transportation

Transportation plays a pivotal role in regulating and facilitating the essential links between residence and employment, producers, and consumers of products, without which all meaningful interactions will be greatly reduced. It is vital in the development of cities and even communities. The provision of access and mobility is very significant for the efficient organization and

functioning of an urban centre of both developed and developing nations of the world (Agunloye, 2011; Faajir & Zidan, 2016; Nwafor & Onya, 2019; Fagbolu, et al., 2022). Research Solanke (2013) shows that in developing countries, transportation in urban centres is becoming increasingly difficult for the existing transport infrastructure and services to cope with the growing transport demand (Palhares, 2003; Jamil & Puad, 2011; Mandić, Mrnjavac & Kordić, 2018). The author opined that a realistic transportation development plan, designed to guarantee sustainable cities and communities, will only be achievable if based on the principle of connectivity in an integrated transport mode. However, transportation demand in urban centres is faced with numerous challenges.

However, inequality in the mobility needs of commuters often necessitates the pursuance of affordable and available means of mobility either private or commercial mode of transportation. Significantly, commercial transportation provides enabling access to people without private transport of their own to pursue their economic and social needs which cannot be fulfilled within a short distance. The rapid population growth and urbanization, coupled with increasing socioeconomic activities and opportunities in communities and cities has encouraged rapid growing travel and tourism demand both for private as well as commercial transport (Usman, 2014; Zheng, Gao & Fang, 2022).

Commercial transportation connotes the act of conveying a large number of people “en masse” as opposed to conveyance in individual vehicles carrying very few people at a time. Commercial transport refers to a collection of modes of transport which are available to the public irrespective of ownership. In other words, commercial transport is a system in which a greater number of people are moved at a time along principal corridors (Olubomehin, 2012; Faajir & Zidan, 2016). According to Ogunbodede (2008), experience has revealed that commercial transport has great significance in reducing traffic congestion, offering alternative means of travel, and contributing greatly to the quality of urban life.

Commercial transport systems provide the most efficient means of moving large numbers of people especially in density populated urban communities and cities. The system is designed to manage and cater for either an individual, group, or large number of passengers, from their place of origin to a given destination, where they are valued more or where their relative economic

importance is greater. Among all the commercial transportation systems, buses are the most popular and commonly used because of their inherent flexibility, adaptability to changing employment and residential patterns and low capital costs (Afolabi & Akibo, 2020).

According to Owoeye, Yakubu-Wokili, Jatau, Oni and Jatau (2022), experiences show a need for a greater variety of commercial transport modes, but buses are the choice of most communities. Commercial transportation serves as the only means of mobility that can be afforded by a majority in developing countries of the world including Nigeria (Ogunbodede, 2008; Afolabi & Akibo, 2020). The system is the transportation system that uses buses that may have a range of passenger capacities and performance characteristics and may operate on fixed routes with fixed schedules, or may be flexibly routed (Owoeye et al., 2022).

Commercial transportation has the potential to be used as a policy tool to reduce the number of cars on urban roads and so reduce traffic chaos in cities and communities for sustainability. It has also the potential to extend transportation services to a greater proportion of communities and city residents who do not have private cars (Adedeji, Olafiaji, Omole, Olanibi, & Yusuff, 2014; Onokala & Olajide, 2020). They have the potential to be used as policy tools to reduce the number of cars on roads and thus reduce traffic chaos in communities and cities. The vital services and roles that commercial transportation is providing Nigerian communities and cities are meeting transportation in communities and cities to a very large extent.

Commercial Vehicle Drivers' Attitude

Studies by Olorunfemi and Adeniran (2018); Okafor and Wusu (2021) have shown that commercial transportation has been documented and classified as highly stressful employment due to a high lack of control over work pace, driving situations and conflicting demands. Commercial drivers are more likely to experience fatigue, tension, and mental overload. Drivers are liable to suffer physical health such as gastrointestinal problems, cardiovascular disease, and musculoskeletal disorders. Psychological health challenges often experienced include stress disorder and post-traumatic experiences which in turn can affect their behaviour and attitudes. (Ajzen & Cote, 2008; David & Toyin, 2017; Teshale & Alemu, 2017).

According to Amrapala and Choocharukul (2019, p.3), attitudes have been defined as “positive or negative evaluations or beliefs about something that, in turn, may influence an individual’s

behaviour.” Significantly, the physical, and psychological health of the commercial driver has been reviewed as critical factors that have some consequences on their attitudes (Ipingbemi, 2015; Etika, Merat & Carsten, 2020). It is imperative to recognize the attitude of commercial vehicle drivers to provide a useful guide on enabling sustainable communities and cities for tourism industry growth (Bashiru & Fagbolu, 2022; Morozov & Morozova, 2022).

Shinar, Schechtman and Compton (2001) examined the relationship between demographic features of drivers and drivers’ behaviour utilizing prevention magazine data between 1994 to 1995 on four-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) model. Results of the study show that only female drivers tend to be more law-abiding when compared with their male counterparts. Progressively, age and educational level strongly impact use of seat belt, while higher educational background and income levels were significantly related to speeding. Also, severity of consistent penalty and punishment meted to offenders substantially influence driving behaviour and attitude (Ajzen & Cote, 2008; Woldegebriel, Aregawi & Gebru, 2019).

Hussin, Yahia, Shaban, Aldukali and Mohd (2014) investigated awareness and attitudes of traffic safety among three hundred and eighty-four (384) drivers in Tripoli. It was ascertained that the age and gender of drivers have a significant impact on knowledge and attitudes of traffic rules and laws. The study revealed that male drivers representing 74% were found to have better knowledge of traffic rules than female drivers which represent 26%. The authors suggest that it is imperative to conduct investigations on the driving behaviour of commercial drivers and traffic safety campaigns.

Schechtman, Shinar and Compton (1999) explored the statistical relationship between drinking habits in terms of frequency and amount, and its influence on driving behaviour and traffic safety. The study found no evidence of a statistical correlation between drinking habits and the use of seat belt, speed limit obedience of driving behaviour factors. Iversen and Rundmo (2004) observe the relationship between risky driving behaviour, attitudes, and accident involvement. The study notes that attitudes of drivers contribute significantly to predicting driving behaviours and involvement in accidents. McHugh (2011) studied road safety and older drivers’ behaviour in Monaghan. The author discovers that even though habits like drunk driving and speeding constitute major risk behaviour on roads and are common among older vehicle drivers, they tend to drive more carefully while on steering than young drivers.

David and Toyin (2017) investigated the rationale as well as implications of psychoactive substances usually embrace among commercial vehicle drivers in Lokoja, Nigeria. In the cross-sectional survey research comprising trailer, taxi, tipper, and long-distance bus drivers registered in the area. However, because of variation in the population of the study, quota sampling was to prevent the over-representation of one group over the other. Data were gathered utilizing a semi-structured questionnaire and analyzed using percentages, frequencies, and weighted means. The findings of the research exposed that the majority of the respondents utilized psychoactive substances to overcome depression, stay awake while steering, overcoming daily problems, challenges and for pleasure. Nevertheless, they were found to sometimes lead to changes in the moods and emotional status of the drivers, hangovers, road traffic accidents, and further engagement in using substances.

Odufuwa et al (2019) investigated the driving behaviour of taxi drivers aimed at sustainable commercial transport in Ogun State, Nigeria. 750 questionnaires were administered and used multistage and random sampling techniques. The data collected was analyzed using Multiple Regression and ANOVA to test hypotheses postulated at 0.05 level of significance. The authors revealed that more males representing 94% of the total sample size are engaged in commercial taxi driving than females representing 6% while 91% have been driving for more than two years. The results further show that intake of alcohol, drugs, and other local substances before and while driving; attitudes of traffic officers; traffic situation; demand for services, and vehicle condition are factors influencing taxi drivers' driving behaviour. Furthermore, the findings show a significant correlation between years of driving experience and the behaviour of taxi drivers.

Research by Abdul-Wahab (2016) showed that educational background, period of learning road safety, knowledge and behaviour of commercial vehicle drivers significantly influence their attitudes to road safety program me. To make significant contribution towards improving the quality of road safety education programs in Nigeria, the study investigated the effectiveness of the Federal Road Safety Commission road safety (FRSC) education program on driving experience, age, and behaviours of the commercial vehicle drivers' perception toward safety signs on the roads. The study using a mixed research approach combined both descriptive survey and focus group designs with a sample of 2,000 commercial vehicle drivers operating in the seven (7) big inter-city parks in the Hadejia zone, Jigawa State, Nigeria. A 52-item self-developed questionnaire

and focus group were utilized to gather quantitative and qualitative respectively. Data were analyzed using ANOVA, Protected Fisher's t-test, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Stepwise Multiple Regression statistical methods at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that there existed a significant difference in drivers' perception of the effectiveness of FRSC road safety education and training on their driving experience toward road safety signs on the roads and highways. Meanwhile, the author discloses that there is a non-significant difference in drivers' perception of the effectiveness of the FRSC road safety education program on their behaviour toward road safety signs because of their age. However, the paper concluded that continuous enlightenment campaign through media and motor garages are imperative to educate commercial drivers is imperative in the country.

In addition, existing evidence opines that drivers especially those who work in establishments with strong road safety cultures tend to exhibit various sets of speeding attitudes and behaviours in driving both at work and in private.

Etika, Merat and Carsten (2020) investigated "the self-reported and objective behaviour of driving within posted speed limits for a sample of fleet drivers" (p. 1). The authors adopted Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) Theory of Planned behaviour (TPB) and on-road driving experiments. The study found that the TPB explained up to 24% of the difference in intention to comply with speed limits. The attitude of drivers emerged as the most critical predictor and strongest relationship with intentions to comply with the speed limit in vehicles. The paper further investigated the correlation between TPB variables and observed speeding behaviour and disclosed that drivers with higher intention to comply with the speed limit or high perceived behavioural control exceeded the speed limit less often than drivers with lower intention to comply with the speed limit or low perceived behavioural control. The findings of the study are significant to theoretical and applied indications for the development of better speed limit compliance interventions geared towards improving driving behaviour, and road safety always.

Scholars Afolabi and Gbadamosi (2017) reiterated that accidents on our roads do not just happen but rather they are to some extent caused. That is, all accidents associated with transport are not just mere occurrences but instituted due to one factor or the other. The authors examined road traffic accident challenges in the Nigerian context and discussed the causes of accidents and

general preventive measures. The high increase in fatal road accidents worldwide was attributed to an increase in population explosion and level of motorization. Thus, motor vehicle accidents are the leading reason for death among adolescent and those in their prime ages. The industrial nations are witnessing a downward trend in the occurrence of accidents by more than 20% but there has been a high magnitude in the proportion and absolute number of vehicle fatalities experienced in several developing countries (Odeleye, 2007; af Wählberg, 2007). Hence, the need to perceive road traffic accidents as a very critical issue needing urgent attention focused on reducing the health, and socio-economic impacts and preventing untimely deaths for sustainable communities and cities (Morozov & Morozova, 2022).

Furthermore, according to Teshale and Alemu (2017), globally, most drivers lack lifesaving knowledge and skills. There are few drivers with first aid knowledge and skills especially in Africa. In some instances, those trained do not always practice it well as. The authors assessed the level of first aid knowledge, attitude, practice, and factors related to practice among taxi drivers. The results of the research show that widespread first-aid training is imperative for successful pre-hospital care when an accident happens on the road and highways. Those drivers equipped with first aid training and knowledge tend to attend to accident victims before going to hospitals for further treatment.

Importance of Transportation Industry in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry

Major phases in tourism development and growth can be linked with transport advancements, the system that enables structural linkage between destinations and origins. Mobility comprises overcoming a distance from the origin to the destination and back to the origin requires cost and time. As a result, accessibility can be measured as the cost and the time an individual require to spend to access a particular destination. Significance of the degree of accessibility is significant for a place towards its economic development, abundance, and sustainability. Being part of a transport hub-and-spoke network that ensures accessibility to a city or town is essential for the economic activity of a place is very significant due to enormous consequences for its economic prosperity (Ayoama, Murphy & Hanson, 2010; Poulaki & Papatheodorou, 2011; Messian, Poulaki & Marinakos, 2019).

Hobson and Uysal (1993) investigated current advancements and gave scenarios of future transport

infrastructure. The authors disclosed the nature and complexity of transport as an essential component of tourism infrastructure. In addition, the availability of different modes of transport and associated infrastructure including levels of fare and frequency of services, accessibility still relies on numerous factors. Twelve (12) transportation factors that influence destinations' accessibility include transportation modes comprising quality of transportation options, such as speed, comfort, and safety. Second, transportation network connectivity which has to do with the density of link and path connections or directness of travel between destinations. Next, travel cost or affordability. Fourth, mobility, that is, travel speed and distance, capacity, or travel time. Fifth, integration of the links and modes within the transportation system. Up next is transportation demand. Seventh, user information means the availability of reliable information on mobility and accessibility options. Eighth, mobility substitutes for telecommunications and delivery service substitutes for physical travel. After that is transportation management, followed by land use factors, prioritization of travel activities and the value of inaccessibility or isolation (Ayoama, Murphy & Hanson, 2010; Crouch, 2011; Poulaki & Papatheodorou, 2011; Messian, Poulaki & Marinakos, 2019; Messian, Poulaki & Marinakos, 2019).

The demand for a tourism destination is increasing, transport infrastructure requires adequate improvement to meet the demand and enhance destination competition. In the same vein, increasing levels of accessibility can enhance the tourist flows so that local governments can implement tourism development strategies. Such strategies usually include construction and transport infrastructure improvement (Crouch, 2011; Messian, Poulaki & Marinakos, 2019). As a result of the new normality after the Covid-19 pandemic, the sustainability of tourism development is critically impacted by global digitalization coupled with the development of a new set of digital tourists (Buhalis, 2019; Fagbolu & Abdulkadir, 2022). Undoubtedly, the pandemic led to a sharp decline in tourist flows, hence, the need for innovative solutions to restore and further develop the tourism and hospitality industry. Morozov & Morozova (2022) investigated topical issues of the functioning of the tourism and hospitality industry in the context of the new normalcy caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study in the context of the new normalcy analyzed innovative solutions to ensure travel and transportation safety for sustainable development of the tourism industry growth. The findings reveal that there was an acceleration of the processes of introducing innovations, entailing digitalization in the context of tourism. As a prerequisite for meeting the

requirement of digital tourists, the authors proposed expansion of the comprehension of sustainable tourism development and growth by including digital information additions.

Santana, Bertolucci, Sloth, Egholm and Ingvorsen (2023) conducted a qualitative study in emerging island destinations to examine the role of transportation infrastructure for community, city, and tourism development. Local actors were interviewed using ethnographic fieldwork. The findings show that active signs of infrastructure development can potentially play a significant role in tourism growth and prosperity. In this context, governmental entities need to comprehend dynamics and make the most of the unique characteristics of the destination to create effective policies which allow communities and cities to benefit and minimize the risk of socioeconomic and environmental challenges (Baumann, 2021).

Tourism activities depended on two indicators referred to as the intention to move and the physical ability to do it exactly. The first parameter spurs a desire for places to visit, which in turn inspires an aspiration to travel and tour while time availability and money are inevitable. The next parameter indicates the ability to access places of visit using information and transport. Thus, developing the transport infrastructure is pertinent to promoting tourism destination competitiveness and attractiveness. Ouariti and Jebrane (2020) bibliographically examined the evidence of a connection between tourism and transport. The authors empirically through a case study tried to identify the influence of transport development on tourism destination attractiveness and used the Pearson correlation and the linear regression methods. The study concluded that transport and tourism are connected through transport infrastructure development comprising airports, highways, and railway stations. Thus, enabling a positive impact on overnight stays in all types of accommodation in communities and cities.

The classical meaning of the quality of tourist and hotel services and the sustainable development of tourism concept is changing when assessing the quality of services in tourism especially in communities and cities, the assessment of their epidemiological safety and security began to occupy a critical place. In general, a tourist destination's accessibility can also be improved by developing the transportation infrastructure network or by improving connectivity between the network and tourist facilities. For example, the distance from a tourist's place of origin to the desired destination can be reduced by adding a direct link between the two locations within the

transportation network. Activities that widen links or provide well-organized transportation connections for tourists near parks or terminals can also improve connectivity between the transportation network and hotel accommodations in cities and communities for tourists.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Sustainable development has been a local public policy concern for almost 3 decades. The United Nations SDGs (2030) drive peace and prosperity for humans. SDG 11, which is one of the seventeen goals focuses on sustainable cities and communities creation (Vaidya & Chatterji, 2020; Franco, 2022; Dall’O, Bruni, Panza, Sarto & Khayatian, 2017; Leal, Marisa, Brandli, Gökçin Özuyar & Wall, 2020).

Ismagiloiva, Hughes, Rana and Dwivedi (2019) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the role of smart cities in creating SDG 11 sustainable cities and communities. The authors focused on renewable energy, water quality, energy efficiency, environmental monitoring, and air quality for a sustainable environment. The study provided a valuable synthesis of the related literature on smart cities. It analysed and discussed the key findings from existing research on issues around smart cities in creating sustainable cities and communities. It discovered that Smart cities can be instrumental in achieving UN SDGs. Cities and communities are faced with multiple issues while becoming sustainable.

MacDonald, Clarke, Ordonez-Ponce, Chai and Andreasen (2020) examined the qualifications, job responsibilities, work activities and sustainability management competencies that experienced professionals often identify as most valuable for performing sustainability manager jobs. The study sampled and interviewed 26 sustainability professionals engaged by 25 different municipalities across Canada. The results provided foundational information on an understudied job that is increasingly significant to public performance. Thereby, contributing salient information toward achieving more sustainable cities and communities (SDG#11).

Fell and Mattsson (2021) investigated the shortcomings and limitations of public-private partnerships (PPPs) and their potential ability to offer solutions to the problem of unsustainable urban development. The paper conducted a systematic literature review using the Doughnut Economics (DE) model tool to test the scope and depth of local collaborations. The results revealed that PPPs are unjust and unable to form collaborations with local actors in urban

development. The authors considered resident participation and inclusion to be the best strategy for PPPs to evolve as future guarantors of sustainable cities and communities. However, major issues in the character of issues connecting the global sustainability ought to be addressed.

Today, communities face the increasingly negative consequences of the unsustainable course cities are set on. Biodiversity loss, climate change and increasing spatial segregation are evident. The effects of all these issues often exceed the coping capacity of communities and cities. Hence, collaboration is essential for policy implementation, commercial vehicle drivers are in a better position to demonstrate positive and transport-worthy attitudes to bring about more sustainable communities and cities for tourism growth.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study explores the perspectives of passengers on commercial vehicle drivers' attitudes and the implications of driver's attitudes on the sustainability of cities and communities. This study employs a descriptive research design and utilizes a quantitative method. The population of the study comprises commercial vehicle passengers in all the commercial vehicle parks in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The figure below showcases a map of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. A list of commercial vehicle parks in the city was compiled for the study while a lottery method was utilized to blindly pick four (4) parks in the city. Hence, they were selected as the study organizations for the study.

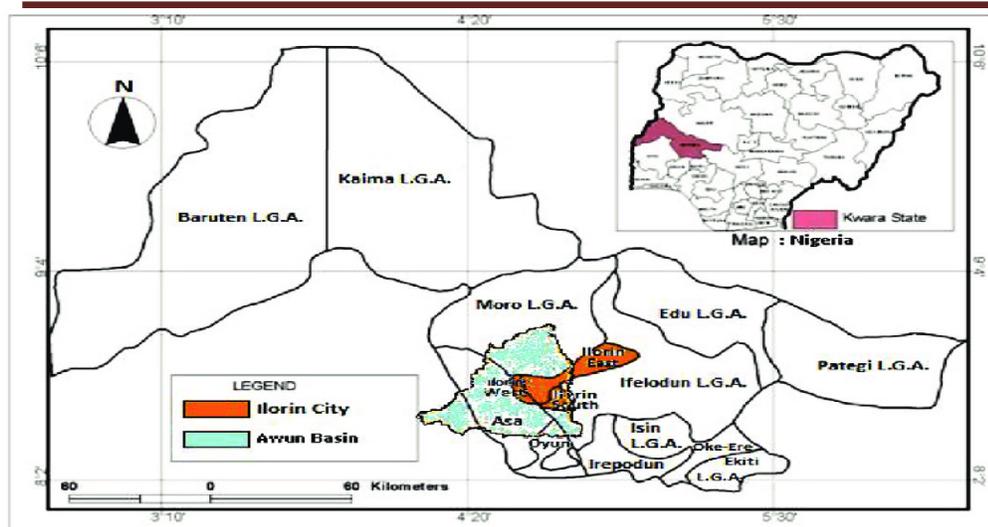


Figure 1: A map showcasing Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Source: https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.researchgate.net%2Ffigure%2FMap-of-the-State-of-Kwara-showing-Ilorin-and-the-Awun-Drainage-Basin-Source-Adapted-from_fig1_324088145&psig=AOvVaw1rzCdxREtYBZhAE2Cfmbqt&ust=1692949910846000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBAQjRxqFwoTCKjAuIjo9IADFQAAAAAdAAAAABAI

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1:

What are the perspectives of passengers on commercial vehicle drivers' attitudes?

Based on the outcome of the review of related literature, primary data are gathered from the respondents utilizing an adopted structured research questionnaire in three (3) sections entailing close-ended questions on a Five Point Likert Scale of Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA). The sample size for this research is drawn using a simple random sampling technique to select fifty (50) respondents from each of the parks accounting for two hundred (200) sample size due to the inability to cover the entire population. A purposive sampling, a probability sampling method is employed while administering the questionnaires to the respondents in each park and collected on the spot with the assistance of research assistants. The collected data are presented in tabular form and analyzed using a free software tool known as PSPP statistical analysis to provide frequencies and simple percentages (GNU PSPP Statistical Analysis Software, 2018).

Demographics of the Respondents

This section presents the demographic information of the passengers in the Table below. Majority 80(40%) of the passengers are 36 years and above. 60(30%) of the passengers are within 26 years and 35 years old while 60(30%) fall within 18 and 25 years of age. The table also shows the number of times each respondent patronizes the park, where 80(32%) of the respondents visit the park daily, 16(8%) declare thrice a week, 40(20%) state annually while 64(32%) express their patronage to be others. On the purpose of patronizing commercial vehicle drivers, 56(28%) of the respondents declare that they patronize the park because they want to deliver a message. 120(60%) are in the park for travelling purposes. 24(12%) declare that they are there for other purposes. Furthermore, 100(50%) of the respondents patronize the park in the morning. 40(20%) do board commercial vehicles in the afternoon while 60(30%) of the respondents patronize the park at any time.

Table 1: Respondents' Demographic

Label	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18 -25	60	30
	26- 35	60	30
	36 years and above	80	40
Total		200	100
Number of Patronage	Daily	80	40
	Three times a week	16	8
	Annually	40	20
	Others	64	32
Total		200	100
Purpose of Patronage	Delivery message	56	28
	Travelling	120	60
	Others	24	12
Total		200	100
Time of Patronage	Morning	100	50
	Afternoon	40	20
	Any time	60	30
Total		200	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2023).

Table 2: Perspectives of Passengers on Commercial Vehicle Drivers' Attitude

Labels	Frequency	Percentages (%)	Ratings
Over-speeding	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral
	40	20	Agree
	160	80	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Reckless driving	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral
	60	30	Agree
	140	70	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Dangerous overtaking	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral
	20	10	Agree
	180	90	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Overloading	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral
	60	30	Agree
	140	70	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Driving under the influence of alcohol	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral
	40	20	Agree
	160	80	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Using mobile phone while driving	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral
	88	44	Agree
	112	56	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Driving against traffic rules	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral

	72	36	Agree
	128	64	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Abusing the passengers	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral
	180	90	Agree
	20	10	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Pursuing another vehicle	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	-	-	Neutral
	60	30	Agree
	140	70	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2023).

Table 2 above showcases the perceptions of passengers on the attitudes of commercial drivers on the roads and highways in our communities and cities. 40(20%) and 160(80%) of the respondents agree and strongly agree that commercial drivers appeared to be overspeeding exhibit overspeeding on the roads and highways. 60(30%) agree while 140(70%) strongly agree that they do perceive reckless driving by commercial vehicle drivers. 20(10%) and 180(90%) agree and strongly agree respectively that dangerous overtaking is common among the drivers.

Furthermore, 60(30%) agree while 140(70%) strongly agree that they do witness Overloading by some drivers on the roads. 40(20%) and 160(80%) of the research participants agree and strongly agree respectively that they notice driving under the influence of alcohol attitude. 88(44%) agree and 112(56%) strongly agree that they observe drivers using mobile phones while driving. The results show that driving against traffic rules is perceived by 72(36%) and 128(640%) of the participants who agree and strongly agree to express their perception of the attitude. 180(90%) and 20(10%) of the respondents agree and strongly agree on abusing the passengers' attitude by commercial vehicle drivers. 60(30%) and 140(70%) agree and strongly agree individuals perceive pursuing another vehicle attitude on roads and highways.

The outcome of the findings supports previous studies (Schechtman, Shinar & Compton, 1999; Odeleye, 2007; af Wählberg, 2007; Iversen & Rundmo, 2004; McHugh, 2011; Hussin et al., 2014; Afolabi & Gbadamosi, 2017; David & Toyin, 2017; Olorunfemi & Adeniran, 2018; Woldegebriel,

Aregawi & Gebru, 2019; Odufuwa et al., 2019; Etika, Merat & Carsten, 2020; Okafor & Wusu, 2021). The transportation industry is crucial in the development and growth of any industry including tourism linking the production with the consumers or end users. It signifies the only sector that connects cities to cities, families with families and city to village maintaining sustainable communities and cities (Odufuwa et al., 2019; Etika, Merat & Carsten, 2020). Commercial transport has become a mode of transport from origin to destinations by passengers including tourists.

Olorunfemi & Adeniran, 2018; Okafor & Wusu, 2021) classified commercial transportation as a highly stressful employment. This is because of a high lack of control over driving situations and conflicting demands. Commercial drivers are more likely to experience fatigue, tension, and mental overload thereby, suffering physical health can affect their behaviours and attitudes. Several attitudes of commercial drivers include overspeeding, reckless driving, dangerous overtaking, overloading, and driving under the influence of alcohol. Others include using mobile phones while driving, abusing the passengers, driving against traffic rules, and pursuing another vehicle (Iversen & Rundmo, 2004; Odeleye, 2007; af Wählberg, 2007, McHugh, 2011; Afolabi & Gbadamosi, 2017; Woldegebriel, Aregawi & Gebru, 2019). Afolabi and Gbadamosi (2017) reiterate that the mode of delivery tends to affect travellers’ demand for the services.

Research Question 2:

What are the implications of driver’s attitudes on the sustainability of cities and communities?

Table 3: Implications of driver’s attitudes on Sustainability of Cities and Communities

Labels	Frequency	Percentages (%)	Ratings
Over-speeding may lead to accident which at the end of the day can causes loss of lives	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	12	6	Neutral
	36	18	Agree
	152	76	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Reckless driving can cause loss of control	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	20	10	Neutral

	52	26	Agree
	128	64	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Dangerous overtaking may lead to accident	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	12	6	Neutral
	16	8	Agree
	172	86	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Overloading cause loss of lives	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	28	14	Neutral
	40	20	Agree
	132	66	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Driving under the influence of alcohol may cause loss of focus and attention	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	24	12	Neutral
	32	20	Agree
	144	80	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Using mobile phone while driving may lead to loss of control	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	8	4	Neutral
	88	44	Agree
	104	52	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Driving against traffic rules may cause accidents	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	4	2	Neutral
	68	34	Agree
	128	64	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Abusing the passengers may lead to low concentration	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	32	16	Neutral
	148	74	Agree

	20	10	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	
Pursuing another vehicle may cause accident	-	-	Strongly Disagree
	-	-	Disagree
	12	6	Neutral
	48	24	Agree
	140	70	Strongly Agree
Total	200	100	

Source: Source: Authors' Field Survey (2023).

Table 3 above displays the results on the implications of driver's attitudes on sustainability of cities and communities. 12(6%), 36(18%) and 152(76%) of the research respondents are neutral, agree and strongly agree respectively that over-speeding may lead to accident which at the end of the day can causes loss of lives. According to 20(10%), 52(26%) and 128(64%) of the participants on neutral, agree and strongly agree ratings respectively express that reckless driving can cause loss of control. Progressively, respondents totaling 12(6%), 16(8%) and 172(86%) are neutral, agree and strongly agree respectively that dangerous overtaking may lead to accident. Also, 28(14%), 40(20%) and 132(66%) of the participants are neutral, agree and strongly agree respectively that overloading cause loss of lives. Participants amounting 24(12%) are neutral, 32(16%) agree and 144(72%) strongly agree disclose that driving under the influence of alcohol may cause loss of focus and attention. On using mobile phone while driving may lead to loss of control, neutral, agree and strongly agree responses are expressed by 8(4%), 88(44%) and 104(52%) of the respondents. Furthermore, 4(2%), 68(14%) and 132(64%) of the participants are neutral, agree and strongly agree respectively that driving against traffic rules may cause accidents. Responses of 32(16%), 148(74%) and 20(10%) of the participants portrayed neutral, agree, and strongly agree respectively on abusing the passengers may lead to low concentration. Meanwhile, 12(6%) are neutral, 48(24%) agree and 140(70%) strongly agree that pursuing another vehicle may cause an accident.

The outcomes of this survey further validate previous research (Iversen & Rundmo, 2004; Odeleye, 2007; af Wählberg, 2007; McHugh, 2011; Hussin et al., 2014; Abdul-Wahab, 2016; Teshale & Alemu, 2017; Afolabi and Gbadamosi, 2017; Etika, Merat and Carsten, 2020). This

study discovers that dangerous overtaking may lead to accidents (Iversen & Rundmo, 2004). In the same vein, driving against traffic rules may cause accidents (Hussin, et al., 2014; McHugh (2011). Disobeying traffic safety rules tends to cause accidents on our roads and highways (Abdul-Wahab, 2016; Etika, Merat & Carsten, 2020). Meanwhile, abusing passengers and pursuing another vehicle may not only lead to low concentration but may cause accidents (Teshale & Alemu, 2017). Over-speeding and reckless driving can cause loss of control leading to an accident which at the end of the day causes loss of lives in our communities and cities (Ismagiloiva et al., 2019; MacDonald et al., 2020; Fell & Mattsson, 2021).

5.0 CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This research focuses on exploring perspectives of passengers on commercial vehicle drivers' attitudes towards achieving sustainability in cities and communities. It concludes that passengers' perspectives on attitude connote certain negative attitudes often exhibited by commercial drivers on our roads and highways. Such attitudes while driving could cause loss of focus, concentration, control, accidents and eventually loss of lives. The implication of commercial drivers' attitudes on passengers, communities and cities is pertinent to movement from various origins to destinations (Hobson & Uysal, 1993; Baumann, 2021; Özgit, & Uludağ, 2022; Santana et al., 2023). This study, therefore, makes a further contribution to discovering commercial vehicles' attitudes through passengers' perspectives towards achieving sustainable communities and cities for tourism industry growth which aligns with SDGs (Vaidya & Chatterji, 2020; Franco, 2022; Dall'O et al., 2017; Leal et al., 2020).

Recommendations

- The government needs to intensify the campaign through print and electronic media for commercial vehicle drivers not only in the study area but also across Nigeria for sustainable communities and cities in the nation.
- Road safety officers should continuously organize education and training in the form of seminars and workshops for commercial vehicle drivers on road safety tips.
- Road safety officials need to always communicate and enforce road safety measures among commercial drivers.

- Transport companies should establish the act of recruiting competent, responsible, and law-abiding drivers.
- Transport management should help commercial drivers to know the various implications of their attitudes on roads, highways, and passengers from the origin to destination
- Commercial drivers should try as much as possible to adhere strictly to road safety and driving rules.
- Passengers need to be agents of change in our parks and on the roads cautioning commercial drivers when displaying observed negative attitudes.
- Further research is required to explore the effects of commercial vehicle drivers' attitudes on tourism industry growth

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Election Administration in Nigerian Democratic Dispensation: An Interrogation of the Process

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Abstract

The paper interrogated the process of election administration in Nigerian democratic dispensation. The study avers that elections in Nigeria since independence were characterized by various problems, resulting in questionable electoral outcomes. This was largely due to weak political institutions, mainly, the Independent National Election Commission (INEC). INEC lacks financial, institutional and administrative independence, as evidenced by its funding and composition by the presidency, as well as its lack of professional staff and security of tenure for its officials. This study, therefore, critically interrogates election administration process in Nigeria and how such elections influenced democratization process in the Country. In achieving this objective, the study relied on content analysis and adopted abstraction from liberal democratic theory. Elections can only promote and institutionalize democratization in Nigeria if the electoral processes are reviewed in certain ways that fundamentally address the capacity and independence of INEC, to discharge its responsibilities effectively and efficiently. This study revealed that democratization through election administration depends largely on the institutional foundations of the electoral processes, especially, the INEC. A professional, impartial and independent INEC would provide better prospects of effective election administration in Nigeria. This study, however, recommends, among others, that a return to the basics of preparation and conduct of elections by INEC is paramount; that electoral laws should be strengthened to encourage stiff punishment for electoral offenders as well as beneficiaries of fraudulent elections. The study conclude that the role of INEC and both its permanent and ad hoc officials is critical to the outcome of any election and the sustainability of democratization process in the Country.

Keywords: *Democracy, Democratization, Elections, Election Administration, and Political Institutions.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The process of election administration in many new democracies continues to generate a lot of controversy; particularly with regards to the level of independence of Election Management

Bodies (EMBs), their professionalism and the acceptability of the elections they conduct. Election administration, construed as the management of a parade of public affairs and events called the electoral process (Agbaje 1999), dates back to 1923 in Nigeria. This was when an election was conducted for the first time in the country to elect members representing Lagos and Calabar in the colonial Central Legislative Council (Akanji 2014; Bamidele & Ikubaje 2004; Akinboye & Anifowose 1999). Since then election administration in Nigeria has expanded. Except for the elections on 12 June 1993, the traditional mark of election administration in Nigeria – particularly since independence in 1960 – has been their poor conduct, as they have been tainted by both malpractice and violence.

The election administration process has always resulted in controversy and crisis arising mostly in part from the perceived collaboration of EMBs with the successive military and civilian regimes of the country's post-independence era. The implication is that the history of election administration processes and procedures in Nigeria has been a history of controversy engendered by electoral malpractices.

A total of six different EMBs were established at various times to conduct the successive elections that have taken place in Nigeria's post-independence history. Indeed, as Agbaje and Adejumobi (2006) note, over the years, the autonomy and capacity of EMBs in Nigeria have been suspect as reflected in its endless renaming and restructuring by successive governments. In 1959 the Electoral Commission of Nigeria (ECN) conducted the first nationwide elections which ushered in Nigeria's first republic. The ECN which was composed of largely expatriate British administrators was replaced in 1964 with the Federal Electoral Commission (FEC). Following a highly contested general election conducted by the FEC in 1964/65, and other existing political problems, the first republic was toppled in a military coup in 1966 and the FEC was dissolved. By 1978 another Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) was established by the outgoing military regime of General Olusegun Obasanjo. FEDECO conducted the 1979 elections that ushered in Nigeria's second republic. However, FEDECO was also dissolved in 1983 by the military administration of General Muhammadu Buhari following a highly controversial election conducted in 1983. By 1987, the Babangida administration also dissolved FEDECO and established the NEC. In what was described as a —transition without end, NEC conducted the 1992/93 elections but was also dissolved in 1993 following the annulment of the

1993 Presidential election results and the exit of the Babangida administration. In 1994 the Abacha administration established the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON). NECON conducted elections from the local governments up to the national assembly level; but was also abolished following the death of General Abacha and the emergence of the General Abubakar administration in 1998. The General Abubakar Abdulsalami regime established the current Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) which has conducted an unprecedented number of five quadrennial general elections in Nigeria from 1999 to 2023. While INEC is the longest-serving EMB in Nigeria's political history, the elections it has conducted have generated varying degrees of controversy and violent conflicts; particularly at the Presidential level.

However, the 2015 to 2023 Presidential elections conducted by INEC were historic for three major reasons. First, the introduction of an electronic accreditation process despite challenges encountered, seemed to have remarkably increased the credibility of the country's election administration process. Secondly, it was the first time in the history of the country that an incumbent President would lose elections and concede defeat to the opposition. Thirdly, in the 2023 general elections, the Biometric Verification System (BVS) was introduced to promote credible and reliable transmission of election results in the 2023 general election administration process. However, as in the previous 6 general elections held from 1999 to 2019 was not without controversy. Political campaigns in the pre-election period were often heated on a non-issue base. In several states across the country, the 2015 to 2023 pre-election periods therefore recorded varying degrees of election related violence. The inability of law enforcement agencies to squarely address this social ill has been complicated by the dearth of robust and reliable data on the incidence and impact of crime related election violence. Indeed, the elections were generally described as the most keenly contested elections in the history of Nigeria. The INEC itself came under severe criticism for the decision to introduce an electronic accreditation process which critics described as too premature, given the country's poor state of infrastructure, particularly with regards to power supply.

Against the foregoing background, several issues concerning INEC's performance in the election administration in the country were and are still germane. What are the basic steps in the election administration process? Which of these steps have been the most controversial and problematic

aspects of the elections conducted by INEC from 1999-2019, and how has INEC fared in the administration of the 2023 general elections? Interrogating these issues is critical for understanding the trajectory of election administration processes and procedures in Nigeria, and the role INEC is playing in the consolidation of democracy in the country.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Explanations

Election: This facilitates and shapes democracy. Democracy is regarded as the best form of government because its ideology promotes people's will. The people have the political right to decide who should govern them in a free and fair conduct called 'election'. Therefore, elections constitute an essential principle in liberal democracy. Election in a democracy is very important because it is through which the expression of the people is shown via legitimacy and leadership succession. According to Schumpeter (1947) election is defined as a post-mortem that investigates the record of officeholders whose actual performance may have little to do with promises made when they were previously elected. This is a way of censuring, reposing function in a ruler that is popularly accepted and ejecting an unpopular leader. This method shuns mutiny and chaos in a system hence it reflects a peaceful hand-over from one administration to the other so long as the process is devoid of election rigging.

Election Administration: The term "election administration" appears nebulous due to the complex set of activities inherent in the concept. Yet, a critical examination of its meaning firmly establishes it as an empirical category. Election administration as Jinadu notes entails "*the organization and conduct of elections to elective (political) public office by an electoral body* (Jinadu 1997). This definition Jinadu aptly notes subsumes both structure and processes. Structure is the bureaucracy that is set up or established to organize and conduct elections which is usually an electoral body like INEC. In another submission, election administration is defined as the management and process of organization of all stages of an electoral cycle (i.e. the pre-election, election and the post- election stages,) by an electoral body (Ajayi, 2007).

Although the foregoing definitions of election administration suggest the existence of an independent electoral body upon which the administration of elections is incumbent, it should be noted that experience in some countries across the globe indicates that election administration is

not necessarily incumbent on an independent body. Indeed, despite the popularity of independent EMBs across the globe, in some countries; particularly among the advanced democracies of the West, election administration is the responsibility of government agencies which have developed a tradition of independence in the administration of elections. However, the import of the two definitions of election administration outlined above lies in the exposition of the electoral administrative process as a structure, as well as a complex set of highly interrelated activities; and not just an activity- polling- as is sometimes misconstrued.

Importance of Elections in a Democratic Environment

According to Zhizhi and Ibrahim (2020), Elections are important in a democracy because they encourage,

- a. *Participation*: they provide a quick and simple form of participation by the citizens of a country in its governance and are an important tool for this purpose.
- b. *Recruitment of political Leaders*: As a result of the electoral process, the electorate can choose their political leaders.
- c. *Making government*: The electoral process provides the basis for the selection of a government that is accountable to the electorate.
- d. *Representation*: The electoral process through the choice of members of parliament and councillors ensures the availability of representatives for the people by the people.
- e. *Responsibility and Legitimacy*: The electoral process ensures that people who are chosen have the responsibility to support the views of the people they represent and have the legitimacy to represent them.
- f. *Popular policies*: With the electoral process, the electorates have the chance to choose the political party that has the policies that they feel will be of their benefit.

The Election Administration Process

In the bid to showcase the election administration process in Nigeria, Kurfi (2005) indicated nine key elements of election administration. This is showcased in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Kurfi’s Steps in the Election Administration Process

SN	Steps in the Electoral Administration Process
	Delimitation or the carving out of electoral districts
	Compilation of voters register or electoral roll
	Establishment and equipment of polling stations and polling booths
	Recruitment, training and deployment of electoral officials
	Logistics: involving the procurement, distribution and retrieval of a host of Electoral materials and equipment
	Canvassing for votes
	Registration of nominations and appointment of polling agents
	Casting the ballot
	Counting of votes and declaration of election results

Source: Kurfi (2005)

Table 1 captures some important steps in the election administration process yet, it is not comprehensive; as the structural dimension of election administration and other post-election related issues which have significant implications for the consolidation of democracy have been ignored.

However, in a more comprehensive submission, Elklit and Reynolds (2000) subdivided election administration into twelve basic steps as indicated in Table 2 below

Table 2: Elklit and Reynolds Steps in the Election Administration Process

Steps in the Election Administration Process	Important Element In Step
1. Legal framework of the EMB’s structure	Constitutional /legal basis Rules and regulation Seat allocation system (i.e. method of composition of electoral commissioners)
2. Elections management	Electoral commissions appointment and independence, including terms of tenure Commission/administration relationship Method of allocation of resources
3. Constituency and polling district demarcation	Relevant body identified and active (i.e which body is responsible for constituency and polling district demarcation) Principles for delimitation identified Rules about automatic periodical revision Adequate resources available Rules for handling complaints in place

4. Voter education	Timing Quality Outreach Adequate resources available Relationship between electoral commissions efforts and efforts by parties and NGO's
5. Voter registration	Automatic or voluntary registration Appointment and training of registration personnel Adequate time for registration and access to registration stations Rules for public scrutiny of voters register Complaints procedure
6. Access to and design of the ballot, nomination and registration of parties and candidates	Registration of parties/ candidates Rules about independent candidates Mechanism for ballot paper access Ballot paper design
7. Campaign regulation	Spending rules Public funding of party expenditure/ campaign costs Access to public media Rules for meetings and rallies Codes of conduct Rules for handling of violations of codes of conduct and campaign regulations
8. Polling	Plan for distribution and location of polling places Appointment and training of polling station personnel Procurement of polling materials Polling observation by representative of political parties and candidates as well as by local and international observations Security and integrity of polling Clear rules for assistance to incapacitated voters
9. Counting and tabulating the vote	Counting procedures established (including whether to count at polling station level or at counting centers) Availability of counting results to party agents and others at the lowest level of counting immediately after completing the count Access for interested parties to observe the count and request a recount
10. Resolving election related disputes and complaints, verification of final results. Certification	Provisions for special electoral courts and/ or adjudication system Time limits for handling election disputes and complaints Verification of the final results verified Certification of the election
11. Election results implementation	Procedures for taking office
12. Post-election procedures	Provisions for publication of election results at all levels of electoral administration EMB subject to ordinary accounting

Source: Adapted from Elklit and Reynolds (2000)

The twelve steps identified in Table 2 constitute the most basic steps of any electoral cycle; and their high degree of interconnectedness

In like manner, Moveh (2012), indicated the cyclical steps in the structure and process of election administration with regard to Nigerian Presidential Elections (1999-2011) as follows:

- a) *Legal framework of the EMB's structure*
- b) *Elections management*
- c) *Constituency and polling district demarcation*
- d) *Voter education*
- e) *Voter registration*
- f) *Access to and design of the ballot, nomination and registration of parties and candidates*
- g) *Campaign regulation*
- h) *Polling*
- i) *Counting and tabulating the vote*
- j) *Resolving election related disputes and complaints, and verification of final results.*
- k) *Certification*
- l) *Election results implementation*
- m) *Post election procedures*

While steps 1 and 2 above have to do largely with the structure of election administration, steps 3 to 12 comprise the steps involved in the actual process of conducting an election and other post polling procedures. The chronological arrangements of the steps of the election administration process as indicated above also highlights the sequence of activities of the major stages of the electoral cycle: steps 3 to 7 captures activities involved in the pre-election period, step 8 captures the major activity of the election stage, while steps 9-12 captures the activities involved in the post-election period.

It is important to note that due to the emphasis on not just the structure of election administration but also on the major activities involved in the major stages of the electoral administration cycle (i.e. the pre-election, election and post-election stages); the electoral administration process depicted in above by Moveh (2012) is more comprehensive. Indeed, the practicality of this model in understanding the trajectory of Nigeria's election administration process was demonstrated by Moveh (2012), in his empirical and comparative study of the four Presidential elections conducted by INEC before the 2015 to 2023 elections in Nigeria.

General Elections of 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019 and 2023

Elections are the life wire of a democratic government and give life to its functionality. The 2007

general elections were the third in a series of elections in Nigeria. The elections were conducted on April 4, 2007, for the Governorship and State Houses of Assembly and April 21, 2007, for the Presidential and National Assembly. According to INEC, 50 political parties were registered for the polls, a number which was extraordinary in the nation's political process (Ajayi, 2007). Before the elections, the political atmosphere was very tense. The issues that contributed to the tense political atmosphere was a statement credited to then President Olusegun Obasanjo that for him and his party- the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the 2007 general elections was 'a do or die affair' (Adejumobi, 2007). INEC too, rather than concentrate on adequate preparations for the elections, was engaged in unnecessary distractions, notably litigations against opposition candidates in its attempts to disqualify perceived opposition candidates (Omotola, 2009). INEC's insistence on disqualifying Alhaji Atiku Abubakar - then Vice President and Presidential candidate of Action Congress - an opposition party, from contesting, even when the electoral law does not permit the commission to do so, raised the unnecessary tension. After the elections, INEC awarded questionable victories at all levels to PDP. How the ruling PDP garnered the votes was not only questionable but alarming. Across the country, there was unparalleled ballot stuffing, falsification of election results, rigging, intimidation of voters/opposition candidates and direct assault on the electorate. In some extreme cases, the election did not take place but results were announced (Adebayo and Omotola, 2007). Commenting on the 2007 general elections, Dr. Chukwuemeka Ezeife, former governor of Anambra State said:

....democracy is associated with elections. How have the elections gone since 1999 till date? The 1999 elections were disputed but it was vastly better than the 2003 elections. People shouted foul about the 2003 elections but it was better than the non-elections of 2007. Each election has been worse, and more flawed than the one before it. We cannot be getting a democracy by running further away from it.

The 2011 general elections were a significant improvement in the country's political history as the election represented the fourth election since the return of the country to democracy in 1999. Despite logistical problems, complaints and skirmishes of electoral fraud, the elections were described by both local and international observers as "successful" compared to previous elections in the country, hence, rejuvenating hopes of democratization (NDI, 2012). Conducted

in April and May 2011, the elections set a new standard for democratic consolidation, fair participation, an improved political environment for peaceful competition and rising hopes of free and fair democratic struggle in the country (NDI, 2012). David et al. (2014) asserted that the 2011 general elections, though endorsed by local and international observers credible, had some problems. One of these problems was the politics of godfatherism. The politics of godfatherism has had far reaching dire consequences for the Nigerian democratization process. It has a profound impact on society, leading to a lack of accountability, pervasive corruption, and economic mismanagement. Other problems include controversy about presidential zoning between northern and southern Nigeria, underage voting, intimidation and harassment of voters/opposition candidates, ballot box stuffing/snatching and falsification of election results. These lapses were admitted by the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) (2012), NDI (2012) and Think Africa Press (2013) in their final reports on the organization, conduct and declaration of the 2011 general election results.

However, the 2015 general elections were the fifth election conducted in the country since 1999, and the elections conducted on March 28 and April 11, 2015 recorded significant democratic landmarks. The 2015 general elections conducted by INEC were historic for two reasons. First, the introduction of an electronic accreditation process called Card Reader and Permanent Voters Card (PVC). Despite the challenges encountered in the new voting policy, it seemed to have remarkably increased the efficacy of Nigeria's election administration processes. Secondly, it was the first time in the political history of the country that an incumbent President lost to the opposition party and conceded defeat (Moveh, 2015).

The 2019 general elections in Nigeria were the most planned for. Arrangements kick-started with the INEC Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021; afterwards, there were the Election Management System, Election Project Plan and Elections Operations Support Centre. Above and beyond, the elections are the costliest in Nigeria's times past. Authoritatively, the Federal Government sponsored the elections with a massive N242bn, N189bn of which went to INEC whilst the outstanding N53bn was shared through the security agencies for the reason of election safety which is outside the millions of dollars exhausted on the commission via the different international donor partners (Punch, 2019). According to Punch (2019), an information sheet on the 2019 General Election exposed that there were 84 million registered electorate out of which 72 million electorate

collected their Permanent Voter Cards; 91 registered political parties; 119,973 Polling Units; 120 Accredited Domestic Observers and 36 Accredited Foreign Observers and 23,000 candidates competing for 1,558 positions. Seven elections were also conducted over two Saturdays. They were Presidential, Senate and House of Representatives elections on February 23 and governorship, state Houses of Assembly, chairmanship and councillorship elections of the six Area Councils of the Federal Capital Territory held on March 9, 2019.

An additional obsession that singled out the 2019 general election is the soaring number of cancelled votes owing to violence, over-voting and non-adherence to the use of Smart Card Readers. In the 2019 general elections over 30 people were reportedly killed in various violence (Leadership Newspaper, 2019). The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) as reported by Leadership Newspaper (2019) reports that armed thugs twisted their guns on people and differing political parties which led to the killings. Vote trade remains a momentous apprehension for Nigeria's election bearing in mind what happened during the governorship and state houses of assembly elections. Buying and selling of votes triumphed despite the admonition by INEC, security agencies and the anti-corruption agencies.

General elections were held in Nigeria on 25 February 2023 to elect the President and Vice President and members of the Senate and House of Representatives. It was the seventh consecutive general election since the return of the country to democracy in 1999. This represents 23 years of unbroken democracy, the longest in the history of Nigeria. This election was seen as the tightest race since the end of military rule in 1999.

The Presidential election was contested by eighteen political parties and conducted under a new electoral framework. The new electoral framework known as the Electoral Act 2022, allows the country's electoral body, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) the use of Technology for the conduct of elections using Bimodal Voter Accreditation System, BVAS for fingerprint and facial biometric identification and authentication of the voters.

The new Act also allows the commission to transmit election results electronically from the collation centres into the INEC servers and results viewing portal immediately after the counting of the votes. Invariably, the new technological innovation introduced by INEC paved the way for an online pre-registration system of voters and a new INEC enrolment device which helped to

reduce the long queues witnessed in previous voter registration and voting exercises in the past. The new Electoral Act as amended by the Nigerian National Assembly also extended the time for political campaigns from 90 to 150 days which has equally created the opportunity for politicians to visit the nooks and crannies of the country if they so desire. There were 93.4 million registered Nigerian voters eligible to go to the polls. However, only a little above 30 million people turned out for the February 25 Presidential and National Assembly elections a far cry from those registered. One of the reasons for the low turnout of registered voters, was that many Nigerians were deterred from participating in the democratic process by political leaders' dishonesty and broken promises.

The commission was equally engaged in continuous sensitization programmes on the processes and preparations for the elections by galvanizing the citizenry by ensuring that they understand and participate fully in the electoral proceedings for the peaceful conduct of the elections. Despite the mechanisms and measures put in place by the commission ahead of the elections, there were still some challenges encountered by the commission. Some of these challenges include attacks on INEC facilities and personnel in some parts of the country, vote buying and selling during elections, the malfunctioning of the BVAS in the transmission of election results during the presidential election amongst other things. Despite all the challenges faced, the elections were generally peaceful and winners were announced without rancour. The losers have taken the right path by resorting to laws of the land which allows them to challenge the outcome in Special Elections Tribunals set up by the government.

Interrogating the Election Administration Process in Nigeria

Nigeria's election administration process is shrouded by a high level of corruption. How do we define the administrative cost or burden of corruption? First, Nigeria still relies on fingerprinting ballots and manually counting them one by one. Second, only one voter is permitted in the polling unit at any given time during Election Day. According to INEC, the average time for a voter to cast their ballot lies somewhere between two and five minutes. Nigeria has over 84 million registered voters (Omotola & Adebayo, 2007) If a polling unit has 500 registered voters at 2 minutes each, that would take roughly 1000 minutes, upwards of 16 hours for all voters to participate. In a day where voting only occurs between 8 AM and 2 PM, the time allotted is not adequate to address the time needed. In this process which is designed to promote security, time

becomes a significant cost for the average voter, whether it be in travel or time spent waiting to cast a ballot.

From our conversations with stakeholders, we learned that Nigerian governance has a long history of corruption and intimidation, and Nigerians are uniquely sensitive to the impact that unseen forces can have on the political direction of their country. Past corruption breeds future suspicion and the lack of transparency from the Independent National Electoral Commission leading up to the postponement of the February 16th presidential election led to unsurprising backlash from Nigerian citizens. What was supposed to be seen, and could still be seen, as the next major step forward for Nigeria in establishing itself as an exemplar of democracy in Africa has, for the moment, sown distrust and anger among the electorate. While INEC operated under the guise of efficiency, they overestimated their capacity to address the logistics of administering the election.

Nigeria has the largest population on the continent, which presents some challenges - how do officials access remote areas where paved roads do not exist? Can they airlift materials, or will they be transported by truck? As Nigeria does not have absentee voting, many citizens must travel back to their home state to vote—for many in Nigeria, this is no small task and requires a significant investment of time and resources to accomplish. Nigeria's population consists of 190 million individuals. There were 72 presidential candidates alone in the election cycle, the most ever for presidential election in Nigeria. There were thousands of security forces being deployed on Election Day - 4030 non-security personnel and 8000 special protection personnel. The total estimated cost of the election itself hovers around 198 billion US dollars, which equates to 6.5 US dollars per voter (Mozaffar & Schedler, 2002).

With such a large population, the number of places to vote must also be large. In Nigeria, there are 119,973 polling units across the country; in areas where the population exceeds the maximum number of voters per unit (voting units should have no more than 750 registered voters), there are multiple voting points, 57,073. These are spread between urban and rural areas, with varying degrees of difficulty in access. Transportation of materials, both sensitive and non-sensitive, can be difficult (Eyinla, 2000). For example, in remote areas that do not have quality infrastructure, airlifting materials for election day is an optimal means of transportation.

As in many African countries, security concerns remain a constant problem. In Kano State, ballot papers were intercepted and taken; a state governor's convoy was attacked by a faction of Boko Haram. INEC offices were firebombed and the materials inside were destroyed. In Anambra State, two containers of sensitive materials including smart card readers were also destroyed. (Suleiman, 2015). Even after numerous INEC offices were attacked and materials burned, smart card readers destroyed, and so on, INEC continued to reinforce the message that they were prepared to conduct the election.

When discussing the election, the overarching concern regarding the Nigerian election was safety and security. Nigerian officials from the government and political parties both called for peace and calm during the process. Foreign dignitaries seemed intent on reinforcing the message that Nigerians should take this election as an opportunity to show the world that they too were capable of conducting an election unmarred by violence and intimidation, one that would give each citizen the chance to cast their ballot without interference. At a YIAGA press briefing the day before election day, US Ambassador Symington stated, *"We have for weeks talked about free, transparent, and now let's stress peaceful elections. For that is the essential task ... The peace and security of the vote tomorrow is the job of every Nigerian. Every single one."* This sentiment was echoed by fellow ambassadors and leaders of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) throughout the briefing.

What we failed to see, and what ultimately seemed to be of the greatest consequence, was not the security of the election but instead, the ability to administer the process to Nigerian voters around the country. While security concerns were warranted, they were not believed to be of the greatest impact on the decision to postpone the election by INEC. Their decision to postpone due to logistical concerns related to the delivery of sensitive and non-sensitive election materials suggests a different calculation of cost for the 2019 presidential election.

The true costs lie somewhere between the tangible inputs and the lack of an outcome satisfactory to the citizenry at large. INGOs and civil society organizations poured time, money, and manpower into mobilizing citizens, promoting transparency, and encouraging every Nigerian to get out and vote. The Youth Corp was mobilized to polling units and points around the country as part of their civic duty to their nation (Julius, N. (2017). Materials were transported to various INEC offices with the intent of being used. The lack of outcome came when, despite the

multitude of inputs utilized in preparing for Election Day, the Nigerian electorate was unable to exercise their right to the democratic process and cast their ballot for the leader of their choosing. The ultimate cost is the loss of confidence Nigerians place in their government institutions that exist to protect their ability to participate in self-government and construct a future that is uniquely and genuinely Nigerian.

One of the themes noticed throughout the election periods was that, while Nigerians were optimistic for a successful election in a periodic cycle, they were cautiously so. Democracy does not develop overnight, and even the most developed of countries have administrative growing pains from time to time. Nigeria is a relatively young independent country, and because of their youth, the progress they have made should be commended. However, Nigeria must continue to move forward with each election, inch by inch, to assume the leading role in Africa that many believe they can fill. As was said by many foreign observers and diplomats, where Nigeria goes, so goes the rest of Africa, and while Nigeria may still be paying for its past, it is certainly making strides toward a brighter future (Osaghae, 2002).

Democratization Process in Nigeria – The Challenges

INEC as the electoral umpire in the country suffered a number of challenges in all its electoral management since its establishment in 1998. INEC suffers credibility problems because most citizens lost confidence in its capacity to organize free, credible and transparent elections. From 1999-2015, all elections conducted by INEC have been criticized as riddled with various problems, resulting in questionable outcomes. INEC lacks financial, institutional and administrative independence, evidenced by its funding and composition by the presidency, as well as its lack of professional staff and security of tenure for its officials (Omotola, 2010; Edet, 2015; Moveh, 2015). INEC's capability has been severely questioned in two ways. The first relates to the appointment of people without the necessary professional and intellectual competence to pilot the affairs of the commission. The second relates to INEC's continuous use of ad hoc staff, who are usually hurriedly briefed for about a day for their duties. These temporary staff lack the requisite knowledge and competence to administer credible elections using laid down electoral laws (Omotola, 2010; Edet, 2015).

The over-centralization of power in INEC responsibility also calls for serious concern. INEC lacks the necessary competence and skilled staff to administer elections in all the states of the

federation including Presidential and National Assembly elections. Fall et al. (2011), Ajayi (2012), Oromareghake (2013), and David et al. (2014) have all raised qualms as to the true independence of INEC to conduct credible and transparent elections. The monopoly of an incumbent President in appointing electoral officials has further raised doubts as to the impartiality of INEC in conducting free and fair elections (Jinadu, 2011; Kerr, 2013). The credibility problems faced by INEC strain electoral apathy and civic irresponsibility. For instance, the level of apathy during the 2011 general election was alarming as only 35 percent of about 70 million registered voters participated in the elections (Thisday Newspaper, 2011). In 2015, the level of apathy still subsisted with only 43 percent of the registered voters participating in the elections (Durotoye, 2015).

3.0 THEORETICAL EXPLICATION OF ELECTION ADMINISTRATION IN A DEMOCRATIC CONTEXT

Of all theories of democracy (Liberal democratic theory, Classic pluralism theory, Radical pluralism theory, Democratic pragmatism theory, Catallaxy theory, and Participatory democracy theory) only the liberal version emphasizes a direct linkage between the quality of the election administrative process and the qualification of a regime as democratic. The issues raised in this discourse are therefore interrogated within the context of liberal democratic theory. The origin of liberal democratic ideas can be traced to as far back as the 17th century when the importance and dignity of man came to be recognized. The ideas of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) which emphasized the view that all social institutions were for the betterment of man as an individual, laid the foundation for the development of liberal democratic thinking.

Hobbes for example put forward the proposition that the state was created by the people through a social contract for the preservation of man's interests. Locke also made his contribution to the theory of liberal democracy by regarding the consent of the people as the basis of political power. He contended that political power was the trust of the people in the hands of the government. The ideas of Locke were clarified and given practical shape by the thinkers of succeeding centuries such that by the 19th century, systematic ideas in the liberal theory of democracy had begun to develop

In his submission, Schumpeter (1947), identified the characteristics of liberal democratic theory including the following:

- a. That there is more than one political party competing for political power, that competition is open and not secretive,
- b. It is based on established and accepted procedures, entry and recruitment to positions of political power are relatively open,
- c. There are periodic elections based on universal suffrage,
- d. Civil liberties are recognized and protected e.t.c.

Indeed, from the foregoing, it is evident that elections are no doubt a critical part of the democratic process Ojie (2006); and all other variables of democracy do not just revolve around elections but on the quality of the electoral process. While the forerunners of liberal democratic theory like Hobbes and Locke may not have explicitly explicated the relationship between elections and democracy, their works laid the foundation for subsequent democratic theorists whose works have demonstrated the inextricable link between the quality of the election administrative process and the qualification of a regime as democratic (Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, 2004). Schumpeter (1975) for example noted that democracy is a political method—that is: a certain type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political legislative and administrative- decisions. Schumpeter further defines the democratic method as: ‘That institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide using a competitive struggle for the people's vote (Schumpeter, 1975).

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The foregoing analysis suggests that the prospect of consolidating democracy in Nigeria through elections remains a tall order, though not impossible to deliver. Consolidating democracy through elections depends largely on the institutional foundations of the electoral processes, particularly the EMB – in this case, the INEC. A professional, capable, and independent INEC, free from partisan influence and government control, would provide better prospects of effective electoral administration. Only such an electoral body could conduct credible elections, whose outcomes will be acceptable to the majority of people, including opposition parties. The role of INEC and both its permanent and ad hoc officials is critical to the outcome of any election and in the strengthening of democratic principles thereby giving some hope for democratization in the

country. However, from the preceding analysis, it is clear that this is not yet the case in Nigeria. In its present form and character, INEC enjoys limited legitimacy and respect among Nigerians.

The prospect of democratization in Nigeria is anchored on effective election administration which has remained a big challenge in the country. Democratization through election administration depends largely on the institutional foundations and capacity of the electoral institution, specifically the INEC. A professional, impartial and independent INEC would offer better prospects for effective election administration in Nigeria. INEC enjoys limited legitimacy, acceptance and respect among Nigerian voters. Only an independent and impartial electoral commission can conduct credible, free and fair elections accepted by a majority of Nigerians, including the opposition parties. The President's overbearing control of INEC by way of appointing its officials grossly erodes its independence and impartiality. This makes it impossible for INEC to provide a level playing ground to all political competitors, actors and participants. The high level of political instability in the country since independence in 1960 has effectively contributed to the weak institutionalization of INEC. As a result of frequent changes of governments, the electoral commission in the country has been renamed six times between 1959 and 1998. The main considerations in these renaming exercises have been political, rather than institutional capacity, independence, impartiality, administrative effectiveness and efficiency.

Therefore, to correct the flaws in election administration in Nigeria, the paper recommended the following:

- a) Electoral laws should be further strengthened to encourage stiff punishment for electoral offenders as well as beneficiaries of fraudulent elections. Individuals found guilty of electoral malpractices should be dealt with in accordance with the law.
- b) The funding of INEC should be charged to the consolidated account, while the appointment of its chairman and commissioners should be removed from the presidency to the National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives).
- c) There should be strict application of electoral laws to the latter. This would change the face of electioneering in the country.
- d) Adequate security should be provided especially during elections to enhance hitch free electioneering exercise. Security should always be provided at both registration and polling

centres to frustrate desperate politicians in their bid to pervert the nascent democracy. This can be achieved through neutrality and impartiality from the security agencies.

e) There is an urgent need to reform electoral processes including election institutions. INEC represents the most important institutional foundation of any successful electoral process in Nigeria. INEC should be detached completely from the presidency and made entirely independent.

f) Good leadership is the major condition that can enhance the sustainability of Nigeria's democracy. If elections are free and fair, the leaders too should be mindful of the fact that people deserve to enjoy the dividends and virtues of democracy. Government is by representatives and the interest of the people is expected to prevail over selfish interest.

g) INEC should incorporate media, civil society organisations and political parties as well as the National Orientation Agency (NOA) in its political campaigns and enlightenment as they are crucial to the success of election administration. This will help in sensitization, education and mobilization of the citizens against the undemocratic tendencies of political competitors or actors in the society.

h) Civil Society Organisations should strengthen their actions of political socialization and political consciousness which will advance the political conduct and voting prototype of the general municipal. This will assist an extensive approach in the strengthening of the democratic system and autonomous authority in Nigeria and Africa in a broad spectrum.

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Dynamics of Civil-Military Relations in Democratising Peace Since the Return to Civil Rule in Nigeria in 1999

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Abstract

This paper examined civil-military relations in Nigeria and its potentials for enhancing democratic peace since the return to civil rule in 1999. Civil- military relations is the relationship and interaction that exists between the military and civil authority/society to create understanding, support and cooperation towards achieving a peaceful and stable political system in the overall interest of national security and democratic rule. This desk review and empirical study sought to assess how these relations have fared in Nigeria's democratisation process since the return to civil rule in 1999. The methodology used was mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative) which involved analysing questionnaires to generate primary data to support secondary data. In the findings, it is revealed that the current state of civil-military relations in the country is weak and should be drastically improved and institutionalised to strengthen Nigeria's democracy and national security. The paper among other recommendations advises against military insubordination to civil-rule, while stressing the benefits of military subordination to civil-rule for sustainable democracy and peace.

Keywords: *Civil Military Relations, Democratising Peace*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Civil-Military Relations (CMR) emerged after the Second World War as a dominant challenge and a recurring theme in developed and developing democracies across the world. Changes in both the geo-strategic environment and domestic political systems are leading to calls for a review of civil-military relations. The concern has been about finding an appropriate balance between the military and civil society in a democracy. In countries emerging from years of military rule, the fear of a politicized military unable to fully subordinate itself to civil governance and plotting to intervene again by covert and overt military action has been a major source of threat to elected governments in democracies, and drives the need to create a dynamic civil-military relations mechanism, especially in emerging democracies like Nigeria. The

military has existed throughout history and is widely viewed as the defender of the state (Leider, 2023). Most nations have armed forces, and their roles are stipulated in the country's constitution. One of the cardinal objects of a nation's vital interests is the defence of its territorial integrity by its armed forces. Despite the armed forces' sacred role, however, their position in the context of national political hierarchy is often a source of debate and intense emotion.

Civil-military relations have grown beyond just the concern about civil supremacy or control over the military. DCAF (2023) observes that civil-military relations in any country especially in a democracy are determined by several factors. These include; the history of the military as an institution; the political culture of the country; the political economy of the state; external factors, the character and training of the officer corps; the character and disposition of the political leadership and the underpinnings of the constitution of the country. Western countries differ greatly as to the degree of control of the military and the model of civil-military relations. For instance, in the United States of America (USA), Britain and Canada; the constitution is the benchmark for measuring the duties of the executive and military interactions with the legislative oversight of the military (Leider, 2023). The relationship between the military and political class is based on the doctrine of civil supremacy. In the USA, the President and the Congress share almost equal powers over the power of oversight for the armed forces. The President is the Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C), but only Congress declares war, raises and supports armies and makes regulations for the armed forces (<https://constitution.congress.gov>, 2023). Therefore, the robustness of American democracy can be traced to the relations that exist between the political class and the military.

The state of civil-military relations is however different in the Third World where the military has extended its role beyond its constitutional powers to the political arena. Thus, De Waal (2023) cites several factors that helped promote military intervention in the politics of new nation-states. Such factors include political instability, weak national institutions, corruption and misgovernance. He further observed that military institutions have not imbibed professional values and respect for civilian supremacy. It is therefore unsurprising that the boundaries between the political superstructure and the military have become intertwined in the Third World.

Leider (2023) stated that national security and strong diplomatic stature; proper equilibrium

between political influence and military professionalism must be established to create and maintain democratic stability. It is an ongoing process which needs to evolve as the dynamic changes. The situation is however critical in many African countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Guinea and Nigeria that have recently emerged from authoritarian rule. In the countries of the Sahel- Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali, the failure of civil-military relations has seen a recent resurgence of military rule and the collapse of their democracies (Ikome & Nwonzora, 2023). A proper understanding of civil-military relations implies the recognition of the military institution in the polity as a vital pillar of statehood. For the military to perform its role effectively to ensure the stability of democracy, both the military, political class and civil society must understand their proper roles in a democratic society (Akinwunmi, Erunke & Yunusa, 2023). This understanding will include well defined areas of cooperation between the military, the political leaders and civil society which is central to civil-military relations.

In Nigeria, the military is now subjected to civil control since the return to democratic rule in 1999 after many years of autocratic rule. The military leadership faces the task of educating personnel against clashes with other security agencies in an imaginary war for supremacy and civil society, and to be subordinated to civil authority. Policymakers, academics, military strategists and civil society groups are preoccupied with developing balanced civil-military relations in the country. Democratic rule therefore demands military subordination to civil authority both in terms of legislative oversight over programmes, projects and activities, and budgetary allocation for the military and security services (Akinwunmi et al, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Civil-military relations are the interaction between the civil authority, civil society and the military. It is aimed at gaining and enhancing mutual respect, understanding, support and cooperation among these segments of the state towards achieving a peaceful and sustainable political system in the overall interest of national security (DCAF, 2023). Civil-military relations in Nigeria before May 1999 were poor and the military was revered by civil society not out of admiration but due to fear of coercion and intimidation. Since Independence, most African States have not had stable governments. The experience of military incursion into politics and

authoritarian one-party regimes sustained by sheer brute force have made the military forces of most African states especially Nigeria less professional and no longer apolitical, this contributes to deteriorating civil-military relations. Before the advent of democracy, most African states had to contend with over bloated military forces, which absorbed a large percentage of their scarce resources. Sadly, the emergence of democracy has not changed this narrative because the Armed Forces have shown little regard for constitutional restrictions (Akinwunmi et al, 2023).

According to a report by Crisisgroup (2016), negative perception of the Armed Forces as anti-democratic, inadequate defence budgets, militarization of the society, lack of defence expertise, and failure to provide dividends of democracy by the political class are glaring challenges facing civil-military relations in Nigeria. Also, the noticeable absence of an environment conducive to setting proper and realistic limits to the activities of the military in its relations with civil society broadens the span of poor civil-military relations. The long military interregnum in Nigeria has created a huge gap in needed civilian expertise to work with the military in deepening democracy and creating a sustainable mechanism for enabling civil-military relations. As a result, the military remained insulated and unresponsive to effective supervision, by civil bureaucracy or the legislature (Ibrahim, 2017).

This lacuna has led to the drive for security sector reform by the 9th and 10th National Assemblies in Nigeria (Akinwunmi et al, 2023). Consequently, efforts are being made to see how democratic control of the defence sector can be achieved as the focus of the security sector reform programme, which is necessary for democracy to thrive in Nigeria. The uniqueness of the defence sector is such that the Executive branch of Government regards it as its exclusive purview, while the security agents feel that their loyalty should first go to the Executive, rather than the country. This causes latent and subtle tension between the two arms of government over the effective supervision of the defence sector. On the one hand, there is the need to ensure effective supervision by the executive of the sector, while at the same time balancing the democratic ideals of ensuring constitutional oversight by the legislature. However, the current reality on the ground is that the Military has not made it easy to attain this balance in Nigeria (Akinwunmi et al, 2023).

Research Aims

The paper seeks to examine the relationship between civil-military relations and democratisation, assess the state of civil-military relations in Nigeria since the return to civil rule in 1999, and identify the challenges facing civil-military relations in the country. Further, examines the impact of the poor perception of the principle of subordination on the unhealthy relationship between the military and civil authority. Recommend strategies for enhancing civil-military relations in Nigeria as long years of military rule have created a gulf between the military and civil populace generating mutual suspicion and lack of effective cooperation.

2.0 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Civil-Military Relations

The classical works of the Chinese military strategist and philosopher Sun Tzu, Arab philosopher Ibn Khaldun, the Italian power theorist Niccolo Machiavelli and the Prussian military thinker Carl Von Clausewitz clearly indicated that the idea and practice of controlling the military predates the modern state system (Huntington, 1957). Their ideas are a good starting point in examining civil-military relations because of their pioneering exposition into the relationship between politics and military power in the state as it adopts normative and historical approaches and provides insights into how political power can be managed within the context of military strategy. While they do not have explicit theories on the concept of civil-military relations, they highlight the significance of political control of military forces as an integral part of strategy in terms of external and internal threats. The main objective of military strategy is to defeat enemies and guard the state. Sun Tzu prescribes the imperative for civil control where he says the general rule for military operations is that the military leadership receives the order from the civilian leadership to gather the armies. (Sun, 1988).

In addition, the sphere of military expertise is differentiated from civil authority with the former assisting the latter to shape the power of a country in relation to external enemies. However, civil leadership is cautioned to know where the boundaries of control stop and where expertise begins. This can be deemed to imply that there should be a limitation in civil control of the military. It implies that a boundary should exist that defines the respective roles of civilians (rulers of the state) and military leaders. According to Sun Tzu (1988) when the civil leadership

is ignorant of military affairs, but share equally in the government of the armies, the soldiers get confused.

In his treatise, *The Prince*, Niccolo Machiavelli is more explicit where control is not only prescribed but how it would work. His ideas tend to emphasize on the use of expedient measures to preserve political power as against the centrality of morality in the conduct of statecraft as expounded in the works of Plato or Aristotle. In general, the Machiavellian paradigm starts with the imperative for the sovereign power to have effective control over the armed forces. He says that the military must be under the control of either a prince or a republic; a prince must assume personal command and captain his troops himself (Machiavelli, 2003). He cautions the sovereign on the specific dangers and limits of delegating authority to the military leader. He specifically says that an incompetent commander should be removed and a competent one should have his powers limited by law to prevent mutiny and coup respectively (Machiavelli, 2003). This is situated within the realist school of thought that unlimited power in the hands of an armed group or military leader cannot be trusted to keep enemies at bay without resorting to possible temptations to engage in political struggles with superiors (as in the sovereign ruler) who is expected to always be on guard to safeguard the throne.

Echevarria (2016) quoting Clausewitz establishes the relationship between political leaders and the military within the context of war. In his view, the relationship between politics and war has to do with politics guiding military strategy. He says that policy is the guiding intelligence and, war is only the instrument, not vice versa. No other possibility exists, then than to subordinate the military point of view to the political. He also stressed that politics shapes the conduct of war, and by extension, the relationship between military and civil leaders.

In general, these classical works do not provide an explicit demarcation of where civil authority ends and where that of the military begins. This is not surprising. In their epochs, political power rested with a leadership that combined both military and civil functions. These were pioneer attempts to conceptualize political control as against civil control emanating from a leadership that was both a civil and military sovereign. They do not take into cognizance the importance of future developments and the attendant changes that would follow especially in Europe and America in the 20th Century. Echevarria (2016) summarized the historical evolution of military leadership and organization as in the feudal days the king himself was the field

commander and his vassals came to his aid with their contingents. When armies came to rely on mercenaries, their loyalty depended on the extent to which their leaders were able to finance the campaign. All that changed with the advent of conscript armies, which involved every citizen but also led to the emergence of an officers' corps with its professionalism, traditions and culture.

The pioneer work on the concept of civil control within the context of Western traditions was outlined by Huntington (1964). He establishes a link between the nature and scope of civil control and the behaviour of the military toward the political system of a country. He draws up several concepts that attempt to explain the basis of civil-military relations in what he terms democratic and non-democratic societies. The rise and evolution of military professionalism is what distinguishes the political from the civil with respect to control of the military institution. While civil control is the most important, it is merely another component in the gamut of civil-military relations. Civilian control is valid when military professionalism exists and operates within the goals of governmental policy. More importantly, civil control is based on the relative power of civilian and military groups and is achieved to the extent to which the power of the military groups is reduced (Huntington, 1964). In essence, the power of the military has to be minimized for the civilian leaders to exercise authority over them based on the latter's confinement to its primary role within the directives of state policy.

Huntington identifies two types of civil control, subjective and objective civilian control. In the first type, the goal is to maximize civilian power over the military- implying an imbalanced power relation between the military and civilians in favour of the latter. Precisely, one civilian group imposes its power out of the multiplicity of political groups and at the expense of a military institution that has minimum levels of professional ethos. Subjective control is maintained through governmental organs, social class domination and through constitutionalism. This type of control is restricted to a political system that is authoritarian and the military professionalism is compromised by its level of interaction with the political ideology of the state (Huntington, 1964). The second type, objective civilian control makes the military apolitical. It is based on maximizing military professionalism while at the same time reducing the degree to which the military participates in politics.

Democratising Peace

Immanuel Kant in his essay ‘Perpetual Peace’ published in 1795 but rejigged in 2019 described *democratic peace* as the proposition that democratic states never (or rarely) wage war on one another. Kant proposes three mechanisms that foster peace among nations and within societies: (i) the presence of a republican constitution, which for Kant entails the requirement of public approval before the government can decide on the use of military force, implying civilian control over the military in deploying it either for war or peace (ii) the pacifying effects of close trade relations between and within states (iii) a federation of states to overcome the condition of lawlessness in international politics. While the third mechanism underlines the importance of international law, Kant’s argument regarding the first two mechanisms essentially rests on utilitarian cost-benefit calculations between the military and civilian components of the state. He assumes that citizens would decide against war if they had to bear the costs themselves. Hence, if citizens were given a say in decisions on war and peace, then this could foster peaceful intra and interstate relations.

A Background on the Nigerian Military and its Psychology

The main tasks of the Nigerian Military in the pre-colonial and early independence years were to support the colonial authority (under the control of colonial residents and provincial officers) in pursuing the ends of political, social and economic policies to the satisfaction of the Metropolitan power, Great Britain. However, this important arm of the colonial state neither had a conception of, nor a commitment to social and economic development of the territory. These are matters left to the political power in the colonial state. The military under colonial rule took for granted the *raison d’être* of the colonial state. Indeed, it was not part of the military profession to question the *raison d’être* (Falola, 1999).

The military has its roots in the various military formations that partook in the colonial conquests and state construction starting around the second half of the 19th Century. The major formation was the Lagos Constabulary under Lieutenant Glover which was formed around 1863 and merged with other outfits to form the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) in 1897. Other units were the Royal Niger Company Constabulary Established in 1886, the Oil Rivers Irregulars in 1885 and the Niger Coast Constabulary in 1891. By 1900 these formations were replaced by the Northern and Southern Regiments (Falola, 1999).

As an attempt to lower the expenses of colonial administration, the Amalgamation of 1914 resulted in the merger of the two Regiments into a single formation called the Nigeria Regiment under the West African Frontier Force (WAFF). In recognition of the role of WAFF in the First World War (1914 to 1918), its name was changed to the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF). In 1958, it was renamed the Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment when the British Army Council in London transferred authority to the colonial government in Lagos (Falola, 1999). While the British exclusively comprised the officer corps and Non-commissioned Officers (NCOs) of the Colonial Army, the non-officer cadres or other ranks came from the native African population. It also meant that the highest rank a native could attain in the Army was sergeant. Initially, the majority of Lieutenant (later Captain) Glover's Lagos Constabulary that began the military conquest in the 1860s came from the yet to be conquered Northern Protectorate and other British colonies in the West Indies and West Africa. By 1898 it had about 500 men. Its counterpart to the eastern shoreline, the Niger Coast Constabulary had 400 men in the same year (Falola, 1999).

Another prominent Military outfit, the Royal Niger Company Constabulary had 150 men under the command of three European officers. The men in this formation were initially drawn from Ghana and Sierra Leone. As colonial penetration moved into the hinterland, its composition changed as it recruited from diverse groups notably the Hausas, Igalas, Igbos, Nupes and Yorubas. In 1889 the constabulary increased to 421 men under the command of five officers and by 1899 it had further swelled to thirteen officers commanding 966 men (Falola, 1999). The conditions of Military service for the natives in these outfits were unfavourable. For example, soldiers could be relieved of their appointment by their commanding officer at any time without the obligation of giving any reason for his action to the soldiers concerned. After the creation of the Nigerian entity, the military was used in suppressing revolts within the colony and in support of the colonial power in the two world wars (1914 to 1939) where it saw action in parts of Africa and Asia. In its drive for colonial conquest, the British government increased its expenditure to foot the bill of the various formations it had mandated to create fear and subjugate the people that would eventually form the Nigerian colony (Ojo, 2012). However, under the pretext of gross disorganization and indiscriminate use of force to pacify many communities, the British Colonial power gradually merged these constabularies with the WAFF which completely took over their functions by 1900. As a result, the psychology of the Nigerian Military as an occupation force

has since been internalised making it fairly difficult for it to imbibe the democratic ethos of subordination to civil authority (Akinwunmi, 2023).

Theoretical Underpinning

The Agency Theory

The agency theory propounded first by Peter Feaver (AJCR, 2007) is adopted as the theoretical framework for assessing the nature of civil-military relations in Nigeria upon return to civil rule. Despite its limitation, the agency theory is more compatible with the analysis of Nigeria's civil-military relations. This is because Nigeria's constitution of 1999 is drawn along the lines of the United States model of presidential democracy. By law, civilian control of the military consists of direct executive command and indirect legislative oversight. The subject matter in the agency theory just like in the traditional literature on civil-military relations rests on how elected civilian leaders control the military.

This is in terms of monitoring the latter's activities and deciding what choices to make if directives are obeyed or disregarded (AJCR, 2007). The agency theory is based on three broad assumptions. The first assumption, states that rational choices determine the relationship between the military and its civilian principal. The second, states that there is a shared position that the civilian principal is superior to the military agent on the condition that the military sees itself as an agent of the state rather than an arm of the government or regime in power. The third, assumes that civilian control of the military is shared by more than one principal notably the executive and legislative arms of the government as well as certain specialized sub-organs under the legislative and executive arms.

Drawing from the democratic thesis, the military as an agent obeys the civilian principal because the latter derives its moral competence and legitimacy from the political environment in which the military operates (AJCR, 2007). In a mature presidential democracy, expert knowledge of the military is not a basic requirement for civilian control to be effective.

Impact of the Obasanjo and Buhari Administrations on Military Subordination to Civil Authority

According to Ibrahim (2017), Olusegun Obasanjo who was elected Nigeria's president in 1999 identified military reform as a top priority. His administration immediately undertook several

measures, particularly to restore effective civilian control and oversight and re-professionalize the services. He replaced all service chiefs with younger officers who had held no public office and retired about 100 other officers who had held political appointments as federal ministers, state governors, directors of public corporations and task force chairmen during military regimes. Obasanjo further promised a comprehensive transformation of the armed forces, including the continuation of rationalization, downsizing and right-sizing, replacing obsolete equipment; re-equipping the services and upgrading soldiers' welfare; reversing the negative slide in military-civilian relations by subordinating the military to democratically constituted authority; and building, rehabilitating and strengthening the relationship between the military and the world after years of isolation and sanctions.

Ibrahim (2017) stated that in pursuit of these reforms, the government restored bilateral military aid programs frozen during the Abacha dictatorship. In particular, it entered into an agreement with the U.S., which offered \$10 million for two programs: short-term capacity building for some army units (Operation Restore Hope) and longer-term reform of the armed forces, to be implemented by a private U.S. consultancy company, Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI). Seeking to address human rights violations and impunity under military rule, the government established a Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission (HRVIC), chaired by the late respected Jurist Chukwudifu Oputa. Its objective was, among other things, to recommend measures for redressing past injustices and preventing their recurrence. It submitted its report to Obasanjo in May 2002.

Obasanjo's initiatives faltered because they lacked a comprehensive guiding framework and were driven solely by the executive, without buy-in from parliament, other political elites and civil society. These deficits impaired implementation and follow-up. At best, Obasanjo achieved increased presidential, but not democratic, control of the armed forces. While the president had promised to rationalise the services and downsize personnel, then Defence Minister Lt. General Theophilus Danjuma rejected the idea of significantly reducing size, saying only that proper implementation of the Nigerian Army Career Review Program would be ensured, indicating a discordance in the administration (Ibrahim, 2017).

At his inauguration, Buhari pledged to reform civil military relations and his first steps offered some hope. But much more was needed for a holistic overhaul of the defence management

system, not only to improve operational effectiveness but also to restore professionalism and promote respect for human rights and better civil-military relations. Until this happens, the armed forces will remain in distress, and citizens will be at the mercy of insurgents and other armed groups (Akinwunmi et al, 2023).

3.0 DATA ANALYSIS

Out of the 300 questionnaires distributed within the Abuja metropolis, the area of study, 258 were returned indicating a return rate of 86%.

Research Question 1: Is there a linear relationship between civil-military relations and democracy?

256 respondents representing 99.2%, a percentage almost as good as the whole population affirmed this assertion, only 2 respondents (0.8%) opposed it stating that the relationship is not obvious.

Research Question 2: How have civil-military relations fared in a democratic Nigeria?

217 respondents which represents (83.5%), indicated that civil-military relations have not fared well in a democratic Nigeria. 43 respondents (16.6%) agreed that it had fared relatively well.

Research Question 3: Do civil-military relations pose a challenge to the relevance of the armed forces in a democracy?

205 respondents (79.4 %) do not think the relevance of the military can be challenged in the context of civil-military relations in a democratic setting. However, 53 respondents representing 20.5% think it could be challenging.

Research Question 4: Would deepening civil-military relations in a democracy be a useful strategy for demilitarising Nigeria's political culture?

256 respondents (99.2%) are of the view that going forward, deepening civil-military relations would soften the effect of military culture on democracy in Nigeria, only 2 respondents 0.8% are opposed to this view.

4.0 CONCLUSION

From the data analysis, it can be concluded that civil-military relations are a vital requirement for

democratisation in Nigeria. This conclusion is informed by the opinion of respondents through questionnaires administered randomly among members of the military, para-military, civil society, NGOs, students, politicians, public servants and other stakeholders in the FCT. The tone depicts that though the civil-military relations culture is not exactly where it should be, sustained and healthy civil-military relations are crucial for democratic peace in Nigeria. However, the study identified some challenges to civil-military relations since the return to civil rule, they include negative perception of the Armed Forces, militarization of the political culture, mutual suspicion and low cooperation between the political class, civil society and the military establishment, and inadequate oversight of the military establishment by both the executive and legislature. This does not portend well for the process of democratising peace in Nigeria.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper recommends military subordination to civil authority, insisting that the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages. The political class and the military establishment should put in place clear strategies, processes and procedures that would enhance civil-military relations within the political system. A conscious, sustained advocacy and sensitization on civil-military relations for citizens would build a political culture that could aid the attainment of democratic peace. The Federal Government should focus on properly equipping and training the Nigeria Police as the lead agency for internal security duties, as that would greatly reduce reliance on the military for internal peace support operations and their presence on the streets, as they are currently involved in internal security operations in 28 out of 36 states. Civil-military relations should also be included in the curriculum of military and para-military institutions to build institutional capacity.

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Socio-Cultural Dimension and its Effects Gendered Contributions to Peacebuilding in Abia North Senatorial Zone, Imo State

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Abstract

Socio-cultural norms, gender role play, and power structures unfortunately shape men and women's participation in conflict resolution and peace. This also has dire consequences for the development and peace of the locality. This study therefore examined the socio-cultural dimension and its effects on gendered contributions to peacebuilding in the Abia North Senatorial Zone, Imo State. The following research questions guided its investigation: i. What are the key contributions of women in peacebuilding in Abia North Senatorial District of Abia State? and ii. What are the challenges women face in their peacebuilding bids in Abia North Senatorial District? Descriptive survey research design was carried out on a population of 354 from the senatorial district, which comprises Arochukwu LGA, Bende LGA, Isuikwuato LGA, Ohafia LGA and Umu-Nneochi LGA. The study finds that women's key contributions to Abia North society include: making contributions to the decision processes, advocacy on communal peace and gender violence, communal dialogue, involvement in conflict resolution, and socio-cultural issues. In spite of their capacity in these regards, women in the study area are not given adequate opportunities to make meaningful contributions due to socio-cultural factors. The study also found that other challenges include the current patriarchal nature of the Ibo society, lack of resources, gender-based violence, and general discrimination against gender in the society. The study concluded that women have far greater contributions to make to the development of society if limiting socio-cultural barriers are reduced or outrightly eliminated. The study recommended making gender studies compulsory at all levels of the Nigerian school curriculum to mitigate this situation. Also, government and NGO should be involved in advocacy campaigns in rural areas to sensitise women on gender roles and limit gender-based violence. Women should also receive mentorship in politics and entrepreneurship to enhance their empowerment.

Keywords: *Gender, Socio-cultural factors, Peacebuilding, Women, Abia North Senatorial District*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Few countries in the world, such as Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait, have a female population of less than 40% of their country's total population. The World Bank estimated the population of females

in other countries at between 47-51% of their total population, with Nigeria having 49% females out of its total population (World Bank, 2020). This means that females constitute almost half of the Nigerian population. This number is too huge to be neglected or pushed aside in developmental affairs. An unjust system that is biased against more than half of the population cannot achieve sustainable development (Thisday, 2022). In 2013, when UNSCR 1325 was domesticated in Nigeria, 16 states were chosen as pilot states to cascade the programme down to the masses. Among the states was Gombe. The Emir of Gombe, His Royal Highness, Mai of Kaltungo was a role model in this regard. He ensured that as many women as possible were part of his cabinet as peacebuilders. According to the story, he was shocked to witness the peaceful transformation of his territory, which he attributed to the remarkable efforts and involvement of these women (UN Women, 2016).

Studies have shown that with the numerous roles and contributions of women in society, they add to its development, which, in translation, is a way of promoting peace. Matrilineal patronage was practiced in many African societies before the coming of the white man. “Man’s wealth was in the custody of his wife” (Ugente, 2022). At this time, women occupied complementary positions, rather than subordinates to men. This among other distortions in family structure was fought for by the Aba Women Riot led by the late Margaret Ekpo in 1929. In Igbo society, individuals of high status and women as a collective group possessed political power through their organisations and their representatives, such as “Eze Nwanyi”- “the Queen Mother”. This is the same all over the country. For instance, the popular Kiriji war demanded extraordinary services from both men and women, where women were able to rise to the occasion and were rewarded with greater political responsibility as in the case of Iyalodes of Yoruba land such as Efunroye Tinubu of Egba (1810-1887). Queen Amina of Zazzau became an undisputed ruler of Zazzau in 1576, a Hausa city in Northern Nigeria. She was a popular soldier and an empire builder who led campaigns within months of becoming ruler. She quieted the whole area between Zazzau and the Niger and Benue rivers absorbing the Nupe and Kwara states. The Igala kingdom was also reputed to have been founded by a woman, Ebele Ejaunu (Masawa, 2022). The likes of Fumilayo Ransome Kuti, Margret Ekpo, Queen Amina of Zassau, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Late Dora Akunyili, showed the resilient nature of Nigerian women in handling issues. ‘Umuada’ and ‘Ndi iyiom’ in Igboland, Abia North inclusive, are not playing ostrich to any anti developmental issue. Indeed, Abia women are known to work hard to help their families and, by extension, society grow.

There seems to be no end to incessant conflicts in Abia North. The government is employing several measures to address these issues. The state always deploys both formal and informal strategies to curb violent conflicts. To enhance peacebuilding and peacemaking in the society, the use of security apparatus, creation of more equipped security agencies, adoption of local securities, civil society organisations, traditional rulers, opinion leaders, and notable individuals in the society have been employed (Okunola and Adeboye, 2013).

Scholarly works have highlighted the marginalisation and exclusion of disadvantaged groups in society as impediments to socio-economic development (Kapur, 2018). Gender discrimination in governance is seen as detrimental to nation building and development, (Gberevbie, Eseme, Oviasogie and Osasumwen, 2013). Lederach and Appleby (2010) maintain that without strategic peacebuilding, peacebuilding exercises will not be successful. Women are excluded from contributing to peace processes, of which they and their children are victims, directly or indirectly. They are not allowed to contribute to development. Abia North and indeed every part of Nigeria is characterised by conflicts of all kinds. An alarmingly high rate of conflict has been observed. Armed conflict, kidnapping, banditry, cattle rustling, farmer-herder crisis, gender-based violence, electoral conflict, climate change conflict, and others, have become the order of the day. It therefore becomes necessary to investigate the contributions that women would have otherwise made to ensure that such situations would have been mitigated, particularly in Aba North, the South East, and Nigeria in general. To achieve these objectives, the underlisted research questions are raised.

- i. What are the key contributions of women in peacebuilding in Abia North Senatorial District of Abia State? and
- ii. What are the challenges women face in their peacebuilding bids in Abia North Senatorial District?

2.0 CONCEPTUAL AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Conflict

According to Herbert (2017), conflict is the result of disagreement between actors over perceived incompatible goals. Conflicts are often analysed at different levels, namely: individual, group, community, and national levels. It is a condition in which one identifiable group of human beings (tribal, ethnic, cultural, economic, or political) is engaged in conscious opposition to one or more

identifiable human groups due to the pursuit of incompatible goals. Coser (1956) noted that conflict is an interaction involving humans and not humans and the environment.

Oseremen & Osemeke in Okoli et al (2017) defined conflicts as clashes between formal authority and power, disputes over how revenues should be divided, how the work should be done, and how long and hard people should work, rivalries, jealousies, personality clashes, role definitions, and struggles for power and favour. It is when people are striving for their own preferred outcome, which, if attained, prevents others from achieving their preferred outcome, resulting in hostility and breakdown in human relations.

Understanding Culture

Culture is a totality of knowledge, belief, art, ethics, law, tradition, and any other competencies and behaviours acquired by man as a member of society, Tyler cited by Avruch (1998: 6). Hofstede in his view sees Culture as the collective programming of the mind which differentiates the members of one group of people from another, Hofstede (1994: 5). Another view sees culture as a set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next (Matsumoto, 1996: p. 16). Groeschl and Doherty (2000) point out that culture is a set of beliefs and assumptions that hold a group of people together. In the study, culture is seen as a hindrance to women's full participation and representation in the political and social arena. Culture limits women's abilities and promotes men, thereby creating imbalance and an unjust society.

What is Gender

Individual, interactional, and structural factors construct gender, creating environmental constraints and opportunities that typically benefit men more than women (Blackstone, 2003). Women's commonalities, particularly their distinctions from men, shape their gender (Flax, 1995). Lindsey refers to gender as those social, cultural, and psychological traits linked to males and females through particular social contexts. Gender refers to those social, cultural, and psychological traits linked to males and females through particular social contexts. It is an achieved status because it must be learnt (Lindsey, 2015). By sapping women's energy and confidence, gender violence can deprive society of their full participation. The physical and psychological scars of abuse prevent women from fully contributing their labour or creative ideas.

It is important to note that sex is different from gender. Sex refers to the biological differences between males and females. For instance, the adult female has breasts that can secrete milk to feed a baby but the adult male does not. It is also worthy of note that gender involves both the male and female, of which all of them are important in this study, as none can be discussed without the other, however, our primary focus is on the female gender (woman).

Understanding Peace

Peace is not merely the absence of violence or disturbance; it is achieved when there is a possibility of conflict, but you deliberately avoid violence and adopt methods to solve the problems through peaceful means (Lama, 2001). Peace would be a strange concept if it does not include relations between genders, races, classes, and families and does not also include the absence of structural violence, non-intended slow massive suffering caused by economic and political structures in the form of massive exploitation and repression (Galtung, 2013). It is the absence of physical and structural violence; the presence of justice, of law, of order, of government. In the study, peace is promoted through its building, which involves a whole lot of strategic processes without undermining women's representation and participation in the scheme of things.

Socio-cultural and political dimensions of conflict have bred mistrust, stereotypes, and unnecessary rivalry in Abia North society among and between different individuals and groups. Several barriers have been unlawfully established to downplay the role of women in Abia North. The patriarchal system dominant in society has not helped issues; some cultural and political barriers limiting women's freedom have, as well, not made things better for women, as "men take it all syndrome" persists, despite the enormous contributions of women at family and at the societal levels that go unnoticed. In Abia North, women have no total control of their families, as the father's role is left to the father or, in his absence, the eldest son.

Abia North Senatorial District

Abia North Senatorial District is located in Abia State, which was created from Old Imo State on August 27, 1991, with Umuahia as its capital, Abia State Investment Brochure, (2019). The state is one of the South eastern states of Nigeria. Abia State is located at approximately latitudes 4° 40' and 6°14' north, and longitudes 7°10' and 8° 00' east, Chigbu, et.al (2016). The state shares boundaries with states such as Akwa Ibom and Cross River states in the Southeast, River State in

the Southwest, Enugu and Ebonyi states in the Northeast and Anambra/Imo in the Northwest of the state. Abia state comprises seventeen Local Government Areas namely; Aba North, Aba South, Isiala Ngwa North, Isiala Ngwa South, Arochukwu, Bende, Isuikwuato, Ohafia, Umunneochi, Umuahia North, Umuahia South, Obi-Ngwa, Osisioma, Ugwunagbo, Ukwa East, and Ukwa West respectively. The Local Government Areas are grouped into three (3) major senatorial districts.



Figure 2 The Map of Abia State showcasing three senatorial districts with colour separation, pink, green and blue colours respectively.

Source: Nigerian Muse, 2018

The focus of the study however, is on Abia north senatorial district (area in pink), which consists of Arochukwu, Bende, Isuikwuato, Ohafia and Umunneochi Local Government Areas.

Literature Review

Including women is crucial in addressing the growing global conflicts. Studies have it that a top-down peace process, with only armed actors at the negotiating table, cannot bring an end to conflict, instead, it will require a more inclusive process that includes women playing more pivotal roles in building peace from the bottom up and from top-down, as well as engaging multiple stakeholders, (Lindborg, 2017).

In Nigeria today, women have been playing an active role in the traditional political governance

before the colonial era (Akinboye, 2004); (Ajayi, 2007). However, the onset of colonial administration impeded their progress (Lewu, 2005; Omotola, 2007). According to Akinboye (2004), colonial administrations created gender policies, economic interests, and generalized patriarchal values that reinforced and feasted on gender inequality in the country. An instance is the deliberate exclusion of women at the 1922 Legislative Council that was set up by the colonial government (Akiyode-Afolabi & Arogundade. 2003). Women's visibility was lacking in the leadership of recognised political parties during the era, as men dominated the political parties—the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) and other parties (Ahonsi-Yakubu, 2001). Ajayi (2007) opined that numerous of those actions signified the beginning of masculinity in politics and women's estrangement from the mainstream of Nigeria's politics.

In a comparative analysis, the British Council Nigeria (2012) noted that the low representation of women in Nigeria's House of Representatives is significantly below the global average (15%) and far behind South Africa's and Rwanda's representation (43% and 56%, respectively). According to the Council, only about 4% of Nigeria's Councillors are women, compared with South Africa's declining but still credible 38%. It also notes that female representation is much lower at all levels in the northern part of the country than in the south. Certain factors could account for regional differences.

For instance, politicians have hired youth gangs to intimidate rivals and the general population as a major security concern (Ladbury, 2011). While women in the South have enjoyed the right to vote since 1960, women in the North were not allowed to participate in politics until 1979. In recent times, between 2015 and 2023, women's representation has continued to dwindle with each election, instead of progressive improvements. The political atmosphere has become increasingly tense for women. All the pronouncements to give women a chance are being scuttled by economic, political, and cultural expediencies. An analysis by the Premium Times in October 2022 from an INEC source shows that in the 2023 elections only 9%, of women were going for elective posts, as against 2015 and 2019, where we had 17%,15% and 12%,11% on Senate and House of Representative seats respectively.

Female Representation in Nigerian Politics

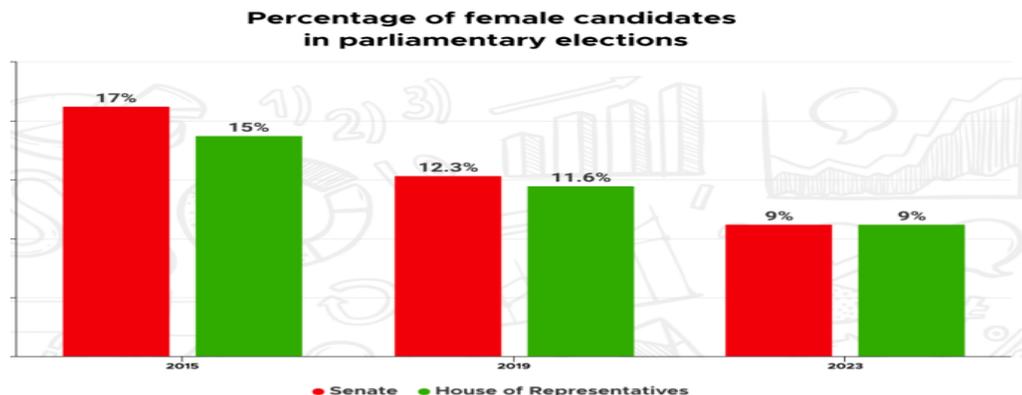


Figure 1: Percentage of female candidates elected in the parliamentary elections between 2015 and 2023.

Source: INEC, 2023

Factors Limiting Women’s Political Participation

Several factors have been identified as being responsible for preventing women from taking active roles in politics. For instance, Adhambo-Oduol (2003) identifies socio-cultural beliefs, attitudes, biases, and stereotypes as chief impediments. According to him, these factors form the fundamental part of the socialisation process in the form of gender education and training that men and women are exposed to from childhood, and they emphasise the superiority and dominance of men and the inferiority and weakness of women.

Daniel (2012) also argues that the institutional framework guiding gender division of labour, recruitment, and vertical mobility limits women's participation in politics. He finds that women are particularly disadvantaged, with their labour often undervalued and underutilized. He notes that although women are more likely to be employed than men, their average income is lower. According to Karl (2001), low education and literacy levels, low access to financial resources, cultural attitudes and stereotypes, religion, and socialisation inhibit women’s involvement in political affairs nationwide. Mukhtar (2013) notes that women constitute a large percentage of illiterate groups in Nigeria, as parents prefer to send their sons to school based on their belief that they will have responsibilities in the future, while girls are expected to grow up, eventually get married, and thus be assimilated into another family.

Effah (2015) reveals some of the problems that women encounter while venturing into politics. According to her, there is large scale discrimination from men folk both in voting for candidates and in allocating political offices. To her, women in Nigeria usually constitute a smaller percentage of political party membership because of the social, cultural, and religious attitudes of different Nigerian societies, which most often tend to relegate women to the background.

Women's Leadership in Traditional African Societies

Western writers have completely neglected the role of women in African cultures. For instance, the writers portray African women as “almost a slave, she has no rights, she is overburdened by her heavy tasks, she is exploited by man and bought by him.” Paul (2002). However, women often found themselves in inferior positions compared to men in some Nigerian ethnic societies. However, this degrading status was often extended due to a lack of understanding of African cultural practices, the arrival of colonisation, Christianity, and Western education (Fedders, 2009). There is ample evidence that the position of women in society was one of influence and status. As a result, academic investigations are increasingly focussing on the role and participation of women in peace and conflict resolutions. In this respect, the participation of women in conflict resolutions and decision making in the political life of their communities is becoming an important area of study. However, culture and religious practices have long influenced women's participation in decision-making and conflict resolution in society.

One of the most significant features of traditional African society is this polarisation between what is female and what is male. Almost every aspect of society segregates males and females. Due to the division of labour, husband and wife pursue their respective tasks during the day. The husband eats with the camp men, his wife with the women and children, and each goes his or her separate way to the well or market (Mercier, 1962).

The division of labour into male and female worlds begins very early. The mother and other female relatives socialise with the girl. The development of male and female age-set groups during puberty, which serve as the foundation for initiation ceremonies, further intensifies this division. Typically, the education of girls focuses on domestic roles like being a good wife, mother, and cook, while the education of boys focuses on the public domain, teaching them how to be a good warrior, athletes, and aggressors. The institution of marriage further exaggerates the

divide between the sexes. The wives usually have their own separate houses or dwelling. Even though having several wives is prestigious and can lead to great wealth and prosperity, it further weakens the link between the man and the woman, as co-wives can conspire against a husband who is not fulfilling his duties (Thurnwalde, 1980).

Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Women in Decision Making and Conflict Resolutions

These conflicts primarily victimize women, but they also prevent them from participating in the peace-making process. Women face many challenges in decision making and peace-building processes. This is due to a variety of social and cultural factors that affect women in leadership. According to Galtung (1995), women may have limited mobility when under attack, especially if they are pregnant, responsible for small children, older people, or are ill. Typically, men occupy high positions of authority, and even the majority of traditional elders are men. According to Nibigira (1999), social-cultural factors resulted in women having less education as compared to men, and this limited their access to leadership. War or violent conflict overwhelms women with cultural activities, denying them the time and opportunities to participate in the peace process.

Culture is how individuals in societies engage with nature to meet their needs and wants. It is also what the individuals create, produce, and give to society or the environment. According to Kusimba (2002), this is material or artistic culture. This refers to the process by which individuals interpret and sense the regularities. The symbols that they produce give rise to a particular form of cultural expression, or 'cultural phenotype'. Due to cultural and historical injustices, most women are not financially independent and are economically disempowered in comparison to their male counterparts. This prevents them from making meaningful contributions or participation in decision-making and conflict resolution. It attempts to ignore the individual ability and instead glorifies social structures.

Indeed, to a considerable extent, gender has been a subsidiary issue in Nigerian society. The traditional social structures have been offering limited incentives for amending the existing distribution of power between men and women. Nmadu (2000) observed that peculiar cultural practices, such as early/forced marriage, wife-inheritance, and widowhood practices, significantly disrupt women's emancipation in Nigerian society, both pre-modern and contemporary.

Ruth Pearson's Theoretical Framework on Gender Relations

The theoretical framework for this study is based on Ruth Pearson's framework on gender relations (Pearson, 1992). This theory explains why women and men think differently. That is thinking on gender relations and the quest for agrarian transformation through traditional and modernisation theories. The theory posits that an individual is intrinsically linked to both the environment and the community. Thus, his or her thinking, actions, and performance are largely influenced by the community rather than by himself.

It is affirmed that community influences and shapes the individual's lifetime behaviour. This theory relates to the study that individuals are constantly making life choices dictated by the society they are living in. According to this theory, society views all activities that are carried out to be based on the social roles and interactions of men and women. This assumes that society dictates gender roles. Based on such ideologies and development policies, society seems to have ultimate authority and the precise nature of what women and men do. This ends up giving women the role of reproduction and locking them out from the roles of leadership, decision-making, and conflict resolution, a role the society entirely allocates to men (Pearson, 1992).

This theory argues that because of biases, the performance of women and men is affected in nearly all spheres of life, such as business, environmental conservation, and development projects. Gender roles and conduct are also regulated. The theory asserts individual actions are prescribed by society. This study therefore acknowledges that both men and women can be involved in leadership and decision-making because the social and cultural differences between men and women are learnt; they are also changeable over time and have wide variations between the various cultures.

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study, while the area of study is Abia North Senatorial District. This is a senatorial district in Abia State, comprising of the entire geographical areas of Arochukwu Local Government Area, Bende Local Government Area, Isuikwuato Local Government Area, Ohafia Local Government Area, and Umu-Nneochi Local Government Area. To determine the sample size, a purposive sampling technique was adopted. Abia North Senatorial Area was divided into 10 units, each representing a cluster (10 clusters). From each of

the clusters, 40 respondents from each of the 10 clusters, which will result in a total of 400 samples of female and select male respondents who are 18 years and older, have reached voting age and already know about the socio-cultural gender issues and the political development of the study area. The sample frame will consist of women from the Abia North senatorial district. The study intends to use 400 women to represent its entire population.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

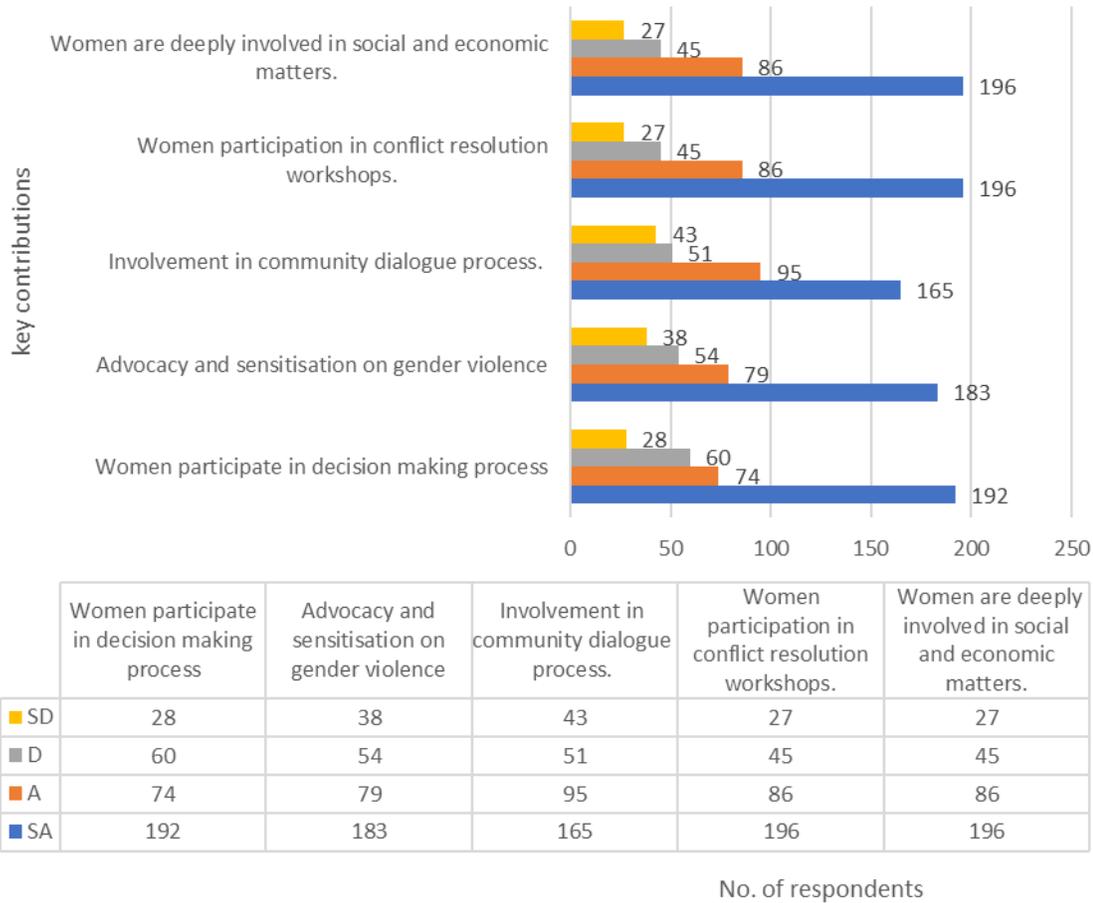
Analyses for the data obtained from the above were presented and analysed below. Out of a total of 400 questionnaires administered to respondents, 354 were properly filled and returned. Questionnaires that were not correctly filled were 19, while the remaining 27 questionnaires were not recovered.

Research Question 1

In the section below, logical answered the first research is given.

Research Question 1: What are the key contributions of women in peacebuilding in Abia North Senatorial District of Abia State?

Fig. 2: The key contributions of women in peacebuilding in abia north senatorial district of abia state



The figure above shows that 192 respondents, or a sizable majority, strongly concur that women participate in the decision-making process. This demonstrates the strong support and acknowledgement of women's participation in decision-making roles. The 74 respondents who did not disagree with the assertion further support the idea that women actively participate in decision-making. Additionally, of the "strongly agree" responses, 266 people agreed overall. Sixty respondents, or a smaller portion, disagree with the assertion. This implies that there may be some disagreement or perceived barriers to women's involvement in decision-making. The 28 respondents, who constitute the smallest group and strongly disagree, express the minority opinion that women do not play a substantial role in decision-making. The average score of 2.88 indicates that most people are generally in favour of women participating in decision-making. A

mean of 2.88 is closer to the "agree" end of the scale, considering that the answer scale probably spans from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The standard deviation of 0.823 indicates a moderate change in the responses. This shows that perspectives on the extent of women's participation in decision-making processes are not entirely uniform, even if there is an overall agreement on the matter.

One of the respondents in our in-depth interview collaborated with the participation of women in conflict resolution workshops. According to her,

The only thing you can say is – yes, I see women, if they are well taken care of, they can be a help towards resolving a lot of crises because they are inherently, peacebuilders. The way God created you people, you are peacebuilders, you don't like blood. Most of the crises are related to men, not women (KII, 2023).

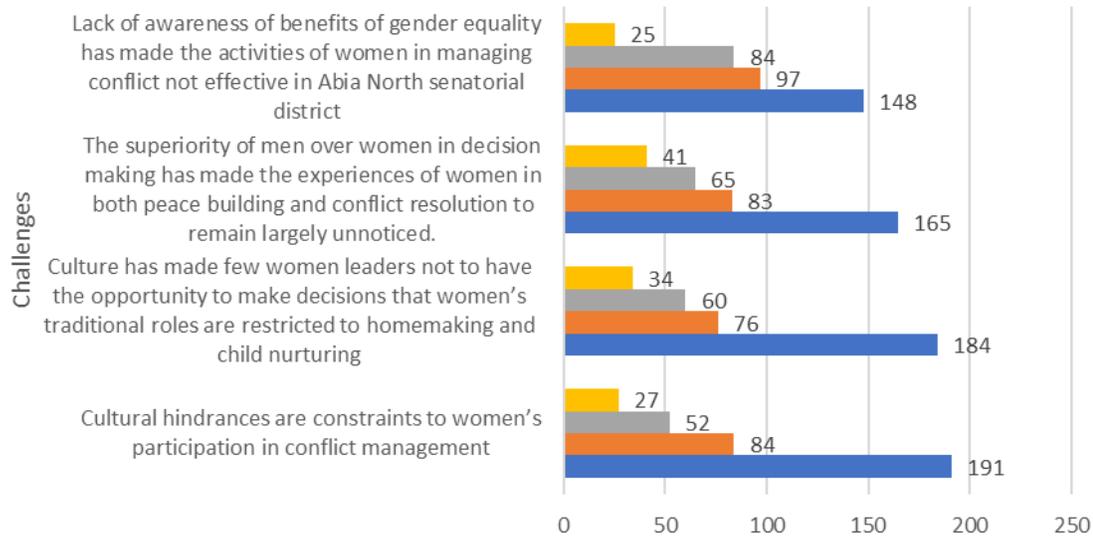
Similarly, from our Key Informant Interview, another respondent corroborated the decision-making role of women. It was noted that:

Women in all histories are the fulcrum of families and communities. They provide care, support and appropriate training to the children. They contribute enormously to communal development. A lot will be deprived the state, without women engagement at the apex of the decision-making process (KII, 2023).

The rest of the chat is equally self-explanatory.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges women face in their peacebuilding bids in Abia North Senatorial District?

Fig. 3: The challenges of women in peacebuilding in abia north senatorial district



	Cultural hindrances are constraints to women's participation in conflict management	Culture has made few women leaders not to have the opportunity to make decisions that women's traditional roles are restricted to homemaking and child nurturing	The superiority of men over women in decision making has made the experiences of women in both peace building and conflict resolution to remain largely unnoticed.	Lack of awareness of benefits of gender equality has made the activities of women in managing conflict not effective in Abia North senatorial district
■ SD	27	34	41	25
■ D	52	60	65	84
■ A	84	76	83	97
■ SA	191	184	165	148

No. of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

The figure above clearly shows that cultural hindrances constrain women's participation in conflict management in Abia North and also limit women leaders and keep them from having decision-making opportunities. It also encourages restricting them to traditional roles of homemaking and child nurturing.

As a respondents opined during an in-depth interview,

There has been lots of advocacy, sensitization. Attempts have been made through policy framework. Attempts have been made through legal framework. Still, all the measures have failed. To me, the only measure to adopt towards achieving gender equity is thorough revisiting of certain social culture (KII, 2023).

Similarly, another male respondent noted that there

There is this innate perception that as a man, you are bound to lead, and as a woman, your position in the kitchen, in the bedroom, is just to take care of children and nothing more. That perception, that value that culture that tends to see women as second fiddle needs to change. So, we need to do as much as in the area of value re-orientation so that a child born today does not grow with that belief or orientation. If we can kill it from childhood, the next generation coming up will not have that thought (KII, 2023).

Discussion of Findings

The study found that in Abia North Senatorial District, women participate in the decision-making process; are involved in advocacy and sensitisation on gender violence; are involved in the community dialogue process; participate in conflict resolution workshops; and are involved in social and economic matters. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon affirmed at the Security Council meeting that by not allowing women to participate in peacebuilding, society suffers. In his words, “In failing to include women and girls in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes, we are not only failing women and girls, we are failing the world” (Ban Ki-moon, 2016).

In line with Sossou (2013), women are traditionally limited in terms of operation—within the family and among their women groups. This is the reason they are requesting a space to use their nature-given talent to change society. Women are also discriminated against in their various localities during post-conflict reconstruction, which affects their potential towards ensuring post-conflict sustainable development processes. Such discrimination includes stigmatisation, deprivation of democratic participation, social exclusion, and economic disempowerment, among others.

The participation of women in peacebuilding will reduce the rate of gender-based violence against women and girls, abuse of the rights of women, reduced sexual violence, and forced marriage, as well as promote the investment and economic growth of women. In many societies, where women and girl children are subdued and inhumane treatment meted out on them, such women and girls lack knowledge of their fundamental human rights. This is relevant to Ouedraogo and Stenzel's (2022) submission that abuse of any form is fundamentally wrong, and a violation of basic human rights shows how violence against women and girls is a major threat to economic development in a region where domestic violence is widespread.

According to Nibigira (1999), socio-cultural factors resulted in women having less education as compared to men, and this limited their access to leadership. In addition to this discussion, in the past presidential elections in Nigeria, Sarah Jubril came out as a candidate but only secured a single vote. What this shows is that no woman could vote for her. This is a big challenge that will need a reliable strategy to handle. Women are overwhelmed with war or violent conflict activities, yet they are not given the time and opportunities to get involved in the peace process. Breaking away from the negative and unprogressive gender perceptions could be easily achieved if committees of imams and pastors are engaged to step up advocacy for women (Abubakar, 2023).

Additionally, improved women's participation in society means that women should be able to support themselves. Previous elections in Nigeria have proven that women do not support their fellow women. Abubakar (2023) likewise encouraged women to start getting involved in the participation and management of political parties right from their localities and seek leadership positions from the party levels. According to him, this approach will facilitate the recruitment of more women to higher positions within political parties to represent them.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing, it is clear that the situation of Abia North Central District women is the same as those of their fellow female gender elsewhere in Nigeria and the world over. Although Abia North bears the major brunt of the backlashes of conflict, they are also excluded from the process of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Being a patriarchal society, socio-cultural factors are used to limit women's participation in decision making processes and their involvement in advocacy. This has huge consequences for women and society as a whole, as women, due to their sheer number and intellect, have much to contribute to the development of society. To mitigate this situation, the following are recommended:

- i. The Nigerian school curriculum should make gender studies compulsory at all levels. This will help to change the socio-cultural values and reorient the minds of citizens about women and their rights as those of the opposite sex.
- ii. Government and non-government organisations should be involved in advocacy campaigns in rural areas with the assistance of religious leaders, traditional rulers, and village heads.

- iii. All stakeholders (government, individuals, and donor organisations), should provide incentives for free and compulsory enrolment of girl children into formal education, such as paying their school fees and providing full scholarships to the girls involved.
- iv. Political mentorship programmes should be introduced by the government. Through this programme, aspiring young ladies are connected to existing and successful female politicians for a couple of years, so that they will understand how they were able to get to the top.
- v. The female gender should be empowered through business grants and should be encouraged to go through mentorship training, especially in fields dominated by men. This will help balance the gender inequality and give women power and voice.

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Entrepreneurship and Development: A Review of Sustainable Livelihood Indicators for Youth Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper aims to assess how entrepreneurship contributes to sustainable livelihoods for Nigerian youth by reviewing key indicators of development. The alternate objectives is to evaluate the impact of entrepreneurship on sustainable livelihoods among Nigerian youth and identify and analyze key indicators of sustainable livelihood affected by youth entrepreneurship. The paper utilized data from secondary material sources to gain insight into the nature of entrepreneurship and development in Nigeria. Within the Psychological Entrepreneurship and Sociological Entrepreneurship theories, the paper utilizes the factors and intentions responsible for introducing entrepreneurship for sustainable livelihood and youth development in Nigeria. Also, youths need to be equipped with the necessary skills to survive and for sustainable livelihood. Entrepreneurship will play a vital role in providing knowledge, innovation and skills needed for sustenance. The findings of the paper indicate that Entrepreneurship can provide youth with valuable skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, leadership, teamwork and innovation, all of which remain relevant for the rest of their lives. Within a set of principles, philosophy and approach, the paper also emphasizes active support for the growing capacity of young people to adopt basic entrepreneurial skills devoid of bottleneck factors for entrepreneurial development like; lack of capital, difficulties in getting loans, poor state of infrastructure, unstable Nigerian economy and politics, inconsistent government policies and poor knowledge on how to run a business.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Development, Youth, Livelihood, Sustainable Livelihood*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Many nations have taken into consideration the well-being of their society to make meaningful improvements. This improvement is occasioned and conditioned by the developmental policies

put in place for livelihood improvement. As it may be, every stratum and group of individuals in the society is considered by the Government for livelihood sustenance and especially social security. This group of individuals ranges from infants, teenagers and youths. One of the most important groups of persons, the youth, is considered of importance to the Government, considering their role as one of the virile and productive groups in the society. In developing countries for which Nigeria is referenced, youth are about 29 percent of the total population and are declining as a proportion of the total population while still growing in absolute numbers, altering the landscape for many social and financial policy issues (Nugent, 2015).

Incidentally, youths account for the highest number of people unemployed in Nigeria. The youth unemployment rate in Nigeria averaged 21.73 percent from 2014 until 2017, reaching an all-high of 33.10 percent in the third quarter of 2017 and a record low of 11.70 percent in the fourth quarter of 2014 (Trading Economics, 2018), it is projected to rise worldwide to 12.8 per cent in 2018 (ILO, 2013) and is projected to peak at 1.5 billion in 2035 and it will increase most rapidly in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and South East Asia (by 26 percent and 20 percent respectively between 2005 and 2035 (Bunnell,2007). These startling unemployment rates have posed a greater challenge for the government and society at large. Within these challenges, the Nigerian government over time has introduced policies targeting youth development. Youth development has formed the greater part of government policies in Nigeria. Some greater parts of the federal budget have been allocated to sports, education, job creation and youth development. The concern of the government in creating budgets for youth development is considered necessary because youths are identified as a sub-system in society for nation building and development.

Not only that, another concern as noted by Bjorvatn (2015) is that most people in low-income countries are young, and a majority of these are poor. Access to higher education is limited, and there are few formal sector jobs. As a consequence, young people typically have to create their jobs to put food on the table. Perhaps the greatest misconception is that poor youth without jobs are idle and economically inactive. Still, research carried out by EQUIP3 with young people in countries as diverse as Uganda, Morocco, the Philippines, Haiti and the West Bank suggests that most contribute to household income through work in the informal sector, in household-based enterprises, or family-based farming, fishing and petty trading activities (USAID 2005, USAID 2006, EQUIP3 2005 in USAID, 2008).

However, most of these policies as defined by the government for development have failed because some were poorly implemented, immersed in corruption and did not take into consideration the input of the youth in the policy formulation. Government is a continuum so also the redirection of policies. In this instance and in the face of unemployment, the government has introduced entrepreneurship programmes to alleviate poverty. It is against this backdrop that the paper set out to examine the issue of entrepreneurship and development within a review of sustainable livelihood indicators for Youth development in Nigeria. Nigeria, with its rapidly growing youth population, faces significant challenges in providing employment and development opportunities. Entrepreneurship is often seen as a solution to these challenges, offering the potential for economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development.

The paper aims to assess how entrepreneurship contributes to sustainable livelihoods for Nigerian youth by reviewing key indicators of development. The alternate objectives would evaluate the impact of entrepreneurship on sustainable livelihoods among Nigerian youth and identify and analyze key indicators of sustainable livelihood affected by youth entrepreneurship. This paper also emphasizes active support for the growing capacity of young people in adopting basic Entrepreneurial skills devoid of bottleneck factors for entrepreneurial development like; lack of capital, difficulties in getting loans, poor state of infrastructure, unstable Nigerian economy and politics, inconsistent government policies and poor knowledge on how to run a business.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

This paper utilized a qualitative research approach to gain insight into the nature of Entrepreneurship and development in Nigeria, with further emphasis on youth development. The issue of Entrepreneurship and Youth development is a critical issue that has attracted a plethora of public attention especially as it looked at livelihood factors in Nigeria. The main motive for this as Bjorvatn (2015) has rightly pointed out is simply that young people in Africa and elsewhere face such difficulties in entering education or formal employment that they will have to create their employment opportunities to survive. Based on this, content analyses and reviews of reports on entrepreneurship and development are critical and of essence, especially on youth development both local and international.

3.0 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL INSIGHT

In academic discourse, it is of paramount importance to examine the conceptual and theoretical foundations of the subject matter to probe into the issues necessitating the research. However, the conceptual variations, the paper will review the following variables; Entrepreneurship, development, livelihood and sustainable livelihood.

The study is guided by the Psychological Entrepreneurship and Sociological Entrepreneurship theories. Just as the theories imply, entrepreneurship is termed as a psychological concept and process. According to this theory, it posits that psychological factors are the primary source of entrepreneurship development. According to this theory, entrepreneurship is important to emerge when the society has a sufficient supply of individuals possessing particular psychological elements. Drawing from Schumpeter, the basic and material function of an entrepreneur is to be innovative. According to this theory, entrepreneurs emerge because individuals have certain psychological elements i.e., willpower, self-intuition, tolerance, and capacity. These psychological willpowers prop an individual to be creative in the areas of innovation.

From the sociological point of view, entrepreneurial activities are affected by social status hierarchy and values. Individuals' positions, traditions, cultural values, mobility social status etc. are thoroughly affected by entrepreneurship development.

Entrepreneurship

The concept of entrepreneurship has attracted a plethora of definitions among scholars. Most of the cited scholars have noted the importance of creativity and innovation. For Stevenson & Jarillo (1990) in Cuervo, Ribeiro & Roig, 2007). Entrepreneurship is a process by which individuals –either on their own or within organizations– pursue opportunities. An activity that involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goods and services, ways of organizing, markets, processes and raw materials through organizing efforts that previously had not existed (Venkataraman, 1997; Shane & Ven-Katraman, 2000 in Thokozani, 2011). For Drucker (1985) entrepreneurship is applying management concepts and management techniques, standardizing the “product,” designing processes and tools, and basing training on the analysis of the work to be done. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2014) defines entrepreneurship as “Any attempt at new business or new venture creation, such as self-

employment, a new business organization, or the expansion of an existing business, by an individual, a team of individuals, or an established business. Entrepreneurship traditionally refers to starting or expanding a growth-oriented business that creates value (USAID, 2018).

Youth Development

The term youth development is used in at least three different ways, referring to a natural process of development, principles, and practices (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2004). Youth development has traditionally and is still most widely used to mean a natural process: the growing capacity of a young person to understand and act on the environment, a set of principles, a philosophy or approach emphasizing active support for the growing capacity of young people by individuals, organizations, and institutions, especially at the community level and a range of practices in programs, organizations, and initiatives (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2004).

As a process, youth development prepares a young person to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood and achieve his or her full potential. Youth development is promoted through activities and experiences that help youth develop social, ethical, emotional, physical, and cognitive competencies (National Alliance, 2010). In other instances, Youth development is a situation when there are equal opportunities for all youths to gain access to basic resources that can help them progress in life such as employment, education, health care, housing and food (Latoyaa, 2013).

Youth

The United Nations, for statistical consistency across regions, defines ‘youth’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. Youth is the time of life when one is young and often means the time between childhood and adult maturity. It is also defined as "the appearance, freshness, vigour, spirit, etc., characteristic of one who is young. The time of life when one is young especially the period between childhood and maturity, the early period of existence, growth, or development (Merriam Webster, 2018). It is “the passage from a dependent childhood to independent adulthood” when young people are in transition from a world of rather secure development to a world of choice and risk (Eurostat 2009: p. 17 in European Commission, nd). The concept of “youth” can be defined as all the people within a specific age group, or as a state of being or even a state of mind. In this brief, we define youth as the people

between ages of 10 and 24. This covers a wide range of experiences and transitions that include an early phase between ages 10 and 14, a middle phase (between 15 and 20), and a later phase between 21 and 24 (Nugent, 2015).

The Nexus Between Entrepreneurship and Youth Livelihood Development

In a world where almost 36% of the world's unemployed nearly 73.3 million people are young people ILO(2015), brings to the fore the challenges confronting the ordinary youth. Livelihood development is a strategic necessity for national development, especially when delivered in careful coordination with traditional investments in health, education, democracy and governance, and economic growth activities (USAID, 2008). As traditional job-for-life career paths become scarce, youth entrepreneurship provides an additional way of integrating youth into today's changing labour markets and improving their economic independence (Ulrich and Amina, 2008). Entrepreneurial experience and/or education help youth develop new skills that can be applied to other challenges in life. Non-cognitive skills, such as opportunity recognition, innovation, critical thinking, resilience, decision making, teamwork, and leadership will benefit all youth whether or not they intend to become or continue as entrepreneurs (Ulrich and Amina, 2008). Livelihood development for youth ought to incorporate critical inputs from stakeholders with an interface that covers human, social and capital. Put more explicitly by USAID (2008)

Livelihood development ought to incorporate the ideas and insights of a wide range of stakeholders. The design package would contain ways to acquire human, social, financial, and physical capital, to integrate youth livelihood development with programs in other sectors, and build the capacity of local service providers. It is very important that livelihood needs to be sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base (Chhaya, Lal, &Lal, 2014).

Very importantly, it is necessary to identify the key skills that young entrepreneurs need to develop to be able to run prosperous ventures (Pomps, 2016). In identifying these skills entrepreneurship can provide them with valuable skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, leadership, teamwork and innovation, all of which remain relevant for the rest of their lives (Pompa, 2016). Youth entrepreneurship development requires an enabling entrepreneurship environment. This environment should encourage young people, support them in starting new

businesses and help them grow (UNCTD, 2014). In identifying livelihood skills for youths using entrepreneurship programmes, mentioning already successful entrepreneurs can achieve the right result. This is paramount as Dzisi (2014), noted that “the more a young person knows a successful entrepreneur, the more likely he or she might become interested in starting a business because they have a role model to follow. Moreover, when supported by media campaigns, credible role models can influence young people’s environment, so that parents and relatives will change their attitude to entrepreneurship as well and encourage their children to engage in this field”.

Barriers to Successful Entrepreneurship

The quest to provide a livelihood for young people using identifiable entrepreneurial programmes comes with its setbacks. Successive studies have identified barriers to successful entrepreneurship and youth development to include;

- i. Promoting an entrepreneurial culture among young people and improving entrepreneurial education.
- ii. Improving access to financing.
- iii. Improving business assistance and development services.
- iv. Improving youth entrepreneurship policy measures (Ulrich and Amina, 2008).
- v. Knowledge of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

However, entrepreneurship is not a panacea: it is not for everyone, and those young people who wish to enter self-employment face obstacles to starting and running a successful business (Ulrich & Amina, 2008).

4.0 CONCLUSION

In a society where the wellbeing of the citizen is constrained by the lack of unemployment, poor access to infrastructural development and better livelihood, the importance of alternative livelihood is imperative. Looking at the rising population of youth with declining employment opportunities, it becomes necessary that the youths need to be equipped with the necessary skills to survive and for sustainable livelihood. Entrepreneurship will play a vital role in providing knowledge, innovation and skills needed for sustenance.

What is needed is providing the enabling environment as contained in entrepreneurial policies

for continuity. These policies must take into consideration the eradication and containing of the various impediments to developing entrepreneurship. These impediments include; lack of capital, difficulties in getting loans, poor state of infrastructure, unstable Nigerian economy and politics, inconsistent government policies and poor knowledge of how to run a business. Further solutions for entrepreneurship and sustainable youth development as proffered by Ulrich and Amina (2008) is the promoting an entrepreneurial culture among young people, improving entrepreneurial education, improving access to financing, improving business assistance and development services and improving youth entrepreneurship policy measures.

The limitations of the study are predicated on the fact that access to comprehensive and reliable data on youth entrepreneurship and livelihood indicators in Nigeria can be limited. Many statistics may be outdated or incomplete, and there might be disparities in data collection methods across different regions. This limitation can affect the accuracy of the analysis and the generalizability of the findings. It may also hinder the ability to draw robust conclusions about the current state of youth entrepreneurship and its impact on sustainable livelihoods.

Again, Nigeria's diverse geographical and socio-economic landscape means that youth experiences with entrepreneurship and development can vary significantly across regions. Factors such as local economic conditions, cultural practices, and infrastructure development may influence entrepreneurial outcomes differently. Findings from one region may not apply to others, which could limit the overall applicability of the study's conclusions and recommendations. This variability requires careful consideration in the analysis to avoid overgeneralization.

The effectiveness of policies and institutional support for youth entrepreneurship can vary. Differences in policy implementation, local governance, and institutional capacity may impact the sustainability of youth livelihoods differently across regions. This limitation may affect the ability to draw broad conclusions about the relationship between entrepreneurship and development without considering the nuances of policy and institutional support.

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Boko Haram Terrorism and Human Security in Nigeria: Implication for National Security

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Abstract

The issue of terrorism has always been a threat to human security and problematic for both developed and developing societies. For example, over the past decade, Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented rate of terrorism attacks orchestrated by the Boko Haram terrorist group, and this has increased the level of insecurity in the country, which has become a major national security issue. The paper adopted a qualitative approach to examine the evolution of Boko Haram in Nigeria and factors that are responsible for its rise, such as bad governance, poverty, unemployment, and corruption, among others. The impacts of Boko Haram activities on national security as exemplified in economic, political, environmental, and social dimensions were discussed, and the efforts of successive governments were explained. Secondary sources of data were collected in the form of government reports, newspapers, journals, books, and the internet, among others. Also, the content method of data analysis was utilised to determine the presence of certain themes within the qualitative data and to interpret the meaning of the content of the text data in relation to the subject matter. Four key persons who performed national assignments in relation to Boko Haram activities or have stayed in areas where terrorism activities were high for at least five years were interviewed, and inductive exploration approach of thematic analysis were applied to identify recurring themes and patterns in the interview. Frustration-aggression and fundamentalism theories were deployed in this paper as the scientific underpinnings of the subject matter. Finally, the paper recommended that notable Muslim scholars and other academics and civil society organisations should organise symposiums, seminars, and lectures, among others, to impart true and thorough knowledge of Islam as a religion of peace through mass media and social media to those who profess Islam, among other recommendations.

Keywords: *Boko Haram, Human Security, National Security, Terrorism*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The act of terrorism in Nigeria impedes national security. The horrible attacks of the Boko Haram terrorist group on security agencies, civilians, churches, mosques, schools, markets and foreign embassies in Nigeria including the United Nations offices in Abuja have become more worrisome as such attacks have led to the destruction of lives and properties (Nwanegbo & Odigbo 2013).

Every government's primary responsibility remains to provide for and maintain its citizens' security and wellbeing and guard its territory against internal insurrections and external aggressions. However, since the emergence of the Boko Haram terrorist group in Nigeria, the primary duty of the government has been threatened and by extension, national security is questionable (Obialor, 2016). The national security situation is pathetic in that most people in the country are afraid of their safety especially people in the North East as a result of terrorist activities.

The deadly activities of Boko Haram especially in the North East region posed dangers to the nation and its citizens by causing massive mortality and casualty rates. This threatens the nation's unity and sovereignty, endangering and jeopardizing political and economic activities, heightened insecurity and fear, displacement of citizens and negatively affecting the country's global image among others. Boko Haram activities have earned Nigeria, a place among the least safe countries in the world and their sophisticated mode of operation has exposed Nigerian defence architecture and thus lowered the capacity of the security apparatus to combat the menace (Onuoha 2014).

Kyari (2014) contends that Boko Haram emerged from a small group of Islamist militants who openly challenged the Nigerian state between December 2003 and October 2004 without success. He added that the group flourished as a non-violent movement until 2002 when Mohammed Yusuf assumed leadership of the sect. Over time, the group has been called different names, such as the Yusufiyya sect, and Nigerian Taliban among others. The clashes in and around Kanama village in Yobe State played a significant role in the genesis from which the name "Nigerian Taliban" emerged. As the day went by, the sect gradually progressed to increasingly more violent operational modes (Kyari 2023).

Moreover, from 2010 onwards, Boko Haram committed itself to asymmetric warfare; since jettisoning the non-violent ways, the group had tried to mimic and adopt the tactics and strategies of global Salafist movements such as Al-Qaeda (Kyari 2020). Furthermore, over the past years, the group's tactics have evolved from strategic arms confrontations with state security forces to increasing use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), targeted assassinations, ambushes, kidnapping, cattle rustling, use of child soldiers, drive-by shootings, using civilians as shield including women and children and suicide bombings among others (Kyari 2014; Pérouse de Montclos 2014).

There are several pieces of literature on the activities of Boko Haram as a terrorist group and how their activities affect national security but most of the existing literature viewed national security in isolation of human security. The concept of human security does not contradict the notion of national security but rather complements the notion of national security. Threats to human security could result in threats to national security, and when national security is threatened, human security could also be under threat. National security and human security can coordinate and complement each other, and any lapses in the security network can generate widespread security problems, which can cause the entire national security network to be torn apart (Scheinin 2020). To this end, this paper intends to give an appraisal of Boko Haram terrorism and human security with its attendant implications for national security.

2.0 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Insecurity

To explain the concept of insecurity, it is pertinent to have a good understanding of the concept of security. Security refers to the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions (Akin, 2008). Also, security could be defined as the relative freedom that individual groups and nations enjoy from danger, risk, or threat of harm, injury, or loss to personal property. It is the existence of conditions within which people in a society can go about their normal daily activities without any threats to their lives or properties. Security embraces all measures designed to protect and safeguard the citizenry and the resources of individuals, groups, businesses and the nation against sabotage or violent occurrences (Ogunleye, Adewale, Alese, & Ogunde, 2011).

Insecurity has usually been described from different points of view depending on individual perception. Some concepts similar to insecurity include: want of safety, danger, hazard, uncertainty, want of confidence, doubtful, inadequately protected, lacking stability and troubled among others. All of these have been used to define insecurity at one point or another. Thus, all these can be summarized to mean a state of vulnerability to harm and loss of life, property or livelihood. In general terms, insecurity refers to a state of being subjected to fear, threat, danger, molestation, intimidation and harassment, among others. According to Salihu, Lukqman, and Abdulahi (2007), human threat to life emanates not only from situations of violent conflicts but also from other non-conflict sources. Furthermore, Insecurity can be defined from two

perspectives. Firstly, insecurity is the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger, whereas danger is the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury. Secondly, insecurity is the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune. These definitions of insecurity underscore a major point that those affected by insecurity are not only uncertain or unaware of what would happen but they are also vulnerable to the threats and dangers when they occur (Achuba, Ighomereho & Akpan, 2013).

Contrarily, Igbuzor (2011), argued that security is not the absence of threats or security issues, but the ability to rise to the challenges posed by these threats with expediency and expertise i.e., the demands of safety from chronic threats and protection from harmful disruption and when this is not the case or the government is not able to provide this or respond appropriately to threats to citizen's lives and property, insecurity sets in. Olaniyan (2021); argued that security need was the basis of the social contract between the people and the state, in which people willingly surrendered their rights to an organ (government) that oversees the survival of all. In the light of this security embodies the mechanism put in place to avoid, prevent, reduce, or resolve violent conflicts, and threats that originate from other states, non-state actors, or structural socio-political and economic conditions (Olaniyan 2021; Stan, 2004).

Terrorism

Terrorism is a phenomenon that has raised so many arguments from various quarters based on people's feelings and perspectives among others, in support or condemnation of the phenomenon. Therefore, terrorism does not lend itself to one single definition. For Ajayi (2012), terrorism is the use of violent action to achieve political aims or force a government to act. This definition is still hanging because every terrorist group has an ideology and they want the government to act in a particular way not just act; the question will be that to act on what?

The United States Department of Defense cited by Terrorism Research (2019), defines terrorism as the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological. This definition makes the goal of the terrorist one sided because terrorist groups may also be interested in stopping a particular policy or programme of the government, with the foregoing fact, United Nations Security Council (n.d.); defined terrorism as;

'Criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act. Thus, terrorist's agenda is not only to pursue their own goal but also to stop government's goal.'

National Security

The term national security does not have a single definition just like any other phenomenon in the field of social sciences but it has been described as the concern of government about the stability and safety of a state. Obialor (2016), posited national security as the survival and pursuit of freedom from threats and the ability to maintain a nation's independence, identity and functional integrity against forces of change that are seen as hostile. National Security is best described as a capacity to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion of a given community believes necessary to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and wellbeing (Maier 1990; Olaniyan & Omotola 2015).

Olaniyan and Omotola (2015); further asserted that national security is the measurable state of the capability of a nation to overcome the multi-dimensional threats to the apparent wellbeing of its people and its survival as a nation state at any given time, by balancing all instruments of the state policy through governance and is extendable to global security by variables external to it. Moreover, the National Security policy of any nation could be seen as a measure taken by the state to ensure its survival and the essence of national security is the protection of the national interest of the state and upholding what the state believes to be valuable to it and its people and these can be found in the grand norm of the country (Paieri 2008).

However, in the context of this paper, national security is referred to as absolute security of all spheres of a country that attracts respect from external actors and builds confidence in the citizens and on how the government of a country respond to threats on issues that border on economy, environment, energy, food, citizenship, military, institutions, foreign policy among others, which

constitute the components of national security. Some of these important aspects of the nation state are seen as the duty of the state which must be viable and not to be threatened by internal or external forces (Olaniyan 2014).

Human Security

The concept of human security has been interpreted narrowly from the ancient periods (Axworthy 2001). It has been treated as security of territory from external aggression or as protection of national interest in foreign policy. The concept of human security has been associated with the interests of the nation-state rather than with those of the people through military security (Newman 2010). Saliently, state security is the traditional security which refers to the security measures taken to protect the integrity and values of the state while human security refers to the security measures taken to protect the integrity of individuals who are threatened by disaster, violence, human rights abuses among others (Luke 2014). The main objective behind human security is to make sure that human lives are well protected from all critical threats that they face in the long term in their environments (Sociology Discussion, 2017).

Human security is a human right; it refers to the security of people and communities, as opposed to the security of states (Axworthy 2001). Human security recognizes that there are several dimensions related to feeling safe, such as freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom from indignity (Robison & Dickson 2021). If for instance, human development works toward the expansion of opportunities, then human security looks at ways of dealing with avoiding, mitigating and coping with threats. Human security is concerned with safeguarding and expanding people's vital freedoms. It requires both protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and empowering people to take charge of their own lives (Scheinin 2020).

According to John, Steve and Patricia (2011), human security means an individual is free from threats or violence within his or her surroundings. Also, Walter (2001), asserted that human security represents an effort to re-conceptualize security fundamentally. It is primarily an analytical tool that focuses on ensuring security for the individual, not the state. According to Human Development Report (UNDP) (1994), there are essentially seven factors associated with human security; namely: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security.

Nevertheless, this paper contextualises human security as the freedom of an individual from both fear and want. Fear can be related to violence, crime, physical or mental abuse, disease, illness, and much more (Booth 2007). On the other hand, wants may comprise employment, food, shelter, health and the want of security itself i.e., a safe environment to live a normal life as humans.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This paper adopted the qualitative method of research and the content method of data analysis to determine the presence of certain themes within the qualitative data and to interpret the meaning of the content of the text data about the subject matter. Secondary data was sourced from textbooks, journals, government reports, the internet, and newspapers, among others. Also, four key persons who performed national assignments about Boko Haram activities or have stayed in areas where terrorism activities were high for at least five years were consulted and interviewed, and the inductive exploration approach of thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring themes and patterns in the interview. The paper was anchored on the frustration aggression theory of Dollard and his associates and the theory of fundamentalism that can be traced to scholars like Dwight L. Moody (1837–99) and John Nelson Darby (1800–1882).

4.0 EVOLUTION OF BOKO HARAM IN NIGERIA AS A TERRORIST GROUP

Boko Haram is the name of one of the world’s deadliest terrorist groups based in North East Nigeria (Campbell 2014). The name Boko Haram is a combination of two words, Boko which means book (western education) in Hausa Language and Haram which means ungodly or forbidden or sinful in Arabic language (Olaniyan & Asuelime 2014). When put together Boko Haram means Western education is forbidden. It is the popular name for the Islamic sect originally called “Jama’atul Ahlus Sunnah Lidda’ awaiti wal Jihah” which translates to “the sunni community committed to the propagation of the prophet’s teachings and Jihad aimed at creating Islamic caliphate by using violence to expel western ideology and cultures from Nigeria” (Olaniyan 2015).

There have been conflicting views concerning the origin of Boko Haram. Some believe that the group started in 1995, while some argued that it sprang up in 2002 but became popular in 2009 when they started attacking religious and social gatherings and carrying out unlawful activities like kidnapping, raping, and bombing among others, killing innocent citizens irrespective of their religious affiliations including women and children (Olaniyan 2014).

The origin of Boko Haram has been traced to Shabaab Muslim Youth Organization in 1995 with its founder Lawan Abubakar (Okemi 2013). According to this perspective, the leader who left to study at the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia was succeeded by a young and versatile Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf. Mohammed Yusuf began as a preacher and leader in the Youth wing, Shababul Islam (Islam Youth Vanguard), of Al, Sunnah, aSalafi group (Campbell 2014). Immediately after Yusuf took over, he changed the doctrine of the sect, abandoned the cleric's view and came up with extremist Boko Haram doctrine (Olaniyan & Asuelime 2014). Yusuf argued that Western education or Boko, had brought nothing but poverty and suffering to the region and was therefore forbidden or Haram in Islam (Okpaga, Chijioke & Eme 2012). The group stands for outright rejection of Western education, western culture and modern science. It rather advocates the propagation of strict adherence to Islamic laws (Sharia) in its purest form (Ajayi 2012). Ajiboye (2019); contended that Boko Haram ideology is beyond Forbidden of Western Education but the whole gamut of Western Liberal Democracy is forbidden and is prohibited for any Muslim to pay allegiance to the state. He further argued that the terrorist group perceived Western education as an instrument to indoctrinate Western Liberal Democracy which is contrary to sharia and must be stopped.

From 2002 to 2009, the group was led by Mohammed Yusuf in Borno state in the Northern Region of Nigeria. He aimed to establish a Sharia government in Borno State under former governor Ali Modu Sheriff (Dauda 2014). The sect believes the establishment of an Islamic government would address the ills of society including corruption, and bad governance which Western Liberal Democracy encouraged (Olaniyan 2015). On this note, Yusuf subsequently became increasingly critical of government and official corruption. His group expanded into states like Bauchi, Yobe and Kano states. It alleged that by 2004, the sect leaders had established links with the Algerian Salafist Group now known as Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb which gave some of their members training in combat; weapons handling and the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) (Ajayi 2012).

The group became known internationally following riots that lasted from 25th July to 30th July 2009 and spread across the four states of Bauchi, Kano, Yobe and Borno, it took the efforts of the Nigerian Army to curb the situation (Campbell 2014). Also, it was alleged that the leader of the sect, Yusuf Mohammed was murdered under questionable circumstances in the custody of the

police when he was arrested (Olaniyan 2014). After the death of Yusuf, his followers went underground for some time and resurfaced demanding justice for the extra judicial killing of their leader and members with attacks on police stations, military barracks, motor parks, religious and social gatherings. The group also carried out jailbreaks to free their members in prisons (Crisis Group Report 2014).

Late Yusuf Mohammed was succeeded by Abubakar Shekau who emerged as a new leader in July 2010. As the leader of the sect, he accentuated the movement, radicalization and extremism (Olaniyan & Asuelime 2014). Since Shekau took over the helm of affairs of Boko Haram, they have become more ruthless and seemingly invisible, destructive and less open to dialogue (Olaniyan 2015). The group act of kidnapping of 276 school girls in 2014 in Chibok which attracted international outcry shows how deepened terrorism is in Nigeria (Duke, Agbaji & Etim 2016). At a point, ISWAP broke out of Boko Haram and was led by Barnawi the second son of Yusuf. Campbell (2021), asserted that because of the supremacy fight between Boko Haram led by Shekau and ISWAP led by Barnawi; Shekau blew himself up to avoid being captured by ISWAP fighters. Also, the Nigerian Army claimed that Barnawi was killed by Nigerian soldiers on the battlefield (Onuh 2021).

Theoretical Framework of Analysis

The study adopted two theories to analyze the subject matter i.e., the frustration aggression theory and the theory of fundamentalism. The frustration aggression theory explains why people become frustrated and become aggressive when their goals and aspirations are not achieved. The frustration aggression theory that John Dollard and his research associates initially developed in 1939 and has been expanded and modified by scholars like Leonard Berkowitz (1962) and Yates (1962) appears to be the most common explanation for violent behaviour stemming from the inability to fulfill needs. In an attempt to explain aggression, scholars point to the difference between what people feel they want or deserve to what they get. Where expectation does not meet attainment, the tendency is for people to confront those they hold responsible for frustrating their ambitions (Donald, Miller, Doob, Mowrer & Seers 1939).

Therefore, the outcome of frustration and where the legitimate desires of an individual are denied either directly or by the indirect consequence of the way the society is structured, the feeling of disappointment may lead such a person to express his anger through violence that will be directed

at those he holds responsible or people who are directly or indirectly related to them.

The theory aptly captures the frustration of Boko Haram terrorist groups with the manifestation of their violent aggression against the Federal Republic of Nigeria and its people especially in the North East part of Nigeria. The attitudes of the corrupt politicians, the level of poverty, unemployment, bad governance, bad leadership, injustice and lack of education among others, have deprived the youths of attaining their goals to be better citizens or to fit in properly to the Nigerian society and now become frustrated, therefore that aggrieved persons felt that to register their grievances, they must fight the state by planting bombs, killing innocent citizens, kidnapping and generally creating problems for those they believe are responsible for their predicaments. However, it has been argued that frustration was an excuse by the Boko Haram sect to ventilate their violent extremism ideology on Nigeria state and that there are other civil ways to engage the government to press home any legitimate demand.

Therefore, because of other underlying factors responsible for the emergence of Boko Haram in Nigeria; the theory of fundamentalism will be the main theory to properly explain the subject matter under study. The theory of fundamentalism was applied more broadly beginning in the late 20th Century to a wide variety of religious movements. Although there was no single name to pinpoint as to the proponent of fundamentalism, nevertheless, Dwight Moody (1837–99), John Nelson Darby (1800–1882), Rob Grant, Jerry Falwell and George Marsden were some of the names associated with the theory. Indeed, in a broad sense of terms, many of the major religions of the world may be said to have fundamentalist movements with various forms such as Jewish fundamentalism, Sikh and Hindu fundamentalism, Buddhist fundamentalism, Islamic fundamentalism and Christian fundamentalism (Munson 1995). Martin and Scott (1995), viewed fundamentalism primarily as the militant rejection of secular modernity and argued that fundamentalism is not just traditional religiosity but an inherently political phenomenon. They also contended that fundamentalism is inherently totalitarianism, in so far as it seeks to remake all aspects of society and government on religious principles. Furthermore, fundamentalists are a sect type of conservative religious movement characterized by the advocacy of strict conformity to sacred texts.

Edward (2005) argued that Fundamentalism means any sect or movement within a religion that emphasizes a rigid adherence to what it conceives of as the fundamental principles of its faith,

usually resulting in a denouncement of alternative practices and interpretations. He concluded that there are fundamentalist sects in almost all of the world's major religions, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism.

The theory of fundamentalism aptly explains the beliefs and actions of the Boko Haram sect in North East Nigeria. Islam is a religion of peace but they went into extremism and violent action against the State. This sect in Islam is against Western education and modernity and they want to remake the society and government based on their religious principles. Also, they were violent against anything that represented Western Liberal Democracy like parliament as law making body, that law has already been given by Allah in the Quran and human beings have no right to make laws and such attempt is deemed as trying to corrupt God's Law (Ajiboye 2019). They believe in strict conformity in their "sacred texts" (Hadith of the prophet) and denounce other Islamic teachings and interpretations of the Holy Quran and Hadith. Saliently, a sect that does not consider a fellow Muslim as a true practitioner of Islam and all citizens either Muslim or Christian have fallen victim to its violence and extremism view can only be designated as a terrorist group and not true Muslims.

Factors Responsible for the Rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria

Several factors have been attributed to the cause of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria such as social-economic, political and religious factors (Awojobi 2014). Therefore, some of the factors that contributed to the growth of the Boko Haram insurgency shall be discussed as follows:

i. Poverty: Onuaha (2014), argued that the high rate of poverty in Nigeria has made the youths enlist into the ranks of Boko Haram foot soldiers which has contributed immensely to the recruitment process of the dreaded group, most of the activities of the sect are concentrated in the North East of Nigeria where poverty is really widespread and severe poverty is reality. It is the reality that depicts a lack of food, clothes, education and other basic amenities. Several poor people in the North East lack the necessities of life to a degree that it can be wondered how they managed to survive, with this circumstance; they are willing tools in the hands of Boko Haram after they might have been promised alternative means of survival.

ii. Unemployment: Adeoye (2021) opined that an idle mind; they say is the devil's workshop so as the rate of unemployment continues to rise, so also the wave of crimes and its attendant effects.

Unemployment is defined as when people are not engaged in meaningful work and are lacking the necessities of life. Boko Haram terrorist group have the opportunity of convincing majority of the youths in the North East who have no means of livelihood to become part of foot soldiers at the group after promising pay packages thus, these youths are easily lured into the act of terrorism which constitutes a threat to national security.

iii. Corruption Adibe (2012) mentioned elicits corruption as one of the factors that cause terrorist aggression in Nigeria. Corruption in Nigeria has become institutionalized thereby translating into wider economic, political and social inequality. Inequality means a concentration of distribution whether one is considering income, consumption or some other welfare indicators (Oyekale, Oyekale & Adeoti 2007). Public funds that are meant for the populace for their wellbeing are been diverted and social economic projects abandoned after embezzling funds for projects have left so many citizens frustrated thereby taking solace or refuge in the violent religious group called Boko Haram (Oyekale Oyekale & Adeoti 2007).

iv. Bad Governance: Good governance precipitates democratic dividend to the doorstep of the people but since the inception of democratic government in Nigeria, majority of the citizens have been disillusioned and disappointed in the manner in which governance is been carried out. The collective resources meant for development have been diverted for private use, rule of law is being jettisoned among others. On this ground, the leader of the Boko Haram sect found a loophole to propagate their gospel of anti-government and democratic principles in support of Sharia practice because to them democracy is Haram since it has entrenched bad governance in the country especially in the North East (Umar 2013).

v. Poor Leadership: Leaders are those who can organize human and natural resources to achieve organization goals but in this context, leadership should be understood based on responsibility and authority of the state. Since the dispensation of democratic rule in Nigeria, one of the challenges has been successive leadership crises to have been caused by diversity and complexities of ethnic-cultural, social and religious backgrounds. Consequently, incorporating several of these ethnic groups into a single political system needs a philosopher king as posited by Plato (Fajobi 2022). Therefore, the responsibility of giving out leadership direction in Nigerian Communities or societies in a multi-ethnic and religious society like Nigeria is an enormous task. To this end, poor leadership also contributed to Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria (Alli, 2002).

vi. Almajiri Syndrome: Adesoji (2011); asserted that lack of parental care and deprivation of quality education of some children from the core North in their numbers normally render such children susceptible to recruitment of terrorist cell groups in Nigeria. The practice of abandoning children between the ages of seven to fifteen to roam the street and beg for alms is antithetical to modern civilization (Bature & Bawa 2013). In light of this, economic hardship and social frustration are factors fostering the growth of radical extremism. Due to the level of ignorance as a result of limited education opportunities swelled up the army of vulnerable people whose disillusionment and impoverishment made them easy prey in the hands of demagogues like the late Yusuf (Ogbole 2021).

vii. Police Brutality: Another factor that led to the violent activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group is police brutality and suppression of the group. Before 2003 they had been meeting quietly but the government suspicious of some of their teachings was trying to checkmate them which went out of control and the sect began to attack police stations and public buildings in the towns of Geiam and Kanamma in Yobe State, and Bama and Gworza police stations in Borno State. Furthermore, the Islamic sect became more violent and arose in July 2009 when they had a faceoff with Nigerian Security forces in an anti-government uprising. It was alleged that the uprising was a result of the Nigerian security forces' fatal shooting on June 11, 2009, at the sect members in which 13 of them were shot (Onuoha 2012).

viii. Porous Borders: Onuh (2021); explained that it is common knowledge that Nigerian borders are porous which gives terrorist easy access to move their weapons into Nigeria. Border permeability is considered one of the greatest challenges in the fight against terrorism in Nigeria. Nigeria shared borders with some West African countries which include Niger, Chad, Cameroon among others and it has been identified that the inability of the Nigerian government to exercise strict control and authority over these porous borders has enabled an influx of mercenaries recruited by terrorist groups into the country and is constituting a threat to National Security (Adetula 2015).

ix. Globalization of terrorism: The connection of globalization between countries and the individuals that reside in them has made the realization of terrorist goals become a reality. The use of social media networks also is a reason why terrorism has been widespread. Social media integrates and connects people from all over the world. Globalization of violence contributed to

the reason for Boko Haram insurgency to become intractable in Nigeria because Boko Haram is connected to a global network (Kyari 2020; Kyari 2023).

x. World Jihadist movement: The term jihad is derived from the Arabic root jahada, meaning "to exert strength and effort, to use all means to accomplish a task" (Kyari 2020). In its expanded sense, it can be fighting the enemies of Islam, as well as adhering to religious teachings, enjoining good and forbidding evil. The Islamic State and al-Qaeda, and their global networks of affiliates are in the forefront sponsoring extremist and violent movements all over the world. It has been alleged that Boko Haram's alliance with the world jihadist movement has made the fight against terrorism in Nigeria extremely difficult (Kyari 2020; Kyari 2023).

Nexus Between Terrorism and Human Security

The UN refers to terrorism as actions intended to cause death, or serious bodily harm, to civilians or non-combatants when their purpose is to intimidate a population or to compel a government or an international organization to commit or to abstain from doing any act (UN, n.d.). With the above description of terrorism, in any society where terrorists hold sway; the personal and political security of citizens will be threatened. Terrorism has allowed weaker and smaller insurgent groups to pose major threats to human security. Adekeye, Ajayi and Fawole (2019); contended that the threat of terrorism is internationally acknowledged and the greatest threat to global peace and human security in the world today is terrorism. In contemporary times, due to the increase in the sophisticated attacks and other activities of terrorists in some nations of the world, the political and economic stability of these nations is in a precarious state (Scheinin 2020). Global threats caused by modern terrorist organisations which ignore national borders such as Al Qaeda or Islamic State (ISIS) with its Islamic caliphate are a major concern for human security experts and within the issues contemplated by the human security paradigm (Adekeye, Ajayi & Fawole 2019).

For instance, in Nigeria, the economic security of the people in major affected areas of terrorism activities which are predominantly farmers, the source of income has been affected because they cannot go to farm to cultivate or harvest as a result of fear of incessant attacks of Boko Haram. Similarly, on food security, food storage is looted, farms destroyed, cattle rustled and their high insecurity in their food market where bandits collect tax (McCormack 2008, Adeoye 2021). On health security; victims of rape or kidnapping by these terrorists are exposed to diverse illnesses,

psychological and emotional trauma. On environmental security, man-made terrorism has made peace and sleep elude people in their homes let alone personal security that is not guaranteed. Community security which is to protect people from the loss of traditional relationships, values and violence has been jeopardized. Boko Haram terrorist group inflicts terror and attack people in their communities; displacing them from their ancestral homes. Lastly, political security which is concerned with protecting the human rights of people, in the atmosphere of violence and absence of peace orchestrated by Boko Haram terror activities, human right is not guaranteed (Adeoye 2021; Kaldor 2007).

Human security is so important that you never know who would become a victim; it could put not only people's property in danger but also their lives. Peace and security are an essential factor of human life. A peaceful and secure environment is critical to every society since it affects all aspects of economic and social development in a country, and is a necessary *sin-qua-non* to the realization of human rights because you can only discuss human rights in the atmosphere of peace and tranquillity (Adeoye 2021; Newman 2010).

The Effects of Boko Haram Terrorism on National Security

National security, narrowly conceived as the use of military force in defence of territorial integrity from external military invasion, is inconsistent with modern reality. National security today is widely conceived in non-military dimensions, which include, majorly, economic, political, social, and environmental. These non-military dimensions of national security are similar to those of human security, which are economic, political, environmental, health, food, physical, and community. Terrorism has a negative influence on these dimensions with cumulative effects on national security, as explained as follows:

1. The economic dimension: The consequence of Boko Haram insurgency on national security as regards the economic dimension can never be quantified. At a point, commercial activities in the North East were reduced because of the unprecedented attacks by the sect. banks, markets and shops do not open regularly due to the fear of coordinated attacks by Boko Haram (Okereocha 2012). At the pick of the insurgency, human capital and investors drain hampered economic development in the northeast due to attacks on banks, markets, parks and government institutions which has led to the migration of people from the area. Many Nigerians who have business in the northeast migrated elsewhere with its attendant effect on economic activities.

Also, foreign nations regularly warn their citizens who are expatriates to avoid cities like Maiduguri, Damaturu and Yola; which can be discouraging for investors (Mohammed 2012). Moreover, some telecom masts belonging to mobile telecom industries were destroyed by Boko Haram coupled with a military strategy to shut down telecommunication; definitely, the income generation of affected mobile operators will be reduced with a ripple effect on the economy (Obaremi 2014). Now in Nigeria, there is high security expenditure because of insurgency making other sectors of the nation-state suffer as a result of the paucity of funds (Odeselu 2011).

2. The Social Dimension: Just as the economic implications of Boko Haram activities, the social costs are enormous, the social and religious gatherings e.g., schools, churches, mosques, markets, parks etc. are major targets for Boko Haram terrorists. For instance, a federal college was attacked in Chibok community in Borno state in 2014 and about 250 female students were kidnapped. The constant attack on social places has discouraged people from gathering. Some students have stopped going to school in the North East while some parents have transferred their wards to Southern parts of Nigeria to continue their studies (Anyadike 2014). Most schools are closed down for a long time thereby lagging in terms of teaching, learning and research activities and teachers from Southern parts of the country have to relocate especially states like Borno, Adamawa, Yobe and Gombe were badly affected by the unproductivity caused by Boko Haram sects with its adverse effects on national security (Echu 2021).

Christians and Muslims are afraid to go to worship in their centres on respective days because of fear of being attacked, market places are deserted. The National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) which was created to foster unity and peace among Nigerians is under threat due to Boko Haram attacks because corps members posted to the northeast normally request for redeployment.

3. Environmental Dimension: (Gbenga & Augoye 2011) argued that an insecure environment impinges directly on development, it disenfranchises communities, contributes to poverty, distorts economics, creates instability and stunts political development. In Nigeria today, apart from the millions of people who had been killed in the course of one security breach or another, sources of livelihood were destroyed, families were disintegrated and social infrastructure was disrupted creating an unconducive environment for citizens to engage in their various activities peacefully.

Also, the improvised explosive devices that these terrorists use in bombing normally pollute the

environment and the dead bodies most times that litter the streets or communities that Boko Haram attacked are not good health for people to inhale the odour or smoke from the inferno that engulfs place of target (Onuh 2021).

4. **Political Dimension:** -Nigeria is fast losing the respect and status of the giant of Africa as a result of the activities of Boko Haram. Nigeria which has been in the forefront of peacekeeping missions in African countries under United Nations world peace missions is finding it difficult to curb insurgency in its backyard. The success story of Nigeria in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Mali among others can never be overemphasized. According to Prof. Ibrahim Gambari, former Nigeria's permanent representative to the UN Nigeria's quest for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council may remain elusive as long the country has yet to overcome basic economic and security challenges (Vanguard 2015).

More so, the activities of Boko Haram are attracting the international community, for instance, the suicide attack on the United Nations Headquarters in Abuja in which twenty people were killed and more than sixty were injured (Mossiter, 2011). This group has caused a lot of damage and unpleasant moments to the people of Nigeria by continuing to burn and destroy communities using arms and arsons on defenceless and innocent citizens. This made the United States Security Department designate Boko Haram as a terrorist organization in November 2013. Subsequently, the United Nations Committee on Al Qaeda sanction blacklisted the group on 22nd May 2014 because Boko Haram was an affiliate with Al Qaeda according to the United Nations listing entry (Nicholas 2014). Due to this, the Boko Haram insurgency in the country, Nigeria was listed as one of the terrorist countries in West Africa and Africa as a whole. Any state that cannot guarantee the safety of its citizens or respond to the threat of insecurity of its citizens appropriately when the need arises, which is the first duty of any sovereign state depicts a falling State (Echu 2021).

Efforts of the Nigerian Government in Tackling the Menace of Boko Haram

Successive governments in Nigeria have tried their best to combat the menace of Boko Haram but the level of defiance and resistance displayed by Boko Haram has generated the debate around the military power of the Nigerian government. Nevertheless, the fight against the insurgency is still ongoing and the federal government has claimed that Boko Haram have been decimated completely. Kiyari (2023), argued that the fight against the Boko Haram insurgency has been

more of a kinetic method than non-kinetic.

During the administration of former president Goodluck Jonathan, an ad hoc military coalition comprising troops from Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon was constituted to fight Boko Haram (Lewis 2015). Also, the Nigerian government came up with the terrorism prevention bill 2011 as part of the efforts to tackle insurgency. This Bill was signed into law in 2012 and amended in 2013 to accommodate ways of dealing with other terrorism related crimes (Terrorism Prevention Amendment Act 2013). This Terrorism Prevention Act, 2013 authorizes the death penalty for any individual involved in terrorist acts. Also, President Goodluck Jonathan's administration gives unreserved powers to state security in the fight against Boko Haram. More so, as part of measures to combat Boko Haram, the federal government declared a state of emergency in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe state in May 2013 under Goodluck Jonathan. The military also shot down mobile networks in the three North Eastern States as a strategy to interrupt the free flow of communication within the terrorist group which destabilized the sects (Jacob & Akpan 2015).

Similarly, the Nigerian National Assembly demonstrated its commitment to live up to its responsibility, by preparing to act in ways to enhance the protection of the lives of the citizens. This arm of government vouched to ensure the passage of good laws as well as carry out effective oversight on government expenditures, especially on defence and internal security.

Nigeria, under Goodluck Jonathan also collaborated with the United Kingdom on counter insurgency measures and France assistance was also requested in the fight against Boko Haram (Premium Times, 2013). The United States and China have their teams on the ground to assist Nigerians in the recovery of the abducted school girls by Boko Haram in May 2014. At the regional level, countries such as the Republic of Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, on March 5, 2014, signed an agreement with Nigeria on a massive joint offensive against Boko Haram (Festus, 2014). The agreement aims to improve the coordination of security, effective border policy and exchange of intelligence among states within the West African sub-region. There was another signing of the multinational agreement on defence with the four countries of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC). The meeting which took place in Yaoundé ended in the signing of the agreement on the establishment of a multinational force to strengthen security in the region (LCBC, 2014; Kiyari 2023).

Furthermore, when President Muhammadu Buhari assumed office, the first action he took was to relocate the headquarters of the Nigerian Military Command Centre from Abuja to Maiduguri which received some commendation from the populace. Also, President Buhari's relentless efforts in motivating member countries of the Lake Chad Commission to redouble their efforts to intensify the operations of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in fighting terrorism. The MNJTF is a collaborative initiative of the defence and military chiefs drawn from Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon and Benin in 1998 (New Express, 2015). The MNJTF has the mandate to fight trans-border crimes in the Lake Chad region and its mandate was expanded to encompass counter terrorism as an area of focus in 2012. During Buhari's administration, the spate of frontal attacks by Boko Haram dropped significantly. There was a relational increase in political will and federal might in the war against Boko Haram when Buhari assumed office as president. The federal government under the leadership of President Buhari also took delivery of Tucano jets from the U.S. for the fight against terrorism (Onuh 2021). President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has also promised to prioritise the fight against Boko Haram since taking over from Mohammed Buhari. However, there is still more to be done by the government to annihilate the Islamic terrorist group because they still carry out pockets of bloody raids and attacks.

Discussions and Findings

The paper discovered that the factors that contributed to the escalation of terrorism activities in Nigeria were bad governance, poverty, unemployment, corruption, the world jihadist movement, and the globalisation of terrorism, among others. The paper also found that the impacts of Boko Haram activities on national security were enormous, with negative manifestations on the following dimensions, which include economic, political, environmental, and social, among others. The efforts of the federal government of Nigeria from one administration to the next in combating the menace of Boko Haram were discussed, and it was discovered that kinetic options dominated the strategies for fighting the insurgency. For instance, during the administration of former president Goodluck Jonathan, an ad hoc military coalition comprising troops from Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon was constituted to fight Boko Haram. Also, under President Muhammadu Buhari, when he assumed office, the first action he took was to relocate the headquarters of the Nigerian Military Command Centre from Abuja to Maiduguri, among other military actions. Lastly, the paper finds out that one of the non-kinetic measures adopted to curb

terrorism was the enactment of the terrorism prevention bill of 2011. As part of efforts to tackle insurgency, this bill was signed into law in 2012 and amended in 2013 to accommodate ways of dealing with other terrorism-related crimes (Terrorism Prevention Amendment Act 2013).

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Terrorism is the use of threats or violence by an organised group directed against a target audience, most especially civilians and the government, to achieve political, ideological, and religious objectives. This is inimical to human security and the national security of a sovereign state because national security refers to the absolute security of all spheres of a country that attracts respect from external actors and builds confidence in the citizens. It is also concerned with how a country responds to threats on matters that border on issues like economy, environment, military institutions, energy, politics, health, and food, among others, which are connected to the human security of its citizens. Human security and national security are complementary concepts and need not necessarily contradict each other because both seek protection against harm. To organise and ensure human security, armed forces are necessary. To provide for national security, the removal of threats at home and abroad is needed. Therefore, the issue of terrorist activities in Nigeria is a great threat to the national security and human security of Nigeria, jeopardising the image of Nigeria in global politics. There have been cases of presidents and prime ministers of other states warning their citizens not to come to Nigeria because of their safety. This negative development challenging the status of a sovereign state called Nigeria, if not properly curbed, might be in affirmation of the position of some scholars that Nigeria is a failing state. However, by jettisoning every political undertone and mustering every political will, the menace of the Boko Haram insurgency will be history.

Recommendations

1. The government should select notable Muslim scholars and academics and organize seminars that will impact the thorough and true knowledge of Islam which stands for peace through mass media and social media.
2. The federal government should organize a de-radicalization program that is all encompassing to change the violent mindset of the sect and of those who might be willing to join.
3. The Security agencies should adopt intelligence gathering and super-tech borderline patrol and surveillance to monitor the movement of terrorists and arms and ammunition

4. The government should adopt a global position monitoring tracking technological system; this innovation will enhance the identification of citizens and foreigners. Also, it is valuable to detect criminals perpetrating violence in various communities in the country for arrest and prosecution.
5. Establishment of an electronically managed database for citizens and foreigners in the country in which any person that enters the country per time should be captured for easy identification, the number of days they will spend and their mission in the country.

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Party Politics and Electoral System in Nigeria

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Abstract

Political party consist of a group of persons organised to acquire and exercise political power. In its modern form political parties originated in Europe and United States in the 19th century along with the electoral and parliamentary systems. Electoral system on the other hand is a set of rules used to determine the results of an election. These rules govern all aspects of the voting process which include when elections are to take place, who is allowed to vote, who can stand as candidate, how ballots are marked and cast, how the ballots are counted, how votes translate into election outcome, limits in campaign spending and other factors that can affect the election results. In short, electoral systems are defined by constitutions and electoral laws and are typically administered by an electoral commission. This paper therefore, focused on how party and electoral systems work in Nigeria. This is carried out through secondary data source and content analysis with suggestions for improvement.

Keywords: Politic, Political Party, Electoral System, Voting

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Democracy entails freedom of assembly, freedom of association, property rights, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, inclusiveness and equality, citizenship, consent of the governed, voting rights and freedom from unwarranted governmental deprivation of the right to life and liberty. In a direct democracy, the citizens as a whole form a governing body and vote directly on each issue. In a representative democracy, the citizens elect representatives from among themselves. These representatives meet to form a governing body, such as a legislature. In a liberal democracy, the powers of the majority are exercised within the framework of representative democracy, but the constitution limits the majority and protects the minority, usually through the enjoyment of certain individual rights (Tangian, 2020). In the course of discussing party politics and the electoral system in Nigeria, this paper used the following perspectives; politics, political parties, elections, party politics and electoral laws among others.

This is because the concepts are interwoven and related to the title of the paper.

Politics refers to the art of governance which is aimed at empowering people for the development of the society for the common good and the welfare of all. It could also be seen as the formal process of selecting a person for public office or accepting/rejecting a political proposition through voting. Politics also connotes the activities of the government members of law-making organizations or people who try to influence the way a country is governed (Elliott, 2024).

Politics in its broadest sense is the activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rule under which they live. Politics is thus linked to the phenomena of conflict and cooperation. On the one hand, the existence of rival opinions, different wants, competing needs and opposing interest guarantees disagreement about the rules under which people live. On the other hand, people recognize that to influence these rules or ensure that they are upheld, they must work with others. This is why the heart of politics is often portrayed as a process of conflict resolution, in which rival views or competing interests are reconciled with one another. However, politics in this broadest sense is better thought of as a search for conflict resolution than as its achievement, because not all conflicts are, or can be resolved which could lead to crisis. Nevertheless, the inescapable presence of diversity and scarcity ensures that politics is an inevitable feature of the human condition (Heywood, 2002).

Political participation on the other hand refers to those voluntary activities by which members of the society share in the selection of leaders and directly or indirectly in the formation of policy and is a civil right of all citizens (Kaigama, 2006). Political participation involves essential political activities such as attending political meetings, rallies, campaigns, nominations, elections etc; holding political party offices and public offices; contesting for elective positions; voting in elections; holding elective and appointive positions; attaining political power in legislative bodies, and other electoral activities. Political participation could also refer to the process by which citizens are actively involved, by right, in the creation of the structures of the political life of the community, state and country. This process includes the right of the citizens to make significant input in designing policies and programmes that serve the interests of everyone. In this way, citizens effectively contribute to the development of the community, state or country through active participation in the political process (Ugwuegede, 2014). Thus, politics is inevitable in all human endeavours.

2.0 POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

A political party is a more or less organized group of citizens with a common political philosophy which acts together as a political unit. They share or profess to share the same opinions on public questions and by exercising their voting power towards a common end, seek to win and retain control of the government for itself and its leaders. It is an association organized in support of some principles or policies which by constitutional means endeavours to make the determinant of government. The organization of political parties followed the full-scale introduction of the representative government, with the supreme law-making power being vested in an elected legislature. With the extension of suffrage in the 19th century, parties became highly organized and increasingly indispensable to the conduct of government. The defining characteristic of a political party is a conscious aim to capture decision-making power either alone or in coalition with other political parties by popular support through elections.

In Nigeria, the Independent National Electoral Commission has the sole power to recognize political parties as national and as the only means of contesting election into any elective position. The Nigerian constitution states categorical guidelines for the formation and operation of political parties. For instance, Part III (Supplement) D Political Parties Section 221-228 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution states as follows:

221: No association, other than a political party, shall canvass for votes for any candidate or contribute to the funds of any political party or to the election expenses of any candidate at any election.

222: No association by whatever name called shall function as a political party, unless
The names and addresses of its national officers are registered with the Independent National Electoral Commission;

The membership of the association is open to every citizen of Nigeria irrespective of his place of origin, circumstance of birth, sex, religion or ethnic grouping;

A copy of its constitution is registered in the principal office of the Independent National Electoral Commission in such form as may be prescribed by the Independent National Electoral Commission;

Any alteration in its registered constitution is also registered in the principal office of the Independent National Electoral Commission within thirty days of the making of such alteration; The name of the association, its symbol or its logo does not contain any ethnic or religious connotation or give the appearance that the activities of the association are confined to a part only of the geographical area of Nigeria; and

The headquarters of the association is situated in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

223. (1) The constitution and rules of a political party shall-

(a) provide for the periodical election on a democratic basis of the principal officers and members of the executive committee or other governing body of the political party; and

(b) ensure that the members of the executive committee or other governing body of the political party reflect the federal character of Nigeria.

(2) For this section-

(a) the election of the officers or members of the executive committee of a political party shall be deemed to be periodical only if it is made at regular intervals not exceeding four years; and

(b) the members of the executive committee or other governing body of the political party shall be deemed to reflect the federal character of Nigeria only if the members thereof belong to different States not being less in number than two-thirds of all the States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

224. The programme as well as the aims and objectives of the political party shall conform with the provisions of Chapter II of this constitution.

225. (1) Every political party shall, at such times and in such manner as the Independent National Electoral Commission may require, submit to the Independent National Electoral Commission and publish a statement of its assets and liabilities.

(2) Every political party shall submit to the Independent National Electoral Commission a detailed annual statement and analysis of its sources of funds and other assets together with a similar statement of its expenditure in such form as the commission may require.

(3) No political party shall-

(a) hold or possess any funds or other assets outside Nigeria; or

(b) be entitled to retain any funds or assets remitted or sent to it from outside Nigeria.

(4) Any funds or other assets remitted or sent to a political party from outside Nigeria shall be paid over or transferred to the Commission within twenty-one days of its receipt with such information as the Commission may require.

(5) The Commission shall have power to give directions to political parties regarding the books or records of financial transactions which they shall keep and, to examine all such books and records.

(6). (1) The Independent National Electoral Commission, shall in every year prepare and submit to the National Assembly a report on the accounts and balance sheet of every political party.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Commission, in preparing its report under this section, to carry out such investigations as will enable it to form an opinion as to whether proper books of account and proper records have been kept by any political party, and if the Commission believes that proper books of accounts have been kept by a political party, the Commission shall so report.

(3) Every member of the Commission or its duly authorized agent shall-

(a) have a right of access at all times to the books, accounts and vouchers of all political parties; and

(b) be entitled to require from the officers of the political party such information and explanation as he thinks necessary for the performance of his duties under this constitution, and if the member of the Commission or such agent fails or is unable to obtain all the information and explanation which to the best of his knowledge and belief are necessary for the investigation, the Commission shall state that fact in its report.

227. No association shall retain, organize, train or equip any person or group of persons to enable them to be employed for the use or display of physical force or coercion in promoting any political objective or interest or in such manner as to arouse reasonable apprehension that they are organized and trained or equipped for that purpose

228. The National Assembly may by law provide-

(a) for the punishment of any person involved in the management or control of any political party found after due inquiry to have contravened any of the provisions of sections 221, 225(3) and 227 of this Constitution;

(b) for the disqualification of any person from holding public office on the ground that he knowingly aids or abets a political party in contravening section 225(3) of this Constitution;

(c) for an annual grant to the Independent National Electoral Commission of other powers as may appear to the National Assembly for disbursement to political parties on a fair and equitable basis to assist them in the discharge of their functions;

(d) for the conferment on the commission of other powers as may appear to the National Assembly to be necessary or desirable for enabling the Commission more effectively to ensure that political parties observe the provisions of this Part of the Chapter.

From the foregoing, Nigerian Constitutional provisions on the formation, existence and functioning of political parties in Nigeria, it could be seen that political parties are more or less pseudo-public agencies. The control of INEC which is a government agency on political parties is indeed overwhelming.

3.0 PARTY POLITICS IN NIGERIA

Political party's formation and growth followed the introduction of election principles in Nigeria's polity. For instance, the establishment of the Legislative Council under the 1922 Clifford constitution gave rise to the inauguration of the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) in 1923. The party led by Herbert Macaulay was the only party that contested and won the 1923, 1928 and 1933 Legislative Council elections as well as the Lagos Town Council elections in 1923, 1926, 1929, 1932 and 1935 (Ogbogbo, 2009).

In 1936, the Lagos Youth Movement (LYM) changed its name to the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM). The party displaced NNDP and won the 1938 Lagos Town Council elections as well as the 3 elective seats in the Legislative Council. In 1944, the National Council of Nigeria (NCN) was formed. In 1945, the NCN changed its name to the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) because three unions from Cameroons joined the Council. But after the 1963 plebiscite, its name also changed to the National Council of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC). Supporters of the party were later restricted to mainly Eastern Nigeria and partly from the then Midwestern and Western regions (Ogbogbo, 2009).

In 1948, the Action Group (AG) emerged out of a Yoruba cultural grouping (Egbe Omo

Oduduwa) with Chief Obafemi Awolowo as its leader. The party from its inception announced itself as a Western regional political organization. In 1951, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) originated from a cultural organization; Jama'a Mutanen Arewa. The party was to serve mainly the interest of Northern Nigeria of all shades. Ahmadu Bello became the leader of the party in 1952 (Ogbogbo, 2009).

The 3 parties; NCNC, AG and NPC dominated and won the regional elections in the East, West and North respectively and federal legislative elections from the regions in the 1950s. The then existing smaller parties in each region were in alliance with the bigger parties from other regions. However, those smaller parties drew their membership from the minorities in their areas. They include the Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU) led by Aminu Kano with the poor masses of Kano and environs as members. Also, the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) led by Joseph Tarka had the Tiv of Benue province and its environs as members. The Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP) led by Josiah Olawoyin had the support of Yoruba-speaking people in Ilorin and Kabba provinces (Olagunju, 1992).

In the eastern region were the Democratic Party of Nigeria and the Cameroon (DPNC) which was a breakaway faction of the NCNC, led by Kingsley Mbadiwe. There was also the United National Independent Party (UNIP), a breakaway from NCNC championed by the expelled Ministers and Legislators in the 1952-53 crises in the party. The UNIP fought for a separate Calabar-Ogoja-River state. In the western region was the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) which was a breakaway from AG led by Ladoke Akintola in coalition with a breakaway group from NCNC led by Fani Kayode. Other minority parties in the western region were the Mid-west Front and the Commoner's Liberal Party (Olagunju, 1992).

It should be noted that the UMBC, ITP and UNIP were in alliance with the AG while NEPU was in alliance with NCNC in the first republic. Also, the NNDP was in alliance with NPC, particularly during the 1964 elections to form the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The NNA competed with the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) which was made up of NCNC, AG and the Northern Progressive Front (NPF), a combination of NEPU and UMBC (Olagunju, 1992).

During the first lap of the second republic (1979-1983), five political parties participated, namely;

the Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP), National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Nigeria's People Party (NPP), People's Redemption Party (PRP) and Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). Towards the second lap of the second republic in 1983, the Nigerian Advance Party (NAP) was registered to make the parties six. During the period, NPN won the presidential elections but could not enjoy a majority position in the federal legislature which led to its alliance with NPP. Indeed, those Second Republic political parties were alleged to be reincarnations of the parties in the First Republic. GNPP and NPP reincarnation of NCNC; NPN reincarnation of NPC; PRP reincarnation of NEPU and UPN reincarnation of AG with strong regional if not ethnic support (Emelifeonwu, 1995).

In the aborted third republic, none of the 13 political associations that applied for registration was registered by the then-military government. In their place, two political parties were established, administered and funded by the government, namely; the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). The two parties were funded by the then military government led by General Babangida and their manifestoes and constitutions were written by it to make every member co-founder and co-joiner. The SDP had the upper hand over the NRC in all the elections including the presidential one which was annulled on June 12, 1993 and declared inconclusive (Civil Liberty Organisation, 1993).

For the fourth republic, 13 political associations were given provisional registration by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in 1998 out of which 3 were given full registration to contest the 1999 elections, namely; Alliance for Democracy (AD), All People's Party (APP) and People's Democratic Party (PDP). PDP led in all the elections including the presidential election where the AD and APP fielded a joint candidate. The same tempo was maintained in 2003 when another round of elections was conducted after the four year tenure with PDP domination of the polity though APP's presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari gave a good account of himself by giving the PDP a tough contest. By 2007 when another round of elections was held, PDP maintained its domination of the political space though the APP changed its name to All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) and also featured Muhammadu Buhari as its presidential candidate for a second time. By the 2011 round of elections, Muhammadu Buhari formed a new party, Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) under which he contested for the presidency. Despite his popularity, PDP candidate, Goodluck Jonathan was declared the winner.

Towards the 2015 elections, a new party was formed; All People's Congress (APC) which comprises ACN, ANPP, CPC and factions of APGA and PDP with Muhammadu Bahari as its presidential candidate. The APC won the presidential elections. In 2019 APC's Muhammadu Buhari was returned as president defeating the main opposition PDP and its presidential candidate; Atiku Abubakar. In the 2023 general election, Bola Ahmed Tinubu of APC won the presidential election by defeating Atiku Abubakar of PDP and Peter Obi of Labor Party (LP) who came second and third respectively in the election.

It should be noted that in Nigerian politics as well as its political party system and its mosaic of identity profiles is vast, complex and multidimensional. For instance, ethno-religion identities in Nigeria have developed along a tri-tendential trajectory. One is the North/South divide that emerged during the colonial period. Two is the tri-polar framework related to the three colonial regions and the majority tribal groups that dominated each region. Three and maybe the most important tendency in Nigerian party politics is a persistent multi-polarity which is continuously repressed with imposed bipolarity and/or tripolarity but has managed to survive. It encompasses the essence of Nigerian politics which could be described as the politics of variable geometry played by the hundreds of ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups in Nigeria. In 1995, Abacha introduced a modified presidential system in which six key executive and legislative offices; President, Vice President, Senate President, Speaker House of Representative, Secretary to the Government of the Federation and Head of Civil Service will be zoned and rotated among the six identifiable geographical groupings; North Central, North East, North West, South East, South West and South South. Invariably the six zones correspond to the Northern minority, Borno Empire, Emirate, Igboland, Yoruba land and Southern minority respectively.

This development could be traced to the country's constitution, Section 14 (3) of the Nigerian constitution which states that; The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that Government or any of its agencies.

4.0 THE ELECTORAL LAWS IN NIGERIA

Here is a brief overview of the major electoral laws in Nigeria from 1960-2023;

1. Electoral Act of 1960 (Pre-independence)
2. Electoral Act of 1964 (First Republic)
3. Electoral Decree No. 25 of 1977 (Second Republic)
4. Electoral Act No 2 of 1982 (Second Republic)
5. Electoral Act of No 13 of 1990 (Third Republic)
6. Electoral Act No 2 of 1998 (Fourth Republic). It provided the legislation for the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which is a major law that governs the electoral process in the country. It provides for the right to peaceful assembly and association, qualifications for election, supervision of elections and restrictions on the formation of political parties. The Act introduced the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC).
7. Electoral Act of 2002 (Fourth Republic). The 2002 Electoral Act expanded INEC's power and introduced Electoral Offences Tribunal
8. Electoral Act of 2006 (Fourth Republic)
9. Electoral Act of 2010 (Fourth Republic). The 2010 Electoral Act established the Political Parties Registration and Regulatory Commission (PPRRC) (Obilade, 2015). The Act provides for the qualifications of persons to be registered as voters, procedures for conducting elections and the declaration of results.
10. Electoral Act of 2015 (Fourth Republic). The 2015 Electoral Act introduced card reader technology and biometric voter accreditation (Akintola, 2017)
11. The INEC Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of 2019 Elections. These regulations and guidelines apply to the conduct of the 2019 election in the country. They provide for the date of general elections, eligibility of voters, where to vote, appointment of presiding officers, accreditation and voting procedures, mandatory use of smart card readers and collation of election results (Ogunlade, 2020).
12. Electoral Act of 2022 (Fourth Republic). The Nigerian Electoral Act 2022 regulates the conduct of federal, state and Area Council elections. Some key aspects of the Act are;
 - (a) The Act granted financial autonomy to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) by establishing the Independent National Electoral Commission Fund.
 - (b) The Act extends the time frame for publishing election notices from 90 to 360 days before the election date.
 - (c) The Act mandates political parties to submit their list of sponsored candidates who have emerged from valid primaries conducted by the parties not later than 180 days before the date

appointed for a general election.

(d) The Act extends the period of campaigning in public by every political party to commence 150 days before polling day and ends 24 hours before that day.

(e) The Act repeals the Electoral Act No. 6, 2010 and enacts the Electoral Act 2022.

(f) The Act regulates the conduct of Federal, State and Area Council elections including the use of card readers and other technological devices in elections and political party primaries.

(g) The 2022 Electoral Act allows for electronic transmission of election results

(h) The Act provides for a timeline for the submission of a list of candidates, criteria for submission of candidates, limit of campaign expenses and other electoral processes.

It should be noted that the various electoral laws have enhanced the establishment of an electoral body which is responsible for the conduct of elections and ensuring the credibility of the elections. The laws provided for a framework for the conduct of elections and ensured that the elections were held periodically to fill various political offices. Also, the laws contributed to the improvements in the electoral process including the use of technology to enhance the credibility of the elections.

However, there are still challenges and controversies surrounding the electoral process in Nigeria. One is irregularities. There have been cases of irregularities in the conduct of elections in Nigeria such as violence, suppression of voters and declaration of questionable results. Two, lack of confidence. There is a lack of confidence in the electoral process in Nigeria which has led to voters' apathy. Some elections have been controversial and ended in courts getting to the Supreme Court.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This paper titled Party Politics and Electoral System in Nigeria approached the narrative from the perspectives of politics, political parties, party politics, election and electoral law. It is observed in conclusion that elections and political party system began in Nigeria in 1923 with the enactment of Clifford's constitution in 1922. Though the polity was dominated by a party system at that time, it later grew into a multiparty political system till the present day. It was observed in the discussion in the paper that since 1923, democracy has been in operation in the country; however, the dividends of democracy of freedom and development have eluded the country. It was based on this fact that the politicians and political office holders need to do more.

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