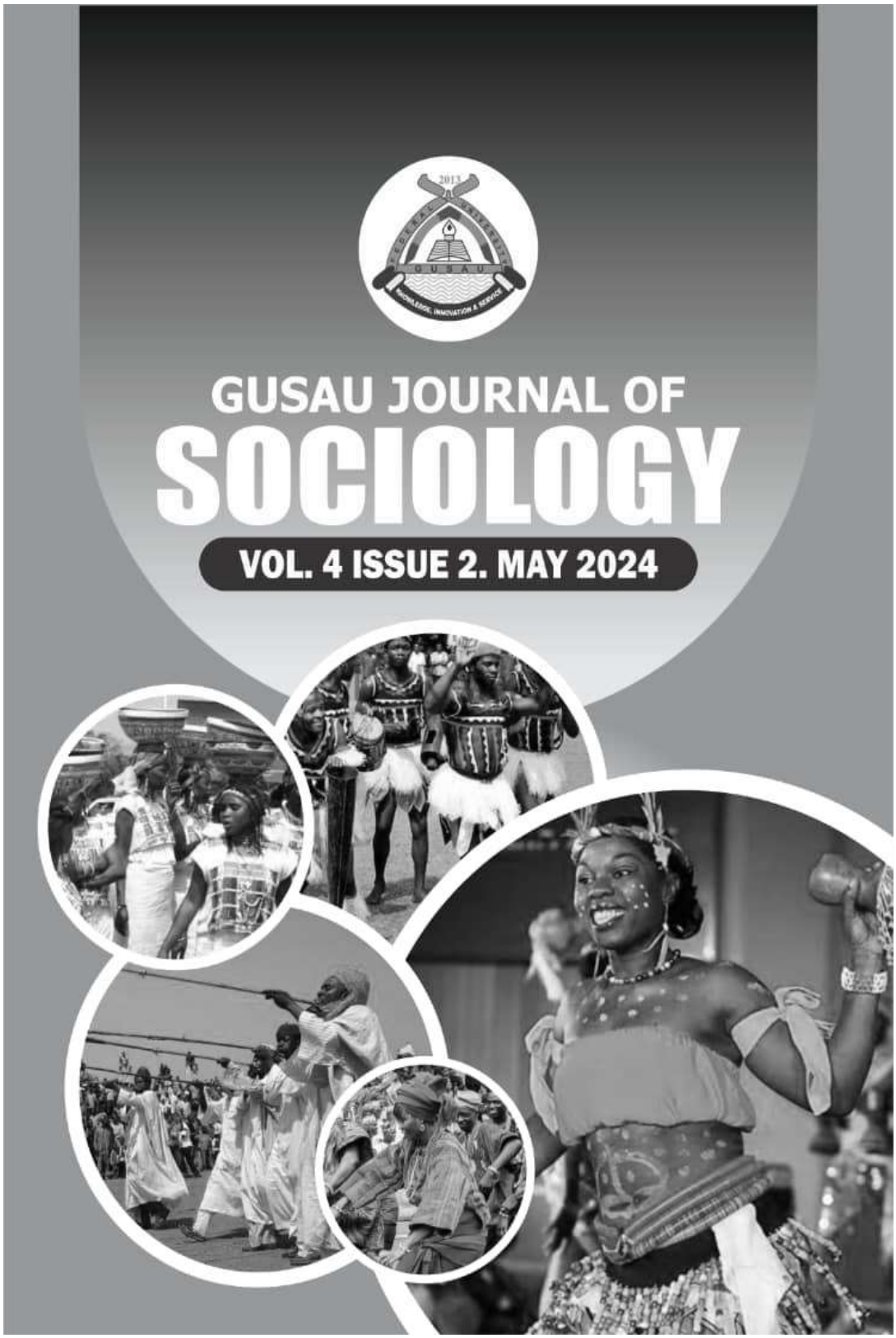
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The *Gusau Journal of Sociology*, is a biannual, blind peer-reviewed publication of the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Federal University Gusau, Zamfara State, Nigeria. It seeks to publish both original empirical or theoretical articles addressing wide-ranging academic and policy issues relevant to, but not limited to the fields of Sociology, Criminology, Anthropology, Public Health, Demography, Development Studies, Medical Sociology, Industrial Relations and Social Work.

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SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OF YOUTH IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ENUGU STATE

Ndu, Akachukwu Vitalis, Cyril O. Ugwuoke
Department of Sociology and Anthropology,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Email: nduvitalis50@gmail.com, cyril.ugwuoke@unn.edu.ng
&
Obinna J. Eze
Department of Planning, Research and Statistics,
Nigeria Center for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), Abuja
Email: judez24@yahoo.co.uk (**Corresponding author**)*

Abstract
Debates over the years, have favored the assumption that individuals who engage in substance abuse have high proclivity to demonstrate antisocial behaviours as direct consequence of substance abuse. But with increase in different psychotropic substances and reports of wide spread substance abuse, this study attempted to revisit youth substance abuse with the hope of ascertaining the current nature of substances they abuse, the extent to which they abuse it, how the abuse relates to their antisocial behaviours, the consequences of the above on them, the challenges associated with the mitigation/control of youth drug abuse and measures that could be adopted to address the phenomenon of youth drug abuse and antisocial behaviours. The study is anchored on containment theory and based its analysis on quantitative data obtained from randomly selected sample of five hundred and ninety-four (594) youth, and qualitative data obtained from purposively selected nine (9) interviewees. Data collected using questionnaire were coded and analyzed with SPSS Version 21 for descriptive and inferential result, while the qualitative responses were transcribed and analyzed to provide in-depth insights, using direct quotes and illustrations. The study found a significant positive correlation between the extent of substance use and degree of indulgence in antisocial behaviours. Property related antisocial behaviours like theft, armed robbery and vandalism were all found to relate with different forms of substance abuse. Measures like youth empowerment, access to counselling services, public sensitization, police border patrol, and increasing the cost of regularly abused substances could be improved to reduce youth drug abuse.
Keywords: Antisocial Behaviour; Methamphetamine; Substance Abuse; Substance Use; Youth Drug Abuse.

Introduction

Behavioural Scientists – Criminologists, Psychologists, Sociologists and other social science scholars have tried to ascertain the prevalence of substance abuse among young people with anti-social behaviour for more than four decades (Moral & Pacheco, 2013). The media is awash with a barrage of news concerning youth arrested for anti-social behaviour culminating from substance abuse. Substance abuse has seriously led to the increase in health issues, crime rate and insurgency in many nations (Broning et al, 2012). One of the reasons adduced for this is that substance abuse is usually accompanied with mental disorder, anti-social behaviours etc. (Broning et al, 2012; Ewetan & Urhie, 2014). In light of the foregoing, Nigeria's anti-drug czar, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), identified substance abuse as the generic cause of banditry and insurgency in Nigeria (Atekojo, 2021).

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) which connotes actions that harm or lack considerations for the wellbeing of others is a global phenomenon (Morgado, 2017). Antisocial behaviours exist along a continuum and include violations of social rules, defiance of authority and of the rights of others, deceitfulness, theft and reckless disregard for self and others. Antisocial behaviour can be identified in children as young as three or four years of age. If left unchecked, these coercive behavioural patterns will persist and escalate in severity over time, becoming a chronic behavioural disorder (Ikediashi & Akande, 2015).

The history of substance abuse and its effects is a long and complicated one (Patterson, 2021). Substance abuse is a well acknowledged public health concern globally (Ghouchani, et al, 2021). The overarching status of substance abuse is well documented. For instance, in Sweden, drug induced fatalities is 81 deaths out of 1 million deaths, making it the highest in Europe (Dahlman et al, 2021). In Portugal, there is a sharp rise in criminal sanctions targeted at drug abusers with jail terms (Rego, Oliveira, Lameira & Cruz, 2021). In the Americas, specifically in Canada, the use of Cannabis alone has increased exponentially with the prevalence of its use highest in those aged 18 – 24 years (Fischer, Lee & Robinson, 2021). The Caribbean is most notorious for substance abuse. This is because Brazil and Argentina are the countries with the largest markets for illicit drugs in South America with over 900 and 600 thousand users, respectively (Nardi, Cunha, Bizarro & Dell'Aglio, 2012). In Asia, Iran alone has 2 million substance-dependent people; representing 2.5% of the Iranian population (Saadati, et al, 2021). Although substance abuse is widespread and affects all social categories, youth are the most affected (Azuike, Oni & Dirisu, 2012). This is often propagated by the susceptible factors which characterize youthful period such as stress associated with physiological and physical change, peer-acceptance and belongingness in school and life in general (Oketch, 2008).

The availability and acceptability of some chemical and psychoactive substances in Nigeria has been of tremendous benefit to mankind but it has been acknowledged that the misuse of the same can cause incalculable harm not only to individuals but to the society at large (Effiong, 2019). A nationwide drug use survey by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Nigeria indicated that one in seven persons (aged 15–64 years) had abused drug in the past year (UNODC, 2018). Following the same survey, one in five individuals who had abused drug in the past year is suffering from drug-related disorders (UNODC, 2018). Consequently, the UNODC noted that substance abuse has been a cause of many criminal offences such as theft, burglary, sex work, and shoplifting. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency Act Cap. N 30 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 provides for stringent penalties for persons trafficking in cocaine, LSD, heroin, or similar drugs to be punished by life imprisonment, while possession or use attracts a sentence of 15 years but not exceeding 25 years (NDLEA Act, 2004). However, the burden of

substance abuse in Nigeria is growing despite several drug laws, policies and strategic plans to prevent it (Jatau et al, 2021).

Many researchers are of the view that there is a direct link between substance abuse and poor attitudinal disposition such as antisocial behaviour (NACADA, 2006; Nardi, Cunha, Bizarro & Dell'Aglio, 2012). In trying to see the impact of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour of youth, many respondents shared their perceptions that substance abuse is a factor in antisocial behaviours, particularly between youth groups in a focused group discussion (FGD) carried out by the Nigerian Stability and Reconciliation Programme (2017). See the following excerpts: "the case of a stolen phone turned into a full-blown community crisis, a boy stabbed his neighbor to death over a minor quarrel after taking a solution of 20 Naira and a stray bullet hit and killed a woman over skirmishes of drug gangs" (NSRP, 2017: 16, 17). It is important to logically access these views in order to ascertain the relationship between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour. However, correlation does not equal causation, and it is likely that street gangs, for example, would still engage in confrontation or other forms of antisocial behaviours against one another even in the absence of illicit substances (NSRP, 2017). While substance abuse at times may exacerbate or worsen antisocial behaviours by removing social inhibitions and impairing the judgment of involved parties, it would be a mistake to blame substance abuse completely for antisocial behaviours (NSRP, 2017).

In Nsukka, it is not uncommon to find many youths roaming the urban and rural streets aimlessly. The number of mentally challenged youth who parade the streets in Nsukka has also continued to increase. Drinking bars and joints for cannabis have also become highly lucrative business in these communities with its concomitant antisocial behaviours (Dibia, Nwagu, & Odo, 2020). There is hardly any gathering in Nsukka that you won't find alcohol of any sort because it has traditional or cultural importance as Nsukka people hardly consult their chief priests and gods without dry gin or palm wine (Iyiani, Iwuagwu, Ngwu, Agholor, Eyang & Okay, 2020). However, in the social acceptance of some of these substances like alcohol in Nsukka, Nsukka people express strong dissatisfaction with the abuse of substances because these substances when abused, outweigh the social gains and create dysfunctional social structure like fighting and other forms of antisocial behaviours (Iyiani, Iwuagwu, Ngwu, Agholor, Eyang & Okay, 2020). In Nsukka, some of the herbal alcoholic beverages like *Erujeje*, *knock off*, *alomo bitters*, *Odogwu bitters* etc. are also consumed by the populace in order to get 'high' and elongate their sexual encounters in the guise of curing malaria (Chukwu, Okonkwo & Mefoh, 2019). Nsukka presents a typical semi-urban area, with great prospects of a city status emanating from pop culture. It is in the authors' argument that amongst youth, patterns like dread lock, hair spray, saggy pant, leg and waist beads, incessant cult activities and other ASB which are experienced incessantly, may have potential link to substance abuse in Nsukka local government area. Although, Nsukka is still developing, many psychoactive substances are being abused and smuggled into the town (Omonobi, 2021).

The Enugu State NDLEA Command raided the Nsukka axis of the state capital and arrested a 28-year-old lady, Odo Ndidiamaka for possession of 80.23 grammes of cocaine and 3.81grammes of methamphetamine (Omonobi, 2021). There are many reported cases of antisocial behaviours of youth in Nsukka culminating from substance abuse. For instance, the police in Nsukka, Enugu State, on 22nd August 2015 arrested two masquerades in Ovoko community, for robbing a trader along the Nsukka-Obollo-Afor Road. One of the arrested masquerades had Indian hemp in his pocket. Narrating his ordeal, the victim (Ezenwaji), a trader said the masquerade gave him the beating of his life, after which they searched him and collected 57000 Naira from his pocket. However, the alleged masquerade animator while admitting that the police recovered

Indian hemp from him, said "If Police will release me, I will not animate masquerade or smoke Indian hemp again. It is the left-over of the one we smoked, before coming out" (Uzodinma, 2015). There are many antisocial behaviours going on in Nsukka such as rape, theft, burglary, assault and battery but less scholarly attention has been given to the influence of substance abuse on these vices. Also, the initial concern about substance abuse expressed in several empirical literatures (see for example Chikere & Mayowa, 2011; Azuike, Oni &Dirisu, 2012; Teferra, 2018; Ikoh, Smah, Okwanya, clement &Aposhi, 2019; Jatau et al, 2021) were limited to the use of marijuana, cocaine, heroin, gum, lizard dropping, pit latrine and other forms of synthetic drugs.

However, the surfacing of substance like crystal methamphetamine (Mkpuru-mmiri*)* in South-Eastern part of Nigeria is an indication that knowledge of substances which could be abused is yet limited. Crystal methamphetamine (Mkpuru-mmiri); which literally translates to water balls or ice block) is a substance which is now trendy with street boys because it provides highness more than marijuana (Uchendu, 2021). As Uchendu noted, the effect of Mkpuru-mmiri (methamphetamine) on its abusers are devastating, and include ability to sustain tragic pain coupled with wriggling on the ground (including in muddy places) like casted demons. The opinion that youth are innovators of illicit substances, often spreading from pop culture, with its attendant link to antisocial behaviour has attracted a lot of views on the subject matter. Yet, empirical studies on youth antisocial behaviour as caused by substance abuse with specific focus on Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State have not received much scholarly attention. This study therefore attempts to fill this research gap by focusing specifically on antisocial behaviours caused by substance abuse. This extends the discussion on substance abuse and its nexus with antisocial behaviours of youth with specific focus in Nsukka local government area of Enugu State.

Conceptual Clarification

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse also called drug abuse, is a term simply used to denote the use of certain chemicals for the purpose of creating pleasurable effects on the brain. Over 190 million drug users can be found around the globe; this number is steadily on the increase exponentially, especially among youth (Mandal, 2021). Drug use is the application of a drug to cure an illness, prevent a disease or improve health, in line with prescription of a qualified medical doctor. However, drug use becomes an abuse when a drug or substance is taken for reasons other than medical purpose, in an amount, strength, frequency or manner, capable of causing damage to the physical or mental functioning of an individual (Sahu & Sahu, 2016). Substance abuse results to substance addiction. This usually happens when the abuser develops tolerance and dependence. Substance tolerance is a condition where the user needs more and more of the drug to experience the same effect (Sahu & Sahu, 2016). When this happens, the smaller quantities which were sufficient earlier no longer satisfy the user and they are ultimately compelled to increase the quantity of drug/substance intake. Gradually, dependence on drug/substance develops.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Antisocial behaviours are behaviours resulting from an individual's inability to respect the rights of others (Fortin, 2003). These behaviours include assault, vandalism, arson, theft, armed robbery and other delinquent acts which are antithetical to social norms (Gaik, Abdullah, Elias & Uli, 2010). In childhood and adolescence, antisocial behaviours are categorized into behavioural disorders, impulsiveness, stealing, vandalism, physical and psychological aggression, bullying, running away from home and truancy (Farrington, 2005). Antisocial behaviours refer to a set of

behaviours which are against established rules or norms (Gaik et al, 2010). It is believed that the early stage of delinquent behaviour is antisocial behaviour. Antisocial behaviour has the potential to cause school failures, impairments in socio-emotional development, peer rejection, delinquency, and adult crimes (Hashmani 2019a). Antisocial behaviour describes all behaviours, attitudes, and personality traits that people engage in that appear to be dysfunctional, in that they often have negative interpersonal and societal outcomes (Hashmani & Jonason, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Containment theory was the theoretical framework adopted in this study. Containment theory which was credited to Walter Reckless in 1967 contends that a series of external social forces and internal qualities effectively insulate certain individuals from criminal involvement even when ecological variables induce others to engage in crime. Reckless (1967) posited that people are pushed or pulled into crime. The determinants of criminal behaviour are inner and outer containment that buffer the relationship between the pull and push. Pushes or social pressures consist of poverty, unemployment, economic insecurity, group conflicts, minority group status, lack of opportunities and inequalities (Reckless 1967:479). Pulls on the other hand, draw a person away from their original way of life and accepted form of living. They consist of bad companions, delinquency of criminal subculture, deviant groups, mass media, and propaganda (Reckless 1967:480). In relation to this study, adherents of the Containment theory tend to approach substance abuse and youth antisocial behaviour as emanating from individuals' inability to discipline self through inner containment; this results from the pushes and pull of life which tend to overwhelm such individual. In Reckless's perspective, inner containment indicates when individuals exhibit self-control and can discipline themselves and thereby not given to deviance (Reckless, 1967). However, when people fail to discipline themselves through inner containment (as is the case with substance abusers and violators of approved social behaviours), the society comes in through outer containment (that is, social control). Therefore, people can be socialized internally through the family to imbibe societal norms. But where this fails, the society, through its agencies (outer containment) regulates the individual. Put succinctly, from Reckless's perspective, deviant behaviour results from lack of self-control which is a resultant effect of improper inner containment, that is, the informal social control, which will in turn inform the formal social control mechanism (the outer containment) to intervene.

Methodology

Sampling of participants was based on multi-stage sampling procedure and purposive sampling. A sample size of 594 respondents were selected from residents of Nsukka LGA through multi-stage sampling, while seven respondents which comprised two National Drug Law Enforcement Agency [NDLEA] officials, one social worker and four substance abusers from the Nsukka Correctional Service, were purposively selected for an in-depth interview (IDI). The police are considered because they are the gate-keepers of the criminal justice system and determine who enters into the process (Dambazau, 2007). Two NDLEA officials were selected because of their role in apprehending drug users, confiscation of illicit substance and counseling of drug abusers. One social worker from the Nsukka Correctional Service was selected because of their role in rehabilitating people who are addicted to illicit drugs. Also, four youth substance abusers in Nsukka Correctional institution were interviewed to know how the influence of substance abuse impacted on their arrests or convictions. This gives a total of nine individuals for the in-depth interview (IDI). The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21 was used for the

analysis. Thematic analysis of the qualitative data placed emphasis on the interpretation and description of responses by the interviewees to complement the quantitative data. The choice of Nsukka Local Government Area as the study area was informed by the dynamic composition of the area by people of different ethnic nationalities who mingle with the indigenous Nsukka people. Nsukka is the second largest town in Enugu State. It is second only to the capital city of Enugu. Nsukka LGA is home to the prestigious University of Nigeria. Because of this, the town is a melting pot for people of diverse cultural backgrounds. Thus, this makes pop culture possible in Nsukka LGA. Therefore, considering the diverse multi-cultural composition of the area, a study of the impact of substance abuse on antisocial behaviours of youth is considered well situated in Nsukka LGA.

Ethical Consideration

This study passed through the review board of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. In line with the approvals, informed consent was duly sought from the respondents being that the study did not expose participants to obvious risks. Also, participants were made to understand that they reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any point or when they feel uncomfortable, with no penalty attached to doing so.

Findings

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by drug/substance intake and associated antisocial behaviours

	Property related antisocial behaviours			
Drug/Substance	*Theft*	*Armed Robbery*	*Property destruction*	*Not applicable*
Alcohol	58 (9.8%)	6 (1.0%)	40 (6.7%)	205 (34.5%)
Cigarettes	17 (2.9%)	Nil	43 (7.2%)	363 (61.1%)
Hemp	40 (6.7%)	23 (3.9%)	116 (19.5%)	220 (37%)
Tramadol	43 (7.2%)	89 (15%)	43 (7.2%)	200 (33.7%)
Methamphetamine	29 (4.9%)	3 (0.5%)	56 (9.4%)	310 (52.2%)
	Non-property related antisocial behaviours			
	Killing	*Sexual assault/ Rape*	*Gangsterism*	*Reckless driving*
Alcohol	Nil	44 (7.4%)	83 (14%)	158 (26.6%)
Cigarettes	Nil	8 (1.3%)	79 (13.3%)	84 (14.1%)
Hemp	Nil	42 (7.1%)	95 (16%)	58 (9.8%)
Tramadol	7 (1.2%)	86 (14.5%)	84 (14.1%)	42 (7.1%)
Methamphetamine	12 (2%)	55 (9.3%)	75 (2.6%)	54 (9.1%)

Source: ***Authors' field survey, 2023***

In Table 1, antisocial behaviours were grouped into property related antisocial behaviours and non-property related antisocial behaviours. In the first part, alcohol usage was found to relate with theft (9.8%), armed robbery (1.0%), and property destruction (6.7%) behaviours of the respondents or that of their friends. In the second row, 7.2% of the respondents indicated that Cigarette smoking by them or their friends is applicable to their indulgence in property destruction, while 2.9% linked it to theft. In the third row, 19.5% of the respondents related consumption of Indian hemps to property destruction behaviour, 6.7% indicated theft while 3.9% linked it to armed robbery. Tramadol usage was linked to theft by 7.2% of the respondents, armed robbery by 15%, and property destruction by 7.2%. It shows that under property related antisocial behaviour, tramadol usage/abuse will likely lead to armed robbery than theft and property destruction. On the contrary, methamphetamine consumption was linked more to property destruction (9.4%) and theft (4.9%), with only 0.5% of the respondents attributing it to armed robbery behaviour.

In the second part, four non-property-based antisocial behaviours were presented against different substances used by some respondents or their friends. It shows that 14% of the respondents linked their alcohol usage to gangsterism, while 7.4% indicated sexual assault/rape. However, reckless driving is the most common antisocial behaviour attributed to alcohol usage, as indicated by 26.6% of the respondents. Few respondents also indicated that when they smoke cigarette, they are likely to engage in behaviours like sexual assault (1.3%), gangsterism (13.3%) and reckless driving (14.1%). In the same way, Indian hemp was associated with sexual assault by 7.1% of the respondents, murder by 1.2% of the respondents, gangsterism by 16% and reckless driving by 9.8% of the respondents.

Tramadol was another substance that was tied to different forms of non-property based antisocial behaviours by some respondents. This is particular to rape/sexual assault as indicated by 14.5% of the respondents and property destruction by 14.1%. Other antisocial behaviours include murder (1.2%) and reckless driving (7.1%). In the last row, use or abuse of Methamphetamine was also linked to rape by 9.3% of the respondents, gangsterism by 2.6% of the respondents, murder by 2% and reckless driving by 9.1%. In both categories, alcoholic drinks and Indian hemp usage were more identified with different categories of antisocial behaviours, while tramadol and methamphetamine had the cruelest effect on antisocial behaviours like rape, armed robbery and murder.

The qualitative responses did not attribute specific categories of antisocial behaviour to substance abuse. However, all the interviewees maintained that substance abuse has direct link with antisocial behaviour. For some, the link is that of commission, that is people engage in antisocial behaviour because they took intoxicating substance, while for others, the substance abuse is to minimize the mental effect of antisocial behavioural lifestyles. What is evident from a careful classification of the responses is that most interviewees who argued that substance intake causes antisocial behaviour were all focused on non-property-based crimes, while those who argued that drug abuse is a supportive element of antisocial behaviour focused mostly on property related antisocial behaviours.

The qualitative data also revealed that drug abuse and antisocial behaviours are interwoven among young people, such that drug/substance abuse is often a prerequisite for their involvement in different forms of antisocial behaviours. According to a 23 years old inmate, some antisocial behaviours cannot be perpetrated without substance intoxication. He said:

> Before I was arrested, I am a popular dealer in my area. I started trading it because I discover that most of my friend knows that I use it well and will always come to ask me to give them. So, I started buying in large quantity to sell. There was this day I got

> so high on Rohypnol with four of my other friends. That day we ended up raping two girls that visited one of those my friends (**IDI: 23-year-old inmate**).

Another participant inferred on the tendency of substance abuse to induce antisocial behaviours, but maintained that the most vital link is that substance abuse helps criminals and youth with high level of antisocial behaviours to deal with the remorse from their behaviour. According to him:

> I don't believe that people commit crime or do things they don't want to do because they took hemp or any intoxicating substance. Those who want to steal will steal because they want to or because it is in their blood to steal, not because they took Mkpurummiri. What they will tell me and I believe it is that taking drugs helps them to forget the bad things they are doing and kill any sense of remorse from them. Like me, I cannot say that I went to steal that motorcycle that brought me here because of drugs, because it is that same frustration that made me steal that I was also using drugs to reduce (**IDI:24 years old inmate**).

A different stand was taken by the correctional social workers who argued for differential outcomes. According to one of them:

> I don't think there is a direct link to drug abuse and antisocial behaviour, yet both go "hand in hand". Mental and body system of individuals vary as well as people's personality. That is why people behave differently after taking intoxicating substances. There are some that will drink heavily and still drive normally and even more carefully. But you see another person with one bottle of beer, the person will engage himself in reckless driving. That same way, a thief will steal whether or not you gave him drugs (**IDI: Male Correctional Social Workers, Nsukka**).

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by how often they experience symptoms arising from drug/substance use

Symptoms	Regularity of symptoms from drug/substance use				Total
	Never	*Sometimes*	*Always*	*Very Often*	
Dry mouth	297 (50%)	209 (35.2%)	35 (5.9%)	53 (8.9%)	594 (100%)
Inability to defecate	413 (69.5%)	143 (24.1%)	26 (4.4%)	12 (2%)	594 (100%)
Frequent urination	252 (42.4%)	179 (30.1%)	89 (15%)	74 (12.5%)	594 (100%)
Constant headache	224 (37.7%)	225 (37.9%)	55 (9.3%)	90 (15.2%)	594 (100%)
Hallucination	301 (50.7%)	145 (24.4%)	50 (8.4%)	90 (15.2%)	594 (100%)

Source: ***Authors' field survey, 2023***

Information contained in Table 2 shows the different symptoms experienced by respondents or their friends as a result of substance/drug use. In the first row, 35.2% of the respondents indicated that they or their friends' experiences 'dry mouth' as a result of substance intake while 5.9% said they always have such symptom. Also, 8.9% indicated that very often, they or their friends experience 'dry mouth' as a result of substance use. Another symptom reported by the respondents in the second row is that of inability to defecate. It shows that 24.1% of the respondents are sometimes unable to defecate after using drugs, 4.4% said the experience is regular for them, while 2% said it happens very often.

In the third row, 30.1% of the respondents said they sometimes experience frequent urination after using intoxicating substance, 15% indicated "always", while 12.5% indicated "very often", which shows that they regularly experience frequent urination as a result of substance use. Following the symptom of frequent urination is that of constant headache. Surprisingly, majority of the respondents (62.3%) reported that they or their friends experience constant headache at varying degrees as a result of drug/substance use. For instance, 37.9% indicated that the headache symptom happens sometimes, 9.3% said that it happens always while 15.2% reported that the symptom happens very often. In the last row, 24.4% of the respondents reported occasional hallucination as a result of drug/substance use, 8.4% said they always experience hallucination, while 15.2% said it's a very often experience for them. In all, the findings show that constant headache and frequent urination are the most common body effects resulting from drug/substance abuse among youth in the area.

Information obtained from the in-depth interview shows that different drug/substances have different bodily effects on the addicts. The identified symptoms include frequent urination, defecation difficulty, hallucination, dehydration and constant headache, while the intensity of the effect could vary, based on dosage and experience. One of the interviewees highlighted this by saying:

> Three things you should note when you talk about how a drug affects somebody are, which drug did the person take, how many doses did he take and what experience does he have with taking that drug. The first day I took *mkpurummiri*, I did not feel anything unusual at first, but with time, I started feeling dehydrated and wanting to drink more and more water. I nearly drank from gutter that day, if not that my friend who gave me the drug that held me till we got to a place he bought water and gave to me. It was later I realized the feeling was not real, that I was just feeling a taste that is not there because even after drinking the water, I was still feeling thirsty like I was going mad (**IDI: 31-year-old inmate**).

The effect of drugs/substance abuse as presented by officers of the national drug law enforcement agencies and the Nigerian police force include mental retardation, untimely death, visual impairment, liver complications and priapism. According to a female NDLEA officer:

> Drug abuse has many effects on the body. We usually warn youth especially that drugs can lead to their untimely death. It can cause defecation problem and the person will not be able to use the toilet. Some of those raw substance they consume can also damage their liver. Even when you tell people that alcohol is not good for the liver, they don't listen. It is also known that substance like Colorado that youth are now smoking anyhow can lead to extreme hallucination and mental retardation. It can get to the point that addicts will start behaving like zombies (**IDI: Female NDLEA Officer, Nsukka Zone**).

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on factors preventing regulation of substance/drug use

Factors preventing regulation of drug use	Extent to which these factors prevent regulation of drug use				Total
	Never	*Low*	*Moderate*	*High*	
Lack of community support	250 (42.1%)	204 (34.3%)	52 (8.8%)	88 (14.8%)	594 (100%)
Inadequate funding	237 (39.9%)	158 (26.6%)	72 (12.1%)	127 (21.4%)	594 (100%)

Bribery of the agency	240 (40.4%)	126 (21.2%)	53 (8.9%)	175 (29.5%)	594 (100%)
Lack of sensitization	306 (51.5%)	146 (24.6%)	47 (7.9%)	95 (16%)	594 (100%)
Inadequate punishment	358 (60.3%)	141 (23.7%)	26 (4.4%)	69 (11.6%)	594 (100%)

Source: ***Authors' field survey, 2023***

Information contained in Table 3 shows that 34.3% of the respondents were of the view that lack of community support to a low extent, prevents regulation of drug abuse, 8.8% said that the effect is to a moderate extent while 14.8% said that the effect is to a high extent. In the second row, 26.6% of the respondents said that inadequate funding to a low extent of preventing proper regulation of drug abuse, 12.1% said the effect is to a moderate extent while 21.4% indicated that the effect of inadequate funding in regulation of youth drug abuse is to a high extent. Another factor that was identified is bribery of the agencies in charge of preventing drug use and abuse by dug users. From the findings, 21.2% of the respondents indicated that bribery of the agency affects regulation of drug use to a low extent, 8.9% said that the effect is to a moderate extent while 29.5% said that the effect is to a high extent. Lack of sensitization was also indicated by 16% of the respondents as having a high effect on regulation of drug abuse, while 24.6% of the respondents indicated that the effect is to a low extent. In the last row, 23.7% of the respondents maintained that inadequate punishment prevents the regulation of drug abuse to a low extent, 4.4% of the respondents said the prevention is to a moderate extent, while 11.6% said that the effect is to a high extent. In all, inadequate funding was the most identified factor preventing regulation of drug abuse, followed by bribery of the agency and lack of community support.

Data obtained through in-depth interview are divided on the challenges affecting the control of drug use among youth. Whereas interviewees from the Nigerian police force and officers of NDLEA emphasized on institutional and operational capacities of the agencies, inmates and drug users identified factors relating to bribery and corruption of personnel of both agencies and that of the larger crime control institutions. Senior personnel of NDLEA said:

> The major challenge as far as I know is capacity, both human and technical capacity. Every force in Nigeria is heavily understaffed and operational materials are hardly provided for. We do not have enough operational vehicles because government hardly provides fund for such and there is no community support because they easily see you as an enemy when you pick their sons and daughters who are into drug trafficking or drug abuse (**IDI: Senior NDLEA Officer, Nsukka Zone**).

On the contrary, the entire institutions involved in crime control were identified as the biggest challenge due to their corrupt tendencies and dishonesty. One of the interviewees said:

> There is no challenge because from the police to the prison officers here, everyone is corrupt and only act rudely when it is a poor person that cannot settle them. You cannot see a big drug dealer here because he is always giving the police their share. Even NDLEA collect their own and pretend not to see what is happening. If not, why are people still selling tramadol even in open space like Ogige market? That shows you the law is for the poor. Big yahoo boys, eat and drink with police and they give them escort. Even here in the prison, we have two quarters. The big boys' side is well taken care of and that is where you see all these yahoo boys and rich criminals. Even here in prison, they get all the drugs they need, smoke their weeds, feel alright and even cash out from their yahoo business. But those of us who are poor stay where we are treated as animals (**IDI: 25 year-old inmate on awaiting trial**).

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by measures that could be improved to reduce drug intake among youth

Measures	Regularity of improvement				Total
	Never	*Once*	*Twice*	*More than twice*	
Access to counselling centres	105 (17.7%)	151 (25.4%)	130 (21.9%)	208 (35%)	594(100%)
Increasing cost of substance	229 (38.6%)	133 (22.4%)	95 (16%)	137 (23.1%)	594 (100%)
Establishment of amusement/recreational parks	278 (46.8%)	175 (29.5%)	65 (10.9%)	76 (12.8%)	594 (100%)
Sensitization	167 (28.1%)	163 (27.4%)	109 (18.4%)	155 (26.1%)	594 (100%)
Community policing	198 (33.3%)	156 (26.3%)	66 (11.1%)	174 (29.3%)	594 (100%)
Strengthening family, school, etc.	163 (27.4%)	100 (16.8%)	92 (15.5%)	239 (40.2%)	594 (100%)
Police border patrol	183 (30.8%)	155 (26.1%)	62 (10.4%)	194 (32.7%)	594 (100%)
Youth empowerment	88 (14.8%)	129 (21.7%)	87 (14.6%)	290 (48.8%)	594 (100%)

Source: ***Authors' field survey, 2023***

In Table 4, more than one-third of the respondents said that improving access to counselling centres more than twice could help reduce drug intake among youth, 25.4% said that once is okay while 21.9% said twice. Increasing cost of substances more than twice was also suggested by 23.1% of the respondents as capable of reducing drug intake among youth while 22.4% said that increasing it once will reduce youth drug intake. Again, 43.2% of the respondents suggested improving youth access to amusement/recreation parks, while majority (71.9%) supported the idea of improving sensitization networks. On the other hand, 26.3% of the respondents indicated that improving community policing once will address the youth drug intake, 11.1% suggested that the improvement should occur twice to be effective while 29.3% said that such improvement need to happen more than twice.

Again, 40.2% of the respondents said that improving on the act of strengthening family and schools should happen more than twice to be able to control substance/drug intake among youth. On the other hand, more than twice improvement on police border patrol was recommended by 32.7% of the respondents as capable of reducing drug intake among youth, while 30.8% said that a onetime improvement will still yield the desired result. In the last row, almost half of the respondents (48.8%) suggested that improving on youth empowerment in more than two occasions will help reduce youth drug intake, while 21.7% were of the view that a one-time improvement in youth empowerment will reduce youth drug intake. The implication of this finding when analyzed comparatively is that youth empowerment is the most identified mechanism for reducing youth drug intake, followed by access to counselling centres, strengthening of families/school and sensitization.

Similarly, the qualitative responses also emphasized the strengthening of learning institutions to improve their socialization capacities while government complements such with financial empowerment and employment. According to a 23-year-old inmate:

> The education system needs to be changed. What they are teaching people in school is not helping them, instead it is frustrating them. I hated school because of the way the teachers were always beating us then, and won't even listen to you or try to know what your problem is. But if school can treat people with care about life, people will listen and won't get involve in things like drugs. Also, people need to be settled financially by giving them job after school or training them to learn hand work and start it for them (**IDI:23years-old inmate**).

On the other hand, there were also suggestions to strengthen the drug regulation agencies to enable them meet up with the challenge of controlling drug circulations and abuse. A senior officer of NDLEA said:

> Government, through the presidency need to strengthen NDLEA by declaring state of emergency on drug abuse. This should be backed with proper and absolute supervision of the agency and its sister's organizations like the police. In terms of logistics, there should also be adequate support from all ramifications to help curtail the activities of drug paddlers because without drug availability, there won't be drug abuse (**IDI: Senior NDLEA Officer, Nsukka Zone**).

Discussion of Findings

One of the major concerns of this study is to ascertain the nexus between substance abuse and antisocial behaviours. To this effect, the study found a significant positive correlation between the extent of substance use and degree of indulgence in antisocial behaviours. This is in consonance with an earlier finding by Nardi et al (2021) which contends that substance abuse has a direct link with antisocial behaviours. Also, previous deviant cases reported around Nsukka area, are often in association with substance possessions like Indian hemps (Uzodinma, 2015). Even studies that explained substance abuse as having direct causal relationships with criminal behaviours like UNODC (2021); did not yield sufficient evidence by controlling for other triggers. The implication therefore is that the current study did not establish the link between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour as a causal relationship, rather as a reinforcing relationship.

Nevertheless, certain antisocial outburst like violent confrontations is known to be perpetrated under the influence of intoxicating substances (NSRP, 2017). Also, in the current study, is the distinct insight on how some form of substance abuse was necessitated by certain antisocial lifestyles. Within this finding, it holds that rather than triggering antisocial behaviour, consumption of such substance by the perpetrators is mainly to minimize the mental effect of the behaviour. Similarly, Abdu-Raheem (2013) explained that drug abuse results from attempts to suppress pains and abolish negative emotions by tapping into the tendency of the substance to increase psychomotor activities leading to euphoric feelings. Since the substances are taken in the process of carrying out the antisocial behaviour or after it, it may be argued that the substance does not cause the behaviour, but rather reinforces its perpetration. This is supported by Hashmani and Jonason's (2019) report that antisocial behaviours have multi-causal factors and that attributing its occurrence to a single factor downplays the role of others like genetics, physiology and environment in shaping behavioural outcomes.

However, for more clarity, attempt was made to itemize different forms of substance abuse and analyse each against different forms of antisocial behaviours. The concept of antisocial behaviour as used in the study is in consonance with Gaik et al (2010) and refers both to criminal and non-criminal behaviours commonly exhibited by youth, that are largely in contrast to social norms or acceptable behaviours. Employing regular classification of crimes into property and none property crimes; antisocial behaviours were equally grouped into property related antisocial behaviours and none-property related antisocial behaviours. The property-based behaviours refer to those antisocial behaviours that are targeted at material benefits, acquisition or destruction, while non-property based are antisocial behaviours that the perpetrators' gratification is not tied to material benefits nor is the behaviour demonstrated in relation to material contents.

Property related antisocial behaviours like theft, armed robbery and vandalism were all found to relate with different forms of substance abuse. Within property based antisocial behaviours, alcohol had the most reported effect on theft, exceeding what was attributed to vandalism, while smoking of hemp had more effect on vandalism, than theft. In Maherr and Kerr (2013) study, drug users were also found guilty of acquisitive crimes in connections with drug users, often in an attempt to secure money to buy more drugs. Similarly, the current study also reported that some respondents or their friends have been arrested as a result of pharmacologically induced behaviours. This was further exemplified by the finding that tramadol manifests more in armed robbery behaviour while methamphetamine abuse connects more with vandalism. Again, this was supported by McKetin et al's (2014) study which analysed how methamphetamine is associated with violent behaviour and found that participants who took the substance reported 6.2 times higher violent behaviours than those that did not take it. But, within the non-property category, alcohol abuse and hemp were linked more to cult activities or gangsterism while tramadol and methamphetamine abuse were linked more to sexual assault/ rape. This is supported by Norstrom and Rossow's (2015) study which reported significant positive association between cannabis (hemp) and violent behaviours.

Different effects of substance abuse as reported in the current study include dry mouth as affirmed by 50% of the respondents, constant headache, frequent urination, hallucination and defecation difficulties. But whereas alcohol abuse was in the current study attributed to reckless driving, a study in Lagos State by Olaniyi (2020) did not find any significant association between abuse of alcohol and involvement in road accidents. On the other hand, the current study indicated reports of mental retardation, visual impairment, liver complication and priapism resulting from substance abuse. Similar complications have been reported in previous studies (Broning et al, 2012, Ewetan & Urhie, 2014), with mental disorder as the most emphasized effect for scholars writing from psychological implications of substance abuse. Priapism although reported in previous studies did not feature in the current study. As a symptom, it results mainly from abuse of drugs believed to enhance sexual performance.

Another aspect of the consequences of substance abuse considered in the current study is its propensity towards incarceration. The study observed that among the negative effects that substance abuse has on youth is that it also exposes them to arrest. For example, nearly one-third of the respondents noted that they or their friends have been arrested before while they are trying to share or buy psychotropic drugs. On the other hand, one out of every five respondents or their friends have been arrested for being in possession of drugs while some have been arrested for psycho pharmacologically induced antisocial behaviours. Similarly, Broning et al (2012) listed part of the effects of substance abuse to include arrest and imprisonment of offenders, while

NCADD (2015) reported that substance abuse leads to crime commission and invariably incarceration of the offender.

Beside the consequences, the current study also found that existing attempts at controlling youth indulgence in substance abuse is marred by different inhibiting factors which ranged from drug availability and to actual consumption. At the level of availability, challenges such as inadequate funding of agencies involved in regulating drug circulations, and corruption of personnel of the agency in the form of bribe to allow drug traffickers and peddlers to remain in business were identified. Dibia, Nwagu and Odo (2020) in their own study noted that businesses promoting substance abuse are highly lucrative, which explains how such business owners are able to bribe regulatory agencies to avert adequate control of their operations. Differently, funding was also found to affect the operational capacities of the regulatory agencies by inhibiting the mobility, ability to investigate cases and sufficient manpower to be present at different locations simultaneously.

The institution of control was also reported to be characterised by inadequate punishment that fails to deter young people from indulging in substance abuse. There were also reports of lack of community support which makes it difficult for both the regulatory and control agencies to achieve their functions. But in all, the centrality of corruption in the form of bribery and corruption remained the most identified challenge confronting existing attempts to control youth drug abuse. Young people rather than be deterred by the agencies, perceive them as existing only for the poor as the rich appears to be above the law. Consequently, they regard increasing their financial status by all means to overcome such discrimination which further leads them to more antisocial behaviours and further exacerbate their substance use.

There were indications that measures like youth empowerment, access to counselling services, public sensitization, police border patrol, and increasing the cost of regularly abused substances could be improved to reduce youth drug abuse. Similarly, Olawole-Isaac et al (2018) reported the comprehensive sensitization and rehabilitation that targets adolescents in settings where substance abuse is prevalent. In a different study, Jatau et al (2021) recommended collaborative involvement of community, government and religious bodies in the attempt to curb the burden of substance abuse, while the youth should be targeted through sensitization.

Conclusion

This study ascertained whether youth substance abuse is associated with antisocial behaviour in Nsukka area of Enugu state. The study found that youth substance abuse has a significant correlation with the extent of antisocial behaviours. However, considering the qualitative data, especially insights from inmates on variations of substance use intent, two pertinent observations were made. First is that the observed correlation between youth substance abuse and antisocial behaviour did not prove that substance abuse leads to antisocial behaviour. Rather, increase in both tendencies are propelled by a common denominator. This is the case with substance abuses that were reported to have occurred in an attempt to provide mental relief in the mind of an offender or to aid the offender to commit an offence with less remorse. Also, conditions within which substance abuse is perpetrated such as partying and clubbing are social lifestyles associated with certain antisocial behaviour. For example, cybercrime popularly known as *yahoo* is reported to expose actors to substance abuse, which they consume in order to stay alert during the online scamming. These same individuals are known for their luxurious spending in clubs and parties during which they consume even more substances and as such, the substance consumption

could not be said to have prompted their involvement in cybercrime, rather their involvement in cybercrime necessitated a lifestyle that is tied to substance abuse.

On the other hand, excessive consumption of alcohol and drug use among youth was found to have descriptive links with youth gangsterism, but the intent to be a member of such group preceded the action since substance abuse in itself counts as a rite of passage. The implication is that substance abuse and antisocial behaviours are both mutually reinforcing behaviours. Whereas alcohol may account for antisocial behaviours like compulsive violent behaviours, general antisocial behaviours are controlled more by criminal intent and sustained by peer pressure. Also, since consumption is tied to availability because a significant positive correlation was observed between rate of substance availability and abuse, the study concludes that antisocial behavioural threats increase the tendency to indulge in substance abuse in similar or even higher proportion than substance abuse may trigger antisocial behaviour. The conclusion is also has utility by applying the differential association assumption of Sutherland. The theory for example, traced youth substance abuse to either association with cult members in display of gangsterism (*treating fuckup*), partying with fellow yahoo friends, relating with users in the same street or ganging up with fellow users to sexually molest or abuse another person.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are considered pertinent to address the phenomenon of youth substance abuse and how it reinforces youth antisocial behaviours, following key findings in this study:

(a) **Strengthening of socio-religious clubs in secondary schools:** Secondary schools were among the key avenues implicated in the learning of substance abuse, especially as a consequence of peer pressure or the quest to be associated with certain group membership. However, strengthening socio-religious clubs with strong moral and mentorship will alternate the social longing in the youth and minimize their desire to join other forms of club. Such clubs will also be platforms of sensitization, counselling and resolving personal issues confronting the youth to also minimize their tendency to feel isolated.

(b) **Direct Family interventions**: The breakdown of family values constitutes a significant factor in youth learning of substance abuse, while some reportedly started by imitating their parents or an elderly person in their neighbourhood. Therefore, there is need to strengthen the family institution through direct state empowerment and workshops. This should be a behaviour targeted workshop that helps parents to improve on how they train their children as well as inform them on the best parenting approach to adopt in maintaining moral standards in the family. The training must involve guarding the children against neighbourhood interaction, especially for those living in areas with high prevalence of substance abusers.

(c) **Overhauling of the drug control agencies and the criminal justice system**: Rather than controlling youth drug abuse, corruption perpetrated by personnel of the agencies invariably contributes to youth indulgence in the abuse. Therefore, there is need for all the agencies to be overhauled with strict sanctions against corrupt practices by culpable personnel. In doing this, the welfare of the personnel must be prioritized with relevant funding and increased human capacity building, through engaging more hands and adequate training and monitoring.

(d) **Youth empowerment:** The axiom that "a lazy man is a devil's workshop" is further sustained in the current study because unemployment and financial hardship were among the

factors indicated to affect youth drug abuse. Therefore, there is need for collective youth empowerment by both the government, private organizations and philanthropists to minimize the number of youths exposed to mental depression of where the next meal will come from.

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INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED LAGOS STATE RESIDENTS ON NIGERIA NEWSPAPERS' COVERAGE OF CRIME ON THE GRATIFICATION OF THEIR SAFETY INFORMATION NEED

Mustapha Olalekan Rufai (PhD)
Department of Mass Communication
Federal University, Oye-Ekiti
Email: mustapha.rufai@fuoye.edu.ng
&
Abiodun Salawu (Professor)
Indigenous Language Media
North-West University, Mafikeng - South Africa
abiodun.salawu@nwu.ac.za

Abstract
Insecurity of lives and property in Nigeria has continued unabated through crime perpetration of all kinds. All forms of violent crimes, including property crimes are reported in the newspapers virtually on daily basis. Concerned by what the feelings of the audience could be on the resonating outcome of Nigerian newspapers' crime reportage, the attendant palpable fear, anxiety, a sense of insecurity and whether or not the newspapers' crime stories gratified their safety information need, this study adopted a non-probability sampling technique and through an in-depth interviews probed into the perspectives of purposively selected Lagos State residents on Nigerian newspapers' coverage of crime and the gratification of their safety information need. Adopting purposive sampling technique, a total of twelve literate respondents, across the three Senatorial Districts (Lagos Central, Lagos East and Lagos West) who had lived and worked in Lagos State for at least five years preceding the study were interviewed. Findings revealed a sense of insecurity and palpable fear among the respondents; Lagos State is prone to crime; murder, robbery, kidnapping, while payment of ransom to secure the release of kidnapped victims were rife. The study revealed that the newspapers feasted on crime stories, but embraced episodic crime reportage. The newspaper crime stories were found educative and gratified the safety information need of the reader even as the police, judiciary and the political class were found culpable in crime festering in Nigeria. The paper recommends that newspapers should engage more in investigative reporting of crime by reporting it like an epidemic while the country's security personnel require constant intelligence report in addition to being proactive, and professional. The Judiciary should ensure the dispensation of justice in all crime cases.

Keywords: Crime Stories; Gratification; Insecurity of Lives and Property, Kidnapping; Safety Information.

> The issue of insecurity in Nigeria has become something of grave concern to all well-meaning citizens most of who continue to wonder how the Country arrived at such dastardly situation where no one is safe; and worse still, rather than abate, the problem is escalating and now totally out of control--- (Oyewusi, 2022).

Introduction

Insecurity has become a major concern for Nigerians. It has created an unequalled and unprecedented fear in all and sundry in Nigeria. Both the Government and the governed have had their confidence shaken and doubtful of a day without a security-breach occurring somewhere in the Country (Rufai & Salawu, 2021; Rufai, 2018). The American Psychological Association regards insecurity as being multifaceted and that it pertains to an all-round sense of uncertainty or anxiety in respect of one's worth, abilities, and conveying the message one is at risk or in danger of something or someone. The negative impact of insecurity could be physical, mental, or emotional.

Insecurity limits one's capability to accomplish tasks. Efforts by the Federal Government of Nigeria to combat the scourge have been futile. The Military and other law enforcement agents appear overstretched and seemingly overwhelmed by the level of insecurity in Nigeria. Security breaches had occurred at unimaginable places. The Kuje Correctional Facility was successfully invaded by terrorists and inmates suspected to be detained Boko Haram insurgents freed (Ejiofor, 2022). The advance party of the President and Commander in Chief of the armed forces was attacked in Katsina and two policemen killed (Oyelude, 2022). Also, the Presidential Brigade of Guards was attacked and casualties recorded (Emperor, 2022). Earlier, there was the Owo massacre, where about forty worshippers were killed and several people injured in a Church. The import of these security skirmishes is that security of the high and the low in the Nigerian society cannot be taken as granted.

According to Williams (2015:1) ''insecurity is the anxiety one experience (sic) when one feels vulnerable and insecure''. Google search engine defines insecurity as ''the state of being open to threat; lack of protection''. Nigerians at the moment are indeed grappling with daily threats to life, business, movement, relaxation, sports and recreation, to say the least. Many factors can lead to insecurity. It can result from a traumatic event, crisis such as divorce or bankruptcy or a loss. It can also result from one's environment, as unpredictability or upset in daily life can cause anxiety and insecurity about ordinary routine events. Insecurity in Nigeria is informed by the failure of the State in allowing crime and criminality to fester and become an industry (Ajayi, 2017, Ngwama, 2014; Rufai, 2018).

Former Nigerian President, Muhammad Buhari in his 2022 ''Democracy Day Broadcast confessed that he lives in grief on daily basis due to the seemingly intractable cases of killings, kidnappings, armed banditry, murder and other cases of crime and violence (*Punch* , Monday, 12th June 2022). It is in this context that this paper gauges the perceptions of selected Lagos State residents on Nigerian newspapers' coverage of crime and the gratification of their safety information need.

Literature Review

Evolution of Newspaper in Nigeria and Its Importance to the Study

A discourse of how the newspaper evolved in Nigeria is of importance to this study, because the newspaper is the main thrust of this study, hence, a brief on the origin and the

performance of the newspapers on the socio-economic and political spheres of the country would significantly enhance the quality of the study.

The evolution and emergence of newspaper in Nigeria predates both the colonial amalgamation of Nigeria of 1914 and the nationhood of Nigeria in 1960 (Oso, Odunlami & Adaja, 2011). Missionary activities were credited to have acted as the springboard for the development of newspapers in Nigeria, through Reverend Father Henry Townsend of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). This is captured in the words of (Oso, 2012) as follows: "The origin of the Nigerian press is closely linked to the Christian missionary's zeal to educate, evangelize and civilize the 'natives' of their new colonies'' (p.13). These feats were aided by schools and the printing press. These two factors were products of missionary activities towards their evangelism mission. Rev. Hope Waddell of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission was at that time in Calabar, and had established a printing press. Aided by these factors, Rev. Father Henry Townsend, on 3rd December, 1859, (Oso, 2012) rolled out Nigeria's first newspaper, titled, *Iwe Irohin fun Awon Ara Egba ati Yoruba (Newspaper for the People of Egba and Yoruba*). This heroic deed sowed the seed of literacy and the act of information seeking from newspapers among Nigerians. Newspapers are regarded as informative and influential on behaviour (Altheide, 2003; Awake, 2005; Baran, 2001; Bello, 2015; Sacco, 1995; Soola, 2007), are sources of crime stories (Crowther, 2007; Surette, 1998), and are depended upon as elite information repertoires during disasters (Sommerfeldt, 2015).

Newspapers, as media of communication, shape culture, play an important role in business and affect the daily lives of millions, inform the public of important affairs and provide information on which many readers form opinions (Awake, 2005). The newspaper enjoys primacy among other forms of the media and demands a considerable degree of literacy from its readers. It is a primordial mass medium and a major purveyor in carrying stories about crime (Crowther, 2007; Jewkes, 2015; Soola, 2007). It is an unbound regular publication containing a variety of stories (Anaeto & Tejumaiye, 2009). It serves as a source of information about the happenings around us and at a distance to its audience. It is a durable medium and its contents are storable as reference materials.

The relevance of the emergence and the sustenance of newspaper publication in Nigeria to this study are underscored by: the establishment of reading culture and the promotion of literacy among the people, dissemination of information, especially crime stories to the audience, and the information seeking behaviour of Nigerian newspaper audience from Nigerian newspapers' crime stories. The information seeking behaviour of media audience from newspapers is in tandem with the cardinal objective of Reverend Henry Townsend in establishing *Iwe Irohin fun awon Ara Egba ati omo Yoruba* in 1859 to promote literacy among the people. The development of newspapers in Nigeria took place in phases and can be broadly categorised into: Pre-independence (Missionary and the Colonial/Early press era (1859-1960); Independence period or the first Republic (1960-1966); the first military period (1966-1979); the second republic (1979-1983); the second military period (1984-1999) and to the current longest democratic period ever in Nigeria (1999 to date). Each of the periods impacted significantly on the media history of Nigeria, Nationalists struggles for Nigeria's independence; the practice of journalism and newspaper business and newspaper readership in Nigeria (Oso, et al, 2011; Oso, 2012; Bello, 2015)

The missionary era marked the beginning of the culture of formal reading by the people of South-West, Nigeria, as characterised in the objective of *Iwe Irohin,* which was to promote literacy and inculcate the habit of reading in people, alongside exposing them to Western education and Christianity (Oso, 2012; Bello, 2015). The Colonial/Early newspapers focussed on reporting the political and social life in Lagos at the time and also the nationalists' struggles for Nigeria's

independence. Such newspapers included *Anglo African* by Robert Campbell (1863-1865); *Lagos Observer* (1882); *The Chronicles* (1908) and the *Nigerian Daily Times* (1926) among others (Oso, et al, 2011). Late Dr Nmamdi Azikwe's *West African Pilot* and the *Nigerian Tribune* established by Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo in 1949 (and still in existence as the only surviving pre-Independence newspaper in Nigeria) were among the many newspapers in Nigeria that contributed to the development of political consciousness of Nigerians as well as the political economy of the Country (Oso, et al; 2011).

The Military era was characterised by press censorship, arrests detention and even killing of journalists and the closure of newspaper houses regarded as threats to the government of the day (Oso, 2012). After the second Military incursion into governance in Nigeria came the current democratic dispensation. Unlike during the Military dispensation when the press experienced brutalization and numerous closures, one of the undeniable advantages of the current democratic rule in Nigeria is a freer press than what obtained during the military era. In this age of globalization, the Internet has made access to newspapers online possible and thriving and competing with hard copy of newspapers, thus making access to information more widespread, and censorship of media somehow difficult, if not impossible.

Despite the odds and encumbrances from the political class, the press in Nigeria has been vibrant, resilient and strategic to keep weathering the storms. According to an online publication by Squirrel PR (2022). *Punch, The Guardian*, *Vanguard*, *The Sun, Daily Trust*, *Nigerian Tribune* are among the twelve top rated newspapers in Nigeria providing their readership with news on crime, economy, health, security or a lack of it, politics, education, disasters among other happenings in the society. The online version of the aforesaid newspapers is available thus making access to information easy and accessible.

Newspaper Readership in Nigeria

The newspaper has been described as one of the oldest components of the modern era (Boczkowski, 2004) and also regarded as the primary model of information delivery (McQuail, 1994). The newspaper is crucial in opinion formation on domestic and foreign issues towards economic development and diplomacy (Olofin, 2012). The newspaper is an important source of information and could shape readers' thoughts (Awake, 2005). In an attempt to satisfy information need- a basic physiological need for human existence- human beings turn to various media, for information, education, entertainment and national mobilization of the public for national and international integration (Olofin, 2012). The newspaper is a credible source of information on social phenomena (Bello, 2015).

The newspaper has also been globally acknowledged as a source of crime information (Altheide, 2003; Chermak, 1994; Sacco, 1995; Surette, 1998; Young, 2005). The advent of the internet and the presence of online newspapers have not diminished the importance of the print medium of newspapers as a news source (Hiebert, Ungurait, Bohn, 1988). The newspaper is literacy medium and central to governance in any country. It is a vehicle for information dissemination and service delivery from the government to the people. It also serves as a medium through which government policies get to the public domain, hence, a go-between the government and the public.

A Brief Profile of the selected newspapers and the Justification for their choice

The choice of newspapers (*Vanguard, Punch, The Sun*, *Nigerian Tribune*, and the *Daily Trust*) for the study was purposive. Since the heroic deed of Rev. Henry Townsend in establishing

Iwe fun awon ara Egba ati Omo Yoruba (The newspaper for the Egba and Yoruba) in 1859 (Oso, 2012), many newspapers both privately and government owned, had existed and gone into extinction in Nigeria ever since (See Daramola, 2006; Salawu, 2001; Ngoa, 2012; Oso, Odunlami & Adaja, 2011). Currently, Nigeria has about one hundred and fifty newspapers of local, regional and national outlook (Bello, 2015).

In a recent web ranking of national newspapers in Nigeria, the five selected newspapers for this study were ranked thus: *Punch,* 1st, *Vanguard,* 2nd, *The Sun*, 5th, *Nigerian Tribune*, 6th and the *Daily Trust*, 7th (Make Money.ng, 2022). In addition, three of the selected newspapers, *Vanguard, Punch*, and *The Sun*, are based in Lagos and were established in 1984, 1977 and 2003 respectively. The fourth newspaper used in the study, the *Nigerian Tribune*, is located in the city of Ibadan (both Lagos & Ibadan are located in South West, Nigeria). It is the only existing pre-independence newspaper in Nigeria, having been established in 1949. The fifth newspaper, the *Daily Trust*, began operation in 1998, and is located in the Northern part of the country, Abuja (the seat of the Nigerian government), to be precise. It is credited as the largest circulating newspaper in Northern Nigeria (Make Money, ng, 2022).

The five newspapers share some characteristics. They are listed among the top ten newspapers in Nigeria having national spread and have existed for over a decade, going by their years of establishment (Nigeria Press Council, 2009). They are published in English, and English being the official language in Nigeria, makes them more acceptable to the readers than if the medium of expression had been in any other language.

Despite the dwindling economic fortunes of the newspapers, symbolized by low circulation of the newspapers (Oso, 2012), in line with the economic downturn facing the country, the selected newspapers, according to the Nigerian Press Council (2009), are widely read newspapers; have national spread in Nigeria, hence, adequate for this study. The newspapers publish on various issues like politics, business, health, finance, crime, law, environment, tourism, sports etc. and have been cited in scholarly articles and at different fora (Okidu, 2013). All the selected newspapers are available in hard copies and online versions, hence, easily accessible.

Theoretical framework

Uses and Gratifications Theory (U&GT)

The study is anchored on the Uses and Gratifications theory. The U & GT approach in communication studies and mass media research has a longstanding history (Liu, 2015). The uses and gratifications theory is a response and a challenge to the minimal effects theory. It was proposed to contest the notion of audience docility. McQuail (2005: 403), noted that early communication researchers mainly focused on media effects on children and young people with an emphasis on potential harm and that early theorists on media influence, concentrated on the impact of audience exposure to the media on behaviour. The turn of the 20th century, to say the least, marked the beginning of research on information seeking behaviour on the part of the audience. Studies in this respect date back to the beginning of empirical mass communication research. (Ketterer, 2000). The U & G has as its main theme an understanding of how and why the media audiences use the media in their daily routine.

Media Use and Gratifications

Gratification is the reward or benefit accruing from an individual media user's engagement with the media. Gratification has been identified to come from two sources: content gratification and process gratification (Rubin, 1985). Process gratification pertains to the practice of using the

media, excluding the media content. Such process gratification includes using the media for entertainment, distraction, or companionship. It relates to the act of using the medium itself. Content gratification on the other hand, relates to the message and the importance to the reader. It is about the message, and not the medium. Content gratification is crucial with respect to communication content and future correspondence. It is about the needs of the media user met by his or her engagement with a particular medium or media.

According to Maslow (1943) human needs are hierarchical. The safety and security needs of an individual must be satisfied before higher social needs could be attained. Safety needs are concerned with physical safety, order, stability, familiarity and control over one's life and environment (Parumasur and Roberts- Lombard, 2014). An important need crucial to this study is cognitive need. Cognitive need which is also referred to as information/surveillance need, is chiefly concerned with "seeking information about relevant events in immediate surroundings, society at large and the world'' (Pitout, 2009: 392).

Other aspects of cognitive needs include, "seeking advice to enhance decision making choices, learning about important topics and self – improvement and gaining a sense of security through knowledge in the media" (Pitout, 2009:393). The media therefore provide media users an avenue to enhance their safety information need as a response to the confounding challenges such as pervasive crime and insecurity to lives and property. The media audiences according to Dominick (1993:49) "use media content as gratifications". These are the needs of the audience satisfied by the media. Uses and gratification theory (UGT) holds that media audience are at the liberty to choose to consume certain kinds of media in anticipation of a specific gratification.

The U & G has as its main theme an understanding of how and why the media audiences use the media in their daily routine. The advent of the various media has seen the U & G theory deployed to inquire into how the radio, newspapers, television, books, magazines and lately the various forms of the new media (e.g., phones, tablets, compact disks, computers), the internet and the social networking sites (SNS) are adopted by the user to shape and define their everyday activities. The importance of UGT to this study is underscored by the fact it investigated the use to which the respondents deploy newspapers' crime stories to gratify their safety information need.

Methodology

The study adopted in-depth interviews on the participants purposively selected for the study.

The demographics of the participants in the in-depth interviews are provided in Table 1.0

Table 1.0: ***Selected Participants' Demographic Information***

Participants	Age	Gender	Marital/ Status	Educational attainment	Years of residing in Lagos	Occupation	Monthly income range	LG/LCDA	Senatorial Districts
A	49	F	M	Degree	since birth	Poultry farming	Not disclosed	Lagos Island	Lagos Central
B	52	M	M	Degree	since birth	Media Practice	Not fixed	Kosofe	Lagos East
C	50	M	M	Post – Secondary	since birth	Banking	N120-N150:000	Agbado/ Oke-Odo	Lagos West
D	35	F	M	Degree	since birth	Physician	Not fixed	Ikorodu	Lagos East
E	59	F	W	Higher Degree	since birth	School Principal	N150-N180:000	Ibeju/Lekki	Lagos East
F	48	M	M	H.N.D	since birth	Public servant	N120-N180:000	AmuwoOdofin	Lagos West
G	25	F	S	School Certificate	10	Schooling	_____	Badagry	Lagos West
H	21	F	S	School certificate.	6	Artisan	Not fixed	Eti-Osa	Lagos Central
I	32	M	M	Post – Secondary	12	Teaching	N80:000-N120:000	Ojo	Lagos West

J	55	F	M	Degree	30	Trading	Not fixed	Osodi/Isolo	Lagos East
K	19	M	S	School cert	7	Apprentice	_____	Iru/Victoria Island	Lagos Central Lagos
L	20	M	S	Post-secondary	Since birth	Attendant	N50:000-N80-000	Epe	st

Source: Author's Field survey

Demographic Information of the Interviewees

The ages of the interviewees (see Table 1.0) ranged between 19 and 59 years. Four of the respondents, fell within the age bracket of 19-25. Participants I and D were within the age brackets of 26-32 and 33- 39 years respectively. Participants G, H, K, and L, fell within 19-25 years age bracket. Also, Participants A, B, C, and F were within 47 and 53 years. Only two (E & J) of the interviewees were 54 years and above. The gender distribution of the interviewees was equal, six each. On educational qualification, all the interviewees possessed the minimum educational requirement for the study, which was Secondary School Certificate.

In terms of years of residing in Lagos, all the interviews had lived in Lagos State beyond the five-year limit set for the study. In fact, seven (7) of the participants had lived all their years of existence in Lagos State. This is healthy for the study, in that it afforded the interviewees, a good background for the study. In terms of occupation, with the exception of Participants G (a student) and K (an apprentice), all the remaining participants were employed, or in private practice. This was related to the income of the interviewees. Five of the interviewees were on fixed income, another five (in private practice) on either undisclosed or flexible income. Two of the interviewees were not earning income.

The distribution of the respondents cuts across the three Senatorial Districts in the State (Lagos Central, Lagos East and Lagos West). This assisted in presenting the experience of the interviewees on the phenomenon of crime in Lagos State and the gratification of their safety information need, as crime is of concern to all.

An Examination of Respondents' Perceptions of Crime in Lagos State and the Coverage by the Selected Newspapers

Crime is a normal feature in every society, especially in cities (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2005; Beirne & Messerschmdt, 1991; Durkheim, 2013/1933). This view is corroborated by the findings of this study. According to the participants, Lagos state is prone to crime. This is attributable to its population and economic activities. By the 2006 National census figures Lagos State has a population figure of 9, 113,605 which makes the State the second most populated in Nigeria, behind Kano State (Federal Republic of Nigeria Gazette, 2009 on National Census, 2006). According to the respondents, crime has remained recurrent in Lagos State despite efforts of the state government to combat it. The participants were unanimous in their verdict that "every type of crime manifest in Lagos". Participant C spoke of a wave in crime. He said: "when one form of crime goes down in Lagos State, another is on the rise". All the interviewees were unanimous on the presence of crime in Lagos State. According to the interviewees, at a time, cases of robbery were high. Recently, cases of kidnappings, murder, and rape are on the increase.

On the causes of crime, majority of the respondents noted that crime is mainly caused by the unemployed youths; aided by self- serving political office seekers, who in a bid to secure electoral victory at all cost, buy and distribute guns to the youths, and abandon them after their electoral victory. Such guns were not often surrendered after elections by the recipients. The

holders deploy the guns to fend for themselves by committing various crimes. The Police were also said to be culpable. Specifically, Participant A said that:

> About crime, I think our politicians brought us to this situation. Nigeria used to be a moderately safe country. It is our politicians that bought guns for the youths who are unemployed, but find it difficult to get the back the guns after the election. The police are also a part of the problem of crime. How can they fight crime when they are a part of it?

Participant C, agreed with the view that the unemployed youths were willing tools in the quest by politicians to attain power at all cost for the sake of themselves and their families. He, however, added that other social factors, such as loss of moral values, lust for money, and the youths being their partners in crime, could be adduced for the state of crime and criminality in Nigeria. He said that:

> We should not forget that as a people, we have lost our moral values and decency. We now worship money no matter how it is come by. Most times we read from the newspapers and hear from people that the sources of this ill-gotten wealth are evil and through corrupt means. Except we retrace our steps, the fight against crime and criminality can become worse. I hope the government and the newspapers can help us out of this mess.

Participant L corroborated the view. She said that the moral decadence in the society and the influence of negative aspects of foreign culture have led to various alien acts in our culture. She mentioned indecent dressing on the parts of male and female which often results in the ladies being sexually harassed by youths and some elderly ones. She also said further that many homes are broken due to the harsh economic situation in the country and that this development has led to a loss of bonding and the spirit of togetherness that was common in families and in communities in the olden days. Participant E mentioned the problem in the judiciary. He said that:

> Our courts are no longer for the masses. We now have judgement and not justice. It is now *cash and carry* (suggesting a miscarriage of justice due to inducement). The courts give judgement in favour of the highest bidder. There is no hope for the common man. The police too do not help matters. People now lack confidence in the police. That is why people now think twice to give the police any security information. We heard a story of how the police revealed the identity of their informants to the criminals, who were later attacked or even killed. The situation is that bad.

The culpability of the police in combating crime, moral decadence in the society, coupled with the involvement of political office holders in recruiting and equipping youths for crime, as it were, could be partly responsible for the alarming rate of crime and the associated sophistication in crime perpetuation in Lagos State. Crime has remained intractable in Nigeria. Of a fact, the Police and the Law Enforcement Agencies in Nigeria do not currently appear to be winning the war against crime and criminality in Nigeria.

In addition, it came to the fore during the interview sessions that: murder, kidnapping, robbery, car snatching and burglary were common occurrences in Lagos during the period of the study, but kidnapping was on the rise. The origin of modern-day kidnapping in Nigeria was traced to the Niger Delta area and dates back to the advent of the current democratic experience. This finding is corroborated by (Ngwama, 2014: 134.), who said that:

> The first act of kidnapping in Nigeria started in 2006 when the militants of the Niger Delta took total hostage to protest the inequality in the region. According to

> the militants, Nigeria is built at the expense of the region which serves as the cash cow for the whole country.

Ever since, kidnapping has been on the increase and defying every attempt by the government to combat it. The crime of kidnapping has since spread to other parts of Nigeria, especially in the creeks in South west Nigeria, of which Lagos State is prominent. The crime of kidnapping as expressed by one of the respondents is on the high in Lagos, especially, along Ikorodu and Epe axis. Ikorodu and Epe are aquatic communities in Lagos State and are surrounded by creeks. It is a widely held view that people from the Niger Delta area, because of their aquatic nature, are the ones perpetrating the crime of kidnapping, especially, across the creeks to escape arrests. One of the aftermaths of the crime of kidnapping is economic loss (Pshisva & Suarez, 2010). This fact also came to light in one of the interview sessions. Participant A regretted that she had to close down her poultry farm and declined to restock for fear of attack by the kidnappers. She said that poultry and vegetable farmers were often kidnapped along Epe, Sala, Igbodu and Lekki axes of Lagos State, adding that she had contributed levies (ransom) three times to free some kidnapped farmers.

Apart from economic loss, the spate of kidnappings from the findings from the in-depth interviews, has affected the psyche and the social lives of the respondents. It has led to fear of strangers and the neighbourhood and also altered movements, especially, commuting at night. This fact about paying ransom to rescue kidnapped victims negates the official position often held by the Nigerian police which claim that no ransom is paid to free kidnapped victims.

The Selected Nigerian Newspapers Source(s) of Crime Stories

In the in-depth interviews, some of the respondents (Participants, A, B, E F H & I) held the views that in covering crime in Nigeria, the media rely on eye witness accounts; report wrongly either by exaggerating, underreporting or by carrying misleading and inaccurate headlines. These views are captured in the words of Participant E, as follows:

> Unlike, the practice by CNN and Al Jazeera, Nigerian Newspapers often depend on other news media sources, especially foreign media and the posts by others to serve crime stories to the audience. In the process, facts are distorted and misrepresented, leading to ambiguities and different interpretations by the audience.

This finding is supported by Soola (2007:7) who observed the "inadequacy and inefficiency with which crime and violence are being reported in the Nigerian media''. On how the sampled newspapers can improve on crime reportage in view of what had been said, Participant E said that the newspapers can only help when they are ready to reduce their profits, because:

> It is those politicians and the criminals who call themselves business men to deceive people that advertise in the newspapers. So, the press-men would not want to go after them, if investigation links any of their patrons to crime.

This is an indictment on the press in carrying out its social responsibility function of providing factual, objective, fair and balanced reportage. Furthermore, Participant I said that the newspapers can improve crime reportage to benefit the society by visiting crime scenes as much as possible, investigate crime cases further and advise government on how to reduce crime in the society. He advocated that:

> Journalists should do more on crime coverage. They should stop relying on the posts by others, or news by foreign media before they can publish crime news. As a matter of fact, they should investigate crime cases further and see that offenders

> are punished. They should do this in the interest of the people and even the journalists themselves. We have heard on many occasions that some journalists were murdered and the killers remain unidentified. If they help the society to report on crime appropriately, they are also helping themselves.

On whether newspapers' crime stories enhance or gratify their safety information need, Participant C said that his exposure to newspapers' crime stories and his accumulated experience as a resident in Lagos State, has led to a change in behaviour safeguarding himself, his property and his loved ones when driving, especially, in the gridlock that often characterise traffic in Lagos State. In his submission, he has had to be applying central locking device, wind up his car glasses, and also hide such personal effects like phones, computers, as well as cash, among other easily attractive valuables from prying eyes.

In the same vein, Participant D said that she used to be a nocturnal person, who enjoyed night journeys. She has had to alter that aspect of her life, in view of the calamities and victimization that befell others that she read about in the selected newspapers, which occurred mostly at nights. Similarly, Participant E said she had fear of sexual assault on her girls. To this end, she finds it difficult leaving them behind with people based on the experience of others she read in the papers and heard from informal discussions that known and familiar faces are those who rape innocent girls. For fear of being kidnapped, Participant A said that she closed down her poultry business situated around the hot-bed of kidnapping activities.

Summary of Findings

From the analysis, the following themes and sub-themes which would add to the existing body of knowledge on media coverage of crime and the impact on the audience are discernible:

Themes

- The Nigerian nation, especially Lagos State was prone to crime.
- Murder, kidnapping, robbery, car snatching and burglary were common occurrences in Lagos during the period of the study, but kidnapping was on the rise. Ransom was paid to secure the release of kidnapped victims.
- There was proliferation and illegal possession of arms, mainly by the unemployed youths in Nigeria.
- The newspapers feasted on crime stories, but embraced episodic framing in crime reportage.
- The direct experience of crime victims from the selected Nigerian newspapers' crime stories enhanced and gratified the safety information need of the respondents by avoiding night travels, winding up car windows in traffic gridlocks, not leaving their children, especially, the girls with people, concealing some personal possession like phones from prying eyes at risky environment.

Sub- themes

- The selected newspapers relied on secondary sources for crime reportage.
- Insecurity, anxiety, and palpable fear pervaded the mind of the respondents.
- The police, judiciary and the political class were found culpable in crime festering in Nigeria.
- Moral values are on the decline in our society according to the respondents.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to the government, media and the public:

(1) Government should grant the press more enabling environment to report crime stories contextually.
(2) Newspapers in reporting crime stories should strive to balance their profit motives with public interest by being socially responsible. Social responsibility of the media places a moral burden on the media not only to describe social phenomena, but to investigate and interpret social phenomena in public interest.
(3) Crime should be treated by the media as a disease requiring diagnosis.
(4) On the part of the public, information seeking enhances appropriate behaviour in social contexts. An informed citizenry is an asset to a nation, and easier to govern.
(5) The public, through the family and other social systems should join hands in resuscitating the neglected value systems, of honesty, integrity, hard work and decency.

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CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF POLITICAL THUGGERY ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF OFU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KOGI STATE, NIGERIA.

Ejiga Isah Minkaila[1] & Linus Akor, PhD[2]

[1]Doctoral Student
Department of Sociology,
Faculty of Social Sciences
Prince Abubakar Audu University
Anyigba - Kogi State
Email: Ejiga.im@ksu.edu.ng

[2]Department of Sociology,
Faculty of Management & Social Sciences
Federal University Gusau
Zamfara State – Nigeria
Email: linus.akoryusuf@fugusau.edu.ng
Orcid ID**:** https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7810-8586
Corresponding Author: linus.akoryusuf@fugusau.edu.ng

Abstract

Thuggery is a destructive force that erodes the fabric of society and breeds fear and distrust. It fosters a disregard for the rule of law and the principles of justice even as it erodes the values of empathy, compassion and respect for others, leading to a breakdown of social order. Societies afflicted by thuggery suffer from increased crime rates, reduced quality of life and a general sense of unrest and anarchy. Thuggery, especially its political variant, is a form of social violence which poses immense challenge to the security of lives and property of Nigerians and undermines the socio-economic and political development of the nation. This study interrogated the causes and effects of political thuggery on the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area, Kogi State, Nigeria. Data for the study were collected from 384 respondents who were selected using the purposive and systematic random sampling techniques. Questionnaire, In-depth Interview (IDI) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were used to elicit data from respondents while the resultant quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22.0. The Frustration Aggression Theory was adopted to provide theoretical pathway for the study. Findings from the study attributed political thuggery in Ofu Local Government Area Kogi State Nigeria, to a plethora of factors, among which are: unemployment, frustration, and bad governance. The study recommends the initiation of aggressive skill acquisition and job creation programmes by the Kogi State Government to effectively engage the army of unemployed youth in the study area to divert them from political thuggery while law enforcement should be strengthened to prosecute state and non-state actors found to be the sponsors of thugs whom they deploy to snatch ballot papers and engage in mayhem before, during and after elections in the study area, to serve as deterrent to others.

Keywords: Bad governance; Frustration; Political thuggery, Socio-economic development; Unemployment**.**

Introduction

The menace of political thuggery in Africa is one of the most pressing challenges affecting how peaceful elections can be conducted (Cheeseman, 2014). This is important because elections in Africa have frequently triggered conflict. At least 80% of elections on the continent are associated with a serious violent incident that have resulted in loss of property and lives. Fierce competition between rival leaders or political parties during elections has been implicated in the outbreak of civil unrest in places such as Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Togo, Uganda, Zanzibar, South Sudan etc. (Kristine, Keith, Jose & Simrin, 2014). As the number of nations involved increases, so the number of lives and property lost increases.

In the African context, political thuggery manifests in different forms, sometimes making it more difficult for conflict experts to adequately capture. Though the issue of political violence is defined based on the direct relationship between the violent act and the immediate political incidence, political violence has surfaced from certain unclear channels. In most African nations, certain violence which had claimed lives and property have emanated from long time grievances over the political situation in the country in question. In some places like Mali, Senegal, Somalia, Libya, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Nigeria and Egypt; political violence has surfaced under the smoke screen of ethnic rivalry, religious domination, quest for change of overdue government and assumed corrupt government (Kristine, Keith, Jose Simrin, 2014).

These entire incidences had political undertones. Of paramount importance here is that whether the violence occurred before, during or after election, the quick and available machinery for the execution of this agenda are the youth. While elections have generally been more peaceful mechanisms for contesting power, politically motivated violence has occurred in about 60% of African elections between 1990 and 1999 (Scott 2012). Electoral violence is orchestrated by political elites to intimidate voters. Youth wings or party task forces are prominent exponents. In Zimbabwe, victory for the opposition in the 2008 parliamentary election triggered immediate and brutal response from the ruling party (ZANU-PF). A campaign of beatings and targeted assassinations of MDC officials and supporters forced the party leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, to withdraw from the presidential run-off vote (Africa Research Institute, 2012).

Political thuggery is a devastating phenomenon in Nigerian politics. It has brought about loss of lives and valuable property with attendant socio-economic and political consequences. The phenomenon is characterized by crises, conflict, dispute, rebellion, violence and even war, all of which combine to stunt the country's democratic development. The menace of political thuggery is such that thugs move mostly in organized groups victimizing, terrorizing, intimidating, and injuring, not only politicians but also innocent and law-abiding citizens. The menace is responsible for poor political culture as it results to death or poses deadly threats by deterring individuals from actively partaking into the political process and routine socio-economic activities in their homes, shops and on the streets within the country. Hassan (2011) noted that the political elite recruit unemployed youth as thugs whom they enlist to disrupt political campaigns, rallies as well as snatch ballot boxes for their personal aggrandizement as manifested during the 2011 general elections and subsequent elections in Nigeria. The trend of ballot box snatching is beginning to give way to vote selling and vote buying occasioned by the introduction of the card reader and other technology enabled voting devices into the country's election management process.

Elections can exacerbate tensions. A recurrence of factional clashes in northern Nigeria followed the Goodluck Jonathan's victory in the 2011 presidential election. A large number of people were reportedly killed in election-related violence in that part of the country. The political

class who often crave for political power, use various undemocratic means including the deployment of political thuggery to remain in power without considering the damage it does to the socio-economic and democratic sustainability of their nations. It is against this background that this study examines the menace of political thuggery on the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Research Problem

Political thuggery is a social problem that has been a menace to Nigeria's political system and Kogi State in particular. Successive governments have taken several steps to nip the scourge in the bud albeit without any tangible degree of success. In spite of the stringent provisions in the 2010 Electoral Act prohibiting hoodlums from engaging in political thuggery, incidences of political thuggery have continued to characterise every election circle in Nigeria with Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State having its own share of the disturbing menace. Ofu Local Government area has been known to be a hotbed of political thuggery and other electoral violence dating back to several years. For instance, Isiaka (2010), reported that hundreds of residents of Ejule in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State fled the town when heavy fighting broke out amongst some youths which left six (6) people dead and several others seriously injured. The then Council Chairman Mr. Enejo Peter had expressed sadness over the incidents, lamenting that the series of politically-motivated killings, maiming and destruction of property by miscreants have impeded economic and political activities in the area. He lamented that four (4) persons were killed while many others sustained serious injuries following a violent clash between rival political thugs in Ejule, Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State. The Chairman blamed the fracas on people he described as "desperate politicians" intent on disrupting the peace of the area by arming political thugs to foment trouble at the slightest provocation.

Not too long ago, one Mrs. Salome Abu, then Women Leader of the Peoples' Democratic Party, PDP, was reportedly burnt alive on November 19th, 2019, when thugs believed to be sympathetic to one of the opposition political parties stormed her residence at Ochadamu Ward in the study area. Ocholi Edicha, one of the suspected culprits was arrested, tried, convicted and jailed 12 years for his role in the murder of the female politician (Agbana, 2019). Similarly, one Kabir Bala, (aka Okwo), was killed on June 23, 2023 at Ejule in Ofu Local Government Area under unclear circumstances by hoodlums. Segun (2023), reported that Kabiru Bala, a notorious criminal was linked to the death of Salome Abu, a PDP Women Leader in Ochadamu Ward.

In nearby, Anyigba, in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, a 19-year first time voter and an undergraduate student of the Kogi State University, Anyigba, Usman Daniel was murdered in cold blood by stray bullets when thugs stormed one of the polling units located by the Kogi State Water Works at Ajetachi area, shot sporadically and snatched ballot boxes during the February 2019 election.

It is against the backdrop of the foregoing problems, that this study examines the causes and effects of political thuggery on the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

(a) What are the causes of political thuggery in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State?
(b) What are the effects of political thuggery on the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State?
(c) What strategies can be adopted to mitigate the menace of political thuggery in the study area?

Study Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided this study:

H_o. There is no positive correlation between the causes of political thuggery and their effects on the study area.

H_o. There is no significant correlation between the effects of political thuggery and the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Literature Review

The concept of Political Thuggery

Political thuggery can be defined as any negative behaviour associated with violence, hooliganism, kidnapping, murder, assassination, gang action and trouble 'shooting', that is strongly instrumental in distorting electoral results, snatching of ballot boxes, alteration of election results, elimination of political opponents under the influence of drugs and supernatural powers. Nigeria's political system is majorly characterized by acts of thuggery, violence, harassment etc. Overall, political thuggery is characterized by robbery, intimidation, gangsterism, murder, physical assault and often involves physical combat between two opposing gangs or groups, which ultimately generates inter-personal or group hostilities. Since the pre-independence General Elections of 1959, politics in Nigeria has been characterized by thuggery and violence (Abubakar, 2015).

Achimugu (2024) conceptualizes thuggery as the actions and behaviours of individuals who have succumbed to lack of moral compass and empathy for others by engaging in violence, intimidation, lawlessness, and criminal acts without regards for societal norms and values. He noted that thugs perpetrate crimes such as physical assault, robbery and extortion, often using brute force to achieve their goals. According him, those who engage in thuggery prioritize their own desires and power over the well-being of others thereby causing harm and suffering without remorse. Also, Lawal cited in Idris (2011: 1) views thuggery as criminalization of politics. He noted that when politics is criminalized, it is left in the hands of ruffians, thugs, hoodlums and hooligans, while the good citizens are scared away. For the purpose of this study, thuggery is any act of politically-motivated violence deployed by desperate politicians to cause mayhem with the ultimate desire of using same to gain ascension to power and retain political relevance.

In order to have a firm grasp of the causes of political thuggery and how it works and affects the socio-economic and political development of societies, Nigeria inclusive, a number of studies have focused on the menace. This has led to the conduct of several empirical studies.

Alphonsus' (2015), study centred on 'Political thuggery; A threat to democratic consolidation in Nigeria. The aim of the study was to examine the reason for the prevalence incidence of political thuggery in Nigeria during elections. The study attributed thuggery to youth unemployment and its attendant poverty and frustration; the negative impact of money politics and the phenomenon of godfather-ism in Nigeria's political process. The study recommended that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should make adequate security arrangement to resist or mitigate the challenge. Part of the mitigation efforts was the provision in the Electoral Act 2010 criminalizing political thuggery. While we agree with Alphonsus' recommendation, the snag however, has been the lack of political will to prosecute electoral offenders, especially political thugs and their sponsors.

Umar (2017), in his work titled "Almajiri (Traditional Islamic scholarship) and political thuggery in Nigeria", sought to identify the causes of political thuggery vis-a-vis the Almajirai system. The study which adopted the cross-sectional survey design, found among others, that

without any significant variation in the perception of stake holders, there was a very weak level of involvement of the Almajiri in political thuggery in Bauchi State (2007-2015). The study therefore advocated a reform of Nigeria's educational system, including conventional and the informal sectors; poverty alleviation, and strong enforcement of law and order as possible antidotes to political thuggery. The study, in our opinion, failed to identify the major cause of thuggery, which is lack of employment opportunity for the ever-increasing army of Nigerian graduates.

Emma and Aloysius (2017), in their study focused on establishing the causes of electoral violence in Nigeria's democracy with Bayelsa and Kogi State 2015 general election as study foci. The researchers adopted the Frustration-Aggression theory to provide intellectual direction. The study which was cross-sectional in nature, identified among other factors, frustration-aggression, poverty and self-centeredness as the predictors of electoral violence and recommended among others, that the elected representatives should keep their campaign promises while the INEC should devise appropriate mechanisms for ensuring free and fair elections. Even though the study provided insight into the menace of electoral violence it, however, failed to underscore the fact that human beings, especially politicians could do and say anything while in need, but the moment they get what they wanted, they might renege on such promises thereby leading to dissatisfaction which is one of the major causes of political thuggery.

Galadima, Sivapalan, and Abd's (2019), work on the study of youth unemployment and terrorism in Nigeria, examined a correlation between youth unemployment and Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria, using the frustration-aggression theory as theoretical frame work. The study found that the increasing number of unemployed youths in the north east of Nigeria has provided adequate pool of recruits for the Boko Haram elite which they deploy to perpetrate their murderous acts. The study recommended that government should declare a state of emergency on employment to nip the scourge in the bud. From the perspective of the study under review, it is noteworthy that such recommendation can hardly solve the problem given that no government-enabled employment opportunity will be commensurate to the huge sums of money being paid the radicalized youths by the Boko Haram leadership.

Abubakar, Bola, Abdulkadir and Ramatu (2020), in their study on political thuggery and violence in Gombe State of Nigeria, isolated the selfish interest of thugs, poverty and unemployment, illiteracy, poor governance, group sentiment and injustice as causes of political thuggery and violence in the study area. The study recommended among others, provision of employment, orientation towards peaceful coexistence, good governance, equity and justice as well as proper education as panacea. The study however, failed to address the politics of ethnicity, the majority versus minority divide, which is prevalent in Gombe State as another cause of political thuggery.

Effects of Political Thuggery on Political and Socio-Economic Activities in Nigeria

Saliu and Enojo (2016), in a study titled "Political conflict, Godfatherism and Democratic Sustainability on Nigeria's Fourth Republic, examined the nexus between contestants and godfatherism in seeking for any elective office. The study which was cross-sectional, found out amongst others, that godfathers have negatively impacted the democratic process in Nigeria as their activities have denied the citizenry the opportunity of electing their preferred candidates into political offices. The study recommended the need for the redefinition of the country's value system even as it failed to appreciate the fact that the personal greed of political thugs, manifested in the destruction of lives and property during elections, negatively affect the development of the society.

Uche and Obi (2016), whose study examined the effects of political thuggery in Kogi State with reference to Anyigba town in Dekina Local Government Area from March 2015 – December 2015, adopted the survey research design. The study found out that political thuggery has fouled the political process in Kogi State with severe consequences for the polity and recommended that politicians should stop the usage of political thugs to win elections. The study however, failed to advise both governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to provide employment for the youth to redirect their energy from engagement in thuggery and electoral violence.

Rasak and Garba (2017), in a study titled "Political Thuggery, Violence and Woman Participation in Politics in Nigeria" found out that for balanced participation devoid of gender inequality, Nigerian women need to be more enlightened to fully participate in the electoral process by seeking election into political offices, the inherent challenges of intimidation and harassment by political thugs notwithstanding. The study noted that contesting for elective positions is not the prerogative of the male gender but a constitutional right of both the male and female genders.

Adamu and Abubakar (2017), in a research titled "The effects of Sara-Suka political thuggery on democratic and social activities in Bauchi State: A Study of the 2015 General Elections" found out among other factors, that instilling fear in candidates, hindering the electorate from participating in political activities, killing of innocent people, human rights violation, destruction of valuable properties, insecurity during and after election and intimidation of people within the state, serve as fetters to the electoral process in the study area. The study recommended that the Bauchi State should institute appropriate measures to nip the identified challenges in the bud. The study was however, silent on the contributions of non-governmental organisation and private individuals towards solving the problem affecting the society. Even though there is similarity of title between the former and the current study, the former was conducted in Bauchi while the latter study is in Ofu local government of Kogi State.

Alhaji (2018), in a study titled "Causes and effects of political thuggery in Nigeria" examined the reasons for the persistence of political thuggery in Nigeria during elections. The study revealed that political thuggery hinders public accountability of elected officers and is thus, is a bane of good governance in Nigeria. Relying on secondary data, the study noted that party differences and political violence have common and destructive effect on the unity of Nigeria in the social, political, cultural and economic spheres.

Okafor and Okafor (2018), in their study titled "Political violence and the prospects of democracy in Nigeria: A study of the South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria" examined the impact of political violence on public perception of democracy in Nigeria among the electorate in the South-Eastern Nigeria. The study adopted survey method of data collection, as well as descriptive and inferential statistics as tools for checking the correlation between political violence and indices of democracy in the region. It found out that political violence negatively affected public attitude towards democracy as political thuggery dissuades people from active participation in the electoral process.

The major underlying lesson to be learnt from these studies is that political thuggery is not only a cog in the wheel of progress of any political system but it is also antithetical to the growth, development and sustenance of democracy as a system of representative government in Nigeria, as it is in other emerging democracies of the world.

Theoretical Framework

For this study, the Frustration Aggression theory is used to explain political thuggery among the youth in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria. The original formulation

of the frustration–aggression hypothesis by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears (1939) stated that the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression. What is especially noteworthy in this definition is that, unlike the use of the word in everyday language, frustration here is not understood as an emotional experience but as an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response.

The original theory claimed that: (a) Aggression is always preceded by frustration and (b), Frustration always leads to aggression. The theory has undergone two important revisions: one by Neal Miller in 1941, and another by Leonard Berkowitz in 1989 (Psychol, 1989). Although the 1939 and 1941 versions of the theory were controversial and heavily criticized, the 1989 version has been better received and is commonly used as a theoretical basis for modern aggression research.

This study finds relevance in the Frustration-Aggression theory because it could be used to link the ever-increasing rate of youth unemployment with political thuggery in Nigeria. The inability of the Nigerian government to provide employment opportunities for its teeming youth has provided a fertile ground for the displacement of frustration by this class of people. There is a strong feeling of joy and expectation when a student is about graduating from a higher institution of learning. However, such expectation gradually fades away and is replaced with frustration after some years of hopelessness as necessitated by unfruitful efforts made to secure gainful employment. When the frustration prolongs as the employment delays or is denied, there is a high probability that such youth may take to unapproved means to actualize their goals. One of such outlawed means which some of the frustrated youth resort to in Nigeria, is to make themselves ready tools to be used for political thuggery by the political class.

Methodology

This study used the cross-sectional survey research design in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting data from only a segment of people or items considered to be representative of the entire group or population so that generalization can be made based on the data collected.

This study was conducted in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State. Ofu Local Government is situated in the Eastern Senatorial zone of Kogi State and was created on the11th of May, 1989. It was carved out of the old Idah Local Government Area (Ofu L.G.A Information Unit, 2022). The population for this study consisted of 192,169 people which is the entirety of the population of Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi Sate, according to the 2006 census figures. The projected population of Ofu Local Government Area was 276, 545 (Ladan, 2020). To get the sample size, the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table was used. Deducing from the table, the sample size drawn from Ofu Local Government Area for the study was 384 respondents.

Purposive and systematic sampling techniques were adopted for the study while three instruments: questionnaire, In-depth Interview (IDI) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were used for data collection. The questionnaire was used in this study because it helped the researchers to reach out to a wide and diverse population of respondents. It was administered by the researchers and two research assistants with social science background and good knowledge of the culture and tradition of the study area.

The second instrument, the IDI was used to complement the questionnaire and it enabled the researchers to probe deeper into the subject of the study. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used to elicit information from members of target groups selected from five of the eleven wards,

namely, Ejule / Alla Ward, Alloma / Okura Ward, Ugwolawo Ward I, Itobe / Okokenyi Ward, and Ochadamu Ward. A total of 25 participants among them, the Onu (King of the town) Pastors, Imam, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), community leaders and heads of the vigilante groups in the selected political wards, formed the FGD participants.

The data generated were analyzed using inferential statistics, frequency and percentage tables with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22.0. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical tool was used to establish probable relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

Results /Discussion

This section of the paper examines the causes as well as the effects of political thuggery on the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State. The discussion is abinitio, premised on the objectives of the study, while drawing inferences from extant literature on the topic of the paper.

Causes of thuggery in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State

Table 3: Shows the causes of political thuggery in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State

S/N	Item	Frequency	Percentage
1	Unemployment and the attendant poverty lead to political thuggery in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State.	88	22.92
2	Political godfathers do everything possible to install their godsons into office during elections.	113	29.43
3	Frustration/aggression constitute the brain behind of electoral violence in the study area.	69	17.97
4	Illiteracy, poor governance, group sentiment and injustice jointly cause political thuggery and violence.	78	20.31
5	Ineffectiveness of security personnel creates room for political thuggery.	36	9.37
6	**Total**	**384**	**100**

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 3 indicates that 88 respondents or 22.92 % of the total population of respondents identified unemployment and the resultant poverty as the cause of political thuggery in the study area, while 113 others or 29.42% implicated the phenomenon of political godfatherism for the menace. A total of 69 (17.97%); 78 (20.31%) and 36 (9.3%) respondents, respectively, singled out frustration/aggression, illiteracy, poor governance, group sentiment and injustice and

ineffectiveness of security personnel in that order, as the drivers of political thuggery in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State.

The respondents' viewpoints are in agreement with the views canvassed in the literature by Alphonsus (2015). Alphonsus in a study of political thuggery as a threat to democratic consolidation in Nigeria, specifically isolated unemployment among Nigerian youth as the major pull factor for engagement in the nefarious act. He noted that poverty and frustration which are the by-products of unemployment, make the unemployed vulnerable to the antics of greedy and selfish politicians who recruit them for their personal aggrandizement.

These findings also cohere with the views of Focus Group Discussants and In-depth interviewees (IDI) as shown below:

> Political thuggery is caused by factors such as unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, godfatherism and selfishness on the part of both the politicians and the thugs alike (Ejule, Male, 55 years, FGD, 2021).

A female respondent in Ugwolawo Ward also noted:

> Political thuggery is caused by the Godfatherism and God son factor. The God father try (sic) every possible means to install their godson (sic) with the aid of hoodlums by criminalizing politics (Ugwolawo, Female, 45. IDI, 2021).

Effects of Political thuggery on socio-economic and political activities of the study area.

Table 4: Shows the effects of political thuggery on economic and political activities in Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State

S/N	Item	Frequency	Percentage
1	Political thuggery leads to destruction of lives property.	20	5.21
2	Political thuggery results in the disruption of elections.	25	6.51
3	Political thuggery scares voters during elections.	30	7.81
4	Political thuggery leads to the imposition of unpopular candidates.	22	5.73
5	Political thuggery hinders economic activities.	34	8.85
6	Political thuggery contributes to the absence of banking and commercial activities in the study area.	10	2.60
7	Relocation of educational institutions from the study area	04	1.04
8	All of the above	239	62.24
9	**Total**	**384**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2021

From table 4, it is evident that an over-whelming population of 239 respondents or 62.24% of the study population identified a combination of destruction of lives and property, disruption of election, scaring of voters during elections, imposition of unpopular candidates, disruption of economic activities, contribution to absence of banking and commercial activities and relocation

of educational institutions to safer havens as the cumulative effects of political thuggery on the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State. However, a combination of 145 respondents or 37.76%, identified each of the factors in the table in different but negligible percentages as the effects of political thuggery in the study area.

The majority view point tallies with the work of Adamu and Abubakar (2017), on "The Effect of Sara-Suka Political Thuggery on Democratic and Social Activities in Bauchi State: A Study of 2015 General Election" whose outcome identified tendencies such as creation of fear among candidates, hindering the electorate from engaging in political activities, killing of innocent people, violation of human rights, destruction of valuable property, insecurity during and after election and intimidation of people within the state during elections as the cumulative effects of political thuggery.

The study findings also resonated with views from the different FGD sessions. Two of the discussants captured their feelings as follows:

> Political thuggery results in fighting, killing and stealing as well as the destruction of the market which is our primary source of income. Outsiders stop coming to the market to buy and sell because of the activities of thugs during elections (Itobe, FGD, 2021).
>
> Thuggery activities have negatively affected our primary source of income and livelihood including the peaceful atmosphere enjoyed within our community (Alloma, FGD, 2021).

It is noteworthy that in addition to the questionnaire and FGD as well as the IDI responses, the authors also tested the hypotheses formulated for the study. In determining the relationship and difference between independent and dependent variables, two (2) null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The first hypothesis sought to establish the correlation between the causes of political thuggery and the effect.

Data from the study findings supported the hypothesis that the causes of political thuggery such as unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, frustration and aggression, etc. have net effects on the prevalence of political thuggery in a given environment, in this case, Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi Sate. This is also consistent with the study of Alphonsus (2015) which identified unemployment and its attendant poverty, frustration and aggression as risk factors. This finding further supported the assumption of the frustration -Aggression theory that the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and contrariwise.

The second hypothesis posited that there was a significant relationship between political thuggery and the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area. Findings from the study as shown in table 4, attested to such relationship. The work of Adamu and Abubakar (2017) and Alhaji (2018), both of which established the destructive effects of political thuggery on socio-economic and political life of citizens further buttressed the validity of the second hypothesis.

Conclusion

This study investigated the causes and effects of political thuggery on the socio-economic and political development of Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria. The study identified thuggery as a destructive force that erodes the fabric of society and breeds fear and distrust while noting that societies bedeviled by thuggery suffer from increased crime rates, reduced quality of life and a general sense of unrest and anarchy.

The study isolated unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, breakdown in core moral values, lack of readiness on the part of the government to deal with perpetrators of political thuggery as the major the drivers of political thuggery in the study area. It asserted that the menace of political thuggery has held back the development of the area through the imposition of unpopular candidates who are surrogates of political godfathers to whom they owe allegiance rather than the electorate. The menace has also retarded the economic growth of the study area as both local and national investors are scared of investing in the area while people live in perpetual fear of possible loss of lives and destruction of property by political miscreants, especially before, during and after elections.

Recommendations

Against the backdrop of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested for policy formulation and possible implementation:

(a) It is obvious from previous studies and this study that a combination of factors such as unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, breakdown in core moral values, lack of readiness on the part of the government have led to political thuggery. It is hereby recommended that governments at all levels should initiate measures through intervention outlets like the NDE, YES, etc., to create skill acquisition programmes to engage the army of unemployed youths and rechannel their energies from engagement in acts of thuggery and political violence.

(b) It is also evident in extant literature that political thuggery has devastating effects including but not limited to killing of innocent persons and destruction of social amenities, which thus, scare away both foreign and local investors. Law enforcement should be strengthened to prosecute both state and no-state actors who sponsor thugs, irrespective of their status, to deter others from the nefarious act.

(c) An important aspect in dealing with thuggery is for the political governance structures at both the Kogi State and Ofu Local Government Area, to ensure the promotion and cultivation of a culture of empathy, respect and ethical behaviour, especially among the youth, to enthrone a more harmonious, safe, peaceful and just environment for all.

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PATRONAGE OF ANTENATAL CARE SERVICES IN ZAMFARA STATE, NIGERIA.

Kabiru Ibrahim Yankuzo
Department of Sociology, Federal University Birnin Kebbi, Nigeria.
Email: kabiru.yankuzo@fubk.edu.ng Phone: +2348062619669
&
Folashade B. Okeshola
Department of Sociology, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria
Email: shadeoyz@gmail.com Phone: +2348036499929
Corresponding author: kabiru.yankuzo@fubk.edu.ng (+2348062619669)

Abstract
Utilisation of antenatal care (ANC) services by women during pregnancy plays a pivotal role in averting pregnancy related morbidity and mortality. However, utilisation of the services remains low over the years in Nigeria and Zamfara State, in particular. This study examined the patronage of ANC services in urban, semi-urban and rural areas of Zamfara State, Nigeria. Quantitative data were used for the study. A total of 384 copies of questionnaire were administered to women of child-bearing age that had children under-five, using the Multistage Cluster Sampling technique. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 was used for the data analysis. The Health-Seeking Behavior model developed by Ronald Max Anderson was adopted as the theoretical framework for the study. The study discovered that majority of mothers received ANC services from skilled healthcare providers at least, once, but the utilisation of the specific components of the services was low. Majority of the respondents did not comply with the current 8 ANC Visits, did not take folic acid and iron tablets daily and had not HIV test during pregnancy. Some women did not use the services at all due to reasons including lack of husband/ mother in-law's permission, patronage of traditional birth attendants, lack of interest, not experiencing any pregnancy related illness, distance to healthcare facility, transportation problems, insecurity and poverty. The study recommends that the Zamfara State government should ensure availability, affordability and accessibility of ANC drugs at all government health facilities. The policy of compelling pregnant women to patronize ANC services as well as carrying out mobilization and enlightenment campaigns throughout the State at regular intervals, should be encouraged.
Keywords: Ante-natal Care Services. Health-Seeking Behaviour Model; Maternal mortality; Skilled Health Care Providers; Traditional Birth Attendants.

Introduction

Antenatal care services (ANCs) are the most cost-effective preventive health care (WHO, 1992; Reiss,1999; Park, 2015) reserved for the use of the world's prospective mothers who appear to be one of the most vulnerable groups exposed to many diseases in society. ANC is a competent preventive medical care service given to women during pregnancy. It is worthy to note that women suffer from many pregnancy related morbidity and mortality issues in the course of child bearing. Over the years, there has been increasing concern by governmental and non-governmental organizations, scholars and practitioners of public health over the high level of global maternal mortality (Black et al., 2016) which could have been prevented through the utilization of ANC services.

A recent report by the WHO et al. (2023), reported that 70% of global maternal deaths in 2020 occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa alone, followed by Central and Southern Asia (17%). Nigeria had the highest number of maternal deaths estimated to have accounted for over a quarter (28.5%) of maternal deaths worldwide in 2020 (WHO et al., 2023). The major causes of maternal mortality in Nigeria are pregnancy related complications that are avoidable through adequate utilisation of ANC services. Despite concerted efforts made over the years by governmental and non-governmental organisations such as WHO, UNICEF etc. in revamping primary healthcare centers in Sub-Saharan Africa, utilization of ANC services in Nigeria is low especially in the North West and North East geo-political zones of the country. While many countries in Africa have reached ANC coverage of 90%, available report in Nigeria shows that 67% of women aged 15-49, who gave birth in the 5 years preceding 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) received ANC from a skilled provider during the pregnancy for their most recent births in Nigeria and only 57% had at least four ANC visits (NPC, 2018).

Historically, in the early 1900 on-ward, ANC was based on many visits which is known as traditional approach to antenatal care model. Later, the Model was revised in 2001 by the WHO and a new model called focused antenatal care (FANC) was adopted, recommending only four visits. However, the aim of reducing maternal mortality was not achieved. Then the model was further revised in 2016 and arrived at 2016 WHO ANC model consisting of eight contacts in order to reduce perinatal deaths (WHO & USAID, 2016). Studies conducted in Nigeria in general and Zamfara State in particular, reported low utilization of ANC services (Idris et al., 2013; Fagbamigbe & Idemudia, 2015; Shamaki & Alabi, 2017; NPC, 2018). Low utilization of ANC services is associated with maternal morbidity which could inevitably lead to high level of maternal deaths (Alliance, 2015; Shamaki & Alabi, 2017). It is worrisome that Zamfara State had only 25.9% of women with 4+ antenatal visits during pregnancy of the most recent birth, 35.2% received antenatal care, 37.4% took iron tablets or syrup, 19. 9% received two or more ante-tetanus injections (NPC, 2018).

Although studies have been done on the patronage of ANC services in developing countries, research designed to determine whether mothers comply with the current 8 ANC visits, take folic acid and iron tablets daily and have HIV test in urban, semi-urban and rural areas of Zamfara State, Nigeria would appear not to have been conducted in that area. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge the knowledge gap.

Research Questions

This study sought to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of patronage of ANC services in Zamfara State?
2. To what extent do pregnant women comply with the current 8 ANC visits in Zamfara State?
3. Do pregnant women take folic acid and iron tablets daily?

4. To what extent do pregnant women undergo HIV tests in Zamfara State?

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the patronage of antenatal care services in Zamfara State. The specific objectives were:

1. To examine the level of patronage of ANC services in Zamfara State.
2. To ascertain the compliance of pregnant women with the current 8 ANC visits in Zamfara State.
3. To determine whether or not, women take folic acid and iron tablets daily during pregnancy
4. To ascertain whether or not, women undergo HIV tests during pregnancy in Zamfara State.

Conceptual Clarifications

Antenatal care: The WHO (2005), defined ANC as a type of competent preventive care with the aim of providing consistent checkups that enable health personnel to prevent, detect as well as treat potential health problems that may arise in a pregnant woman. ANC services were measured in terms of receiving antenatal care from a skilled provider, number of ANC visits, number of anti-tetanus injections received, measuring blood pressure, urine and blood measurement, receiving HIV tests, receiving folic acid and iron tablets as well as antimalarial tablets

Patronage/utilization: is a measure of whether and how a phenomenon is being used. In the context of this study, patronage refers to the extent to which ANC services are being utilized by mothers during their last pregnancy. Utilisation of ANC services was high at 80% and above coverage.

Maternal mortality: This has to do with cases of maternal deaths caused by pregnancy related complications in a given period of time

Literature Review

Studies conducted on the patronage of ANC services from different parts of the world continue to report diverse findings. Such studies conducted in Ghana, Saudi Arabia, Burkina Faso, and Nepal reported high levels of patronage of ANC services. For instance, study by Gudu & Addo (2017) in rural Ghana found that 97% of the mothers received ANCs during their last pregnancy and 75% had four or more ANC visits. This shows that the level of patronage is encouraging in a developing country like Ghana, located in sub-Saharan Africa, a region which is generally believed to have poor or very low uptake of ANC services. This finding was corroborated with the outcomes of other studies in Nepal by Awasthi, et al. (2018) and in Saudi Arabia, by Al hazmi, et al. (2017), which revealed that 80.9% of prospective mothers followed up ANC at first and second trimesters and out of which 80.1% followed up their pregnancies consistently and regularly.

In contrast, studies conducted in Nigeria over the years, reported low patronage of ANC services. For instance, data from a nationwide study by Babalola & Fatusi (2009) revealed that 60% of mothers used antenatal care services at least, once, during their most recent pregnancy. The finding was also confirmed by another nationwide study by Dahiru & Oche (2015), which reported only 54% of women that had at least four ANC visits. Although the studies relied on secondary data derived from nationwide studies, the findings gave clear direction of maternal healthcare utilisation in the country. These findings were further corroborated by those of a study

by Fagbamigbe & Idemudia (2015) which that found only 11.3 % of the respondents had minimum acceptable quality of ANC utilisation.

Furthermore, a study carried out in Northern Nigeria by Doctor et al. (2012) showed that only 26% of the women surveyed had received antenatal care for their most recent pregnancies in northern Nigeria. The finding was in line with that of a study conducted in Sokoto by Shamaki & Alabi (2017), which reported that only 31.1% of the respondents received ANC services. The gap that has been established from all the studies is that the scope of ANC activities measured was inadequate as most of the studies focused only on dichotomous variables. In other words, none of the studies investigated the specific components of ANC services such as compliance to 8 ANC visits, taking folic acid and iron tablets daily, breast examination, abdominal examination and HIV tests which this study addressed.

Theoretical Framework

The study applied the Health-Seeking Behavior model developed by Ronald Max Anderson. The model was first developed in the late 1960s. The basic propositions of the model are that utilization of health care services by people depends on three major variables/determinants: the predisposing factors, enabling factors and need for health care (Andersen, 1995). Central to this study is the predisposing and enabling factors. Predisposing factors such as place of residence, insecurity, patriarchy, health belief, and interest, influence mothers' decision to utilize or not utilize the services. Enabling characteristics like access to health services, level of income, regular source of care, transportation, as well as the need for safe pregnancy and delivery so as to avert maternal morbidity and mortality, determine the patronage of ANC services including compliance to current 8 ANC visits, taking folic acid and iron tablets daily as well as receiving HIV tests during pregnancy.

Methods

Description of the Study Area

Zamfara State is one of the States in Nigeria. The State covers an area of 38,418 square kilometers with an estimated population of 5,066556 people in 2020, out of which 1,114,642 constituting 22% were women of child bearing age (Zamfara State Ministry of Health, 2020). In the context of this study, Gusau (the State capital) was considered as urban area, the local government headquarters was considered as semi-urban while political ward headquarters and other villages were considered rural areas.

Design of the study

This was a cross sectional survey study because the issues were examined at one point in time. Questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection, multi stage cluster sampling was employed for the administration of the questionnaire to the targeted population.

Study population and Sample Size

This comprised women of child bearing age (WCBA) i.e. women age 15 to 49 years that had under-five children. An estimate by the Zamfara State Ministry of Health revealed that 1,114642 people constituting 22% of the total population of Zamfara State in 2020 were women of child bearing age and that constituted the total population of the study. In determining the sample size, the formula developed by Krejcie & Morgan (1970) was adopted. The formula is as follows:

$$S = \frac{X^2\ NP\ (1-P)}{d^2\ (N-1)+X^2\ P\ (1-P)}$$

Where:
S = stands for the required sample size. X^2 = stands for the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level of 3.841. N = stands for the total population or population size = 1,114,642. P = stands for the population proportion assumed to be .50. d^2= stands for the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion 0.05. Based on the application of the formula, the sample size arrived at was 384 respondents. Furthermore, six LGAs were used out of the fourteen LGAs in the State (Gusau, Tsafe, Kaura Namoda, Zurmi, Maradun and Anka LGAs).

Two political wards were selected from each of the LGAs. These political wards were: Dauki and Tsafe Central from Tsafe LGA, Tudun Wada and Wanke from Gusau LGA, Kyambarawa and Dangaladima from Kaura Namoda LGA, Kanwa and Zurmi from Zurmi LGA, Maradu South and Birni Kaya/Dosara from Maradu LGA, Dangaladima and Galadima from Anka LGA. The formula below was used in determining the sample size for each political ward.

$$\text{Ward Sample Population} = \frac{No.\ of\ Ward\ Population}{No.\ of\ the\ Total\ population of\ all\ the\ wards} \times \frac{Sample\ size}{1}$$

Sampling technique

Considering the size of the State, the Multi-Stage Cluster Sampling was employed for the study.

Stage I: The whole State was grouped into three Senatorial Districts (SDs) namely: Zamfara Central Senatorial District (ZCSD), Zamfara North Senatorial District (ZNSD) and Zamfara West Senatorial District (ZWSD).

Stage II: Simple random sampling was used in selecting two LGAs from each of the three SDs.

Stage III: one Political Ward was selected from each of the six LGAs using simple random sampling and one political ward located in headquarters of each LGA was purposively selected in order to have diverse findings.

Stage IV: Enumeration areas were selected from each of the selected Political wards.

Stage V: Systematic sampling technique was employed in administering questionnaire copies to mothers. Where the target mother was not found, the next house was adopted and where two or more mothers were found, a free hand was given to members of the households to select among themselves who would represent them, or balloting was used.

Method of data collection

Semi-structured questionnaire, consisting series of questions derived from the objectives of the study were distributed to women of child-bearing age and 76% of the questionnaire copies was translated into Hausa language. A comprehensive ANC checklist by the Zamfara State Ministry of Health was used to obtain information on the components of the services used by the respondents. The respondents were met in their respective homes through female research assistants who were employed and trained by the researchers. Both direct administration and self -administration techniques of administering questionnaire were used.

Method of data analysis

A total of 382 copies of questionnaire were retrieved. The questionnaires were edited and itemized, the data were coded and entered into the computer. Data cleaning was done by carrying out range and consistency checks. The Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) Version 21was used for the analysis. Univariate and Bivariate analysis were employed.

Ethical consideration

On consent, all the authors declare that written informed consent and co-operation of the respondents was solicited and obtained for the conduct and publication of this research study. Regarding ethical approval, all the authors hereby declare that the study has been examined and approved by the Zamfara State Ministry of Health Ethical Committee.

Findings

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Location	Urban	98	25.7
	Semi-urban	154	40.3
	Rural	130	34.0
	Total	**382**	**100.0**
Age in years less	Le thtthan 18 years	17	4.5
	18 -29	191	50.0
	30 – 39	139	36.4
	40 - 49	32	8.4
	50 and above	3	0.8
	Total	382	**100.0**
Highest	No formal education	36	9.4
Educational	Quranic education	121	31.7
	Primary certificate	22	5.8
qualification	SSCE	111	29.1
	NCE/ND	44	11.5
	HND	19	5.0
	University degree	28	7.3
	Others	1	0.3
	Total	382	100.0
Occupation	Full h house wife/unemployed	82	21.5
	Non-agricultural labour	9	2.4
	Craftswoman	146	38.2
	Trader	44	11.5
	Food selling	39	10.2
	Traditional medicine woman	3	0.8
	Farming	3	0.8
	Civil servant	44	11.5
	Others	12	3.1
	Total	382	100.0
Income	No response	3	.8
	Less than N5000	207	54.2
	N5,001 – 15,000	70	18.3

N5,001 – 20,000	31	8.1
N 20,001 – 30,000	37	9.7
N30,001 -40,000	27	7.1
N40,001 and above	7	1.8
Total	**382**	**100.0**

Field Survey, 2021

As indicated in Table I, 40.3% of the respondents were from Semi-urban areas, 34% from rural areas while 25.7% from urban areas. About 94.8% were within the age bracket (18 - 49 years) which is conceived as child-bearing age. A significant number of mothers (40.9%) had no Western education and schooling process of majority of women with Western education apparently terminates at completion of secondary school education. The highest percentage of the respondents (88.5%) were not working in the formal sector, out of which 21.5% engaged in domestic chores. Majority (54.2%) earned less than N 5,000 per month which illustrates the respondents' very low level of income in the State.

Patronage of ANC Services

Table 2: Respondents on Specific ANC Services Received During their Last Pregnancies.

	Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Whether ANC services were received from a skilled healthcare provider	Yes	346	90.6
	No	36	9.4
	Total	382	100.0
Number of times ANC was visited	1 – 2	38	9.9
	3 -4	83	21.7
	5 – 7	83	22
	8	88	23.0
	More than 8 times	29	7.6
	I don't know	25	6.5
	No response	36	9.4
	Total	382	100.0
Whether blood pressure checking was performed	Yes	290	75.9
	No	92	24.1
	Total	382	100.0
Whether urine tests was performed	Yes	259	67.8
	No	123	32.2
	Total	**382**	**100.0**
Whether hepatitis B Test was performed	Yes	119	31.2
	No	263	68.8
	Total	**382**	**100.0**
Whether HIV Test was performed	Yes	159	41.6
	No	223	58.4
	Total	**382**	**100.0**
Whether breast cancer test was performed	Yes	82	21.5
	No	300	78.5
	Total	**382**	**100.0**

Whether diet related advice was received	Yes	169	44.2
	No	213	55.8
	Total	**382**	**100.0**
Whether family planning advice was received	Yes	142	37.2
	No	240	62.8
	Total	382	100.0
Whether breast feeding related advice was received	Yes	166	43.5
	No	216	56.5
	Total	382	100.0

Table 2: Respondents on Specific ANC Services Received During their Last Pregnancies (Contin.)

Number of times iron and folic acid tablets were taken	**Never**	**32**	**8.4**
	Once	31	8.1
	Twice	40	10.5
	Daily	190	49.7
	Weekly	54	14.1
	Others	29	7.6
	No response	6	1.6
	Total	382	100.0
Number of times antimalarial drugs were taken	None	21	5.5
	1	40	10.4
	2	65	17.0
	3	111	29.1
	4 and above	130	34.0
	No response	15	4.0
	Total	382	100.0
Number of tetanus toxoids (TT) injections received	None	42	11.0
	1	99	26.0
	2	130	34.0
	3	102	26.7
	More than 3	2	0.5
	No response	7	1.8
	Total	**382**	**100.0**

Field Survey, 2021

As depicted in Table 2, majority of respondents (90.6%) received certain number of ANC services at least once during their most recent birth and only 9.4% of mothers had not received ANC services at all. The respondents were asked to state reasons for using or not using ANC services. 41.1% did not respond to the question, 37.2% used ANC because it is important for both babies and the mothers, 13.9% used ANC because their husbands encouraged them to do so. Of those who did not use ANC services at all, 5.2% was due to lack of husband's permission, 0.7% due to patronage of traditional birth attendants, others 1.9% reported lack of interest, distance to healthcare facility, insecurity and poverty as reasons for non-utilizing the services.

WHO recommended a minimum of eight ANC visits during pregnancy, but as depicted in Table 2, only 30.6% had 8 or more contacts. Although majority of the respondents received ANC services from a skilled provider during their recent birth at least once, utilization of specific

components of the services was low. Table 2 demonstrates the proportion of mothers who received ANC services and had their blood pressure measured (75.9%), urine tested (67.8%), hepatitis B tested (31.2%), HIV tested (41.6), breast cancer tested (21.5%), diet related advice received (44.2%), family planning advice received (37.2%), breast feeding advice received (43.5%). The level of utilization was low because with exception of blood pressure and urine measurements, less than 50% of women had received all the services.

Furthermore, only 49.7% of women took iron and folic acid tablets daily, and 8.4% did not take the tablets at all. Malaria and neonatal tetanus are among the leading causes of maternal and child mortality in developing countries, as depicted in the table, 63.1% of women took 3 or more anti-malarial drugs to get protection from malaria in pregnancy. Five ways of protecting women from neonatal tetanus have been identified, one of which is, women are required to receive two doses of tetanus toxoid injections during pregnancy to protect a birth against neonatal tetanus. About 37% received 1 or 0 doses of tetanus toxoid injections (TT) indicating that many prospective mothers had not received TT injection.

The WHO recommends that ANC visits should start from conception of pregnancy. The finding of the study shows that majority of the respondents (35.6%) started ANC visits during second trimester and this category of respondents was asked to state reason for the delay: 56.5% did not answer the question, 30.1% reported lack of interest in early antenatal visit, 4.2%, because of not experiencing any pregnancy related illness, 6.8% stated financial problem, while others 2.4% stated lack of permission of mother in-laws, lack of husbands permission and transportation problems.

Bivariate Analysis

Table 3: Cross Tabulation of Location and Number of ANC Visits

		How many times did you visit ANC during your last pregnancy?							Total
		No response	1 - 2	3 -4	5 – 7	8	More than 8 times	I don't know	
Location	Urban	0	5	12	30	29	15	7	98
		0.0%	5.1%	12.2%	30.6%	29.6%	15.3%	7.1%	100.0%
	Semi – urban	9	5	37	59	26	10	8	154
		5.8%	3.2%	24.0%	38.3%	16.9%	6.5%	5.2%	100.0%
	Rural	0	28	34	21	33	4	10	130
		0.0%	21.5%	26.2%	16.2%	25.4%	3.1%	7.7%	100.0%
Total		9	38	83	110	88	29	25	382
		2.4%	9.9%	21.7%	28.8%	23.0%	7.6%	6.5%	100.0%
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		2.4%	9.9%	21.7%	28.8%	23.0%	7.6%	6.5%	100.0%

Field Survey, 2021

As indicated in Table 3, only 30.6% of the respondents had 8 or more ANC visits in the State. Urban mothers (44.9%) were more likely than semi-urban mothers, (28.5%) to have 8 ANC visits. The least was found among Semi-urban mothers (23.4%).

Table 4: Cross Tabulation of Location and HIV test

				Total
		No	Yes	
Location	Urban	25	73	98
		25.5%	74.5%	100.0%
	Semi-urban	92	62	154
		59.7%	40.3%	100.0%
	Rural	106	24	130
		81.5%	18.5%	100.0%
		223	159	382
Total		58.4%	41.6%	100.0%
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		58.4%	41.6%	100.0%

Field Survey, 2021

Table 4 reveals that HIV test is one of the most important components of ANC services. Majority of the respondents (58.4%) were not tested for HIV throughout their pregnancy periods. Urban mothers (74.5%) were more likely than semi-urban mothers (40.3%), to have HIV test. The lowest were rural mothers (18.5%).

Table 5: Cross Tabulation of Location and Taking Iron and Folic acid Tablets

		No response	Never	Once	Twice	Daily	Weekly	Others	Total
Location	Urban	0	2	4	11	46	23	12	98
		0.0%	2.0%	4.1%	11.2%	46.9%	23.5%	12.2%	100.0%
	Semi urban	6	6	10	8	95	20	9	154
		3.9%	3.9%	6.5%	5.2%	61.7%	13.0%	5.8%	100.0%
	Rural	0	24	17	21	49	11	8	130
		0.0%	18.5%	13.1%	16.2%	37.7%	8.5%	6.2%	100.0%
Total		6	32	31	40	190	54	29	382
		1.6%	8.4%	8.1%	10.5%	49.7%	14.1%	7.6%	100.0%
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		1.6%	8.4%	8.1%	10.5%	49.7%	14.1%	7.6%	100.0%

Field Survey, 2021

Taking Folic acid and Iron tablets daily is recommended for women during pregnancy. Finding of this study revealed that only 49.7% of mothers took Iron and Folic acid daily as indicated in Table 5. Disparities along places of residence exist in daily use of iron and folic acid tablets. Higher (61.7%) was found among semi-urban mothers, followed by urban mothers (46.9%). The least were rural mothers with 37.7%.

Discussion of Findings

This study revealed that about 90.6% of mothers received ANC services at least once, from a skilled provider during their recent births. The reasons for such a high coverage could be that most mothers were knowledgeable about the importance of ANC to themselves and their babies and were encouraged by their husbands to use the services. Lack of husband's permission, patronage of traditional birth attendants, lack of interest, distance to healthcare facility, insecurity and poverty were the reasons given by the respondents who did not use the services at all. Similar determinants of maternal health utilisation have also been reported by previous studies in Nigeria and other African countries (Doctor et al., 2012; Adgoy, 2018; Stephen et al., 2019). The finding was in line with predisposing factors of Anderson Model of Healthcare Utilisation.

However, utilization of specific components of the services was low. With the exception of blood pressure checking and urine test, less than 50% of mothers had hepatitis B test, HIV test, breast cancer examination, received diet related advice, received family planning advice, received breast feeding advice, took iron and folic acid tablets daily and only 23% had 8 ANC visits. This agrees with findings of many previous studies in Nigeria and a study in Ethiopia (] Doctor et al., 2012; Jibril, 2017; Wolderufael, 2018; NPC, 2018). Early ANC visit is very important but this study found most mothers did not begin ANC visits until their babies were four months old which is not in line with the 2016 WHO ANC model. This also agrees with findings in the 2018 Nigeria demographic and health survey, which reported majority of pregnant women had their first ANC visit in the fourth or fifth month of pregnancy (NPC, 2018). It has been established in this study that urban mothers were more likely to have 8 ANC visits and HIV tests compared to semi- urban and rural mothers in Zamfara State but semi-urban mothers were more likely to take folic acid and iron tablets daily compared to urban and rural mothers in the State.

Conclusion

This study examined the patronage of antenatal care services in urban, semi-urban and rural areas of Zamfara State, Nigeria. Despite the concerted efforts made over the years at both global and local levels in improving maternal health in general and patronage of antenatal care services in particular, utilisation of specific components of ANC services in Zamfara State remains low especially in semi-urban and rural sections of the State. Pregnant women could avert pregnancy related complications when all the specific components of ANC services were received. Although majority of mothers received ANC services from skilled healthcare providers at least once, most of the mothers had no hepatitis B test, HIV test, breast cancer examination; had not received diet related advice, family planning advice, breast feeding advice and did not take iron and folic acid tablets daily. Majority of the mothers started ANC visits during the fourth month of pregnancy and did not comply with current approved 8 ANC visits especially in the rural areas of the State.

Recommendations

This study recommends the following:

(a) As a matter of urgency, Zamfara State government should ensure necessary drugs for ANC are always available and accessible at health facilities and also implement a policy prohibiting pregnant women who do not go for ANC regularly to go to any public health facilities for treatment of any health problem.

(b) Government should carryout mobilization and enlightenment programs in radio and television stations as well as at places of worships and public gatherings in collaboration with traditional and religious leaders at regular intervals.

(c) Enlightening husbands to understand the importance of the services and encouraging them to support their wives to go for ANC during pregnancy even if the wives are healthy is imperative.

(d) PHC centers should enlighten prospective mothers coming for ANC to understand the advantages of early ANC visits, timing and receiving all the recommended doses of ANC services.

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EFFECTS OF MILITIA ACTIVITIES ON YAM PRODUCTION AMONG RURAL FARMERS IN UKUM LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

ANCHOVUR, Timothy Tyowase, OCHI, Sunday Ochin, UTEGI, Sedoo Irene & ORTYOM, Julian Onyemowo

Department of Sociology,
Benue State University,
Makurdi - Nigeria.
Email: tanchovur@bsum.edu.ng,
sunnycollins2012@gmail.com,
sedooutegi@gmail.com
juli4ortyom@yahoo.com

Abstract
Overtime, the existence of militia groups and their activities has caused great concern in Nigeria and Benue State in particular. Their activities have constituted threat to human security as well as food production. This study examined the factors that birthed armed militia groups and how the activities of these groups have affected the production of yam, a major staple food in Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State. The study hypothesized that there is no relationship between militia activities and yam production among rural farmers in Ukum Local Government Area. The General Strain Theory was adopted as the study's theoretical perspective. The study utilized Cross-sectional design whereby the study population of 384 (using Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination formula) was drawn from 216,986 residents of Ukum Local Government Area. However, the study sampled 100 farmers through purposive and snowball sampling technique due to the volatile nature of the area. Findings of the study reveals that high rate of poverty, fear of domination/injustice, failure of law enforcement agencies to tame the activities of militia groups, and resurgence of political thugs that have been abandoned by their political godfathers, accounted for the formation and proliferation of militia groups in the study area. Results of correlation statistics show a positive correlation between the existence of militia activities and production of yam. Thus, ethnic militia activities negatively affect the production yam in the study locale. The study recommends, among other things, that concerted efforts should be made by the State government to fully develop the productive forces; provide avenues where youths will be engaged to alleviate poverty in Ukum and indeed Benue State, security personnel should be proactive in responding to identified threats, arrest and prosecute offenders to deter others, politicians should stop empowering youths with arms and the youths should be actively engaged in political matters as this will remove the tendencies of domination and marginalization between them and the political elites.

Keywords: Militia, Yam Production, Rural Farmers, Benue State

Introduction

One of the major issues affecting agricultural activities in rural societies across Nigeria is insecurity majorly occasioned by armed militia groups. The existence of militia groups and their concomitant activities have not only threatened the peace and development of several communities, it has also affected other aspects of their economy, including food production. According to Alimba (2014), in Nigeria, armed groups, including militia, have adopted the posture of intractability and in most cases, they are highly violent by nature. The manner in which these groups conduct their operations is demeaning and rural farmers are the most hit.

Though the phenomenon is not new, militia activities became rampant in Nigeria after the return to civil rule in 1999. According to Nwosu (2020), after 1999, politics of ethnic identity became an underlying factor in the emergence and proliferation of ethnic militias. Anifowose (2000), identified the conditions that gave birth to the proliferation of the ethnic militias to include perceived marginalization, declining economic climate which created acute discontent and frustration among the people, especially residents of the urban slums who had always had their grievances against the government, coupled with a sense of relative deprivation. Since then, militia activities have grown exponentially in power and size and almost beyond State control. Some of the militia groups in Nigeria include the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC), the Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities (FNDIC), Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA), Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Niger Delta Strike Force (NDSF), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) emerged in the Niger Delta while the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) emerged from the two major ethnic groups of Igbo, and Yoruba respectively. Similarly, another group known as the Ombatse militia emerged in Nasarawa State (Lysias, 2013). Though these groups claimed to represent parochial interests; they adopted diverse strategies which include violence and criminally motivated actions in the conduct of their activities.

The activities of militia groups have resulted in both intra and inter-ethnic conflicts that have exerted a huge toll on food production. In Benue State, there have been series of conflicts within and between communities, which are often orchestrated by local militias. According to Anikyum, Samuel-Tough, Shagu and Takada (2020), militias of Ikurav-Tiev in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area and the Kusuv of Buruku Local Government Area, for instance, have been in conflict for over 5 decades over the ownership of land for farming and other boundary rights. More so, there have been reports of militia activities in Ukum and Logo Local Government Areas of Benue State and extending to Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State (Suswam, (2022). The resultant effect has been wanton destruction of lives and agricultural produce (including yam) worth millions of Naira.

No doubt, one of the major crops among rural farmers that is affected by the activities of militia groups is yam. Orkwor, Asiedu & Ekanake (1998), noted that apart from cereals, yam is the most important staple food in Nigeria and Benue State in particular. However, where insecurity is rampant, yam production is affected. Slobanka (cited in Dekera, 2019), stated that the activities of militia groups are capable of directly reducing economic activities (like yam production) in areas where they operate and may limit these activities altogether. Considering the intractable nature of the activities of militia groups, there are increasingly less incentives to invest in food production thereby affecting yam production capacities.

Ukum Local Government is acclaimed to be the largest producer of yam in Nigeria and West Africa at large (Philips, Ogbonna, Etudaiye, Mignouna & Siwoko, 2013), with arguably the

largest yam market in Zaki Biam town. This prospect raises the general expectation that there should be sufficient yams in Benue State and an avenue whereby yam-farming households can sell surplus yam produce to generate enormous financial income, which will translate into continuous availability of sufficient quality food for household consumption and export. However, the rising level of militia activities in Ukum Local Government Area has the propensity to directly or indirectly affect the production of yams.

For over a decade, militia activities have continued to ravage Ukum Local Government Area, affecting yam production in several aspects including inputs, farm fields and harvested/stored produce. Generally, Iorzua et al. (2020), noted that yam production is affected by losses in quantity and quality of tubers, arising from physical damage, rodent attack, fungal and bacterial diseases, and physiological processes such as sprouting, dehydration, respiration and human activities like crises resulting from the activities of militia groups. However, in Ukum Local Government Area, the ravaging nature of militia activities have repelled efforts to curtail its effect on yam production. Despite the fact that the government has stationed security personnel and the traditional institution decreeing war on militia groups, their activities have continued and yam production has been grossly affected. The status of Zaki-Biam Yam market among the major yam markets in Nigeria has continuously diminished. It therefore appears that the intractable nature of militia activities has affected the level of yam production among rural farmers in the area. However, due to lack of adequate empirical literature, there is limited knowledge on the factors that have influenced the formation of these militia groups and the extent to which their activities affect production of yams in the area.

It is against this backdrop that the study seeks to examine the factors that have influenced the formation of militia in the area and the extent to which their activities have affected yam production in Ukum Local Government Area, as well as suggest measures to curb the menace. The study is guided by the hypothesis that, there is no relationship between militia activities and yam production in Ukum Local Government Area, Benue State.

Review of Related Literature

Factors that influence the formation of Militia Groups

Ethnic militia has been characterized as youth-based groups formed with the purpose of promoting and protecting the parochial interests of their ethnic groups and whose activities sometime involve the use of violence. It is pertinent to note that the prevalence of the phenomenon within the geographical space of Nigeria pre-dates the country's independence (Adejumobi, 2002; Agbese, 2003). According to Duruji (2010), the colonial policy of divide and rule employed to strengthen European control and dominance was significant and affected politics and ethnic relations, characterized by discord and unhealthy competition among the ethnic groups in Nigeria. These ethnic relations were at times expressed in violent forms as the example of the 1953 Kano riots clearly showed. The riot was a result of some value judgement stemming from perceived mistreatment of northern delegates by the southern crowd in Lagos for opposing the 1953 motion moved at the Federal House of Representatives for independence in 1956. That kind of outburst, the first of its kind, was a selective violence targeted at an out-group emanating from the colonial administration's invention of tradition and the mutiny of an 'us versus them' syndrome in Nigeria (Agbese, 2003). This means that ethnic related violence is situated in the public policies of the Nigerian state. This character of the Nigerian state has not fundamentally changed in spite of the transition from colonial to post-colonial dispensation.

Apart from the 1953 violent eruption that occurred in Kano, there has been an avalanche of violent ethnic crises in Nigeria. They include the 1981 bloodshed in Numan, the 1987 mass

killing in Kafanchan and other parts of southern Kaduna , the 1990 clashes in Wukari and Takun, the 1991 massacre in Tafawa Belewa and the mass killing in Kano city, the 1992 Zango–Kataf bloodshed, the 1993 Andoni and Ogoni bloodbath, the intermittent Warri crises between the Ijaws, Itsekiri and Urhobo, the clashes between the Hausa and Yoruba ethnic groups in Sagamu, Lagos, Ilorin and Ibadan, the Nasarawa crises involving the Tiv and other ethnic groups in that state, the Yelwa-Shendam and Jos clashes in Plateau State, among many others (Duruji, 2010).

Explanations of the literature on the rise of ethnic militias in Nigeria have come under two broad perspectives. One perspective views the development from the angle of militarization of the State by repressive governments while the other perspective sees it from a materialistic point of view, borne out of economic frustrations (Duruji, 2010). The state militarization perspective contends that ethnic militias are logical outcomes of the increased militarization of the State, especially during those many years of military dominance of politics in the country (Anugwom, 2000).

The political economy perspective tallies closely with the economic explanation of the development of violent rebel groups which are always motivated by material gains. The argument of scholars with this view point is that the rise of ethnic militias in Nigeria results from a logical outcome of the frustrations brought about by the material deprivation of the people. The economic woes of the country that followed the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986, and the inability of the central government that has become much stronger as a result of military rule to deliver economic dividends to the citizens, spurred demands for devolution of power and more autonomy to the regions as was the case prior to the military era in Nigeria (Jega, 2003). The correlation here is that people who believe that local autonomy has potentials of improving their economic wellbeing are amenable to join these violent ethnic formations which they believe shall provide the remedies to their economic downturns (Akinboye, 2001).

Other scholars have related this to the rapid population growth that resulted in explosion in the number of youths that could not be taken care of by an educational system that has collapsed with no economic opportunity to take care of them, thus leaving a vast number of able-bodied people to face harsh and difficult conditions. It is circumstances like these that expose them to a culture of marginality rooted in drugs, loose morality, violence, profanity and disrespect for social institution (Sesay et al., 2003). People in this category are the street urchins and hoodlums comprising children and youth; product of broken, collapsed or homeless families, a ready pool for ambitious politicians willing to employ them as thugs and socialise them into participating in organized violence. These politicians tend to discard these youths after elections, but the respectability acquired by these individuals in the process and the need to maintain their new found lifestyle, contributed significantly in transforming them into a more cohesive militia organization most of which now hide under the banner of fighting for ethnically defined interests (Adebanwi, 2002).

The increased availability of illegal small and light weapons (SLAWs) in Nigeria is also identified as a contributory factor to the rise and proliferation of violent social formations. The relatively easy access to these weapons has promoted a culture of violence and emboldened disaffected groups to mount direct challenge to legitimate authorities (Udeh, 2002; Akinwumi, 2005). This is linked to the 20th century global phenomenon of de-nationalization of the states that have resulted in the clash of culture and development elsewhere in the world and encourages subnational units in plural society whose inclination to violence is facilitated through easy access to Small and Light Weapons (SALW).

The lack of employment opportunities for the ever-teeming school leavers and the increasing circulation of small arms and light weapons in the country were also cited as the factors responsible for the phenomenon of ethnic militias in Nigeria. A study carried out in 2005 revealed that the use of small arms and light weapon (SALWs) has increased the scale of lethality, the degree of intensity, causalities and the extent of livelihood destruction with wider developmental impact for the country (Ginifer & Ismail, 2005). The duo identified the weapons now in use in Nigeria to include AK-47 assault rifles, automatic pump action short guns, bazookas, berretta pistol, browning pistol, carine riffles, double-barrel short guns, G3 rifles, general purpose machine guns, along with other traditional weapons such as machetes, spears, cutlasses and knifes. All these weapons are what have been deployed in the frequent ethno-religious conflicts ravaging the country including those of the northern and middle belt regions.

The perverse Nigerian federalism which is supposed to accommodate the country's diversity has been cited by some scholars as the factor behind the rise of ethnic militias. According to Adejumobi (2002), many civil society activists claim that the ethnic militias are mere manifestations and frustrated expression of the dysfunctional structure of the Nigerian federation and the character of the Nigerian state. The argument is that the effect of military rule bastardized the Nigerian federation and turned it into a unitary state. They therefore posit that the phenomenon of ethnic militia is a logical derivative of the process of de-federalization of Nigeria since 1966 (Babawale, 2001). Ethnic militia is also seen as a consequence of the mismanagement of ethnic grievances by the Nigerian state and its agents (Anifowose, 2000; Akinboye, 2001).

The consensus in the literature is that ethnic militias are organizations with root in ethnicity which have been with Nigeria prior to independence. There is also the general agreement in the literature that ethnic militias in Nigeria are youth based. Drawing from existing literature on the subject; it can be asserted that the generic term of ethnic militia as used in common Nigerian parlance, refers to any armed or organized group with potential for violent tendencies based in any of Nigeria's geographical region and claiming to be fighting for and defending some common ethnic or geo-political interest whether broad or narrow.

Effect of Ethnic Militia Activities on Food Production

The activities of ethnic militia disrupt production. According to Simmons (2013), hostilities, especially armed hostilities by the militia, prevent normal farming, fishing, and herding operations from being carried out. He added that for the millions of poor households, whose principal source of income-and much of their food supply-is derived from agricultural production, activities of armed men can inflict significant damage to livelihoods and food security. For example, a study conducted in 14 countries by Messer et al. (2000), found that production levels were, on average, 12.3% lower in armed conflict periods than in peacetime in 13 of those countries, with Angolan farmers experiencing reductions as high as 44 percent.

There is also evidence that households in militia dominated areas deliberately make choices that reduce their production, thus, the risks of predation, looting, or loss of crops or livestock. In northern Uganda, for example, households shifted their livestock holdings from cattle to small ruminants, reducing the value of their herds by two-thirds (Rockmore, 2012). An FAO analysis concluded that global agricultural losses due to conflict by militia groups between 1970 and 1997 averaged $4.3 billion annually (in 1995 constant U.S. dollars), exceeding the value of food aid to these countries. This implies a net reduction of food availability not just to producers but also to the consuming population as a whole (FAO, 2000).

Other studies on the effect of armed conflict on food productivity in developing countries as occasioned by the militia (Ageaoili, Perez, & Rosegrant, 1995; Sambe, Avanger, & Alakali,

2013; Okpiliya, Ekong, & Eni, 2013), showed that several disputes, especially in Africa have impeded food productivity. Arising from an empirical study which found a correlation between violent groups and food security in Africa, Sambe, Avanger and Alakali painted the following scenario:

> Violent activities perpetrated by militia groups are enemies of food security… The activities disrupt food production through physical destruction and plundering of crops and livestock, harvest and food reserves. The activities also prevent and discourage farming and also interrupt the lives of transportation through which food exchanges and even humanitarian relief takes place (Sambe, Avanger & Alakali, 2013, p.46).

Activities of militia groups are increasingly becoming threats to rural economic activities such as agriculture in most sub-Saharan African countries (Yamano & Deininger, 2005). The prevalence of these conflicts is escalating at a time when crop yields are stagnant or even declining for some countries in the region (Otsuka, 2006). The destructive tendencies of militia activities are such that have largely affected the developmental prospect of many warring communities. Voors, et al. (2012), in their study of conflict impacts in Burundi, for instance, found that households that experienced militia activities were doing poorly in the shares of cash crops grown in total production and in measures of social capital than their counterparts without such experiences.

Again, Simmons (2013) maintained that, recruitment of young males into militia or rebel groups reduces the supply of labour for herding or farming, which affects food production and availability. Women and children may be left to work the fields and feed the animals, but in many cases they do so under conditions that threaten their safety and well-being. Often, when militia activities become rampant, members of rural households in conflict areas simply flee their farmlands, leaving most of their assets (including stored crops) and livelihoods behind (Dekera, 2019). In many cases, they end up as displaced persons in communities where they have few claims to land or in camps managed by the international humanitarian community. Consequently, the way in which militia activities are carried out reduces food and agricultural production capacities-and the availability of food-even when peace is achieved.

Finally, activities of militia groups result in outright loss through the destruction of food and food-producing assets. Contributing on this, Dekera (2019), asserted that production equipment, animals, seed supplies, and food stocks are often casualties of conflict, deliberately destroyed by competing factions. Such destruction reduces food availability in the short term, but it also prevents a resumption of productive activities and recovery of livelihoods in peace periods. Post-conflict recovery of agricultural production is often further impeded by the increased poverty of people affected by the conflict. Ibáñez and Andrés (2010), maintained that even when farmers are able to reoccupy their lands or homes, they have lost their economic ability to reinvest in lost assets, thus limiting food production and availability. Thus, the menace of militia groups constitutes a serious security concern in Nigeria. This is even as their activities tend to threaten food security in parts (especially Ukum Local Governemnt Area) of Benue State which is considered the food basket of Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The General Strain theory is adopted for this study. Strain theory is a theory developed in 1938 by Robert K. Merton (Watkins, 2018). Other scholars associated with this theory include, Albert K. Cohen (1955), Richard Cloward, Lloyd Ohlin (1960), Neil Smelser (1963), Robert Agnew (1992), among others. The theory states that society puts pressure on individuals to achieve socially accepted goals (such as living a better life), even when such individuals lack the socially

approved means (employment and finance) to meet those goals. This leads to strain which may lead individuals to commit crimes, like selling drugs or kidnapping people for ransom in search of financial security.

The theory was further improved upon in 1992 by Robert Agnew (Agnew, 2001). Agnew believed that people who experience strain or stress become distressed or upset which may lead them to commit crime in order to cope. One of the key principles of this theory is emotion as the motivator for crime. Agnew proposed that various forms of strain cause individuals to experience negative emotional state such as anger, depression, and fear (Agnew, 1992). For Agnew, crime occurs when people seek alternative means to cope with their negative emotions. Agnew explained that an individual's coping strategy is the determining factor of whether or not one will engage in crime.

Furthermore, to explain all crime, rather than just economic crimes among the lower class, Agnew stated that strain was caused by the difference between one's aspirations towards any goal and the means to achieve that goal (Agnew, 1992). Thus, the failure to achieve any goal, rather than strictly a financial goal, would result in strain. Agnew's modification of the definition of strain enabled strain theory to explain any type of crime rather than strictly financial crimes.

The theory is adopted for the study because it explains why people engage in militia activities which further poses a challenge to the production of yam. The relevance of the theory to the topic under study is that, the theory relates the emergence as well as perpetration of militia activities to the strain experienced by people who feel marginalised by the existing structures. Political domination and marginalization, among other factors which hinder the achievement of goals, compel people to form militia groups across ethnic lines in the quest to demand for 'justice'. It also explains that these militia groups indulge in criminality in order to cope with their poverty conditions and life challenges in general. In other words, the inability of the people to legitimately achieve their goals compel them to enroll into militia groups which in turn, engage in activities that are consequential to socio-economic development. As a consequence, their activities have also affected the production of yam by inhibiting access to inputs, reducing labour, limiting the time of cultivation as well as harvest and distribution of yam.

Methodology

The cross-sectional descriptive research design was adopted to examine the activities of ethnic militia on yam production in Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State. As of 2006, Ukum LGA had an estimated population of 216, 983, at an annual growth rate of 3.05% (National Population Commission, 2007; National Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The Local Government Area has thirteen council wards and its headquarters is Sankera. The council wards include: Aterayange, Adzendeshi, Borikyo, Kundav, Kendev, Lumbur, Mbatiam, Mbayenge, Mbazum, Tsaav, Tyuluv, Ugbam and Uyam. In Ukum LGA, yam is the most cultivated crop (Ani, Iorkaa & Ogebe, 2014). In fact, Suswam (2022), posits that the "Food Basket of the Nation" status of Benue State is a derivative of the massive production of yams and other crops from the area.

Both male and female population of farmers from 18 years and above constituted the study population. The study population of 384 (using Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination formula) was drawn from 216,986 residents of Ukum Local Government Area (NPC, 2016). However, the study sampled 100 farmers through purposive and snowball sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was used to select five council wards that are mostly affected by militia activities. These council wards include Aterayange, Borikyo, Tyuluv, Ugbam and Uyam. The reason for limiting this study to the affected areas was to understand the extent to which militia

activities exert a toll on the production of yam among the rural farmers in the affected communities. Similarly, simple random sampling was used to select one village from each council wards making a total of five villages. This technique gave a fair chance for all the affected villages to be part of the study. Lastly, snowball sampling technique was used to select respondents. This was to ensure that only yam farmers were engaged in the study. Farmers were approached on the basis of referral where each previous farmer referred to the next and the exercise continued until a total of twenty (20) persons were selected from each village and the researcher snowballed from one farmer to another until the sample size for each village was covered.

To collect data effectively, a 3-likert scale self-structured questionnaire was used. The researcher administered the questionnaire through face-face method. This method ensured that where the respondent did not understand the questionnaire the researcher explained it for easy understanding. The researcher strictly monitored the completion process and ensured that all questionnaires were retrieved. The data generated from the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and simple percentages. In-depth interview was also conducted with five key informants (one informant from each of the selected villages) in order to compliment the questionnaire aspect of data collected.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

The data collected were analyzed quantitatively using frequency counts, percentage distribution tables, mean and standard deviation. The benchmark mean was 1.5 score. Spearman Ranked Correlation statistics was used to test hypotheses.

Socio-Demographic Attributes of Respondents

Analyses in this section focused on describing social characteristics of respondents.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Attributes of Respondents

Attributes	Frequency (N=100)	Percentage (% =100)
Sex		
Male	60	60.0
Female	40	40.0
Age (in years)		
18-28	26	26.0
29-39	59	59.0
40 and above	15	15.0
Marital Status		
Single	07	7.0
Married	87	87.0
Divorced	06	6.0
Highest Educational Qualification		
Primary school and below	38	38.0
Secondary School	46	46.0
Tertiary Education	16	16.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 presents a summary of the socio-demographic attributes of the respondents. The data reveal that 60 (40.0%) of the respondents were males, while 40 (40.0%) were females. The data also show that 26 (26.0%) were aged between 18 and 28; 59 (59.0%) were between 29 to 39

years; 15 (15.0%) were aged between 40 years and above. Marital status of the respondents showed that 7 (7.0%) of the respondents were single, 87 (87.0%) were married, while 6 (6.0%) were divorcees. Educational status showed that, majority of the respondents 46 (46.0%) had secondary education, followed by 38 (38.0%) who had attained at most the primary level of education, and finally 16 (16.0%) had attained tertiary education. Summarily, the socio-demographic data of respondents indicate that the study comprised more males between the ages of 18 and 29 who were married and who were mostly at the secondary level of education.

Factors responsible for the formation of Militia Groups in Ukum Local Government Area

Presented under this chapter are the perceived factors for the formation of militia groups in the study area as opined by the respondents.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to perceived factors responsible for the formation of militia in Ukum Local Government Area

S/NO	Factors	A (%)	D (%)	U (%)	X	STD
1	The phenomenon of militia has existed for a long time in the area	42(42.0)	49(49.0)	9(9.0)	1.67	.64
2	High rates of poverty and unemployment influence the formation of militia groups	85(85.0)	14(14.0)	1(1.0)	1.66	.39
3	Poor leadership and lack of political recognition are responsible for the emergence of militia groups	47(47.0)	50(50.0)	3(3.0)	1.56	.56
4	Fear of domination/injustice influences the perpetration of militia activities	72(72.0)	19(19.0)	9(9.0)	1.57	.65
5	Failure of law enforcement agencies to tame the activities of militia groups have led to the proliferation of such groups	45(45.0)	50(50.0)	5(5.0)	1.60	.59
6	Lack of proper education/ ignorance leads many people to form and perpetuate militia activities	83(83.0)	16(16.0)	1(1.0)	1.18	.41
7	Thugs who were hired and later abandoned by politicians have enrolled into militia activities	79(79.0)	12(12.0)	9(9.0)	1.51	.63

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 is a presentation of the perceived factors responsible for the formation of militia groups in Ukum Local Government Area. The data in the table show that items 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7 are all above the benchmark mean of 1.5. This means that militia have existed in the area for a long time (χ=1.67) and the factors responsible for their emergence in the study area include poor leadership and lack of political recognition (χ=1.56), high rate of poverty (χ=1.66), fear of domination/injustice (χ=1.56), failure of law enforcement agencies to tame activities of militia groups which have led to their proliferation (χ=1.60), and resurgence of political thugs that have been abandoned by their political godfathers (χ=1.51). This means that the activities of militia are entrenched and their emergence is as a result of the high rate of poverty and other factors which have strained youths who took to indulgence in militia activities to achieve their goals. Consequently, they sometimes attack innocent farmers in the area, an action that has the propensity of retarding yam production. This resonates with the findings of Dekera (2019) that activities of violent actors in rural areas, usually perpetrated by youths recruited from host communities, create more tensions and inhibit food security. Anikyum et al. (2020), also found that armed militia are

usually violent youths who are sometimes sponsored by politicians to cause mayhem in order to foster their political agenda.

Similarly, Key Informants interviews revealed that the activities of militia groups in Ukum LGA which are criminal and violent in nature, emerged as a result of poverty and political thuggery influenced by some politicians in the area. The informants also blamed the prevalence of militia groups on lack of proper education and unemployment that characterized the local government area. A 64-year-old traditional ruler from Tyuluv council ward lamented how lack of access to quality education, and employment of youths as political thugs who eventually are abandoned by their political godfathers, thereby forming themselves into militia groups. The activities of these militia groups have affected yam production in the area because they sometimes attack farmers to either collect money or farm produce. In his words,

> We have experienced situations where militia groups attack farmers on their farms or stop them on their way from the farms and demand for yams or cash, and when the farmers argue or resist, they are beaten seriously and sometimes their properties are destroyed. More worrisome is the fact that their activities have been responsible for high rate of crime in our area. All the attempts we have made to stop them from carrying out their activities have so far failed (KII, Male, 64, 2023).

Effects of the Activities of Armed Militia Groups on the Production of Yam in Ukum Local Government Area

This section captures the effect of armed militia on food security in Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents with regards to the effect of militia activities on yam production in Ukum Local Government Area

S/NO	Effect	A(%)	D(%)	U(%)	χ	STD
1	Farmers find it difficult to go to farm and cultivate yam thereby reducing the quantum of cultivated yam in the area	50(50.0)	47(47.0)	3(3.0)	1.53	.55
2	Farmers abandon their yam farms thereby reducing the number of harvested yams in the area	72(72.0)	27(27.0)	1(1.0)	1.59	.48
3	Militia activities inhibit transportation of yam thereby hindering effective distribution of the commodity	37(37.0)	60(60.0)	3(3.0)	1.66	.53
4	Where the militia operates, consumption of yam is also reduced	34(34.0)	62(62.0)	4(4.0)	1.30	.54
5	Farm inputs cannot be accessed leading to low productivity	21(21.0)	33(33.0)	46(46.0)	2.25	.78
6	Activities of armed militia lead to rising hunger and starvation	77(77.0)	21(21.0)	2(2.0)	1.55	.48

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 reveals that items 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 are significant because they recorded scores of 1.5 and above which is the benchmark mean. By implication, the data show that militia activities inhibit farmers from going to the farm due to fear of being killed (χ=1.53), most farmers completely abandon their yam farms leading to low or no harvest (χ=1.59), and even the available yams cannot be effectively distributed (χ=1.66). Worst of all, militia activities limit access to farm inputs (χ=2.25), which ultimately leads to low production of the commodity. This obviously affects the quantity of yam available for consumption (χ=1.55) and indeed, for export. This coheres with the findings of Dekera (2019), that militia activities negatively affect all the four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability. In addition, Deininger and Castagnini (2006), stated that armed militia activities create insecurity over accessed land and hence, impede land improvement, which translates to low agriculture output per hectare.

Informants have also collaborative reports which indicated that militia groups engaged in nefarious acts in order to achieve their aims. This includes, among others, attacks on innocent civilians, rival militia groups, security forces, motorists as well as marketers. Thus, acts of intimidation, extortions, threats, and violence against the locals were often used to control mapped territories and extract resources. This situation has instilled fear in the local populations especially among farmers, who are no longer willing to go to their farms in order to avoid been attacked by militias. This has led to low yam production in the area, thereby causing hunger and starvation. In his submission, a 57-year-old community leader in Ugbam reported that the militia groups continually engaged in activities that do not warrant peace and though security forces have been working tirelessly, still, they are far from containing the situation. According to him,

> People are afraid even to go to their farms because of series of intimidation from militia groups. Some are even hired by politicians to attack their rivals. There are instances where members of these militia groups kidnap people and request for various ransoms and if not paid, they kill the victims. In some cases, they attacked farmers who have bomber harvest and have sold it with huge sums of money. There may be times they will block roads and extort farmers and local business people (KII, Male, 57, 2023).

Some informants emphasized that, in many cases, militia groups exacerbated communal conflicts by taking sides, providing support, or directly participating in hostilities. The involvement of militias usually inflamed existing tensions and escalate violence. Similarly, it was reported that militia groups often sought to control and exploit local resources, such as land, water, and trade routes, which have been central issues in communal conflicts. Their control of resources usually intensified disputes and fueled ongoing conflicts. In fact, the participation of militia groups in communal conflicts often led to heightened violence, including targeted attacks, reprisals, and displacement of communities. It is evidently clear that their activities have far reaching effects on yam production in the area.

Test of Hypotheses

H_0: There is no relationship between the activities of militia groups and yam production in Ukum LGA.

H_1: There is a relationship between the activities of militia groups and yam production in Ukum LGA.

Table 4: Correlation between existence of ethnic militia and yam production in Ukum Local Government Area.

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.248	.098	2.536	.013[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.307	.100	3.197	.002[c]
N of Valid Cases		100			

Source: Field Survey, 2023

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on normal approximation.

From the presentation in Table 4, there is a positive correlation between the activities of militia and yam production (r=.307). This means that militia activities in Ukum Local Government have affected yam production in the area. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion

The study has established that there is a preponderance of militia activities in Ukum Local Government Area (LGA) which have negatively affected yam production in the study area. The militia groups emerged because of a number of factors among which are poverty, betrayal by politicians, inadequate security measures, illiteracy, and injustice. Apart from the fact that the activities of these groups are inimical to socio-economic development of the people of the area as well as visitors and potential investors, the militias also constitute a threat to food security. There is therefore the need to tackle the menace by both State and Non-state actors. The political class as well as traditional institution need to evolve strategies to contain the situation in both Ukum LGA and the Sankera axis of Benue State. This done, will guarantee surplus and sustainable production of yam and other agricultural produce.

Recommendations

The study recommends as follows:

(a) Concerted efforts should be made by the State government to fully develop the productive forces; provide avenues where youths will be engaged to alleviate poverty in Ukum and indeed Benue State.

(b) The security personnel should be proactive in response to identified threats, arrest and prosecute offenders to deter others.

(c) Politicians should stop empowering youths with arms to perpetrate electoral violence. Rather, they should endeavour to conscientize their followers on the importance of unity and progress and equally assist in youth empowerment. Youths should be actively engaged in political matters as this will remove the tendencies of domination and marginalization between them and the political elites.

(d) There is the need to inculcate in the younger generation, values of unity and peaceful coexistence. This can be done by the traditional institution and at the family levels.

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UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE NAME 'BIAFRA' IN CONTEMPORARY IGBO SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN NIGERIA

Scholastica Ngozi Atata
Department of Communication and General Studies
Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta Nigeria
atatasn@funaab.edu.ng
&
Ayokunle Olumuyiwa Omobowale
Department of Sociology
University of Ibadan, Ibadan Nigeria
ao.omobowale@gmail.com

Abstract
Name is a social construct that gives identity to people in society. The name 'Biafra' has an interpretation and social context that is embedded with meanings among the Igbo of South-East, Nigeria. The name 'Biafra' expresses idea, social interpretation and value among Igbo people in their social interaction. This study explains the historical antecedents of the name 'Biafra', the contemporary use of Biafra by the Igbo for identity construction, social cohesion, and contextual symbol of the name 'Biafra' in Nigeria. Using qualitative method of data collection, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussion (FGD), twenty-six interviews were conducted with Biafra activists/representatives, Biafra war veterans and youth leaders in two selected communities namely, Aba and Onitsha in Abia and Anambra states, respectively. Data collected were analyzed using ethnographic content analysis. The findings of this study show that the name 'Biafra' holds social and cultural symbols that are presented as Biafuru (come and see) and *Bia-fara* (come and take) which is a symbol of *olile-anya* (hope) and *nzoputa* (emancipation). All these create Biafra symbolism for agitation, social identity, recognition, freedom and *ofu-obi* (social cohesion) that are associated with the Igbo society in Nigeria.
Key words: Biafra; Biafra Activists; Identity Construction; Social Construct; Igbo.

Introduction

Name is one of the most important components of identity. It influences the identity of people or individual or groups in the society. Names portray meanings that have effect on the social relations of the people (Nze, 1984). It is arguable that names are social symbols that are connected to traditions, culture, expectations, and values and linked to identity (Radding & Western 2010). It is symbolic and gives people a sense of belonging in society. This shows the social constructs and impactful effect of names and people's identity. Name promotes group cohesion and represents the remarkable categorization in the society and carries deep cultural and historical links.

Rymes (1996) and Olatunji, et al. (2015) observe that a name is a dynamic socio-cultural practice that reflects the social reality of human activities. Name is an important social phenomenon that categorizes persons and enhances social cohesion (Nze, 1984; Vermes, 2003). Mmadike (2014) argues that names have influence on people and expresses how individuals view themselves in a social environment. This is why adopting, using and projecting a name can represent and promote social cohesion among groups or individuals in the society. In this paper, the depth and symbolic use of Biafra name is elaborated and an overview of the social context among the Igbo in southeast Nigeria is greatly emphasized. In order to present the depth and symbolic use of the name Biafra, this study queries the social context of Biafra name in contemporary Igbo society in southeast Nigeria; and the symbolism of Biafra among Igbo people in Nigeria. These explain the close connection of the name-'Biafra' and continuous Biafra activism in Nigeria.

The name Biafra represents a socio-political context of the post-war experience among Igbo people in Nigeria. There has been an increasing agitation to reinstate the defunct Biafra nation in Nigeria's Fourth Republic and contemporary democratization process (Bassey, 2023, Okaisabor, 2023, Oloyede, 2009; Onuoha, 2011, Zhizhi & Fanen, 2020). Spearheaded by the Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in the year 2000 and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in 2014, *Biafra* is somewhat a social reconstruction of the contextual Nigerian Civil War experience. Lasting between 1967 and 1970, the Nigerian Civil War was a phenomenal national experience in the making of post-colonial Nigeria (Achuzia, 1986; Ademoyega, 1981, Diamond, 2007; Effiong, 2000; Ekwe-Ekwe 1990; Folade, 2011; Korieh, 2012). The preceding inter-ethnic violence and the resultant civil war created a consciousness of Igbo marginalization within the Nigerian state (Ikepeze, 2009; Ukiwo, 2009; Obianyo, 2012). Although the resurgence of Biafra consciousness in contemporary Igboland has been linked with the pre- and post-Civil War experience of the Igbo within Nigeria, it is indeed important to investigate this very 'context' of the name Biafra, which has largely been taken for granted.

After the Nigerian civil war, 1967-70, Biafra took a new dimension, creating different symbolic expressions that sustain the constant agitation in South-East, Nigeria. This is demonstrated in the name 'Biafra' that express the symbolic interpretations that tend to represent the Igbo in contemporary Igbo society. The Biafra symbolism explains an embedded context of the post 1966 Igbo nationalism, leading to the Nigerian Civil War and contemporary nationalistic agitation from about the year 2000. The representation of Biafra values and ideology independently describe the use of art, act or intent, belief and utterances targeted at projecting and sustaining Biafra consciousness. This gives credence to the embedded context of Biafra, starting as a non-indigenous Igbo nomenclature that has a symbolic ideology that connotes Igbo nationalism and sustains Biafra consciousness in South-Eastern Nigeria. Although the name Biafra is not an indigenous Igbo word, it has an indigenous interpretation that promotes social cohesion

among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria (International Legal Materials, 1967). The symbolism of Biafra name can be traced to pre-colonial Bight of Biafra (Korieh, 2000, Nwokeji, 1998), thus, there is need to examine the Igbo in the pre-colonial Bight of Biafra.

The Arochukwu-Igbo in pre-colonial Bight of Biafra

The Bight of Biafra is located in the coast of the Atlantic Ocean on the Western coast of Africa and extended to the Niger River around Nigeria hinterland, while at the coast of the Gulf of Guinea, Bight of Biafra is bordered by South-South Nigeria (see Lovejoy & Richardson, 1999; Northrup 1978; Nwokeji, 2000). The Bight of Biafra was a major base of economic activities in the pre-colonial Nigeria. The Portuguese and Spanish merchants and explorers gave the nomenclature Bight of Biafra (Achebe, 2012). This was derived from a misconstruction of a local language of the residents of the Gulf of Guinea called the Bight of Biafra. The pre-colonial Eastern Nigeria which comprised the Igbo people and other ethnic groups such as the Ogoja, Kwa, Efik, and Ibibio in the old Calabar, and Ijaw, Ikwere among other groups, had Igbo people, especially the Arochukwu in the majority and they were economically dominant (Isichei, 1976; Lovejoy & Richardson, 1999; Nwankwo, 1980; Nwokeji, 1998).

Before an attempt is made to further analyse Igbo in the pre-colonial hinterland of the Bight of Biafra, it is necessary to discuss, at least, the Igbo, social, political, economic and religious organization around the Bight of Biafra. It is imperative to state that the Igbo political and economic institutions played a vital role in the interaction of the Arochukwu-Igbo around the Bight of Biafra. The combination of pre-colonial political structure of the Igbo and trade with the Europeans brought about interaction with Igbo and other ethnic groups around the Biafra hinterland. Thus, the Arochukwu group influenced a large part of Southern Nigeria in the pre-colonial era. In the 17th and 18th centuries, it was certain that Igbo people predominated in the Biafra socio-political and economic expansion especially in palm oil trade (Afigbo, 1983; Chambers, 2002; Njoku, 2016). However, the socio-political disposition of this predominant Arochukwu-Igbo group explains how they exploited the use of *Arochukwu long ju ju* (Arochukwu gods) to their social and political advantage in and around the Bight of Biafra (Anene, 1956; Nwauwa, 1995).

Jones (1989) adds that in the pre-colonial Bight of Biafra, the Arochukwu-Igbo retained their lead in the economic gains in trade. They dominated in trades such as slave trade and oil palm trade; and they integrated themselves into the social structure and socio-economic activities in the old Calabar region and around Biafra coast and hinterland (Njoku, 2016). By 17th up to the 18th century, the Arochukwu-Igbo slave trade was the popular business in the hinterland and there were large numbers of Arochukwu-Igbo businessmen around the Biafra hinterland (Afigbo, 1971; Dike & Ekejiuba, 1990). With this, the Arochukwu-Igbo extended its economic and socio-political interaction with Europeans around the coast of Biafra and hinterlands, thus the Igbo influence around the Biafra. This interaction with Europeans further enhanced the domination of the Igbo in trade, religious, social, and political influences (Nwauwa, 1990). The activities of Arochukwu-Igbo symbolised the success of the Igbo people around the Bight of Biafra.

Afigbo (1971) and Njoku (2016) argue that, though the Igbo people had no centralized political structure, they enjoyed long socio-economic dominance in and around the Bight of Biafra and the hinterlands during the years of European exploration. The Igbo lived in autonomous villages and towns which were led by community elders. The pre-colonial Igbo political organization was based on community leadership devoid of any form of central kings or chiefs governing the people. This gave the Igbo power to extend politics and trade to other parts of the

hinterland of the Bight Biafra. The Biafra hinterland was a major space for the supply of trade around the Atlantic coast from the 1730s to the latter part of the nineteenth century (Korieh, 2000). This, thus, paved way for the Arochukwu-Igbo dominance in trade in the Biafra coast (Nwokeji, 2000). Arochukwu promoted the Igbo anywhere they went and they were the forerunners of Igbo dominance and trade success around the Bight of Biafra. This clearly presents the link between economic strength and political power of the Igbo in the pre-colonial Bight of Biafra.

Morrill, (1963) argues that the political disposition in Igbo society was superimposed on the kinship structure and the leaders of kinship groups were the decision makers in the political sphere. Thus, pre-colonial Igbo political organization was based on a republican system of government that guaranteed equality of citizenry in closely knit communities. This was first witnessed by the Portuguese, who arrived through the Bight of Biafra and met with the Igbo people in the 15th century (Dike, 1956; Ekechi, 1971; Isichei, 1969). The politics of a republican society, as opposed to an authoritative society, marked Igbo politics as clearly distinct from other political groups in the pre-colonial era. This created and fostered the success of the political and socio-economic activities in and around the Biafra coast.

Also, the Arochukwu religious priests were not left out in the political administration of the communities in Igboland and it extended the administration to Biafra hinterlands. Crowder, (1973), notes that, with the adoption of religious sanction of the Arochukwu oracle, the Arochkuwu-Aro were able to trade with complete security through Igboland and around the coast of Biafra. Great importance was attached to them for they were believed to be the mouthpiece of the gods such as the Arochukwu long juju in the 17th -19th century (Isichei, 1969; Ekechi 1971). The Arochukwu long juju was used for certain religious and socio-political (oath taking) activities by the people. The religious activities among the Arochukwu people also strengthened the leadership of the Igbo people in interacting with European explorers and other ethnic groups around Bight of Biafra. The pre-colonial Igbo society undoubtedly created great extension in governance in the Southern region as well as the extent to which it accommodated or embraced other groups (which comprised of other ethnic groups such as the Efik and Ibibio) (Akresh, Bhalotra, Leone & Osili, 2011; Nwauwa, 1995).

The extension of Igbo socio-economic interaction with other ethnic groups in the region facilitated the realization and recognition of Bight of Biafra as a trade zone. From the coast-line of Bight of Bonny which was inhabited mostly by the Igbo especially the Arochukwu extended round the borders of Ibibio, and Efik and to its eastern hinterland around old Calabar-Cross River (Lovejoy, 1974). Igbo people in the pre-colonial Nigeria were in the frontline of the social, economic, political and religious expression of the ethnic group around the coastline and hinterlands of Bight of Biafra (Afigbo, 1971). The presence of Arochukwu-Igbo certainly had control in and around the trade-based Biafra in the pre-colonial era. Based on this, the socio-political power exercised around the Biafra hinterland shows the existence of the Igbo and Biafra. To present the activities of the Igbo people around the hinterland and coast in the pre-colonial Bight of Biafra, Cowan (1935) writes:

> Apart from the Ibibio's, who occupied a stretch of country north-west of Calabar, the whole of the hinterland was peopled by the Ibos, …the Ibos were, in effect-and may be looked upon as such to-day-the producers of South-eastern Nigeria. They were more than that, as it is questionable if the Coast communities could have survived but for an ever-increasing influx of Ibos… (Cowan, p.399).

Cowan's (1935) assertion gives credence to the population and dexterity of Igbo people, who apart from the Efik and Ibibio moved to Biafra hinterland and dominated the region. This

dominance accounts largely for movement, trade, power of the Igbo in the region. Afigbo (1983) argues that by the 18th century, there was an already existing economic activities-trade between the Igbo around the Biafra hinterland. Since trade encouraged the exchange of ideas, interaction and inter/intra-relations, it invariably facilitated the socio-economic contact within the region called Biafra until the colonial period.

The Igbo movement, trade and power in colonial Nigeria

The dominance of the Igbo around Bight of Biafra gives a greater understanding of their involvement in trade and movement in colonial Nigeria. With the abolishment of slave trade in the 19th century, the socio-economic activities of the Igbo were diversified by the 20th century and this created easy movement across Nigeria (Afigbo, 1971). The socio-economic experience of the Igbo in Nigeria demonstrated the change in the patterns of interaction through movement and trade within Nigeria during the colonial era. While the slave trade was halted around the Bight of Biafra, new method of trade such as palm oil produce business was adopted and that took an economic dimension and expanded beyond Igboland (Nwokeji, 2000; Olutayo, 1999).

The Igbo were able to settle in parts of colonial Nigeria because of their migration prowess, commercial and social dispositions (Smith, 2005; van den Bersselaar, 2005). It is believed that the pre-colonial Igbo socio-economic and political activities explained Igbo dominance and control in trade during the period of colonial era. Igbo people who dominated trade around the Bight of Biafra saw the need to expand in trade in colonial era, so they moved their socio-economic activities from the Bight of Biafra and interacted with other ethnic groups in the country.

By early 20th century, Igbo people had moved to other parts of Nigeria and established economic and social influence both in the South-Eastern and beyond. This extended the Igbo social and economic interaction and contacts with other ethnic groups, as the Igbo became a dominant group in parts of Nigeria (Mgbeafulu, 1999). These interactions characterised the trend of migration that saw Igbo people residing both in south-east and other parts of Nigeria. The colonial Nigeria saw the proscription of slave trade and movement of the Igbo from the Biafra hinterland to other parts of Nigeria and created interaction with other ethnic groups in Nigeria (Afigbo, 1971). Much of the Nigerian colonial era provided the opportunity for the Igbo to migrate to the Northern and Western Nigeria.

The colonial Nigeria presented Igbo people the opportunity to move from the then Eastern Nigeria (such as Port-Harcourt) to the Northern (especially Kano, Kaduna) and Western region (mostly in Lagos) (Smith, 2005). Igbo society was associated with trade in the pre-colonial and colonial era (Mgbeafulu, 1999; Uduku, 2002). Osaghae (1994) notes that Igbo people took up residence in the Northern and Western part of Nigeria from 1940 to 1960 after slave trade was abolished. The colonial era presented the period for the Igbo to dominate in trade in parts of Nigeria where they had migrated to. Morrill (1963) and Oriji (1987) explain that movement of the Igbo in and out of the hinterland of Eastern Nigeria increased the emergence of social network around and beyond the Calabar region and Bight of Biafra during the colonial era. In an attempt to describe colonial historical state of the Igbo around the Biafra hinterlands, Amaazee (1990) and Nwokeji (2000) add that Igbo people were the majority group in the then Eastern Nigeria while the engagement in trade presented the Igbo with the development of efficient inter-ethnic relations as well as social identity. In the course of migration, the Igbo people created distinct economic dominance and interaction with other ethnic groups (Hamiet-Sievers 2006; Howard-Hassmann 1986; Imbua, 2013; Isichei, 1976; Jones; 1989; Korieh 2000; Meagher, 2009; Northrup, 1978; Oriji, 1987).

The migration during the colonial era presented Igbo people with the opportunity to influence the socio-economic activities across the country. In the early 20th century, there was a significant of Igbo migrating to other parts of Nigeria (Diamond, 1967; Smith, 2005). Due to their large concentration and competence on commerce, many Igbo people did not find it difficult to migrate to other parts of the country for trade and employment during the colonial era. According to Diamond (1967) the widespread migration among Igbo people created a sense of perceived dominance among other ethnic groups in Nigeria. During the end of the colonial rule, the unity of ethnic groups in Nigeria was greatly affected. Ethnic schisms and interaction between the Igbo and other ethnic groups in the country became heightened (Afigbo, 1992; Akinyemi, 1972).

Biafra declaration and the symbolism of the name Biafra

The ethnic schism, the killing of prominent Northern politicians in Nigeria during the *coup de etat* of January 1966 and then the reprisal coup of June 1966, killing of Igbo migrants in Northern Nigeria in late 1965, 1966 and early 1967 resulted in the return of Igbo people to Eastern Nigeria (Achebe, 2012, Diamond 1967; Keil, 1970; Plotincov, 1971). The killings of the Igbo and their return migration facilitated the declaration of the Republic of Biafra and the quest for secession in the Eastern region (Achebe, 2012; Duruji, 2009; Effiong, 2000; Gbuile, 1989; Hawley, 2008; Madiebo 1980).

The declaration of Biafra by Lieutenant Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, and the secession, excised the Igbo and other ethnic groups such as Ijaw, Efik, Anang, and Ibibio, in the hinterland of Bight of Biafra from the Nigerian nation. At inception, on May, 30th 1967, the Republic of Biafra comprised ethnic groups such as Igbo, Ijaw, Ikwere, Efik, Anang, and Ibibio among other ethnicities (Howard-Hassmann, 1986), a territory that spread from Onitsha end of the River Niger to the coast of Calabar.

This shows the region that was referred to as Biafra in 1967. The Igbo were the predominant population at the point of creation of Republic of Biafra. In the declaration of the Republic of Biafra in 1967, Ojukwu states:

> Having mandated me to proclaim on your behalf, and in your name, that Eastern Nigeria be a sovereign independent Republic, NOW therefore I, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CHUKWUEMEKA ODUMEGWU OJUKWU, MILITARY GOVERNOR OF EASTERN NIGERIA, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY, AND PURSUANT TO THE PRINCIPLES, … DO HEREBY SOLEMNLY PROCLAIM THAT THE TERRITORY AND REGION KNOWN AS AND CALLED EASTERN NIGERIA TOGETHER WITH HER CONTINENTAL SHELF AND TERRITORIAL WATERS SHALL HENCEFORTH BE AN INDEPENDENT SOVEREIGN STATE OF THE NAME AND TITLE OF "THE REPUBLIC OF BIAFRA''(International Legal Materials 1967, p.679).

The proclamation of the Republic of Biafra was documented in upper case letters (see International Legal Materials 1967, p.679) as a bold symbolic expression of Biafra's post-colonial decision for self-determination. While the adoption of the nomenclature, Biafra, was a testimonial of the Igbo dominance in and around the Bight of Biafra and the coastline down to Calabar, Port-Harcourt and Yenagoa, it allowed the ground republic of Biafra access to the coast sea. With access to the sea, Biafra nation was full of confidence of access to war weapons through the waterways and this invariably gave them the strength and willingness to fight for their independence. With the obvious sense of self-defense, the fight for self-determination and social identification became

the ideal. The war was prolonged because of the constructed ability for self-defense and sustainability before Biafra was taken over by the Nigerian Army.

The construction of Biafra value and meaning attached to the name Biafra gave impetus for the sustenance and prolonged fight during the Nigeria Civil War even when the *Biafran*s did not have sufficient fighting warheads to defeat the Nigerian Army. The embedded meaning Biafra projects, created a society for Igbo protection, self-defense and hope for safety to *Biafrans* in the Eastern part of Nigeria. Biafra assumed an identity capital that seemingly surmounted fear and the constructed capital was used to promote Biafra values and ideas during the Civil War but has a symbolic meaning that has sustained Biafra resurgence. To this end, the name Biafra assumes an embedded symbol that represents Igbo people, the geographical expression (Bights of Biafra) and creates a historical symbolic means for social identification. The name Biafra was as a re-enactment of the Igbo economic achievement and supremacy in pre-colonial and immediate post-colonial Bight of Biafra.

The pre-colonial Biafra represents the trade around the coastline, which harboured the trading activities of the Igbo and European explorer around the Bight of Biafra hinterland and giving the Igbo the ability to dominate around the region. The immediate post-colonial Biafra shows the secessionist region, during the Civil War. During the years of the Nigeria Civil War, the name Biafra bolstered the struggle for Biafra state among the people in the then Eastern region. Surprisingly, the Biafra name has continued to sustain social construction and symbolism of Biafra in contemporary Igbo social consciousness as explained in symbolic interactionism theory.

Theoretical framework

The theory of symbolic interactionism is adopted to explain the symbol of the name Biafra among Igbo people in Nigeria. Symbolic interactionism derives its name from the dual emphases on symbolism of action/words and interaction among individuals. Symbolism focuses on the meanings attached to symbolic words that are attributed to the social actors, while the interaction explains the how the words shape social actions and vice versa, and how all these interactions lead to the social construction of the self and actions (Fine, 1993; Bruce & Yearley, 2006). Symbolic interactionism paradigm explains the meaning people attach to words in their everyday life. Symbolic interactionist theory was first used by Herbert Blumer and was subsequently expanded by George Mead and Erving Goffman to explain human interaction (Bruce & Yearly, 2006; Carter & Fuller, 2015; Fine, 1993; Ritzer, 2012). This theory explains how actors create their worlds through the meanings they construct from everyday interactions for the purpose of achieving a goal.

Symbolic interactionist theory opines that individuals act in accordance to meanings they attach to symbols. Actions and meanings within an interacting community are all symbols to which interpretations are attached, and the meanings attached inform the course of a word or action to be taken (Carter & Fuller, 2015; Ritzer, 2012). Symbolic interactionism explains the meaning of actions and how people interpret words in specific interactions over space and time in a society. In Nigeria, the name Biafra remains a remarkable part of Nigeria's history, which is embedded with deep meanings drawn from the experiences the Nigerian Civil War and assumptions of Biafra agitation. The name Biafra conveys the context of contemporary Biafra symbolism. This study, therefore, uses the symbolic interactionist theory to explain the meanings attached to the name Biafra and how the Igbo people project the name to promote Biafra values in Nigeria.

The meanings attached to the name Biafra are symbolic and are conveyed by Igbo language to give deep interpretive essence. The name Biafra conveys deep symbolic meanings that create

sense of social cohesion. It conveys the meanings of unity, freedom, hope and emancipation. The meanings attached to the Biafra nomenclature highlight the construction of the Biafra in contemporary Igbo social consciousness in Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted the qualitative approaches in data collection and analysis. Data were collected using Key Informant Interviews (KII), In-Depth Interviews (IDI) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The ethnographic analysis of the findings of this study presents the Igbo social interpretation and cultural context of the name Biafra. Data were collected from two communities in Igboland selected from states in South-Eastern Nigeria; they include Aba in Abia state, and Onitsha in Anambra state. These communities were purposively selected because of the prevalence of Biafra activism in the areas. Purposive and snowballing methods were adopted in selecting the twenty-six interviewees for this study. The interviewees include the Biafra representatives/activists (four each from the two selected communities), eight Biafra loyalists, two youth leaders and eight Biafra war veterans in the two selected communities. A total of four (4) focus group discussions were conducted for this study. There were two (2) FGD sessions in each of the selected communities. The focus group sessions were homogenous. Each FGD sessions was conducted based on gender and age group to allow free expression of views.

FGD sessions were held for the younger generation from ages 18-59 (male and female in each community). This group comprised those who were not born during the Civil War and those who were born though experienced the Civil War as teenagers and nevertheless have knowledge of it. Similar session was also conducted for the older generation 60 years and above (male and female in each of the selected communities). This session included those that had direct involvement in the Nigerian Civil War. Though they may not have fought as soldiers during the war but had experienced it as adults. Each of the FGD sessions comprised 6-12 people per group. Each session was held with discussants that were knowledgeable of the Biafra war and contemporary Biafra activism. The discussants were drawn using purposive and snowballing methods.

The interviewees and discussants were selected because of their grass root involvement in Biafra activism in southeast, Nigeria. The interviews were conducted in Igbo, Pidgin English and English languages to enable the interviewees respond adequately and provide substantial data. Data collected in Igbo and Pidgin English languages were translated to English language and the data collected were transcribed, sorted, and further subjected to interpretive content and ethnographic analysis as the results are presented below.

Results

This section presents the results of the data collected. The results of this study show that the name Biafra is adopted to represent hope, unity social cohesion, and identity among Igbo people in Nigeria, as presented below.

The Biafra name in contemporary Igbo society

The name Biafra presents a social context, interpretation and creates embedded meaning among the Igbo of South-East Nigeria. The meanings attached to the name 'Biafra' expresses the symbolic interpretations that tend to represent the Igbo. In contemporary Igbo society, the name Biafra is explained as Biafuru (come and see) and *Bia-fara* (come and take) which is a symbol of *olile-anya* (hope) and *nzoputa* (emancipation). All these create the symbolism for social identity,

freedom, *ofu-obi* (social cohesion) that holds symbolic expressions among the Igbo people. These contextual meanings and symbolic expressions exemplify the construction of Biafra ideology as an identity capital used to construct contemporary Igbo social consciousness. The Biafra symbolic meanings are further illustrated below, as an interviewee says:

> I know the name Biafra was derived from Bights of Biafra, though it is not an Igbo language. I know that today, Biafra means more than the Bights of Biafra to me, Biafra means, *Bia-fa-ra* (come and take) (IDI/1).

Another interviewee adds:

> I know that Biafra means *Bia-fara, obodo bu nke anyi* (come and take over the land that belongs to us). The name Biafra means a lot to us, *ndi Biafra* (the people of Biafra) and love Biafra. (KII/1)

The responses above, illustrate the symbolic meanings attached to Biafra. This presents the name, Biafra, as an indigenous Igbo concept and as such represents the social symbolism and adoption of social identity as a means of promoting and sustaining Biafra value and ideology in South-Eastern Nigeria.

This interviewee states that:

> Well, the meaning of Biafra, I think the meaning is *Biafruru obodo oma* (come and see our beautiful homeland), yes, Biafra, *Biafuru obodo oma nke anyi*. (IDI/ 2).

While another interviewee adds:

> For me Biafra is described as an ideology, is our hope... It is the only way our voice can be heard in this entity called Nigeria. You know that we have been quiet for some times, Igbo have been marginalized, side-lined, if I might use that word, so a lot of things has been happening to the Igbo people particularly in this Nigeria (IDI/3)

These responses further explain the meaning attached to the name Biafra. Here, Biafra is adopted as a structure used to present the quest for political inclusion of the Igbo in Nigeria. This explains the symbolisms of the name, Biafra. An interviewee also adds,

> …today, I think Biafra means a lot to *ndi Igbo* (Igbo people). Biafra means *olile anya* (our hope). *Olile anya, ndi Igbo were na ala Nigeria* (the hope for the Igbo people in Nigeria) (IDI/4).

The narratives of the name Biafra represent that the hope that tends to intensify Igbo social consciousness. The illustration of Biafra as *olile anyai* (our hope) portrays constant social consciousness that expresses hope for a socio-economical developed Igbo society. This advertently creates upsurge in Biafra agitation and acts as a means of attracting the attention of the Federal Government in south-east Nigeria. While Nnaemeka (1997) describes the Biafra as a symbol of privilege (an opportunity to fight for self-protection) in the Igbo society after the Nigeria/Biafra Civil War, but in contemporary Biafra agitation, Biafra presents different meanings that are used as material representations of contextual symbols.

Contextual symbol of Biafra among the Igbo in Nigeria

The contextual representations of Biafra are described as hope, freedom, *ofu obi* (togetherness/oneness), *nzoputa* (redemption from neglect), and *ala nna* (fatherland). These contemporary symbolisms of Biafra and constructed ideology, therefore, describe the name Biafra. These symbolisms extend beyond the geographical composition of Biafra to *Bia-furu,* and the energetic conquest to take Biafra out of Nigeria (Bia-fara). This suggests that the clamour for Biafra is not just secessionist idea but a medium to which the needs of the Igbo are presented. The Igbo meaning of Biafra is not limited or directed to self-determination alone, rather it is a

contextual interpretation that shows that the Igbo Biafra is adopted in contemporary Igbo society to address perceived marginalisation in Nigeria. The problems are generally presented as: marginalisation or/and low representation in governance (political activities) (Lenshie, 2014), thus the need to use Biafra to solve these problems. Biafra is symbolic and awakens the consciousness of the Igbo people (Atata & Omobowale, 2022).

Invariably, Biafra becomes a means of achieving a set goal in South-Eastern Nigeria. This set goal is viewed as using Biafra to end the perceived socio-political exclusion and marginalization that generates hope for people in south-east region. These data below demonstrate Biafra as the symbol of hope:

> Biafra is our hope in this country (Nigeria), if the Federal Government should continue like this we will suffer, but with Biafra, we have hope. It is either they include us in the Nigerian politics or we continue to look for Biafra (IDI5).

An interviewee adds:

> See, let me tell you, if the Nigerian government should do the right thing/the needful today, it will just end, nobody will come out and start saying he needs Biafra. Biafra is our hope for an inclusive government (IDI/6).

These show the symbolic presentation and meaning attached to Biafra, such that Biafra represents the hope for the Igbo. Here, Biafra is used as a medium to derive hope and a means to clamour for restructuring and an inclusion of Igbo in Nigeria politics.

An FGD group presents that:

> Biafra is our hope, we are saying this because of the way we are been treated in Nigeria[1]. We do not feel belonged and we are not supposed to be Nigerians based on the way we are being maltreated in this country-no Federal Government presence in this town, no Igbo person in politics… (FGD/1).

A discussant in a group says:

> We see Biafra as a means of getting what we want. Sometimes I feel we need Biafra, since we are marginalized in this Zoo (Nigeria). Biafra will give us what we want… like a better Igboland (FGD/2).

Another FGD group adds:

> The Igbo speaking region has never had any chance to govern this country-Nigeria. It is the problem that is springing up Biafra today. For me reoccurrence of Biafra struggle will not be necessary if the Igbo people are carried along, inclusion of more meaningful Igbo people in government will help reduce this Biafra reoccurrence. In other words, Biafra will be meaningless if Igbo people are involved in the leadership of this country (FGD/3).

While other interviewees say:

> …we hope this Biafra re-birth will help make government to recognize and integrate *ndi Igbo* into the affairs of this country. (FGD/4).

The data above show that Biafra is used as an identity capital and symbol that is used to achieve an intended goal. This study explains the notion that Biafra is an embodiment of hope for integrating Igbo people in the Nigerian politics. Biafra is presented as hope for Igbo people, which also produces a symbol of *nzoputa* (freedom) as a social identity. Below are data illustrating Biafra as a symbol of freedom. An interviewee state that:

> If Nigeria does not want to include us (Igbo people) in the agenda of this country they should give us Biafra. With Biafra we can be free and govern ourselves (IDI/7).

While a group of discussants adds:

> … we experienced the Biafran war. Then it (Biafran war) was fought for an independent state due to killings. Now I can say it is because of marginalization. …my people (Igbo) seek for freedom from political exclusion, to be recognized so that they can at least rule this country one day (FGD/5).

Beyond the representation of Biafra name as a quest for freedom, Biafra is also projected as a symbol of *Ofu obi* (unity) among the Igbo in Nigeria. To illustrate this assertion, a Biafran veteran says:

> After the war, there was a call for unity, but we (Igbo people) discovered that it did not work. So, we started another call to get Biafra… Biafra brings us together, *Biafra na e gosi ofu obi, ngikota na idi na otu, Biafra na eji ko ta ndi Igbo* (Biafra unites the Igbo identity) (FGD/6).

Also, an interviewee adds:

> …Biafra is my fatherland; I do not know about Nigeria. *Ihe gba sara Biafra ka m ga eso* (I will follow the Biafra identity) (KII/2).

Etched in social consciousness of Igbo people is the attachment to the Biafra identity that has proven to be more resilient than the Nigerian identity. Individually and/or collectively, this identity disparity often presents a conduct that elevates Igbo-Biafra consciousness above the interest of the Nigerian state. Of all the various forms of Biafran name, several symbols have been pointed out as important meanings that promote Biafra in contemporary Igbo social consciousness.

Discussion of findings

The name Biafra, represents an underlying construct of a modified social identity of the Igbo people. Also presenting Biafra is symbolism of the concept, *Bia-fara*, this has meanings linked to the Igbo social interaction and it refers to the social consciousness and quest to intensify Biafra contest.Thus, the meanings attached to Biafra as *Bia-fa-ra* illustrates the 'come and take' interpretations and intensifies the social consciousness on the 'Biafra' value. According to Onuoha (2010), Biafra is presented as a political struggle, but beyond the political struggle, Biafra represents a construction of social identity of the Igbo and a tool used for achieving a set goal. This presents struggle of the Igbo as expressed in recent times as a contest to seek for recognition in Nigeria's socio-political space, which is often perceived by Igbo people as 'marginalization'. This constructs the embedded meaning and drive for Biafra renaissance among the Igbo in contemporary South-Eastern Nigeria.

Biafra assumes the strategy used to fight perceived marginalization (Bassey, 2023, Onuoha, 2014, Zhizhi & Fanen, 2020), that is, it is used by the Igbo to express the need for inclusion in prominent socio-political and economic positions in Nigeria. The *Biafuru obodo oma* (come and see the beautiful Biafra land) representation of the name Biafra also presents the call to appreciate the Biafra region, as it is described as a region that should be fully integrated into the Nigeria socio-political and economic space. Since the resurgence of Biafra activism in year 1999 (Duruji, 2009), Biafra has assumed different social values such as their hope to: achieving political and social recognition, an end to perceived marginalization, inclusive political participation, collective inclusion in the socio-economic distributions as well as an alternative independent sovereignty where the activities of the Federal Government of Nigeria is assumed to be inadequately recognised. The hope attached to Biafran is attributed to use of identity capital by the Igbo in projecting their social and political intent (Atata & Omobowale, 2022). The idea of hope is basically linked to the quest for freedom as presented in Biafra name as *nzoputa* (freedom).

Another classification on symbolism of Biafra is based on *nzoputa* (freedom). This notion is greatly inspired by the Igbo claims on marginalization and exclusion in the Nigerian political activities especially at the Federal Government level and constant crisis in regions where Igbo people tend to dominate. As posited by Adekson, (2005), Onuoha, (2011) and Uwalaka (2003), the sense of marginalization will persistent in any society unless the aggrieved group(s) is recognised and included in the social, political and economic plans in the given society. The Igbo people thus, tend to seek to be recognized, live, stay, and work freely in any part of Nigeria. This approach and use of Biafra as a symbol of freedom explains symbolism of Biafra renaissance in Igbo social consciousness.

According to Hilleary, Dudley and Marrow (1977) freedom manifests itself through cohesive cooperation, especially in giving benefit to social structure in an in-group. A symbolic and more positive suggestion for meanings attached to freedom is based on understanding of the context and concept of freedom. Freedom is not necessarily an expression of being free but it comes as an instance to people who barely participate actively in the socio-political activities of a country but want to be recognized. Thus, freedom is strengthened through different actions such as (war, protest) which arise as means of contesting to correct the sense of neglect in any society (Dowd & Macmahon, 2014). Keller (2005) and Shimrat (2003) argue that part of the struggle for freedom is the quest for liberation from neglect and the contribution it makes to the well-being of people in the society.

The name *Biafra* illustrates freedom as a quest for recognition and a call for an end to the perceived marginalization. Thus, Biafra constructs and sustains Igbo social consciousness for freedom and participation in political process. The contemporary Biafra consciousness outlines the social and symbolic value of freedom among Igbo people in South-Eastern Nigeria. It is important to note that Biafra is symbolic in the Igbo social consciousness and the role which Biafra plays is both contextual and socially constructed. This is represented in the covert and overt agitation in southeast, Nigeria. The contemporary Biafra agitation and the Igbo in their sense of freedom hope and image of the Nigerian society (in which they live), express the notion of a socially, politically and economically neglected region.

It shows that Biafra activists choose Biafra as a symbol of freedom (Atata & Omobowale, 2022). Here, freedom is not just for self-determination as presented by scholars (see, Okonta, 2012; Onuoha, 2011) rather freedom is explicitly presented as liberty from exclusion in the socio-political and economic activities of the 'host country'-Nigeria and call for adequate inclusion. Thus, Biafra is used as a means for achieving an in-group goal against the out-group. Biafra is adopted as an *identity-capital,* used in projecting the Igbo-Biafra cause.

Biafra freedom agitation confirms the submission of Shimrat (2003) and Keller (2005) who posit that freedom is the willingness of people to get better living in comparison to what they perceived as neglect. Here the context of freedom among Igbo people goes beyond the quest to be free, but a request for recognition and end to exclusion in the Nigeria socio-political structures. The perceived marginalization which is deeply presented in areas of poor infrastructure, socio-political exclusion, and absence of social amenities tend to be some of the problems faced in South-Eastern Nigeria. The south-eastern region and the Biafra activists tend to adopt Biafra identity/activism as a means of presenting these social shortcomings. The adoption of Biafra as a social mechanism, describes the social identification of Biafra as a symbol of *ofu obi* (oneness).

Biafra as *ofu obi,* in the Igbo cultural context presents group cohesion in achieving a set goal, thus Biafra adopted as an identity capital in achieving the *Biafranization* of South-Eastern

Nigeria. Biafranization explains the inclusion of all the Biafra ideology and the different meanings and values attached to Biafra especially among the Igbo.

The Biafra symbol of *Ofu obi* encourages unity and presupposes Biafra ideology, also appeals to the Biafra consciousness among Igbo people. In the struggle for freedom, unity is incorporated among the Igbo people to uphold inalienable struggle for *ofu obi* in the Biafra activism. While some Igbo people may clamour for united Biafra identity within Nigeria, some propose a united Biafra identity to achieve the Biafra objectives (end to marginalization and quest for a socio-political inclusion) by having an independent Biafra nation.

Conclusion

Name is a social construct that gives identity and enhances social cohesion among people in the society. With the meaning attached to Biafra name and the construction of depth social symbolism, Biafra value is also expressed in the social cohesion of Igbo people, the name 'Biafra' has been identified with different symbols, to construct Biafra identification and values, these meanings have been used to promote and sustain Biafra consciousness among the Igbo people in south-east, Nigeria This study shows that the name Biafra holds a symbolic interpretation and upholds Igbo identity that is explained as Biafuru (come and see) and *Bia-fara* (come and take) which is a symbol of *olile-anya* (hope) and *nzoputa* (redemption). All these create the symbols such as, freedom, *ofu-obi* (social cohesion) that represents symbolic expressions among the Igbo in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Beyond the agitation for self-determination and secession, Biafra has assumed a social symbol translating to mean the Igbo of south-eastern Nigeria, it could unite them for development purpose at the same time it could be a cause of underdevelopment especially in the cause of confrontation against the Nigerian state. This study suggests that:

(a) Effort should be made to adopt the advancement of Biafra name for the socio-economic and political development of the South-eastern states in Nigeria.

(b) The south-east Governors, *Ohaneze ndi Igbo* (Igbo political forum) and the Federal Government should ensure that the Biafra name which has become an identity, be constructively regulated to give deeper sociological presentation to the views on Biafra in Nigeria.

(c) More attention should be paid to social cohesion as a viable option to improve ethnic unity in Nigeria. However, by virtue of the ethnic diversity and socio-cultural configuration in Nigeria, policies mostly designed to achieve this should consider the unequal ethnic representation in the country which the Igbo-Biafra name suggests.

(d) The Nigerian government should consider designing polices aimed at adequate/equal representation of all the ethnic groups in Nigeria's socio-economic, political and developmental spaces, to foster unity in the country. Such policies should not only focus on a particular ethnic group but should consider all the ethnic groups (majority and minority groups) in Nigeria.

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LEVERAGING INTERNET OF THINGS IN 21ST CENTURY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: GAINS, CHALLENGES, AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Toyin Segun Onayinka[1], Ndubuisi Friday Ugwu[2], Ogechi Kate Onyekwere[3], Jacob Kehinde Opele[4], Godwin Nonye Nweze[5], Nnaemeka Chijioke Okorie[6], Oluwakemi M. Anyanwu[7] & Chinenye Mercy Ignatius[8]

[1]Department of mass Communication, Federal University, Oye, Ekiti State,
[2]Dept. of Health Education, FUOYE,
[3]Dept. of Physical & Health Education, FCE, Eha-Amufu, Enugu State,
[4]Dept. of Computer & Information Science, FUOYE,
[5]Dept. of Public Administration, FUOYE,
[6]Dept. of Educational Technology, FUOYE,
[7]Dept. of Educational Mgt. FUOYE,
[8]Dept. of Mass communication, FUOYE.
Corresponding Author: toyin.onayinka@fuoye.edu.ng

Abstract
This paper examined the need to integrate Internet of Things (IoT) technologies into Nigeria's education system to help close digital divides between Nigeria and her advanced counterpart countries. The benefits, opportunities and challenges for integration of IoT were explored through the lenses of constructionism, connectivism and activity models. Possible technical, pedagogical, financial and social barriers that would face large-scale IoT adoption in schools were examined. To overcome these obstacles, the paper also examined the blended strategies including specialized learning hubs, cloud-sourcing models, mentorship networks, and crowd-computing. Collectively, these approaches could empower leveraging IoT for transformative, project-based connected learning through participatory knowledge-building. Potential navigational tactics were reviewed like contextualized training, activity groups for continual connections, and public-private partnerships to share infrastructure costs. The paper concluded that by guiding implementation with established theoretical models while pursuing innovative technical, economic and social strategies tailored to the local context, noting that Nigeria can successfully overcome barriers to leveraging Internet of Things for advancing 21st century teaching and learning outcomes. However, the paper also acknowledged the need for further research. Areas suggested for future exploration included longitudinal case studies evaluating impact of different infrastructure deployment and financing options. Large-scale surveys were proposed to understand evolving teacher perception and ongoing support needs. Finally, comparative analyses with other developing economies' IoT integration pathways and best practices could provide valuable insights for optimizing Nigeria's approach.

Keywords: Internet of Things; Educational Technology Integration**,** Technology Adoption Barriers; 21st Century Educational Skills

Introduction

Nigerian education has faced stagnation compared to global standards (Adewole, 2020) Student-teacher ratios average 1:50, is far higher than the recommended 1:25 (Emmanuel, 2014). National learning assessments show majority of students cannot comprehend basic texts or do division, indicating poor learning outcomes (Stephania, Ahmed, & Jacob, 2022). Infrastructure is lacking, with over 72,000 classrooms needed to meet UN standards and only 50% of schools having basic water and sanitation facilities (Alexander et al., 2016). Teaching methods also rely heavily on rote learning rather than critical thinking (West, 2023). However, this stagnation can be reversed if Nigeria could join her advanced counterparts in embracing 21st century technologies. As technologies advance, the ability to incorporate it into various aspects of life has become more feasible. Education is one sector that could see significant transformation through technological advancement especially with Internet of Things.

The IoT refers to the network of physical devices embedded with electronics, software, sensors and network connectivity that enables data collection and exchange over the internet (Onayinka, 2011; Muhammad et.al, 2022). By integrating IoT applications into Nigeria's education system, stagnant classrooms can be transformed through tools that facilitate student-centered active learning, personalized e-learning, remote access from underserved areas, data-driven optimization of administrative functions and infrastructure, and continuous refinement of curricula to accordingly meet the needs of the digital age.

The gains of integrating Internet of Things into Nigeria's education system have not been widely publicized through research, limiting its ability to draw the attention of key decision-makers and stakeholders. While preliminary initiatives show promise, little is known about the tangible benefits Internet of Things can deliver at scale across learning outcomes, access, efficiency and socioeconomic impact. This means that adopting Internet of Things in Nigerian education requires creating widespread understanding of its benefits to garner support from policy makers and all stakeholders (students, staff, schools and communities). A research exposing the demonstrable strides of Internet of Things in areas like active pedagogy, remote learning extension, data-driven operations and maintenance is, therefore, needed to stimulate political motivation and interest in resource allocation for large-scale implementation of Internet of Things in Nigeria education system. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is a paucity of research on the task of publicizing IoT's transformational roles in 21st century education system. While no prior research has created awareness of the roles of IoT in improving Nigerian education system, the present study will do more than just publicize benefits, it will also expose challenges faced on-field and provide actionable strategies going forward.

Literature Review

Nature of internet of things

The paradigm of the IoT encompasses networks of physical objects embedded with electronically-enabled sensors, software, and connectivity which facilitate said objects' collection and exchange of data with minimal human intervention (Lopez Research, 2017). IoT enables devices to monitor environmental conditions and communicate with intelligent systems wirelessly (Dhillon, Kalra, Bhagat, & Chandhoke, 2017). It relies upon pervasive sensors that discreetly observe metrics including temperature, motion, and pollution levels (Whitmore, Agarwal, & Xu, 2015). These sensors transmit wirelessly using protocols such as WiFi, Bluetooth, Zigbee, or low power wide area networks to interface with software platforms (Borgia, 2014). Such platforms

assimilate information across disparate endpoints to discern patterns and trigger outcomes via network gateways (Lin et al., 2017).

Common IoT devices include smart appliances, wearable technologies, environmental monitors, industrial machinery, and transportation assets equipped with internet connectivity via onboard integrated circuits (Khan, Khan, Zaheer, & Khan, 2012). Identification techniques like the full meanings of the codes mentioned are as follows: Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Quick Response codes (QR) codes, Near Field Communication (NFC) tagging digitally distinguish objects (Zhang, Liu, & Lou, 2011).

Central to IoT is data processing using infrastructure such as cloud servers and edge computing clusters which analyze real-time flows of information from billions of interconnected devices (Atzori, Iera, & Morabito, 2010). This analysis enables responsive automated decision-making with applicability in domains including infrastructure management, agriculture, and healthcare through optimization using insights derived (Petrik & Herget, 2019). Artificial intelligence and machine learning techniques further leverage such insights (Samaniego & Detweiler, 2020).

Thus, IoT facilitates ubiquitous sensing and activation capabilities worldwide through perpetual machine interactions and convergence of the physical and digital realm (Okunade & Onayinka, Ajijola, 2015) for purposes like remote monitoring, precision process control, and predictive maintenance (Jia, Karagiannis, & He, 2016).

However, questions arise around the pedagogical merits of such an approach as well as challenges that may undermine its effectiveness.

Potentials of Internet of Things (IoT)

Promotes engagement*:* IoT enhances engagement through gamification and interactive activities by allowing teachers to incorporate more immersive elements into lessons (Armier, Shepherd, & Skrabut, 2016; Kumar, Tiwari, & Zymbler, 2019). It enables adding activities like games that help stimulate students' interest and involvement. Specific examples include interactive games and quizzes where learners can use connected devices to participate in educational competitions with real-time scoring and feedback (Licorish, Owen, Daniel, & George, 2018). Additionally, IoT facilitates simulations through applications of augmented and virtual reality that provide hands-on, experiential learning opportunities outside traditional classrooms (Hu-Au, & Lee, 2018). Students can explore immersive historical reconstructions or scientific visualizations through these technologies (Serrano-Ausejo, & Mårell-Olsson, 2023). IoT also promotes collaboration using networked tools that allow peers to jointly build virtual objects (Onayinka et al., 2018) or tackle real-world problems together (Dillenbourg, 1999). A further engagement feature is IoT's capacity to collect student performance data to design contextual adaptive scaffolds, providing Just-in-time clues, tasks or feedback tailored to each learner's skills and challenges (Abiodun, James, & Merja, 2022).

Personalized learning: IoT enables personalized learning through collecting student data (Spyrou et al., 2018; Li, 2023). It can tailor lessons based on individual skills like self-paced assignments with difficulty adjusted in real-time (Duong, Bui, & Lu, 2022). Preferences are also accounted for, like allowing musical lessons geared towards favorite genres (Rentfrow, Goldberg, & Levitin, 2011). Assessing prior knowledge helps determine starting points such as skipping basics in well-granted topics. Tracking engagement and struggles aids delivering relevant remedial/extension content (National Research Council, 2002). Lessons can be optimized for diverse skills like pairing

audio instructions with texts for varied learner styles (Singh, 2018). Monitoring comprehension on-the-go further ensures challenges match evolving abilities.

IoT facilitates collaborative learning through new models enabled by connected devices (Kailash, & Abdulaziz, 2022; Satu, Roy, Sunny, & Whaiduzzaman, 2018). Group projects can involve jointly building virtual objects through networked robotic kits (Kumar, Rus, & Sukhatme, 2008). Peers can team up on augmented reality scavenger hunts across devices revealing layers of locations (Lu, Chao, & Parker, 2015). Discussion boards let classmates converse online in real-time on assignments from remote areas (Vargas-Madriz, 2018). Peer feedback is simplified through shared document annotation(Rufai, 2023) or digital portfolio reviews (Nilson, & Goodson, 2018). Experts can live-stream instruction to distributed students participating through interactive polls, comments and breakouts (Cavinato, Hunter, Ott, 2021). Connected devices open gamified labs where small teams solve collaborative coding, wiring or simulation puzzles (Jovanović, & Milosavljević, 2022).

Ubiquitous: Access to education anywhere and anytime is a promising benefit of IoT. With internet connectivity via devices like smartphones, learners can access educational resources remotely (Sprecher, 2023). For example, connected e-books allow students to check out digital textbooks using a library app and study any time outside the classroom (Doering, Pereira, & Kuechler, 2012). Interactive video lessons can also be streamed to devices, enabling self-paced learning on commutes or downtime (Papadopoulou & Palaigeorgiou, 2016). Teachers may give assignments connecting to simulated labs or fieldwork through virtual or augmented reality apps (Minocha, Tudor, & Tilling, 2017). Flipped classroom models are another application, where learners watch pre-recorded lectures at home and use class time for discussion (Iacopo, 2020). This flexible approach benefits rural students or those juggling work/family duties.

Just-in-time supplemental learning through IoT can reinforce formal classroom instruction. For example, IoT devices allow delivering micro-learning lessons (Díaz, Caeiro, López, Escobar, & Vilas, 2021) to students on the fly, such as by publishing short audio or video clips that explain a concept a student is currently researching (Kostereliogl u, 2016). Educators can also create contextual information streams programmed to each student's schedule using connected devices and calendars. For instance, review materials related to an upcoming exam delivered via smart speakers the evening before (Franco et al., 2023). Adaptive practice quizzes accessible through apps help students evaluate and strengthen weak areas in real-time as well (Areed, Amasha, & Abougalala, 2021). Further, interactive activities with IoT-connected objects provide just-in-time experiences. A biology student examining plant samples outdoors could trigger audio explanations through barcodes (Daily, et al., 2016). Such contextual supplementation leveraging constant IoT connectivity motivates lifelong learning beyond classroom walls.

Potential Challenges of Integrating IoT in 21st Century Education in Nigeria

While it is desirable to integrate IOT into the Nigerian educational systems, this review identifies some potential challenges that may affect the integration into the Nigerian educational system. Some of the challenges include:

Technical challenges: Integrating IoT technologies on a wide scale in educational institutions may pose some significant technical challenges (Damilare, Ariyo, & Oke, 2022). The existing IT systems in most Nigerian schools would require extensive upgrades like network cabling, bandwidth expansion and device standardization to support new IoT applications and the influx of

connected devices (Damilare, Ariyo, & Oke, 2022). Additionally, aspects like intermittent power supply, and lack of technical skills among users could potentially hamper scale-up efforts if not properly addressed at the implementation planning stages through strategic partnerships and innovative engineering solutions customized for the local context. More so, reliability issues including devices crashing or networks failing can disrupt lessons, reducing continuity of learning (Tobi, Osman, Bakar, & Othman, 2021). With diverse operating systems and platforms across schools, content interoperability becomes difficult (Jakimoski, 2016). Without common standards for interconnectivity, lessons risk incompatibility (Egyedi, 2007). In remote/under-resourced areas, unreliable networks may impede access (Ishii, 2009). Examples include unreliable electricity supplies crashing routers in certain regions (Mesbahi, Rahmani, & Hosseinzadeh, 2018). Additionally, unforeseen failures like cyber-attacks disrupting networks damage the student experience (Perwej, Abbas, Dixit, Akhtar, & Jaiswal, 2021). Due to these issues, full reliance on technology for education introduces dependencies which when impaired undermine the pedagogical aims of accessibility and engagement IoT planned to facilitate.

Financial challenges: Significant financial outlays are required to deploy IoT for education (Webbylab, 2023). Schools must fund costly equipment purchases to outfit classrooms with networked devices and connectivity solutions initially (Machin, McNally, & Silva, 2007). Once procured, resources are needed to continually replace aging components and upgrade technologies over the systems' lifespan (Ahuff, 2022). In remote or lower income communities, making IoT access universal poses particularly steep barriers without subsidies to distribute affordable devices to every student (Moore, & Vitale, 2019). Such expenses risk hindering comprehensive integration if not addressed.

Pedagogical challenges: Significant pedagogical challenges arise when adopting IoT for learning. Assessment methods require redesign to authentically evaluate interactive, self-paced instruction (Koehler, Mishra, & Yahya, 2007). Educators lack skills to competently operate new technologies without intensive training (Studeo, 2022). Overly relying on devices risks reducing social skills if not balanced with other activities (Kolhar, Kazi, & Alameen, 2021). Teachers face pressures from constantly troubleshooting technical issues disrupting lessons (Habibu, Mamun, & Clement, 2012). For instance, designing assessments for an adaptive IoT-enabled science curriculum requires reinventing current practices. Similarly, without special preparation through courses, many educators struggle integrating a sudden move to IoT classrooms.

Social challenges: Integrating IoT technologies into education presents various social challenges that must be addressed. Student data privacy is a key concern, as personal information collected through IoT devices and platforms could potentially be at risk if not properly secured (Gogus, & Saygın, 2019). Additionally, a digital divide may emerge where less privileged groups lacking reliable internet connectivity or adequate devices become marginalized (Sanders, & Scanlon, 2021). Ensuring appropriate oversight and accountability over student online activities and monitoring learning progress can also be difficult (UNESCO, 2023). These equity issues are further compounded for disadvantaged populations who may find equipping all learners with the necessary IoT resources prohibitive due to financial constraints (Madni et al., 2022). If precautions are not taken to empower vulnerable stakeholders and gain broad consent, such equity and privacy threats have the capacity to undermine IoT's benefits for education. Addressing challenges spanning technical, social, financial and pedagogical spheres will be important for navigating large-scale, sustainable IoT integration in Nigerian education.

Mitigation of the Challenges

This review considered the need to take actions that will provide a pathway to overcoming the challenges. The mitigation suggestions are as follows:

The Home-Grown Factors

Though the review recognizes the technical steps that could be taken to mitigate the challenges, there is need to address the home-grown factors that may affect the full functionalities of the technical solutions when available. The identified home grown factors include finding solutions to Quality of Service, Quality of Experience, government will and policies, infrastructure deficits security issues, and issue of users' privacy (Kunle et al., 2017).

Open standards and protocols: Adopting open standards and protocols would allow for diverse IoT devices and platforms to connect and communicate seamlessly without compatibility issues disrupting the learning process (Noura, Atiquzzaman, & Gaedke, 2018). This enhances reliability and enables numerous learning opportunities. For example, students could collectively monitor environmental factors across a school garden using an assortment of Bluetooth-enabled soil sensors (Carrión, Huerta, & Barzallo, 2018) and micro-climate data loggers (Whiteman, Hubbe, & Shaw, 2000) from different manufacturers. The sensors would transfer real-time readings to a learning management system (LMS) (Mershad, & Wakim, 2018) through an open-source protocol allowing easy integration (Schindelin et al., 2012). Learners could then analyze trends visible through an open application programming interface (API) (Zepecki, Guendelman, DeNero, & Prata, 2020) gaining understanding of ecosystems (Chapin, 2011). Similarly, a science class collaborating on an international water quality study may contribute findings on pH, temperature and dissolved oxygen captured through a variety of Bluetooth or Wi-Fi enabled probes (Bogdan et al., 2023) from multiple sources (Zainurin et al., 2022). An open IoT framework ensures the diverse tools seamlessly synchronize streaming data for the joined investigation regardless of brand (Balakrishna, Thirumaran, & Solanki, 2018). These illustrate how openness raises pedagogical opportunities by allowing educators and students flexibility in their integrated technology selections unrestricted by proprietary constraints.

Technical strategies: Technical issues can be addressed through open-source solutions, robust infrastructure, standardized specifications and modular design (Jroberts, 2023; Bonvoisin, Molloy, Haeuer, & Wenzel, 2020). Adopting open-source platforms allows devices and software from different providers to seamlessly connect through common protocols (Nagy, Yassin, & Bhattacherjee, 2010). This requires upfront investment but ensures reliability (Xing, 2020). For example, an open hardware specification for IoT devices in schools allows different sensor brands to integrate on a shared network. Standardizing physical attributes like wireless specifications or software APIs supports interoperability when students bring their own devices (Pal et al., 2018). Modular programming approaches also improve scalability, for example developing lesson apps independently of the connected devices used (Sun, Sun, & Wang, 2012).

Pedagogical strategies: Pedagogical challenges can be mitigated through piloting, support systems, stakeholder collaboration and evaluation (Samaniego et al., 2015; Chanimbe, 2019). Starting small with new technologies allows refining approaches before widespread adoption (Straub, 2009). For example, a new IoT platform for science lessons was first tested in one classroom. Providing dedicated training and technical support for educators can help address any issues with educational technology, allowing them to focus primarily on teaching quality

(Osamwonyi, 2016). Initiatives like regular hands-on workshops and dedicated desks officers can help in ensuring that instructors are adequately equipped to utilize new tools and platforms effectively in their classrooms (Osamwonyi, 2016). When instructional staff have timely access to assistance with troubleshooting problems, it can prevent technical difficulties from disrupting the learning environment. This emphasis on training and support consequently helps technology enhance rather than hamper lesson delivery and student outcomes. Furthermore, regular review of innovations ensures adaptations would address the emerging educational needs (Onayinka, (2011); Lyng, 2021). Collaboration between educational technology developers, schools, and researchers is important to ensure solutions are well-grounded in real-world educational needs (Resta, & Laferrière, 2007). When these stakeholders work together, technologies can be designed and tested in live classroom environments to validate learner and pedagogical fit before widespread adoption. Feedback from end users also helps developers continuously refine products to better serve evolving purposes. This cooperative approach can help in advancing innovations that are meaningfully integrated into learning environments from the start

Policy and economic strategies: The challenges of IoT integration can also be mitigated thorough planning and strategic policy and economic strategies (Onayinka et al., 2022). For example, developing privacy/ethics planning, guidelines, inclusion strategies and financing models can address policy concerns regarding data usage and security (Hayes, & Bulat, 2017). Inclusion strategies that leverage public-private partnerships and phased implementation can expand access into a financially sustainable manner. Establishing alternative financing models like infrastructure sharing or funding from universal service funds can also reduce upfront investment burdens. Well-communicated responsibilities and rights help gain involvement from stakeholders (People Management, 2023). By transparently establishing what is required and entitled for each stakeholder, it creates mutual understanding and accountability. This helps different parties willingly and actively contribute as needed, rather than feeling unclear or removed from decision-making. Good communication of responsibilities and rights is therefore important for fully engaging stakeholders in complex educational technology undertakings.

Another economic strategy is cloud-sourcing to maintain access for underprivileged communities. Leveraging cloud-based platforms can mitigate infrastructural barriers to education technology integration. Hosting digital curricula, administrative systems and student assessments within centralized cloud environments takes advantage of reliable, scalable data centers (Ogwo, Ibegbulem, & Ezema, 2022). This redistributes costs across a wider user base while reducing upfront capital expenditures for local hardware/IT maintenance (Akpoghome, & Nwano, 2019; Dabbagh, & Kitsantas, 2012; Ogwo, Ibegbulem, & Ezema, 2022). When outages occur, cloud-sourcing also maintains continuity since content/services reside off-premises. Overall, as an affordable, resilient solution it can help expand access for underserved groups by optimizing investments. Taking proactive measures to thoughtfully address issues like these through cooperative frameworks and enabling policies can pave the way for more widespread adoption of IoT solutions while circumventing common economic barriers faced during technology integration initiatives in education.

Models Anchoring the Review

Models play a vital role in guiding position papers like one exploring IoT integration in Nigerian education sector. They provide useful frameworks that help define important parameters in an organized, analytical manner. This leads to robust, evidence-based conclusions and policy recommendations regarding strategies needed to support innovative learning initiatives.

Ultimately, such frameworks strengthen the position paper's ability to contribute meaningful insights on technologies revolutionizing 21st century education. This discourse is anchored on: Connectivism Model by George Siemens in 2004; the Constructionism Model by Seymour Papert in 1991; and the Activity Model by Yrjö Engeström in 1987.

Connectivism Model: According to this model, learning occurs through network connections between sources/nodes of information. Key tenets include learning as a connectivity within networks, learner as node, curriculum as connections. In a connectivist model employing IoT, students' research pathways could be recommended through an adaptive learning platform analyzing their online interactions. For example, the platform may suggest additional sources to explore based on keyword similarities between articles already read. Remotely accessed smart devices could also aggregate students' individual note-taking into a shared knowledge bank for the class to reference.

Constructionism Model: Hands-on building of personally meaningful artifacts facilitates creative, engaged learning (An, Sung, & Yoon, 2022). The key tenets include learning through making, using technology to design and experiment. Using IoT, educators could design constructionist assignments where students collaborate virtually on an interactive science simulation. With connected tools, students might remotely operate and record observations from a robotic microscope exploring real specimens. The gaming elements of these models can motivate persistence to finish multi-step projects.

Activity Theory Model: Learning emerges through goal-oriented interactions within a cultural and historical system (Kabuye, & Marjorie, 2019). Key tenets include historicity of activity, mediation of tools and signs, community context. In an activity theory-based IoT environment, classes discuss a community issue like traffic safety through a social network. Students access connected traffic sensors and model proposals for change. Interacting with IoT data makes the learning more situated and authentically tied to solving a real problem.

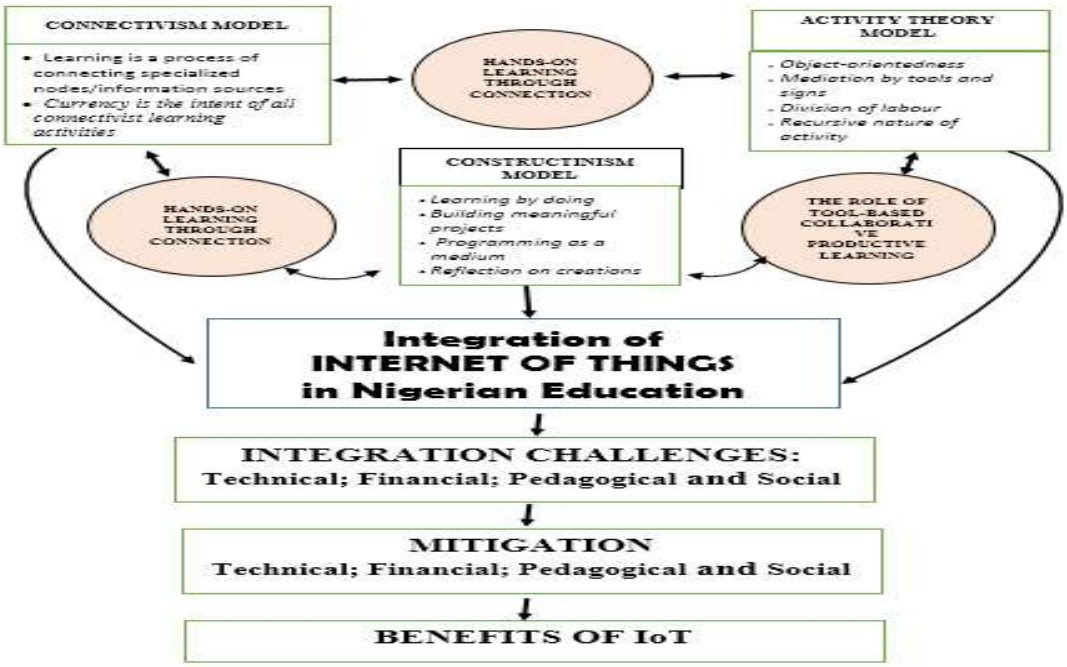

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Integration of Internet of Things in Education

This conceptual framework diagram provides a systematic representation of how three important learning theories (connectivism, constructionism, and activity theory) collectively inform the analytical approach to studying IoT integration in Nigerian education. By visualizing each socio-constructivist perspective as a distinct yet related lens influencing the central topic, the diagram illustrates the key concepts, variables, processes and impacts defined by each theoretical perspective. It also demonstrates how practical examples concretize abstract ideas within the theories. Ultimately, the framework structures a well-rounded exploration of both opportunities and challenges for adopting networked technologies to transform pedagogical practices, knowledge development patterns, and overall optimization of the education system based on validated theoretical underpinnings that holistically support such investigation.

Conclusion

This review reveals the long-standing challenges confronting the Nigerian education space and the transformative capacity the Internet of Things brings to bear in solving the identified challenges. The review underscores the urgent need for innovative solutions to combat stagnation and improve learning outcomes in Nigerian schools, as evidenced by the inadequate infrastructure, outdated teaching methods, and poor student performance highlighted in the literature.

By leveraging IoT technologies, such as smart devices, sensors, and data analytics, Nigeria has the opportunity to revolutionize its education system and provide more engaging, personalized, and accessible learning experiences for students across the country. The review outlines several potential benefits of integrating IoT into education, including enhanced student engagement, personalized learning experiences, and ubiquitous access to educational resources.

However, the review also acknowledges the significant challenges that must be addressed to realize the full potential of IoT in Nigerian education. Technical, financial, pedagogical, and social barriers present formidable obstacles that require careful planning, strategic partnerships, and innovative solutions. Mitigation strategies, such as adopting open standards and protocols, providing technical support and training for educators, and implementing inclusive policies, are essential for overcoming these challenges and ensuring equitable access to IoT-enabled education.

Recommendations on Future Research Direction

More work is needed to understand how best to meet the needs of all learners through IoT education models. For example, additional considerations are required regarding students with disabilities or special learning needs to promote full inclusion and accessibility. Qualitative research gathering input from students and support organizations could provide useful insights.

Second, the study did not provide enough depth around sustainable financing approaches for large-scale IoT integration. Beyond public-private partnerships, alternative models may exist but require further exploration. Options such as crowdfunding campaigns or philanthropic funding sourced from impact investors could potentially lower adoption barriers and warrant investigative case studies.

Third, although privacy and security concerns were acknowledged, students' and guardians' perceptions were not qualitatively examined. Gathering lived experiences through interviews and focus groups would allow their priorities and trade-offs to guide policy approaches tailored for meaningful consent and oversight.

Fourth, access solutions for remote communities were vaguely proposed without defining context-specific barriers rural schools may face. Future work could use a community-based participatory research design to co-create locally relevant interventions taking into account things like infrastructure deficiencies or socioeconomic factors.

Fifth, co-designing curricula directly with educators was not described but would aid understanding technical assistance needs and skills development supports to ease integration challenges. Shadowing programs documenting teacher viewpoints could capture on-the-ground realities informing more practical resources.

Finally, long-term randomized control trials are needed to show durability of learning impacts and cost savings over multiple years through longitudinal comparative analyses of diverse IoT models deployed at scale in partnership with regional education boards.

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DETERMINANTS OF CHILD BEARING DECISIONS AMONG HAUSA WOMEN IN KATSINA STATE

Ilim, Moses Msughter
Amali Sulaiman
Anifat AbduRaheem
Department of Sociology
Federal University, Dutsin-Ma
Katsina State
milim@fudutsinma.edu.ng

Abstract
While the decision and ability to give birth is natural, such decision is nonetheless influenced by distinct socio-cultural barriers particularly among Hausa women in Katsina State. This study examined how access to healthcare, education levels, cultural norms, and economic opportunities shape child bearing decisions in selected households in Katsina State. A multi stage sampling techniques where cluster sampling was first used to divide Katsina State into three (3) clusters corresponding with the senatorial districts in the state and thereafter simple random sampling was used to sample 225 respondents. Data were collected quantitatively from 225 respondents using questionnaire. Quantitative techniques of data analyses were used to analyse the resultant data. Descriptive statistic was used to examine factors that influence child bearing decisions among women. Both the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Chi-square were used to establish the relationship and influence of education, income level, partners' attitude on child bearing decisions in Katsina State. The findings reveal that most women in the study area are aware of the existence of varieties of modern contraceptives and majority of them have used some of the methods to control birth. Education, and level of income ranked among the main socio-demographic factors that influence child bearing decision while partners' attitude is one of the main socio-cultural factors. The result of the tested hypotheses revealed a statistically significant relationship between partners' attitudes (p-value 0.001), level of education (p-value 0.000), and women's childbearing decisions in Katsina State. The study recommends a comprehensive approach that increases access to family planning services and reproductive health education of both women and men as well as tackling of specific cultural barriers that limit reproductive choices.

Key Words: Birth control; Child bearing decisions; Cultural norms; Partners' attitude; Socio-cultural barriers

Introduction

From a biological standpoint, a woman's body is uniquely designed to carry and nurture children. Women have the reproductive organs necessary for conception, pregnancy, and childbirth. While the act of child bearing is a woman thing, the process is a complex and multifaceted experience that has been shaped by cultural, social, and biological factors throughout history. Women have played a central role in childbearing for millennia, and their experiences have been shaped by their gender, race, class, and other social identities. With the development of modern medicine and contraception, women in some Western societies have more control over their fertility and child bearing decisions. Studies have shown that their counterparts in other parts of the world lack control over their fertility and child bearing decisions owing to some socio-cultural influence (National Demographic and Health Survey 2014).

In many African societies, men are seen as the head of households and have the final say on important decisions, such as when to have children. This can mean that women have little to no control over their own reproductive choices. According to Kriel et al (2019), even though nearly 40% of households in South Africa are headed by women, men continue to hold considerable power over women including decision to have babies or not. This is mostly related to the culturally elevated position that men have over women and men being more economically empowered. Male dominance is perpetuated through political and economic factors that hinder women's access to financial independence and therefore their capacity to access and use family planning and contraception methods and services. Patriarchal views on gendered roles are socially built and maintained within distinct cultural settings and result in women lacking autonomy to make their own decisions about child bearing. Moreover, in Most African societies including Nigeria, child bearing decisions almost entirely rest with the man and the in-laws. Women are left with very little other than to conceive and give birth whenever the man and his father and mother in-law deems it fit.

The number of children that a woman bears depends on many factors, including the age she begins childbearing, how long she waits between births, and her fecundity. Postponing first births and extending the interval between births have also played a role in reducing fertility levels in many countries (National Demographic and Health Survey NDH 2018). Birth control is very imperative because these factors have consequences. Short birth intervals, particularly those fewer than 24 months, place newborns and their mothers at heightened health risk. The median birth interval in Nigeria is 30.9 months. Studies have indicated that 25% of non-first births occur within 2 years after the preceding birth, 24-35 months after the previous birth. Relatedly, childbearing at a very young age is associated with an increased risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth and higher rates of neonatal mortality.

The age at which childbearing commences is an important determinant of the overall level of fertility as well as the health and well-being of the mother and child. In Nigeria, the median age at first birth among women age 25-49 is 20.4 years. This means that half of women age 25-49 give birth for the first time before age 21. Seventy-five percent of women have given birth by age 25. Katsina State, located in northwestern Nigeria, and is predominantly inhabited by the Hausa ethnic group. The Hausa culture is deeply rooted in traditions and customs, and these often play a significant role in shaping reproductive health behaviors and decisions. According to Bayo (2019) the region also faces numerous challenges in maternal and child health, including high maternal mortality rates, low contraceptive prevalence, and inadequate access to quality healthcare services which may combine to influence child bearing decision among women.

It is equally important to state that while women in urban centers and in places like Lagos delay to begin childbearing, the experience for women in rural areas and those in Katsina and Zamfara is different. According NDH report (2018) women in Lagos begin childbearing 7.3 years later (24.8 years) than their counterparts in Katsina and Zamfara (17.5 years each). Relatedly, the report revealed that women with no education begin childbearing 4.5 years earlier than women with a secondary education (18.0 years versus 22.5 years). This implies that location and level of education may also have significant influence on child birth. This study however seeks to provide an understanding of the determinants influence on child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State. By examining socio-cultural, economic, healthcare access, knowledge, and policy-related factors, the study aim to inform targeted interventions that can improve maternal and child health outcomes in the region. The idea is to interrogate women and see the extent to which their bearing decisions are influenced by other factors.

Statement of the Problem

Radecki, & Beckman, (1992) conducted a study titled determinants of child-bearing intentions of low-income women: Attitudes versus life circumstances. The authors conducted multivariate analyses to show that motivation for parenting and life circumstances in addition can affect women's child-bearing intentions 88.6% of the time for nulliparous women, but 73.7% for parous women. However, data for the study is outdated and the aim was also to examine child bearing intensions not decisions influencing child birth. Kriel et. al. (2019) conducted a similar study to examined male partner influenced on contraceptive use.

While there is an array of studies into fertility decisions, a lot of them are focus on contraceptive use and the influence of push factors on decisions to use contraceptives. Kriel et. al (2019) for instance was more interested in investigating the influence of men on contraceptive use by women. This present study seeks to examine the influence of several factors particularly demographic and socio-cultural factors and how they influence decisions (not intensions) towards child bearing by women. Boutayeb (2023) also used NDH to conduct a comparative study which examined the social determinants of health and adolescent childbearing in WHO Eastern Mediterranean countries. Apart from the fact that the study is a comparative one, the respondents were adolescent and not married women. The ongoing study seeks to gather primary data from married women in the field. It is based on this that this study seeks to examine the influence of socio-demographics and cultural factors on child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina state.

Research Questions

The main research question is, what is the effect of socio-demographic and cultural factors on child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina state? Other specific research questions include the following:

(a) What are the socio-demographic factors that affects child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State?
(b) Are the Hausa women in Katsina state aware of the existence of modern family planning methods and utilize them for control birth.
(c) What is the effect of socio-cultural factors on child bearing decision among the Hausa women in Katsina State?
(d) What are the specific roles of male partner's involvement in child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State?

Research Objectives

(a) To identify the socio-demographic factors that influence child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State.
(b) To assess the level of awareness and use of modern family planning methods among Hausa women in Katsina State to control birth.
(c) To examine the effect of socio-cultural factors on child bearing decision among Hausa women in Katsina State.
(d) To determine the role of male partners' involvement in child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State.

Study Hypotheses

H_0. Partners' attitudes are less likely to influence women's childbearing decision in Katsina state.
H_0. Women's level of education will less likely influence their childbearing decisions in Katsina state.
H_0. Women's income level will less likely influence their childbearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina state.

Methodology

Katsina State is located in the Northwestern region of Nigeria and shares borders with the Republic of Niger to the North, Kano State to the east, Jigawa State to the southeast, Kaduna State to the south, and Zamfara State to the west. Census data from the 2022 census pilot survey put the population of Katsina at over 10 million people. The main ethic groups in Katsina State are the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups. The predominant language spoken in the State is Hausa while Fulfulde and English languages are also widely used, especially in formal and educational settings.

The major urban towns in Katsina State are Katsina town (state capital), Malumfashi, Daura and Funtua. For the purpose of the study, Dutsin-Ma, Charachi, Danja towns were added to the list as a semi-urban town. The state is known for its rich cultural history and mostly agrarian economy, which is centred on raising cattle and crops like millet. The predominant religion, Islam, has a significant impact on daily life and views regarding child spacing and utilization of family planning methods.

The study population consisted of men and women of reproductive and sexually active age (15-59 years) in Katsina State. The population of Katsina state is over 10, 826,966 according to 2022 trial Census trial figures from National Population Commission (NPC). A multi-stage sampling procedure was used where a number of suitable sampling techniques were employed at different stages. In the first stage, the researcher used cluster sampling technique to divide the population of Katsina State into three clusters namely; Cluster 1 (Katsina North), Cluster 2 (Katsina Central) and Cluster 3 (Katsina South).

Two communities were selected from each of the clusters using the balloting methods which involved writing the names of the major towns in the clusters (senatorial districts) in small pieces of papers, which were squeezed and put in a small jar. The jar was thoroughly shaken after which the researcher inserts his hands to remove whichever piece of paper he touches first in the jar. This procedure was repeated in all the places visited until the required number of communities were selected. In Cluster 1 (Katsina North), Katsina and Daura towns were selected. In Cluster 2 (Katsina Central), Kankara and Dutsin-Ma were selected and in Cluster 3 (Katsina South), Malumfashi and Funtua were selected. A total of six communities were selected using simple random sampling by balloting. The local government headquarters and other rural communities in each of the local government sampled were selected.

A total of 225 men and women were purposively selected in the nine sampled areas. The targeted population for the study were men and women of child bearing age. Katsina has a large Hausa population, making random sampling which was initially contemplated logistically challenging. Purposive sampling technique on the other hand, enabled the researcher to focus on these relevant subgroups, (men and women of child bearing age) which helped us to generate richer and more nuanced data about the effect of sociocultural factors and the role of men in childbearing decisions. Moreover, purposive sampling targeted specific areas like the "majalisa" (known joints where men sit out and chit chat), markets and households. This made recruitment more manageable for the study.

The major instrument for data collection in this study was questionnaire. The questionnaires was divided into sections according to the objectives of the study. The first section covered information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The questions and the layout of the questionnaire were designed to generate unambiguous information on. Questionnaire was the primary instrument for data collection. It was self and other administered to take care of the literate and non-literate participant who cannot read or write. Given the cultural and religious sensitivity unknown male interaction with married women among the Hausa people, female research assistants (who were fluent in Hausa and English languages) were used to help in collecting data particularly from household that restricted entry for men.

The study employed quantitative method of data analysis. Bivarate analyses were used to examine the relationship between demographic and other variables with child bearing decision among Hausa women. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and chi square were used to determine the relationship between sociocultural factors and child bearing decisions.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents.

Variable	F (n=225)	(%)
Age Bracket		
15-30 years	120	53.3
31-45 years	64	28.4
49-59 years	28	12.5
Above 51 years	13	5.8
Monthly Income (₦)		
Below 20,000	16	7.1
21,000-40,000	54	24.0
41,000-60,000	135	60.0
61, 000 and above	20	8.9
Marital Status		
Married	201	89.3
Divorced	8	3.6
Widowed	16	7.1
Educational Level		

Non-formal Education	83	36.9
FSLC	86	38.2
SSCE	46	20.4
Tertiary education	10	4.4
Occupation		
Employed	27	12.0
Self-employed	141	62.8
Unemployed	33	14.6
Student	24	10.6
Number of Children		
0.0	19	8.4
1-2	19	8.4
3-4	72	32.0
5+	115	51.2
Location		
Daura	51	22.7
Dutsin-Ma	25	11.1
Kankara	32	14.2
katsina	42	18.7
Funtua	33	14.7
Malumfashi	42	18.6
Sex		
Male	102	45.3
Female	125	54.7

Field Survey

All the 225 copies of questionnaire distributed, were retrieved and analyzed for the study. The results in table 1 show the socio-demographic information of the respondents. The table displays the age bracket of the respondents where majority of the respondents 120(53.3%) respondents were between the ages of 15-30 years, 64(28.4%) respondents were between the ages of 31-45 year, 28(12.5%) respondents were within the age bracket of 49-59 years, and the remaining 13(5.8%) respondents were above 51 years. In terms of monthly income, 16(7.1%) respondents earned below ₦20, 000, 54(24.0%) respondents made between ₦21, 000 – ₦40, 000, 135(60.0%) respondents earned between ₦41, 000 – ₦60, 000, and the remaining 20(8.9%) respondents earned above ₦61, 000.

The table also shows the marital status of the respondents where majority 209(89.3%) respondents were married, 8(3.6%) respondents were divorced and the remaining 16(7.1%) respondents were widowed. The educational level of the respondents shows that 83(36.6%) respondents had no formal education, majority 86(38.2%) respondents had FLSC, 46(20.4%)

respondents had SSCE and the remaining 10(4.4%) respondents had tertiary education. The table also displays the number of children the respondents have. Deducing from the table, 19(8.4%) respondents had no children, 19(8.4%) respondents had 1-2 children, 72(32.0%) respondents had 3-4 children, while majority 115(51.1) of the respondent had above 5 children. In terms of location, 51(22.7%) of the respondents were from Daura, 25(11.1%) respondents were from Dutsin-Ma, 32(14.2%) respondents were from Kankara, 42(18.7%) respondents were from Katsina, 33(14.7%) respondents were from Funtua and the remaining 42(18.7%) respondents were from Malumfashi. With regards to gender, the same table 1 above indicated that women constituted majority (54.7%) of the sampled population.

Table 2: Socio-demographic factors and child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State

Variable	F (n=225)	(%)
Does your level of income influence your childbearing decision?		
Yes	165	73.3
No	60	26.7
Do you think education influence childbearing decision among Hausa women?		
Yes	178	79.1
No	47	20.9

Multiple responses

Table 2 showcases the socio-demographic factors that influence child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State. Majority of the respondents 165(73.3%) agreed that income level influence their childbearing decision. Also, majority 178(79.1%) of the women reported that educational level determines childbearing decision among Hausa women.

Table 3 Showing Distribution of other factors that affect child Bearing Decisions among Hausa Women in Katsina State

Variables	F (n=225)	%
Occupation	16	7.1
Marital status	62	27.6
Household size	101	44.9
Age	46	20.4

Multiple responses

Table 3 indicates other determinant factors of childbearing decision to include, occupation (7.1%), marital status (27.6%), household size (44.9%) and age (20.4%).

Table 4: Awareness and use of modern family planning methods among Hausa women in Katsina State to control birth

Variable	F (n=225)	(%)
Are you aware of modern family planning methods?		
If yes, which methods are you aware of?		

Contraceptive pills	51	22.7
Condoms	135	60.0
Intrauterine devices (IUD)	14	6.2
Implants	25	11.1
Have you ever used any modern family planning method to control birth?		
Yes	225	100.0

Multiple responses

Table 4 displays the result of analysis to examine level of awareness and use of modern family planning methods among Hausa women in Katsina State to control birth. Deducing from the result, all 225 (100.0%) respondents were aware of modern family planning methods. The modern contraceptive methods they are aware of include: contraceptives, pills, condoms, intrauterine devices (IUD) and implants.

Table 5: Role of male partners' involvement in child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State

Variable	F (n=225)	(%)
How involved is your male partner in childbearing decisions?		
Very involved	145	64.4
Somewhat involved	32	14.2
Not involved	48	21.4
Does your male partner support the use of modern family planning methods?		
Yes	184	81.8
No	41	18.2
If yes, what kind of support did you receive from your partner?		
Financial support	102	45.3
Emotional support	26	11.6
Mental support	17	7.6
Advice	39	17.3
Sex abstinence to avoid pregnancy	41	18.2
Have you and your male partner ever discussed family planning together?		
Yes	225	100.0

Multiple responses

Table 5 displays the result of analysis on the role of male partner's involvement in child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State. Deducing from the result, majority 145(64.4%) of the respondents agreed that their partners were very involved in childbearing

decision. Also, majority 184(81.8%) reported that their partners support the use of modern family planning methods. The respondents mentioned financial support, emotional support, mental support and advice as the support they received from their partners. About 41% of the participant in the study also mentioned that their partners sometimes avoid having sex with them to help them avoid possibility of getting pregnant. All 225 (100.0%) respondents agreed that their partners have ever discussed family planning with them.

Table 6: Partners' attitudes are less likely to influence women's childbearing decision

X^2 (Chi square) = 14.58; df = 2; $p < 0.05$ (Significant)

			How involved is your male partner in childbearing decisions?			Total
			Very involved	Somewhat involved	Not involved	
Does your male partner support the use of modern family planning methods?	Yes	Count	120	32	32	184
		% of Total	82.8%	100.0%	66.7%	81.8%
	No	Count	25	0	16	41
		% of Total	17.2%	0.0%	33.3%	18.2%
Total		Count	145	32	48	225
		% of Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0 %

Table 6 above displays the Pearson Chi-square analysis to test the null hypothesis (H_0) that partner's attitudes are less likely to influence women's childbearing decision in Katsina state. From the result obtained, the p-value (0.001) was found to be less than the level of significance (0.05), thus we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that partner's attitudes are more likely to influence women's childbearing decision in Katsina State.

Table 7: Women's level of education will less likely influence childbearing decisions in Katsina state

			Do you think age influence childbearing decision among Hausa women?		Total
			Yes	No	
Edu level	No formal education	Count	36	47	83
		% of Total	20.2%	100.0%	36.9%
	FLSC	Count	86	0	86
		% of Total	48.3%	0.0%	38.2%
	SSCE	Count	46	0	46
		% of Total	25.8%	0.0%	20.4%

	Tertiary education	Count	10	0	10
		% of Total	5.6%	0.0%	4.4%
Total		Count	178	47	225
		% of Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

$X^2 = 101.64$; df = 3; $p < 0.05$ (Significant)

Table 7 above displays the Pearson Chi-square analysis to test the null hypothesis (H_0) that women's level of education will less likely influence their childbearing decisions in Katsina State. From the result obtained, the p-value (0.000) was found to be less than the level of significance (0.05), thus we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that women's level of education will more likely influence their childbearing decisions in Katsina State.

Table 8: Women's income level will less likely influence their childbearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State

$\mathbf{X}^2 = 74.66$; df = 3; $p < 0.05$ (Significant)

			Does your level of income influence your childbearing decision?		Total
			Yes	No	
Monthly income	below 20,000	Count	12	4	16
		% of Total	7.3%	6.7%	7.1%
	21,000-40,000	Count	54	0	54
		% of Total	32.7%	0.0%	24.0%
	41,000-60,000	Count	99	36	135
		% of Total	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
	61,000 and above	Count	0	20	20
		% of Total	0.0%	33.3%	8.9%
Total		Count	165	60	225
		% of Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Multiple responses

Table 8 shows the Pearson Chi-square analysis used to test the null hypothesis (H_0) that older women's income level will less likely influence childbearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State. From the result obtained, the p-value (0.000) was found to be less than the level of significance (0.05); thus we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that women's income level will more likely influence childbearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State.

Discussion

This study examined the determinants of child bearing decisions among Hausa women in Katsina State. The study found that sociodemographic factors such as income level, level of education, occupation, marital status, household size and age influence childbearing decision. This is in line with a study conducted by Owuamanam and Alowolodu (2010) in Ondo State, where it was discovered that educated people had fewer children than the uneducated. The researchers´ observation revealed that illiterates seem to keep on procreating even with observable little

resources to cater for the needs of the children. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents were aware of modern family planning methods. The level of awareness however, contradicts the findings from a study that was conducted by Olubiyi, Olatunde, Biturs, Olubiyi and Jibril (2014) that few Hausa women have any knowledge about birth control. This increased level of awareness may be attributed to advances in technology and the improved awareness in the mass media.

The modern contraceptive methods they are aware of include: contraceptives, pills, condoms, intrauterine devices (IUD) and implants. This finding agrees with the report of the National Demographic Health Survey (2008) which revealed that 72 percent of all women and 90% of all men know at least one contraceptive method. Majority of the respondent have used modern family planning methods to control birth. This finding is inconsistent with earlier studies among Kanuri women in Borno state conducted by Eyayou, Berhane and Zerihun in 2004 which found that very few of the women used modern family planning methods since majority of their husbands disapproved of it.

Other argument for non-use of family planning was that God who gave the children will undoubtedly provide for them. Some of the ladies also indicated that they were not utilizing family planning since they were still young and intended to have more children. This finding also contradict the study which was conducted by Nettey et al. in 2014 and the report from NDHS in 2014 which stated that awareness of family planning was more than its use; despite the fact that most of them accepted that there are family planning clinics where they could easily access family planning services at an affordable rate (Regnier, 2011).

The findings of the study revealed that socioeconomic factors that influence the practice of home deliveries among Hausa women in Katsina State as most of the respondents have preference for home deliveries more than hospital deliveries. The findings revealed that the main reason for this preferences include: lack of access to healthcare facilities, cultural preferences, distance to health facility, cost and comfort and familiarity. This finding is in tandem with the report of the Nigerian Demographic Health Survey report (2013) that a significant proportion of mothers in developing countries deliver at home, with most births unattended by skilled personnel.

Approximately 50% of women in Nigeria underwent a minimum of four prenatal consultations during their pregnancy. Similarly, studies report that only about 38% of births in Nigeria are attended by a qualified health provider, such as a midwife, doctor, or nurse. The data from the NPC (2010) indicated a significant decrease in three of the northern states. In diverse contexts, individual factors, including maternal age, parity, education and marital status; household factors including family size and household wealth; and community factors including socioeconomic status, community health infrastructure, region, rural/urban residence, available health facilities and distance to health facilities all determine place of delivery and these factors also interact in different ways (Gabrysch & Campbell, 2009).

The study found that most of the women's partners were involved in childbearing decisions. Similarly, it was found that male partners supported the use of modern family planning methods. The supports received include: financial support, emotional support, mental support and advice. This finding agrees with the assertion of Duze and Mohammea (2006) that the Hausa community is patrilineal in nature, with a strong male influence on many decisions concerning the household, including reproduction. This makes the attitude of the male counterpart towards family planning and the preferred number of children important determinants fertility and fecundity among the Hausas.

Conclusion

While the amount of knowledge on family planning and contraceptive methods is adequate, the actual use of contraceptives among the studied group is suboptimal. Therefore, it is necessary to provide educational and counselling programmes that are better suited to women, while also including family planning messaging targeted at men. Men's inclusion is crucial as it has been found to affect women's utilisation of maternal health services. It is important to educate majority of Hausa men on the potential consequences and effects of making poor decisions regarding maternal health. The economic challenges faced by many families, such as poverty and lack of access to resources, have deterrent effects on childbearing decisions, as families weigh the economic responsibilities of parenting.

Education emerged as a critical determinant, with higher levels of education among women often correlating with lower fertility rates. Education empowers women with knowledge about family planning methods, leading to more informed decisions regarding childbearing. Furthermore, educated women are more likely to participate in the workforce, which can delay marriage and childbirth due to career aspirations. Health-related factors, including access to healthcare services and family planning, significantly influence childbearing decisions. The availability of reproductive health services and accurate information about family planning methods can enable women to have greater control over their fertility preferences. However, limitations in access to these services and cultural resistance to family planning methods can constrain women's choices.

Most Hausa women prefer to give birth at home. This preference could predispose them to complications such as severe bleeding leading to shock, excruciating pain, vesico-vaginal fistula, and spread of infections like HIV and hepatitis and painful intercourse later. Others are burn injuries, severe hypertension, eclampsia, heart failure and subsequent death which are associated with harmful practices that occur during home delivery. There is need for education and encouragement of the women to seek adequate and appropriate healthcare services in order to reduce the rate of maternal and child mortality

Recommendations

(a) There is need for government to collaborate with Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other relevant humanitarian bodies to improve access to reproductive health services by establishing more healthcare facilities in rural areas of Katsina State. These facilities should offer family planning services, antenatal and postnatal care, as well as education on contraceptive methods.

(b) Similarly, there is a need for government to empower both main stream and new media by sponsoring educational campaigns tailored at Hausa women in Katsina State. Such campaigns should focus on the importance of family planning, the benefits of child-spacing and the risks associated with high fertility rates.

(c) There is need to implement programs aimed at empowering Hausa women through education and skill-building initiatives.

(d) Men should be engaged in discussions about family planning and reproductive health.

(e) There is also need to challenge harmful sociocultural norms and practices that may influence childbearing decisions, such as the preference for large families or the belief that women should have limited autonomy in reproductive health matters.

(f) There is need to integrate family planning services into existing maternal and child health programs in Katsina State to help normalize discussions about contraception and provide

women with convenient access to contraceptive methods during antenatal and postnatal visits.

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ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC RISK FACTORS OF MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG YOUTHS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

[1]Abonyi, Sunday Evaristus Ph.D
Department of Social Work
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria
abonyi.se@unilorin.edu.ng, +2348030499523

[2]Onwuka, Charles Chukwujekwu, Ph.D
Department of Sociology
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
Igbariam, Anambra state
onwuka.cc@coou.edu.ng, +2348064396459
&
[3]Madu, Tochukwu Emmanuel, Ph.D
Department of Criminology & Security Studies
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
Igbariam, Anambra state
te.madu@coou.edu.ng +2347062847082
Corresponding Author: abonyi.se@unilorin.edu.ng

Abstract
The study examined socio-economic correlates and mental illness among youths in Kwara State, North Central, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed to select 114 respondents from three council areas in the three senatorial districts of the state using structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and cross tabulation. Findings of the study revealed that 79.8% and 81.6% of respondents indicated that financial hardship and unemployment often take the center stage as the most socio-economic risk factors accountable to the increasing rate of mental illness among the youths while 88.6% and 83.3% of respondents respectively reported incessant strikes embarked upon by teachers/lecturers of educational institutions and undue threats by government security personnel. Similarly, 91.2% of respondents revealed poor social relationships maintained by the youths amongst other critical issues. Social workers were identified as playing crucial role in the areas of counseling, advocacy, collaborative services/referrals sequel to which a recommendation was made for inclusion of social work and mental health in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools as well as form part of general study courses in Nigerian higher institutions.
Key Words: Exploratory analysis, Mental illness, Social work, Socio-economic, Youth

Introduction

In Africa, the number of young people going through mental illness occasioned by the global economic crunch seems to be alarming. Mental illness here refers to health conditions that alter the individual's mode of thinking, feelings or behavior and also resulting to distress and difficulty in functioning. It portrays a symptom of disorder that could be clinically assessed such as abnormal thoughts, depression, anxiety, dementia, schizophrenia, autism, deficit hyperactivity disorder and so on (Kelani, 2019). Mental illness seems to affect the way the individual feels, thinks, behaves or interact with others. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) reported that 166 million adolescent boys and girls globally were diagnosed of mental illness in 2019. In 2021, the organization also reported that barely one in every seven adolescents (14%) have mental problem. The United Nation's International Children's Emergency Funds (UNICEF, 2020) however, noted that the economic meltdown of many nations brought a kind of crisis in the labour market which then placed the young people at the greater risk of unemployment and inability to enjoy stable livelihood and sustainable income. What this portends is that the impact of mental illness on young people in most African countries had become systemic and deep as a result of the ongoing economic depression and social change. South Africa recorded the highest rate in youth unemployment with 32.0% in 2023, followed by Djibonti (27.9%), Eswatini (24.65%), Gabon (21.35%) and Nigeria (7.2%) from its 4.2% earlier recorded in 2022 (Aina, 2023, NBS,2023)).

In addition to imparting negatively on the mental health wellbeing of the individuals, the productivity levels recorded among this segment of the population seems to have decreased drastically. According to reports from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2023), Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) remained at 2.51% in the second quarter of 2023 which seemed to be lower than 3.54% recorded in the second quarter of 2022 and which was attributed to the challenging economic conditions being experienced in the nation. The youths which in this study chronologically refers to individuals within the ages of 18 and 35 years constitute more than 40% of Nigerian population and forms the backbone of the nation in terms of socio-economic and political development (Odo & Eme, 2014, Ojoye, 2019). Many studies have also confirmed that a reasonable percentage of young people in Nigeria and across the globe suffer from one form of mental illness or the other (Ogbonna et al, 2020, Kuranga & Yusuf, 2021, Ajike et al, 2022, Babasola et al, 2024)).

In Nigeria, the increase in mental illness among the young people was also exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic that invaded the country in the later part of 2019 to almost half of 2020. This generally led to the reduction of income of the nation which invariably may have translated to poor physical and mental health among many people as a result of anxiety and depression (Ardington, 2010). It is likely that once an individual is enjoying a robust income and maximum standard of living, there is the tendency to be happy and less disposed to depression and other psychiatric disorder that are prevalent among people with low income (Hanlon & Carlisle, 2013). Onyedinefu (2021) added that even before the coronavirus incidence, many young people carried the burden of mental illness but without significant efforts to address them. The psychiatric disorder or mental illness could emanate from financial stress that interferes with the individual's ability to meet up with some basic needs and functions within the society. It is the human brain that forms the major organ for the onset of mental illness because it is responsible for the primary functions of the human body (Gould, 2010). According to Health Direct (2023), some of the symptoms of psychiatric disorder or mental illness include; Aggression, Illogical thoughts, poor concentration and memory, disturbance in mood (irritability), lack of motivation, drug abuse,

incoherent speech, paranoid, neglect of personal hygiene and other responsibilities, wandering tendency, talking to the self, amongst others.

Garba (2021) observed that though the increase in the population of youths in Nigeria is an asset, the reality is that the resources are not being properly harnessed as a result of poor governance, corruption and misplacement of priorities. In most developed countries of the world, the celebrated growth in their economies are credited to the youths who are regarded as the economically active segment of the population (World Bank, 2023). Patel (2001) noted that the relationships between financial difficulties and mental health is a vicious cycle as poor/inadequate income invariably results to high level of stress and reduced access to better health services, malnutrition and other physiological challenges which predisposes one to mental illness. Many of the Nigerian youths seem to be negatively affected more than any other segment of the population as a result of the dwindling income accruable to the government in this period of economic crunch which had resulted to disruption of essential health, nutrition and social services (Partnership for Maternal Newborn and Child Health-PMNC, 2021). What this implies to is that mental illness could emerge in the individual's life as a result of financial difficulties and inability to pay for health promoting resources or treatment /medications. Bhat (2012) noted that owing to the fact that many young people in Nigeria and other developing nations are involved in low level jobs with very low remunerations, this group of people become more prone to frustration especially on the financial pressure needed to support oneself and family resulting to mental illness. The author also observed that the global economic challenges contributed further in making the reward structure of many workers swallowed up by inflation and then making the purchasing power to be so low which is bound to generate anxiety and mental imbalance.

Unemployment also appears to be another formidable factor and a major zone of anxiety among youths in many countries including Nigeria. According to reports from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2023, the youth unemployment figure in Nigeria increased to 7.2% in the second quarter of 2023 from the 4.2% recorded in 2022. The reports further highlighted that within the periods, unemployment among the males occupied 3.5% far below that of the females (5.9%), 8.5% for those with tertiary educational certificates, 5.4% for those with Senior School Certificates, 3.7% for those with Junior Secondary Certificate, 3.0% for those with Primary School Certificates and 2.5% for those with no formal education. This portrays an evidence of stagnation in employment generation for the youths in both rural and urban centers across Nigerian states and which indirectly subject this young people to stress, financial pressure, lower self-esteem and consequently mental illness. In other words, the Nigerian economy which is expected to be booming and stimulating investment/production as well as creating more jobs and better income becomes far from reality (Garba, 2021). Adler and Stewart (2010) however argued that securing employment has its own latent functions on the wellbeing of the individual as it could lead to a more positive mental health. The authors noted that many young people have expressed frustrations and depression which have made them to develop mental health problems as a result of lack of employment opportunities. This situation became so precarious since the onset of the democratic governance in Nigeria in 1999 that had denied the youth opportunities for good jobs (Oladeinde, 2021) and increasing the number of patients admitted into psychiatric hospitals. The Chief Medical Director of the Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital Yaba, Lagos, recently revealed that in 2023, the hospital recorded one hundred per cent increase in admission of young people with mental illness which the physician attributed to the economic and socio-economic factors in the country (Ogundepo, 2024).

The educational system of a nation could also inject pressure into the lives of the young people. In many societies, majority of the parents/guardians would like to see their children setting a good record in academic performance among their peers without taking cognizance of their abilities. Bhat (2012), argues that academic burden and stress could be a predisposing factor to mental illness among the youths especially those in higher schools/colleges and universities. The author further noted that majority of academic programmes in many parts of Africa countries were designed or tailored towards getting the white-collar jobs which makes the youth to live with high expectations to pursue paper certificates only, so as to qualify for the jobs without caring to acquire some vocational skills.

On the other hand, the disruption of academic calendar and programmes in public educational institutions occasioned by incessant teachers' strikes could be considered as one of the outstanding factors promoting mental illness in many developing countries (Ewa et al, 2023). In Nigeria, for example, the incessant strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and other university based unions including those in polytechnics and colleges of education down to secondary and primary schools seem to have imparted negatively on the mental health of the youths with a record of 25% out of 10,420 students in a study carried out in 2019 (Esan et al, 2019) while in Ethiopia, it ranges from 21.6% to 40.05% (Dachew et al, 2015). The United Nation's International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2020) noted that young people whose educational programmes are disrupted are likely to experience anxiety or depression compared to others who have never experienced such disruptions in most countries. This is because most of the course outlines slated to be covered in three months or more would now be compressed to last for one or two months. In the same vein, Nigeria in particular has witnessed an increasing number of young people seeking for admission into the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education that have limited space for admission thereby subjecting the youths to unbearable pressure and then to use any available means to secure such admission which may in the process affect their mental health negatively. A revelation by Sule (2021) shows that an average of 65% of candidates who applies for admission with the Nigerian Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) are denied of admission into the universities and other higher institutions in the country annually. The author cited the case of one of the federal universities in Nigeria that recorded 108,917 applications for admission in 2019 and was only able to offer 10.7% admission to candidates out of the total applicants. The implication is that candidates may develop loss of confidence, anxiety or sense of being dysfunctional and mental illness if they keep trying every year without success (Zada et al, 2021).

Louise (2018) however, argues that whereas entering into higher institution could mark the beginning of an exciting life for the individual, many young people undergo a lot of stress capable of developing into mental illness in their struggle to transit from secondary schools to the universities. Zada et al, (2021) argued that gaining admission into the university changes one's life both emotionally and intellectually thus resulting to considerable stress for students to meet up with the academic dealings and the necessary adjustments in the competitive environment. Pedrelli et al (2015) revealed in one of their studies that anxiety disorders are the most prevalent mental problems among university students with approximately 11.9%, followed by depression with about 7-9%. In a related study carried out by Ogunmodede et al (2023), it was revealed that 23.5% of students in Nigerian higher institutions have experienced one form of mental illness or the other as a result of some stressful conditions which may form a trigger for emotional upheavals.

The social relationships of the individuals also count a lot in the development of mental illness among the youths in many societies. The isolation of the young people may encourage them

to engage in risky behaviors and consumption of hyperactive substance which results to mental illness. Studies shows that during the COVID-19 lockdown, the rate of loneliness among the youths increased from 5.8% before the pandemic to 20.8% during the lockdown, a situation that placed many young people into mental health crisis (OECD, 2021).

Mental illness among the youths creates a form of social burden not only to the individual suffering it but to the entire family and the society in general especially when left untreated at the early stage (Uche & Uche, 2012), hence, the need for collective efforts in the treatments. This is one of the assumptions of the Biopsychosocial theory enunciated by George Engel in 1977, which forms the theoretical framework of this study. The theory which is rooted in the General system theory provides a holistic approach to mental illness and states that the personality and the emotional tone of the individual, the surrounding environment and other social parameters do influence manifestation of mental illness (Babalola et al, 2017, Tripathi et al, 2019). In most developed countries for instance, the federal and state laws provide that employment and mental health services be provided to people with mental illness, but this practice is not common in Nigeria and other African countries. The reality that mental illness among the youths is caused by multi-level mechanisms makes the biopsychosocial theory highly relevant for social work intervention. The theory helps social workers to be more holistic and integrative in their attempt to resolve client's problems especially as it relates to mental illness (Mclnerney, 2015). Uche and Uche (2012) also stated that social work services have had substantial influence on mental health policies of many countries in the areas of advocacy, counseling, linkage to resources and collaborative principles with health care professionals. In other words, social work profession makes an important contribution to mental health services and a crucial component of its development. Similarly, Gould (2010) stated that social work values, skills and knowledge are part of the intervention approaches in mental health policy documents in many advanced countries.

Prior studies concentrated more on the prevalence of mental illness among adolescents with little or no emphasis on its implications for social work practice (Ogbonna et al, 2020, Babasola et al, 2024) while others dwelt on social epidemiology and public awareness of mental illness (Salami, 2019, Ajike et al, 2022. Moreover, only few of the studies were situated in Kwara state. The only related study carried out in the study area dwelt on psychosocial factors associated with psychiatric morbidity among students of higher institutions with no emphasis on social work (Ogunmodede, 2023). This study was initiated to address this gap in knowledge. The study was embedded on the following objectives: (i) To ascertain whether financial hardship and unemployment are socio-economic risk factors for mental illness among youths in Kwara state (ii) To ascertain whether the incessant strikes by teachers/lecturers in public institutions in Nigeria are among the predisposing factors to mental illness among youths in Kwara state (iii) To find out whether negative attitude of the government security personnel and poor social relationships of the individuals are accountable to mental illness among youths in Kwara state (iv) To examine the role undertaken by social workers in addressing cases of mental illness among youths in Kwara state.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Kwara state, North central, Nigeria between the months of May to August, 2023. The choice of Kwara state for the study was informed by the researcher's years of residence in the study area and visits to Government hospitals where many young people having some forms of mental illness were observed. The study adopted survey research design and multi-stage sampling techniques. Kwara state was clustered into three units which aligns with the three senatorial districts (Kwara North, Kwara Central & Kwara South) and one local government

council selected from each (Edu from Kwara north, Kwara south from Kwara central and Isin from Kwara south, i.e., three on the whole) using simple random sampling (balloting). Similarly, from each of the local government council areas, one community preferably the council headquarter was purposively chosen as most activities involving the youths are conducted in the headquarters.

A sample questionnaire with open and close ended items were then administered to 120 respondents (i.e. 40 respondents within the ages of 18-34 years, for each community), who were randomly chosen and where at the end, only 114 (94%) were properly completed and returned while 6 (6%) were declared invalid. The questionnaire administration was done by the researcher and two research assistants who were in the final year degree programme in social work. Informed consent of every participants in the study was obtained after explaining the purpose of the study to the participants. In all, 114 copies of the questionnaire were used for analysis with SPSS computer software (version 21.0). The analysis was done using simple descriptive statistics.

Findings

Table 1: Socio-demographic features of respondents (n=114)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	59	51.8
Female	55	48.2
Age (in years)		
18-21	16	14.0
22-25	23	20.2
26-29	25	21.9
30-33	36	31.6
34+	14	12.3
Marital status		
Single	77	67.5
Married	34	29.8
Ever married	3	2.7
Educational level		
Non-formal	2	1.8
Primary	8	7.0
Secondary	42	36.8
Tertiary	62	54.4
Religious Affiliation		
Islam	54	47.4
Christianity	41	36.0
Traditional	19	16.6
Employment status		
Gainfully employed	15	13.2
Student	30	26.3
Business	20	17.5
Applicant	49	43.0

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2023

Table I shows the socio-demographic features of respondents. Majority of the respondents (59%) were males. The age of respondents ranges from 18-34 years with a greater percentage (31.6%) of respondents being within the ages of 30-33. Respondents' marital status shows that a greater percentage of respondents (67.5%) were single. Similarly, the educational qualifications of respondents show that a greater proportion (54.4%) possess tertiary educational certificates, only a small percentage (1.8%) indicated non-formal education. A greater percentage of respondents (47.4%) were found to be adherents of Islamic religion while 36% and 16.6% of respondents respectively were Christians and traditional religious worshippers respectively. Most of the respondents (43%) were applicants, only 13.2% of respondents were found to be gainfully employed. This is one of the major nightmares of the Nigerian youths in the contemporary period.

Table 2: Relationships between socio-economic risk factors and occurrence of mental illness among youths in Kwara state

	Socio-economic Predictors	**Occurrence of mental illness**				
		Very often	Often	Rare	Very Often	Total
1.	**Financial Hardship**					
	Strongly Agree	44	18	1	0	63
	Agree		18	8	1	1	28
	Undecided		7	5	0	0	12
	Disagree		2	2	1	2	7
	Strongly Disagree		3	1	0	0	4
			74	34	3	3	114
2.	**Unemployment**					
	Strongly Agree	28	20	2	1	51
	Agree		23	17	1	1	42
	Undecided		5	8	1	0	14
	Disagree		1	4	0	0	5
	Strongly Disagree		0	2	0	0	2
			57	514	2	114	
3.	**Teachers'/Lecturers' strike**					
	Strongly Agree	29	35	2	2	68
	Agree		21	11	1	0	33
	Undecided		4	6	0	0	10
	Disagree		0	2	0	0	2
	Strongly Disagree		1	0	0	0	1
			55	54	3	2	114
4.	**Threats by Government's Security personnel**					
	Strongly Agree	23	28	2	2	55
	Agree		20	19	1	0	40
	Undecided		5	6	1	0	12
	Disagree		2	3	0	0	5
	Strongly Disagree		2	0	0	0	2
			52	56	4	2	114

5. **Poor social relationships**

Strongly Agree	31	26	2	1	60	
Agree		20	23	1	0	44
Undecided		4	2	1	0	7
Disagree		0	2	0	0	2
Strongly Disagree		1	0	0	0	1
		56	53	4	1	114

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2023

Table 2 above shows the relationships between socio-economic risk factors and occurrence of mental illness among the youths in Kwara state. An overwhelming majority of 91 respondents (79.8%) indicated that financial hardship is one of major socio-economic risk factors accountable to the increasing rate of mental illness among Nigerian youths especially in Kwara state, however, 11 respondents (9.6%) did not subscribe to the opinion in addition to 12 others (10.5%) who did not disclose their views. Similarly, 93 respondents that is; 81.6% indicated that unemployment was another socio-economic risk factor to mental illness among youths as only 7 respondents or 6.1% disagreed to that assertion. More so, 101 respondents (88.6%) agreed that incessant strikes by teachers/lecturers in both higher institutions and other basic educational institutions forms another socio-economic risk factor to mental illness among the young people in Nigeria. Only 3 respondents (2.6%) disagreed to the opinion while the remaining 10 respondents (8.8%) did not disclose their view.

In the same vein, 95 respondents (83.3%) out of the total sample were of the view that threats unleashed to the youths by government's security personnel without any justification cannot be ignored with only 7 respondents (6.1%) disagreeing to the assertion. Finally, 104 participants or 91.2%% of the entire sample agreed that poor social relationships often result to many young persons having mental illness with only a small proportion (2.6%) not subscribing to the opinion.

Table 3: Respondents' view on the role of social workers in tackling mental illness among youths in Kwara state

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Advocacy	30	26.3
Counseling	50	43.9
Linkage to resource system	13	11.4
Collaborative services	14	12.3
Others (specify)	7	6.1
	114	100

Source: Researcher's Field survey, 2023

Table 3 above shows respondents' views on the role of social workers in ameliorating the problem of mental illness among youths in Kwara state. A greater percentage of respondents (43.9%) indicated counseling as the most prominent role played by social workers in the amelioration of mental illness among youths in Kwara State while 26.3% and 11.4% indicated advocacy and linkage to the necessary resource systems. A small proportion of the sample (6.1%) however indicated others such as referral and educational services.

Discussion

From the responses gathered, it becomes obvious that a great number of socio-economic risk factors have played immense role in promoting cases of mental illness among young people in Nigeria, especially in Kwara State. Findings emerging from the study reveals that financial hardship is one of the major socio-economic factors underlying mental illness among youths especially in Kwara State with 79.8% of respondents making the revelation. This finding corroborates the reports submitted by the World Health Organization (2021) that the exposure of the youths to poverty has been one of the leading causes of mental illness worldwide. Similarly, one of the studies done by Esan et al (2019) also identified financial stress as a major risk factor of mental illness among the youths than any other factors.

The implication is that when there is minimal access to financial resources for the individual's wellbeing, stress or emotional upheaval may set in and which may equally trigger mental illness. Unemployment was also reported by respondents as the second leading socio-economic risk factor pointed out by respondents (81.6%) as responsible for the escalation of mental illness among youths in Kwara State. This finding aligns with the view of Jibril (2020) that majority of Nigerian youths are vulnerable to mental illness as a result of some socio-economic challenges such as unemployment or limited employment opportunities. The implication is that staying without a job may generate significant emotional distress and could dispose the individuals to mental illness. In other words, once the individual is not actively employed, he/she becomes vulnerable to anxiety of not satisfying the basic needs and which may trigger mental illness.

Going further, 88.6% of respondents revealed that incessant strikes embarked upon by teachers/lecturers of our educational institutions are also among the socio-economic forces in the occurrence of mental illness among the Nigerian youths. Olanrewaju et al (2022) stated that since 1996, there is hardly any year that university lecturers and other teachers in Nigeria had not gone on strike which comes in the form of warning, indefinite or total/comprehensive strike. Falade et al (2020) also noted that during strike, the academic performance of students tends to drop and abuse of substance/alcohol heightened with its consequent development of mental illness heightened. This implies that when students are made to stay away from school for a longer period, there is the likelihood of having poor thinking capacity, loss of concentration, decline in memory, anxiety and depression, which in turn, may give birth to mental illness.

Study findings also revealed that undue threats by government security personnel is among the socio-economic risk factors for mental illness among Nigerian youths as 83.3% of respondents made the declaration. Moody (2020) remarked that the use of torture and ill treatment of the youths by police officers and other security personnel in Nigeria is an absolute disregard for international human rights laws and standards. More so, the poor social relationships maintained by the youths in their day to day interactions were discovered to be part of the socio-economic risk factors that could invoke mental illness among the youths in Kwara State with 91.2% of respondents making the revelation. This is in keeping with findings of a study carried out by Salami (2019), which reveals that lack of social relationships especially among family members could disrupt the provisions of basic necessities of life for its vulnerable members thereby making them to become dysfunctional leading to the emergence of mental illness. Respondents' view also confirmed that social workers play some critical roles in the amelioration of mental illness especially among the youths and other segments of Nigerian society. Gould (2010) stated that mental illness is a consequence of social circumstances that social workers can intervene to ameliorate the distress. A greater percentage of respondents (43.9% and 26.3%) indicated counseling and advocacy as the most crucial role of social workers in this respect while 12.3% and 11.4% reported collaboration

with other care service professional and linkage to resource system. This finding shows that social work profession could make important contributions in proffering solutions on issues related to mental illness.

Conclusion

The increasing rate of mental illness among youths in Nigeria especially in Kwara State occasioned by socio-economic risk factors such as financial hardship, unemployment, incessant strikes by teachers/lecturers, poor social relationships amongst others have become an issue of great concern to policy makers and every well-meaning individual in Nigeria. It is therefore necessary that all hands should be on deck to address this situation and rescue the youths who are regarded as the leaders of tomorrow.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby advanced;

(a) There is the need to revamp the economy and create more employment opportunities for the teaming population of Nigerian youths to cushion the effect of financial crisis.
(b) The is also the need to avert all forms of strikes in our educational system that tend to keep the young people idle at home for months or years.
(c) Social work education and mental health should be introduced as a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary schools as well as being a part of the general study courses offered by students in our higher institutions.

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ADAPTING TRADITIONS: AN EXAMINATION OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE FULƁE KINSHIP STRUCTURE IN JIGAWA STATE, NIGERIA

Abdu Auwalu Sarkin Fulani
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
abdulfulani66@gmail.com

Abstract
This study examined the dynamic evolution of Fulɓe (Fulani) kinship structures within Jigawa State, Nigeria. Jigawa State, located in northern Nigeria, is home to a diverse range of ethnic groups, in addition to the Fulɓe. Some of these ethnic groups include Zarma (Zabarmawa), Hausa, Kanuri, Bade, Ngizim, Gungawa, and so on. Some typologies of Fulɓe people in Jigawa State include Nomadic Fulɓe, Sedentary Fulɓe, Agro-pastoral Fulɓe, Fulɓe Traders, etc. The research employed qualitative methods by utilizing secondary sources such as documents and records, books, journals, and internet sources to collect data on the dynamic evolution of Fulɓe kinship structures within Jigawa State. The investigation draws on the social structure theory to comprehend the traditional Fulɓe kinship systems, elucidating their essential functions in maintaining stability and order within Jigawa State. The findings reveal that the evolution of Fulɓe kinship structures in Jigawa State is intricately linked to historical events such as colonialism, the spread of formal education, urbanization, economic transformations, and the assimilation of modern values. Consequently, Fulɓe kinship structures in Hadejia Emirate, Ringim, Dutse, Kazaure, Birnin Kudu, and Buji, in Jigawa State, exhibit a synthesis of traditional and modern influences by adapting to the changing societal landscape. This adaptation involves a shift towards an increased emphasis on individual choice, smaller nuclear families, more flexible kinship networks, and a heightened focus on individual accomplishments. In light of these findings, the study advocates for collaborative efforts between the government and Fulɓe communities in Jigawa State to formulate policies that are supportive of the distinctive kinship structures in the State.

Keywords: Cultural Adaptation, Fulɓe Kinship, Kinship Structures; Kinship Networks; Social Structure.

Introduction

Kinship holds great significance and serves as a fundamental aspect of Fulɓe culture. The Fulɓe community stands as the largest ethnic group of pastoralists spanning multiple countries on the African continent. Their traditional way of life revolves around a nomadic lifestyle, with cattle herding being their primary means of subsistence. This distinctive form of nomadism has had a profound impact on the configuration of their kinship structures (Curtin, 1955). The features of traditional Fulɓe kinship structures encompass the prominence of patrilineal descent as the fundamental principle guiding the tracing of ancestry and lineage through the father's side. This unbroken line of descent instils a sense of continuity and provides a solid foundation for their identity and affiliations.

These kinship structures are further strengthened by the concept of extended families, which play a crucial role in Fulɓe society. These extended families are marked by their expansive nature, encompassing multiple generations residing close to one another. This physical closeness ensures a sense of communal cohesion and nurtures a profound feeling of kinship and solidarity among the members. Clans and lineage groups provide a sense of belonging, fostering a collective identity and shared values among their members. Moreover, the practice of arranged marriages is often orchestrated by community elders, who aim to strengthen social ties and alliances between families. Through arranging marriages, the elders strive to consolidate familial bonds and enhance social cohesion within the broader kinship network (Sarkin Fulani, 2022).

The existence of rigid gender roles within traditional Fulɓe kinship structures is a defining characteristic. Men and women are assigned distinct responsibilities and roles within the family unit. These roles are deeply ingrained in the social fabric of Fulɓe society, with men typically assuming leadership positions, and being responsible for the protection and provision of the family, while women play crucial role in nurturing and raising children, as well as managing the household.

The Fulɓe community in Jigawa State, Nigeria, adheres to the characteristics of the traditional Fulɓe kinship system, thus placing significant importance on its practices. This intricate web of familial relationships profoundly influences various aspects of their societal organization and cultivates a strong sense of collective identity. In the light of this context, this investigation explores the transformation of kinship among the Fulɓe people in Jigawa State. By delving into the complexities of their kinship structures and scrutinizing the diverse factors that have influenced their development, the study intends to contribute to a more profound comprehension of the cultural heritage of the Fulɓe community in Jigawa State. Additionally, the insights derived from this research have the potential to inform future policies and practices aimed at safeguarding and perpetuating the essential aspect of kinship within the Fulɓe community.

This study possesses the potential, not only to enhance the knowledge of the Fulɓe in Jigawa State people, but also make a valuable contribution to the broader field of cultural anthropology and heritage preservation

Conceptual Clarification

Fulbe Kinship

Kinship systems differ significantly across various cultures and societies, exerting a profound influence on social organization, inheritance patterns, and the distribution of roles and responsibilities within communities. Kinship refers to a complex system of social relationships, encompassing a diverse range of ties that connect individuals into family units. These connections can be based on blood relations, marriage, or even adoption. Within this intricate web of familial

connections, there exists a multitude of rights and obligations that shape and define the nature of these relationships (Crossman, 2019).

Carsten (2023) defines kinship as a social organization system that is predicated on both actual and perceived family ties. This definition underscores the fundamental role that kinship plays in shaping social structures and individual identities in many societies. Moreover, kinship extends far beyond the confines of the nuclear family, encompassing extended family members and creating a complex network of relationships that form the bedrock of support, cooperation, and social organization. As a result, kinship systems are imbued with a unique set of terminologies, rules of descent, and marriage customs that contribute to the intricate dynamics of each culture's kinship system (Alber, 2010).

Kinship is described by Levy (1966) as any organization, membership of which is importantly oriented to questions of real or assumed biological descent or sexual intercourse. Young (1957) defines kinship as a system of patrilineal descent that is reckoned through the father line only. Kinship among the Arabs term means a share in the common blood which is taken to flow in the veins of every member of a tribe (Smith, 1903). Arabic kinship was once reckoned not in the male but in the female line. Wali (1990) states that in Hausa kinship, the paternal side of the family is oftentimes stronger and more important than the maternal side. In most cases, one finds that, when the husband dies, his relations, rather than the relations of the wife take over the upbringing of his children, or when parents get divorced; their children remain with the father rather than live with the mother.

Kinship is reckoned in several ways around the globe, resulting in a variety of types of descent patterns and kin groups. Anthropologists and sociologists view that most early societies are matrilineal. Typical examples are Arabian societies before the advent of Islam. In African society, the Ashanti Kingdom of Central Ghana kinship had been preceded by women only. This is also found among the Ohafia people of Abia State where the social system of Ohafia is markedly matrilineal or mother-oriented (Egbe, 2017). Based on the definitions given above, kinship can be defined as the recognition of a relationship between individuals based on blood relations or marriage. Fulbe (Lenyol) kinship refers to a relationship between individuals either by blood (consanguineal) or by marriage (affinal).

Kinship among the Fulbe is sometimes beyond blood relations (consanguineal) and marriage (affinal). Fulbe society is both patrilineal and virilocal. An individual belongs to the kin group of his/her father. Patrilineality is among other things, reflected in the naming system. The name of a Pullo person consists of his/her first name plus his/her father's first name; for disambiguation, the grandfather's name can be added, for example: Kabiru Sale Hamza. In the above example, ‘Kabir’ stands for the ego’s surname and Hamza stands for the ego’s grandfather’s name (Sarkin Fulani, 2022).

The historical development of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State can be traced back to the nomadic traditions of the Fulbe people, whose existence has been deeply intertwined with the practice of nomadic pastoralism, which has been a fundamental aspect of their livelihood. This has been influenced by several factors such as socioeconomic transformations. For instance, changes in economic activities, such as a shift from traditional pastoralism to diverse livelihoods impact familial roles and relationships within the community. This highlights the interconnectedness between economic factors and the structures of Fulbe kinship (Crossman, 2019).

Ibrahim (2021) delves into the subject matter of nomadic traditions and examines how education influences the Fulbe kinship structures. Increasing levels of education among the Fulbe

community introduce modern ideologies that potentially challenge traditional kinship norms. As individuals become exposed to new ways of thinking and are empowered by education, he/she can re-evaluate roles, responsibilities, and interpersonal relationships within families.

In a similar vein, Musa (2022) and Kadiri (2023) investigate the influence of globalization on Fulbe kinship and agree that globalization brings about increased exposure to external influences, which can result in the adoption of new ideas, lifestyles, and even alterations in kinship terminology and practices.

Urbanization and migration patterns disrupt traditional kinship structures. As individuals move away from their ancestral homes to urban settings, new social dynamics are introduced, potentially altering the traditional roles and functions of kinship within the community (Ibrahim, 2021). Moreover, religious beliefs, particularly in predominantly Muslim communities, significantly influence the shaping of kinship structures. The impact of Islamic teachings on familial relationships and responsibilities helps to understand how religion intersects with kinship dynamics among the Fulbe (Miller 2011; Wellman, 1999).

Methodology

The study employed the qualitative approach, particularly utilizing secondary sources such as documents and records, books, journals, and internet sources as means of data collection. The obtained data underwent thorough content analysis, with particular emphasis on identifying and interpreting the underlying themes found within the authors' archives and documents to successfully achieve the study's objectives.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework employed in this study is the social structure theories which elucidated the intricate mechanisms through which societies are organized, the intricate roles that individuals assume within these societal structures and the multifaceted factors that exert influence on the very fabric of social organization (VanderPyl, n.d.). Proponents of this theoretical framework include Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, among others.

There are three main variants of social structure theories, notably; structural-functional theory, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism.

The structural-functional theory posits that societal structures, as complex and interconnected as they may be, serve specific functions that play a pivotal role in upholding stability and order within a given society (Form & Wilterdink, 2024), while conflict theory places a firm emphasis on the notion that society is characterized by inherent inequality, with social structures being perpetuated and maintained by dominant groups to safeguard and perpetuate their power and resources (Hayes, 2024). Symbolic interactionism on the other hand, places great importance on the micro-level interactions between individuals and the significant role that symbols and shared meanings play in shaping social reality (VanderPyl, n.d.).

The most relevant of the three variants of the social structure theories to the evolution of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State is the structural-functionalist theory. It holds particular significance in shedding light on the traditional Fulbe kinship structures within this specific region. By emphasizing the functional roles that kinship plays within this cultural context, this theory serves as a powerful tool for understanding the intricacies of Fulbe kinship structures and the vital functions they fulfil within the broader societal framework. This theoretical lens creates the enablement for a proper understanding of the multifaceted ways in which kinship serves as a

mechanism for maintaining social order, providing support networks, and preserving cultural identity in the Fulbe community of Jigawa State.

Furthermore, applying the structural-functional theory to the analysis of changing Fulbe kinship practices and terms in Jigawa State, allows the understanding of how these changes may disrupt traditional functions and give rise to new dynamics within the community. In essence, the structural-functional theory offers a comprehensive framework through which the evolution of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State can be comprehensively examined and analyzed.

Discussion

Structure of the Fulbe Kinship System in Jigawa State

The structure of the kinship system in Jigawa State is characterised by a primarily patrilineal structure in line with the traditional Fulbe kinship. The lineage of individuals is traced through the paternal line, resulting in the formation of extended family units known as "ngel" or "ngelooji." These units encompass multiple generations residing under one roof or close. Additionally, belonging to a clan, referred to as "pulaaku," further solidifies an individual's position within the larger community. Clans often share a common ancestor and possess distinct symbols or totem animals. The kinship system determines the roles and responsibilities within the community. Elders are held in high esteem due to their wisdom and experience, while younger generations are expected to demonstrate respect and learn from them (Crossman, 2019).

The impact of the kinship system on societal organization can be observed in the domains of land ownership and inheritance, marriage and family formation, as well as conflict resolution and social control. Land, which holds immense significance for the traditionally nomadic lifestyle of the Fulbe, is frequently passed down through successive generations within the family lineage. This ensures the continuity and stability of land utilization (Sarkin Fulani, 2022).

The kinship system also exerts a significant influence on marriage arrangements, with an emphasis on preserving social ties and strengthening clan bonds. Furthermore, it serves as a mechanism for resolving conflicts and upholding social order within the community. Elders and lineage leaders often mediate disputes and enforce customary laws (Curtin, 1955). The kinship system of the Fulbe community in Jigawa State contributes to the development of a collective identity and a sense of belonging through the transmission of shared history and traditions from one generation to the next. This fosters a shared sense of historical consciousness and identity among community members.

Kinship ties also provide a robust support network for individuals and families, with the expectation that members will assist one another in times of need. This reinforces a sense of community and belonging. Moreover, the Fulbe kinship in the Jigawa State system plays a crucial role in the preservation of cultural values. The emphasis on respecting elders and upholding traditional practices helps safeguard the unique cultural values and way of life of the Fulbe (Sagheer, 2017).

Factors Contributing to the Evolution of Fulbe Kinship Structures in Jigawa State

Factors that contributed to the evolution of kinship structures among the Fulbe people in Jigawa State are multifaceted and complex. One of the foremost factors that played a pivotal role in this transformation was the advent of British colonialism. The imposition of colonial rule brought about significant changes in various aspects of Fulbe society, including land ownership, political structures, and religious practices. These changes had far-reaching implications for

traditional kinship systems that had been deeply entrenched in the fabric of Fulbe culture in Jigawa State for generations (Sarkin Fulani, 2022).

Another key factor influencing the evolution of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State is the spread of formal education. This educational expansion, particularly among women, has fostered increased individual mobility and economic independence. Consequently, traditional gender roles and family structures are challenged as women gain access to education and opportunities outside the household. This paradigm shift in gender dynamics has had a profound impact on the traditional kinship system, as it disrupted the established norms and expectations surrounding familial roles and responsibilities. A famous 19th-century reformist jihadist leader (Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo) bolstered considerable support on the influence of education in the provision of uncommon transformation, he averred that "if you desire to liberate a woman, give her sound and enviable education" (Last, 1977).

Furthermore, urbanization has played a significant role in reshaping Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State. With the migration of Fulbe people to urban centres, there is a breakdown of extended families and a growing reliance on nuclear families. This shift towards nuclear families has a profound effect on traditional patterns of kinship support, as the close-knit intergenerational relationships that were once the bedrock of Fulbe society in the state have begun to erode. The urban environment necessitated a reconfiguration of kinship networks, leading to a reevaluation of the roles and responsibilities of various family members (Sagheer, 2017).

In addition to the aforementioned factors, economic changes also have played crucial role in the evolution of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State. The transformation from a predominantly pastoral economy to one centred around wage labour and commercial agriculture has brought about significant shifts in patterns of resource sharing and interdependency within the kinship network as individuals have to adapt to new economic realities and navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing society (Wandel, 2013).

The adoption of modern values such as individualism and egalitarianism cannot be overlooked when examining the factors that contribute to the evolution of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State. The embracement of these modern values has brought about a decline in the authority of elders within the kinship system and a greater emphasis on individual choice and autonomy within the family unit. As traditional hierarchical structures give way to more egalitarian ideals, the dynamics of Fulbe kinship have undergone a profound transformation, reflecting the broader societal changes occurring in Jigawa state (Sarkin Fulani, 2022).

Notable Adaptations Made to Accommodate the Demands of Evolving Fulbe Kinship Structures in Jigawa State

The kinship structures of the Fulbe people in Jigawa State in the contemporary era have shown a fusion of both traditional and modern influences, thereby reflecting the dynamic nature of societal transformation. While certain customary practices still hold significant value, such as the veneration of older individuals and the significance of ancestral lineage, some adaptations have been made to accommodate the demands of an evolving society (Adefila, 2021).

One of the fundamental aspects of contemporary Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State is the increased importance given to individual choice, particularly in matters about marriage partners and career paths. This newfound freedom challenges the traditional emphasis on familial obligations and elevates the autonomy of individuals in these critical life decisions. Consequently, the influence of extended families has diminished, and nuclear families have gained prominence, assuming a central role in the daily lives of the Fulbe people. This paradigm shift in family

dynamics has brought about changes in the traditional social fabric, altering the way individuals perceive and interact with their kinship networks (Carsten, 2023).

In addition, the kinship ties within present-day Fulbe communities in Hadejia Emirate, Ringim, Dutse, Kazaure, Birnin Kudu, and Buji in Jigawa State have become more fluid, as they are no longer solely based on lineage affiliation. Instead, these connections are formed based on shared interests and experiences, allowing for a more inclusive and dynamic social structure. This departure from strictly lineage-based kinship networks has enabled the Fulɓe people to forge relationships with individuals who may not share the same ancestral background but possess similar values and aspirations in the State. Consequently, the Fulbe society in Jigawa state has become more diverse and interconnected, fostering a sense of unity and cooperation among its members (Carsten, 2023).

Furthermore, an increased emphasis on education and individual achievement has emerged as a defining feature of contemporary Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State. Education is regarded as a crucial pathway to success and social mobility within the community. As a result, traditional gender roles and family expectations have transformed, with both men and women actively pursuing educational opportunities and aspiring to attain personal goals. This shift in aspirations has contributed to the empowerment of individuals, promoting a more equitable distribution of power within the Fulbe society in the State (Sarkin Fulani, 2022).

Challenges and Opportunities of the Evolution of Kinship Structures among the Fulɓe People of Jigawa State

The evolution of kinship structures among the Fulbe people in Hadejia Emirate, Ringim, Dutse, Kazaure, Birnin Kudu, and Buji in Jigawa State encompasses myriad challenges as well as opportunities. One of the challenges that arise is the potential loss of cultural heritage, whereby the waning of traditional practices and values engenders a profound sense of cultural loss and identity confusion, particularly among the younger generations who find themselves grappling with the clash between their ancestral customs and the influence of external forces. Moreover, the process of modernization further compounds the issue of social inequality within Fulbe communities, as those who are more adept at adapting to the changes and advancements brought about by modernity are more likely to reap the benefits, potentially widening the existing disparities that already exist within the community (Wandel, 2013).

Another significant challenge that accompanies the evolution of kinship structures in Jigawa State is the breakdown of extended families. As traditional family units become more fragmented, the once prevalent support systems and networks that extended families provided begin to dissolve, consequently leading to amplified levels of social isolation and vulnerability, particularly for older adults and children who may no longer have access to the same level of familial care and support that they once enjoyed. This breakdown in family units has far-reaching consequences and necessitates concerted efforts to address the potential ramifications on the social fabric of the Fulɓe community (Adefila, 2021).

Fulbe communities in Jigawa State were predominantly nomadic, moving with their herds across vast territories. However, factors such as land scarcity, environmental degradation, and government policies promoting sedentary agriculture have led many Fulbe to settle in permanent villages. This transition from nomadism to settlement has disrupted traditional kinship systems based on mobility and pastoralism, impacting social cohesion and community organization among the Fulbe (Maryah, 2014).

The shift towards sedentary agriculture and modernization has altered the economic basis of Fulbe society in Jigawa State. While some Fulbe continue to engage in pastoralism, others have diversified their livelihoods, becoming involved in trade, commerce, and wage labour. This economic transformation has introduced new dynamics into Fulbe kinship structures, as traditional roles and responsibilities associated with cattle herding may no longer hold the same significance. Within Fulbe communities in Jigawa State, social stratification based on wealth, education, and occupation has emerged, creating divisions among kinship groups. Wealthier and more educated Fulbe individuals may have different social aspirations and lifestyle preferences compared to those engaged in traditional pastoral activities. These socio-economic disparities can lead to tensions and conflicts within Fulbe kinship structures, affecting intra-group relationships and solidarity (Crossman, 2019).

Opportunities

Despite these challenges, the evolution of kinship structures also presents a range of opportunities that can be harnessed for the betterment of the Fulbe people in Jigawa State. For instance, as kinship structures evolve, individuals are afforded increased empowerment through expanded choices and greater autonomy. This newfound individual agency can contribute to enhanced personal fulfilment and overall well-being, as individuals can shape their destinies and make decisions that align with their aspirations and values. Moreover, the process of modernization can also catalyze fostering greater gender equality within Fulbe families and communities in Jigawa State. As traditional gender roles and expectations are challenged and redefined, there is an opportunity for a more equitable distribution of power and resources, thereby empowering women and promoting gender parity. This shift towards greater gender equality is pivotal in dismantling deeply entrenched patriarchal structures and fostering a more inclusive and egalitarian society.

The evolution of kinship structures in Jigawa State also allows Fulbe communities in Hadejia Emirate, Ringim, Dutse, Kazaure, Birnin Kudu, and Buji in Jigawa State to adapt to changing circumstances and maintain their cultural identity and social cohesion amidst the rapid changes taking place in the World arising through globalization. By embracing and adapting to new forms of kinship structures, the Fulbe people in the State will have the potential value to strike a delicate balance between preserving their rich heritage and embracing the benefits that globalization can offer (Sarkin Fulani, 2022). This, in addition, will possess the social strength to accelerate a greater understanding of Fulbe kinship structures in the creation of renewed hope towards repositioning Fulbe's psycho-cultural belief system against some misconceptions ideations about them.

Conclusion

The study on the evolution of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State highlighted the complex interplay between tradition and the transformation among the Fulbe people in the State. While some traditional practices remain important, the system is undergoing significant transformations in response to social, economic, and political changes. This is significantly influenced by inherent greater external and internal robust interactions emanating from systemic global changes. The kinship structure was hierarchical, with elders wielding significant authority. Specific features of this system included patrilineal descent, extended families, clans and lineage groups, arranged marriages, and strict gender roles. These elements worked together to create a

cohesive and interconnected kinship network that played a fundamental role in shaping the social fabric of the Fulbe society.

The paper reveals that the evolution of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State is influenced by a multitude of factors, ranging from the impact of colonialism to the spread of formal education, urbanization, economic changes, and the adoption of modern values through a globalized system. While the evolution of Fulbe kinship structures in Jigawa State presents its fair share of challenges, such as the loss of cultural heritage, social inequality, and family breakdown, the opportunities that arise from this evolution include individual empowerment, greater gender equality, and the ability to adapt to change. By embracing these opportunities, the Fulbe people in Jigawa State can navigate the complexities of the modern world while preserving their cultural identity and fostering social cohesion within their community.

Recommendations

In light of the identified challenges in the study, it is, therefore, recommended that:

(a) The government and the Fulbe leaders in Jigawa State should encourage unbridled communication between generations to share Fulbe values and traditions.
(b) The government and the Fulbe leaders should promote Fulbe participation in decision-making processes concerning kinship systems among the people in the State.
(c) Fulbe communities in Jigawa State should collaborate to create strong synergistic relations with the government in the State to design policy statements that will advocate unflinching support for unique kinship structures.

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HIGHNESS OR ABUSIVENESS: EXPLORING ALCOHOL AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE DYNAMICS IN NIGERIA

Saheed, Rahman Olanrewaju,
Department of Sociology,
Federal University, Wukari

Saliman, Salahu Tunde
Department of Social Works
University of Ilorin
&
Adeniyi-Lawal Mariam Olajumoke
University of Hull, U.K
Corresponding Author: lanreandrahaman@gmail.com

Abstract
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) remains a pervasive social issue in Nigeria with a complex interplay of cultural, social, and individual factors contributing to its prevalence. One notable factor is the significant association between alcohol consumption and IPV, which poses a challenge to understanding and addressing this multifaceted problem. This study aimed to comprehensively examine the relationship between alcohol consumption and IPV in Nigeria, by seeking to interrogate the underlying mechanisms through theoretical frameworks and literature evidence. The study argues that alcohol consumption acts as a catalyst for IPV in Nigeria, influencing individual behaviours and interacting with societal norms. Deviance Disavowal Theory was adopted to offer a nuanced perspective on cultural dynamics at play. A systematic literature review was conducted integrating studies that explored the link between alcohol consumption and IPV in Nigeria. To ensure thorough coverage of relevant literature, different electronic sources, such as PubMed, Scopus, African Journals Online, and Google Scholar, and manual searches of references from selected studies were used. An examination of the literature revealed a relationship between alcohol consumption and IPV in Nigeria. Deviance Disavowal Theory highlights the cultural dynamics that permit alcohol as an excuse for deviant actions. This study underscores the urgency of adopting comprehensive intervention strategies that address not only individual behaviours, but also societal norms and cultural beliefs. Recommendations include targeted public health campaigns, legal reforms to strengthen enforcement against IPV, and the integration of alcohol abuse treatment into support programs.
Keywords: Abusiveness; Alcohol; Alcoholism; Alcohol Abuse Treatment; Intimate Partner Violence.

Introduction

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a pervasive and complex global issue that manifests uniquely in the Nigerian context. The scope of IPV encompasses the physical, sexual, and psychological harm inflicted by current or former partners, and its multifaceted nature is deeply influenced by cultural, economic, and social factors. Globally, 1/3rd of women and one in nine men who have been in a relationship experience or are at risk of experiencing IPV, including sexual coercion (Claudia et al., 2012; WHO, 2021; Reckdenwald et al., 2020). Oceania, Southern Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa have some of the highest rates of IPV against women, ranging from 33% to 51% (Reckdenwald et al., 2020). Relative to the other regions, Europe, Central Asia, Eastern Asia, and South-Eastern Asia exhibit lower rates of child marriage, which range from 16% to 23%, according to the WHO (2021). It is 14% in Azerbaijan, 18% in Portugal, 20% in Norway, and 26% in America (WHO, 2021; Sardinha et al., 2022).

Despite concerted efforts to tackle the menace of violence against women, many women in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) still experience different forms of sexual violence in marital settings and have one of the highest rates of IPV. For instance, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Mozambique, Zambia, and Cameroon have the highest prevalence rates at 43.4%, 45.3%, 45.5%, 53.9%, and 57.6%, respectively (WHO, 2021). Echoing this global trend, the Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS, 2018) reveals a comparable prevalence, underscoring a deeply rooted issue within the societal fabric.

Like the rest of Africa, IPV is as high as 30.5% among women aged 15-49 in Nigeria (WHO, 2021). The Amnesty International report indicated that 2/3rd of Nigerian women are abused by their partners (Amnesty International, 2021). In its 2014 report, the Nigerian National Population Commission (NPC) and ICF International estimated women's lifetime exposure to IPV from their current husbands or partners. The findings indicated that 19% of women experienced emotional IPV, 14% experienced physical IPV, and 5% experienced sexual IPV within their lifetime (NPC & ICF International, 2014).

In addition to the NPC and ICF International reports, previous studies conducted in Nigeria provided further insights into the prevalence of IPV. These studies showed considerable variation in the rates of IPV across different forms. Specifically, the prevalence of psychological or emotional violence ranges from 31% to 61%, sexual violence from 20% to 31%, and physical violence from 7% to 31% (Mapayi et al., 2014). Furthermore, the regional disparities in IPV prevalence in Nigeria are noteworthy. Studies conducted in various regions of Nigeria reported distinct rates of IPV. For instance, in the northern region of Nigeria, Tanimu et al. (2016) found a prevalence of 42%, while in the South West, Okenwa et al. (2009) reported a prevalence of 29%. In the South East, Okemgbo et al. (2002) observed an alarming prevalence of 78.8%, and in the South South, Itimi et al. (2014) reported a prevalence of 41%. In Nigeria, IPV transcends the boundaries of private matter, evolving into a public health crisis and a blatant violation of human rights.

Within the intricate tapestry of Nigerian society, IPV often lurks in the shadows of underreporting and understudy, shielded by cultural norms that, at times, tacitly endorse certain levels of violence within intimate relationships. Adding to this complexity is the prevalence of alcohol abuse in Nigeria, which exacerbates IPV. Extensive studies (see Ilika, 2005; Ogum-Alangea et al., 2015; Mekonnen, 2019) have demonstrated a clear correlation between alcohol consumption and the likelihood of perpetrating violence. This connection is often ascribed to the disinhibiting effects of alcohol on aggression and the cultural norm of associating drinking with masculine behaviour, which may amplify proclivities towards dominance and violence. However,

ongoing debate persists regarding the extent to which alcohol contributes to the initiation or escalation of intimate partner abuse (Foran & O'Leary, 2008). It is crucial to recognize that the association between alcohol and IPV is complex, involving multiple contributing elements.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks a chronological approach, within the complex web of sociocultural practices, to address the loose ends in close relationships and unresolved intricacies among heterosexual partners, who engage in health risk behaviour such as alcohol consumption in Nigeria. The assertion in this study is firmly grounded in the intricate interplay between alcohol abuse and the manifestation of violence within intimate relationships.

Consequent upon the foregoing, it is relevant to raise the following questions: What is the prevalence of alcohol on intimate partner violence in Nigeria? How does the act of “highness” specifically correlate to intimate partner violence in Nigeria? What are the implications of intimate partner violence on the well-being of victims in Nigeria? Outside government intervention in the area of policy, how can the menace of intimate partner violence be adequately addressed in Nigeria?

Theoretical Framework

The Deviance Disavowal Theory, as expounded by MacAndrew & Edgerton in "Drunken Comportment: A Social Explanation" (1969), provides a compelling framework for examining the intricate relationship between alcohol consumption and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Nigeria. The theory posits that cultural beliefs and norms play a pivotal role in shaping expectations and behaviours associated with alcohol use. In societies like Nigeria, where alcohol is often perceived as a disinhibitor, individuals may feel freed from typical social and moral constraints when under the influence. The theory argues that alcohol consumption serves as a socially acceptable rationale for engaging in behaviors that would otherwise be considered deviant, with IPV serving as a pertinent example. The alignment of the Deviance Disavowal Theory with the concept of "alcohol myopia”, as elucidated by Steele and Josephs (1990), is noteworthy. This concept suggests that alcohol narrows individuals’ focus, making them more responsive to immediate cues and less cognizant of the broader implications of their actions. In the context of IPV, this alcohol-induced myopic state may lead individuals to justify their deviant behaviour within the narrow framework of their immediate circumstances.

In the Nigerian context, cultural norms and attitudes toward alcohol and masculinity have emerged as influential factors shaping the prevalence and perception of IPV, as revealed by Ilika's (2005) study. The theory argues that some individuals may exploit alcohol as an excuse or mitigating factor for their abusive conduct, leveraging it as a culturally understood 'alibi' for deviance. This aligns with the notion that alcohol consumption provides a convenient justification for actions that deviate from socially acceptable norms. This phenomenon may contribute to the heightened prevalence or severity of IPV in contexts where alcohol abuse is widespread, as supported by Antai's (2011) findings.

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative review of the literature to examine and analyse the relationship between alcohol consumption and the prevalence of IPV in Nigeria. To ensure thorough coverage of relevant literature, electronic databases (such as PubMed, Scopus, African Journals Online, and Google Scholar) were searched, and references from selected studies were manually searched. A comprehensive search strategy was devised, utilizing keywords such as "domestic violence," “spousal violence” “marital violence” “intimate partner violence” "Nigeria,"

and "alcohol" or "alcoholism." Boolean operators were employed to logically combine search terms. The study selection process involved initial screening of titles and abstracts, followed by full-text screening of shortlisted articles and removal of duplicate publications. The inclusion criteria encompassed studies specifically focused on marital violence, intimate partner violence, using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method approaches, and published in English. Exclusion criteria comprised of studies not specific to marital violence or intimate partner violence and non-academic or non-peer-reviewed articles were excluded. The analysis focused on identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within the literature using a thematic approach.

This approach provides a comprehensive perspective on the subject. This is because qualitative reviews are highly effective at capturing the intricacies of a specific context, which is crucial for comprehending the nexus between alcohol consumption and the phenomenon of IPV in diverse and multifaceted countries such as Nigeria. Unlike quantitative studies, qualitative reviews have the flexibility to incorporate a wide range of literature, such as theoretical pieces, empirical studies, and gray literature, which allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the topic (Snyder, 2019).

Results and Discussions

Several themes have been identified from the literature consulted, which have been grouped to provide guidance for the analysis in this study.

What Constitutes Alcohol and Alcohol Abuse?

The term "alcoholism" is frequently used to refer to a condition marked by consistent and unmanageable alcohol consumption, leading to negative consequences on the physical, psychological, social, or financial welfare of the individual or those in their immediate surroundings (Franks, 1958). Alcoholism is a persistent and recurring condition characterised by the inability to control alcohol consumption, preoccupation with alcohol, and the occurrence of withdrawal symptoms when alcohol intake is reduced or stopped. This syndrome demonstrates a progressive and continuous decline driven by complex interactions among biological, psychological, and social factors (Franks, 1958).

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) refers to a condition in which individuals have physical reliance on alcohol, a strong desire for alcohol, and an inability to control or stop using alcohol despite negative effects. It is important to highlight that alcoholism is not officially acknowledged as a diagnostic category in psychology. The preferred term is Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD). AUD, or Alcohol Use Disorder, is a medical illness marked by challenges in controlling alcohol intake, obsession with alcohol, and a consistent habit of drinking while facing negative consequences (Mann, 2000). The severity of AUD can be classified on a spectrum, ranging from mild to severe, depending on the manifestation of various symptoms. It includes a range of detrimental alcohol use habits from occasional binge drinking to the progression of alcohol addiction. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) of the American Psychiatric Association, alcohol abuse is classified as part of Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD), which encompasses a range of behaviours ranging from mild to severe. Alcohol use disorder is an acknowledged medical illness marked by ongoing alcohol consumption despite adverse outcomes (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2023).

Excessive alcohol use can lead to detrimental health consequences for individuals and contribute to social problems such as alcohol-related criminal behaviour. Alcohol abuse is the second most widespread type of substance abuse in the United States after tobacco addiction.

Alcohol consumption disorder is a major public health concern, affecting approximately 14.4 million adults in the United States alone (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2023).

The definition of alcohol abuse is not without controversy and a central debate revolves around the distinction between alcohol abuse and dependence. Some scholars (e.g. Schuckit, 2009) advocate for a clear separation between the two, emphasizing that dependence typically involves physical withdrawal symptoms and tolerance, whereas abuse may lack these physical dimensions. This distinction is prominently addressed in Schuckit (2009). Furthermore, cultural and social factors significantly shape alcohol consumption patterns, thereby introducing another layer of controversy. Room et al., (2001), in his work, highlights the interpretive challenge in defining 'abuse' across diverse cultural contexts. This cultural relativity complicates the establishment of a universally applicable definition, acknowledging that what may be perceived as 'abuse' can vary significantly among different societies.

The ongoing discourse on the definition of alcohol abuse reflects the nuanced nature of this concept embedded within the broader context of AUD. The debate regarding the distinction from dependence underscores the complex interplay between psychological and physical dimensions. Additionally, the recognition of cultural variations in interpreting alcohol abuse underscores the need for a flexible understanding that accommodates diverse societal norms. The evolving understanding of alcohol abuse remains crucial for refining diagnostic criteria, informing treatment approaches, and fostering cross-cultural sensitivity in addressing this multifaceted issue.

Understanding the concept of IPV

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a broadly encompassing term that refers to behaviour within an intimate relationship that leads to physical, sexual, or psychological harm. The World Health Organization (WHO) offers a comprehensive definition that encompasses physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse, and controlling behaviours. However, despite this comprehensive framework, the definition of IPV is still a subject of controversy. The primary point of contention in defining IPV revolves around gender dynamics. Some researchers assert that IPV is predominantly perpetrated by men over women, reflective of broader societal power imbalances.

This perspective finds support in studies such as Garcia-Moreno and Watts (2011), which emphasize the gendered nature of IPV. On the contrary, an alternative viewpoint argues for a more inclusive definition, acknowledging that IPV can occur in any intimate relationship irrespective of gender. According to the WHO (2021), IPV 'refers to behaviour by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours'. The Council of Europe's Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (better known as the Istanbul Convention) conceptualizes Intimate partner violence as encompassing four dimensions: physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence (BMFSFJ, 2018).

Furthermore, Moshtagh et al. (2023) have attempted a classification of IPV, stating clearly designated boundaries and the limitations and linkages of violent relationships. As observed, there is psychological violence, which involves not only degradation or frightening by partners in close relationships, but also containment from social relationships, work, and social activities; intimate violence could also be identified through economic violence, which portrays partners in financial denials and hindrances. This also includes restrictions on finances or the regulation of items such as clothes, food, or a car.

The debate on the gendered nature of IPV and inclusion of emotional abuse underscores the complexities inherent in defining and understanding this phenomenon. The conflict between a gender-specific definition and a gender-inclusive perspective reflects broader societal debates on power dynamics and relationships. Moreover, the challenge of incorporating emotional abuse into the definition speaks to the nuanced and intricate nature of IPV, where the less tangible aspects of harm are as significant as the more overt ones.

Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence and Alcoholism in Nigeria

The study of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Nigeria remains a challenge because of the absence of official data and statistics regarding its occurrence and prevalence. This deficiency stems from the fact that IPV is often not reported as a crime within the legal system, compounded by social and cultural barriers that deter victims from disclosing their experiences or seeking assistance. Despite these impediments, various studies have endeavored to document and analyse IPV in Nigeria using diverse methods and sources to shed light on this complex issue.

There is an avalanche of observations on IPV across African gendered relationships, perhaps due to challenges in data collection instruments in Nigeria. Scientific studies are yet to establish a more dependable root-cause of IPV, even when the population seems to paint the dimensions in different lights; for instance, the 2018 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) report indicated that 36% of ever-married women aged 15-49 reported experiencing sexual, physical, or emotional IPV by their current or former partner/husband. Importantly, the prevalence of IPV varied considerably across states, ranging from 13% in Jigawa to 75.4% in Kogi. Furthermore, the data revealed higher levels of IPV among widowed, separated, or divorced women (49%) compared to married women (35%) (NPC & ICF, 2019; Benebo, Schumann, & Vaezghasemi, 2022). Notably, these figures exclude women aged above 49 years, potentially leading to an underestimation of the true prevalence of IPV in Nigeria.

In addition, studies by Nkoane (2023; Chikezirim, et al. 2022) among men in northern Nigeria revealed that 55.4% experienced IPV in their marital relationships, with 82.4% experiencing emotional and verbal abuse. Additionally, a cross-sectional study conducted by Envuladu et al. (2012) among pregnant women in Jos, Nigeria reported a prevalence of 31.8% IPV among pregnant women. These figures underscore the pervasive nature of IPV in Nigeria and its multifaceted impact on various demographic groups. Despite the challenges in obtaining comprehensive data, these studies have provided valuable insights into the prevalence and patterns of IPV in the country.

The complex association between alcohol intake and intimate partner violence (IPV) has been extensively studied, uncovering a strong correlation that exists across different cultures and geographical regions. The correlation between alcohol intake and intimate partner violence (IPV) has been widely recognised globally. Available data that shows alcohol consumption greatly increases the likelihood of domestic violence. Alcohol impairs cognitive reasoning, weakens self-control, and hinders the ability to maintain healthy social interactions. As a result, conflict and violence are common. The relationship between alcohol consumption and intimate partner violence (IPV) varies depending on the sociocultural framework of different regions or countries.

With alcohol abuse, official statistics show a clear gender gap in severe IPV encompassing dangerous physical injury, rape, murder, and homicide, with much higher rates of perpetration (Bundeskriminalamt, 2021). Further analysis of the correlation between alcohol use and intimate partner violence worldwide reveals intricate patterns, as demonstrated by a study undertaken by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2010, Olena (2023), and Mahenge and Stöckl

(2021). According to this study, alcohol was a contributing factor in around fifty-five percent (55%) of reported occurrences of intimate partner violence in the American region. The WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women revealed geographical discrepancies, with the Americas exhibiting greater rates of intimate partner violence associated with alcohol than other areas (García-Moreno et al., 2005).

A study conducted in European countries revealed that alcohol consumption was a contributing factor in 25 -70% of domestic violence cases. In Africa, namely Nigeria, there is considerable evidence to suggest a notable association between alcohol consumption and instances of domestic violence, intimate partner abuse, or violence. According to statistical data, alcohol abuse is a factor in 40–60% of domestic violence cases, and 20% of aggressive men use alcohol before committing violent acts (WHO, 2010). Importantly, the impact of alcohol on intimate partner abuse or domestic violence extends beyond male perpetrators, as their female counterparts also exhibit alcohol-related violent behaviours towards their spouses. This underscores the fact that alcohol is implicated in violent behaviours across both sexes and society.

Numerous studies have contributed to a nuanced understanding of the association between alcohol consumption and IPV. For instance, Leonard and Quigley (2017) demonstrated a significant correlation between alcohol consumption and the incidence and severity of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). Their findings suggest that engaging in alcohol use increases the probability of aggressive behaviour within intimate relationships, thereby fostering IPV. This aligns with the conclusions drawn from a meta-analysis conducted by Graham et al. (2019), which encompassed a comprehensive review of one hundred and four (104) studies. The meta-analysis revealed a robust association between alcohol use and IPV perpetration, reinforcing the notion that alcohol consumption plays a pivotal role in IPV dynamics of intimate partner violence. Foran and O'Leary's (2008) seminal study conducted a comprehensive analysis of data from 22 countries, revealing a consistent link between alcohol use and increased risk of perpetrating IPV. This global perspective underscores the universality of this relationship, emphasizing its prevalence across diverse cultural and geographic contexts.

Despite the evident impact of alcohol on relationships in Africa, reports on its adverse effects remain limited, and the severity of its devastating impact varies between countries and communities. This limitation is attributed to underreporting, driven by cultural practices that inhibit reporting by some genders, while potentially promoting the interests of their counterparts. For instance, Jewkes et al. (2002) conducted a study in South Africa that revealed that men identified as hazardous drinkers were more likely to perpetrate intimate partner violence. Another study by Seedat et al. (2009) in South Africa underscored the strong association between alcohol use and physical and sexual IPV perpetration. In Kenya, Muturi's study (2012) established a significant correlation between alcohol consumption and perpetuation of intimate partner violence among men. These findings highlight the complex interplay of cultural, social, and economic factors in shaping the relationship between alcohol consumption and intimate partner violence in the African context.

Despite limited documented research on the relationship between alcohol consumption and intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria and West Africa, few studies have illuminated this relationship, providing valuable insights into its prevalence and contributing factors. Notably, Ogum-Alangea et al. (2015) conducted a study in Nigeria that identified a positive correlation between alcohol use and IPV perpetration of intimate partner violence. This research argued that engaging in alcohol consumption is associated with an elevated likelihood of participating in various forms of IPV, encompassing physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

Ogum-Alangea et al. (2015) shed light on distressing practices among Nigerians, including spiking drinks for sexual gratification, committing rape under the influence of alcohol, and manipulating partners into alcohol consumption for purposes of subsequent emotional or physical blackmail. According to this study, the use of alcohol as a tool to sedate and facilitate sexual acts contributes significantly to the occurrence of intimate partner abuse or violence in developing societies. This phenomenon is exacerbated by the weakening of laws prohibiting violence against partners, due to prevailing cultural practices that both condemn and endorse violence in relationships as a form of authority.

In a distinct perspective, Olagunju et al. (2018) conducted a study examining psychiatric outpatients in Nigeria to assess the impact of alcohol on intimate partner violence. Their findings affirmed a significant relationship between alcohol use and intimate partner violence and abuse. The study concluded that alcohol plays a substantial contributing role in the occurrence of IPV, particularly among individuals with mental health conditions, even after they have undergone rehabilitation, reform, and full reintegration into mainstream society.

In a comprehensive examination of the nexus between alcohol use and intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria, Ilika et al. (2017) conducted a study focusing on pregnant women attending antenatal clinics. Their findings revealed a noteworthy correlation: women who reported alcohol use during pregnancy were more prone to experiencing intimate partner violence compared to those abstaining from alcohol. Similarly, Raji & Udofia's (2015) investigation into men undergoing rehabilitation in a substance abuse treatment center in Nigeria disclosed that alcohol use and related problems significantly influence the perpetuation of intimate partner violence among men. The study highlighted a significant connection between alcohol-related problems, including alcohol dependence and heavy drinking, and the perpetration of intimate partner violence. Essentially, men with consistent and heavy alcohol consumption exhibited a higher likelihood of expressing aggressive and violent behaviours towards their partners when contrasted with men who consumed alcohol more sparingly.

Further contributing to the discourse, Ogunwale et al. (2019) examined the relationship between alcohol use and intimate partner violence among married men attending a primary healthcare center in Nigeria. Their research uncovered a significant linkage between alcohol consumption and a heightened likelihood of men perpetuating intimate partner violence. Notably, the study emphasized that men grappling with terminal diseases or viral infections often turned to alcohol consumption as a coping mechanism due to a loss of confidence in their abilities and perceived threats of denial, rejection, or ridicule by their partners. This coping strategy resulted in the development of defensive mechanisms expressed aggressively and violently, ultimately contributing to the perpetration of intimate partner violence.

In a related vein, Ogum-Alangea et al.'s (2015) research in Nigeria demonstrated a positive relationship between alcohol consumption and intimate partner violence or domestic violence practices by spouses. The study highlighted the symbiotic relationship between alcohol use and sexual expression among Nigerians, where alcohol served as an influencer, fostering aggressive behavior in male partners. This aggression was often linked to the cultural expectation of male possessiveness, prevalent in patriarchal African societies, where aggression becomes a smoke screen to assert dominance and possession over female counterparts.

Similarly, Mekonnen et al.'s (2019) study in Ethiopia emphasized the influence of cultural norms and gender inequalities on the association between alcohol use and intimate partner violence. The patriarchal culture prevalent among Africans, which expects men to be possessive, was identified as a significant factor shaping this association. Men, striving to conform to cultural

expectations, often resorted to alcohol use as a smokescreen to express aggression and dominance over their female counterparts, particularly those perceived as weak within the societal construct.

However, it must be stated that, Nigeria, with its rich tapestry of ethnicities, cultures, and beliefs, presents a diverse array of opinions regarding Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and alcohol abuse. Okenwa et al. (2009) emphasize the considerable variation in beliefs and attitudes towards IPV across different Nigerian communities, with influences stemming from factors like ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status. This diversity underscores the need for caution when making generalizations about the link between alcohol and IPV in Nigeria, highlighting the heterogeneous nature of the society.

While some studies posit that IPV is a manifestation of the inherent abusive nature of certain individuals, implying that it arises from individual pathology rather than external factors like alcohol, Fawole et al., (2005) study offers a nuanced perspective. Fawole argues that while individual predispositions may play a role, societal and environmental factors, including alcohol abuse, often exacerbate these tendencies. This viewpoint challenges the notion that individual characteristics alone can account for the prevalence of IPV in Nigeria.

Moreover, an alternative argument posits that societal norms, rather than alcohol consumption per se, are responsible for IPV. However, this perspective is confronted by research, such as Ilika's (2005) study, which suggests that societal norms contribute to IPV, but alcohol functions as a catalyst, intensifying both the frequency and severity of violence. The contention between societal norms and alcohol as contributing factors highlights the intricate dynamics at play in understanding the roots of IPV in Nigeria.

Consequences of Alcohol abuse and IPV

Victims of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), especially in the context of alcohol abuse, not only endure physical harm but also face severe psychological trauma. This trauma often manifests in the form of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety. A study by Owoaje et al. (2012) found that Nigerian women who experienced IPV showed significantly higher rates of mental health issues compared to those who did not. The emotional toll of IPV extends to profound feelings of worthlessness, fear, and helplessness, fostering a climate of emotional detachment and hindering the formation of trusting relationships over time (Umana et al., 2014).

Sociologically, the victims of IPV confront stigmatization and isolation, which can be further intensified when alcohol abuse is involved. In such cases, societal attitudes towards both IPV and alcohol abuse compound the stigma experienced by victims, as observed by Overstreet and Quinn (2013). Okenwa-Emegwa et al., (2016) posit that IPV survivors in Nigeria often experience social ostracism, further exacerbating their trauma and hindering their recovery. This societal response contributes to an environment where victims not only grapple with the immediate effects of violence but also contend with social ostracization.

The impact of IPV and alcohol abuse extends beyond the individuals directly involved, affecting children within such families. Holt, Buckley, and Whelan (2008) note that children in households where IPV and alcohol abuse coexist are at a heightened risk of experiencing emotional and behavioral problems. This exposure can lead to intergenerational cycles of violence, perpetuating the issue within the community (Akmatov, 2011). The volatile and unpredictable environment created by these dual factors can significantly disrupt the emotional well-being and development of children. Furthermore, the intertwining of IPV and alcohol abuse disrupts family dynamics, leading to a breakdown in communication and emotional bonds. This disruption sets the stage for a cyclic pattern where violence and substance abuse become normalized within the

family unit (Wright & Fagan, 2013). This cycle perpetuates a detrimental pattern, impacting not only the current generation but potentially influencing future generations within the family.

On a broader community level, the repercussions of IPV and alcohol abuse are significant. The associated healthcare costs, legal expenses, and loss of productivity contribute to a substantial societal burden (Max et al., 2004). Max et al., suggest that this burden can be reduced by implementing policies that promote healthy lifestyles, early detection of diseases, and effective treatment of illnesses. In addition, the World Health Organization (WHO) also estimates the economic and social costs of IPV, including long-term disability, impairment, and lost productivity, which are estimated to amount to **wastages**. Therefore, the cumulative effect of IPV and alcohol abuse extends well beyond individual experiences, necessitating a holistic approach at societal, familial, and individual levels for effective intervention and prevention.

In essence, the trajectory analysis across these studies underscores a pervasive and substantial association between alcohol use and intimate partner violence in Nigeria. Alcohol emerges as a major catalyst for instability in intimate relationships, affecting marriages, courtships, and dating scenarios. The impact of alcohol on intimate partner relationships is not only substantial but also abusive, limiting the relevance of spouses to one another and exposing them to traumatic conditions, encompassing pain, depression, anxiety, and even suicidal tendencies. This abuse, rooted in alcohol-related IPV, has led to a significant number of individuals developing a phobia for intimate partner relationships, seeking alternative, and sometimes unconventional, forms of sexual relationships as a means of avoiding the dangers associated with alcohol-fueled partner violation and abuse (Richard,et al. 2022 &Olena, et al.2023 & Aizpurua, et al. 2021).

It must be stated that, Nigeria has taken commendable steps in addressing Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) through legislative measures, most notably the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act of 2015. This legislative milestone signifies a significant move towards criminalizing acts of violence against individuals, encompassing IPV within its purview. However, despite these legal advancements, challenges persist, particularly in the enforcement of these laws. The legal landscape surrounding IPV in Nigeria is characterized by a dual narrative. On the one hand, the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act of 2015 represents a noteworthy commitment to curbing IPV, aligning with international efforts to protect individuals from domestic violence.

A critical factor influencing the effectiveness of legal measures is the response of the Nigerian judicial system. Despite legislative strides, the judicial response to IPV is impeded by various societal factors. Ayeni & Tebkas (2022), shed light on the formidable challenges faced by victims seeking justice, outlining impediments such as a lack of support, bureaucratic hurdles, and societal pressure favoring private resolution over legal intervention. These challenges underscore the pervasive societal attitudes and the stigma surrounding reporting IPV incidents, creating a hostile environment for victims attempting to access justice. The reluctance of victims to engage with the legal system can be attributed to the societal preference for private resolution, perpetuating a culture of silence and hindering the effective implementation of legal safeguards.

Conclusion

This paper argued that IPV in Nigeria is a complex sociological issue significantly influenced by alcohol consumption, irrespective of the inherently abusive tendencies of individuals. It has established that there is a strong correlation between alcohol abuse and IPV, supported by scientific studies. Additionally, societal norms and attitudes in Nigeria—particularly regarding masculinity, alcohol consumption, and family dynamics—further compound the issue, as evidenced by research in the Nigerian context.

In conclusion, the interplay between alcohol abuse and IPV in Nigeria is a testament to the complexity of social issues rooted in deeply ingrained cultural norms and behaviours. Addressing this issue requires a holistic approach that encompasses public health, legal reform, societal change, and individual accountability. The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of IPV in Nigeria and offer a foundation for developing more effective interventions.

Recommendations

The findings of this paper hold significant implications for understanding and addressing IPV, especially in relation to alcohol abuse.

(a) First, they underscore the need for a multifaceted approach to IPV prevention and intervention, one that not only addresses individual behaviour but also tackles broader societal and cultural factors. Public health campaigns and educational programs in Nigeria should focus on altering perceptions of masculinity and alcohol consumption, highlighting their role in IPV.

(b) Furthermore, the findings suggest the importance of integrating alcohol abuse treatment into IPV intervention strategies. Healthcare providers and social workers need to be trained to recognize the signs of both alcohols abuse and IPV and to provide comprehensive care that addresses these interconnected issues.

(c) Lastly, the legal and judicial responses to IPV in Nigeria must be strengthened. While significant legal frameworks like the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act of 2015 exist, their effective implementation remains a challenge. Enhancing legal responses, coupled with societal change, is essential for providing justice to victims and deterring potential perpetrators.

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CAMP ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL DISPLACEMENT AND WELL-BEING OF FEMALES IN SELECTED INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS' (IDPS) CAMPS IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY (FCT) ABUJA.

ORIOLA, Bolanle; ADEOYE, Beatrice Damilola; FASORANTI, Temitayo Victor
&
ODEDOKUN, Ezekiel Adeyemi.
Department of Sociology
Federal University Oye-Ekiti
Ekiti State
bolanle.oriola@fuoye.edu.ng;
beatrice.adeoye@fuoye.edu.ng;
fasoranti@fuoye.edu.ng;
adeyemi.odedokun@fuoye.edu.ng

Abstract
The frequency and intensity of violence in Northern Nigeria with its associated humanitarian crises have necessitated the establishment of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps in the region. While these camps offer temporary shelters for displaced vulnerable groups, especially women and children, there are certain conditions in such camps like lack of social and basic facilities, unsafe buildings, lack of economic opportunities and security that may predispose them to further incidence of gender-based violence while seeking shelter and survival. Thus, the study examined the relationship between the social environment of IDPs camps and the well-being of female inmates in some selected IDPs camps located in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Nigeria. The study adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative design methods. The simple random sampling technique was utilized to select eight hundred and fifty-two (852) females on whom copies of questionnaire were administered. Findings revealed that there are diverse manifestations of gender-based violence in the IDPs camps due to the poor camp environment such as no access to basic needs and facilities, insecurity, poor buildings, drug use etc.The study findings show that the camp environment conditions have significant effects on the experience of sexual and gender-based violence $F(3,840) = 132.41$, $p < .05$. This has implication for the social well-being of the females in the IDP camps. The study recommends that the government should provide proper incentives for a comfortable camp environment and proper management of the displaced persons' social well-being.
Keywords: Camp Environment; Humanitarian Crises; Internally Displaced Persons; Social Displacement; Social well-being.

Introduction

Natural disasters such as earthquake, volcano, land slide and social disasters, among them, ethno-religious, herders-farmers conflicts and terrorism, are a threat to human existence. They constitute security threats and challenges that contemporary societies have had to contend with, including developing societies (Mohammed, 2017). Incidentally, Nigeria is currently battling with the phenomenon of internal displacement occasioned by the activities of religious sects like *Boko Haram* and ISWAP (Islamic State West Africa Province), herders/farmers conflicts and other non-state armed groups conflicts in the country (Onuoha, 2016; Mohammed, 2014). Consequently, the number of displaced people has continued to rise exponentially owing to these conflicts that have overwhelmed the country since the return to democracy in 1999 (Lenshie (2016). The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA, 2020) specifically estimated that attacks by the Boko-Haram sect alone, had resulted in the social displacement of over 60,000 people. Women, the elderly and children are the most affected by the activities of non-state armed groups like the Boko-Haram Islamist sect in Nigeria (Mohammed, 2014).

The social environment includes the cultures, the families, the organisation of individual work and its strategies to manage their lives. Any environment is a function of a constant contact between natural and human elements, social processes and interpersonal relationships, so as not to exist in an isolation environment (Barnett, & Casper, 2001). According to WHO (2010), for women and young adolescent girls living in overcrowded displacement camps, resources are recoiling and their flexibility is pushed to the limits. Even though early/forced marriage was usually practiced among different communities in Northern Nigeria before the armed conflict started, the figure of such marriages have severely risen consequent upon their displacement status (Human Rights Watch, 2016), and somewhat due to the security and socio-economic complications families are going through in the camps; including increased poverty levels, reduced freedom of movement, lack of occupation opportunities and food availability and narrow access to education (Oladeji, 2015).

Conceptual Clarifications

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Internally displaced persons are people who have been forced or coerced from their homes or places of habitual residence, especially as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of military conflict, general disorder or human rights violations and who have not crossed a recognised State.(United Nations Humanitarian Right, 2021). IDPs may also be defined as individuals who have been forced to flee or leave their own country because of armed conflicts, human rights violations, widespread violence, or natural catastrophes within their own boundaries (WHO, 2010).

The plight of displaced persons has developed into a daunting global issue in recent years (Ladan, 2012). Globally, the total number of displaced people is reportedly estimated to be about 50 million people, with the majority residing in Africa and Asia. Displacement throughout the nation is a frequent occurrence as a result of sectarian unrest and internal armed conflict. While some tensions tend to be motivated by religious or ethnic disparities, the violence in a nation with endemic poverty, low levels of education, and a large and marginalised young population is typically motivated by political, social, and economic gains (Ocha, T. (2003). Among the factors examined in this report are insurgency, terrorism, and natural disasters.

Social well-being alongside physical and mental prosperity add to great well-being. At the point when we experience disquiet or apprehension in friendly circumstances it very well may be

not difficult to accept that you have social uneasiness. This can here and there be troubling as individuals are intrinsically friendly animals. We live respectively in gatherings, grouping in urban communities and towns with families or companions. The great majority of people do not spend a lot of time alone. The desire to be part of a group is a common motive. As a general rule, our well-being may be influenced by the number and quality of our supportive groups and social ties (Mariachiara 2014).

The term "social well-being" refers to one's ability to establish and maintain regular, meaningful relationships with the people around him or her, such as family, friends, co-workers, and neighbours. Having connections and behaving appropriately in these interactions, as well as adhering to appropriate social norms, is an essential part of social success. The most significant influence on our lives comes from our relationships with our families, the fundamental social unit (Sinclair, 2021). Nearly all camps and many local communities housing displaced individuals in and around Maiduguri reported high levels of sexual assault, including rape and other types of sexual abuse. Sexual harassment and rape against internally displaced individuals are often ignored by the Nigerian government, a UNCHR (2018) poll found. Terror, shame, and other cultural factors have intensified this pandemic of violence, and abusers have gained immunity as a consequence, leading to under-reporting of incidents to the right authorities.

Social Displacement

Social displacement refers to the disengagement and loss of personality, home, or culture experienced by individuals and groups. It can occur among migrants as well as in communities where people feel isolated or excluded. Displacement can result from conflicts in society, job loss, and disconnection from cultural ties, leading to weaker connections among individuals and groups, and a loss of integration in society. Displacement is a complex issue that arises during major crises and the majority of displaced people seek safety in neighbouring countries or as internally displaced persons (Jeffrey & Yongmeil (2022).

Literature Review

Camp Environment

The interaction of social and economic powers within a society is primarily of social economic concern. Social economics may assist in describing how a particular social group or socio-economic division functions within a society, including its behaviour as a consumer. A person's socio-economic status may have a significant impact on his or her educational and financial security. The contact that may take place in person or through communication channels, may be private or one-way, and may not mean social equality. The term "social setting" encompasses a wider range of concepts than "social class" or "social circle" (Barnett& Casper, 2001).

The physical environment, social relationships, and cultural environments in which defined groups of individuals operate and communicate provide a human social environment, depending on human social background. Climate building, industrial and labour market, social and economic systems, wealth, social, individual, health, power relations, government, racial relations and social inequality are all components of a social environment and include cultural values, architecture, religious institutions and activities as well as the mindset towards local and cultural affairs. The social universe includes many aspects of the physical environment as modern forests, water supply and other natural resources have at least partly been influenced by social processes (Barnett & Casper 2001).

The social environment includes the cultures, the families, the organisation of individual work and its strategies to manage their lives. Any environment is a function of a constant contact between natural and human elements, social processes and interpersonal relationships, so as not to exist in an isolation environment (Yen & Syme, 1999).

Camp Social Environment of the IDPs

Indeed, displacement has several serious consequences, including economic insecurity, such as loss of livelihood, unemployment, and limited access to natural resources on which individuals and communities depend, as well as a lack of access to shared resources and involuntary removal of aid, both of which make it difficult to maintain a situation where displacement is a possibility (Oyefera & Alabi, 2016). Cernea (2000) said that food poverty is one of the pressing problems for displaced people and is caused by hunger, displacement and lack of access to basic facilities. Similarly, malnutrition among displaced persons, especially adolescent females and women, is recognised as a particularly serious issue. One of the direct social impacts of migration that was extensively studied in literature has been the deterioration of state of health (Oyeferas&Alabi, 2016), primarily as a result of a lack of access to safe potable water and sanitation, as well as a direct impact on progressive economic degradation leading to psychological distress, mental illness and loneliness, as groups particularly vulnerable to health risks associated with development-induced relocation, adolescent females, mothers or elderly persons whose prosperity was much lower than men under normal terms (Terminski, 2013) have been found.

According to the UNHCR (2010), a significant majority of internally displaced people in the world are women. The women make up an important part of the overall internal displacement community and, since they lose their livelihoods, have less access to aid and are unable to find jobs, they are considered to be more at risk than any other communities impacted. They also lose permanent social and cultural ties, which threaten their relations and disturb or lose educational opportunities for their children (Oyefera &Alabi, 2016). Furthermore, their claims to housing, land and property are difficult to exercise and they are also removed from decision-making processes. They are also more vulnerable to physical, mental, and other domestic abuse depending on gender. This is often compounded by an increasing alcoholism, which is common for men to feel hijacked and unsecure (Ghimire, 2012; Oyefera &Alabi, 2016). All of these are thought capable of leading to depression and physical deterioration, as a post-traumatic stress syndrome (Oyefera&Alabi, 2016). The widespread perception of insecurity is used to describe defamation, victimhood, deprivation, shame, and the reliance on specific classes within a society (Olanrewaju et al., 2019).

Social Well-being, Camp Coping Style and Strategies

The primary tactic used by all IDPs is to seek assistance from nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and individuals. The invisibility of IDPs refers to host societies' institutional/governmental laxity against IDPs. Charity groups are the primary providers of humanitarian aid. Unlike those living in Government-run camps, those living in unaccredited facilities depend on contributions from FBOs, individuals, and non-governmental organisations (Olanrewaju et al., 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Social Disorganization Theory

The Social disorganization theory is one of the prominent classical sociological theories of crime. This theory which was the brain child of the Chicago school of thought, was prominent in the works of Shaw and McKay (1942). The duo utilized spatial mapping system to study the residential dynamics and incidents of criminality in Chicago city. The theory of social

disorganization is anchored on the notion that social disorganization results from a sudden and unexpected breakdown in the usual and habitual way of life of a people. The theory argues that whenever and wherever there is social disorganization, there will be a spike in the rate and propensity of crime.

Shaw and McKay developed their assumptions from the premise that criminality is not evenly dispersed across time and space in the city, but that crime is concentrated in a particular area of the city noting that the incidence of crime is relatively consistent within some areas of the city despite continual changes in the population dynamics. For instance, they observed that in some particular areas of the city, despite changes in the socio-demographic characteristics of the resident's crime rate remains stable in such areas.

Applied to this study, it could be argued that gender-based violence such as verbal abuse, sexual harassment, as well as denial of rights and coercion, are the consequences of social displacement. This implies that many of the victims of displacement are individuals that have experienced one form of social disorganization or the other in their places of abode. For example, many of the displaced persons from Northeastern Nigeria, especially women and children, who moved into the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, did so as a result of Boko Haram activities. Mohammed (2014) attributed the social displacement of many people living in IDP camps in Nigeria to the activities of insurgents.

Methodology

The study is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. It utilized the simple random sampling technique to select eight hundred and fifty-two (852) female respondents on whom copies of the questionnaire were administered. Four camps were purposively selected. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interview (KII) sessions were carried out among selected displaced women and girls, camp officials, NGO officials. Data collected from the FGDs and KIIs were sorted using content analysis while data from questionnaire were analysed with Two-Way Ancova, Correlation and Regression Analysis.

Findings and Discussion

Table 1.1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	X^2
Age			67.690 (3), p =.001
15-20	113	13.3	
20-25	273	32.0	
25-30	236	27.7	
30 and above	230	27.0	
Total	**852**	**100.0**	
Marital Status			1494.0 (3), p = .001
Married	697	81.8	
Single	113	13.3	
Separated	10	1.2	

Widow	32	3.8	
Total	**852**	100	
Religious Affiliation			69.878 (1), p = .004
Christianity	304	35.7	
Islam	548	64.3	
Total	**852**	**100.0**	
State of Origin			1506.1 (2), p = .001
Borno	818	96.0	
Adamawa	15	1.8	
Yobe	19	2.2	
Total	852	100.0	
Original Place of Residence			1512.7 (4), p = .001
Gwoza	619	72.2	
Adamawa	42	4.9	
Yobe	81	9.5	
Maiduguri	3	0.4	
Chibok	107	12.6	
Total	**852**	**100.0**	
Sex			844.0(1), p = .003
Females			
Total	852	100.0	
	852	**100.0**	
IDPs Centres			175.587 (3), p = .010
Wassa	361	42.4	
Durumi	237	27.8	
Kuje Pegi	135	15.8	
New Kuchingoro	119	14.0	
Total	**852**	**100.0**	

Source: Author's fieldwork, 2023

Table 1.1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. The distribution of the respondents according to their age reveals that more than one-quarter are between 20 and 25 years (32.0%), 25-30 years (27.7%) and above 30 years. Less than 20.0% are between 15 and 20 years. The chi-square goodness-of-fit conducted to ascertain whether the distributions were due to change or statistically significant shows that the age distribution of the respondents was not due to chance (X^2 = 67.690, df =3, = .001). The findings show that majority of the respondents were youths, in their economically active ages. Also, the table indicates that most (81.8%) of the respondents are married, while less than 20.0% are single (13.3%), widowed (3.8%) and separated (1.2%). This finding is significant (X^2 = 1494.0, df =3, = .001). The observed high number of married among the respondents is high. The religious characteristics of the respondents indicated that majority of the respondents are significantly (X^2 = 69.878, df =1, = .004) Muslim (64.3%). This is expected because the far northern part of Nigeria is believed to be dominated by Muslims.

A close observation of the table also reveals that almost all of them (96.0%) were from Borno State, while the remaining respondents were from Yobe (2.2%) and Adamawa (1.8%). The outcome here is that Borno accounted for the highest percentage of displaced respondents because it is the epicentre of the Boko-Haram activities) This is in line with the study conducted by Busuguna (2022) which found that majority of current internally displaced persons in Nigeria were form Borno followed by Adamawa and Yobe States. The distribution of the respondents according to their places of origin indicated that more than half of them were from Gwoza (72.2%), very few of them were from Chibok (12.6%); Yobe (9.5%), Adamawa (4.9%) and Maiduguri (0.4%). These distributions were found to be statistically significant (X^2 = 1512.7, df =3, = .001). This finding complements the already established fact that the northern Nigeria is faced with more serious security challenges than any other part of the country. This finding is statistically significant (X^2 = 67.690, df =3, = .001)

Table 1.2 Environmental Characteristics of IDP Camps in Abuja

Camp Environment Variables	**Freq.**	**%**	$\overline{X}$	**SD**	X^2	**Rank of Camp environment challenges faced**
Unsafe Building:			2.808	1.8852	214.739(2), p =.001	4th
The building I live in is unsafe						
Strongly Agree & Agree	423	49.6				
Indecisive	88	10.3				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	341	40.0				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				
Drug use prevalence:						
Rowdy camp environment & prevalence of miscreants and drug addicts						
Strongly Agree & Agree	228	26.8	4.592	1.1482	1144.711(2), p = .000	5th
Indecisive	30	35				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	594	69.7				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				

Access to economic opportunities:						
No access to economic activities within the camp						
Strongly Agree & Agree	626	73.5	2.061	1.7669	187.793(1), p =.002	3rd
Undecided	0	0.0				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	226	26.5				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				
Access to basic provision:						
Women's basic needs are not provided in the camp						
Strongly Agree & Agree	771	91.2	1.352	1.1299	1287.634(2), p=.021	2nd
Undecided	1	0.1				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	74	8.7				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				
Access to services:						
Limited Supply of relief materials:						
Strongly Agree & Agree	838	98.4	1.038	.3043	1621.211(2), p =.014	1st
Undecided	12	1.4				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	2	0.2				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				

Source: Author's fieldwork, 2023

(a) Unsafe Building

As seen from the table almost half of the respondents strongly affirmed that the building, they resided in were unsafe (49.6%), while 40.0% held a different view. A few (10.3%) of them were indecisive of whether the buildings unsafe or not. This finding was found significant (X^2 = 214.739, df =2, = .001). Living in unsafe buildings has implications for the health and wellness of the respondents. These views as expressed by the participants in this study, account for why the vulnerable populations of the displaced, do all sorts of odd jobs in the course of which many end up being sexually abused. One of the respondents noted thus:

> "When we got here, I didn't believe this will be our place of residence for this long. But I am already used to it now though very porous and unconducive for all weather".FGD1/20years/Durumi/Borno/Trader

From the views canvassed above, one could say that the participants were just coping with their present environment and the government seems not to care about their well-being. This shows that there is a perception of bad camp environment which could predispose these vulnerable populations to sexual and gender-based violence.

(a) Drug Use Prevalence

Regarding camp population density, many (67.9%) of the respondents noted that the camp was not rowdy and that miscreants and drug addicts were not much in the camp. A very few (3.5%) were undecided about this view. More than one-quarter (26.8%) of the respondents indicated that the camp was rowdy, and dominated by miscreants and drug addicts. Chi square-goodness-of-fit analysis shows that these findings were significant (X^2 = 1144.711, df =2, = .000).

(b) Access to economic opportunities

The opinion of respondents on accessibility to economic opportunities revealed that majority (73.5%) of the respondents were significantly (X^2 = 187.793, df =1, = .002) in support of the view that females do not have access to economic activities within the IDPs camps in Abuja, while 26.5% thought otherwise. The above finding is supported by the response of some of the FGD participants.

A young adolescence girl who was not comfortable with the camp situation regarding economic opportunities had this to say:

> "…Initially I engaged in petty trading outside the camp for my parents because no money to sustain myself and my old parents. I believe government is at fault; they did not care about us here at all".FGD3/ 15years old/Kuje-Pegi/Borno/Single.

Another participant had this to say in Hausa language:

> I have no husband again; he was killed by Boko-haram elements. We live from hand to mouth here...it has not been easy at all (FGD1/ 27/Durumi/Borno/widow).

(c) Access to Basic Provision

A close observation of the responses of the respondents in table 1.2 on the provision of their basic needs in the camp shows that a significant proportion (X^2 = 1287.634, df =2, = .021) noted that women's basic needs were not adequately met in the camps. Only few (8.7%) had a contrary view, while a negligible segment was undecided (0.1%). Access to basic needs is one of the challenges faced by many of the respondents in their various camps. The impact of diets on their families and especially their children, and elderly was a significant concern expressed by six of the respondents as follows:

> I am concerned about my family. My child should be well fed, even if I can't get enough. My elderly husband as well. We need proteineous foods. (FGD1/ 29/Durumi/Borno/married).

Another respondent added thus;

> Some members and I in this camp used to eat cooked root flakes, especially the cassava flake raw rather than the cooked/processed ones because there is no place to get kerosene or gas to cook (FGD1/ 30/Durumi/Borno/married.

A respondent further shared her experience thus.

> "We came here with our children, and we struggled very much for children to get the food they require. Because you know, as children, they require good food, so that they can live but no means of working to achieve this (FGD3/24/Kuje-Pegi/Yobe/married)

In the view of a participant who is twenty years of age, lack and poverty were highlighted as some of the challenges in the camp. She reacted thus:

> No bath room pace to bath, I always do my bathing around 5am before morning prayers. In fact, the experience here is bad. This made me suffer a lot (FGD/Durumi /20 years/Borno/married/skilled).

The response above shows that participants had problem with access to bathroom inside the camps. Probing further, a participant confessed that she would do better if she is given financial assistance. Another participant expressed her frustration as follows:

> I do feel bad when having urge to urinate or defecate, because the toilet here is bad and no alternative means. Life has been difficult living or staying here doing nothing (FGD 4/Wassa / 15 years/Adamawa /Single)

Another participant said:

> "In the last one year of my being in this camp, insufficiency of water and electricity has been a recurrent issue. I think the government is not really concerned about us here at all and we have little or nothing to live on here (FGD2/New-Kuchingoro/ 2years/Borno/married).

Furthermore, internally displaced people (IDPs) face a variety of challenges inside the camp, the most common of which are food shortages, overcrowding, inadequate medical treatment, and general safety concerns. Many IDPs in the camp say they are starving to death because of lack of food supplies. An FGD informant at the New-Kuchingoro camp confirmed that:

> We have not enough food to eat here in the camp; we are always hungry because, in the past two months, the government people have not brought us food. As I am talking to you now, I and my kid siblings have not eaten since morning. We always eat our little breakfast late in the afternoon to be able to take us till the second day (FGD2/New-Kuchingoro/28years/Adamawa/married).

Another respondent shared his ordeals thus:

> The camp is not fit for human shelter because it lacks adequate facilities such as; light, water, and good roads. (FGD3/Kuje-Pegi /28years/Yobe/married).

Despite the purported efforts of the governments, there were cases of inadequacy of social amenities among the IDPs.

(d) Access to Services

From table 1.2, it is evident that almost all of the respondents affirmed that relief materials supplied to women in the camp were limited (98.4%), while 1.4% of the respondents was undecided about the adequacy of relief materials. A small segment (0.2%) however, held a different view. Lack of access to basic services such as health, security, education, etc., makes the respondents more socio-economically vulnerable.

Table 1.3: Social Wellbeing and Lived Experiences of Female IDPs

Social Wellbeing Lived Experience of Female IDPs	Freq.	%	$\overline{X}$	SD	Chi square	Rank
Peace*:*						
There are enough security agents in my camp						
Strongly Agree & Agree	376	44.1	2.357	1.3537	174.958(2), p =.022	2nd
Indecisive	374	43.9				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	102	12.0				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				
Social Stability*:*			1.10	.635	766.272(1), p = .021	5th
There is no proper arrangement of people in my camp						

Strongly Agree & Agree	830	97.4				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	22	2.6				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				
Happiness*:*						4th
Women in the camp live lonely						
Strongly Agree & Agree	791	92.8	1.230	.8692	1357.951(2), p =.003	
Indecisive	24	2.8				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	37	4.3				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				
Good Relationships*:*						
Women are reservedly verbally abused in my camp						
Strongly Agree & Agree	341	40.0	2.664	1.5559	1293.092(2), p=.001	1st
Indecisive	313	36.7				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	198	23.2				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				
Freedom and equal right*:*						
Women are often denied right to freely expressed themselves						
Strongly Agree & Agree	731	86.4	1.526	1.3384	1621.211(2), p =.010	3rd
Indecisive	8	0.9				
Strong Disagree & Disagree	108	12.7				
Total	**852**	**100.0**				

Source: Author's fieldwork, 2023

(i) **Peace**

Table 1.3 presents the lived experiences of females in IDPs camps in Abuja in relation to their social well-being. As seen in the table, more than one-quarter of the respondents affirmed that there was enough security in the camp while less than 20.0% disputed adequate security in the camp. These findings are statistically significant (X^2 = 174.958 df =2, = .022). Feeling safe, stable and secure are important parts of man's sense of wellbeing.

(ii) **Social Stability**

As seen in table 1.3 almost, all (97.4%) of the respondents argued that people were not socially stable while only 2.6% of the respondents supported that people were socially stable. The table further shows that these findings are statistically significant (X^2 = 766.272 df =1, = .021).

(iii) **Happiness**

Happiness is related to social wellbeing, as it provides different physical and psychological strength to continue to enjoy different activities of life as well as living with family and friends. Despite being with their husbands in the camp, majority (92.8%) of the respondents significantly (X^2 = 1357.951 df =2, = .003) affirmed that women lived a lived a life of loneliness in the camp, as seen in table 4.3, while only 2.8% were undecided. Nonetheless, less than 10.0% were not in support of the view that women in the camp lived a lonely life. The implication of this finding is that respondents who are unhappy and do live a lonely life are less likely to be mentally and economically stable and productive, than those who live happily.

(iv) **Good Relationship**

It is observable from table 1.3 that more than one-quarter of the respondents (40.0%) concurred that women were verbally abused in their camps, while 36.7% were unable to affirm this. Howsoever, more than 20.0% of the respondents indicated that women were not verbally abused in their camps. It is further seen in table 1.3 that these findings are statistically significant (X^2 = 1293.092 df =2, = .001). In support of the above finding, the head of the women unit in the camp on social functioning, had this to say:

> I have to tell you this, some of these people are not acceptable to the society, they are experiencing a different world entirely, and they need to be reconnected to the society (KII / 30years/Government Official /BSC /Married

On social well-being, she said;

> Some of them are not emotionally stable even as there not enough medical facilities to help them; I can't imagine you (researcher) helping us out. We need help"

(v) **Freedom and Equal Right**

Table 1.3 examines the state of freedom and right of women in IDP camps in the study area. It is evident from the table that women were often denied the right to freely express themselves, while less than 1.0% were undecided about this. Nonetheless, some (12.7%) of the respondents were not in support of the opinion that women in the camps were often denied their right to free express themselves.

The implication of this is that many women in the camp are likely to be unhappy as found in table 1.3 because they were regularly verbally abused either by family members or other camp members and are denied the right to self-expression. This might have caused them to withdraw and reduce their social interaction within the camp. All indications from Table 1.3 show poor social wellbeing among the respondents. The implication of this is that the socio-economic wellbeing of the respondents is negatively affected. A participant conveyed the reservation this way:

> What happened to me is as a result of Boko Haram insurgency separation from my family which create my difficulty (FGD2/Durumi/ 18years/Borno/ single).

Another participant, expressed herself in this way:

> "I love been okay; but my situation here is worst and so, I have to sell my body at times for survival despite that I was married before I got here". (FGD3/Wassa/21years/Adamawa/Separated).

The issue of social well-being was also demonstrated in the words of another adolescent female participant in the following words:

> I love going out to celebrate/felicitate with my friends and people of like passion in my usual place of residence and it is difficult for me to do so here am not feeling well here at all. (FGD1/Borno/17years/Kuje-Pegi /married).

A participant noted that:

> …because of intra-camp petty stealing and brutality, especially among children in the camp. We have been living in fear. Unknown men are mostly perceived as dangerous. No rest of mind (FGD4/Adamawa/27years/Wassa/married).

Summarily, there are reports which identified unconducive environment as a major plight confronting the IDPs in Abuja.

Summary of Major Findings

The summary of major findings of the research are:

i. The accommodation facilities in the IDPs camp are unsafe and the condition of the environment is unpleasant. ($X^2 = 214.739$, df =2, = .001).
ii. The level of females' social and physical activities experienced across the selected camps was found to poor. ($X^2 = 187.793$, df =1, = .002).
iii. In line with this concept, it could be inferred that females in IDPs camps are still battling with conflict of social safety as they are faced with increased risk of gender-based violence as a result of living in unsafe buildings. ($X^2 = 214.739$, df =2, = .001).
iv. The study revealed high levels of hunger and inadequacy of basic needs among the females in the IDPs camps ($X^2 = 1287.634$, df =2, = .021).
v. The study revealed that there is a significant association between participants' camp environment and their social well-being. ($X^2 = 1357.951$ df =2, = .003)

Conclusion

The aim of the study was to examine the correlations between camp environment and social well-being of females living in IDP camps in Abuja, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to: assess the effect of unsafe building on social well-being of women and young adolescent girls in IDPs; examine the effect of overcrowded camps on the social well-being of women and young adolescent girls in IDPs; assess the effects of low economic opportunities on the social well-being of women and young adolescent girls in IDPs; examine the effects of exposure to gender-based violence (GBV) on the social well-being of women and young adolescent girls in IDPs & assess the effect of inadequate facilities on the social well-being of women and young adolescent girls in IDPs.

Recommendations

In order to improve the social environment of displaced females in the IDPs camps covered by this study and enhance their well-being, the following recommendations are made:

(a) There is need to improve the camp situation and make it more habitable for the dwellers by providing adequate facilities for improved living.

(b) Proper and adequate skill acquisition programmes should be put in place to keep the displaced females in the IDP camps busy and safe within the confines of the camps.

(c) There is need to develop an intervention programme as well as coping skill strategies to harness the needs of those displaced in the camps and prepare them for integration into society, taking cognizance of the trauma they encountered, especially the challenge of meeting their daily needs within and outside the camps.

(d) There is a further need for administrative restructuring of the displaced persons' camp environment to give the dwellers a sense of positive social well-being.

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INTERNET USERS' PERCEPTION OF THE PREVALENCE OF ONLINE INVESTMENT FRAUD AND VICTIMISATION IN NIGERIA.

Obasanjo S. Balogun[1], Tomisin A. Akangbe[2], Olumide D. Fagbamila[3] & Felix O. Aigbovbioisa[4]

[1&2] Department of Criminology & Security Studies, University of Ilorin
[3]Department of Sociology, University of Ilorin
[4]Centre for Conflict management & Peace Studies, University of Jos
Corresponding Author: balogun.so@unilorin.edu.ng

Abstract
This study investigated the prevalence of online investment fraud and victimisation among internet users in Nigeria, focusing on sociodemographic characteristics, investment behaviours, victimisation. experiences, and perceptions of fraud risk factors. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design, utilizing Google Forms for data collection and convenience sampling to recruit 164 participants from Ilorin, Kwara State. The study adopted the Routine Activities Theory (RAT) as theoretical framework. Findings reveal that a majority of respondents are young individuals with tertiary education, indicating their susceptibility to online investment fraud due to limited financial experience and a desire for quick financial gains. Notably, over half of the participants actively engage in online investments. In addition, family and friends' recommendations and the pursuit of financial freedom influencing investment decisions significantly. However, a substantial proportion of investors report falling victim to online investment fraud, predominantly through Ponzi/pyramid schemes, crypto currency scams, and forex trading scams. Financial losses vary among victims, with factors such as lack of regulation, poverty, unemployment, and insufficient training on fraud prevention contributing to vulnerability. Statistical analysis indicates a significant relationship between investment experience and the perception of high returns as a risk factor for fraud victimisation. These findings underscore the urgent need for regulatory measures, public awareness campaigns, and educational initiatives to mitigate the risks associated with online investment fraud in Nigeria.
Keywords: Internet, Nigeria, Online Fraud, Online Investment, Victimisation.

Introduction

The internet usage is witnessing a significant rise globally and particularly in Nigeria. For instance, data indicates that in Nigeria, over 84 million individuals, constituting approximately 39 percent of the population, accessed the internet in 2022, with projections suggesting this number will escalate to 117 million users by 2027 (Sasu, 2022). The growth of internet accessibility has become integral to the economic landscape; however, it has concurrently brought forth the challenge of cybercrime (Siegel, 2007), which has exhibited a consistent upward trend over the years (Halder, 2022). The utilisation of electronics and the internet devices has facilitated the integration of diverse economies worldwide, making the electronic economy becoming more accessible to a broad spectrum of individuals, including those with malicious intent (Victory, Promise, & Mike, 2022).

The advent of internet-based investment platforms alongside the advancement of innovative technologies has significantly transformed the investment landscape, presenting individuals with unprecedented opportunities to enhance their financial portfolios. However, regrettably, this technological advancement has also precipitated a surge in the incidence of individuals falling victim to online investment fraud (Button & Cross, 2017). Online investment opportunities and online-based commercial transactions have become increasingly popular as more people seek ways to invest their money into moneymaking schemes. As noted, the COVID-19 lockdown period witnessed a significant surge in the expansion of e-commerce and a heightened dependence on online businesses (Lallie et al., 2021; Halder, 2022).

Foy (2021) noted that the lockdown has spiked up investment fraud as many people are drawn to the virtual environment. However, this trend has also resulted in a rise in instances of online investment fraud victimization, particularly affecting young people in need of employment or seeking quick money, who often find themselves targeted by fraudsters (Halder, 2022). As highlighted by Siegel (2007, p. 472), cybercriminals purposefully design websites with the intention of deceiving people by marketing securities in a manner that appears exceptionally appealing, promising substantial returns on investments while downplaying the inevitable risks of loss.

Online investment frauds can exert far-reaching financial, emotional, psychological, and even health-related impacts on individual investors, their families, and the wider community (Button et al., 2014b; Kerr et al., 2012; Whitty & Buchanan, 2012; Harvey et al., 2014). For instance, analysing the nature of crypto currency scam, Mackenzie (2022) opined that crypto currency online marketplace is characterised by its expansive and diverse nature, serving as an unconventional financial system. Within this context, it offers intricate and high-risk technological investment opportunities. Notably, Mackenzie (2022) highlights a significant deficiency in effective mechanisms for regulating and curbing criminal activities within this emerging crypto-economic landscape, thus contributing to the proliferation of fraudulent schemes and scams.

In Nigeria, the prevalence of online fraudulent investments have led to substantial financial losses for victims, with its attendant social, economic, and emotional effects on those affected. Some notable online investment frauds operating within Nigeria include crypto currency fraud, forex-trading scam, Ponzi scheme, real estate scams, among others. Ponzi schemes, also known as "Wonder Banks," represent fraudulent investment schemes that offer investors high rates of return with minimal risk. The fundamental mechanism involves using funds from new participants to generate returns for earlier investors. This fraudulent practice flourishes as initial subscribers, who receive substantial returns, actively promote the scheme, enticing more individuals to join. However, these schemes typically collapse when new investors cease to contribute funds, resulting

in financial losses for participants (Jack & Ibekwe, 2018; Jack & Jack, 2019; EFCC, nd; Iyatse & Otaru, 2022).

The financial impact of the online investment frauds is significant. In Nigeria, it has been reported that Nigerians lost over 911 billion Naira to Ponzi Schemes and other related fraudulent investments in the last 23 years (Iyatse & Otaru, 2022). According to a report published in The Guardian on December 1, 2022, it was revealed that 700 billion Naira was trapped in private placements in Nigeria in 2016, while MMM Ponzi defrauded their investors of 18 billion Naira. Additionally, MBA Forex swindled investors of 171 billion Naira, while Nospecto defrauded victims of 22.45 billion Naira (Iyate & Otaru, 2022).

Given the growing popularity of online investment platforms and the increasing incidence of investment fraud cases reported in Nigeria, there is need for more empirical undertakings to understand the specific factors influencing Nigerian investors' susceptibility to online investment fraud, with a view of recommending interventions and policy measures to mitigate this threat. The study, thus, examined the prevalence and determinants of online investment and online investment fraud victimisation in Nigeria. The study was guided by the following research questions, objectives and hypothesis:

1. How prevalent are online investments and online investment fraud victimisation in Nigeria?
2. What are the factors influencing online investment fraud victimisation?
3. What measures can be adopted to mitigate online investment fraud victimisation?

Objectives

The main objective of the study was to examine the prevalence of online investment and online investment fraud victimisation in Nigeria. The specific objectives included:

1. To determine the level of prevalence of online investments and online investment fraud victimisation in Nigeria.
2. To identify the factors influencing online investment fraud victimisation.
3. To suggest measures that can be adopted to mitigate online investment fraud victimisation.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant association between respondents' online investment experiences and their perception of whether the promise of high returns is a risk factor for online investment fraud victimisation.

Conceptual Clarification: Online investment fraud and online investment fraud victimisation

Koong, et al. (2006) cited in Tade & Aliyu (2011) see online fraud (also known as Internet fraud) as any type of fraud scheme that utilises one or more components of the Internet to perpetrate a crime. Online investment fraud is an aspect of economic fraud, with serious implications on society (Grabosky, 2013). Online investment fraud encompasses a spectrum of deceptive tactics orchestrated through digital channels, targeting individuals seeking investment opportunities. These fraudulent schemes, leveraging the anonymity and reach of the internet, entice prospective investors with promises of lucrative returns while downplaying associated risks. Upon investment, perpetrators may abscond with the funds or orchestrate sophisticated manipulation to fabricate false returns, ultimately inflicting substantial financial harm on investors.

Online investment fraud victimisation denotes the process by which individuals are ensnared and exploited by fraudulent schemes operating within the digital realm. Victims, often

enticed by promises of substantial returns and minimal risk, become unwitting participants in fraudulent investment schemes facilitated through online platforms. Online investment fraud victimisation represents a convergence of technological sophistication and psychological manipulation. Scammers often use social media platforms such as Facebook to promote fraudulent investment schemes.

Literature Review

Online investment is a risky endeavour. Adeniran (2008) observed that internet fraud cuts across both sexes. According to him, unlike the traditional criminal gangs, both male and female are functionally involved in internet fraud. Nursanti and Trinugroho (2024) in their "The effect of financial literacy on the ability to detect investment fraud" research found that individuals with higher levels of financial literacy demonstrate a greater ability to detect investment fraud. They also found that socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and education have no significant effect on controlling the effect of financial literacy on the capacity to detect investment fraud.

A study by Jack and Jack (2019) examined the impacts of Ponzi schemes in Nigeria. The research revealed that Ponzi schemes represent deceptive methods of doubling money, functioning on the principle of taking from one investor to pay another, (that is, "robbing Peter to pay Paul"), ultimately intending to defraud unwitting individuals of their earned income. Results of their study indicated that participation in Ponzi schemes led to adverse economic, social, and psychological consequences, encompassing financial setbacks, increased distrust, psychological distress, depression, and in extreme cases, suicide. The study emphasized the fraudulent nature of Ponzi schemes and recommended their criminalization by the Nigerian government, along with the imposition of suitable sanctions on their promoters in Nigeria.

Button et al. (2014a) conducted a study on "online frauds: Learning from victims why they fall for these scams". They interviewed 15 online fraud victims and held focus groups with 48 additional victims, as well as interviewing 9 professionals involved in combating online fraud. The research identified various reasons why victims fall for online scams, including the diversity of frauds, the small amounts of money sought, the authority and legitimacy displayed by scammers, emotional appeals, embarrassment, pressure, coercion, grooming, fraud at a distance, and the utilisation of multiple techniques. Their study illuminates the intricate array of factors that contribute to individuals' susceptibility to falling victim to online fraud.

Furthermore, in a Punch's report by Igomu (2021), greed and promise of high returns on investment constitute the main factors why Nigerians become victims of fraudulent online investment schemes. As buttressed by Tade and Aliyu (2011), the level of internet literacy and greed have made unsuspecting persons become victims of internet fraud in Nigeria, as many have been deceived into business transactions online. They however suggested that tackling the menace of online fraud requires addressing the problems of unemployment and corruption, while also integrating moral values into the body polity.

A study by Harvey et al. (2014) provides a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted factors contributing to people's susceptibility to investment fraud. It elucidates the intricate interconnections among financial, familial, and psychological dimensions, which collectively shape decision-making processes in this context. Within the financial domain, the analysis encompasses individuals' financial resources, their beliefs regarding financial systems and institutions, as well as the quality and extent of their financial social networks. Moreover, the study examines the influence of familial circumstances, including immediate financial pressures and the

long-term imperative to provide for family members. Additionally, it explores participants' psychological dispositions, delineating traits that may render individuals more prone to fraudulent schemes, such as trustfulness, juxtaposed with protective attributes like reflectiveness.

Zamzami (2021) explored the usage intensity of online investment platforms during the Covid-19 pandemic, focusing on perceived trust and risk. Employing the clause method, the study conducted online surveys within investor communities in Java Island. Findings reveal that investors exhibit low perceived risk and high-perceived trust toward investment platforms, with low perceived risk positively influencing perceived trust and, consequently, intentions to use these platforms.

Furthermore, online fraud poses significant costs not only in terms of its financial repercussions for businesses and government entities but also due to its adverse effects on numerous victims (Emami, Smith, & Jorna, 2019). It is believed that victims of online fraud come from diverse backgrounds, as studies indicate that fraud perpetrators target individuals indiscriminately (Pratt, Holtfreter & Reisig, 2010; Emami, Smith, & Jorna, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the Routine Activities Theory (RAT) as one of the most suitable criminological theories to explain online investment fraud and victimisation in Nigeria. The Routine Activities Theory was developed by Marcus Felson and Lawrence E. Cohen in 1979. RAT posits that for crime and victimisation to take place, specific conditions must be present, though they may not individually guarantee such outcomes. These conditions involve the convergence of motivated offenders, the presence of suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians (Balogun, et al., 2021).

The theory's strengths lie in its capacity to explain crime rates and trends, understand the interplay between victim behaviour and opportunities for criminal acts, and its proposition that victimisation risk can be reduced by increasing guardianship and/or reducing target vulnerability (Siegel, 2007). However, critics contend that Routine Activities Theory primarily centres on the circumstances surrounding criminal events rather than delving into the characteristics or motivations of offenders. They argue that the theory falls short in explaining why certain individuals choose to engage in criminal behaviour while others do not (Balogun, et al 2021, Alemika, 2013).

In understanding online investment fraud victimisation in Nigeria, the three elements of the theory such as the motivated offender, a suitable target, and absence of a capable guardian will be considered. Firstly, the *Motivated Offender* represents the scammers and fraudsters who may be motivated into online investment fraud due to several factors such as economic disparities, high unemployment rates, and widespread poverty. In addition, they may have been motivated by the rapid technological advancement that has empowered individuals with the necessary tools and knowledge to carry out sophisticated online scams. Additionally, a *Suitable Target* represents the victims of online investment fraud.

There are risk factors that may make the individuals vulnerable, such as poverty, low financial literacy, and a desire for quick wealth accumulation. In addition, the proliferation of online investment platforms, along with enticing promises of high returns, attracts unsuspecting victims who may lack awareness of the risks involved or the ability to distinguish legitimate opportunities from fraudulent schemes. Finally, the *Absence of Capable Guardian.* A capable guardian represents anything (be it human or non-human) that has the potential to prevent or deter

criminal activity and victimisation. However, the absence or ineffectiveness of the capable guardian allows the opportunity for crime to be committed or criminal victimisation to occur.

In the context of online investment fraud, example of absence of capable guardian include inadequate cyber security regulations and measures to combat online investment fraud in Nigeria. In addition, the anonymity and global nature of the internet make it challenging for law enforcement agencies to track down and prosecute perpetrators, exacerbating the absence of capable guardianship. Furthermore, lack or inadequate financial literacy can bring about online fraud victimisation.

The Routine Activities Theory appears particularly relevant due to its focus on the convergence of motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians in explaining the occurrence of crime and victimisation. The convergence of these factors within the Nigerian context creates a fertile environment for online investment fraud to thrive. The absence of effective guardianship, coupled with motivated offenders and suitable targets, increases the likelihood of fraudulent online investment activities occurring and victimisation taking place.

Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The survey instrument used for quantitative data collection was Google Forms, which incorporated validated scales and custom-designed questions to explore the prevalence of online investment fraud victimisation. Due to the nature of online data collection, a non-probability sampling technique, specifically convenience sampling, was used to recruit participants for the study. The target population comprised internet users residing within Ilorin, Kwara State space, cutting across diverse demographics, including age, gender, employment status, and education level. The link to the Google Forms-based questionnaire was distributed to the public through various social media platforms.

Data collection occurred between May 2023 (when it was first opened) and September 2023. During this period, 164 people responded to the questionnaire. Quantitative data collected were analysed descriptively to generate summary statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, while inferential statistical techniques, such as the chi-square test, were employed for hypothesis testing. For ethical considerations, participants' informed consent was sought, with a clear explanation of the purpose of study, while confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the data collection process.

Results

It is noteworthy that the results presented here were based on the 164 individuals that responded to the questionnaire during the course of collecting data for the study. However, in some instances, the frequency of the respondents varied based on question-response specificity.

Table 1 Sociodemographic data of the respondents

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Gender		
Male	99	60.4%
Female	65	39.6%
Total	164	100%
Age Range		
18-24	115	70.1%
25-34	28	17.1%

35-44	16	9.8%
45-54	3	1.8%
55 and above	2	1.2%
Total	164	100%
Educational level		
Secondary or less	6	3.7%
Tertiary	139	84.8%
Postgraduate	19	11.6%
Total	164	100%
Employment status		
Student	126	76.8%
Employed	30	18.3%
Unemployed	8	4.9%
Total	164	100%

From table 1, gender shows that male constituted the majority of the respondents in the study (60.4 percent). Majority of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 24 years (70.1 percent). Their level of education revealed that most of them were tertiary students (84.8 percent), while employment status indicated that majority of them were students (76.8 percent).

Table 2: Investment in online opportunities

Investment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Never invested	76	46.3%
Invested	88	53.7 %
Total	164	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 indicates that 53.7 percent of the respondents have invested in online opportunities. This shows that a significant portion of the population has some investment experience.

Table 3: Factors influencing investment decision among those who had invested in online opportunities

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
High returns on investment	18	20.5%
Recommendations from family and friends	29	33.0%
Endorsement by a known celebrity	6	6.8%
Easy access to investment opportunities	2	2.3%
Desire for financial freedom	33	37.5%
Total	88	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 3 shows that the major proportion of respondents, representing 37.5 percent of the total number of those who had invested in online investment platforms, cited the desire for financial freedom as a significant factor influencing their investment decisions. This indicates that a significant proportion of the respondents is primarily motivated by goal of achieving financial independence.

Table 4: Victimisation of online investment fraud among those who had invested in online opportunities

Victim of Online Fraud	Frequency	Percentage
No	20	22.7%
Yes	68	77.3%
Total	88	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4 shows that among the respondents, who reported investing in online opportunities, a significant majority, 77.3 percent of them, indicated that they have been victims of online investment fraud. The finding suggests that online investment fraud is prevalent among the respondents, with a substantial majority having experienced it in some capacity.

Table 5: Types of online investment fraud victimisation experienced by those who had been victims of online investment fraud

	Frequency	Percentage
Crypto currency scams	18	26.5%
Forex trading scams	13	19.1%
Ponzi/pyramid schemes	29	42.6%
Others	8	11.8%
Total	68	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on table 5, among the respondents who reported that they had been victims of online investment frauds, finding suggests that Ponzi/pyramid schemes are the most prevalent form of online investment fraud victimisation reported by them, accounting for the highest percentage among the listed categories (42.6 percent).

Table 6: Amount of money lost to online investment fraud as reported by those who had been victims of online investment fraud

Amount Lost	Frequency	Percentage
Less than ₦50,000	34	50.0%

₦50,000 - ₦100,000	20	29.4%
₦100,000 - ₦500,000	8	11.8%
₦500,000 - ₦1,000,000	3	4.4%
More than ₦1,000,000	3	4.4%
Total	68	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data in table 6 suggest that while a significant portion of respondents experienced relatively smaller losses, there were also notable instances of higher losses, albeit occurring less frequently. This indicates the varying degrees of financial impact resulting from fraudulent activities experienced by the respondents.

Table 7: Perception of factors that are likely to influence online investment fraud victimisation

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Ever Received Training on online investment fraud and how to avoid it	95	57.9
Did not receive training 69	164	100%
Total		
It is easy to fall victim of online investment fraud without proper due diligence		
Strongly disagree	9	5.5%
Disagree	8	4.9%
Neutral	15	9.1%
Agree	89	54.3%
Strongly agree	43	26.2%
Total	164	100%
Lack of regulation of online investment platform exposes Nigerians to online investment fraud		
Disagree	144	87.8%
Agree	20	12.2%
Poverty and unemployment increase the risk of online investment fraud victimisation		
Strongly disagree	10	6.1%
Disagree	4	2.4%
Neutral	26	15.9%
Agree	66	40.2%

Strongly agree	58	35.4%
Total	164	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 7 shows that majority (57.9percent) of the respondents of stated they did not receive training on online investment fraud. Similarly, an overwhelming majority of the respondents (80.5 percent) expressed agreement that it was easy to fall victims of online investment fraud without proper due diligence. Additionally, majority of respondents (87.8 percent) agreed that the lack of regulation of online investment platforms exposes Nigerians to online investment fraud. Finally, a larger proportion of the respondents (75.6 percent) expressed agreement that that poverty and unemployment increase the risk of online investment fraud victimisation.

Hypothesis testing: There is no significant association between respondents' online investment experiences and their perceptions of whether the promise of high returns on investment is a risk factor for online investment fraud victimisation.

Table 8: Cross tabulation of respondents' online investment experiences and their perception of whether the promise of high returns on investment is a risk factor for online investment fraud victimisation.

		Promise of high returns on investment is a risk factor for online investment fraud victimisation.		
		Disagree	**Agree**	**Total**
Investment in online platforms	**Never Invested**	10	66	76
	Invested	3	85	88
Total		13	151	164

$X^2 = 5.310$, d = 1, P-value = .021

From table 8, the chi-square test result indicated a significant association between respondents' online investment history and their perception of the connection between promise of high returns and the likelihood of online investment fraud victimisation., $X^2(1) = 5.310$, p-value < 0.05.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the prevalence of online investment fraud among online investors. The findings indicate several notable trends related to respondents' involvement in online investment opportunities and their susceptibility to online investment fraud. Sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents showed that most of them were female (60.4 percent). In addition, majority of them were young people between the ages of 18-24 years. More so, their educational attainment revealed that larger proportion of the respondents had tertiary education (76.8 percent), while their employment status showed that most of them were students.

These findings are consistent with those of Jack and Jack (2019). This can be inferred that younger people are most likely to invest in online platforms as well becoming victims of online investment frauds, which may be due to their frequent presence and engagement in the social media as well as their advantage of flowing with the tides of innovative informative and communication technologies. Furthermore, the prevalence of online investment fraud among young people, especially those in the age group of 18 to 24, suggests that this demographic group is particularly

susceptible to such schemes. This vulnerability could be attributed to factors such as limited financial experience, a desire for quick financial gains, and perhaps, a lack of awareness about the risks associated with online investments.

Additionally, the fact that the majority of victims had tertiary education raises questions about the effectiveness of educational attainment in protecting individuals from falling prey to online investment scams. It implies that despite higher education levels, individuals may still lack the necessary financial literacy or critical thinking skills to discern fraudulent schemes from legitimate investment opportunities. Furthermore, the prevalence of online investment fraud among students highlights a concerning trend of exploitation within educational institutions. Fraudsters may specifically target students who are often financially vulnerable, seeking to capitalize on their limited resources and potentially naive outlook on financial matters.

The high participation in online investment as found in the study, shows that more than half of the respondents (53.7percent) have actively participated in online investment opportunities. This indicates a significant prevalence of interest in these online moneymaking platforms. Additionally, the study found that recommendations from family and friends (33.0percent) and the desire for financial freedom (37.5percent) are significant factors influencing investment decisions. This indicates the influence of social networks and personal financial goals on investment choices. In addition, this desire for financial freedom suggests that many individuals view investments as a means to build wealth and attain a level of financial stability that allows them to pursue their desired lifestyle.

Furthermore, the study found widespread victimisation by online investment fraud, as a substantial majority (77.3 percent) of those who engaged in online investments reported falling victim to online investment fraud. The study also found that Ponzi/pyramid schemes are the most prevalent form of online investment fraud victimization among the respondents, with 42.6percent reporting being victims. This finding is consistent with global trends, where Ponzi schemes often attract unsuspecting investors with promises of high returns but ultimately collapse when new investments fail to cover the returns promised to earlier investors. This finding is also consistent with that of Jack and Jack (2019). Additionally, the study also found that Crypto currency scams (26.5percent) and Forex trading scams (19.1percent) also pose significant risks.

Moreover, the study found varied magnitude of financial losses. For instance, among the victims of online investment fraud, a significant portion (50.0 percent) reported losses of less than ₦50,000. However, it is critical to note that half of the respondents (50 percent) reported losses of amounts between N50, 000 and higher (although in varied ranges). In addition, delving into the factors influencing online investment fraud victimisation. Assessment of respondents' perceptions shows that most respondents (87.8 percent) agreed that lack of regulation exposes Nigerians to online investment fraud. In addition, an overwhelming proportion (75.6 percent) agreed that poverty and unemployment increase the risk of online fraud victimisation, and a higher proportion, 57.9 percent reported never received training on online investment fraud and how to avoid it. Finally, the test of hypothesis indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship (p-value = 0.021) between investment experience and the perception of high returns as a risk factor for fraud victimisation. As shown in table 7, among those who have invested, 85 out of 88 agree that high returns are a risk factor.

Conclusion

In conclusion, addressing online investment fraud in Nigeria requires a multi-dimensional approach involving regulatory measures, economic empowerment initiatives, and comprehensive consumer education programs. The study findings call for enhanced regulatory measures and

enforcement actions to combat online investment fraud effectively. Most importantly, the prevalence of online investment fraud among students and young individuals with tertiary education emphasises the urgent need for proactive measures to protect this demographic from financial exploitation. This includes targeted educational initiatives, strengthened regulations, and enforcement efforts aimed at safeguarding against fraudulent practices in the online investment landscape.

Recommendations

(a) There is need for stricter and swift legal actions against perpetrators to deter future occurrences.
(b) The high percentage of individuals reporting victimisation suggests a pervasive issue in Nigeria's online investment landscape. This stresses the urgent need for better regulation and consumer education to mitigate risks.
(c) The findings show that while high returns are an attractive proposition for investors, there is a growing awareness that they can also be a significant risk factor for fraud. This signals the importance of financial literacy and due diligence in investment decision-making.
(d) Respondents perceive a lack of regulation and economic challenges like poverty and unemployment as exacerbating the risk of fraud. Strengthening regulatory frameworks and addressing socio-economic issues could help reduce vulnerability to fraud.
(e) Given the influence of social networks on investment decisions and the prevalence of online fraud, there's a clear need for targeted education campaigns to raise awareness about fraud schemes and promote safer investment practices.

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DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING DIFFERENTIALS IN INFANT MORTALITY IN NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA

Mamman Matthew Samuel
Department of Sociology
Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria
matthewsamuel@nsuk.edu.ng

Attah Amana Philip
Department of Social Sciences and Humanities
Federal Polytechnic, Idah, Kogi State Nigeria
philipfpl.paa@gmail.com
&
Danladi Hadiza Ovenada
General Studies Unit
Air Force Institute of Technology, Kaduna
talk2deeza@gmail.com

Abstract
Infant mortality is one of the most expressive indicators of development in all countries of the world. In Nigeria, the current rate of infant mortality indicates that the country is far from ending the problem of infant mortality. It has not only reflected on the health of an infant, but also, the societal wellbeing as a whole. Hitherto, available studies on infant mortality have not clearly indicated its level as to whether it is increasing or decreasing in Nasarawa State, let alone its differentials. The paper examines the demographic factors influencing differentials in infant mortality in Nasarawa State-Nigeria. A multistage sampling technique was adopted to select respondents. Initially, for the study which involved six (6) namely Local Government Areas, electoral wards, main street, houses, household and individual/respondent. The methods of data collection utilized for the study was questionnaire. The questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using tables, frequency, percentage, cross tabulation and Chi-square to establish and statistically test the level of significance in the relationship between two variables. Findings of the study established the differentials in infant mortality in urban and rural communities in Nasarawa State, Nigeria, but overall, it is still high. There were marked differentials found in the prevalence of infant mortality among socio-economic and demographic factors, such as maternal education, maternal occupation, sex of infant birth interval and gender. On the basis of these findings, the study recommends a renewed policy on maternal health education in Nasarawa State including free counselling on birth spacing, family planning, immunization, ante-natal and post-natal care for all women.
Keywords: Demographic, Influencing, Differential, Infant Mortality, Nasarawa State

Introduction

Infant mortality can be classified as one of the components of population fluctuation and demographers have long been captivated in its study. Infant mortality which is a broad term that has been used to define mortality for the whole first year of life is a crucial public health concern globally and one of the key signs of the quality of primary health care delivery systems and the overall health status of a country. An infant is powerless of him or herself, highly exposed to many spheres of life and completely dependent on other people for care, development and survival. Millions of infants have died and continued to die from various causes, many of which are avoidable and avertable (Mazharul, 2010). Many components account for infant mortality in all countries, but these components vary between the developed and developing countries, and also between rural and urban areas within each country.

In 2023, 3.3 million infant deaths occur globally, and the rate of infant mortality, which is the number of deaths of infant under age 1 per 1000 live births in that given year was 26 deaths per 1000 live births (World Population Data Sheet, 2023). Infant mortality rate is high in Sub-Sahara Africa. Despite the region having only one fifth of the world's infant's population, it harbors half of childhood deaths globally. The risk of infant mortality is highest in Asia and Africa with rate of more than 55 deaths per 1000 live births (World Health Organization, 2023).

Infant mortality rate is none of the components of the United Nations Human Development Index, and is very essential for the assessment and planning of public health strategies. Furthermore, one of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 3.1) is to achieve good health and wellbeing and to reduce under five mortalities, including infant mortality to no more than 25 deaths per 1000 live births by 2023 (World Mortality Report, 2015). In developed countries, infant mortality has significantly reduced mainly due to advancement in basic healthcare and technological progress in the medical field. However, in developing countries, especially in Sub-Sahara Africa, infant mortality remains a major cause of concern as it is the most difficult place for a child to survive until the age of five (Ahmed & Hussein, 2010).

Infant mortality rate in the developed nation is on the average of 5 deaths per 100 live birth as compared to the developing nation of 26 deaths per 1000 live birth (World Population Data Sheet, 2023). The World Health (WHO) stated that rural infants, infants born to uneducated mothers, and infants living in poorer households continue to have higher mortality (WHO, 2018). The course of infant mortality in Nigeria and Nasarawa State is such that the greater portion of infant deaths occurs in the rural areas. For instance, in 2013, the infant mortality rate was 60 deaths per 1,000 live births in the urban area compared to 86 deaths per 1,000 live births in the rural area (Nigeria Demographic Health Survey, NDHS 2018). The exposure of infant mortality is said to be highest in developing countries like Africa which have a rate of 55 deaths per 1000 live births (NPC & ICF International, 2023). This figure has attracted the nationwide attention and is a major contributor of reduction of life expectancy of the population.

According to the National Population Commission (NPC) and ICF International (2023), there are differences in the rates of infant mortality in each geo-political zones of the country. These differences range from 89 deaths per 1000 live birth in Northwest, to 82 deaths per 1000 live birth in Southeast, 77 deaths per 1000 live birth in Northeast, 66 deaths per 1000 live birth in South-South. In Nasarawa State, infant mortality has been unstably declining at gradual rates over the years at a high prevalence rate of 115 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2008 to 60 deaths per 1000 live births in 2018 (NPC & ICF International, 2023). This present situation notwithstanding, still remains too slow to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of reducing infant mortality by 2030 in Nasarawa State.

Infant mortality is studied in two age segments: mortality between birth and exact age of one month (the neonatal period) and mortality between one month and eleven months (the post neonatal period). The first month of life of an infant represents the most vulnerable time for its survival. Nigeria ranks second globally, as the country with the second highest number of neonatal mortality (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, UNICEF 2015). Globally, one million neonates die during the first day of birth and roughly two million within the first seven days of life (WHO, 2020). The rate of neonatal mortality declined from 36 deaths per 1000 live birth to 19 deaths per 1000 live birth between the period of 1990 and 2015 (UNICEF, 2015). Available interference so far has failed to yield beneficial results; thus, it was concluded in a recent study that there was no much improvement in neonatal survival in Nigeria since 1990 (Akinyemi, Bamgboye & Ayeni 2015). Nigeria would need about two to three times increased reduction in neonatal mortality rates to be on track to meeting the targets of SDG for infant survival at 12 deaths per 1000 live births for neonatal mortality rate by 2030 (Emmanuel, Yun & Reeta, 2016).

In Nigeria and Nasarawa State in particular, due to issues such as trends in rapid population growth, downturn of the economy, malnutrition, ignorance, unsafe drinking water, environmental population, poor hygiene and nutrition, lack of accessibility to health services, relatively high level of poverty, apathy inadequate sanitation and diseases, infant mortality is still at an alarming figure, therefore, the study examines the demographic factors influencing differentials in infant mortality in Nasarawa State-Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Though a common problem relating to the studies of infant mortality in developing countries can be attributed to the scarcity of data, it has also been argued that scientific research on infant mortality is also hampered by the insufficient use of the information available, however imperfect or indirect they may be. Cases involving infant mortality in developing country have largely been under-reported (Emmanuel, Yun & Reeta, 2016). Although substantial improvement in survival has occurred, the encumbrance of mortality within the first month of life has remained basically unchanged. Each year, four million infants die, three quarter of this death occur during the first week of life of which at least 1 million die in their first 24 hours of birth globally. Most infant deaths occur at home where there is an absence of contact with any skilled health care provider (Lawn, Knippenberg, & Darmstadt, 2005).

Monitoring the differences in infant mortality is challenging because country specific differentials tend to change overtime. Adequate data in comprehending on the levels and differentials of infant mortality at the State level is insufficient, given the variation of each State in Nigeria. Nasarawa State is an agrarian state with high percent of rural dwellers. The state has a population of over 3 million people including 1.6 million women of childbearing age (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Nasarawa State has dis-satisfactory high mortality rate and disease burden profile. In 2018, infant mortality rate was 115 per 1000 live birth (African Population and Health Research Centre, 2019). This figure represents a worsening trend in the level of infant mortality have approached the study based in trend analysis.

Women in rural areas contributed more to this number as they were less advantage compared with women in urban areas in terms of access to maternal healthcare services. Infant mortality in the State is a serious health problem. Most rural women are challenged with the predicament of accessing and utilizing of maternal health care services. This is because they are faced with the problem**s** of low income and education, unavailability of health care services and poor road network. Often times, women living in rural areas have little or no source of income, education to

cater for their health needs. They are at the disadvantaged part of the society. Besides, women from disadvantaged segments of society are in double jeopardy since they find themselves even more disadvantaged within a disadvantaged population–they are the poorest among the poor and the least educated among the inadequately educated.

Several studies in Nigeria (Bongaarts, 2014; Wilopo, 2009; Ahmed & Hussein, 2010) have been undertaken on differentials in infant mortality, but none has explored differential in infant mortality in Nasarawa State-Nigeria where infant mortality rates remain increasingly higher. Consequently, little is known about differential in infant mortality in this part of the country. This has given rise to not just context-specific gaps in literature on differential in infant mortality in Nasarawa State-Nigeria, but also in knowledge. Therefore, it has become imperative to examine the differential in infant mortality in Nasarawa State-Nigeria.

Research Questions

i. What is the level of infant mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria?
ii. What are the demographic differential of infant mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria?
iii. What are factors that determine infant mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine the demographic factors influencing differentials in infant mortality in Nasarawa State-Nigeria. However, the specific objectives included:

i. To examine the level of infant mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria
ii. To ascertain the demographic differential of infant mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria
iii. To examine the factors that determine infant mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for this study:

i. H_o: There is no significant relationship between infant mortality and maternal level of education in Nasarawa State, Nigeria
ii. H_o: There is no significant relationship between infant mortality and maternal occupational status in Nasarawa State, Nigeria
iii. H_o: There is no significant relationship between sex of infant and age at birth in Nasarawa State, Nigeria
iv. H_o: There is no significant relationship between infant mortality and birth interval in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Conceptual and Theoretical Clarification

Mortality

Like other societal issues, scholars or intellectuals have variegated views on mortality. In other words, there is no consensus or generally accepted definition of the concept. But this study will dwell on those definitions that are widely accepted. Mortality is the pattern of death in a population. It is the occurrence of deaths within a population at a given point in time. Mortality refers to deaths that occur within a population. The incidence of death can reveal much about a population's standard of living and health care delivery services in a country (NBS, 2016).

For Graunt (1662), morality refers to the relative frequency of death in a population. Demographer use two different concepts when referring to mortality, namely, the life span, which is numerical age limit of human life and life expectancy or expectation, which is the average

expected number of years of life to be lived by a particular population at a given time. In the context of the study, mortality means deaths that occur among women in Nasarawa State.

Infant mortality

It is rather difficult to point out a single holistic definition of infant mortality despite its significance and wide usage in the field of demographic and population studies. This has left scholars, researchers, intellectuals and authors to defining infant mortality from different perspectives and perceptions. Infant mortality is the death of a live born infant between the day of birth and span of 12 months (UNICEF, 2018). The rate of infant mortality is the measure of probability of infants dying before reaching the age of one year.

Theoretical Framework

The study is positioned within the Mosley-Chen Model. This model was formulated in 1984 and was believed to have combined social sciences and medical perspectives in restrained way. This model was first designed by Henry Mosley and Lincoln Chen, purposely to develop a new analytical framework to study the factors of infant survival in developing countries. The strength of the Mosley-Chen model lies in combining elements from both social science research and medical research, which gives a stable base for studying the determinants of infant mortality. The approach includes both social and biological variables and integrates research methods used by social and medical scientists. Morbidity and mortality were both measured as a single variable. This was considered as the outcome variable, that is, depending on the interaction of the factors in the model, an infant might end up being sick (morbidity) and eventually gets better and regains his/her health or the state of health might get worse which then leads to death (mortality).

Some specific medical causes of deaths are not being addressed by social scientists, and the processes by which socio-economic determinants operate to bring about mortality differentials are often not disentangled. The Epidemiological studies focus on mechanisms of disease transmission in the environment and studies on nutrition centers on breastfeeding, dietary practices and food availability as they relate to nutritional status. The assumption of this model is that underlying socio-economic status manifests itself in proximate determinants. The value of this variable influences the risk of disease, which is linked to the probability of death. Mosley and Chen set the framework of infant survival based on the assumption that all socio-economic factors of infant mortality necessarily operate through a determinant of infant mortality and they categorized fourteen (14) proximate determinants of infant into five (5) general groups. These groups are:

i. Maternal factors such as age at birth, and birth interval.
ii. Environmental contamination such as air, food, water, skin, soil, and insect vectors.
iii. Nutrient deficiency such as calories; protein; micronutrients (vitamins and minerals).
iv. Injury either accidental or intentional.
v. Personal illness control: personal preventive measures, medical treatment.

Underlying factors on the other hand are categorized into three (3) levels and are stated as:

a. Individual-level variables (i.e. individual productivity at household's level as well as traditions/norms/attitudes).
b. Household-level variables (e.g. income and wealth)
c. Community-level variables (i.e. ecological setting; political economy and health system).

Sullivan et al. (1994) classified the sex of a child, birth order, birth intervals from previous birth, and age of mother at birth as biological factors that are related to the inherent risk of infant

mortality. Bicego and Ahmad (1996), further classified the factors as bio-demographic differentials. Bio-demographic determinants are classified into two groups. First factors are genetic endowment which represents biological factors that are genetically endowed by the child. For example, birth interval, being singleton or twin, birth weight, and size at birth. The second factors are biological and demographic factors that affect infant mortality through the health and fertility status of the mother, for example mother age when the baby was delivered, complications during pregnancy, and problems that occur during labour and delivery.

The second proximate determinants of infant mortality are categorized into behaviour factors. This factor is divided into two categories. The first category focuses on nutrient intake factors that consist of breast-feeding practice and the other category addresses issues on health control that is related to the household effort in order to prevent the child illness and the medical treatment taken to cure the disease. In addition, health control also includes other activities of health seeking behaviors' (place of delivery) such as using contraception to control birth spacing. Due to current medical intervention, a child may remain healthy, the sick could recover and become healthy or treatment may fail and the child dies.

The third proximate determinants are the household hygiene and infrastructure. These determinants comprise of environmental contaminations that are affected by the hygiene condition inside the household. This contamination can occur at any point in time. It can occur in the household's source of drinking water, in the practice of waste disposal, and contacts to parasitic agents from unimproved type of flooring materials and untidy environmental surroundings.

Mosley and Chen (1984) conceptual framework was adopted for this study because of it appropriateness and relevance to the study and this model believes that death is the final biological expression of a process that is determined basically by the economic and social structure of a country or region. These conditions influence the occurrence of the disease and how it develops. One of the possible outcomes of such occurrence is death. Structural determinants are mediated at the family level, since the infant growth and development are heavily dependent on the living environment of the family. These determinants of infant mortality are grouped into four (4) categories. They are:

i. The socio-economic characteristics such as mother's education, occupation, place and region of residence, resources of the household, income of the parents and medical care.
ii. The intervening/housing conditions/ environmental variables such as source of water, access to toilet facilities and distance from home to the nearest health facility.
iii. The demographic variables such as age of mother at child birth, birth order, previous birth interval, breastfeeding and sex of the child.
iv. Access in terms of accessibility to geographical location, affordability in terms of financial capability, adequacy in term of quality services, acceptability in terms of cultural practices and availability in terms of facilities provision.

These variables operate through the proximate determinants (i.e. the intermediate of intervening variables) to influence infant mortality.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted for the paper. This design is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from few people considered to be a representative sample of the entire population. The survey design is suitable for this study because, the target population is large and it is obviously not possible to reach out to all of them. The study population consist of women of

childbearing between the age of 15 and 49 years in Nasarawa State, Nigeria estimated at 1,621,381 populations as at 2022 (NBS, 2022). Smith (1984) sample technique was used to estimate a sample size for the study population. The Smith (1984) formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{3 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

N = Population size

3 = Constant

e = Margin of error (5%)

$$n = \frac{N}{3 + Ne^2}$$

Substituting into the formula we have

$$n = \frac{1,621,381}{3 + 1,621,381\ (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1,621,381}{3 + 1,621,381\ (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{1,621,381}{4056.4525}$$

$$n = 399.70$$

$$n = 400$$

This formula gives the degree of accuracy of the sampling technique. It gives an idea as to how many samples have to be studied taking into consideration the error. From the population of 1,621,381 respondents the formula yielded a sample size of 400 respondents from the study population. 400 questionnaires were distributed and 397 were retrieved as valid. The study employs multistage sampling technique. A multistage sampling technique involves selecting sample from another sample. In this sampling procedure, the primary groups and sub-groups are selected on the basis of geographical distribution rather than other characteristics. Multistage sampling technique was employed in the selection of local government, electoral wards; streets; houses/compounds, household and respondent/individual. The questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using tables, frequency, percentage, cross tabulation and Chi-square to establish and statistically test the level of significance in the relationship between two variables.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Differentials in Infant by Maternal Level of Education and Infant Mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Infant Mortality	**Maternal Level of Education**								
	NoFormal education	**Primary**	**Secondary**	**Tertiary**	**Total**	**X^2 Value**	**df**	**p-value**	**Remark**
Yes	52 (32.9%)	47 (29.7%)	59 (37.3%)	0 (0.0%)	158 (100%)	**26.25**	**3**	**<0.05**	**Significant**
No	0 (0.%)	0 (0.0%)	71 (29.7%)	168 (70.3%)	239 (100%)				
Total	**52**	**47**	**130**	**168**	**397**				

Pearson Chi-Square value =26.25; Alpha Level= 0.05; df=3; Critical value=7.815; Missing value=0

Table 1 shows the relationship between maternal level of education and infant mortality. About 33 percent of respondents who has ever lost an infant had no formal education, 30 percent of respondents attended secondary education and 70 percent of the respondents with tertiary education have not lost infant. From the table, it can be deduced that majority of respondents had tertiary education and never lost infant. The analysis of variance on the maternal level of education and infant mortality is demonstrated as the factors varied significantly across the study area. Consequently, the hypotheses that there is no significant relationship between maternal level of education and infant mortality in the study area is hereby rejected as the calculated chi-square of 26.25 at df.3 is greater than the table chi-square of 7.815.

Table 2: Differentials in Infant by Maternal Occupational Status and Infant Mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Infant Mortality	Maternal Occupational Status									
	Petty trading	Artisan	Civil servant	Farmer	None	Total	X^2 Value	df	p-value	Remark
Yes	158 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0.)	158 (100%)	**31.039**	**4**	**<0.05**	**significant**
No	24 (10%)	26 (10.9%)	149 (62.3%)	21 (8.8%)	19 (7.9%)	239 (100%)				
Total	**182**	**26**	**149**	**21**	**19**	**397**				

Pearson Chi-Square value = 31.03; Alpha Level= 0.05; df=4; Critical value=9.488; Missing value=0

Maternal occupation determines the amount of care rendered to an infant. In table 2, data generated from the study established that artisans, farmers, and the unemployed have a low percentage in terms of infant mortality. The higher percentage of petty trader have lost an infant, while those whose occupation is in the civil service have a percentage of 62 percent and were seen to have not lost an infant. The hypotheses that there is no significant difference between occupational status and infant mortality ever lost is hereby rejected as the calculated chi-square of 31.03 at degree of freedom 4 is more than the table chi-square of 9.488. This implies that the occupational status of the mother influences the incidence of infant mortality in the household.

Table 3. Differentials in Infant Mortality by Sex of Infant and Age at Death in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Sex of infant	Age at death							
	Early neonatal stage	Late neonatal stage	Post neonantal stage	Total	X^2 Value	df	p-value	Remark
Male	69 (85.2%)	12 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	81 (100%)	**12.064**	**2**	**<0.05**	**Significant**
Female	0 (0.0%)	42 (54.5%)	35 (45.5%)	77 (100%)				
Total	**69**	**54**	**35**	**158**				

Pearson Chi-Square value= 12.064, Alpha Level= 0.05; df=2; Critical value=5.992, Missing value=0

Table 3 indicate the differentials in infant mortality by sex of infant and age at death in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. About 85.2 percent of respondents who lost a male infant died during the early neonatal stage, 15 percent died during both the late neonatal stage and post neonatal stag. Likewise, about 54.5 percent of respondents who has ever lost a female infant died during the late neonatal stage, 45.5 percent died during the post neonatal stage. This implies that majority of infants who died were male and that they died during the early neonatal stage. The hypothesis that there is no significant difference between sex of infant and age at death is hereby rejected as the calculated chi-square of 12.06 at degree of freedom of 2 is higher than the tabulated chi-square of 5.992.

Table 4: Differentials by Birth Intervals and Infant Mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Infant Mortality	**Birth Intervals between respondent's current child and the previous one**								
	>1year	**1-2 years**	**2-3 years**	**4years**	**Total**	**X^2 value**	**Df**	**p-value**	**Remark**
Yes	32 (20.3%)	126 (79.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	158 (100%)	**135.102**	**3**	**<0.05**	**Significant**
No	0 (0.0%)	125 (52.3%)	98 (41.0%)	16 (6.7%)	239 (100%)				
Total	**32**	**251**	**98**	**16**	**397**				

Pearson Chi-Square value = 135.102; Alpha Level= 0.05; df=3; Critical value=7.815, Missing value=0

The length of the preceding birth interval is a factor that compounds to the parity of infant. In table 4, it can be acknowledged that respondents who have a birth interval of less than one year make up 20.3 percent of infant mortality and 1-2 years of birth interval make up 79.7 percent of infant mortality. It was also shown in the table that 52.3 percent of respondents who have not lost their infants have a birth interval of between 1-2 years, 41 percent have a birth interval of 2-3 years and 7 percent have a birth interval of 4 years and above. Approximately 93.3 percent of respondents who have a birth interval of 1-3 years between their current child and previous one has not experience infant mortality. Therefore, the result of the analysis on birth interval and infant mortality shows that the variable varies significant. The null hypothesis (H_o) that there is no significant difference between birth interval and cases of infant mortality is hereby rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_1) that there is a significant difference between birth interval and cases of infant mortality is accepted as the calculated chi-square of 135.102 at the degree of freedom 3 is bigger than the critical chi-square of 7.815.

Discussions of Findings

Findings on the maternal level of education and infant mortality indicates that respondents with tertiary education experience lower incidence of infant mortality than those without educational qualification. This was supported by Danjuma (2015) that maternal education has been identified as one of the most important socio-economic determinants of infant mortality. Education increase the woman ability to utilize government and private healthcare facility and it may increase the independence necessary to advocate for infant in the household and outside world.

Regarding findings on maternal occupation and infant mortality, result shows that there is significant variation between the two variables. Occupation has been seen as a factor that has both

positive and negative impact on the infant. To an extent, it determines the amount of care rendered to an infant. Some previous studies believed that working class women have lesser time to render in taking care of an infant thereby leading to infant death, other studies believed that women who are not engaged in any form of occupation find difficult to take care of an infant especially when it relates to finance and health (Mahfouz, et al, 2009).

On the sex of infant and age at death, the study findings established a significant difference between the two variables. Similar pattern was found in a previous study conducted by Negara (2013) that male infant mortality usually surpasses female infant mortality in the first 6 days of birth, but this differential is often reversed in the remaining 11 months. This is in line with NPC and ICF (2013) that infant deaths among births that occurs been attributed to the first month of life. Findings on infant ever lost and birth interval shows there is a significant difference between the two variables as short birth interval can lead to infant death.

Conclusion

The study found out that the incidence of infant mortality in Nasarawa State, Nigeria is reducing, but the level is still fairly high especially in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals. Marked differentials were found between the incident of infant mortality in socio-economic as well as demographic factors particularly maternal education, maternal occupation, sex of infant and birth interval.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward to drive policy towards the mitigation of the identified challenges;

(a) There is need for a renewed policy on maternal health education in Nasarawa State including free counselling on birth spacing, family planning, immunization, ante-natal and post-natal care for all women.

(b) All policies on infant mortality developed should be integrated with women empowerment programmes especially through education. Women with low status usually do not fully utilize the facilities provided to them. This could hamper progress even if government improves the health care system.

(c) To increase the survival rates of infants in Nasarawa State, policies and programmes to urgently address poverty alleviation and increase the level of maternal education and literacy should be implemented

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TACKLING RISING CASES OF STROKE AND HYPERTENSION AMONG YOUNG ADULTS THROUGH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN NIGERIA

Adebayo John JAMES
Department of Mass Communication
Faculty of Social Sciences,
Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria
E-mail: adebayo.james@fuoye.edu.ng

Folarin Florence
Department of Mass Communication,
Anchor University, Ayobo, Lagos
E-mail: ffolarin@aul.edu.ng
Phone No: +2348036222665

Grace Oluwakemi ONIPEDE
Department of Mass Communication
Faculty of Social Sciences,
Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria
E-mail: oluwakemi.onipede@fuoye.edu.ng
Tel: +2348063014091

Abstract
Research evidences show that 5 million people die of stroke, and 5 million people are also left with permanent physical disability globally every year, due to the incidence of stroke. Stroke remains the third leading cause of mortality and physical disability among young adults and the aged in the developing and developed nations of the world. The public knowledge of stroke risk factors and signs have not changed. Heart attack and stroke are the symptoms of cardiovascular disease, morbidity and mortality worldwide. Stroke attack is increasing among young adults, due to changing lifestyles. This study assessed the influence of strategic communication on stroke and hypertension literacy. The paper adopted qualitative descriptive approach to examine the elements involved in stroke cases and rising hypertension among young adults in Nigeria. The paper recommends that public health campaigns targeted at youths should aim to promote cardiovascular health and wellness. It is essential for the health care providers to enlighten young adults at early stage to imbibe cardiovascular wellness in Nigeria. Besides, early arrival of stroke patients to stroke centres or hospitals for immediate medical attention should be widely emphasized through public education and strategic communication process in the media.
Keywords: Hypertension, Hypertension literacy; Strategic Communication; Stoke; Young Adults,

Introduction

Research evidences, as Vairale, Dalal, Bhattacharjee, and Gawali (2015) note, show that 5 million people die of stroke, and 5 million people are also left with permanent physical disability globally every year. World Health Organisation (2020) as cited by Rachmat (2022) declare stroke as one of the major global causes of death. Stroke, as Hodgson et al., (2009) observe, is a major cause of morbidity and mortality, and early and timely treatment is crucial to stroke patients securing timely healing. Stroke, as Flynn et al., (2014) maintain, remains the third leading cause of mortality and physical disability among young adults and the aged in the developing and developed nations of the world. The public knowledge of stroke risk factors and signs have not changed (Wada, et al., 2017). Stroke attack, as Komolafe et al., (2015) posit, is increasing among young adults, due to changing lifestyles.

The critical period of stroke management, according to Folyovich et al., (2017), is between the outset and emergency call. Cardiovascular disease, as Liu et al., (2020) remains a leading cause of mortality among young adults worldwide, and there are rare media campaigns that target young adults against stroke. An instant response to stroke attacks is vital to early healing process (Flynn et al., 2014). Atrial fibrillation, as Moloney (2021) avers, is a widely known risk factor for stroke, usually unrecognized before its stealth emergence. High blood pressure, high cholesterol, overweight and obesity, smoking, sedentary life and physical in-activities, as Rubinstein et al., (2009) aver, have been identified as risk factors of stroke. Life-saving stroke treatments, as Leighton-Herrman et al., (2016) maintain, is slowed down by late arrival to the hospital for treatment, majorly due to poor knowledge of symptoms of the disease.

Unlike acute stroke cases, awareness of pre-hospital delay reduces death in ischemic stroke patients (Nishijima et al., 2016). Although, Heart Foundation and Federal Ministry of Health have been running media campaigns to create public awareness, early detection and time protection from stroke attacks in Nigeria and a number of countries, Moloney (2021), the sudden stroke attacks have not abated, especially among rural dwellers, who have a restricted access to media of information and education. Although engaging in physical exercise and trekking for thirty or forty-five minutes, as Wray et al., (2005) maintain, have been identified to reduce the rising cases of stroke, cardiovascular diseases, colon cancer and diabetes, not many people are aware of or have embraced regular physical exercise, especially among non-educated young adults. Studies have long established that symptoms and recognition of imminent stroke attacks by the people are challenging and impacts of mass media on attitudinal or behavioural change with regard to stroke are uncertain (Frederic et al., 2013).

Although, media enlightenment campaigns and public education aimed at influencing positive attitude and behaviour to sudden stroke attacks, media campaigns have little impact on public behaviour (Flynn et al., 2014). Disrupting progression of stroke, according to Cook et al., (2021), depends largely on effective awareness, early detection of stroke symptoms and timely access emergency health care services. There are region-specific barriers, cultural and social impediments to obtaining stroke care at emergencies (Naftchi et al., 2021). There were no warning signs and risk awareness among young adults in Nigeria (Komolafe et al., 2015). Due to the fact that media of mass communication are urban-centric, knowledge of stroke, its symptoms, and risk factors are prevalent in the urban centres, however, the same cannot be said of rural areas where people heavily depend on opinion leaders for education and information about the menace of stroke (Kayode-Iyasere and Odiase, 2019). Public health campaigns are designed to create awareness, improve health literacy and influence the adoption of desirable attitude and behaviour by a target population (de Morais Pinto et al., 2021).

Methodology

Being a theoretical paper, this study made use of used secondary data such as journals, reference books, and other documentary information to the study.

Theoretical Framework

This study made use of the health Behaviour theory as a theoretical guide. Health behaviour model, as Yanuar et al., (2022) note, is used to explain how health belief factors are impacted to initiate healthy living behaviours. Health behaviour model is used to explain how people engage in behaviour to prevent stroke attacks or hypertension or affected by the disease and make attempts to manage it. Health behaviour model is relevant to this study because it could be used to predict health related behaviour on the basis of certain thought patterns (Yanuar et al., 2022).

The Health behaviour model is dependent on individuals' belief in healthy behaviour. The belief could be in form of preventive one or curative behaviour or even the use of health facilities (Yanuar et al., 2022). Health behaviour model is a theory that could help researchers explain the adoption or rejection of certain anti-stroke or anti-hypertension strategies (Abrams and Callahan, 2022). Health behaviour model is inherently linked with to the measurement of health behaviour (Redding et al., 2000). The Health behaviour model was developed in the West and had been widely tested applied to explain health issues (Lin et al., 2022). It has been used to analyse and explain certain health challenges such as stroke, hypertension, and other physical disabilities. Health behaviour model has been applied to many fields of health studies. Health behaviour model only works with fatal diseases.

The postulation of health behaviour model, as Brehmer-Rinder et al., (2014) note, is that people understand the concepts of health, diseases, illnesses and disabilities and impact the way they see or perceive themselves which behavioural approaches to those health challenges they assume or take. Heart attack and stroke are the main causes of cardiovascular disease, morbidity and mortality worldwide. Stroke attack is increasing among young adults, due to changing lifestyles.

Discussion

Tackling Issues of Stroke and Hypertension through Strategic Communication Process

It is evident that the mass media have helped to inform, create awareness and sustained the adoption of certain health behaviour among young adults in Nigeria (Qakisa, 2022). Paid advertising messages and other messages tailored towards reduction of stroke cases, as Lockhart et al., (2022) maintain, have increased public knowledge about symptoms of stroke and its early detection and prevention among young adults in Nigeria. Stroke literacy aided by strategic communication, as Han and Jang (2021) maintain, is very crucial in the early detection and prevention of stroke sudden attacks. It is unclear how effective media campaigns against stroke are, and the extent people translate the media campaigns into actions (Trobbiani et al., 2013).

Stroke literacy campaigns, according to Rasura et al., (2014), are deployed globally, but few assessments of those campaigns are in published literature. A number of countries, according to Wolters et al., (2013), have initiated and maintained media campaigns to promote symptom recognition of stroke, and seek timely medical care. Mass media campaigns, as Mellon et al., (2014) posit, create awareness and encourage people to take prompt actions to prevent stroke attacks. There are correlations between television advertising and increased knowledge of stroke among young adults bin Nigeria (Hodgson et al., 2007). Public awareness of symptoms of stroke

through mass media, as Urbankova et al., (2013) suggest, has not been adequate. Costly media campaigns about stroke literacy in an economically disadvantaged environment is tantamount to waste of resources because most of the targets of the messages are non-literate and live under extreme poor conditions (NCT, 2011).

A correlation, according to Barakat et al., (2022), exists between knowledge and awareness of stroke and educational level of the people and their exposure to media of communication. Although, e-health, as Corea et al., (2020) note, is becoming crucial in stroke awareness, knowledge and literacy, not many people in the rural areas of Nigeria have access to internet for e-health messages due to some certain factors among which are the illiteracy and low educational level. Media campaigns are used to expose large population to rising cases of stroke and other health-risk behaviours (Paiva et al., 2022). Hypertension affects over 1 billion people worldwide, making the disease a global health concern (Solomon et al., 2023). Too much dietary sodium is a contributory factor to cardiovascular disease, chronic disease and stroke. Physical inactivity, hypertension and non-communicable diseases are major public health concerns across the world (Cheal et al., 2023).

Rising cases of Hypertension in Nigeria

The rate of hypertension among children is between 2% and 5% unlike the higher prevalence of hypertension among young adults (Falkner et al., 2023). As Anjajo et al., (2023) aver, 11 million young adults die of hypertension in Africa due to acute illiteracy and poor medical attention aimed at arresting the scourge of the disease. Sub-Sahara Africa has an acutely high prevalence of hypertension among young adults with acutely high hypertension illiteracy (Galson et al., 2023). Hypertension is a significant cause of untimely death among young adults in Nigeria (Koya, et al., 2023). The public health significance of hypertension, as Mekonene et al., (2023) note, is attracting attention of policymakers and stakeholders in the health sector as well as government at various levels in low- and middle-income nations of the world. Hypertension affects 31.1% of adults worldwide, with higher incident, as Wu et al., (2023) posit, of hypertension in the elderly.

The prevalence of hypertension among diabetic patients is twice higher than non-diabetic patients (Anjajo et al., 2023). Parent-offspring association of hypertension is on the increase in sub-Saharan Africa (Jang et al., 2023). Hypertension is an increasing blood pressure in excess of normal value. 18.6 million people die globally every year as a result of cardiovascular disease, Malhotra et al., (2023) which is a leading cause of death among young adults. The complications arising from hypertension is due to untreated high blood pressure which can lead to heart attack, coronary artery disease, heart failure and even stroke (Nuraini, 2015). Poor adherence to treatment is not uncommon to clinical practice, precipitating uncontrolled high blood pressure (Roubsanthisuk et al., 2023). Death arising from cardiac and cerebro-vascular disease has been on the increase lately in Nigeria (Jeong, 2013).

There is a strong correlation between salt intakes and hypertension, myocardial infarction, stroke and select cancers (Szybinski et al., 2010). Neuropsychiatric disorder is a common complication from stroke and has negative effect on recovery, permanent physical disability or death among survivors (Zhang et al., 2020). Cardiovascular disease, heart disease and stroke are leading causes of pre-mature death in Africa and beyond (Tiscornia et al., 2013). Hypertension is a major causal or risk factor for cardiovascular diseases (Tiscornia et al., 2013). A diet high in salt, as Beauchamp et al., (2017) observe, is a causal factor of heart diseases and stroke.

There is a strong association between age, sex, primary headache, obesity and hypertension (Kumar, et al., 2017). While media of communication in Nigeria have failed their responsibility test in the creation of awareness and knowledge about cardiovascular diseases and stroke literacy, radio and ethno-communication media should be adopted to raise the level of awareness and literacy among `young adults Klassen et al., (2021). Cardiovascular prevention, as Mazza et al., (2016) maintain, could be achieved through nutritional or lifestyle changes. While diet management can help reduce hypertension, not many young adults are gainfully engaged to eat a balanced diet in Nigeria, due to economic situations (Susanto et al., 2023).

Growing Cases of Stroke among Young Adults in Nigeria

Stroke and hypertension among young adults are still crucial public health challenges in Nigeria (Kundu, et al., 2023). As Urbankova et al., (2013) maintain, 2 million young adults die annually due to stroke attacks. The evidence that stroke affects cognitive, communicative and arm explains poor response to early detection of stroke symptoms (Alberts, 2012). Stroke, as Farhoudi and Sharifipour (2022) note, is a leading cause of mortality and morbidity in Nigeria and Iran. Stroke, as Bogousslavsky et al., (1996) posit, is a major cause of mortality and physical disability in the industrialized countries, due to poor stroke literacy.

Stroke is a global health issue (Khalil and Lahoud, 2020). While young adults and old people are vulnerable to stroke, evidence suggests that have acute stroke illiteracy (Khalil and Lahoud, 2020). In a minority, economically disadvantaged populations, NCT (2011), stroke literacy and knowledge of its symptoms is brutally poor. Stroke, as Kayode-Iyasere and Odiase (2019) maintain, is the main cause of morbidity and mortality, and public awareness with regard to symptoms of stroke is extremely poor. In the same vein, Urbankova et al., (2013) affirm that stroke is the most common causes of death and permanent physical disability in young adults. Also, Rasura et al., (2014) affirm that stroke is the leading cause of long-term disability and eventual death. Education about stroke is usually hospital-based in Nigeria.

The prevalence of stroke in sub-Sahara Africa, as Alkali et al., (2016) observe, could be attributable to under-diagnosis and under-treatment of hypertension, hyperlipidemia and atrial fibrillation. Pre-hospital procrastination in accessing medical care for acute stroke usually, as Mellon et al., (2014) observe, attracts the unwanted. The most incorrect symptoms of stroke usually cited are the pains in the arm, chest pains and shortness of breath. However, the most common symptoms, as Bray et al., (2011) posit, are the paralysis or weakness in the arm, face, leg and speech difficulties**.** Public awareness of symptoms of stroke, as Silver et al., (2003) aver, is crucial to early healing process. Heart Foundations, Federal and state Ministries of Health have designed anti-stroke programmes aimed at stemming the tide of rising stroke attacks (Hundt and Chen, 2017).

There is a correlation between ceaseless smoking and risk of stroke (Hanrahan et al., 1996). Stroke, as Barakat et al., (2021) maintain, is associated with different demographic factors such as gender, income, socio-economic values and females versus males. Stroke patients with acute cases of speech and arm impairment, as Inam et al., (2021) posit, are unable to provide consent and, therefore, get excluded from research participation. Hypertensive patient-centred strategies and adherence to medications may reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with hypertension (Boima, et al., 2023). Reduction of stress, low salt intakes, non-smoking, abstinence from alcohol, medication adherence, lifestyle modification, increased physical activities, and increased self-monitoring remain effective methods to fight growing hypertension among young adults in Nigeria (Konlan and Sin, 2023).

Mapping the Way Out of Growing Cases of Hypertension and Stroke in Nigeria

Public health campaigns targeted at youths should aim to promote cardiovascular health and wellness. It is essential for the health care providers to enlighten the young adults at early stage to promote cardiovascular wellness among young adults in Nigeria across divides. Besides, early arrival of stroke patients to stroke centres or hospitals for immediate medical attention should be widely emphasized through public education and strategic communication process in the media. Face, Arm, Speech and Time (FAST) awareness, knowledge and literacy should be initiated and maintained by the Federal Ministry of Health and Ministries of Health across states to promote availability of information in the public space about signs of stroke and immediate medical response in Nigeria. Community-based media campaigns that promote wellness and cardiovascular health should be employed in most urban and rural areas of Nigeria. Community-based media have credibility, better and more effective access, and are more effective than the conventional media of mass communication.

Traditional methods of education, information and enlightenment campaigns have proven to be more effective than conventional media of mass communication, especially for those who live in the rural areas of Nigeria. Therefore, house-to-house campaigns, traditional newspersons, village square meetings and itinerant information vans should be deployed as a means of rural and urban education, information and enlightenment of the people with regard to early symptoms and detection and prevention of stroke attacks.

Although, television has been identified as a major source of information for stroke-related messages, young adults also prefer sourcing information on social media and internet, especially those who live in the urban centres. Consequently, campaigns and sensitization messages should make use of social media and internet to reach the young adults. Community-based organisations and ethno-communication media should be co-opted on the march to sensitization and education of the young adults, especially those who reside in the remotest parts of the rural areas of Nigeria. Television, newspaper, internet, poster, flier and billboard have failed integrity test and social responsibility with regard to dissemination of information in the remotest part of Nigeria. And therefore, carefully conceived on ethno-communication media, effectively designed and culturally specific messages would help to eliminate barriers in knowing the symptoms of stroke.

Establishment of Acute Stroke Units in all the state government-owned hospitals across 774 Local Government Areas of Nigeria is crucial to prevent and minimize the growing cases of stroke. Exercising is extremely crucial in the prevention of strike. Exercising promotes good strong muscles, bone density, burn calories, and improves reflexes and balance (Croft, 2015).

Conclusion

This study interrogated the use of strategic communication as a tool for stemming the rising incidence of stroke and hypertension in Nigeria. Literature evidence indicates that community-based media have credibility, better and more effective access, and are more effective than the conventional media of mass communication, and therefore, could proof beneficial when employed for the promotion of wellness and cardiovascular health in the rural areas of Nigeria.

Recommendations

The fooling recommendations are put forward for purposes of policy making and implementation with regards to the subject of this study:

(a) Establishment of Acute Stroke Units in all the state government-owned hospitals across 774 Local Government Areas of Nigeria is crucial to prevent and minimize the growing cases of

stroke. Exercising is extremely crucial in the prevention of strike. Exercising promotes good strong muscles, bone density, burn calories, and improves reflexes and balance.

(b) Public health campaigns targeted at youths should aim to promote cardiovascular health and wellness. It is essential for the health care providers to enlighten the young adults at early stage to promote cardiovascular wellness among young adults in Nigeria.

(c) Early arrival of stroke patients to stroke centres or hospitals for immediate medical attention should be widely emphasized through public education and strategic communication process in the media.

(d) Face, Arm, Speech and Time (FAST) awareness, knowledge and literacy should be initiated and maintained by the Federal Ministry of Health and Ministries of Health across states to promote availability of information in the public space about signs of stroke and immediate medical response in Nigeria.

(e) Traditional methods of education, information and enlightenment campaigns have proven to be more effective than conventional media of mass communication, especially for those who live in the rural areas of Nigeria. Therefore, house-to-house campaigns, traditional newspersons, village square meetings and itinerant information vans should be deployed as a means of rural and urban education, information and enlightenment of the people with regard to early symptoms and detection and prevention of stroke attacks.

(f) Although, television has been identified as a major source of information for stroke-related messages, young adults also prefer sourcing information on social media and internet, especially those who live in the urban centres. Consequently, campaigns and sensitization messages should make use of social media and internet to reach the young adults.

(g) Community-based organisations and ethno-communication media are more effective for sensitizing and educating young adults, especially those who reside in the remotest parts of the rural areas of Nigeria.

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FOOD SECURITY CHALLENGES: AN IMPEDIMENT TO ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs 2) IN NIGERIA.

ONOJA Anthony
Department of Sociology
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
goodmantony2002@yahoo.com 08033446233

ODUMU Abraham Sunday
Liberal Studies Department
Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State.
tellabraham@yahoo.com 08035548511
&
MOSES-OJO Olufunke A. PhD
General Studies Directorate,
Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.
mosesfunmi2@gmail.com 08023622636

Abstract
SDGs-2 is about the shared responsibility to ensure that every one has access to nutrition and affordable food. The heightened interest in food security is the result of a recognition that a number of important factors constitute a setback to the success of SDGs-2 in Nigeria. The main objective of the study is to identify the challenges to achieving Sustainable Development Goals on food security in Nigeria. The theoretical framework of the paper is Political Economy Theory by Karl Marx (1883-1883). Methodologically, the paper used secondary data, the study primarily drew evaluation and statistical information from Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, National Bureau of Statistics, Nigerian Living Standard Survey, and SDGs Base line Reports. While the results have shown that the Nigerian government has embraced the idea of rolling out plans and programs to address the gaps in food security at one time or the other, little has been achieved in curbing insecurity in food. The findings from the study show that Nigeria has about 85 million hectares of land where almost everything can grow, currently produced 110,798 metric tons of seeds in 2022, which is a summation of some major seeds that are established in the formal seeds sector, has the manpower favorable for the advancement of Agriculture and to boost livestock as well as food security. The paper concludes that it is important government removes barriers that increases vulnerability to poverty and hunger by providing an integrated security strategy to address issues of security threats in the agricultural sector. The paper recommends that government should partner with key private agencies to increase investments in the agricultural sector by empowering small and medium scale farmers in particular with access to credits and modern tools.

Key Words: Achieving; Bane; Challenges; Food Security; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs- 2)

Introduction

It is imperative to briefly highlight the foundational effort at promoting global development, as it was this effort that gave impetus to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were a common yardstick of global progress in the decade prior to 2015 (Kenny & Dykstra, 2015). The MDGs which were born out of the Millennium Declaration agreed to, at the United Nation General Assembly in 2000 to spread global progress lifted from shaping the 21st Century targets to halve absolute poverty, hunger, and the number of people lacking access to clean water, to ensure universal primary education and gender equity in education access, and to reduce maternal mortality. The MDGs have been a success that spurred the global community into a frenzied round of discussion that later culminated in the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 and both processes ended up suggesting a far broader sets of areas and targets that contained the original Millennium Development Goals where the 2001 set had 8 goals and 18 subsidiary targets. While the MDGs were essentially about focusing aid on the poorest and most disadvantaged in a few narrow areas, the mantra has become that the new goals should be universal, not just about a few narrow areas, but a holistic vision of human flourishing that is inclusive of the myriad concerns of sustainability (Kenny & Dykstra, 2015).

A future that is socially inclusive, environmentally resilient, and economically sustainable is what the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals aims to achieve. The formulation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, 169 targets, and 230 key performance indicators reflects this. The SDGs-2 connotes the promotion of sustainable agriculture, drive to end hunger, attainment of food security and improved nutrition. To guarantee that future generations have enough food, food systems must be sustainable and able to support the entire population. According to Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), for social and mental development to occur, every individual, regardless of gender or age, has the right to be free from hunger and malnutrition (FAO, 2006). In international efforts to combat hunger, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs-2) aim to eradicate all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030.

Although the Food and Agricultural Organization reported that global hunger has been declining, as the prevalence of undernourishment decreased from 18.7% in 2000 to 8.9% in 2020, it has, however, increased recently in Sub-Saharan Africa primarily as a result of the region's rapid population growth, low agricultural productivity, and economic downturns (FAO, 2021). Africa's prevalence of malnutrition increased from 17.6% in 2015 to 19.1% in 2019. Furthermore, in 2020, it was estimated that about 21 % of Africa's population was suffering from malnutrition, and as of 2022, the prevalence of undernourishment in Africa stood at 19.7%, indicating that the continent is still not on track to eradicate hunger by 2030 (FAO, 2023). Despite the large body of research on food security indicators, the fundamental parameters required to accurately assess the state of household food security globally at both the micro and macro levels remain unresolved (Akukwe, 2020).

The terms "food security" and "food insecurity" refer to the degree of availability-or lack thereof-of sufficient and nutrient-dense food for a given population. Access, availability, use, and sustainability of food are all factors in food security (FAO, 2017). Therefore, having access to sufficient, secure, and nutrient-dense food throughout the year qualifies a person as having food security. Food security has emerged as a critical issue for both developing and developed nations, despite the fact that the majority of food insecure people live in these nations.

Since gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria has developed a number of interventions aimed at boosting agricultural productivity, creating jobs, and guaranteeing food security. The Operation Feed the Nation (1979), The Green Revolution (1980), the Food Security Council, and

other notable agricultural policies were introduced during the previous administrations in an attempt to revitalize the nation's agricultural sector. Unfortunately, a lot of these initiatives failed because of weak institutional underpinnings, a lack of modern mechanized farming practices, security risks, corruption, and inadequate execution, which were to blame for the food insecurity in Nigeria (Abdulwahab, 2020).

Evidently, Nigeria's inflation rose to a 21- year high of 29.90%, while food inflation rate quickened to 35.4% in January 2024, on a year on year basis, which was 11.10% point higher compared to the rate recorded in January 2023, 24.32 % (NBS, 2024). The perspective of the study is holistic covering security, the economic policies of the government, the removal of fuel subsidy, the health challenges, poor nutrition which are associated with the risk of mortality, as a result of food insecurity in Nigeria.

Over time, a number of Nigerian government administrations have persisted in considering the issue of sufficient food security to be crucial (Ejimeke, 2017). Nigeria is ranked 25th out of 28 Sub-Saharan African nations and 107th out of 113 countries in the index (Global Food Security Index, 2022). Also, Nigeria ranks 113th out of 195 countries with a score of 25points, indicating a serious problem with food affordability in the nation. This is one of the four pillars of food security for 2022. Nigeria is ranked 26th in the region and 108th in the world for food availability. Nigeria received its highest scores in the quality and safety category, placing it seventh in the region and 79th overall. With a score of 53.7 in the sustainability and adaptation category, Nigeria is ranked eighth in the region and joint 57th overall (Global Food Security Index, 2022).

Nigeria was ranked as the second poorest country in the world in terms of food affordability by the United Kingdom-based Institute of Development Studies (2022) using a cost of "food basics" analysis that compares the average wage in 107 counties with the monthly minimum recommended spent on food per adult. In consonance with the above, statistics released by National Bureau of Statistics revealed that 133 million Nigerians were estimated to be multidimensional poor based on four indicators: employment, health care, education, and food security (NBS, 2022).

It is practically impossible for farmers to continue engaging in agricultural production at an optimal level due to the insecurity in many rural communities; this has disrupted the market and resulted in shocks to food prices. The difficulties have been growing, ranging from the Covid-19 pandemic that hampered the economy to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, to a faltering national currency and the most recent widespread flooding that caused supply chain disruptions. The situation is made worse by the ongoing fighting between farmers and herders in the country's food belt, which has an impact on Nigeria's ability to meet the SDGs 2.

The International Monetary Fund (2022) expressed concern over Nigeria's difficult economic outlook due to high food prices and elevated inflation. These challenges faced by Nigeria prompted the Minister of Agriculture to intone that "In 2023, the consequences of flooding and high fertilizer costs became more ingrained, having a detrimental influence on food prices and agricultural output" (Kyari, 2023). According to the IMF, Nigeria runs the risk of experiencing a food crisis, which could turn into social unrest. Millions of Nigerians already lived in constant hunger prior to the IMF's warning. Nigerians require long- and medium-term sustainable plans to address food insecurity because of flooding, galloping inflation, and insecurity. This persistent challenge further led the Minister of Agriculture to aver that "Unless something is done, we will never be able to overcome these issues; our population is growing at a rapid geometrical ratio while our food supply is decreasing" (Kyari, 2023).

Based on this, the FAO's (2023) statistics predict that approximately 25.3 million Nigerians will experience severe food insecurity. Food inflation climbed by 31.52% YoY in October 2023, indicating a 0.88% increase over the 30.64% recorded in the previous month. According to the NBS (2023), food inflation has been steadily rising, and there is a serious risk that the nation's food insecurity will impede the achievement of SDGs- 2. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2023), Nigeria has reached an unacceptably high food consumption threshold as a result of a notable increase in the price of staple foods that followed increases in fuel prices, inflation, and the high cost of food production. Affordability is just one aspect of food security; accessibility and food safety are also important. Due to inadequate infrastructure and logistics for appropriate aggregation, storage, and processing, 40% of Nigeria's food production is wasted (Kayode, 2023).

The Consumer Price Index (CPI), which gauges how quickly prices for goods and services are changing, rose by 0.61% to 27.33%. Nigeria's GDP grew by 2.5% in the third quarter of 2023 compared to 3.5% in the same period in 2022. This represents an exceptional period of decline in food productivity in a nation where the population grows by roughly 2.5% annually (NBS, 2023). According to the Global Hunger Index (2023), Nigeria is rated as "serious," ranking 109th out of 125 countries. These illustrate Nigeria's degree of food insecurity even more. According to data from the Central Bank of Nigeria (2023), food capacity utilization decreased from 61% in the corresponding period of 2022 to 49% in the half-year ending in June 2023 (H1'23), showing a 20 percentage point drop, which came after consumer demand declined due to high prices, which was mirrored in a further increase in the food prices rate to 31.52% in October.

The research contextualized the root causes of food insecurity in Nigeria to the pervasive insecurity that plagues several parts of the country, manifesting in armed conflicts, kidnapping, banditry, terrorism, and communal clashes. These have not only displaced millions but also disrupted agricultural activities, leading to reduced food production and distribution channels. The study identified critical chains that have been disrupted, hindering the transportation of food from surplus producing regions to deficit areas, thus exacerbating unequal food distribution and leaving vulnerable population particularly susceptible to hunger and malnutrition. Through the research, the symbiotic relationship between security and food availability is evident. Food inflation prices, poverty, climate change, conflict between farmers and herders, insecurity, population growth, ineffective policy implementation, inefficient agricultural practices, post-harvest losses, low budgetary allocation to agriculture, removal of subsidies, infrastructure & logistics, and the Russia-Ukraine war are some of the major factors that have been identified as contributing to food insecurity in Nigeria.

The study differs from that of other researchers in that, it pin pointed a multifaceted approach toward rural development which is crucial for enhancing food production, and distribution networks, making them more resilient to security challenges, strengthening governance, rule of law, and community resilience. The call for the nations to make investment in commercial agriculture and implement cutting-edge farming practices like irrigation, green technology, and emerging technologies is a standout for the research.

Objectives of the study

The general aim of the study is to contribute to the development of policies and actions that promote food security and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

(a) To evaluate the extent of food security within the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.
(b) To identify barriers to achieving food security in Nigeria.
(c) To determine how socioeconomic indices of Nigeria affected food security in Nigeria.

(d) To investigate the intervention policies aimed at improving food security in Nigeria

Conceptual Review:

Achievement: Achievement in Sustainable Development **Goals** refers to progress made towards the targets set by the United Nations to address global challenges such as poverty, food insecurity, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice. These goals aim to ensure a better and sustainable future for all.

Challenges: Are situations or barriers that call for skill, effort, and will power to get past. Difficulties can take many different forms, such as obstacles, intricacies, or difficulties that organizations face while pursuing their goals. Comprehending obstacles entails acknowledging them as elements that hinder advancement and demand methodical methods to be addressed.

Food Security: When everyone, everywhere, has physical and financial access to enough wholesome food that satisfies their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life, food security has been achieved. Food insecurity is commonly defined as a nation's incapacity to meet these requirements (FAO, 1996). Food utilization, stability, economic and physical access to food, and physical availability of food are the four primary components of food security, for the goals of food security to be fulfilled (World Bank, 2023).

Sustainable Development Goals: The United Nations adopted the 17 global objectives known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 with the aim of promoting sustainable development and tackling various social, economic, and environmental issues. They address many different objectives, including the eradication of poverty, the preservation of the environment, gender parity, food security, and the development of clean energy (UN, 2015). Targeting "End hunger, food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture" by 2030.

Empirical Review

In order to take advantage of the new opportunity that the SDG-2 presented, the Nigerian government established institutional frameworks and carried out social reforms to improve coordination in order to mainstream the SDGs-2, which allowed it to advance agricultural production and improve food security (Ajibade, 2019). Despite these, Nigeria's inability to diversify its food import profile, corruption, lack of harmonization, and recession prevent it from achieving self-reliance and resilience in the food production sector (Ajibade, 2019). The nation's food production remained severely disrupted, and hunger remains widespread. For instance, the Anchor Borrowers program is a significant project. Subsistence farmers in rural areas are often extremely poor and unable to provide for their basic daily needs of enough food (Akukwe, 2020).

Because of the high number of undernourished individuals residing in agricultural households, Nigeria has been included in the list of 55 Low Income Food Deficit (LIFD) countries (Ambali, 2015). Food insecurity access scale, food consumption core, per capita food consumption, share of dietary intake, and coping strategy index are just a few of the indicators that have been used to measure food security indices globally. There has been food inflation in the final few months of 2023: 29.34% in August, 30.64% in September, and 31.52% in October, respectively. In August, headline inflation was 25.8%; 26.72% in September and 27.33% in October, the highest in decade which all impacts on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals on Food security in Nigeria (NBS, 2023).

The Global Food Security Index (2022), showed that Africa is home to the world's poorest nations, many of which experience persistent poverty and food insecurity. These nations rely

largely on rain-fed agriculture, which puts them at risk for a variety of environmental problems like droughts, desertification, erosion, and more. As a result, nations have had to create a variety of coping strategies to lessen the impact of household food insecurity or increase their resistance to it. In an analysis of food security in an agrarian community in southeast Nigeria, Akukwe (2020) found that 46.5% of households had food security and the majority, 53.5%, experienced food insecurity.

A Federal government report in 2023 indicated that 88.5 million Nigerians were threatened with insufficient food consumption, 80% surge in food importation alarming, and that food inflation stood at 31.52%. Furthermore, it indicated that Nigeria had the highest rate of stunted children globally (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2023). In its "Trade and Development Report," the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2022) examined the state of affairs throughout Africa, focusing on Nigeria in particular. The report noted that "A shortage of cash, triggered by the replacement of the highest denominations of the country's currency hobbled the economy, especially the informal sector," and warned of the potential consequences for the nation's food security.

The Challenges of Food Security in Nigeria.

Food inflation prices, lack of access to credit facilities, poor road networks and transportation system costs, poverty, climate change, conflict between farmers and herders, insecurity, population growth, ineffective policy implementation, inefficient agricultural practices, post-harvest losses, low budgetary allocation to agriculture, and removal of subsidies are some of the major factors that have been identified as contributing to food insecurity in Nigeria. These obstacles make it challenging to deal with food production issues locally, which has an impact on achieving the SDGs-2 target. It is challenging for people to get access to and afford nourishing food because of the high rates of poverty. Nigeria's index and ranking indicate that the country's hunger index and food security are indicators of the global hunger index, which serves as a gauge for the international hunger target and SDGs-2.

The issue of improved seeds had to be on the front burner given the challenges posed by climate change and the constraints to crop yields due to drought, heat and cold stress, including altered soil properties due to deteriorating soil fertility, floods and diseases and pests among others. The production system must overcome biophysical and socioeconomic constraints causing yield gaps in crops production and cultivation of improved seeds (Kyari, 2023). In addition to poverty, unfavorable weather patterns including droughts, high temperatures, and floods have an impact on food production and agricultural productivity both in Nigeria. The length and intensity of rainfall in some states have varied over time from normal, according to data from Nigeria's Meteorological Agency (NiMet) (2022), having a disastrous effect on agricultural practices. Over 2.4 million people were forced to flee their homes as hundreds of villages and urban centers in Nigeria were inundated by one of the worst floods in the country's history. Large areas of agricultural land were also devastated, which had an impact on the nation's food supply, cost, and safety. The objective can be undermined by unpredictable weather patterns, such as droughts, floods, and crop failures that interrupt agricultural activities and result in food shortages (Williams & Davis, 2020).

Conflicts between farmers and herders as well as rising levels of insecurity in some areas of the nation—particularly the northwest, northeast, and central regions—have also caused disruptions to agricultural operations and forced farmers to relocate. Due to concerns about attacks by bandits or herdsmen during the past ten years, many farmers have been unable to visit their farms, which has hampered the production and distribution of food. Nigerian farm settlements are plagued by a number of issues, including inadequate access roads, ineffective transit networks,

and a dearth of functional storage facilities. In addition to inadequate investment in infrastructure for preservation that could help extend the shelf lives of food items before they reach consumers, this frequently results in massive spoiling and waste. Because of Nigeria's expanding population, the high percentage of poor harvest losses being reported deteriorates food availability, making it difficult to meet the increasing demand for food (Anderson & Clarke, 2017).

Inadequate budgetary allocation: Nigeria has not complied with the 2003 Maputo Declaration on Agricultural and Food Security in Africa, which among other things mandates that signatories set aside 10% of their national budgets for the advancement of agriculture throughout the continent. Even in the face of corruption and waste, the sector has received incredibly little funding over the past ten years. Budgetary support for agriculture has been meager since 2015; in 2015, it received 0.9% of the total federal budget; in 2016, it received 1.3%; in 2017, it received 1.8%; and in 2018, it received 2.01%. Prior to showing the smallest increase of (1.37%) in 2021 and (1.8%) in 2022, the rate dropped to (1.56%) in 2019 and (1.34%) in 2020 (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2023).

Nigeria has implemented several ineffective agricultural policies in an attempt to increase production and enhance food security, but the results have been mixed. Both financial investment and machinery are insufficient. The nation's farming system is also antiquated. Because few farm lands in Nigeria have irrigation systems, the majority of farmers still rely on rainfall for planting. Harmful practices such as burning of vegetation, repetitive tillage, and overgrazing still occur among some farmers. The government carries out subpar programs and projects in agriculture. Inadequate oversight of government agencies has resulted in inefficiencies, misappropriation of public finances, and inadequate execution of economic strategies and directives. Policies pertaining to land use, agriculture, and social welfare that are inconsistent or ineffective frequently obstruct attempts to accomplish food security (Johnson & Brown, 2019).

Agricultural practices that limit agricultural productivity and impact food availability and access include traditional farming methods, restricted access to modern technology, and inadequate knowledge transfer (Smith, 2018). The increasing demands on food resources due to rapid population growth make it difficult to meet the nutritional needs of the growing population, which affects health and poverty alleviation goals (Taylor & Robinson 2019). Gornall (2010) argued that the areas sown with the major crops have all seen an increase in the percentage area affected by drought from 5-10% to 15-25% since 1960. Miliband (2023) contented that Nigeria loses 60% of its agricultural produce due to lack of storage and agro- processing facilities, there by farm produce couldn't reach the market as expected, this is one of the major factors affecting food security in the country while Kyari (2023) opined that Insecurity and the naira redesign policy impoverished the farmers and severely threatened food security in the country, noting that “the cash crunch caused by the naira redesign made most of the farmers to sell their farm produce at giveaway prices for survival since buyers couldn’t access cash to buy the produce from them. The policy which coincided with the harvest season, ended up rendering the farmers empty financially”.

Theoretical Framework

The study makes use of Karl Marx's Political Economy theory (1818–1883) to examine how economic variables and governmental policies interact in the particular context under study. It focuses on the people, institutions, and laws related to the notion that free markets can self-regulate by eliminating subsidies and enacting tax laws. Marx’s political economy theory provides a

critical perspective on the challenges facing Nigeria, offering insights into the structural inequalities and power dynamics inherent in the global capitalist system. The theory provides insights how resources are allocated, who benefits, and who loses from different policies and interventions.

The Nigerian economy seeks to place development interventions in the context of the dominant political and economic processes in society, with a focus on incentives, reforms, the elimination of fuel subsidies, and the unification of the interest rate and exchange rates. Key ideas in Marx's political economy theory include the Labour theory of value, which explains relative differences in market prices, declining profit, and growing wealth concentration. The interaction of different factors, such as trade, productivity, and government laws, is the focus of political economy. Marxism's central tenet is that the relationships of exchange and the modes of production constitute the foundation of society.

Political economy theory is useful to the study because it clarifies the reasons behind the federal government's specific economic interventions in Nigeria, including government ideology, socioeconomic issues, and economic downturn. Sub-national political economies are influenced by the interplay of the political and economic systems in real-world societies, and the actions of foreign governments like the World Bank and IMF.

Methodology

In order to explore various challenges and to identify the precise issue that needs to be solved, the study employed an exploratory research design to investigate SDGs-2-Food Security Challenges to achieved Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria. Exploratory research design is used to generate new ideas and hypotheses that can be explored in future studies, also the exploratory research takes the form of qualitative data in data collection. Karl Marx's Political Economy theory served as the study's theoretical foundation.

Nigeria, a large country in West Africa covering 923,768 km2, is the study area. It is home to the great rivers Niger and Benue. Abuja, the nation's capital, is situated in the middle of the country. Nigeria is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in Africa and boasts the largest economy in the continent. Nigeria is a federal republic that consists of 36 states, 774 local government units, and a Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Using secondary data to extract evaluation and statistical information from Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria Living Standard Survey (NLSS), and SDGs Baseline Report, the sampling procedures are applied to the six geopolitical regions of Nigeria, through analyzing the results and contrasting the reports in relation to the issue under investigation.

Discussion

The geopolitical regions pursued infrastructure, social services, mining, agriculture, industrialization, and food security during the First Republic. However, the agricultural industry collapsed following the discovery of crude oil, leading to the abandonment of farming, which is why food insecurity has persisted. Due to free money from the oil sector, food security has become an issue, suggesting that agriculture is being neglected along with other sectors. It is evidence of the government's lack of initiative and disregard for preparation and notice. After comparing the 12 months ending in October 2023 to the previous 12 months average, the average annual rate of change for food was 31.52%, which represents a 23.72% increase from the average annual rate of change recorded in October 2022 (23.72%).

The current administration of Nigeria has declared a "State of Emergency" in response to the threat to food security in the country. This includes providing 200,000 metric tonnes of grains

from strategic reserves to households in the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) at moderate prices; 225,000 metric tonnes of fertilizer, seedlings, and other inputs to farmers; 50 billion each for the cultivation of 150,000 hectares of rice and maize; 50 billion for the cultivation of 100,000 hectares of wheat and cassava; $50,000 each for 1,300 small business owners in each of the 774 councils; and $75.1 billion for 100,000 MSMES and start-ups with investments ranging from $500 to $1 million at 9% interest.

Additionally, it allocated $200 million to promote the cultivation of 500,000 hectares of farmland and the approval of a state-specific infrastructure support (Ogundele, 2023) and approved a 50% price cut for farmers on agricultural inputs, including seedlings, pesticides, herbicides, and other essential resources. At least $1.52 billion in donor funds will be directed by the National Economic Council into 36 unique agro-industry processing zones around the country, serving 100,000 farmers nationwide (Kyari,2023).

Some of the steps taken to ensure food security by the present administration include, certification of available planting materials in readiness for dry season farming. Reviewing the mechanism and processes for delivering fertilizers and agro-pesticides input to farmers under a transparent and accountable regime. Fast tracking the takeoff and operations of the "National Agricultural Development Fund" among others. For the 2024 fiscal year, a total of #362,940 billion was earmarked for the agricultural sector (Kyari, 2023).

Conclusion

A well-thought-out structural policy is needed to address these issues, in addition to coordinated fiscal and monetary measures. If Nigeria could effectively execute the brilliant agricultural policies that previous administrations have formulated, it could become a food exporter rather than a net importer. To meet their food needs, governments all over the world are investing in agricultural biotechnology. The nation needs to move past relying solely on hoes and cutlasses to meet its food needs. Due to the ongoing high levels of insecurity, which have disrupted supply chains and important economic activities and prevented many farmers from accessing their farmlands, the nation's output and productivity have declined. Inflation and food shortages have resulted from this in different regions of the nation. Food security is still largely influenced by the high cost of transportation, which is a result of rising energy costs brought on by the removal of gasoline subsidies, middlemen activities in the food distribution chain, and the enduring shocks from legacy infrastructure bottlenecks.

Recommendations

(a) Biotechnology breakthroughs have been demonstrated in developed economies to boost agricultural productivity, lessen environmental impact, and improve food quality. Nigeria must use agricultural biotechnology in order to produce more food and improve the nutritional value of that food.

(b) To reduce the pressure of inflation on consumers, the government must work with relevant stakeholders to implement policies aimed at improving supply chains, stabilizing prices, and boosting local production. Maintaining a sustainable balance between supply and demand in the future to guarantee cheap food supplies.

(c) The nation needs to make investments in commercial agriculture and implement cutting-edge farming practices like irrigation, green technology, and emerging technologies. The Nigerian government needs to provide incentives that are applicable to both parties in order to promote private investments in the agricultural sector.

(d) In addition to tax breaks, the government ought to promote agricultural sector investments by means of insurance programs and agricultural credit guarantee funds. Any proposed agricultural intervention projects should be implemented transparently and on time, and the ministry of agriculture should establish an independent body to oversee this process.

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NATURE AND EFFECT OF WASTE GENERATED IN NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA

Faridah Ladi Apake, John Obioma Ukawuilulu
&
Udoh C. Osisiogu
Department of Sociology,
Nasarawa State University, Keffi
Corresponding Author: faridaapake@gmail.com

Abstract
The problem of indiscriminate waste disposal dates back to the earliest urban settlements in human society. The trend has been on the increase across many societies including Nigeria. This paper examined the nature and effect of waste generated in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study adopted the Reasoned Action Theory to explain the nature of waste generated in the study area. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study. A sample of400 respondents was drawn through simple random, systematic sampling, clustered and purposive sampling techniques in the selection of Local Government Areas, electoral wards, towns/villages, main streets, houses, households and individuals. Primary data were generated through the use of questionnaire and in-depth interview. The questionnaire copies were analysed quantitatively using simple percentage while test frequency tables, mean and in-depth interview were unbundled using content analysis. The findings revealed that decomposed food items, empty sachet water packs and water bottles, empty engine oil gallons, used and unused drinking straw, sachets of all kinds, biscuit, condemned zincs and building materials were the solid wastes indiscriminately disposed in the study area. The study recommends that the Nasarawa State Waste Management Board should intensify the collection of solid wastes from the doorsteps of residents for appropriate recycling to mitigate the associated health and environmental hazards associated with the indiscriminate disposal of solid waste in the study area.
Keywords: Indiscriminate Waste Disposal; Recycling; Solid Waste; Urban settlements; Waste Disposal.

Introduction

In recent years, humans generate more waste, not only because of an increase in population but also due to the change in the pattern of consumption and various composition of waste (Udo, Esezobor, Afolalu, Onovo, Ongbali & Okokpuji, 2018). Waste management has become an important issue confronting both developed and developing countries. The rate of waste generation has continued to increase, due to population growth, lifestyle choices, consumption, and technological advancement (Asase, Yanful, Mensah, Stanford & Amponsah, 2009). Waste generation and disposal are among the pressing environmental and public health issues in the world today. For instance, Miller (2005) observed that as more countries develop and population growth rates increase around the world, the amount of waste produced becomes a major environmental issue. The problem of waste is inextricably linked to changing life styles and consumption patterns occasioned by urbanization and emergence of modern civilization (WHO, 2004; Nwosu, 2002; Awoso, Taiwo, Gladebo & Arimoro, 2010; Momodu, Dimuna & Dimuna, 2011).

The generation and accumulation of waste are beginning to produce health, social, economic and environmental problems in significant proportions. The continuous dumping of refuse and open defecation has resulted in air pollution and attraction of unwanted insects such as flies and mosquitoes to the environment. Persistent dumping of both household and non-household wastes could lead to severe sanitation problems with increased risks of the spread of diseases such as cholera, malaria and typhoid among the residents in Nigeria. The indiscriminate dumping of waste along residential buildings, roads, on drainages, streets, etc. cause great health and environmental problems resulting in diseases such as cholera, typhoid and malaria, including the annual flooding in Nigeria (United Nations Environment Programme, 2020).

In sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Nigeria, refuse generation and its likely impacts on the health, quality of environment and the urban landscape have become burning national issues, For example, Nigerian cities such as Lagos, Port Harcourt, Kano, and the suburbs of Abuja to mention a few, are grappling with mounting heaps of wastes dumped indiscriminately. These wastes emanate from household or domestic sources, markets, shopping and business centres, schools and eateries. Also, of concern is the dumping of hazardous commercial and industrial wastes which are a clear violation of clean air and health rules in the country's environmental sanitation laws, rules and regulation (UNEP, 2003). The United Nations in its August, 2004 report noted that while developing countries are improving access to clean drinking water they are not striving to meet sanitation goals. Makwara (2013) noted that a joint report by UNICEF and WHO said that about 2.4 billion people will likely face the risk of needless disease and death by the year 2015 and beyond, due to bad sanitation-decaying or non-existent sewage system, and toilets fuels the spread of diseases like cholera and basic illness like diarrhoea, which kills a child every 21 seconds. The worst hit by bad sanitation are the rural poor and residents of slum areas in fast-growing cities, mostly in Africa and Asia (Awoao et al, 2010).

The issue of environmental and waste generation in Nigeria is on the increase due to the rise in population resulting from techno-economic development in cities and the pattern of economic production and consumption of materials (Gutberlet, 2018). Nigeria's estimated waste generation rate per capital per day is between 0.65kg and 0.95kg. This constitutes over fifty percent of the total amount of waste generated in sub-Sahara Africa (Edet & Maduabuchi, 2019). Indiscriminate disposal has resulted in blockage of drains, and obstruction of water ways. Inappropriate collection and disposal of wastes are gradually leading to an environmental disaster

as the nation presently lacks sufficient budgetary requirements for implementing integrated waste management systems across the states (UNEPA, 2020).

In most developing countries like Nigeria, laws, policies, statutes, and regulations on waste management are underdeveloped, and even existing ones are poorly implemented due to the lack of enforcement of these environmental laws and policies. Generally, laws involving waste management were mainly formulated and articulated. The poor state of waste management system in the nation is a reflection of its laws and policies (Opodo & Oluwatayo, 2016). There are several loopholes in government policies on waste management. Though the public is encouraged to partake in the monthly clean-up exercise, however, the government has failed in providing disposal sites. In some of the states in Nigeria, it has been reported that there is no articulate piece of legislation that deals with waste management. Most government policies that are in place lack strategies for actualization. In addition, a review of the legislative aspect of waste management has been suggested in order to work towards achieving set objectives on sustainable waste management.

Furthermore, an all-inclusive management approach has been proposed which entails waste prevention, reuse, reclaim, recycle, composting, and generation of energy. Despite some good policies that are in place, proper implementation remains a significant challenge. For instance, a comprehensive environmental impact assessment that is supposed to be submitted during project planning before approval. However, this critical regulation is frequently overlooked. Several authors have criticized the implementation and enforcement of environmental laws in Nigeria. Enforcement of environmental laws remains an issue of concern, while control, and management of environmental legislation has achieved very little success (Alabi, Kasim & Lasisi, 2020). Based on the foregoing, the paper examined the nature of indiscriminate waste disposal in Nasarawa State-Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, there has been increasing cases of indiscriminate dumping of solid wastes resulting from increasing urban population and urbanization. In sub-Sahara Africa, particularly Nigeria, refuse generation and its likely impact on the health, quality of environment and the urban landscape have become burning national issues. Major cities in Nigeria are grappling with mounting heaps of indiscriminately dumped wastes. There is also a concern about those residues including the domestic wastes that may poison or damage the environment, adversely affecting species in the biosphere and destabilizing ecological balance. The modern Nigerian urban domestic waste is characterized by polythene materials, garbage, bottles, cans, papers or foil wrappings and throwaways of all sorts from the household. The volumes of these wastes are increasing greatly because of the constant desire of consumers to discard the old and acquire new items (Alabi, Kasim & Lasisi, 2020).

The UNEPA (2020) revealed that wastes that are not managed properly, especially those from households and the community, are a serious health hazard that can lead to the spread of infectious diseases. The report further revealed that unattended wastes lying around attract flies, rats, and other creatures that, in turn, spread diseases. Normally, it is the wet waste that decomposes and releases bad odour. The ever-increasing consumption of household goods results in huge volumes of solid wastes from industrial and domestic activities, which pose significant threats to human health. Health deterioration, accidents, flood occurrences, and environmental pressures are just a few of the consequences.

These wastes are ultimately thrown into municipal disposal sites and due to poor and ineffective management, the dumpsites turn to sources of environmental and health hazards for people living in the vicinity of such dumps. The wastes cause pollution on both land, water and air. Open dumpsites are a major problem to the environment especially to the air that we inhale as oxygen. Health care waste and other medical waste disposed in dumpsites, mixed with household waste, increase the risk of Hepatitis B and HIV infections, and other related diseases (World Bank, 2020). Dumpsites emit obnoxious odours including smoke that causes illness to people living in, around, or close to them. Pollution is seen as a major environmental effect of dumpsites, which is not directly transferred from land to people, except in the case of dusts and direct contact with toxic materials. Pollutants deposited on land usually enter the human body via the medium of contaminated crops, animals, food products, or water. In addition to the aforesaid, the dumpsites also have smelly conditions. These conditions are worse in the summer because of extreme temperatures, which speed up the rate of bacterial action on biodegradable organic material.

Waste collection is irregular and restricted to major cities. Improperly sited open dumps deface several cities, thereby endangering public health by encouraging the spread of odours and disease. Furthermore, despite the establishment of Waste Management Board by Nasarawa State in an attempt to mitigate the menace of wastes generated, as well as clearance of such wastes, the board is overwhelmed by indiscriminately disposed wastes in the urban areas of the State. Also, other mitigating measures put in place by the State, have not yielded positive results due to weak enforcement and the state of the equipment used to clear the wastes to designated waste dump sites. In most remote parts of Nasarawa State, that are close to Abuja such as Mararaba ,Masaka ,Nyanya, it has been noticed that heaps of waste dumps are in virtually all market areas, outskirts of the urban areas and even on roadsides for weeks without waste collection either by the private sector or the government.

While Several studies in Nigeria (Alabi, Kasim & Lasisi, 2020; Emily, 2014; Salam, 2010; Nguyen, 2011; Makwara, 2011; Opodo & Oluwatayo, 2016; UNEPA, 2020; Udo, Esezobor, Afolalu, Onovo, Ongbali & Okokpuji, 2018; Asase, Yanful, Mensah, Stanford & Amponsah, 2009; Miller, 2005; WHO, 2004; Nwosu, 2002; Awoso, Taiwo, Gladebo & Arimoro, 2010, Momodu, Dimuna & Dimuna, 2011) have been undertaken on the nature of indiscriminate waste disposal, very few have explored the nature of indiscriminate waste disposal in Nasarawa State. Moreover, most of the studies have concentrated on the indiscriminate waste disposal in the Southern and Eastern parts of Nigeria, while only few focused on North Central Nigeria and Nasarawa State in particular. It is in view of the foregoing that this paper examined the nature of waste disposal in Nasarawa State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

(a) What are the methods of waste disposal in Nasarawa State-Nigeria?
(b) What are the types of wastes indiscriminately disposed in urban Settlements in Nasarawa State, Nigeria?

Objectives of the study

The paper examined the nature of waste generation in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The specific objectives included:

(a) To ascertain the methods of waste disposal in Nasarawa State –Nigeria.

(b) To identify the types of wastes indiscriminately disposed in urban settlements in Nasarawa State.

Literature Review

Waste has been variously defined by experts and environmental studies scholars. The common denominator in their descriptions is that waste is any material that is no longer in use and discarded for their lack of perceived value. Waste may be in solid and fluid forms; it is this feature that defines its typology or categorization. Makwara (2011), further described waste as any movable substance or material that is perceived to be of no further use and therefore should be discarded. Waste is any material that is discarded because it has served its purpose or is no longer useful. Solid waste comprises all the wastes arising from human and animal activities that are normally solid, discarded as useless or unwanted. Waste according to Ezechi, Nwabuko, Enyinnaya and Babington (2017) is a useless and unwanted product of human domestic and industrial activities released into the environment. It can be a solid material, liquid, semi-solid or container of gaseous material.

Wastes as opined by Oluwade (2009) are refuse (empty containers, papers rubbish etc.) sewage (faeces, water urine) and industrial waste (chemical nuclear) that result from the manufacturing of certain substances, materials and equipment. The interaction of organisms and their environment leads to the generation of waste. Waste is non-beneficial materials discarded; therefore, all these have to be properly disposed. Refuse are waste materials that have been thrown away. The statutory definition of refuse is not based on the physical form of materials, that is, whether or not it is solid, as opposed to liquid or gas but on the fact that the material is a waste.

The United State Environmental Protection Agency (2011) defines solid refuse as any garbage, refuse, sludge from a waste water treatment plant, water supply treatment plant or air deed material, including solid, liquid, semi-solid or contaminated gaseous material and agricultural operation and from community activities. Humans have always produced waste that included not only the discarded bones of animals slaughtered for food. Refuse according to Clesceri (2008) can be divided into two main groups: that which is mainly dry and can be put directly in the dustbins and that which is liquid and may be drained away through pipes. The dry household refuse can be disposed using galvanized iron or plastic bins having a well fitted lids and two handles for easy transportation. The bins are placed away from the kitchen or the back door. The only waste that should be put in these bins are dusts, waste papers, leaves, nylon or cellophane wrappers tins and bottles. The other type of wastes includes faeces, urine and water wastes from our kitchen and bathroom. For the purpose of this study, waste is defined as items that are ready to be discarded after being used which could be in a solid or a liquid form.

Indiscriminate Waste Disposal

Indiscriminate waste disposal refers to unlawful disposal of waste in undesignated spaces such as open or vacant land, sources of water and other areas (Achi et al. 2012; Okechukwu et al. 2012; Machete and Shale 2015). According to Abdullahi, Ajibike, Man-ugwueje and Ndububa (2014) defined indiscriminate waste disposal as the disposal of solid and liquid waste without taking necessary measure. Indiscriminate waste disposal is a process in which waste is disposed of by dumping in open spaces, water bodies and surface drains as a result of inadequate infrastructure and ignorance of inhabitants (United Nations Environmental Programme, 2010). Indiscriminate waste disposal according to Ifeoluwa (2019) is define as the unlawful manner of dumping these refuses such as garbage, sludge from water supply or manufacturing waste, air

pollution control facilities and other un-useable materials without considering the adverse effect on human health. For the purpose of this study, indiscriminate waste disposal is conceptualizing as the inadequate dumping of refuse which could pose a challenge on the health of the populace.

Nature of Indiscriminate Waste Disposal

The unprecedented increase in world population growth rate particularly in the developing countries coupled with technological advancements, has compounded the problem of waste disposal and management in societies. In rapidly urbanizing cities, the problems and issues of solid waste management are of immediate importance (Momoh & Oladebeye, 2010). Irrespective of the size of countries that make up the developing countries, the nature of the solid waste problem remains similar. Urban growth in some of these countries (Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Kenya, etc.) continues at a much faster rate than the provision and expansion of infrastructure and services. Demographic changes and economic growth contribute to the generation of waste. Consequently, waste management has become inadequate as evidenced by the rise in illegal dumping and the proliferation of the now seemingly permanent piles of rubbish (waste) in some commercial, industrial and residential areas of the urban areas (Miller, 2005).

For instance, Nairobi citizens generate approximately 1000 tons of waste daily. However, Aurah (2013) points out that at most 10% (≤100 tons) of the total waste generated was collected by the local authority. The remaining 9900 tons of generated waste is unaccounted for. It is evident from these studies that indiscriminate dumping of waste remains the main approach used for final disposal of municipal and hazardous wastes in most developing economies and will continue to be a challenge (Oyoo, Leemans, & Mol, 2010). Furthermore, two separate studies conducted in Nigeria and Ghana came to the same conclusion that approximately 80% of solid waste in African countries was disposed of through indiscriminate dumping (Ogwueleka 2009; Aziale & Asafo-Adjei 2013). The prevalence of indiscriminate dumping and its spread across African communities is therefore clear. However, although indiscriminate dumping is more prevalent in developing countries, developed countries are not an exception. A study in Italy revealed that indiscriminate dumping of hazardous waste and open burning of hazardous and municipal solid waste has been practiced since the 1980s (Fazzo, de Santis, Mitis, Beneditti, Martuzzi, Comba & Fusca, 2011).

In two studies conducted in the United States of America (Crofts, Morris, Wells and Powell (2010) and Laundra (2011), it was found that indiscriminate dumping of municipal solid waste is a common challenge in rural America. Furthermore, it is evident from the literature that indiscriminately dumped waste contains a mixed stream of waste materials as previously pointed out by Machete and Shale (2015).

A cross country survey on waste disposal in sub-Saharan Africa reveals that waste collection has virtually collapsed due to chaotic and rampant illegal dumping (United Nation Environmental Program, 2003). The media is awash with reports of how accumulated waste such as metals, polythene, wood, vegetative matter, tins, glass, cans and other municipal refuse litter the streets and major roads. One key factor responsible for this uncoordinated waste disposal is the attitude of city residents to environmental protection and human health. As observed by Makwara et al (2013). Urban residents characteristically dispense of the waste they generate without regard for the environment since it is treated as common property (Miller, 1994). The concoctions generated by these wastes are hazardous. This is because improper handling and/or disposal of waste causes substantial harm to human health, death of smaller animals and plant organisms and a general breakdown and loss to the immediate ecological systems.

Research has shown that some wastes could stay up to 100 years before decomposing and degrading completely in the environment. Hence, if the decomposition process is completed, these materials cause inestimable pollution to the environment (Makwara, 2011, Federal Government of Nigeria, 2005). More importantly, this will disrupt normal cycles, nutrient flows and the interrelationships existing among biotic organisms. It must also be reported that chaotic dumping of both domestic and industrial waste has become a public health concern in countries of sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria. This practice has put the health and safety of both city and rural residents and that of the entire environment at great risk due to the toxic nature of some of the wastes.

In Nigeria, waste disposal is essentially the statutory function of municipal councils. The rapid increase in volume and types of solid and hazardous waste, due to continuous economic development, urbanization and industrialization is becoming a burgeoning problem for most governments in ensuring effective and sustainable management of wastes (Igoni, Ayotamuno, Ogaji, & Probert, 2007). It is estimated that in 2006, the total amount of municipal solid waste generated in Africa reached 2.02 billion tones representing 7% annual increase since 2003 (UNEPA, 2002). It is further estimated that between 2007 and 2011, generation of municipal waste must have raised to 37.3%, equivalent to roughly 8% increase per year most especially those wastes categorized as hazardous. The UNEPA (2002) estimated the total health-care waste per person per year in lowest income countries ranges from 0.5 Kg to 3 Kg.

Nigerian cities and towns are currently facing serious environmental problem arising from poor solid waste management. Solid waste is generated at a rate beyond the capacity of the city authorities to handle in order to maintain a sustainable urban environment. This has resulted in poor solid-waste management system that portends serious environmental crisis in most Nigeria towns and cities (Abel & Afolabi, 2007). Babayemi & Dauda (2009) reported high waste generation rate in Abeokuta without a corresponding efficient technology to manage the wastes. Of some 201 sampled respondents in Abeokuta Ogun State, (35.8%) used waste collection services, (64.2%) used other waste disposal options, (16.4%) used both, (68.7%) and (58.7%) were aware of waste collection service and waste management regulations respectively.

Okeniyi & Anwan (2012) reported that the of average wastes generated per day in Covenant University Ota, food waste exhibited the highest percentage of (26.2%), followed by polythene bag (19.3%); and plastic bottles (13.6%), metal cans (11.5%), paper (10.5%), plastic food pack (7.2%), other combustible wastes (5.6%) and polystyrene food pack (5.6%). This was attributed to inadequate resources, and the privatization scheme set up in 1995 to address the environmental issues. The study stressed the need for private partnership with government in providing adequate delivery services to the public.

Similarly, Nkwocha, Pat-Mano and Dike (2011) assessed the efficiency of solid waste collection services in Owerri municipality and observed that the level of efficiency in waste collection was only about 61%, a situation they attributed to a wide range of socio-economic and technical factors. Ogwueleka (2009) investigated solid waste management involving nine cities in Nigeria and discovered that a great majority of the total solid wastes generated in the cities are organic in nature. The study revealed that there is gross inefficiency in the solid waste management in practically all the cities. The poor performance was attributed to inadequate funding, personnel, equipment, and technological constraints. Onwughara, Nnorom, & Kanno (2010) examined the disposal habit, environmental impact of solid waste management in Umuahia, Abia State, Nigeria. It gave an overview about the various management practices and necessary rules to achieve sound management, with a population of about 1.2 million people who produced 250 metric tons of waste

in 2005 and 350 metric tons of waste in 2007 daily. The study revealed that (80.0%) of the solid wastes was generated from market traders consisting of mixed wastes containing hazardous and non-hazardous components which are separated, treated or recycled before disposal by the municipality.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is positioned within the theory of reasoned action. The theory of reasoned action was postulated by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1975 and reviewed in 1980. The theory posited that a person's intention to perform a specific behaviour is a function of two factors: 1) attitude (positive or negative) toward the behaviour and 2), the influence of the social environment (general subjective norms) on the behaviour and that the attitude toward the behaviour is determined by the person's belief that a given outcome will occur if he or she performs the behaviour and by an evaluation of the outcome. The theory of reasoned action explains behaviour by identifying the primary determinants of behaviour and the sources of these determinant variables, and by organizing the relations between these variables. The theory is marked by a sequence of reformulations that build on one another in a developmental fashion. These are the theory of reasoned action, the theory of planned behaviour, and the integrative model of behavioural prediction. The theory's current formulation, is graphically displayed as the reasoned action approach to explaining and changing behaviour.

The most proximal cause of behaviour is behavioural intention (what one intends to do or not to do). Behavioural intention, in turn, is determined by attitude (one's evaluation of the behaviour) and subjective norm (one's evaluation of what important others think one should do), either of which might be the most important determinant of any particular behaviour. Usually, this is revealed empirically by the beta weights obtained from multiple regression analyses, where behavioural intention is regressed on to attitude and subjective norm. If the result is a larger attitude than subjective norm beta weight, the behaviour is deemed to be more under attitudinal than normative control, but if the reverse is true, then the behaviour is deemed to be more under normative than attitudinal control. In either case, then, it is desirable to know what determines attitude or subjective norm, respectively, if a researcher wishes to influence the behaviour. Attitude is determined by behavioural beliefs (beliefs about the likelihood of various consequences) and evaluations of how good or bad it would be if those consequences happened. Subjective norm is determined by beliefs about what specific important others think one should do and how much one is motivated to comply with those important others. Both attitude and subjective norm are assumed to be determined by summative processes. Thus, to form an attitude, people are assumed to sum behavioural belief-evaluation products (attitude), whereas to form a subjective norm, people are assumed to sum normative belief-motivation to comply products (subjective norm).

This applies to the study in that indiscriminate waste disposal is influenced by the waste managers' attitude and social environment. The waste managers' attitude towards waste management is guided by their belief and evaluation of the impact of waste management on health and environment. If they belief that poor and discriminate waste disposal will adversely affect health and environmental issues, they will be motivated to be committed to waste management.

Methodology

This study was conducted in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The research design for this study was the cross-sectional survey design. This design is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analysing data from few people considered to be a representative sample

of the entire population. The survey design is suitable for this study because, the target population is large and it is obviously not possible to reach out to all of them. Nasarawa State has a projected population of 3,086775 populations as at 2021 (National Population Commission, 2022). The study population comprises all adult (male and female) between the ages of 18years and above, who resident in the three selected Local Government Areas of Nasarawa State-Nigeria to include Akwanga (Nasarawa North Senatorial District), Lafia (Nasarawa South Senatorial District) and Karu (Nasarawa West Senatorial District) respectively with population of 1,068,874 (National Population Commission, 2021). The Local Government Areas were selected using cluster sampling and this was necessitated by the high frequency of waste generation.

The Smith (1984) sample technique was used to estimate a sample size for the study population. The Smith (1984) formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{3+ Ne^2}$$

Where:

N = Population size

3 = Constant

e = Margin of error (5%)

$$n = \frac{N}{3+ Ne^2}$$

Substituting into the formula we have

$$n = \frac{1,068,874}{3+ 1,068,874\ (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1,068,874}{3+ 1,068,874\ (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{1,068,874}{2675,185}$$

n = 399.55

n = 400

This formula gives the degree of accuracy of the sampling technique. It gives an idea as to how many samples have to be studied taking into consideration the error. From the population of 1,068,874 respondents, the formula yielded a sample size of 400 respondents. The sample size of 400 was distributed proportionately across the three selected Local Government Areas of Nasarawa State. Of the 400 questionnaire copies distributed, 374 were retrieved. The analysis is therefore based on the returned copies. The study employed cluster sampling technique. The Local Government Areas were clustered based on the three senatorial districts in the State. Primary data were collected using questionnaire and in-depth interview. The questionnaire were administered to adults who are 18 years and above, residing in the study area, while, the in-depth interviews were conducted with health workers, Staff of Nasarawa State Waste management Board, community leaders and other relevant stakeholders The Univariate analysis involved the use of mean, median, and simple percentage and the in-depth interview through content analysis.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Responses on the Nature of Waste Disposal in Nasarawa State-Nigeria

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	197	52.7
Moderate	98	26.2
Low	79	21.1
Total	**374**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 indicates that the majority of respondents acknowledged that the nature of waste disposal in the study area is high as reported by 52.7 percent of the total respondents. This implies that the area has witnessed more indiscriminate waste disposal at regular intervals and has significantly affected the environment of the State. A participant in the IDI said this:

> The nature of waste disposal in this community is on the high side and uncontrollable. This has devastating effect on the well-being of the society. We have been experiencing indiscriminate waste disposal regularly especially when it seems to be about raining and this has become a recurrent decimal. In this area, a day cannot be passed without people engaging in indiscriminate waste disposal and this has affected the community greatly. This is hitting hard on the wellbeing of the residents in the Local Government Area and NN the State at large (IDI/Male/42years/ Lafia-Nasarawa State).

Table 2: Response on Respondents Methods of Waste Disposal in Nasarawa State-Nigeria.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Dumpsite	31	8.3
Along the highways	118	31.5
Water canals	52	13.9
Road site/drainages	74	19.8
Waste vendors	39	10.4
Rivers/streams	48	12.8
Others	12	3.2
Total	**374**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 demonstrates that 31.5 percent of the respondents affirmed that they dispose their waste in an open area in Nasarawa State. Data also revealed that 19.8 percent of the respondents dispose their waste by road sites, 13.9 percent of the respondents on water ways, 12.8 percent of the respondent at the market square, 10.4 percent of the respondents at waste collection services, 8.3 percent of the respondents for dumpsite and 3.2 percent of the respondents for others. This implies that the larger proportion of the study population acknowledged that open area is the common waste disposal sites utilized by the respondents in the study area.

This was further corroborated by a participant who confirmed that open area is the main place for the disposal of waste in Nasarawa State-Nigeria. The participant noted that:

> In this State, open area or space are the places people dump their wastes. It is a common thing in this area. Any open area ultimately becomes a dumpsite. Check all the open space today they have become places for dumping waste and it is done

indiscriminately. From Masaka to Karu, all the open space has been turned to dumpsite. This is a serious problem (IDI/Female/34years/ Karu-Nasarawa State).

Table 3: Responses on whether Wastes Are Indiscriminately Disposed in Nasarawa State-Nigeria

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	323	86.4
Disagree	51	13.6
Undecided	0	0
Total	**374**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 indicates that most of the respondents believe that wastes are indiscriminately disposed in Nasarawa State. This is reported by the overwhelming majority representing 86.4 percent of the respondents. This suggests that a larger percentage of the respondents confirmed that wastes are indiscriminately disposed.

Table 4: Types of Wastes Indiscriminately Disposed in Urban Settlements in Nasarawa State.

Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD	FX	N	$\overline{X}$	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5				
Empty Sachet water packs and water bottles	97	88	18	115	56	1067	374	2.85	1st
y plastic and tin can of assorted minerals	94	116	23	98	43	1002	374	2.68	7th
Sachet of all kinds of biscuit	120	89	8	67	90	1040	374	2.78	3rd
Used and unused take away plates	106	132	32	55	49	931	374	2.48	9th
Different kinds of noodles sachets	89	101	20	100	64	1071	374	2.23	12th
Polythene bags	121	132	13	59	49	905	374	2.42	2nd
Breakable plastic chairs	121	163	6	45	39	840	374	2.25	11th
Empty engine oil gallons	96	101	23	81	73	1056	374	2.82	5th
Used and unused drinking straw	113	92	9	72	88	1056	374	2.81	4th
Different kinds of Empty bottles	102	135	7	61	69	982	374	2.62	8th
Condemned zincs and building materials	105	114	5	80	74	1038	374	2.77	6th
Rotten food items	89	101	20	100	64	1071	374	2.86	10th
Used diapers and sanitary pads	97	88	18	115	56	1067	374	2.12	13th

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4 shows a collection of responses on the types of indiscriminately disposed wastes in Nasarawa State. The results indicate that empty sachet of water packs, water bottles are some of the waste that are indiscriminately disposed. Others included polythene bags and sachet of all kinds of biscuits, empty engine oil gallons, used and unused drinking straw, condemned zincs and

building materials. This indicated that rotten food items are the most common waste disposed indiscriminately by the respondents. This submission is in line with the in-depth interview results where participants identified empty sachets as the common wastes that are disposed indiscriminately in the area. Two of the participants noted thus:

> The types of waste disposed here are usually empty pure water pack and polythene bags plastic containers. This is very common in this environment. You can see it littering everywhere in this community. This is very disturbing and unpleasant experiences. Even though, there are other wastes that are disposed indiscriminately here like used baby diapers, unused bottles, containers, pack of biscuits and others. But, the most common of all is empty water pack and polythene bags of all kind. You can move one metre in this area and you didn't see it. It is very undesirable thereby affecting the ecosystem (IDI/Male/45years/ Karu-Nasarawa State).
>
> In this Local Government Area, in all the streets you can see polythene bags, empty pure water packs littering all over and making the environment dirty and unfriendly. This is the kind of wastes we are confronted with in this community. People will just be dropping their refuse in any open space and this is a recurrent decimal. No day passes without such experience in this area (IDI/Male/49years/Akwanga-Nasarawa State).

Discussion of Findings

Study findings established that empty water pack and polythene bags are some of the wastes that are indiscriminately disposed in Nasarawa State. This is in addition to empty engine oil gallons, used and unused drinking straw, sachets of all kinds, biscuit, condemned zincs and building materials. This was corroborated with the work of Makwara et al (2013) which identified sachet water packs and water bottles, empty engine oil gallons, used and unused drinking straw, sachet of all kinds of biscuit, condemned zincs and building materials as the wastes disposed indiscriminately.

Indiscriminate dumping of organic wastes constitutes sanitary hazards and poses public nuisance, particularly in over populated residential areas or cities. In Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, etc. waste dumps cause environmental problems like aesthetic intrusion, offensive stench or odour and serve as breeding grounds for vectors of communicable diseases such as diarrhea, dysentery and typical. During the rainy season, wastes dumped recklessly, are washed away. As a result of that, water channels and drainage are blocked, thereby causing excessive flooding, surface water contamination and ground water pollution. Urban residents characteristically dispose of the waste they generate without regard for the environment since it is treated as common property. The toxins generated by these wastes are hazardous. This is because improper handling and/or disposal of waste causes substantial harm to human health, death of smaller animals and plant organisms and a general breakdown and loss to the immediate ecological systems.

Conclusion

Indiscriminately disposed wastes are wastes arising from human activities that are normally solid and are discarded as useless or unwanted. They are also seen as non-liquid and non-gaseous products of human activities. Indiscriminate waste disposals arise from the exponential population growth in Nigeria and the increase in the production and consumption process, poor waste

management system, inadequate facilities for the disposal of wastes, as well as the inadequate of knowledge on the dire consequences of indiscriminate disposal of wastes by most residents.

Recommendations

Arising from the findings of the study, the paper recommends that;

(a) There should be attitudinal change among residents in Nasarawa State towards waste and waste disposal in addition to compliance with environmental laws.

(b) Government should collaborate with the various Local Governments, waste providers, waste vendors and other stakeholders, to effectively evacuate wastes from dumpsites to the recycling plant for the production of organic manure.

(c) Monthly sanitation exercise should be reintroduced to curtail the littering of environments and indiscriminate dumping of refuge while offenders should be appropriately sanctioned.

(d) Public enlightenment programmes, should be organized by governmental and non-governmental organizations. especially in schools, market places, eateries etc. on the dire consequences of indiscriminate waste disposal on human health and the environment

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ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC PERCEPTION ON THE CAUSES OF ACTS OF TERRORISM IN JOS NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

Haruna Ibrahim Khalil
Mount Kenya University, Kenya
&
Rev. Dr. Elijah O.S. Odhiambo
Department of Arts, Governance and Communication Studies,
Bomet University College, Nairobi, Kenya
Correspondence: harunaibrahimkhalil@gmail.com

Abstract
Nowadays, terrorism is one of the biggest problems confronting the world. Terrorism and insecurity pose significant global concerns and Nigeria has been bedeviled by a number of security challenges, the most prominent being that of Boko Haram. Worldwide, terrorism continues to become more concentrated, with 57 countries reporting a terror attack in 2022, compared to 59 in 2021 and 74 in 2015 when terrorism reached its peak. Terrorism was most concentrated in the Sahel region of sub-Saharan Africa, where 65 per cent of attacks in the region took place in the ten countries in the region. In Nigeria, the impact of terrorism, however, witnessed a temporal decline; with total deaths falling by 23 per cent, decreasing from 497 in 2021 to 385 in 2022.This study assessed public perception on the causes of acts of terrorism in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State. In Jos North, a combination of factors-economic, political and identity - has instigated violence over the years, producing segregation in the city mainly along ethnic lines. The sample for this study is made up of four hundred and twenty (420) respondents drawn from a total population of 917,000, using a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The study sample was determined using the sample size determination table by Krejcie and Morgan. The survey gathered responses from 403 out of 420, with a response rate of 96%. Data were analyzed through the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29. The study was guided by the social structure and anomie theory. It was found from this study that respondents attributed the causes of acts of terrorism in the study area to political marginalization, injustice, poverty, unemployment, and negative religious teaching. The consequences of terrorism are significant and have wide-ranging impacts on the community by way of economic and social disruption. In light of the above findings, the study recommends the need to address political marginalization through inclusive governance, tackling injustice through fair legal systems, implementing policies to mitigate poverty, reduce unemployment and promote positive teachings to counteract negative influences. Additionally, there is the need to encourage community engagement and education, to mitigate the root causes of terrorism.
Key words: Boko Haram; Injustice; Political Marginalization; Poverty; Terrorism.

Introduction

Terrorism is regarded as a global phenomenon. Virtually all nations of the world are bedeviled by it. The 2014 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) (Asongu, Tchamyou & Minkoua 2017) has shown that terrorist activities have increased significantly after the 2011 Arab Spring. The U.N Security Committee said that Iraq as well as Syria together, accounted for much more than twenty thousand overseas troops, who went there to battle largely in support of the Islamic States of Iraq and Syria, ISIS, (Associated Press, 2015). The influential Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) currently controls more than a third and a half of the regions of Iraq and Syria.

The African region has also been suffering an upwelling in extremist actions. Nigeria has had its own share terrorism due to activities of the *Boko Haram* (BH) terrorist group. Boko Haram has changed from a non-violent sect with its abhorrence of Western philosophy and morals to a destructive group that has become a threat to both Nigeria and the West African sub-region. The sect has been involved in a series of terrorist acts mainly in northern Nigeria, among which include the kidnapping of 276 girls from a secondary staying school in Chibok, a town in Borno State on 14 April 2014 (Abimbola & Adesote, 2012). There are more recent data on BH activities in Nigeria. Cite more of such current examples. The year 2014 is almost 10 years ago!!

Since 1999, when Nigeria had a shift from military dictatorship to democracy, there has been a resurgence of violent movements across all the geo-political zones of the country, Plateau state inclusive. The 2001 Jos crisis, which lasted a week and resulted in approximately 1000 deaths, was fueled by economic, political, and religious tensions. The conflict was sparked by various factors, including disputes over natural resources (Sani, 2007) and political appointments. The appointment of a non-indigene as the coordinator and chairman of the Jos North Monitoring Committee of the National Poverty Eradication Programme, as well as local conflicts over farmland and resource harvesting, contributed to the escalating tensions. The crisis culminated in a tragic event triggered by a dispute over passage through a barricaded road by a Christian woman while Muslim were preparing for their Friday Juma'at Prayer at the Congo-Russia area (Nkanga, 2011), leading to widespread violence and significant loss of lives and property. The crisis in Jos was a complex interplay of economic, political, and religious factors, which ultimately had devastating consequences for the region (Nkanga, 2011).

In 2004, the Jos crisis, which lasted from February to May, was driven by economic factors and involved clashes between Muslim herders and Christian farmers over land and cattle. The conflict resulted in over 1000 deaths, the internal displacement of about 258,000 people, and the destruction of property worth billions of naira (Global IDP Project, 2005; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005; Ostien, 2009; Nkanga, 2011). As a response to this crisis, the Plateau Peace Conference of 2004 was convened during the period of emergency rule to seek a resolution.

The November 2008 Jos crisis was attributed to political, religious, and economic factors (Gwamna and Amango, 2010). The crisis began after a state-wide local government council election, and it was while awaiting the announcement of results that trouble broke out at the collation center, which had been moved to Kabong outside the headquarters of Jos North local government council. The crisis lasted for four days, during which several lives and property were lost (Gwamna and Amango, 2010).

The January 17, 2010 Jos crisis began two weeks after the Abisoye Presidential Committee started sitting at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPS) in Kuru, Jos. The immediate causes of the crisis were attributed to three versions: the reconstruction of a demolished house, an attack on a Catholic church, and a minor argument during a local football match. These isolated disagreements in the Nasarawa area triggered a major crisis in Jos, resulting in an

estimated 326-362 casualties, 150 dead bodies pulled from a village well at Kuru Karama, and 8000 refugees in the Toro local government area of Bauchi (The Nation, Feb. 6, 2010:51). As a result, a presidential committee co-chaired by Chief Solomon Lar and Alhaji Yahaya Kwande was set up to investigate the causes of the crisis and provide solutions to prevent future occurrences. The Christmas Eve bombings by Islamic extremists further fueled violence, resulting in the deaths of more than 200 people in Plateau State. This study examines public perception on the causes of acts of terrorism in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.

Statement of the Problem

Terrorism continues to pose a significant threat to the security and well-being of communities across Nigeria, including the Jos North Local Government Area (LGA) in Plateau State. The prevalence of acts of terrorism in this region has not only led to loss of lives and property but has also deeply impacted the social fabric of the region as well as its safety and security.

Also, terrorists' activities have become serious security problems in Nigeria as many lives and assets valued at billions of Naira have been lost to the numerous terrorist attacks in the country. Since 2010, *Boko Haram* terrorists have launched several assaults in the northern part of Nigeria. Multiple explosive attacks have been carried out in many cities, towns and villages across Nigeria. A twin explosive blast murdered more than thirty individuals in the Terminus area of Jos metropolis, Plateau State, where similar twin blasts killed over 100 people on May 20, 2014 (Shittu, 2014).

The problem of acts of terrorism in Jos North, Nigeria, is multifaceted and has been influenced by various factors, including economic pressures, inter-communal violence, and the activities of extremist groups such as Boko Haram. The region has experienced an increase in population, leading to economic strains and the scarcity of resources, which have contributed to social tensions and conflict. Additionally, the rise of Boko Haram, particularly in Northeast Nigeria, has had a significant impact on the security situation in the country, leading to widespread violence and mass atrocities. The interplay of ethnic, religious, and political divisions has also been a contributing factor to the deadly clashes in the region, further exacerbating the security challenges. The prolonged conflict and the government's response to Boko Haram's insurgency have resulted in tens of thousands of casualties and a humanitarian emergency in the affected areas.

Despite numerous efforts by the government and security agencies to combat terrorism, there remains a lack of comprehensive understanding of how the local populace in Jos North LGA perceives and responds to this menace. Understanding public perception on acts of terrorism is vital for devising effective counter-terrorism strategies and fostering community resilience. This is the focus of this study.

Aim and Objectives of the study

The study assesses public perception on the causes of acts of terrorism in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.

The specific objectives are to:

(a) Determine the level of public awareness of the causes of acts of terrorism in the study area.
(b) Identify the perceived causes of acts of terrorism in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.
(c) Identify the perpetrators of acts of terrorism in the study area.

Research Questions:

(a) What is the level of public awareness of the causes of acts of terrorism in the study area?
(b) What are the perceived causes of acts of terrorism in Jos North Local Government area of Plateau State?
(c) Who are the perpetrators of acts of terrorism in the study area?

Literature Review

Global Overview of Terrorism

The Global Terrorism Index (IEP, 2023), noted that the number of deaths from terrorism in 2022, decreased by 9% to 6,701 deaths, and the number of attacks decreased by almost 28% from 5,463 in 2021 to 3,955 in 2022. Afghanistan remained the country most impacted by terrorism for the fourth consecutive year, despite attacks and deaths falling by 75% and 58% respectively. The deadliest terrorist groups in the world in 2022 were the Islamic State (IS) and its affiliates, followed by al-Shabaab, Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), and Jamaat Nusrat Al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM) (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023).

Terrorism-related deaths attributed to the ISIS and its affiliate groups declined by 16%, but deaths attributed to unknown jihadists in the countries where Islamic State West Africa (ISWA) operates increased by 17 times since 2017 to 1,766 terrorism deaths. The lethality rate of terrorist attacks increased in 2022, killing on average 1.7 people per attack compared to 1.3 deaths per attack in 2021. Violent conflict remains the primary driver of terrorism, with over 88% of attacks and 98% of terrorism deaths in 2022 taking place in countries in conflict (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023).

The Sahel region in sub-Saharan Africa has become the center of terrorism, accounting for a larger number of terrorism deaths in 2022 than both South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa combined. In 2022, deaths in the Sahel constituted 43% of the global total, a significant increase from just 1% in 2007. Burkina Faso and Mali are particularly concerning, as they accounted for 73% of terrorism deaths in the Sahel in 2022 and 52% of all deaths from terrorism in sub-Saharan Africa. Both countries experienced substantial increases in terrorism, with deaths in Burkina Faso rising by 50% to 1,135 and in Mali by 56% to 944 (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023). The latest report by the Institute for Economics and Peace (2023) shows that the number of people killed per attack also increased by 48% from 2021 with most attacks in these countries attributed to unknown jihadists, although both IS and JNIM operate in these areas. The escalation in violence in Burkina Faso has spread to neighboring countries, with Togo and Benin recording their highest GTI scores on record.

The increase in terrorism in the Sahel has been dramatic, rising by over 2,000% in the last 15 years. The underlying drivers are complex and systemic, including poor water utilization, lack of food, ethnic polarization, strong population growth, external interventions, geopolitical competition, pastoral conflict, the growth of transnational Salafi-Islam ideology, and weak governments. Additionally, most of the terrorist activity occurs along borders where government control is weakest (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023).

In 2022, the Sahel region in sub-Saharan Africa experienced the largest deterioration in the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) score, while North America recorded the largest improvement. Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 60% of all terrorism deaths globally, with an 8% increase in terrorism deaths compared to 2021. Four of the ten countries with the largest deteriorations in GTI score are located in sub-Saharan Africa: Togo, Djibouti, Central African Republic, and Benin (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023). The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region recorded a 32%

decrease in terrorism deaths, with only 791 deaths in 2022, the lowest number since 2013. Attacks in the MENA region almost halved, from 1,331 in 2021 to 695 in 2022 (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023).

South Asia remains the region with the worst average GTI score in 2022, recording 1,354 deaths from terrorism, a 30% decrease compared to the previous year; however, if the improvement in Afghanistan was excluded, terrorism deaths would have increased by 71%. In Afghanistan, both the Khorasan chapter of IS and the emerging National Resistance Front (NRF) pose a serious threat. Afghanistan and Pakistan remain amongst the ten countries most affected by terrorism in 2022, with deaths in Pakistan rising significantly to 643, a 120% increase from 292 deaths in 2021. The BLA were responsible for a third of these deaths in Pakistan, a nine-fold increase from the prior year, making it the fastest-growing terrorist group in the world (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023).

In the West, the number of attacks continues to fall, with successive falls each year since 2017. However, the number of deaths more than doubled, albeit from a low base; from nine deaths in 2021 to 19 in 2022, with 11 of these occurring in the US. This was the first increase in terrorism deaths in the West since 2019 (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023).

In Europe, Islamist extremists carried out two attacks in 2022. Attacks in the US remained low, with only eight recorded in 2022. None were attributed to any known terrorist group (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023). The UK recorded only four attacks and no deaths this year, the first year since 2014 that no deaths have been recorded; while Germany recorded the lowest number of attacks since 2015. Ideologically motivated terrorism continues to be the most common type of terrorism in the West, with religiously-motivated terrorism declining by 95% since its peak in 2016 (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023).

Terrorism in Nigeria

There had been numerous civil disturbances that led to struggles between influential establishments and some segments of the Nigerian society. In the pre-colonial era, there were some important events that had the propensity to lead to terror. For example, in the aftermath of Nigeria's independence, enormous security challenges manifested, which posed a great threat to the government. These included the Tiv unrest in Benue State, the Agbekoya Levy, the Isaac Boro rebellion in the Delta Niger region (Mohammed, 2003). Ovaga (2012) traced the sources of security problems in Nigeria to military incursion into politics. Shea (2003) also perceived the 1966 overthrow of government against the First Nigerian Prime Minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, deaths of key ministers, the Premier of Northern Region and several other well-known political party and army rulers as adding to the causes of security challenges in Nigeria.

The impact of terrorism in Nigeria has decreased, with a 23% reduction in total deaths, dropping from 497 in 2021 to 385 in 2022 (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023, p. 28). The number of terrorist attacks also significantly decreased, with 120 incidents in 2022 compared to 214 in 2021, marking the lowest number of attacks and deaths since 2011. The military became the most targeted group in 2022, with military personnel being the focus in a quarter of all attacks, followed by civilians at 24% and law enforcement at 18%. Despite this, half of all terrorism deaths in Nigeria in 2022 were civilians (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023, p. 28).

The ISWA remained the deadliest terrorist group in Nigeria for the third consecutive year, with an increased lethality rate. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) recorded its deadliest year in 2022, while Boko Haram attacks almost halved. The conflict between the ISWA and Boko Haram continued, with the ISWA becoming significantly stronger. Borno State experienced a

substantial improvement in terrorism, with a decrease in terrorism-related deaths and attacks. However, it remains the hardest-hit region in Nigeria, accounting for 60% of all terror-related deaths in 2022 (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023, p. 28).

The deadliest terror attack of the year occurred in Borno State, attributed to the ISWA. The conflict between ISWA and Boko Haram, along with counter-terrorism efforts, has significantly weakened Boko Haram, allowing ISWA to expand its area of activity in northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad region (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023, p. 28).

Theoretical Framework

This study employed the social structure and anomie theory to analyze the relationship between socioeconomic factors and criminal behavior in urban communities. The Social structure theory posits that the organization of society, including its economic and social arrangements, influences individual behavior and opportunities for success or deviance (Merton, 1938). The Anomie theory, which is an extension of social structure theory, suggests that when societal norms and values are weakened or undermined, individuals experience a sense of normlessness or confusion, leading to increased likelihood of deviant behavior (Durkheim, 1897).

The social structure perspective emphasizes the importance of social institutions such as family, education, and employment in shaping individuals' life chances and opportunities. According to this perspective, individuals from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds may face limited access to legitimate means of achieving success, such as education and stable employment, increasing their likelihood of engaging in criminal activities as an alternative means of achieving their goals (Sampson & Laub, 1993). On its part, the Anomie theory further enunciates how social and economic disorganization can lead to heightened levels of deviance and criminal behavior. When individuals perceive a disconnection between their aspirations and the means available to achieve them, they may experience feelings of strain and frustration, contributing to the breakdown of social norms and an increase in criminal behavior (Merton, 1938). In economically disadvantaged urban communities, such as the Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State as well as similar sections of Nigeria, where opportunities for legitimate success are scarce and social cohesion is weak, individuals may turn to illicit activities such as acts of terrorism like kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery, etc., as a means of attaining their desired goals.

Methodology

The study area is Jos North, situated within the metropolitan area of Jos, Plateau State capital. Jos North Local Government was created in 1975. It is a heterogeneous settlement with over 1,400 of its populaces coming from various parts of Nigeria. People of different cultural backgrounds populate Jos North, but the five major ethnic groups are: Birom, Jarawa, Amfir, Anakuta and Hausa/Fulani. There are also minority tribes in Jos north. The people occupy a portion of the high plains of Northern Nigeria, 752.6 feet above sea level and some 950 km from the coast at 11º04` N, 7º42`E.

The research adopted the survey research design. This is appropriate since it agrees with the use of a sample from a study population that is representative enough of the whole population. The research is descriptive in that it utilized respondents' views to provide explanations for acts of terrorism in the study area.

The target population for this research comprised all people (both men and women), village heads, government officials, members of Civil Society Organizations and respondents from

political wards in Jos North, Plateau State. Jos North has a projected population of 643,200 as at 2022, based on the figure of 437,217 of the 2006 population exercise (National Population Commission of Nigeria, 2022).

The sample used for this study is four hundred and twenty (420). The sample size was determined by the use of the sample size determination table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). To achieve a representative sample of 420 respondents (2 village heads, 14 persons for FGDs, 4 key informant from Civil Society Organization and 405 Respondents from 14 political wards, namely; Abba Na Shehu, Ali Kazaure, Garba Daho, Gangare, Ibrahim Katsina, Jenta Adamu, Jenta Apata, Jos Jarawa, Naraguta 'A', Naraguta 'B' Sarkin Arab, Tafawa Balewa, Tudun Wada-Kabong and Vanderpuye) for the study, a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed. The first step involved dividing the population of Jos North LGA into relevant strata based on political wards. Each stratum represents a distinct subgroup within the population. Random samples were then drawn independently from each stratum, ensuring that the sample includes participants from various political wards. The populations of samples were derived from the wards using proportionate sampling technique.

In addition to the stratified random sampling, some participants were included through convenience sampling. This technique was used to reach individuals who might not be easily accessible through other methods, such as community leaders, law enforcement personnel, and representatives from NGOs. While convenience sampling introduces potential bias, these participants' insights were considered valuable in understanding the local response to terrorism.

The research employed both quantitative and qualitative instruments of data collection. This means that questionnaire copies were administered to generate quantitative data from respondents, while Key Informant Interview (KII) guides and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were used to generate qualitative data from informants.

Primary and secondary data were collected from the respondents. Data were collected through questionnaire administration and interviews with the respondents. The adopted instruments of data collection are considered appropriate for the study because they allowed the researcher to get in-depth opinions from large respondents. Secondary data were collected from periodicals, books and reports.

For the KIIs, the researchers identified 4 members from Civil Society Organizations who have been in the study area for at least 10 years and have a certain level of information on the research topic and conducted semi-structured interviews with each of these KIs asking questions about public awareness of the causes of acts of terrorism, the perceived causes of acts of terrorism and the perpetrators of acts of terrorism in the study area in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State. Each interview session lasted approximately one hour.

For the FGDs, the researchers identified 4 groups of people from each political ward and conducted one FGD with each group for approximately 2 hours.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The researchers used mixed method of data analysis. Mixed method was adopted for complementarity. For the quantitative data, descriptive statistics such as tables, percentage and charts were used for the analysis. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	278	69.0
	Female	125	31.0
	Total	**380**	**100.00**
Age group	18-23	81	20.10
	24-28	72	17.90
	29-33	70	17.40
	34-38	96	23.80
	39-above	84	20.80
	Total	**403**	**100.00**
Educational level	Non-formal	10	2.50
	Primary	67	16.60
	Secondary	118	29.30
	Tertiary	208	51.60
	Total	**403**	**100.00**
Religion	Islam	277	69.00
	Christianity	85	21.00
	African traditional religion	41	10.00
	Total	**403**	**100.00**

Source: Field data (2023)

The researchers sampled a total of 420 respondent from which 403 (96%) of the respondents responded while 17 (4%) did not respond. The response rate was therefore significant enough to analyze the data on the subject of the study. The response rate agrees with the view of Nachimias (1992), who argued that any response rate above 80% is excellent for analysis in a descriptive research study.

From table 1, males were the higher gender that responded with 278 (69%) and female respondents accounted for the remaining 125 (31%). This indicates that men were dominant within

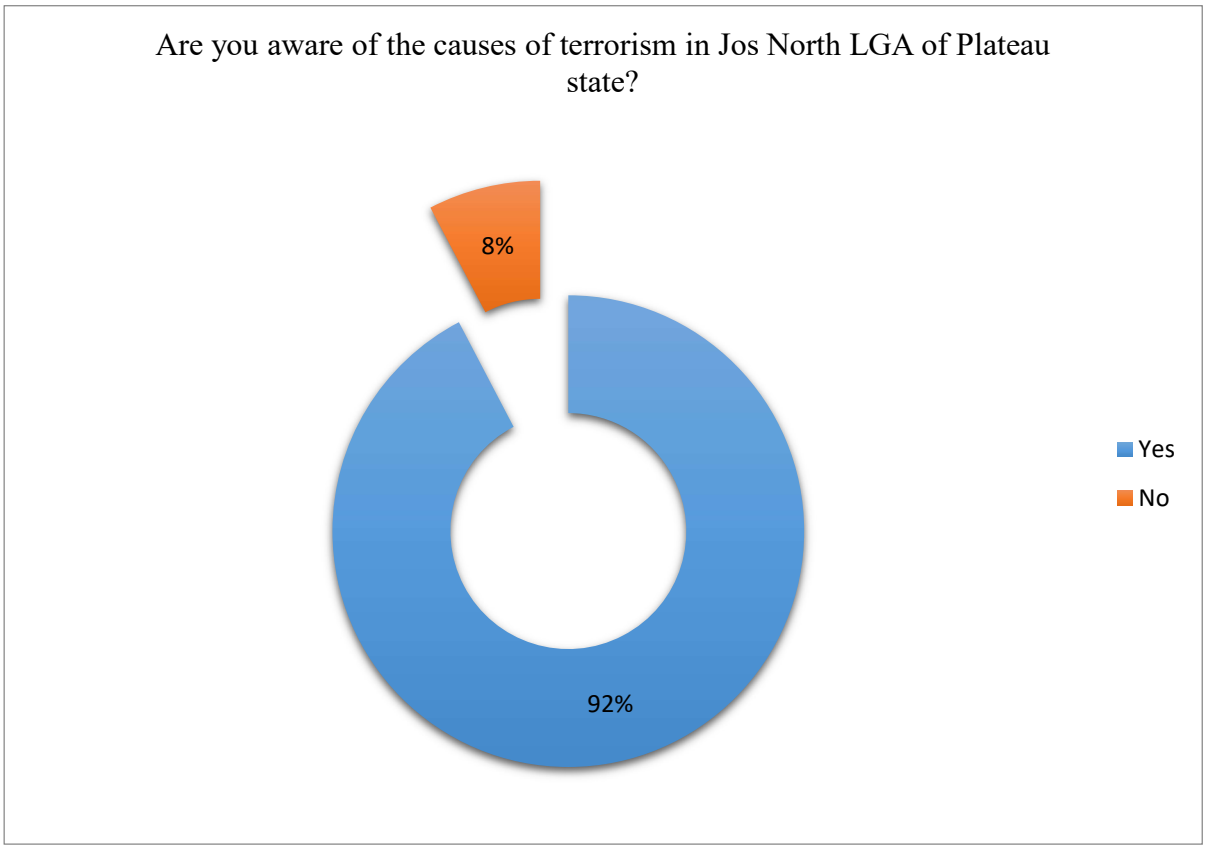
the study area. The age of the respondents ranges from 18-23 to 39-above. It was found from the study that majority of the respondents are in the age range of 34-38 with 96 (24%) respondents followed by 39-above, with 84 (21%) respondents. Those in the age range of 18-23 were 81 (20%), while those in the age range of 24-28 were 72 (18%) and the least, are in the age range of 29-33 representing 70 (17%).

For the level of education, data in the table indicated that majority of the respondents studied up to tertiary institution level, 208 (51.6%), followed by secondary school, at 118 (29.3%), 67 (16.6%) respondents attained primary education and the least, accounting for 2.5% (10) respondents had no formal education.

For the religion, 277 (69%) of respondents are Muslims, 85 (21%) are Christians and 41 (10%) practice African traditional religion. The high percentage of Muslim respondents may be a reflection of the dominant religious group in Jos North LGA.

Public Perception on the Causes of acts of Terrorism in Jos North LGA of Plateau State

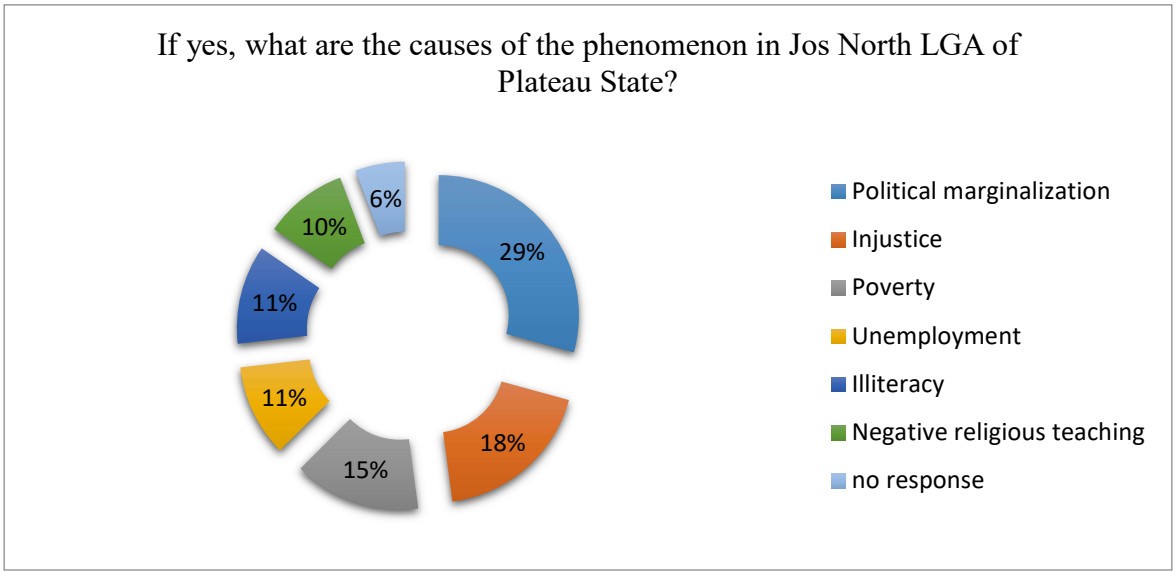
Figure 1: Public Awareness of the causes of terrorism in the study area



Source: Field Data (2023)

Figure 1 revealed the responses to the question about awareness of the causes of acts of terrorism in Jos North LGA, Plateau State, Nigeria. A total of 372 or (92%) of the respondents were aware of the causes of terrorism while the remaining 31 (8%) of respondents were not. These indicates that the majority of respondents were aware of the factors or reasons for acts of terrorism in the study area. The awareness level suggests that the issue of terrorism is well-known and has likely attracted significant attention and concern among the local population.

Figure 2: Perceived causes of terrorism in the study area



Source: Field Data (2023)

From figure 2, the responses to the question about the perceived causes of terrorist attacks in Jos North LGA, Plateau State, Nigeria showed that 118 (29%) of respondents identified political marginalization, 75 (18%) of respondents cited injustice, 59 (15%) of respondents blamed it on poverty, 43 (11%) of respondents implicated unemployment, 46 (11%) of respondents settled for illiteracy, while 39 (10%) of respondents attributed it to negative religious teaching. 23 (6%) of respondents did not respond. These findings provide insights into how the respondents perceived the underlying causes of terrorist attacks in the study area.

The distribution of responses indicates that respondents attribute terrorism to a mixed bag of political, socioeconomic, and religious factors. The high percentage of respondents mentioning political marginalization and injustice as causes suggests that grievances related to governance and social equity are significant factors influencing terrorism perceptions. The acknowledgment of poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy as potential causes underscores the importance of addressing economic and educational disparities in countering extremist ideologies.

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In a KII interview a respondent lamented as follows:

In my opinion, the causes of terrorist attacks in our area are multifaceted and complex. One of the significant factors contributing to this issue is poverty. Many individuals in our community struggle to meet their basic needs, which can create feelings of hopelessness and desperation. Unfortunately, some extremist groups exploit these vulnerable circumstances, offering a false sense of purpose and belonging in exchange for their involvement in violent activities.

Moreover, the high unemployment rate in our region exacerbates the situation. Lack of job opportunities can lead to frustration and disillusionment among the youth, making them susceptible to radicalization and recruitment by extremist groups promising a sense of purpose and income.

Injustice is another crucial factor that plays a role in fueling terrorism. Perceived or actual injustices, such as unfair treatment by authorities or discrimination based on religion or ethnicity, can lead to feelings of resentment and anger, pushing some individuals towards extremist ideologies as a means of seeking revenge or retribution.

Additionally, negative religious beliefs or misinterpretation of religious teachings can be exploited by extremist groups to justify their violent actions. These groups often manipulate religious ideologies to attract followers and create a distorted sense of religious duty or superiority, which further contributes to the rise of terrorism.

Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that focuses on poverty alleviation, job creation, promoting social justice, and fostering interfaith dialogues to challenge and correct the misinterpretation of religious beliefs. Combining these efforts can help to create a more inclusive and stable society, thereby reducing the appeal of extremist ideologies and ultimately mitigating the threat of terrorist attacks in our area (Naraguta, 08/08/2023,).

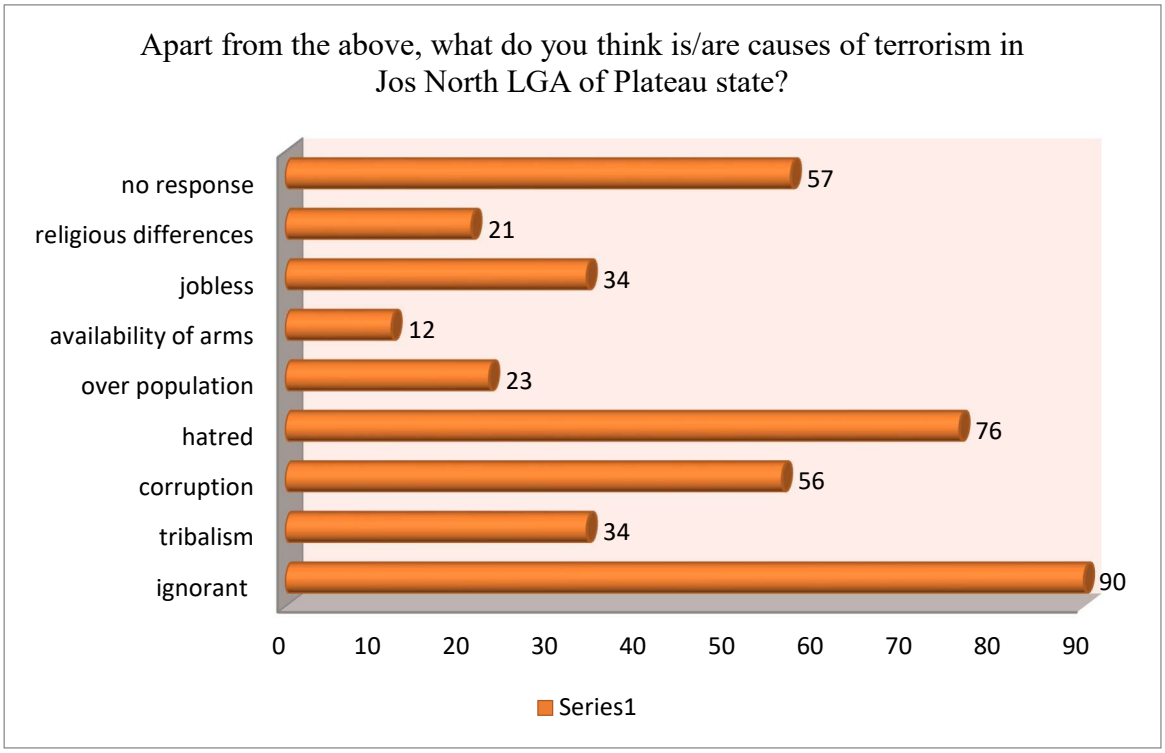
Another KII emphasized the role of perceived or actual injustices, unfair treatment, and discrimination in fueling terrorism, particularly in the context of inter-communal violence in Nigeria.

During FGD sessions in Naraguta B, the informants highlighted the implications of socioeconomic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and limited education as contributing to the risk of potential recruitment into terrorism, particularly in the northern region of Nigeria.

Additionally, during FGDs in Tafawa Balewa, the respondents emphasized that exploitation of negative religious beliefs by extremist groups is supported by a report on the ethnic, political, and religious factors contributing to deadly clashes in the study area. This report highlights the manipulation of religious ideologies by extremist groups to justify their actions, which resonates with the respondent's viewpoint.

Adesoji *et al.* (2016) posit that it is a common belief that religious tension and religious fundamentalism cause terrorism. There is empirical evidence to support this argument with respect to Boko Haram; religion plays a vital role in their discourse. The group holds extreme religious ideology, which they use as the basis to commit their heinous crimes (Adesoji *et al.,* 2016). Vivian (2018) cited in Oladimeji (2019), submited that a huge gap between the country's government and its people is another cause of terrorism in Nigeria. Quite often, people do not seem to be heard by government officials. While some manage to deal with this in a civilized manner, others take to arms and use fear as their instrument of getting what they want from the country.

Figure 3: Other perceived causes of terrorism in the study area



Source: Field Data (2023)

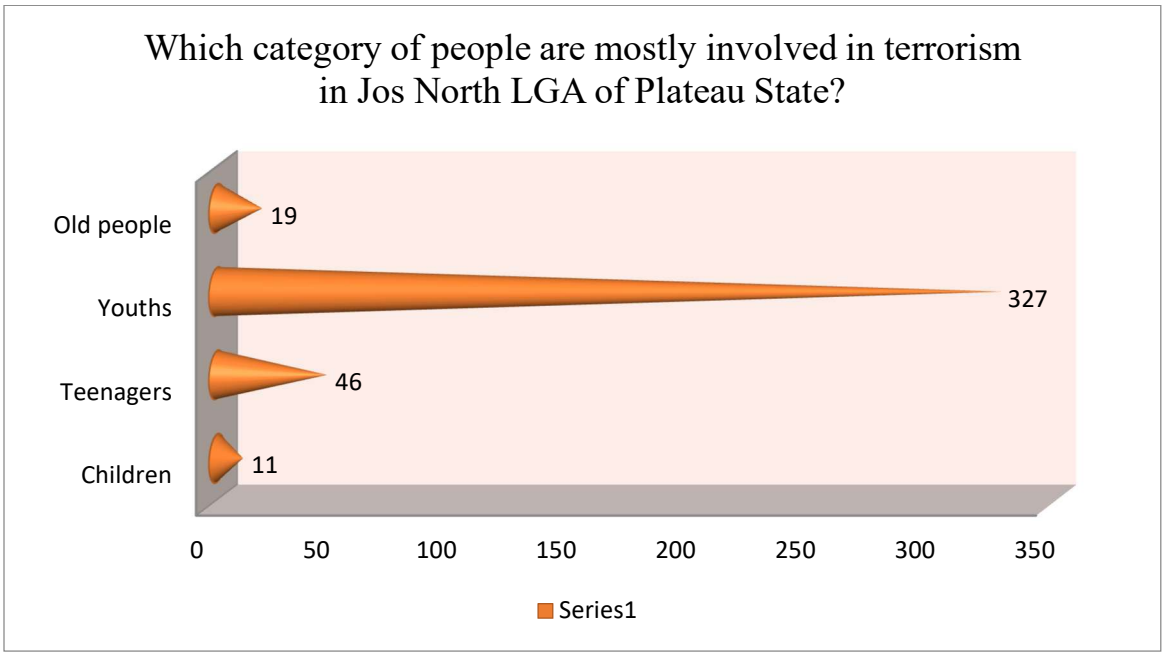
Figure 3 shows additional responses to the question about the perceived causes of terrorism in Jos North LGA, Plateau State, Nigeria. 90 (22%) respondents went for ignorance, 34 (8%) respondents identified tribalism, and 56 (14%) respondents cited corruption, while 76 (19%) respondents blamed it on hatred. Another set of 23 (6%) respondents attributed it to overpopulation, 12 (3%) respondents hinged it on the availability of arms, 34 (8%) respondents cited joblessness, and 21 (5%) respondents identified religious differences while 57 (14%) respondents did not respond. These findings provide further insights into the various factors that respondents believe contribute to the causes of terrorism in the study area.

The high number of respondents who identified ignorance and tribalism as causes suggests that social factors, including lack of awareness and intergroup tensions, are perceived to play significant roles in fostering terrorism. Onuoha (2014) conducted a study based on interviews, focus groups and surveys in six states across Nigeria, highlighting socioeconomic factors. The study included data from traditional leaders, women leaders, religious leaders and focus group discussions with youth, women, faith groups and interviews with civil society organisations drawn from Bornu, Gombe, Kaduna, Kano Sokoto and Yobe states of Nigeria. Onuoha's (2014) study found among others, that issues of unemployment, poverty and weak family structures were instrumental drivers of radicalization into terrorism. In Kano State, 92% of the participants cited poverty and unemployment as key drivers of radicalization, while 83% of surveyed respondents in Kaduna consider them as important (Onuoha, 2014). Existing studies that include former Boko Haram members also highlighted the role of poverty in driving radicalization (Adelaja *et al.,* 2018).

The implication of these findings is that poverty, when left unaddressed, tends to breed frustration, leading to aggression. Within the synthesized studies, such aggression is manifested in

a diverse format, including joining terrorism. While poverty is construed as a breeding ground for terrorism, successive governments are perceived to have failed in their duty to provide the requisite basic welfare and living conditions for its populace. Such failure was identified in another study conducted by the Mercy Corps (2016) as a condition exploited towards recruiting youth desperate for business support.

Figure 4: Categories of people mostly involved in terrorism in the study area



Source: Field Data (2023)

Figure 4 shows the responses to the question about the category of people mostly involved in terrorism in Jos North LGA, Plateau State, Nigeria. 11 (3%) respondents identified children, 46 (11%) respondents cited teenagers, 327 (81%) respondents went for youth and 19 (5%) respondents cited old people. These findings provide insights into the respondents' perceptions regarding the age groups that are perceived to be mostly involved in terrorism in the study area.

The significant number of respondents who identified youth as the category mostly involved in terrorism suggests that young people are perceived to be particularly susceptible to or associated with extremist activities. The finding is in line with that of Mercy Corps (2016) who found that youth desperate for business support can easily be recruited into terrorism related activities. The Corps further painted a scenario thus:

> A male youth is running his business – struggling, perhaps and he is approached by a generous benefactor. Maybe he has seen this person around the community, or he has a mutual friend. The benefactor offers a business loan to the youth. Later, he comes back demanding repayment. If there is no money, the youth is forced to join Boko Haram or be killed (Mercy Corps, 2016).

The above extract highlights a perceived sense of initially positioning Boko Haram as the 'good other' that provides opportunities otherwise not easily obtained from the government. The quest for sustenance amid the 'struggle' to remain afloat in business seems central to the decision to accept loans from perceived benefactors regardless of the consequences of non-repayment. The implication of such findings is that access to required financial support perceived not to be readily

available by the government could trigger easy recruitment into terrorism. Such recruitment is made easy due to the exploitation of the needs of those struggling to survive.

Conclusion

The research sought to determine the perception of the public on the causes of terrorism in Jos North LGA, Plateau State**.** Respondents attributed the causes of terrorism to factors such as political marginalization, injustice, poverty, unemployment, and religious negative teaching.

Recommendations

In light of the above findings, there is need to address political marginalization through inclusive governance, tackling injustice through fair legal systems, implementing policies to alleviate poverty, reduce unemployment and promote positive teachings to counteract negative influences.

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A REVIEW OF THE EFFECTS OF WOMEN LITERACY AND POVERTY REDUCTION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Leah Yisa Jummai[1],
Aidelokhai, Dennis Idonije[2]
&
Nmadu, Timothy[3]
Department of Public Administration,
Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University,
Lapai, Niger State.
Email: yisaleah75@gmail.com, aidelokhaidennis@gmail.com
& nmadutimothy5@gmail.com

Abstract
Despite the potential of the strategies put in place by successive governments in Nigeria, women's literacy and poverty reduction for sustainable development, Nigeria continue to grapple with persistent challenges in realizing the full transformative impact of educated and empowered women in the country. This paper examined the effects of women literacy and poverty alleviation on sustainable development in Nigeria. The paper relied on documentary sources of data obtained from textbooks, journal articles, official gazettes, conference papers and the internet. The paper deployed the Liberal Feminism theory to provide a theoretical guide for the study. The paper observed that the relationship between women's literacy, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development in Nigeria is complex and multifaceted and emphasized that empowering women is not only a matter of social justice but a catalyst for sustainable development. It recommends a conscious implementation of policies and programs that should aim to eliminate barriers to education for girls and women, including addressing financial constraints, cultural norms, and discriminatory practices as well as the development and implementation of targeted economic empowerment initiatives, such as vocational training and entrepreneurship programs, to enhance women's skills and make them job creators rather than job seekers, thereby increasing their participation in the formal economy.
Keywords: Cultural Norms; Feminist Theory; Women Literacy; Poverty Reduction; Sustainable Development,

Introduction

One of the most difficult problems Nigeria is currently facing is the scourge of poverty, especially among women. Poverty is one of the most pervasive and urgent issues facing countries around the world, notably in Africa, where the problem has grown particularly severe, especially in the sub-Sahara region where Nigeria is located (Atkinson, et. al., 2016), compromising human dignity and obstructing the advancement of sustainable development. Due to its complexity, a thorough and sophisticated strategy that goes beyond simple economic concerns is necessary. An integrated approach that includes social security, work, healthcare, and education is necessary to reduce poverty.

Women in Nigeria are overrepresented in vulnerable/informal employment and underrepresented in formal wage jobs requiring higher education and specialized skills. According to Enhancing Financial Innovation and Access (EFInA)'s Access to Financial Services in Nigeria (A2F) 2020 survey). Those are all essential to economic expansion. Nigerian women have historically engaged in subsistence-level enterprises, which means they possess entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, and experience that can be utilized to promote inclusive growth and long-term national success.

Global Data (2021) indicates that Nigeria has had a modest female literacy rate since 2010. The percentage of female literacy in 2010 was 60.01%. Eventually, the rate has gone up with time. Nigeria's female literacy rate rose by 18.9% between 2010 and 2021. The rate was 71.35% in 2021. In 2021, there was a 1.5% annual rise in the literacy rate. According to estimates from the 2022 Multi-dimensional Poverty Index survey conducted in Nigeria, 133 million people, or 63% of the country's population, live in multidimensional poverty. According to the National Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which stands at 0.257, the absence of access to health care, education, standard employment, and security causes just over 25% of all conceivable deprivation among Nigerians. 86 million people, or 65% of this total, reside in the North (MDPI, 2022).

Once more, the Nigeria MPI for married girls is higher—0.338—than the 0.256 for single girls. Even though the numbers are minor, the disparities in poverty are significant, highlighting the necessity of addressing child marriage and multifaceted poverty together. With 1 in 7 impoverished people (19.1 million) living in a household where a man has completed basic school but no woman has, gender gaps still have a significant impact on the general population. (MDPI, 2022). According to the 2019 Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria study, over 83 million people - more women than men - or 40% of the country's total population live below the poverty line (World Bank, 2020).

Numerous programs have been developed to address the complex issue of poverty in Nigeria, a country where there is both economic opportunity and pervasive suffering. In order to address this trend, a number of interventions were instituted by successive Nigerian governments. These include the National Social Investment Programs (NSIP), the Directorate for Food and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI, 1986), the National Directorate of Employment (NDE, 1986).Better Life for Rural Women (1987), the Community Bank (CB, 1991), Family Economic Advancement Programs (FEAP, 1996), the National Poverty Eradication Programs (NAPEP, 2001), the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES, 2004), and the Subsidy Re-investment and Empowerment Programs (Sure-P, 2012), the National Funding for Women's Economic Empowerment (NFWCC, 2015 & 2020), and Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES, 2004). Others were the Home Grown School Feeding Program (HGSF), Government Enterprise and Empowerment Program (GEEP), Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), and N-Power Program (Kudu, Binta & Suleiman, 2023).

Nigeria continues to struggle with enduring obstacles in achieving the full transformative impact of educated and empowered women, despite the potential of the policies implemented by successive governments in the country, women's literacy and poverty reduction for sustainable development (Goodness, 2022). The confluence of gender-based poverty and poor literacy rates is a formidable obstacle to the country's endeavors towards attaining sustainable development objectives. The ineffective integration of women into the educational and economic realms is made worse by a number of socioeconomic circumstances, cultural norms, and systemic problems. It is in the light of this, that the paper reviews the effects of women's literacy and poverty reduction on sustainable development in Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

(a) To examine the effects of women literacy and poverty reduction on sustainable development in Nigeria.
(b) To examine the level of participation of indigenous women in poverty reduction and alleviation programs in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification and Literature Review

The concept of Literacy

It has been shown that literacy is a crucial aspect of education and a useful instrument for decreasing poverty and promoting sustainable development. There is no exact definition for literacy. The UNESCO and other international organizations have had difficulty over the years coming up with a universally recognized definition of literacy. However, according to Patrick and Ijah (2013), literacy is the capacity to meet every day needs by being able to read, write, and compute in an official national language with functional competence. The ability to read and write clearly, as well as the ability to write one's name and a brief message, are all considered forms of literacy in the broadest sense. These skills allow a person to participate successfully in all the activities that are typically associated with literacy in their culture or group. Since literacy is the cornerstone of universal basic education, achieving gender equality, ending poverty, lowering child mortality, slowing population growth, and ensuring sustainable development, peace, and democracy are all made possible by it (UNESCO, 2002).

Eliminating ignorance among women and promoting development via education are deemed essential for Nigeria's economic progress. Adult education is a key strategy for assuring poverty reduction, claims Akande (2016). Because it places a strong emphasis on the pressing need to address the issues impeding community development, it presents the prospect of change for better living. Through adult literacy education programs, women are empowered and given the opportunity to learn the skills of reading, writing, and calculation. They can also learn useful skills that will increase their productivity. The way they do in the adult literacy education program influences every other aspect of the development process. Not only can adult literacy education help with professional advancement, but a woman's level and kind of education also affects how she views her roles in the home and at work. This is where the relative rise in education among women is first perceived as a shift. Second, a shift that has impacted her ability to teach her kids. In a similar vein, adult literacy education generates independent women who take charge of their own growth and do not always wait for a change agent to make decisions

Concept of Women Poverty

The term "women's poverty" describes the unique and disproportionate ways that women face financial hardship and deprivation in comparison to men. It acknowledges that because of a

variety of social, cultural, and structural variables, poverty affects men and women differently. According to Mubecua and David (2019), women's poverty is a widespread and intricate issue that represents the particular difficulties and disparities that women encounter in all economic domains around the world. It includes the various ways that women experience deprivation and economic suffering differently from males, extending beyond the simple lack of cash means. The notion of women's poverty acknowledges that women experience a unique pattern of economic vulnerability due to gender-based disadvantages that are founded in social, cultural, and structural factors. Being in poverty entails not having enough money for clothing and food, not having access to credit, and lacking the fundamental ability to engage in society. (Ogu and others, 2016).

Hunger and malnutrition, restricted access to education and other essential services, social isolation and discrimination, and a lack of involvement in decision-making are all examples of poverty, according to the UN (United Nations, 2020). Every country in the world has attempted to find a long-term solution to the pressing issue of poverty. The UN 2030 plan envisions less than 3% of the world's population living in extreme poverty, however despite efforts by governments, NGOs, international organizations, and corporate actors, this goal is not expected to be met (Moyer & Hedden, 2020).

According to Castañeda et al. (2018), 80 percent of those who are classified as being in severe poverty live in rural areas. Globally, poverty in rural areas still outpaces that in urban areas (Ali & Thorbecke, 2017). Compared to urban residents, rural people are more likely to fall into poverty and remain there for a longer period of time (Cotter, 2002; Kyzyma, 2019). According to Cuaresma et al. (2018), people in rural areas, particularly women, continue to live in extreme poverty and entrenched deprivation that is frequently made worse by violent conflicts and a predisposition to catastrophes. According to several forecasts, extreme poverty in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to persist until 2030 unless governments in the region adopt significant policy changes (Mubecua & David, 2019).

Nigeria has been measuring poverty using both monetary poverty and multidimensional poverty in recent decades. (Mbada & Aluko, 2020). The multidimensional poverty measure takes into account pertinent non-financial aspects of poverty like food insecurity, unemployment, deteriorating housing, a lack of access to healthcare, low educational attainment, etc., while the monetary poverty measure evaluates income or consumption and expenditure poverty in accordance with national poverty lines. Kim (2019).

Like many other sub-Saharan African (SSA) nations, Nigeria is predominately a rural nation with a substantial female population (Madu, 2010; Farrel, 2018). Despite being largely less powerful and socioeconomically disadvantaged than men (Enfield, 2019; Obayelu and Chime, 2020), these women make up roughly 45.5% of Nigeria's labor force (World Bank, 2019). The feminization of poverty is believed to be fueled by gender inequality in the labor market, which affects both urban and rural communities. Women are employed in Nigeria's formal, informal, and agricultural sectors, with a greater proportion of women working in the latter. These women are mostly found in low-skill manual labor markets, which include the agricultural sector, as well as non-agricultural labor markets, particularly in rural areas. It's possible that poor literacy and skill levels contribute to the concentration of women in low-paid specialized employment in rural areas. (Mbada and Aluko, 2020).

According to the International Labour Organization (2018), Nigeria's female employment population ratio began well in 2000 but declined in the following years relative to the male ratio. According to the data, the proportion of females in the years 2000, 2010, 2015, and 2019 was 25.9%, 26.3%, 21.9%, and 21.2%, respectively. In contrast, the male ratios for the same years were

29.9%, 28.8%, 29.1%, and 29.3% (Goodness, 2023).However, boosting income, consumption, and human development is the broadest definition of poverty alleviation, according to Sindzingre (2008) in Musa (2021). Therefore, reducing poverty entails raising people's standards of life via more income, higher spending, higher consumption, and easier access to healthcare and education. Abang (2015) defines poverty alleviation as a reduction in the quantity and size of physical instances of poverty. He underlined that creating an atmosphere that is supportive of empowerment and capacity building may effectively reduce poverty.

In general, the term "poverty reduction" or "poverty alleviation" refers to a set of mostly humanitarian or economic actions meant to help individuals escape poverty once and for all (Slikkerveer, 2019). Raising the level of living for those who are in an unpleasant situation and moving them toward a desirable one is the goal of poverty alleviation. It refers to the process of lowering poverty among individuals as a result of their involvement in the establishment of an indigenous school feeding program in this study. Therefore, in order to improve women's literacy in Nigeria, many national governments and international donor agencies have developed a number of poverty alleviation programs during the course of the year, such as the Better Life for Rural Women Programme (BLP). It was started with the intention of eradicating ignorance and poverty among rural residents, especially women. Under a military regime, the program changed its name to the Family Support Programme (FSP) in 1994. By 1997, the Federal Government had created a new version of the BLP and FSP known as the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP). This is an empowerment program created especially for prospective cottage industry entrepreneurs and regionally based producers of goods and services.

By promoting suitable economic activity in each of the country's local government areas' several wards, the initiative sought to raise the standard of living for low-income groups (Obasi and Oguche, 1995). All of these earlier programs were combined under the Poverty Alleviation Programs (PAPs) by 1999. All these old and new programmes follow the same approach of micro credit and promotion of rural-based Small Scale Enterprises (Iwuchukwu & Igbokwe, 2012 in Kolawale, 2021).

The different programs were not prepared for and were poorly thought out. They were light on content and heavy on propaganda, if not outright noise-making. Because sustainability was not incorporated into their planning, program names were always changed when a new administration took office. The institutions set up to oversee the program benefited the program managers alone. The programs misled rural households into developing self-sustaining enterprises instead of empowering them to do so. They imposed a beggar-like mindset and dependency syndrome on them, failing to equip them with the necessary market and political clout to demand and obtain their entitlements from the government (Akinyosoye, 2005; Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012 in Kolawale, 2021).

In order to actualize women's rights and gender equality, Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) and Women's Financial Inclusion (WFI) WEE were founded in 2015 and 2020, respectively. This is what happens when women's agency, skill, control over their resources, and bargaining power are increased. These attributes allow women to participate in the economy and acquire the resources required for self-sufficiency. Women's Financial Inclusion (WFI): WFI is the meaningful use, access, and management of financial services that produce social and economic benefits, which are necessary for achieving WEE, gender equality, and economic rights. Meaningful involvement in the financial sector for women extends beyond the 14 official and 15 informal banking services available for individual, corporate, or personal usage. WFI

acknowledges the various ways in which financial services improve the social and economic standing of women, particularly when those services are tailored to meet their specific needs.

Concept of Sustainable Development

Todaro and Smith (1985) in Adebayo (2020) aver that sustainable development is the guiding concept for achieving human development goals, according to which it is morally required of the present generation to provide for the basic necessities of their descendants' sustainable living conditions. Meeting everyone's immediate needs and increasing their chances of leading satisfying lives are essential components of sustainable development (Arejiogbe, et. al., 2023). To raise the standard of living for the people of a nation, sustainable development is necessary (Ugwoji, 2022). Thus, social entrepreneurship, youth empowerment, and poverty reduction (Ugoani, 2019; Waziri & Idris, 2019) are seen as essential steps towards achieving sustainable development in Nigeria (which encompasses the environmental, economic, social, and political domains). Joel & Nel-Sanders (2021) state that. Development that can meet the demands of the present generation without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is known as sustainable development.

Review of Empirical Literature

Muhingi, Mutisya, and Kandie (2023), analyzed the impact of specific women's economic empowerment initiatives on the reduction of poverty in Marigat Ward, Baringo County, Kenya. The study used a cross-sectional methodology and concentrated on women who had benefited from empowerment initiatives. A sample size of 334 people was obtained by using stratified random sampling. Furthermore, 15 Key Informant Interviewees (KIIs) who are leaders of empowerment programs were specifically chosen for in-person interviews. Questionnaire and interview schedules were used in the data gathering process. Filtering, coding, and input into SPSS version 26.0 were the next steps in the analysis process. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, and descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies, and tables were utilized in the analysis. Thematic analysis was done on qualitative data in accordance with the objectives of the study. With correlation values of.233, 129, and.248, respectively, it was found that women's skill development, market linkages, mentorship and networking, and poverty reduction are positively and strongly correlated. At a 95% significance level, the study found that, with respective values of.001.010, and.001, and skill development, market contacts, mentoring, and networking significantly improved women's poverty reduction. Table banking, on the other hand, showed a negligible effect on women's poverty reduction (p =.659). Remarkably, networking and mentorship were shown to be the most important variables in reducing women's poverty, with skill building, market contacts, and table banking coming in second and third, respectively. These results highlighted the critical role that social work plays in promoting gender equality and reducing poverty through focused initiatives and useful advice.

Nyongesa, Odhiambo, and Omondi, (2023), conducted a study on how cash transfers among female-headed households in Siaya County, Kenya, affected poverty reduction in the context of achieving sustainable development goals. The main goal of the Inua Jamii-CT program, which was the subject of this study, was to determine how cash transfers affected the decrease of poverty and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Siaya County's female-headed families. The Household Welfare Theory, which bases the study's methodology on household spending and income decisions, suggests that the best way to quantify household welfare is through these factors. The 109,680 female-headed families in Siaya County were the focus of the investigation. A sample of 399 homes was selected using the Yamane formula. A total

of 377 respondents were found using a correlational design. It was discovered that 163 households did not get financial transfers, while 214 households did, according to a study of descriptive statistics of respondent household demographics. The average household spent money on groceries and agricultural supplies. The average age of the female head was 49, 52.2% were in good health and 85.7% had only completed elementary school. Five people on average, made up the household. A social group was represented by 51.7% of the female heads. 36.3% of the female head's income came from small companies, while 41.4% came from farming.

With P values of less than 0.05, a binary logit regression model showed that household consumption, cash transfers, and income were important predictors of SDGs among FHHs in Siaya County. The model's 30% goodness of fit was shown by the R2 of 0.3. Since income and cash transfers have values of β2=-0.689 and β1=-0.935, respectively, raising both of these factors lowers poverty. The household spending and SDGs had a minor connection (β3=0.0004). It was concluded that CT had a major role in achieving the SDGs. The study suggests designing a tailored program to guarantee more revenue-generating activities and ethical farming methods.

Johnwest & Nnodim (2022), conducted research in the Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State on the impact of adult and non-formal education on reducing poverty among rural women. For the study, a descriptive survey design was adopted. Out of the fifty-eight (58) rural settlements in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni (ONELGA), forty (40) were randomly selected. Ten (10) program beneficiaries and ten (10) non-beneficiaries made up the sample of twenty (20) respondents drawn from each of the communities that were chosen. Data were gathered using a standardized questionnaire that was created using a 5-point Likert scale. The Z-test was utilized to test the null hypothesis at the 0.05% significant level of significance, and percentage, mean, and standard deviation were employed in the analysis of the gathered data.

According to the survey, the majority of rural women made their living through farming and trading, with the majority of beneficiaries earning an average monthly income of between N50,000 and N60,000 as opposed to N20,000 to N30,000 for non-beneficiaries. Rural women in ONELGA were given access to the majority of adult and non-formal education programs, including literacy, environmental education, vocational training, and aesthetic education. The study made the following recommendations: rural women should participate more in adult and non-formal education programs because the evidence suggests that doing so will help them develop the necessary skills, knowledge, aptitude, and attitudes to reduce poverty. The state government should work with local government areas to establish and implement more adult and non-formal education programs as well as other programs within rural areas.

Aghamelu's (2020), study on techniques for empowering women in Nigeria by encouraging adult literacy among rural women noted that women have historically endured various sorts of discrimination in Nigeria and other African and Asian nations because of the unique cultural and theological uncertainties inherent in these regions. But unlike in Saudi Arabia, where women - both educated and uneducated, are denied the ability to operate a motor vehicle, the issue of women's liberation in Nigeria and other African nations is impeded by the low level of basic literacy among women. Women in Nigeria's rural areas are the most severely affected by the illiteracy epidemic. These women typically lack access to education because of their poverty and inability to access schools, which are typically found in urban regions. According to the author, low adult literacy has contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS, increased susceptibility to exploitation and manipulation, low self-esteem, and poverty among women.

It is thought that by acquiring adult literacy skills, women in rural communities would experience improvements in their economic empowerment, level of living, social interaction,

political involvement, ability to solve issues pertaining to women and the community, and ability to make decisions for their families and communities. But it seems that people have not paid enough attention to the importance of literacy among citizens in general and women in particular. In light of these considerations, the author advises using tactics free from political exploitation. Increasing funding for adult literacy at all governmental levels in Nigeria is one of these tactics. In order to finance adult literacy centers and supply them with instructional materials, it is also advised that managers of adult literacy programs work more closely with private organizations.

Gautam (2020), carried out a study on "Evidence from the Poverty Alleviation Fund, Nepal: The Impact of Government Policy on Women Empowerment." The research used a combination of methods. The study found that women are currently undergoing the process of becoming more powerful. They require support and assistance from their families, communities, and nation as a whole. The nation should create programs and policies that are gender-friendly to address this. When the government's poverty reduction policy was first proposed, it was advised that it should prioritize solving multidimensional poverty among the impoverished and marginalized population, in line with women's empowerment. It has created, put into practice, evaluated, and declared a unique model of poverty alleviation that is inclusive and successful in raising the targeted communities' degree of functionality and ownership.

Women Literacy Programmes in Nigeria

To address the issue of women literacy, Nigeria has established a number of literacy initiatives and programs tailored to help women contribute to their communities and the nation's overall growth by increasing their education and skill set. Among the noteworthy instances are:

1. **National Mass Education Commission** (**NMEC**). Founded in 1976, the NMEC was established as a government organization to plan and advance non-formal and adult education across the nation. In order to solve literacy issues and increase educational possibilities for a range of demographic groups, including adults and youth who are not enrolled in school, NMEC is essential. The commission's primary goal is to adopt policies and initiatives that will increase literacy rates and increase access to education, hence advancing the general development of Nigeria's human capital.

2. **Girls' Education Project** (**GEP**): This project, which is funded by the World Bank and other institutions, aims to increase girls' access to high-quality education in Nigeria. Through tackling obstacles to education, such as prejudice based on gender, GEP helps raise the rates of literacy among women and girls. I suggest contacting reputable sources like the World Bank, the Nigerian Ministry of Education, or groups actively engaged in the project's execution to get the most precise and current information about the inception of the Girls' Education Project in Nigeria. These sources' official announcements, reports, or records may contain particulars regarding the start and development of the Girls' Education Project in Nigeria.

3. **Universal Basic Education Commission** (**UBEC**). The UBEC was founded in 1999, as a statutory authority to oversee and advance the nation's Universal Basic Education (UBE) program. With an emphasis on enhancing access, equity, and quality in basic education, the UBE initiative seeks to offer free and required basic education to every child in Nigeria. UBEC collaborates with state and municipal authorities to oversee and administer the UBE program nationwide.

4. **Literacy and Non-Formal Education** (**LIFE**). The initiative, which aims to assist adults and out-of-school youth-including women, who are deficient in fundamental literacy skills. Enhancing literacy, numeracy and life skills.

5. **Community-Based Adult Learning Centers**: Adult learning centers are run by a variety of community-based and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Nigeria. These facilities provide literacy initiatives specifically designed to meet the needs of nearby women.

6. **The role of International Organizations** and **NGOs**: Women's literacy is actively promoted in Nigeria by organizations like UNESCO, UNICEF, and NGOs like the Plan International and Save the Children, which frequently work with regional partners to put into action, initiatives that remove obstacles to education and improve women's literacy.

7. **Digital Literacy Programs**: With a growing emphasis on digital literacy in the digital age, certain programs concentrate on providing women with fundamental digital skills, which can improve their communication and access to information, and economic prospects.

8. **Programs for Empowerment and Skill Acquisition**: Some literacy efforts incorporate elements of skill acquisition in addition to basic education. These initiatives seek to empower women by giving them useful skills that may open doors to chances for earning a living.

Women Literacy and poverty Alleviation in Nigeria

In Nigeria, as in many other developing nations, increasing women's literacy can be extremely important to reducing poverty. Nnodim & Johnwest (2022), revealed that literacy empowers women by providing them with knowledge and skills. Educated women are more likely to make informed decisions about their lives, health, and family. This empowerment can lead to better economic opportunities and improved overall well-being. On the contrary, Literate women are better equipped to access job opportunities and engage in income-generating activities. This can be particularly important in a country like Nigeria, where economic opportunities are often limited, especially for women. Gaining more literacy offered up job and entrepreneurial opportunities (Akande, 2016).

Literate women are more likely to comprehend and implement good hygiene and health habits, which improve their own and their families' health, according to Aluko & Mbada (2020). This may lead to lower healthcare costs, which will help to lower poverty. Educated women are more inclined to place a high value on and make financial contributions to their children's education. By giving kids the resources they need to succeed, this breaks the cycle of poverty and benefits future generations. In the growth of communities, women frequently take the lead. Women who are literate can take an active role in community efforts, pushing for improvements in healthcare, education, and infrastructure, which will help to reduce poverty generally.

Enfield (2019) discovered a correlation between decreased birth rates and education, especially for women. Having access to education makes women less likely to have children and more capable of raising the ones they do have. This can lessen the financial strain on families and aid in ending the cycle of poverty. By questioning prevailing gender roles and conventions, literacy can advance gender equality. An educated woman is more likely to advocate for equal rights and opportunities for women, which promotes an inclusive and just society. But in order to solve the problem of women's literacy in Nigeria, we must concentrate on expanding girls' and women's access to school and removing obstacles like poverty, discrimination based on gender, and cultural norms. Government policies, community initiatives, and international collaborations can all play a role in promoting women's literacy and, in turn, contribute to poverty alleviation in the country.

Effects of Women Literacy on Sustainable Development in Nigeria

In Nigeria, women's literacy has a significant influence on sustainable development. Moyer & Hedden (2020) asserted that educated women are more likely to engage in the formal job market, which boosts the nation's economy. Women can participate in a wide range of fields by developing their knowledge and abilities, which will boost overall production and support the nation's economic growth. Once more, literate women are more qualified to launch and run companies. This spirit of entrepreneurship promotes economic variety and innovation. In order to create sustainable business practices that support environmental, social, and economic sustainability, women entrepreneurs can play a significant role.

Improved health outcomes are strongly correlated with women's literacy levels. Women with higher levels of education are also more likely to use healthcare services, take up healthier habits, and make well-informed decisions regarding the welfare of their families. The population's general health and productivity are greatly impacted by this. Conversely, women's literacy increased environmental sustainability since educated women are more likely to participate in sustainable practices and to be aware of environmental challenges. Among these are implementing eco-friendly habits at home, taking part in neighborhood conservation initiatives, and supporting sustainable resource management (Obayelu & Chime, 2020).

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Obstacles to women's Literacy vis-a-vis Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nigeria

Like in other nations, cultural variables have a big impact on women's literacy and the effectiveness of programs aimed at reducing poverty in Nigeria. Initiatives aiming at increasing women's literacy and decreasing poverty must be implemented effectively, which require an understanding of and attention to these cultural variables. According to Ogu, Ezeonwuka, and Sule (2016), patriarchy - a deeply embedded system of social organization that prioritizes males over women - can have a substantial impact on women's literacy and their involvement in initiatives aimed at reducing poverty. Within households, patriarchal traditions place a higher value on men's education than on women's. Girls' access to educational opportunities, particularly literacy initiatives in Nigeria, is consequently restricted. Gender differences in literacy may persist when families choose to invest more in the education of their male offspring due to patriarchal beliefs, particularly in times of resource scarcity (Fatima, 2020). On the other hand, in patriarchal society, the low visibility of educated and accomplished women greatly contributes to the dearth of female role models.

Women's aspirations and confidence in pursuing reading and education are greatly impacted by the lack of role models, particularly in environments where traditional gender roles are strictly enforced. According to Daniel (2015), there is a low level of female engagement in literacy programs in the Maiha Local Government Area of Adamawa State. These factors include poverty, sociocultural attitudes, gender stereotypes, and a lack of understanding. Nwaoduh (2016), found out that the social structure of Nigerian exacerbates female poverty due to factors like

limited access to resources, low income, work discrimination, lack of good health care services, and socio-cultural exclusions. On the other, hand Adisa., Mordi, Simpson, & Iwowo, (2020) identified cultural barriers impacting women's literacy in Nigeria to include discrimination, corruption, familial/domestic responsibilities, cultural perceptions of gender, and ingrained religious beliefs. Again, Bawa noted that that northern Nigeria being patriarchal in nature features a traditional society where powerful cultural traditions undermine the rights of women who are discriminated against, in most cases, from acquiring formal education. Girl's educational opportunities tend to be circumscribed by patriarchy, parent's preference of education of boys than girls.

In spite of the social pressures on women such as early marriage, and other extraneous factors as well as practices, many women are breaking the glass ceiling and contributing greatly in educational development in Northern Nigeria. Zvokuomba & Batisai (2022) revealed that access to and control over land are crucial for economic stability and livelihoods in many societies.In patriarchal systems, women may have limited or no rights to own or inherit land. Landownership is often passed down through the male lineage, excluding women from this crucial economic asset. inheritance laws and customs, influenced by patriarchal norms, may favor male heirs over female heirs which result in women being denied their rightful share of family assets, including land, leaving them economically vulnerable

Methodology Being a theroetical paper, this study relied heavily on documentary sources of data obtained from textbooks, journal articles, official gazettes, conference papers and the internet.

Theoretical paper Framework

The adopted Liberal Feminism as its theoretical framework. The proponents of the liberal feminist theory include Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873, 1989); Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902). Liberal feminism posits that all people are created equal and that culture and attitude of individuals are responsible for promoting women under representation and that nobody benefits from making one gender subordinate to the other. The theory emphasizes that the potentials of both men and women alike are suppressed. The creation of equal opportunities particularly in socio cultural and work is at the heart of the liberal feminist theory.

Liberal feminists argue that society holds the false belief that women are, by nature, less intellectually and physically capable than men; thus, it tends to discriminate against women in the socio-culture aspect, the forum, and the market place. Liberal feminists believe that "female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that block women's entrance to and success in the so-called public world", and they work hard to emphasize the equality of men and women through political and legal reform. The theory posits that men and women are similar to one another because of their shared humanity, as such; the theory emphasizes human progress through rational thought. Looking further into the ideas of inequality under a liberal feminist perspective, the division of labour is a predominant issue (Fatima, 2020).

The application of liberal feminism theory to the analysis of women's literacy, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development in Nigeria derives from the need to advocate for equal access to education, economic empowerment, legal and policy reforms, women's empowerment, breaking of gender stereotypes, and addressing health and reproductive rights, towards achieving a more equitable and sustainable future.

Discussion

As stated in the methodology, the study relies on documentary sources of information.

Therefore, the discussion of the study is based on the inferences from the findings of empirical studies relating to women literacy and poverty reduction among women. Literature evidence indicates that Nigeria has had a modest female literacy rate since 2010. The percentage of female literacy in 2010 was 60.01%, but the rate has gone up with time. Nigeria's female literacy rate rose by 18.9% between 2010 and 2021(Global data, 2021). This simply connotes that the more educated the women, the lesser would be the intensity of poverty and deprivation among women in Nigeria.

Data further revealed that 1 in 7 impoverished people (19.1 million) living in a household, a man has completed basic school but no woman has, indicating that gender gaps still have a significant impact on the general population. (MDPI, 2022). To buttress this, the World Bank (2020) noted in the 2019 Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria study that of the over 83 million poor people in the country, more women than men or 40% of the country's total population live below the poverty line. This clearly substantiated the disparity and deprivation of women in Nigeria to access western education that seeks to empower and emancipate the women from poverty and to access basic life necessities.

One fact that is incontrovertible is that women in Nigeria are overrepresented in vulnerable/informal employment and underrepresented in formal wage jobs requiring higher education and specialized skills (A2F, 2020 survey). Thus, Nigerian women have historically engaged in subsistence-level enterprises, which means they possess entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, and experience that can be utilized to promote inclusive growth and long-term national success if the women folks are given the opportunity to access literacy capacity that will enhance their capacity to meet every day needs by being able to read, write, and communicate in an official national language with functional competence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between women's literacy, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development in Nigeria is complex and multifaceted. The integration of a liberal feminist theoretical framework provides valuable insights into potential avenues for progress. By examining the nexus between gender equality, education, economic empowerment, and legal reforms, it becomes evident that empowering women is not only a matter of social justice but a catalyst for sustainable development. The strides made in improving women's literacy rates in Nigeria have far-reaching implications. Education equips women with the skills and knowledge necessary to actively participate in the workforce, breaking down traditional barriers and contributing to economic growth. As women become more integrated into the formal economy, poverty alleviation efforts gain momentum, leading to improved living standards for families and communities.

Moreover, the liberal feminist emphasis on legal and policy reforms is crucial for dismantling discriminatory practices that hinder women's progress. Ensuring equal access to education, employment opportunities, and participation in decision-making processes lays the foundation for a more inclusive and just society. As gender stereotypes are challenged and cultural norms evolve, the potential for sustainable development in Nigeria becomes even more promising.

Recommendations

(a) Both the Federal and State governments in Nigeria, should adopt policies and initiatives that address financial limitations, cultural norms, and discriminatory behaviors in order to remove obstacles that prevent women and girls from pursuing higher education.

(b) To improve women's abilities and boost their involvement in the formal sector, specific economic empowerment programs, like entrepreneurial courses and vocational training, should be designed and implemented.

(c) Target-specific policies should be adopted to make it easier for women-led enterprises and projects to obtain financial resources, such as credit and micro lending options.

(d) Relevant law making bodies should enact legislations that advance gender equality in the workplace, in education, and in other areas of public life to break down barriers that tend to undermine the potentials of the women folk.

(e) Governments at all levels should carry out community-based awareness initiatives to dispel gender stereotypes and highlight the achievements that women have made to society.

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IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON FULƁE KINSHIP IN JIGAWA STATE, NIGERIA

Abdu Auwalu Sarkin Fulani
Department of African Languages and Cultures,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
08031132992
abdulfulani66@gmail.com

Abstract
This study examined the impact of technology on the kinship of the Fulɓe people in Jigawa State, Nigeria. The study employs secondary data and content analysis methods to achieve its objectives. It utilizes the diffusion of innovations theory as a theoretical framework to comprehend the impact of technology on Fulɓe kinship in Jigawa state. The investigation reveals that technology facilitates improved communication among Fulɓe communities, bolsters livestock management, introduces new economic opportunities for the Fulɓe culture and economy, expands the horizons of education, offers new possibilities for Fulɓe families to conceive and have children, enhances morbidity and reduces mortality rates among Fulɓe people in Jigawa State. On the other hand, technology diminishes face-to-face interaction among them, instigates changes in economic dynamics, challenges traditional values and norms deeply embedded within the Fulɓe community, introduces new methods of influencing ideas about lineage, inheritance, and the transmission of family identity, alters family structures and caregiving dynamics within the Fulɓe kinship system in Jigawa state. The study, therefore, recommends that government and community leaders should collaborate on initiatives that integrate indigenous wisdom with innovative technologies that can improve lives while preserving the essential aspects of the Fulɓe kinship system in Jigawa State.
Keywords: Fulɓe, Jigawa State, kinship, diffusion of innovations theory, technology.

Introduction

Kinship is an essential component of individual and community well-being. It refers specifically to a relationship established through descent and marriage. Within one's social life, an individual assumes various roles, such as son, father, brother, and so on. In traditional societies, kinship serves as the language through which individuals comprehend and navigate these roles. It is a construct, a cultural artefact that is prevalent across diverse human societies. As an artefact, it primarily shapes individuals and their relationships. Kinship represents the most fundamental attachment that an individual possesses. It is a social relationship founded on genuine blood ties. In every society, the acknowledgement of biological relationships between parents and children, and the understanding that all offspring descend from their parents, are central to kinship.

Descent is employed to trace an individual's genealogy, which is also referred to as lineage. Kinship, based on descent and lineage, determines familial relationships and establishes rules governing marital unions. It provides guidelines for interpersonal interactions and defines the appropriate and acceptable relationships between father and daughter, brother and sister, and husband and wife. Kinship safeguards cultural practices, preserves cultural identity, and contributes to societal stability (Mondal, n.d.).

The kinship system of the Fulɓe, also known as the Fulani, a diverse society of semi-nomadic pastoralists spanning West and Central Africa, exhibits certain similarities while displaying variations influenced by factors such as geographical location, socioeconomic conditions, and historical influences. The kinship system of the Fulɓe in Hadejia Emirate, Ringim, Dutse, Kazaure, and so forth in Jigawa State, similar to the traditional Fulɓe system, encompasses several key features that play a fundamental role in their societal structure. They adhere to a patrilineal descent system, wherein lineage is traced through the male line, and the larger kinship structure is formed by clans and sub-clans. Furthermore, they practice patrilocal residence, which entails the wife joining the husband's family residence after marriage. This extended family structure is characterized by the prevalence of multigenerational households, fostering robust social support and economic cooperation among family members.

The Fulɓe kinship in Jigawa State places significant importance on age and gender roles, with elders exerting authority within families and gender roles predominantly determined by the division of labour based on pastoral and domestic activities (Hasty, *et al*., 2022). However, the progress in technological advancements such as reproductive technologies, communication technologies, social media, connectivity, globalization, economic changes, access to healthcare technologies, and education technology can have an impact on the kinship ties of the Fulɓe people in the state. Specifically, the developments in reproductive technologies have resulted in the blurring of boundaries between the "natural" and "cultural" aspects of kinship within the Fulɓe community, thereby raising inquiries about lineage and paternity. Consequently, this challenges the traditional practice of tracing lineage and introduces complexities surrounding fatherhood and family identity. A concrete example can be seen in Kenya, where the introduction of assisted reproductive technologies has disrupted conventional notions of kinship and familial relationships (Piot, 2015).

The utilization of communication technologies, such as mobile phones and the internet, can exert influence on how Fulɓe communities uphold their kinship ties. These technologies facilitate easier and swifter communication between family members, even when they are geographically dispersed. Similarly, platforms like social media can have an impact on kinship dynamics by allowing Fulɓe individuals to interact with a wider social network. For instance, advancements in communication technologies, social media, and connectivity in Mexico facilitate

the formation of transnational kinship networks among Mexican migrant kinship networks (Levitt, 2001).

Moreover, technology-driven globalization can also affect the kinship of the Fulɓe people through alterations in economic structures. Additionally, improved access to online education resources, virtual classrooms, and e-learning platforms can influence how knowledge is transmitted within families and how education contributes to social mobility and status within the kinship structure. Furthermore, enhanced access to healthcare technologies can impact Fulɓe kinship by influencing patterns of morbidity and mortality within the community. Increased access to healthcare and education can lead to changes in demographics, which in turn can modify traditional kinship structures and gender roles within Fulɓe families. For example, in India, improved access to healthcare and education has resulted in modifications to familial dynamics (Kumar, 2014). Against this backdrop, the study examines the effects of technology on the kinship of the Fulɓe people in Jigawa State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study include analyzing how technological advancements both reinforce and challenge the Fulɓe kinship system in Jigawa State.

Methodology

This research employs secondary data sources, including textbooks, journals, documents, and internet sources, to gather information on the impact of technology on the kinship of the Fulɓe community in Jigawa State. It uses content analysis methods to analyze the data collected by identifying recurring themes and patterns in the analysis of the data to achieve the objectives of the study.

The Concepts of Kinship and Technology

The concept of kinship is the most universal and basic of all human relationships and is based on ties of blood, marriage, or adoption (Crossman, 2019). According to Theodorson cited in Mondal (n.d.) kinship system is the customary system of statuses and roles that governs the behavior of people who are related to each other through marriage or descent from a common ancestor. For Smelser cited in Mondal (n.d.) kinship is a cluster of social relations based on such factors as biological ties, marriage and legal rules regarding adoption, guardianship and the like. Thus, from the above, it is concluded that the relationships created through marriage or blood ties are called kinship. When two or more persons are related to each other through descent or united through marriage kinship comes into existence.

Murdock cited in Crossman (2019: 2) opined that every adult individual belongs to two nuclear families. The family of orientation i.e. the family in which one is born and brought up and the family of procreation i.e. the family established through marriage. The relationships formed by both these types of family, ancestors, posterity and successors are called Kinship. Hence every kinship system has blood relations and close relatives based on intimacy.Otite (1999) discussed the prevalence of patrilineal lineage systems in many African societies, where descent is traced through the father's line. This creates extended family structures with strong bonds within lineages. He emphasized the importance of lineage solidarity in areas like land ownership, resource allocation, and conflict resolution. Lineages often act as collective units, supporting individual members and maintaining social order.

Most social scientists agree that kinship is based on two broad areas: birth and marriage; Sociologists agree that a third category of kinship involves social ties. These three types of kinship are: Consanguineal kinship which is a kinship that is based on blood or birth, the relationship

between parents and children as well as siblings. This is the most basic and universal type of kinship. Also known as a primary kinship, it involves directly related people (Sagheer, 2017). Affinal kinship is a kinship that is based on marriage. The relationship between husband and wife is also considered a basic form of kinship. There are also social kinships, where individuals not connected by birth or marriage may still have a bond of kinship. By this definition, two people who live in different communities may share a bond of kinship through a religious affiliation or a social group, such as the Kiwanis or Rotary service club, or within a rural or tribal society marked by close ties among its members. A major difference between consanguineal or affinal and social kinship is that the latter involves the ability to terminate absolutely the relationship without any legal recourse (Schneider, 1984).Schneider (2004) assertd that kinship is the degree of sharing likelihood among individuals from different communities. For instance, if two people have many similarities between them, then both of them have a bond of kinship.

According to the anthropologist Murdock cited in Crossman (2019: 2), kinship is a structured system of relationships in which kins are bound to one another by complex inter-locking ties. If kinship involves only blood and marriage ties, then kinship defines how family relationships form and how family members interact with one another. But if, as Schneider argued, kinship involves any number of social ties, then kinship and its rules and norms regulate how people from specific groups, or even entire communities, relate to each other in every aspect of their lives.

Technology

The concept of technology is multifaceted and defies a single, universal definition. Floridi (2023) defined technology as the design and use of instruments, artefacts, and processes to solve problems and fulfil needs, but also highlights its potential to shape new needs and problems. He emphasizes technology's influence on both societal values and its evolution. Ihde (2009) explained technology from a sociological perspective. He proposes technology is a way of being in the world. He focused on how technology mediates our experiences and becomes integrated into our lives, shaping perception and interaction. Freeman (2022) avers that technology is inherently social and embedded in specific contexts, often perpetuating or amplifying existing social inequalities.

Tsing (2015) averred that technology organizes life, materials, and knowledge. The global flow and local impacts of technology shape diverse communities and environments. Jorgensen (2022) noted that technology is both a tool for colonization and a site of resistance and showcases its multifaceted role in shaping global power dynamics. Long (2023) argues that technology is shaped by and shapes societies and that the dynamic relationship between social contexts, cultural values, and technological advancement, highlights the agency of different actors in driving innovation and its social consequences.

Franklin (2013) explores how these technological innovations influence kinship practices, social hierarchies, and family configurations. He opines that technology has transformed the dynamics of kinship, often blurring the lines between biological and non-biological relationships. In today's globalized world, migration facilitated by technology has given rise to transnational families with complex kinship networks. Glick (2006) an anthropologist avers that technologies like social media and communication apps play a vital role in maintaining familial bonds across geographical distances. The study reveals that technological tools have become essential in bridging the physical and emotional gaps that exist within transnational families, allowing individuals to maintain a sense of belonging and connection despite being separated by vast distances.

Sociologists like Wellman (1999) present a contrasting viewpoint, Wellman emphasizes the potential of technology to create new forms of social connection and support networks. Wellman argues that technology can bring individuals together, facilitating communication and fostering a sense of community even in the absence of physical proximity. Risman (2004) argued that technological advancements have led to a redistribution of domestic responsibilities and have challenged traditional gender roles within the family unit. Additionally, technology has altered the nature of parent-child relationships, with parents increasingly relying on technology as a means of monitoring and communicating with their children.

The adoption of communication technologies, such as mobile phones and the internet, has had an impact on how Fulɓe individuals uphold their kinship ties. These technologies facilitate a more convenient and expedient means of communication among family members, regardless of their geographical dispersion. The ability to remain connected has implications for the sustenance of relationships, coordination of familial activities, and the overall sense of community. Social media platforms, for instance, possess the capacity to influence the dynamics of kinship by enabling Fulbe individuals to engage with a wider social network. This leads to the exchange of ideas and cultural practices and even influences how kinship relationships are negotiated and upheld (Ihde, 2009).

Technological advancements in the field of education can also exert an influence on the kinship dynamics of the Fulɓe people. Access to online educational resources, virtual classrooms, and e-learning platforms impacts the transmission of knowledge within families and how education contributes to social mobility and status within the kinship structure (Tsing, 2015). Developments in reproductive technologies, such as invitro fertilization (IVF), can pose a challenge to traditional conceptions of kinship. These technologies may offer new avenues for Fulɓe families to conceive, thereby impacting ideas surrounding lineage, inheritance, and the transmission of family identity. This, in particular, raises questions about the intersection of the "natural" and "cultural" realms of kinship as these technologies challenge conventional modes of conception and family formation in societies, including the Fulɓe (Franklin, 2013).

Globalization and economic changes have also had an impact on Fulɓe kinship through alterations in economic structures. For instance, the adoption of modern agricultural technologies or involvement in global markets modifies traditional roles within the family, which in turn affects the division of labor and economic responsibilities. Similarly, enhanced access to healthcare technologies influences Fulɓe kinship by exerting an effect on patterns of illness and mortality within the community. Improved healthcare technologies lead to changes in family structures and dynamics of caregiving, as well as impact life expectancy and the role of elders within the kinship system (Kumar, 2014).

Theoretical framework

The study adopted the diffusion of innovations theory as the theoretical framework for understanding the impact of technology on Fulɓe kinship in Jigawa State. The theory was developed by Everett Rogers in 1962. It explains how and why new ideas and technologies spread through populations. This theory remains important for understanding the adoption of various innovations, from agricultural practices to social media platforms. The core elements of the diffusion of innovations theory include the following:

(i) Innovation: The theory begins with the introduction of an innovation, which can be an idea, product, service, or technology that is perceived as new by potential adopters.

(ii) **Adopter categories**: Rogers classified individuals within a social system into different adopter categories based on their willingness to adopt an innovation. The categories are:
Innovators: The first to adopt an innovation.
Early Adopters: Opinion leaders who adopt early but not as quickly as innovators.
Early Majority: Those who adopt before the average member of society.
Late Majority: Those who adopt after the average member.
Laggards: The last to adopt an innovation.

(d) **Communication Channels**: The theory emphasizes the role of communication in the diffusion process. Different adopter categories may use different communication channels to gather information about the innovation. Mass media, interpersonal communication, and social networks all play a crucial role in spreading information.

(e) **Time**: Rogers identifies the innovation-decision process, which is the period between the knowledge of an innovation and its adoption or rejection. This process is influenced by factors such as the relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability of the innovation.

(f) **Social Systems**: Diffusion occurs within a social system, which is a group of individuals who share a common set of values, norms, and communication channels. The characteristics of the social system, such as its structure and norms, can affect the diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 1962).

(g) **Critical Mass**: Critical mass refers to the point at which enough individuals in a social system have adopted an innovation, leading to a self-sustaining process of adoption (Rogers, 1962).

The relevance of the diffusion of innovations theory to the study is that it enables a proper understanding of the impact of technology on Fulɓe kinship in Jigawa State, Nigeria. The theory helps to analyze how Fulɓe communities in Jigawa state adopt and integrate new technologies within their kinship structures and how factors like communication channels, social norms, individual characteristics, and local leaders, government officials, or NGOs influence technology use within Fulɓe communities.

Analysis of the Impact of Technology on Fulɓe Kinship in Jigawa State

The technological advancements in Jigawa State, Nigeria, have a dual impact on the Fulɓe kinship in the state. One of the primary advantages is found in improved communication within Jigawa state. In the past, mobile phones were limited in number among Fulɓe communities in Jigawa State, but have extensively been used by the Fulɓe people in the state over the years. This shift in accessibility has facilitated seamless connectivity among family members, even across vast distances. Consequently, the traditional nomadic lifestyle of the Fulɓe, which centres around herding and transhumance, has been significantly enhanced by the emergence of instant communication. Within this context, elders can transmit their invaluable wisdom to the younger generation, thus fostering a stronger sense of familial ties through regular exchanges facilitated by modern technology in the state (Lenhard, 2013). On the other hand, the increasing reliance on digital communication among Fulɓe in Jigawa State reduces face-to-face interaction, communal gathering and storytelling among Fulɓe community members.

The impact of technology-driven globalization on Fulɓe kinship extends to the restructuring of economic systems. For instance, the integration of modern agricultural technologies has bolstered livestock management, while participation in global markets has opened up new economic prospects for Fulɓe culture and economy in Jigawa state. The utilisation of GPS tracking and data analytics tools has become increasingly prevalent to effectively monitor grazing patterns, ensure the welfare of the herds, and optimize herd movements (Alber et al., 2010). Conversely, the introduction of technology also instigates shifts in economic dynamics within Fulɓe families in Jigawa state. It has altered traditional familial roles, thereby influencing the division of labor and economic responsibilities. The emergence of online markets and mobile banking platforms has brought about novel economic opportunities that have reshaped traditional economic roles and responsibilities. This shift in economic dynamics disrupts well-established patterns of financial responsibility and decision-making within the Fulɓe family unit in the state (Alber et al., 2010).

Furthermore, education, which was previously confined to oral traditions and local educational institutions in Jigawa state, has witnessed a remarkable expansion due to the advent of technology. The rise of online platforms has facilitated unprecedented access to a wealth of information, thereby empowering the Fulɓe youth with educational opportunities that transcend the limitations of their immediate surroundings in the state. Conversely, the exposure to global perspectives facilitated by the internet and social media platforms challenges traditional values and norms deeply ingrained within the community in the state. The exposure of individuals to diverse ideologies and practices has resulted in the dilution of traditional customs that have defined the Fulɓe way of life for generations in the state (Tsing, 2015).

The advancements in reproductive technologies, such as in vitro fertilization (IVF), offer new possibilities for Fulɓe families to conceive and have children in Jigawa State. However, these developments also pose a challenge to traditional notions of kinship in the state as they introduce new avenues for shaping ideas about lineage, inheritance, and the transmission of family identity. The improved access to healthcare technologies among Fulɓe communities in Jigawa State has led to a reduction in morbidity and mortality rates within the Fulɓe communities. Nevertheless, enhanced healthcare technologies have brought about changes in family structures and caregiving dynamics, impacting life expectancy and the role of elders within the Fulɓe kinship system in the state (Franklin, 2013).

Thus, it can be inferred from the aforementioned analysis that technological advancements in Jigawa State possess a dual nature. While they have the potential to reinforce Fulɓe kinship through improved communication and connectivity, advancements in education and healthcare, and reproductive technologies, they also present challenges by introducing new ideas and lifestyles. The achievement of a state of harmonious equilibrium requires the skilled navigation and adaptation of Fulɓe communities in Jigawa to the aforementioned technological advancements, while also ensuring the preservation of their respective cultural identities (Kumar, 2014).

Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of technology on Fulɓe kinship in Jigawa state. The findings of this study indicate that technology, despite its challenges, plays a significant role in enhancing communication among the Fulɓe community. It also assists in maintaining cultural ties and fostering a sense of unity. Furthermore, technology enables the Fulɓe people to remain connected, engage in discussions regarding their heritage, and reinforce their traditional

relationships. The advancements in technology within the fields of education and healthcare have resulted in increased exposure to diverse ideas and practices.

Additionally, the interactions on a global scale and the economic changes have introduced new lifestyles, values, and opportunities for the Fulɓe population in Jigawa State. Reproductive technologies serve as a means to strengthen familial bonds by addressing health concerns or infertility. Nevertheless, it is important to note that these advancements are not without their challenges. The progress made in education and healthcare has led to increased exposure to different ideas and practices, which can potentially challenge traditional norms and values. The access to a wide range of information has influenced individuals to question or reevaluate certain aspects of their cultural heritage.

Furthermore, global interactions and economic changes have brought about new ways of life that challenge the traditional practices of the Fulɓe community in Jigawa State. Reproductive technologies can also disrupt traditional family structures, especially when there are changes in reproductive patterns. Therefore, the technological advancements in various aspects of life in Jigawa State have both positive and negative impacts on the traditional bonds that define Fulɓe kinship in the state. To achieve a harmonious equilibrium, Fulɓe individuals and communities must navigate and adapt to these technological changes while preserving their cultural identity in Jigawa state.

Recommendations

In light of the challenges of technology to Fulɓe kinship in Jigawa state, the study recommends that government and community leaders should collaborate on projects that blend indigenous wisdom with innovative technologies that can enhance livelihoods while preserving the community's cultural heritage of kinship.

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ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AND VOTE-BUYING IN NIGERIA: MEDIA STUDY PERSPECTIVES

[1]Toyin Segun Onayinka, [2]Adebayo John James, [3]Chinyere, M. Ignatius
[1,2,3] Department of Mass Communication
Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State
&
[4]George Adekola Fehintola
Department of Communication and Language Arts
Faculty of Arts
University of Ibadan
Corresponding Author: toyin.**onayinka**@fuoye.edu.ng

Abstract
The study examined the dynamics of vote-buying and election campaigns in Nigeria within the media study perspectives. It focuses on the multifaceted dimensions of election campaigns, political campaign strategies and the phenomenon of vote buying. Despite Nigeria's 23 years of uninterrupted democratic rule since the Fourth Republic commenced in 1999, the persistence of vote buying poses significant challenges to the integrity and legitimacy of the electoral process. The study employs a qualitative descriptive approach with secondary data to conduct an in-depth review of existing literature to reveal the elements embedded in election campaigns and vote buying practices. It explored the communication systems and mass media strategies deployed in vote buying transactions thereby revealing the socio-behavioral patterns of Nigerian voters. The study applies the agenda setting theory to explain how political agenda influences voters' expectations and perceptions. It subsequently identified stimulus words and phrases deployed in election campaigns that enable vote buying practices thereby revealing the relationship between political campaigns and vote buying in Nigeria. It also identified poverty, unemployment and the absence of robust institutions as causes of vote buying. It establishes the understanding of agenda-setting theory to elucidate the complex dynamics between campaign communication and voter behavior, providing insights for future empirical studies and policy interventions aimed at safeguarding the integrity of Nigeria's electoral process. The study therefore recommends the need for policies that will mitigate the influence of inducements on the electoral process.
Keywords: Election Campaigns, Vote-Buying, Agenda-Setting, Media Studies, Stimulus

Introduction

Democracy is a system of government that provides qualified citizens participatory right in election processes. Monsiváis-Carrillo (2022) posits that people have varied perspectives democracy and desired outcomes. However, Monsiváis-Carrillo, (2022) further argues that a useful and relevant democracy must be such that yields free and fair electoral outcomes. The emerging democratic governance structure(s) respects and observes the rule of law where citizens have equal civil and political rights and freedoms. Elections are a fundamental part of democracy. They are the process by which citizens choose their representatives and leaders. Elections must be conducted in a transparent and accountable manner for them to be fair and free.

The Nigerian state subscribes, from independence in 1960 to democratic dispensation with military coups and leaderships in-between. Nigeria currently runs what is known as the Fourth Republic of its democratic dispensation (Monday, 2021) The Fourth Republic began on May 29, 1999, following the death of military dictator Sani Abacha and the subsequent transition to democracy. The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria governs the Fourth Republic, which establishes a presidential system of government (Matfess, 2016).

The Fourth Republic recorded both progress and challenges. On the one hand, there have been significant improvements in the country's democratic institutions and practices. For example, there have been seven successful presidential elections and the opposition defeated the incumbent once. Also, there have been challenges in the process that delivers each transition. One of such is the prevalence of vote buying practices in Nigerian elections (Oladapo et al., 2020). Vote buying is a form of electoral corruption in which money or other goods exchange hands between contestants and voters. Vote buying can have a significant impact on electoral outcomes and undermine the legitimacy of the democratic process. Despite the prevalence of vote buying, Korovin, (2020) establishes that politicians often campaign vigorously during election circles.

However, the above standpoint is reinforced with the charging to court of Chief Adebutu, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governorship aspirant in the 2023 election by the government of Nigeria for alleged vote buying. The PDP governorship candidate distributed 200,000 ‘verve cards’ with his name printed on the cards and loaded with N10, 000 each and distributed to potential voters (Akinyele, 2023; Apanpa, 2023; DailyPost, 2023). Also, few studies have been carried out to understand the communication dynamics of vote buying on the socio-behavioural patterns of voters in Nigeria. These few studies include how vote buying represents a form of political clientelism dealing with pre-electoral transfers of money or material benefits from candidates to voters (Lucky, 2014). Christopher et al., (2022) examines the issue of vote buying as a negative factor against good governance in Nigeria, while Mohammed, (2020) discusses the menace of vote buying in Nigeria and way forward.

This study’s core objectives are to contribute to the emerging media studies on vote buying; and enrich the theoretical base of the concept to engender media study interests. Through the foregoing objectives, the study hopes to provide direction for future media studies, focus on vote buying in Nigeria by highlighting possible approach, categorization of variables, and the need to establish the relationship between election campaign and vote buying on one hand and vote buying and election outcomes on the hand. The study also contributes to the ongoing discussion on the paradox between electoral campaigns and vote buying in the Nigerian electoral system and its implication for the sustenance of democracy.

Methodology

This paper adopted qualitative approach to conduct an in-depth review of available literature to examine the elements involved in election campaigns and vote buying. It further highlights the media study approach on the menace towards proposing basis for empirical studies on vote buying while also suggesting a theory to guide such studies The reviewed materials include Acts of Legislative House, reference books, journals, magazines, newspapers, images and other written materials linked to the issues.

Theoretical Framework

Fortunato and Martin (2016) provide insight into the understanding and explanation of complex political communication using agenda setting theory. The introduction of agenda-setting theory out of its media eco-chamber to the realm of political environment shows how elastic the theory could readily be adaptable to the explanation of non-media-related concepts and issues. Fortunato and Martin, (2016) fluidly applied agenda setting theory to explain the existing connections between the media environment and election campaigns. In the same vein, Lampoltshammer et al., (2023) also applied the foregoing understanding of agenda setting theory to reveal the link between the press and political discourse.

It is therefore obvious that politically related communication involves elements of agenda setting that moderate voters' expectations. Media agenda and political agenda often have a meeting point through which the existing dominant political agenda is moderated and mainstreamed into election processes. However, the acceptance of such mainstream dominant political agendas as the norm will form part of the focus of this study. Hence, situating the relationship between media theory within election campaigns enabled us to understand and explain how electorates relate to the various promises of politicians, including on-and off-campaign trial promises.

The agenda-setting theory, developed by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in the 1970s, posits that the media play a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and influencing the salience of issues. This theory suggests that the media do not tell people what to think but instead what to think about (Ardèvol-Abreu et al., 2020; McCombs et al., 2014). Agenda-setting theory, traditionally applied to media studies, has been extended to political communication research to understand how political campaigns influence the priorities and attitudes of voters (Fortunato & Martin, 2016; Lampoltshammer et al., 2023; Stasiak-Jazukiewicz et al., 2020). Nigerian politicians use different campaign strategies to voters and to galvanise their support base.

However, politicians in Nigeria pushes narratives that are aimed at convincing the electorate that their offerings are the best options. Such narratives are often laden with words and phrases that stick with the electorates and pave the way for vote buying. The narratives pushed are deliberately in the realm of agenda setting. We consider such agenda setting narratives as stimuli that tend to promote illegality or negative actions that are at variants with the tenets of democracy. Our attempts at isolating negative stimulus that shape public opinions and perception proposes that agenda setting theory should be approached form two perspectives, positive and negative stimulus.

This study therefore posits that there is a link between mass communication at the campaign trails and the shaping of voters' expectations during the Election Day which enables acceptance of vote buying as part of the election campaign practices (Onayinka et al., 2018). The question that the Agenda Setting theory has enabled us to set for this work is to ask how the Nigerian electorates enabled a fusion of election campaign and vote buying to coexist within the electoral process.

Election Campaigns

Election campaigns are pivotal moments in democratic systems, providing candidates and political parties with opportunities to convey their messages, policy proposals, and visions for governance. Political communication plays a significant role in the success of election campaigns, as candidates strive to connect with voters, shape public opinion, and secure electoral support. This article aims to explore the multidimensional aspects of election campaigns, the influence of political communication, and the implications of modern campaigning strategies.Politicians' campaign adopts different platforms and different strategies to win elections (Kao et al., 2022). Campaign strategies, instruments and media adopted depend on which of the strategies politicians consider most effective, audio-visual means, new media, broadcast radio and television stations, religious institutions, and indigenous media (Ali & Al- Ahbabi, 2022; Rufai, 2023; Stier et al., 2018).

According to Kao et al., (2022) studies on democracies in developing countries have shown that vote buying is widespread. Researchers have investigated how politicians decide who to target with vote buying, how voters view vote buying, and the consequences of vote buying. However, most studies have only compared support for candidates who offer handouts to those who do not. They have not explored how offering handouts compares to other campaign strategies, such as promising future goods or community benefits, explicitly refusing to engage in vote buying, or building support based on ethnic or local ties.

From the foregoing, vote buying can be regarded as one of the campaign strategies by politicians to win elections. For instance, in Nigeria, politicians use money and food items as means of inducing voters and thereby buy their votes (Jaja & Agumagu, 2019).

Vote-Buying in Nigeria's Democratic Process

Vote buying is a form of electoral corruption in which voters are offered money or other inducements in exchange for their votes (Nichter, 2014). Vote buying remains a pervasive phenomenon often discernable in countries practicing participatory democracy that allows leaders' emergence through elections. According to Guerra and Justesen, (2022) vote buying represents a political clientelism involving pre-electoral transfers of money or material benefits from candidates to voters especially in developing countries. In Latin America, it is a common practice to deploy vote buying strategies to win over voters during election period and this practice is pervasive in the whole region (Justesen & Manzetti, 2023). Also, there is the use of rent seeking method to win voters in authoritarian countries like China (Ma et al., 2022). Hence, it is obvious that vote buying is a worldwide phenomenon.

This practice is widespread in Nigeria, and it has significant implications for the country's democratic process (Nwagwuet al., 2022). Vote buying undermines the principle of popular sovereignty, as it allows wealthy and unscrupulous candidates to buy their way into power, regardless of their competence or public support. This erodes citizens' trust in the electoral system and reduces political participation. Vote buying also perpetuates a cycle of corruption and impunity. Politicians who engage in vote buying may feel entitled to recoup their "investment" through corrupt practices while in office, leading to a vicious cycle of electoral corruption and governance challenges (Aspinall et al., 2017; Nichter, 2014). In addition, vote buying exacerbates socio-economic inequalities. The practice tends to target vulnerable populations who are more susceptible to inducements due to poverty and lack of access to essential services. Consequently, this reinforces patterns of marginalization and perpetuates the cycle of poverty.

There are several factors that contribute to the persistence of vote buying in Nigeria. These include weak law enforcement, the lack of political will to hold vote buyers accountable, poverty,

and socio-economic disparities. Addressing vote buying requires a multi-faceted approach. Strengthening law enforcement and electoral institutions to enforce anti-corruption laws and regulations is crucial. Additionally, promoting political transparency, accountability, and civic education can empower citizens to resist inducements and make informed voting decisions.

Vote-buying is an illicit electoral phenomenon characterised by the act of enticing voters to endorse a specific political candidate through intermediaries and representatives of a political party. These individuals actively seek to secure votes for the designated candidate(s) from voters either prior to or on the day of an election. Such inducements come in the form of money, food and clothes and describe vote-buying as any form of financial, material and promissory inducement or reward by a candidate, political party, agent or supporter to influence a voter to cast his or her vote or even abstain from doing so to enhance the chances of a particular contestant wining an election (Ma et al., 2022; Nwagwu et al., 2022). It is an electoral trading engagement whereby an agent or a proxy of a political party or a politician offers monetary or comestible inducements to obtain the votes of the electorates.

Unlike in marketing, where a seller persuades prospective buyers to purchase his products and services, it is the buyers who persuade the electorates (sellers) to sell their votes in the electoral process. It is a reversal of roles in the vote-buying and selling process. For instance, in an off-cycle elections conducted in the Ekiti, Anambra, Ondo, Osun and Edo states as well as the 2019 general elections, Lecturer and Chukwuma, (2020) discovered how flagrant sharing of money, food and valuables among the voters by political contestants and party agents during elections qualifies Nigeria as a moneyocracy or 'cash-and-carry' democracy.

The pervasive nature of vote-buying often receives responses from the Nigerian state through its legislative houses with the laws that criminalise voters' inducements (Adebiyi & Olowa, 2022; Awopeju, 2011).

Forms of Vote-Buying

Voters' inducements, also known as electoral clientelism, are another form of electoral corruption that has become increasingly prevalent in contemporary democracies. These inducements can take various forms, such as direct cash handouts (Lecturer & Chukwuma, 2020), promises of social services or development projects, (Justesen & Manzetti, 2023) employment or patronage, food and material goods, or community and social events (Busia et al., 2021) . Voters' inducements have significant implications for democratic governance. Voters inducement goes contrary to the ideals of participatory democracy and defeats the purposes of free choice (Mohammed, 2020).The various forms of vote buying undermine the principle of political equality, foster short-term, transactional relationships between politicians and voters, and perpetuate corruption and a culture of entitlement among politicians (Israel & John, 2020).

Causes of Vote-Buying in Nigeria

Poverty

Poverty remains a pervasive issue in Nigeria, with a significant portion of the population living below the poverty line (Arejiogbe et al., 2023). Various factors contribute to the high level of poverty in Nigeria. These factors include high population growth, infrastructural deficit, poor standard of living among others. These factors lead to a large proportion of the Nigerians population experiencing multidimensional poverty (Justice et al., 2023). Due to high level of poverty, it creates a large pool of vulnerable voters among citizens, making them susceptible to inducements offered during election periods. Politicians exploit the economic hardships faced by many Nigerians by offering financial incentives, food items, or other forms of assistance in

exchange for votes (Dimnwobi et al., 2023; Saidu et al., 2023). For impoverished individuals, the immediate relief provided by vote buying may outweigh concerns about the long-term consequences for democracy and governance. This cycle perpetuates a culture of dependency and undermines the integrity of the electoral process.

Israel and John, (2020) regard vote-buying as a transactional engagement between politicians and electorate with the aim of influencing voters in the realm of political economy. Thus, voters' inducement is transactional involving a willing buyer and a willing seller with both parties taking something out of the transaction. Mares and Young's, (2016) work through examination of political literature, disaggregated the concept of vote buying (tagged as clientelism) on two parallels, the positive and negative inducements. They argued that application of either positive or negative inducement depends on countries, regions and individuals. However, this study argues that in every electoral process, voters' inducement occurs, and it has minimal bearing with geographical location if literature has recognised positive and negative inducements. The above justification rests on assessing election campaign as positive inducement while gifts such as monetary and material are negative inducements.

Unemployment

Unemployment rates in Nigeria have remained high, particularly among youth and recent graduates (Olubusoye et al., 2023). The lack of viable employment opportunities contributes to economic insecurity and disenchantment with the political system. Many unemployed individuals may view vote buying as a means of accessing financial assistance or patronage from political actors (Enilolobo et al., 2019; Okolie & Igbini, 2020). Politicians, aware of the frustrations and aspirations of unemployed youths, leverage promises of job creation, empowerment schemes, or government appointments as inducements during election campaigns. The prospect of securing employment or livelihood opportunities through political connections influences voting behavior and perpetuates the cycle of patronage politics.

Absence of Strong Institutions

Weak institutional frameworks and ineffective governance mechanisms exacerbate the prevalence of vote buying in Nigeria (Ojeka et al., 2019). The absence of robust regulatory bodies and enforcement mechanisms undermines accountability and transparency in the electoral process. Political elites often wield disproportionate influence over state institutions, enabling them to manipulate electoral outcomes and perpetuate corrupt practices. The lack of credible electoral oversight and enforcement mechanisms diminishes public trust in the electoral system and erodes confidence in democratic institutions. Without strong institutions to safeguard the integrity of elections and hold perpetrators of vote buying accountable, the practice continues unabated, undermining the democratic aspirations of the Nigerian populace (C.J.S. et al., 2021).

Addressing the root causes of vote-buying in Nigeria requires comprehensive reforms aimed at tackling poverty, promoting economic opportunities, and strengthening institutional capacity. Effective governance, transparency, and citizen engagement are essential for fostering a democratic culture that prioritizes the collective welfare of the nation over narrow political interests.

Recommendations

The study focused on the need to expand research efforts and academic discourse on vote buying within the field of media studies. Arising from that the following recommendations are made:

(a) There is need to deepen understanding of the elements of electoral communication strategies and voter behaviour as related to media studies. Such understanding enhances explanation of the mechanisms through which vote buying influences electoral outcomes.
(b) By conducting empirical studies and theoretical analyses, media scholars can contribute valuable information on the prevalence, causes, and consequences of vote buying in Nigeria and other democratic contexts.
(c) The study highlights the need for proactive policy interventions and electoral reforms aimed at curbing the prevalence of vote buying and strengthening electoral integrity.
(d) Policy makers and electoral authorities should prioritize the enforcement of existing anti-corruption laws and regulations, particularly those pertaining to electoral malpractice and voter inducements.
(e) Electoral reforms should focus on enhancing transparency, accountability, and fairness in the electoral process, including the regulation of campaigns, financing, monitoring of political expenditures, and prosecution of vote buying offenders.
(f) Furthermore, electoral institutions should collaborate with civil society organizations, media stakeholders, and international partners to promote public awareness campaigns, civic education initiatives, and grassroots mobilization efforts aimed at combating electoral corruption and promoting democratic values.
(g) The study emphasizes the importance of strengthening democratic institutions and governance mechanisms to safeguard the integrity of the electoral process. Efforts should be made to enhance the independence, professionalism, and capacity of electoral management bodies, law enforcement agencies, and judicial institutions responsible for overseeing elections and adjudicating electoral disputes. By fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and rule of law, democratic institutions can effectively deter electoral malpractice and uphold the principles of free and fair elections.
(h) Furthermore, institutional reforms should prioritize the inclusion of marginalized communities, protection of electoral rights, and promotion of inclusive political participation to ensure the legitimacy and credibility of electoral outcomes.

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CHALLENGES CONFRONTING VIGILANTE GROUPS IN EFFECTIVE CRIME CONTROL IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

Stephen Terver Anyo, Prof. E.T Tagher
&
Dr. Comfort Ugbem-Onah
Department of Sociology,
Benue State University, Makurdi
Contact: stevieanyo@gmail.com

Abstract
Vigilante groups' contributions to crime control are invaluable. However, the activities of vigilante groups have faced operational and institutional challenges. These challenges have negatively affected the operations of vigilante groups in crime control in Benue State. The study investigated the challenges of vigilante groups in crime control in Benue State with a view to suggesting ways of curbing those challenges for enhanced effectiveness of vigilante groups in Benue State**.** Three Local Government Areas – Katsina-Ala, Makurdi, and Oturkpo, were selected across the three Senatorial districts in Benue State for the study. The population of the study comprised vigilante operatives, religious leaders, traditional rulers and members of the public. The study adopted a survey design. Questionnaire and in-depth interview (IDI) were used to generate data from 367 respondents using the Taro Yamane sample size determination formula. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling were deployed for the selection of respondents and interviewees. Twelve interview sessions were conducted across the sampled Local Government Areas. The quantitative data were presented in frequency and percentages while qualitative data were presented in narrative form. The study identified lack of logistics, shortage of crime fighting equipment, absence of enabling legal instrument for the operation of vigilante groups, human rights violation, corruption, insufficient training among vigilantes and vested interests, as the challenges of vigilante group in the study area. The study recommends the enactment of laws recognizing vigilante groups; provision of needed crime fighting equipment by stakeholders; adequate funding, provision of logistic support as well as proper training and reorientation of vigilante operatives to respect the fundamental human rights of suspects.
Keywords: Crime fighting Equipment; Human Rights Violation; Legal Instruments; Vigilante Groups; Religious Leaders.

Introduction

Concerns about crime cuts across the global community, and there is unanimity among both leaders and the followers about the need for a solution to the problem. In spite of the various concerted strategies to combat crime globally, crime rate seems to have been continuously high. According to the World Population Review of Crime Rate (2022), crime rate by country indicated the following: Venezuala, 83.76%, Papua New Guinea, 80.79%, South Africa,76.86%, Afghanistan, 76.31%, Honduras, 74.54%, Trinidad and Tobago, 71.63%, Guyana, 68.74%, Brazil,67.49%, Elsalvado,67.79%, Jamaica,67.47%, Bangladesh,63.9%, Argentina, 63.82%, Puerto Rico,62.82%, and Nigeria, 64.06%. The above crime rates indicated that crime is high across countries of the world.

The global upsurge in crime rate may be attributed to the failure of the formal crime control strategies to effectively checkmate the incidence of crime. The ineffectiveness and inefficiency of the formal mechanisms of crime control probably accounts for the emergence and persistence of crimes such as kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery, rape, assassination, theft, ethnic Militia activities among others in different parts of Nigeria including Benue State. It appears there is a crime problem in Benue State which seems to have overwhelmed the formal crime control agencies in the State. Crime control in Benue State appears ineffective ostensibly due to the nature of the security architecture adopted by the formal agencies of crime control (Anyo, e tal 2020).

In any society where crime control mechanisms are functional, such a society is relatively stable and peaceful thereby guaranteeing the people the right to pursue their socio-economic, political aspirations and other legitimate aspirations without obstruction, fear and disturbance. Conversely, in a society where crime control strategies are dysfunctional, the people find it difficult to pursue their political and socio-economic goals and other needs. For centuries, Benue communities have been preoccupied with the task of finding the most viable, reliable and dependable crime control strategy to checkmate and counter the menace of crime in order to have a peaceful environment where the aspirations of the people could be attained. Crime remains one of the phenomena that have constituted an encumbrance to the attainment of the people's desire for a secured and orderly society (Anyo, et al 2020).

Till date, the formal agencies of crime control such as the military and police in Benue State have been unable to guarantee safety of live and property of the people. In addition, the services (police) of formal crime control agencies seem to be expensive, and time wasting (consuming).This perceived gap in the operational efficiency and service delivery necessitated the emergence of vigilante groups in Benue State. Vigilante groups have become essential part of everyday security among communities in Benue State. The patronage of vigilante groups on the other hand, has proven remarkable in complementing the peoples' quest for cost effective, accessible, rapid, and swift community evolved mechanism of crime control and order maintenance. However, vigilante groups are faced with enormous challenges such as lack of logistics: patrol van, torch lights, rain coat and uniforms, lack crime fighting equipment among others, which hamper their crime control activities. These challenges have negatively affected the effectiveness of vigilante groups in crime control in Benue State, in particular.

Alemika etal (2003) identified the challenges of vigilante groups to include: lack of funding, harassment from the police when carrying out their duties, lack of proper training and adequate arms, lack of basic operational equipment such as flashlights, rain boots, rain coats, identity cards, whistles, and uniforms. The Justice for All Group (2012) noted that vigilante groups, lack technical support and funding intervention from the State for enhanced operations of vigilante. Justice for All Group also identified the absence of relevant training in tackling the trend

and sophistication of criminality as a challenge of vigilantes (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013). Alemika e tal (2003) stated that the meagre remuneration paid to the local vigilante groups by the community has been one of the factors limiting the effectiveness of the group in their security services. This implies that, funding challenges may lure vigilantes into temptation of engaging in criminal activities.

Knowland (2014), observed that in Mexico, certain vigilante groups that started by helping in countering kidnapping and drug dealing sometimes deviated into drug dealing and exportation themselves; due to lack of adequate remuneration and strict regulation of their activities by the State. The foregoing presupposes that the needed funding of vigilante groups was not provided for, and State regulatory policies were not available to checkmate their excesses. According Onwuegbusi (2017), scholars have raised a number of concerns ranging from the character of the vigilantes, the manner of recruitment of the operatives, the training they receive, their remuneration and upkeep, the relationship between vigilantes and the public, to the allegiance of the vigilantes to the State authority to the level of cooperation between vigilante groups and the conventional security agencies (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013).

In a similar vein, Umeagbalasi, (2012) argues that vigilante group members have often slacked in their objective mission and channeled their loyalty to the State both at the National, State and the Community levels. It is argued that vigilantes have turned their loyalty to the State authorities, helping in actualizing the motives, objectives or goals of State authorities and have often played along with their preferences because of monetary benefits. This trend in vigilantism is obtainable in various communities where the vigilantes would submit to the wishes of agencies of the State or where they are used as instruments of power tussle among individuals aspiring for leadership positions. The consistent changes in vigilante groups' loyalty from community to State appear to emanate from the lack of remuneration for vigilantes. The direct involvement of the State in the activities of vigilante groups is pointer to the usurpation of vigilantism by the State.

There are diverse researches on the challenges of vigilante groups in Nigeria and elsewhere. However, none of such studies was carried out in Benue State to investigate the similarities or dissimilarities of such challenges, hence, there is gap in knowledge. Again, Benue State in particular, and Nigeria in general, is caught up in the wed of security challenges that appear to overwhelm the formal agencies of crime control, hence the resurgence of vigilante groups as complementary community-evolved crime control organs. However, vigilante groups are confronted with challenges which needed to be investigated and resolved for enhanced crime control in Benue State, Nigeria. This study therefore, examines the challenges confronting vigilante groups in crime control in Benue State. In doing this the study attempted to answer the following questions: What are the challenges of vigilante groups in Benue State and how can the identified challenges be addressed to reposition vigilante groups for effective crime control? The objectives of the paper include to: identify the challenges confronting vigilante groups in Benue State; and suggest ways of mitigating those challenges for effective crime control in the study area.

Conceptual Clarifications

In this study, some concepts are clarified to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding of usage. The concepts of vigilante groups and crime control are clarified.

Vigilante Group: Vigilante groups are generally viewed as local, participatory, unofficial, voluntary and simplistic community evolved agencies. They are established by landlords, tenants, age grades, youth associations, the community and other non-State interest groups. The

composition of local vigilante groups is mostly people residing within the community. Vigilante groups are not formalized agencies and have no written operational guidelines. Vigilante groups are also not uniformed, ranked, and salaried organizations but voluntary associations. They are financed by the community through community contributions and their activities are not formally recognized by the State. They resolve disputes between neighbours, restrain antisocial behaviours, and ensure security of lives and property (Anyo etal, 2020). For the purpose of this study, vigilante groups are civil society-initiated security and safety efforts that emerged to fill a security gap.

Crime Control: Dambazau (2007) defines crime control as a pattern of attitudes and behaviours directed both at reducing the threat of crime and enhancing the sense of safety and security to positively influence the quality of life, and to develop environments where crime cannot flourish. He further asserts that crime control involves the idea of solving crime problems, arresting suspects, prosecuting and incapacitating offenders. For this study, crime control is the concerted effort of the community to counter and checkmate the incidence of crime in the society.

Literature Review

This section of the study reviews literature on the evolution and challenges of vigilante groups.

In North America, vigilantism dates back to the eighteenth century and remains relevant to-date (Brown, 1975). In 1851 and 1856, concerned citizens in San Francisco organized vigilante committees that forcibly restored peace and order (World Book Encyclopedia cited in Nwaeze, 2010). Before 1900, many vigilante groups were formed in frontier areas of the United States. Newby (2012) suggested that the continuing use of a variety of vigilante groups in different contexts in the United States and Britain is part of the efforts to protect and create a perfect democracy which ensures a peaceful and secure environment for the populace. These vigilante groups collaborate with the State to provide services to the people in the areas of crime prevention and crime control, protecting local communities, and serving as alternative dispute resolution mechanism

In pre-colonial Africa, especially in South-Africa, Sierra-Leone, Ghana, and Nigeria, vigilantism found expression in the activities of secret societies, warrior bands, age grades and night guards which performed diverse functions of law enforcement, extra-judicial adjudication, external defense and peacemaking (Pratten, 2008). The phenomenon of vigilantism as citizen-led provision and governance of security is neither new in history across cultures (Killingray 1986; Abrahams 1987; Gore and Pratten 2003; Leach 2004; Fourchard 2008 cited in Zumve, et al 2020), nor is vigilante activities in modern times uniquely peculiar to African societies (Brownyn, 2001). Some dissimilarity can be drawn between these groups which were created by local communities for their own protection and the recently State evolved vigilante groups.

Nigerian pre-colonial societies depended solely on informal methods of crime control in combating crime and criminals. For example, Rotimi 1977; Tamuno 1970, Ahire 1991; and Dambazau 1994 cited in Anyo, et al 2020 posit that before the emergence of formal crime control structures in Nigeria, among the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa societies/nations, crime control was achieved using informal means such as, age grade system, secret societies, dogarai, and community watch groups that may be subsumed generally into vigilante groups in today's parlance. This was also true in Benue province where community watch groups such as "(Mbakwav) age grade" and "(Mbayev Kyaior) youth" among the Tiv, and "(Olode) community policing group" among the Idoma were used as a means for both social and crime control before the advent of colonial rule. They policed community members' behaviour; imposed sanctions against those who violated the course for maintenance of law and order, defended their communities against external aggression,

performed peacemaking function, and control of crime. These pre-modern agencies of crime control were not accepted by the colonial administration, who described them as barbaric, archaic and uncivilized and hence they were abolished.

Communities have diverse reasons accounting for the resurgence of the activities of community watch groups (vigilante groups). In South Africa, vigilante activity was frequently justified as 'filling a policing gap' due to police inefficiency, corruption and conspiracy with criminals, practical failure in the criminal justice system. In Sierra-Leone, vigilante activities have been explained in terms of police ineffectiveness in combating crimes (Pratten & Sen, 2008). In Nigeria, Human Rights Watch and Center for Law Enforcement and Education report (2002) noted that vigilante groups and other self-defense groups currently operating in Nigeria have roots that reach deep into the country's history. Vigilante groups are organized to ensure public safety because of police ineffectiveness. It is in this regard that various alternative means such as – Civilian Joint Task Force-(Yangoro) in Borno State (CJTF), ethnic militias, such as Oodua People's Congress (OPC), "Amotekun" in Western Nigeria, Bakassi Boys and Egbesu Boys in Eastern Nigeria, Arewa Youth Vanguard for the Northern Nigeria, Hisba for Sharia practicing areas, Livestock Guards and Benue State Community Volunteer Guard in Benue State developed and are still being supported in many quarters. However, the operations of vigilante groups are characterized by a plethora of challenges.

In specific, the following are the challenges of vigilante groups:

Inadequate funding

The world over, all institutions performing such crucial functions for the society are supposed to be properly funded to live up to their expected goals. Most imperatively, for those ensuring the security and safety of lives and property of the society, funding should have been given priority. However, vigilante groups in Nigeria and Benue State in particular, are confronted with funding challenges which hamper their effectiveness and efficiency. Vigilante groups are largely funded by and through community efforts and individual monetary donations and contributions. The issues of lack of funding lead to vigilante groups' unending yearnings for operational facilities such as touch lights, patrol vans, rain coats, and whistles (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013).

The Use and Abuse of Arms

The operations of vigilante groups that are armed and managed outside the purview of the State raise several concerns. Their existence in Benue State mirrors the failure of the State and the danger of a gradual drift towards State failure and collapse that may throw up warlords in different parts of the State. For instance, the arming of Benue Community Volunteer Guards is a pointer in this direction. The proliferation of arms in the society via vigilante groups' activities in Benue State is a major breeder of conflict and violent crimes in general. The extent to which such groups contribute to the wide spread cases of ethnic, religious and communal violence needs to be investigated, because many well-known vigilante groups are primarily ethnic militia (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013).

Human Rights Violation

The operations of vigilante groups, stir concern regarding human rights protection, observance of the rule of law, and due process. Vigilante groups are criticized in the area of respect for suspects' human rights in the course of investigation. There are numerous instances

where vigilante groups are challenged on the account of violation of inalienable rights of crime suspects. The nature of human rights violation by vigilante groups include, torture of crime suspects, neck lacing of suspects, hanging, use of tear gas, electrocution of suspects and the application of pepper on genital and other sensitive organs of crime suspect, such organs include, anus, eyes, penis, and virginal. The issue of human right violation by the vigilante groups makes the people to decline their support to the operation of vigilante groups in their communities. A recurring feature among vigilance groups' method of handling cases is that of inflicting corporal punishment on suspects in the mistaken belief of administering justice (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013).

Illegal Nature of Vigilante Groups:

In Nigeria as it stands today, there is no existing law establishing, empowering, mandating, recognizing and defining vigilante groups' powers to function as crime control outfits. The challenge of lack of legal framework sometimes makes the police and the public to question of the legality of vigilante groups. Such attitude has de-motivated members of the organization thereby making them to be rated lowly in performance (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013).

The Problem of Remuneration:

Vigilante groups provide security services for the protection lives and property of members of the society. However, the individuals performing such functions are not well remunerated to boost their morale. The non-provision of token in form of remuneration for full time vigilante members pushes some of them to indulge in corrupt practices. Members of vigilante groups take to corrupt practices that are noticeable and prevalent in State or official security organizations. The nature and extent of corruption in vigilante groups in Nigeria in general and Benue State in particular, causes public distrust for the services they provide and gives them bad image before the public (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013).

Lack of Facilities/Equipment:

There is no institution or organization that functions, operates and performs maximally without the availability of the basic tools or facilities to enhance proficiency and efficiency. Vigilante groups are confronted with the challenge of lack of operational logistics and facilities to perform in Benue State. There is no crime fighting agency, or organization that operates effectively without improved crime fighting facilities. Vigilante groups lack such facilities as patrol vans, touch light, rain coat, whistles and stationeries. When institutions and organizations lack work tools, their performance is grossly affected (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013).

Extra Judicial Killing:

Extra judicial killing means killing of a human being not in accordance with the due process of law as determined by a competent judicial authority after regular trial in a court of law and subsequent determination of guilt for which death penalty is applied. Many vigilante groups have been accused of engagement in extra judicial killings, contrary to the intent and purpose of the services they are supposed to render (CLEEN; 2003, Chikwendu; 2016, Okeke, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted functionalism as its theoretical framework. Functionalism or structural functionalism as it is often called is rooted in the works of Spencer (1820-1903) and Durkheim (1858-1917). Functionalists view society as a system of highly interrelated structures and parts that function or operate together and harmoniously. Functionalists analyze the society by seeking to know what each component part of the society contributes to the smooth functioning of the whole 'society'. The core argument of functionalism is that there is a consensus of core values within a society which corresponds to the needs of its members. Society is viewed as a functioning entity comprising of many parts each of which interrelates with and supports the others (Haralambos & Robini, 1980). Therefore, to understand any part of the society is to analyze its relationship with other parts and essentially its contribution to the maintenance of the society.

For the functionalists, social control is a basic human need and one of the salient prerequisites behind the existence of the State, government and even society. Therefore, the activities of vigilante groups as crime control outfit are indispensable in the society given their contribution to crime control in the society without which the nature of social disorder would have aggravated. For the functionalists, the basic needs or those necessary conditions of existence of society are referred to as the functional prerequisites of society. Several approaches have been used to identify what these functional prerequisites of societies are. The assumption here is that the existing institutional arrangements such as crime control agencies meet the needs that are common to all societies. The functional prerequisites here are; the need to device a suitable mechanism (crime control strategies) to ensure that crime is adequately and appropriately controlled by motivated persons-vigilantes.

The concept of "function" in the functionalists' analysis refers to "the contribution of the part to the whole". Social control mechanisms ensure for the attainment of social order through the regulation of human conduct. As long as crime control agencies perform their roles adequately, they remain functional. However, their ineffectiveness and inefficiency in attaining the expected roles of maintaining the society in a cohesive and harmonious state would make them dysfunctional. Therefore, the challenges confronting vigilante groups have rendered them ineffective and inefficient in crime control making them dysfunctional. Suffice is to say that, the challenges of vigilante groups makes the people disenchanted with their activities. This aligns the dysfunctional postulation of structural functionalists. Therefore, the challenges of vigilante groups such as inadequate/poor logistics, inadequate funding, abuse of human rights, inadequate basic training challenge, non-existence of legal instrument establishing vigilante groups, corruption and vested interest have amounted to the rating of vigilante groups as a dysfunctional crime control strategies.

The major strength of the functionalist perspective in explaining the challenges confronting vigilante groups in effective crime control in Benue State is that; it attempts to account for the interrelatedness of all the components that make up the social system or society towards the attainment of social equilibrium. The dysfunctional postulation of the functionalist theory is apt in explaining why the activities of vigilante groups are marred by challenges that made same ineffective in crime control in Benue State.

Methodology

Benue State was adopted as the setting for this paper. Three Local Government Areas were selected across the three Senatorial districts in Benue State. These selected Local Government Areas were, Katsina-Ala, Makurdi, and Otukpo. The Local Governments Areas were selected to

draw a balanced representation across the senatorial districts in Benue State. The setting was adopted because of the prevalence of the activities of vigilante groups in the locality. The study adopted cross-sectional research design. This type of research gathers data from a large number of subjects. The purpose was to gather information from a representative sample of the population from which generalization can be made to the entire population. Survey design describes and interprets what exists at present.

The research population for the study consisted members of the public, traditional rulers, religious leaders, police officers and leaders and members of Vigilante groups within Benue State. The selected population of the study was considered as stakeholders in the activities of vigilante groups in their various communities. Data from the Independent Electoral Commission (2019), put the population of the selected Local Government Areas that were between 18 years and above for Katsina-Ala at 149,397, Makurdi, 272,678 and Oturkpo, 130,199, respectively. This made a total population of 552,274 persons. Four hundred (400) respondents were selected using the Taro Yamane sample size determination formula.

Simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were employed for the selection of respondents. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting one (1) Local Government Area from each of the senatorial zones making a total of three (3) Local Government Councils. The study adopted simple random sampling in selecting the respondents. Compounds were selected randomly from each of the sampled areas from which respondents chosen. To achieve this, a balloting system was adopted where codes "Yes" and "No" were inscribed on separate pieces of papers. These were folded and presented in twos to each prospective respondent. Those that chose the acceptable code (Yes) were allowed to participate in the study.

Questionnaire and in-depth interview (IDI) were used to generate data. Consequently, four (4) in-depth interviews sessions were conducted from each of the selected three (3) sampled areas. This brought the total number of in-depth interviews to twelve (12). Two (2) research assistants were hired and trained to help the researcher collect data in Zones, A, and C. The research assistants were University graduates. Each of the research assistants covered the number of Local Government Areas sampled in their respective senatorial districts as assigned to them while Makurdi Local Government Areas was covered by the lead researcher. Quantitative data were presented in frequency and simple percentages while qualitative data were presented in narrative form.

Table 1. Selected Local Government Areas sampled for the Study

LGA	Sample Population	Sample Size	Percentage of Sample Population
Katsina-Ala	149,397	176	44%
Makurdi	272,678	134	33.5%
Otukpo	130,199	90	22.5%
Total	**552, 274**	**400**	**100**

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission (2019)

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section deals with data presentation and analysis on the challenges confronting vigilante groups in Benue State. The following were the identified challenges of vigilante groups: lack of basic crime fighting equipment, vigilante were not statutorily recognized agency, funding challenges, abuse of the fundamental rights of suspects, inadequate basic security training, logistics challenges.

Table 2: Challenges confronting vigilante groups in Benue State

Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Lack of basic crime fighting equipment	60	16.4
Vigilante are not statutorily established	73	19.8
Inadequate funding	66	17.9
Abuse of the fundamental rights of suspects	61	16.6
Inadequate basic training as security personnel	56	15.3
Logistic challenges	51	13.8
Total	**367**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Data in table 1 revealed that 16.3% (60) identified lack of basic crime fighting equipment, 19.8% (73) indicated that vigilante groups were not statutorily established and recognized crime control agency, 17.9%(66) cited inadequate funding, while 16.6%(61), noted abuse of the fundamental rights of suspects. A total of 15.3% (56) identified lack of basic training and 13.8% (51) cited shortage of logistics as the challenges of vigilante groups in Benue State.

The qualitative data on the challenges of vigilante converged with the quantitative data on lack of basic crime fighting equipment as one of the major challenges of vigilante groups in Benue State. For instance, a key informant noted that:

> I have observed that vigilante groups in this area lack basic equipment to facilitate their fight against crime. Vigilante groups have depended on bows and arrows, cutlass, catapults, Dane guns, batons as their basic crime fighting equipment. Moreover, this equipment was not available for vigilantes. The activities of vigilante groups were negatively affected by the deficit in crime fighting equipment that befall them **(**KII, 18th July, Male, Traditional Ruler, Aged 65, Katsina-Ala, 2022**).**

Data established that vigilante groups as a community-evolved crime control agency were unable to acquire crime fighting equipment to facilitate their operations in a manner that they can neutralize armed Fulani Militia who terrorise Benue communities. This finding corroborated the findings of (Justice for All Group, 2012; and Alemika and Chukwuma, 2003) which stated that vigilante groups lack basic crime fighting equipment to facilitate their operations.

The opinions of the interviewees cohere with respondents' opinion on lack of statutory provisions as a challenge of vigilante groups in Benue State as shown in table two above. An informant stated that:

> People in our locality have described vigilante as illegal organisation because there were no extant laws that legalised and recognised the activities of vigilante groups in our area. Because of the non-availability of legal framework that established and recognised the activities of vigilante groups in the area, residents have disregarded and ignored their invitation most times; some queried their stop and check activities, and have had contestations with vigilantes in the area (KII, 17th July, Male, Vigilante Officer, Aged 51, Makurdi LGA, 2022).

Findings indicated that the constitutional provision for the establishment of security outfits was within the exclusive list of legislation which deprived the State governments in Nigeria the right to legislate on the establishment of security agencies. Data revealed that because vigilante

groups were informal crime control mechanisms, they had challenges of operating within the ambit of the law. This finding corroborated the findings of (Obeagu, 2014, Ekeh, 2003) which established that some Nigerian communities have resorted to unregulated and violent reprisal against suspected sources of their collective endangerment.

Data identified inadequate funding as another (14.2%) challenge that confronted vigilante groups in Benue State. According to the data, funding challenge meant near absence of finance to support the activities of vigilante groups. Data revealed that vigilante groups being community evolved structure of crime control, they were funded by the community and they never received State grants hence they have funding challenges. Data indicated that because of the funding challenge that surrounded vigilante groups, they were not a salaried crime control mechanism. Data proved that the host community and the State to some extent made financial interventions that enabled the payment of vigilantes monthly stipend which was not enough compared to what employees of formal crime control agencies earn and in relation to the prevailing economic realities in Nigeria. A key informant noted that:

> Vigilante groups have serious funding challenge in this locality. We have been providing crime control services here without any reasonable funding by our host community, the State Government and Local Government Council. The challenge of remuneration has dampened the morale of most of our members in the locality. The funding challenge of vigilante groups has caused lack of basic equipment to facilitate our fight against crime (KII, 27th July, Female, Vigilante Officer, Aged 46, Oturkpo LGA, 2022).

Available data revealed that vigilante groups needed operational logistics and equipment was not procured because of the funding challenges that characterized the operations of vigilante groups. Therefore, vigilante groups lack bows and arrows, batons, cutlass, sword, axes, spears, catapult and dane guns, patrol vans, torch lights, batteries, whistles, raincoats, boots and uniforms. The findings further established that vigilante groups sustained their operations in view of funding via different means and sources such as community sponsorship, case registration fees and inconsistent grants from the State and Local Governments. Also, finding show that individuals' resident in the communities where vigilante groups operated were major stakeholders in the sponsorship of the activities vigilante because they were the direct beneficiaries of vigilante groups' services. According to the finding this justified why vigilante solicits for alms from households, traders, and passersby while on surveillance patrol and street barricade for the purchase of operational tools like torchlight, rain coat, and batteries for the torchlight. This finding corroborated the findings of (Onwuegbusi, 2017; Justice for All Group, 2012; and Alemika and Chukwuma, 2003).

Data revealed that vigilante groups violated and abused the fundamental human rights (13.9%) of the people. According to the data, abuse of fundamental human rights meant the violation of human dignity of suspected criminals by vigilantes. The respondents said that the subjection of crime suspects to dehumanizing treatment such as torture and deprivation of their right to fair hearing and trial amounted to abuse of their fundamental rights. The findings of the informants corroborated with the findings of respondents on the violation of fundamental rights of crime suspects as a challenge of vigilante groups in Benue State. For instance, the views of an informant indicated that:

> Vigilantes have no regards for the fundamental rights of crime suspects in our locality. Vigilante groups were noted to have tortured crime suspects in the course of arrest and investigation. Such activities that amounted to torture of suspects by

> vigilantes include hanging of suspects, burning of suspects nails on fire, application of pepper on suspected criminals' sensitive organs such as eyes, anus, penis, vagina and ears, canning of suspects palms, head pinning of suspects, and kneeling of suspected criminals under the sun. This and many other extrajudicial practices were typical of vigilante within our locality (KII, 27th July, Male, Religious Leader, Aged 67, 2022).

Findings established that dehumanizing practices were deployed by vigilante groups to inflict psychological and physical pain on suspects to facilitate admissibility of their involvement in crime. Findings revealed that the methods employed by vigilante groups in dealing with crime suspects were against the United Nations extant laws that provides for the safeguard of human rights. Such was against the basic tenet of democracy that advocated for the safeguard of human rights. The above finding corroborated the findings of (Knowland, 2014; Onwuegbusi, 2017; Chikwendu, 2016; Okeke, 2013, Umeagbalasi, 2012, Amnesty International Worldwide, 2013, Justice for All Group, 2012; Alemika etal, 2003; and CLEEN, 2003) which diversely established that vigilante groups have violated and abused the fundamental rights of the people.

Data established that vigilantes lack basic security training (12.5%) for enhanced operations. According to the data, training meant availing a detailed orientation and refresher courses on basic security practice and operational tactics for the vigilantes for enhanced maximum operations. Data indicated that such training covered crime profiling, crime investigation technique, beat operation technique, fire arms usage, self-defense, and human rights safeguard. The data revealed that absence of these training hampered the effective and efficient operations of vigilante groups. The findings of the respondents corroborated with informants on lack of basic security training as a challenge of vigilante groups in Benue State. For example, a key informant noted that:

> A noticeable challenge of vigilante groups in our area was lack of basic training among vigilantes. The manifest consequences of lack of basic training among vigilantes was the violation of the fundamental rights of residents in our locality, poor knowledge on crime profiling, lack of understanding on interrogation and investigation of suspects, poor intelligence gathering and surveillance skills (KII, 6th July, Male, Traditional Ruler, Aged 61, Oturkpo LGA,2022).

Findings revealed that vigilante groups had not received basic security training for enhanced effective operations. Data noted that security agencies both formal and informal needed basic training for enhanced performance. The data established that the importance of basic security training was to equip security operatives with the needed expertise to cope with the emerging trends in criminality by evolving suitable strategies to checkmate crime. Data indicated that vigilante groups being informal crime control mechanisms had training deficit because their host communities lack the funds to hire professional security agencies to train vigilantes. Data show that vigilantes were not trained on how to use Dane gun which to some extent made them to have accidental discharge. Data further established that vigilante groups were not given the basic training on what amounted to the rights of crime suspects and what constituted violation of the human rights of suspected criminals and how such rights shall and must be safeguarded by security operatives. The above finding corroborated the findings of (Chikwendu, 2016; Okeke, 2013, Amnesty International Worldwide, 2013, Justice for All Group, 2012 and CLEEN, 2003) which established that vigilante groups needed technical support and relevant training intervention that will improve them in tackling the trend and sophistication of criminality and fundamental human rights safeguard.

Data further indicated that vigilante groups have logistics challenges (10.6%) in Benue State. According to the data, logistics meant the needed operational facilities to facilitate the activities of vigilante groups in Benue State. The data indicated that the needed materials meant to facilitate the operations of vigilante groups were unavailable in the area. Data revealed the logistics that were lacking by vigilante groups include patrol vans, motorcycles to access the remote localities that were motorable, uniforms, raincoat, boots, whistles, torch lights walkie-talkies and batteries. The above findings corroborated the views of key informants on logistics challenges that characterise the activities of vigilante groups in Benue State. For example, an informant mentioned thus:

> Vigilante groups have logistics challenge which has hampered their effective and efficient operations. Such logistics vigilante groups lack in our area were patrol vans or vehicles and motorcycles that were needed to facilitate their operations across the length and breathe of our area, torch lights to flash dark spots while on night patrol, raincoats and boots to enable them operate in the rain, whistles to communicate security threats to officers and residents and lack of means of identification such as uniforms and identity cards (KII, 6th July, Male, Religious Leader, Aged 49, Katsina-Ala, 2022).

Findings indicated that unavailability of logistics such as patrol vans and motorcycles hindered vigilantes 'swift response to distress security calls in the locality. Findings revealed further that lack of uniforms made the identification of vigilantes difficult. Without such means of identification, criminals have infiltrated the operations of vigilante groups in Benue State. Findings established that lack of raincoat and boots stopped vigilantes from operating under the rain which allowed criminals to operate freely during the raining season; boots were needed for the protection of the feet of vigilantes against environmental hazards; lack of whistles, torch lights and batteries hindered vigilantes from illuminating dark spots and alerting officers and residents on security threats. Data indicated that no security agency functions efficiently and effectively without logistics hence the underperformance of vigilante groups in the locality was tied to logistics challenges. This finding corroborated the findings of (Knowland, 2014; Onwuegbusi, 2017; Chikwendu, 2016; Okeke, 2013, Umeagbalasi, 2012, Amnesty International Worldwide, 2013, Justice for All Group, 2012; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2003; and CLEEN, 2003) which variously revealed that vigilante groups have logistics challenges.

Conclusion

This study examined the challenges confronting vigilante groups in Benue State, Nigeria. The study drew its strength and findings from data obtained from three Local Government Areas of the state, namely Katsina-Ala, Makurdi, and Otukpo, respectively which constituted the focus of the research. The study discovered that vigilante groups in the study area were encumbered with operational and administrative challenges. The identified challenges included lack of basic crime fighting equipment, absence of legal backing, inadequate funding and lack of basic security training among others.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following towards repositioning the activities of vigilante groups in Benue State, Nigeria:

(a) Enactment of laws recognizing vigilante groups as a crime control agency. The National and State Assemblies across Nigeria and in particular, the Benue State house of Assembly,

should enact laws that give legal backing for the existence and operation of vigilante groups.

(b) Vigilante groups should be provided with the needed crime fighting equipment and other logistic support by the State and Local Governments, host communities, and non-governmental organizations to enhance their performance.

(c) Adequate funding of vigilante groups by relevant stakeholders will go a long way in guaranteeing their performance and in the end, result in efficient service delivery.

(d) Vigilante groups should demonstrate adequate respect for the rights of suspects instead of being law breakers or promoters of lawlessness and disorder in the society as it is the case in Benue State.

(e) Vigilantes should be properly trained in order to meet the professional standard needed to operate in a democratic environment such as Nigeria.

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FEMALE CRIMINALITY IN NIGERIA: A FEMINIST CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Aderoju Okoh, PhD
Department of Sociology
University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria
aderoju2024@gmail.com , +2348059153419

Abstract
Criminality is no longer considered a male phenomenon as the involvement of women and girls in crime is on the increase in Nigeria and globally, even as the rate of women and girls' participation in outlawed behaviour is still relatively low compared to that of men and young boys. Of the current total population of 78,621 prison inmates in Nigeria, males account for 97.8% (or approximately 76,891) while the female sex makes up 2.2% (1,729 approximately). The criminal justice seems to lack a comprehensive and contextualized understanding of the gendered criminological pathways of women which include maternal roles, trauma, structural poverty and physical abuse, among others. This work aimed at a feminist conceptual and theoretical review of female criminality with a view to highlighting the distinctive nature of female criminality. The paper relied on secondary sources of data for its analysis. Based on the review, it was found that women's pathway to criminality is gendered and the cause(s) of female criminality are multidimensional, ranging from running away from home, drug abuse, child abuse, sexual victimization, domestic abuse, structural poverty and the need for survival. The paper recommends that all identified triggers of female criminality should be addressed by both governmental and non-governmental organizations to mitigate the incidence of what appears to be a spike in female offending in Nigeria and even beyond.
Keywords: Crime; Criminological pathways; Gender, Female criminality; Feminism.

Introduction

For over four decades, there has been profound change in the involvement of women within the criminal justice system. Globally, the rate of arrest and incarceration of women and girls has increased profoundly in recent decades by 50% since 2000 (Ameh, 2013; Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2004; Oatakey, Birai; Jemaku & Ashituabe, 2021; UNODC, 2022; Walmsley, 2023). In the United States, incarceration capital of the world (more than two million prisoners), women account for 30% of total crime rate; in Germany women account is for 24% of the total crime rate; similarly, in the United Kingdom, women account for approximately 25% of the total crime rate (Sandler and Schaller, 2012, UNODC, 2022). This growth in population of female offenders is not peculiar to western societies, similar trend has been documented in African continent. South Africa has 3.0% of female offenders, the highest in African continent (South Africa Department of Correctional Services, 2023). In Nigeria, the current total population of prison inmates is 78,621. Male inmates account for 97.8% while female inmates are approximately 2.2% (Nigerian Correctional Service Report, 2024).

The disparity in female and male crime rates in Nigeria and elsewhere has been attributed to unreported crimes committed by women and "chivalrous treatment" of female offenders by male criminal justice officers (Agboola, 2014; Barkan, 1997; Fontebo, 2013; Suleiman, 2014). Feminist scholars, however, have challenged these assumptions and argued that much is not known about female criminality. Furthermore, they argued that the male criminologists who dominated mainstream criminology had little understanding of women's gendered social world and offending behaviour. Smart (1977) stated: 'Our knowledge is still in its infancy. Much is not known about offending women, the quantum of study carried out on female criminality and women's prison is extremely limited, when compare to studies on male criminality'. Smart (1977) attributed this neglect to the fact that women offenders are considered as less problematic for the society as they commit lesser crimes which are often less serious in nature compare to men, thus not worthy of research.

This paper attempts a feminist conceptual and theoretical review of female criminality in Nigeria, with a view to highlighting the distinctive nature of female criminality, provide better understanding of the concept of female criminality as well as theoretical explanations of female offending behavior, thereby shifting attention from the androcentric explanation of human criminality that has characterised Nigerian criminology.

Literature Review

Gender and Criminality

Criminality must be understood within the context of socio-cultural construction of the notion of gender. To a very large extent, women and men behavior are informed and shaped by the socio-cultural construction of the notion of gender. Contemporary feminist works in western societies have drawn out the gender dimension to criminal behavior, sentencing and treatment. Thus, feminist work on the theme of gender had stimulated highly complex theoretical discourses that are fundamental in the field of criminology and sociology. Gender plays a significant role in understanding who commits what types of crimes, why they commit crimes, who is most often victimized, and how the criminal justice system responds to these victims and offenders. For the purpose of in-depth understanding of the concept of gender and its connection with criminality, it is imperative to explain sex and gender explicitly. Sex can be explained as the biological /physiological differences between female and male or the biological distinction between female

and male (Lorber, 2010). In other words, sex is biologically determined identity and anatomical make-up of females and males at birth (Lorber, 2010).

On the other hand, gender can be explained as socio-culturally constructed differences between human females and males found in the meanings, beliefs, and practices as associated with femininity and masculinity (Hussein, 2018). Gender is an important features of a person's identity, shaping social life, informing behavior and individual's sense of self. Gender as a social organization of sexual differences, is enforced by gender belief system which includes all the ideas regarding masculine and feminine attributes that are held to be valid in a society (Lorber, 2000). Thus, everything social in our lives is gendered, including criminal behavior. Through gender socialization, gender-appropriate roles and behavior for each sex are learnt and further validated by gender norms. Gender socialization is the aspect of socialization that contains specific messages and practices pertaining to being female and male in a specific culture or society. This means that women and men learn the practice of gender, internalize the norms associated with masculinity and femininity (Hassan, 2018). Thus, males are socialized to embrace the notion of masculinity which is associated with assertiveness, machismo, toughness, independence, bravery, and fearlessness.

Females are often socialized to embrace the traditional notion of femininity which is associated with softness, passiveness, nurturing, domestic, emotional, dependence, sensitivity, and fearfulness. Aluko and Ajani (2006) observed that in Nigeria, gender does not only create duality of femininity and masculinity, it also places women lower in a hierarchy in which femaleness is generally valued less than maleness because of their socially ascribed roles in the reproductive sphere. These feminine traits which have kept women in subordinate position, are also responsible for the low crime rates of females and their involvement in non-violent crimes. Female-male difference in crime, especially violent crime, are often associated with difference in gender role and the way the sexes are socialized. In other words, women commit more of non-violent crime on account of their softness, sensitivity, empathy and passiveness. Thus, gender-based criminal behavior of female and male is a product of gender socialization and gender norms.

Gender and Crime in Nigeria

The term crime does not have universally accepted definition. It has been defined in various ways by different scholars. The Oxford English Dictionary (2009) defines crime as an unlawful act punishable by the state. It is an act, which could be harmful to an individual, some individuals and the larger society. According to Lindsay (2008) crime is being created by the law or is a product of the law. That is, where there is no law, there will be no crime; an act can only be regarded as a crime if there is a law that sees or classifies it as such. Thus, crime is a product of criminalization. A behavior becomes a crime when is criminalized by the law and its violation is accompanied by sanction.

Furthermore, crime is a cultural phenomenon that is found in every human society. There is a connection between gender and crime as there are differences in pattern of criminal behavior and crime rates between men and women. Thus, women and men involve in criminality though the pattern of offending behavior and rate of crime between both sexes differs to a very large extent. Recent studies have revealed that women involve in different types of crime such as: street crime, violent crime, property crime, white collar crime, organized crimes, victimless crime (drug offences and prostitution), non-violent crime and cyber-crime. In most cases, women involve in non-violent crimes (property crimes) for pecuniary benefit and survival (Artz, Hoffman-Wanderer & Moult, 2012; Beknap, 2007; Dastille, 2011; Sandler and Schaller, 2012). For example, in United States, United Kingdom, and Italy, women commit more of non-violent (property crimes) such as

theft, drug offences and fraud (Sandler and Schaller, 2012). Similarly, in Nigeria, offending women involve more in non-violent crimes such as drug trafficking, child trafficking, larceny (theft), and fraud (Ameh, 2013; Okoh, 2024; Zakariyya & Ado 2020). The involvement of women and girls in criminality, however, has suggested that criminality is no longer a male phenomenon, though criminal activities are still dominated by men.

The comparatively low crime rate between women and men is a global phenomenon which has been attributed to gender factor and chivalry treatment given to women by male criminal justice officers. In Nigeria, large proportion of offender populations are males while female constitutes small fraction of the offender populations. It is pertinent to note that over the years, the number of female offenders is on the increase, though women still accounts for minority of offender populations. According to the World Prison Brief report (2022) Nigeria had prison population of 70,797 inmates, 69,501 were males while 1,296 were females. Thus, men accounted for 98.2% of the prison population, while women accounted for 1.8% (World Prison Brief Report, 2022). Between 2022and 2024, the percentage increase in the number of women that went to prison was more than that of men. In 2024, data indicated that the percentage increase in the number of incarcerated women was from 0.6% to 8.8% between 2022-2024, while that of men showed slight increase from 0.3% to 5.8% between 2022 to 2024 (NCS Report, 2022-2024).

Presently, the prison population of those incarcerated in Nigeria is 78,621. However, male inmates account for 97.8% while female offenders account for approximately 2.2% (Nigerian Correctional Service Report, 2024). This means that females still constitute minority of offender populations, suggesting that women commit less crime compared to men in Nigeria.

Women, Class and Crime

Early discourses and representations of offending women in traditional criminology and public domain was based on biological factors and prevailing societal construction informed by patriarchal ideology. Lombroso and Freud, claimed that female criminals were anomalies, and that female offenders exhibited biological and psychological traits that were similar to those of male criminals. Later a sociological discourse on the subject of crime emerged and birthed sociological criminology which also attempts to explain female participation in crime. In the 1970s, a controversial explanation of female criminality emerged and seen as an attack on feminism. The controversial argument was presented by Adler (1975) and Simon (1975), who linked women's offending behavior to women's liberation and change in gender role and further predicted convergence in male and female crime rates. Adler (1975) and Simon (1975) were heavily criticized and challenged by feminist scholars on account of distortions and flawed representation of women's offending behaviour. This criticism as well as the critiques of other traditional criminological works on women contributed to the emergence of feminist criminology which has provided alternative knowledge and contextualized understanding about women and girls' involvement in crime.

Feminist discourse, however, has highlighted the gendered nature of female criminality and women's experiences of the criminal justice system. Also highlighted class structure and feminization of poverty associated with female criminality. Criminality is considered to be a lower class phenomenon as well as a male phenomenon. Dobash, Dobash & Noaks, (1995) stated that criminal justice system responses to female criminality and deviance have been shaped by gender and class through institutional and ideological patterns associated with patriarchy and capitalism. The crimes that women engaged in are crimes often prompted by economic marginalisations (experience of structural poverty) and gender roles (Quinnla, 2006). Thus, female criminality is

related to gender structure and structurally imposed experiences of multidimensional poverty and social exclusion.

Contemporary feminist literature has also suggested that women's offending behaviour is closely related to feminization of poverty, social marginalization and the struggle for survival (Okoh, 2024; Otakey, et al. 2021). In Nigeria, where increase in female criminality has been documented, most female offenders are socio-economically disadvantaged and come from a marginalized segments of the society (Okoh, 2024). Furthermore, typical offending women are often young, unemployed, poorly educated and have dependent children.

In addition, many offending women have histories of substance abuse and experience of violence and sexual abuse (Agboola, 2014; Okoh, 2024; Otakey, *et al.* 2021). It was also argued that most criminalized women committed non-violent crimes, disadvantaged by poverty and illiteracy and suffered physical and sexual victimization (Baldwin & Epstein, 2017; Belknap 2007; Gullberg, 2013; Okoh, 2024; Otakey, *et al*. 2021). Similarly, Zakarriya and Ado (2020) who conducted a survey in Katsina and Kano custodial facilities in Nigeria, reported that many women offenders are impoverished mothers who struggled economically with their parenting roles. This is a reflection of the structural multi-dimensional poverty prevalent among majority of the women, who constitute the marginalized segment of the society (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2023).

Furthermore, a feminist study conducted in Nigeria highlighted physical abuse, sexual victimization, structural poverty, familial responsibilities (motherhood) and dysfunctional relationship as criminological pathways of offending women. This same study also maintained that gendered factors and events created context that influences women's pathways toward criminality. This means that physical abuse, sexual victimization, trauma, structural experience of poverty and gendered familial roles which amplified women economic vulnerabilities are gendered criminological pathways of offending women. Thus, female criminality is different from male criminality on account of gendered complexities of women realities, factors responsible for women's involvement in crime, the context in which women commit crime as well as the gendered nature of their crimes (Vetten, 2008; Artz, et al. 2012).

When offending women come in contact with the criminal justice system, they often experience double standard which some scholars described as chivalry treatment. The chivalry hypothesis suggests that male police officers who often dominate the police institution often avoid arresting female suspects and even when they arrest women, they treat them more leniently than men. Taking these factors into consideration, one may argue that the current statistics on female offenders in Nigeria are not a true representation of female criminality and the actual statistics of female offenders.

However, feminist criminologists challenged the chivalry factor and further argued that women are treated more harshly by the criminal justice system than men. Beknap (2007), Chesney-Lind (2001) and Walkate (2001) maintained that male offenders are treated leniently than their female victims, especially in rape and domestic violence cases. In domestic abuse and sexual assault trials, women have to establish their respectability and credibility before their evidences would be considered admissible in courthouses.

A number of empirical studies that challenged the validity of the chivalry factor and concluded that male and female are treated differently and this differential treatment are informed by traditional stereotypical gender norms that prescribed what is considered appropriate behavior for female and males. This differential treatment, however, is not often to the detriment of women offenders. Carlen (1997) maintained that women who conform to the idea of femininity held by male judges sometimes receive lighter sanctions while females whose sexual lifestyle are not in

conformity with feminine sexual script are more likely to receive custodial treatment than males. On the other hand, the criminal justice may be reluctant to take women with young children whose lifestyle reflect gendered appropriate behavior for women. This indicate that the justice system is influenced by the socio-cultural construction of the notion to gender as the criminal justice administration is tied up with conventional definitions of femininity and masculinity, evident in how women and men are treated differently in contemporary Nigerian criminal justice sector. Thus, the criminal justice system is gendered and class-based and the differential treatment seen as 'chivalry', however, disadvantaged women and reinforce sexist stereotypical ideologies about women and men.

Discussion

Theoretical Discourse of Female Criminality

The term 'pathway' is frequently used in sociological and epidemiological research to explain the linkages and connection between a risk factor or exposure, and an outcome. In feminist criminology, the context of events and experiences of offending women/girls are examined with the aim of understanding how these events interact and shape women's and girl's subsequent criminal behaviour. Feminist pathways model provides an understanding of how the past traumatic experiences of females influence their propensity to commit crimes and delinquent acts. The gender pathways approach emerged from feminist pathway perspective and further developed by Kathleen Daly (1992), the leading proponent of the theory.

The theory emphasized on the interconnectedness between the lives of females and their subsequent offending behavior, particularly, childhoods and adulthood victimization and subsequent criminality in providing explanation to female criminality. In addition, the theory also maintains that female criminality is different from male criminality, stressing that the journey of women into criminality is different from that of male offenders. Feminist/gender pathway theory is based on the premise that sexual victimization, physical abuse, parental neglect, substance abuse, dysfunctional family background, trauma, and economic deprivation are defining features and factors that influenced women's pathway into criminality.

It is imperative to note that socio-cultural gender norms significantly influence female pathways into crime through the construction of masculinity script and femininity script. Gender belief system and gender structure influences and shapes women's experiences and lives. Men, however, are raised to enact their masculinity using aggression, violence and harsh approaches. The femininity programmed into women through gender socialization, and further reinforce through gender norm makes women to be passive, vulnerable and susceptible to victimization perpetrated by their male counterparts. According to gender pathway theory, the harmful effects of abuse, victimisation and gender oppression influences women's identity and experiences and consequently influence their coping and survival mechanisms which are usually drug use, delinquency and crime.

Gender pathway theory identified five different pathways of women into criminality and deviancy which are physical and sexual abuse, running away from home, drug addiction, and economic marginalization. These identified pathways provide understanding into the criminological pathways and criminogenic needs of offending women. According to Daly (1992), the first pathways involve running away from home that is characterized by abuse and violence. Daly described those female as street women who are entering street life. The crimes that follow may be drug- related offenses, prostitution, or property crimes. The second pathways involving contact with recreational drugs and/ drug addiction, and these women are referred to as drug-connected women. Daly is of the view that these women sees drugs as coping mechanism to

manage the strain, and other challenges which is often gender-related. Women who are using drugs may be coerced by intimate partners or family members to traffic drugs.

The third gender pathways involve serious victimization and experience of child abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect, therefore entering into the world of crime or causing criminal behaviour. Daly (1992) referred to such women as harmed and harming women. The fourth pathway, however, have to do with battering and subjection to dehumanization. This pathway usually involving battered women who are abused by intimate partners, but are unlikely to have committed crime prior to the abuse. The crime that follows is geared towards coping and survival. The fifth pathway highlighted by Daly (1992) involves economic strain and economic offending. Women on this economic offending pathway can be separated into two categories, poor women offending for survival, and women who commit crimes because of luxury or greed. The latter may have no history of abuse, addiction or violence (Daly 1992; Daly, 1994).

However, most of the pathways highlighted are motivated by survival. For the majority of female criminals, abuse and trauma are involved, making their criminological pathways and correctional needs different from that of male inmates. These pathways represent the majority of female offenders in Nigeria and the reality of their difficult lives. The works of other feminist criminologists (Artz., Hoffman, & Moult, 2012; Belknap, 2007; Modie-Moroka, 2003) have helped to shed light on the pathways of females into crime in furtherance of gender pathways theoretical framework.

Conclusion

Women's pathway to crime is multifaceted and gendered in nature. Women and girls commit more of non-violent crimes (and property crimes). Thus, gendered contexts and experiences underpin women's criminality. Female criminality is uniquely different from male criminality on account of gendered criminogenic factors and social contexts that propel women to involve in crime. Physical abuse, sexual victimization, experience of poverty, gender socialization and gendered familial roles influence women's lives severely and consequently place them at risk of criminality.

Recommendations

(a) The paper identified experiences related to abuse, trauma, structural poverty and maternal roles are some of the criminological pathways of many offending women. Therefore, gender-sensitive therapy, education, vocational training and work in correctional facilities are critical for rehabilitation and diverting women away from crime. Custodial facility activities should seek to create egalitarian and appropriate skills that will develop and empower women, without fostering stereotypical gendered notions of 'women's work' (or focusing on pink-collar work) that may in fact compound existing histories of poverty, dependency and abuse.

(b) The paper implicated structural poverty for the involvement of women in criminality. Consequently, economic policies and poverty alleviation programmes should be all inclusive and gender-sensitive. When this is done, it will reduce the feminization of poverty.

(c) Another finding of the paper is that which isolated abuse and trauma as criminogenic factors to the extent that most offending women are victims of abuse. It is therefore recommended that there should be gender-sensitive trauma and therapy facilities in the community for female survivors. This would help in addressing women's offending behavior.

(d) Governments at all lvels, should sensitize the public on the need to change the narrative of socializing boys into the culture of male supremacy and hegemonic masculinity. If the notion

of masculinity is socio-culturally reconstructed to reflect traits such as empathy, sensitivity, and gentility, the rate of female criminality will drastically reduce.

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GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF NIGERIAN LIBRARIES

Kudirat Abiola Adegoke (PhD)
Department of Library and Information Science
Faculty of Education and Extension Services
Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria.
kudrat.abiola@gmail.com, adegoke.kudirat@udusok.edu.ng
Phone Number: +234(0)8038949317
&
Badmus Ibrahim Temitope (PhD)
Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti
ibrahim.badmus@eksu.edu.ng
08061356022

Abstract
Sustainable national development refers to present developments that are supposed to be devoid of negative consequences for future generations. Equal access to information, equal opportunities for men and women, women empowerment and girl child education are the catalysts for attaining sustainable national development. This paper examined the imperative of gender equality, women empowerment and the role of libraries in promoting gender equality and women empowerment for sustainable development in Nigeria. The paper noted that if all women get equal chance and freedom to make positive contributions to the development of their respective communities, there will be economic growth and informed citizens. The paper recommends that the Nigerian government should provide enabling environment for women to excel and contribute to nation building. Libraries should be properly funded by both government and well-meaning Nigerians to enable them deliver effective services that will foster growth and national development.
Keywords: Gender equality; Information literacy; National development, Women empowerment; Sustainable national development.

Introduction

Sustainable national development begins with the capability of a nation to satisfactorily provide meals, adequate infrastructure, precise health care services and enabling surroundings, which are needed with the aid of its people. The era of globalization is surrounded with a growing number of hopes for women and men. Mostly, a large number of investors recognize the importance of women as employees, project managers, leaders, buyers, retailers, entrepreneurs, and caretakers/ givers. They are adapting their policies, programmes and initiatives to create environments where women and girls thrive, sustainable national development is achievable provided the government and its citizens knows the right thing to do and how to do it. In knowing the right thing to do, people must have access to right information at right time meaning that there must be constant provision of current, adequate and relevant information in the society.

The role of Nigerian libraries in providing current information and literacy capabilities and competencies for men and women to benefit a competitive edge that will make them active global players in the knowledge-based economy, where information is a commodity and power for them to be on top of the current happenings around the globe. Men and women must engage in information seeking for research, personal development and effective decision-making. Effective decision-making can easily be accomplished by having access to the right information, in the right format at the right time, every citizen needs equal access to information regardless of their gender. Gender has been defined by the USAID (2007) as "the arrays of socially constructed roles and relationships personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values and relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis".

Thus, no nation can record any significant development without utilising women's potentials, in other words; national development requires gender equality for sustainability. Gender equality means the different behaviours, potentials and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally without any form of discrimination Uduigwomen (2004). It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, what it means is that their rights, duties and opportunities will not be shared according to their sex. Gender inequality in Africa is age-long issue that has greatly affects virtually every sector and all developmental process of many developing nation. This view was corroborated by Anaeme (2012) who reported that women and girl-child still have unequal access to education, healthcare, adequate housing, information, training and employment which is connected with traditional or cultural practices and as well as cultural beliefs in some African society.

Every African society has its own peculiar culture and believes that have been reported by previous scholars to have directly impacted negatively on the enrolment of girl child education in most African countries particularly in the northern part of Nigeria. Studies of Mango (2008) unveiled the setback posed by the cultural and religious practices of some Muslim women in the Northern states of Nigeria to include marriage practices and Purdah, stereotype. Fear of the contents of the curriculum and school life experiences leading to moral decadence of girls or fear of educated women being a threat to a man as a result of their level of exposure or their interaction with people from different background coupled with the parents' financial status and so on were among the reasons reported by Mango as factors that contributed to the uneven gap between girl child and boy's education.

Similarly, the UNICEF (2002), reported the prevalence of out of school girls to have dominance over that of boys among the 120 million children who have never been to school in the developing world; to buttress this point Tuwora and Sossoub (2008) reported that "most research works conducted in developing countries observed that females' education level is very low as a

result of factors such as cultural, political and job inequalities when compared with males". Despite the fact that women representing half of the global population, research still shows that only 20 % of women are found in the world's legislators, cases of violence against women have been on the increase, women are more than 40 percent in the agriculture labour force but 3 to 20% are landowners which shows that gender inequality is still high in some developing countries like Nigeria particularly in terms of empowerment opportunities.

Women's empowerment has become one of the global issues that attract different researchers, non-governmental and government agencies due to the fact that the role of women in national development can never be over-emphasized; it is part of the developmental strategies which is targeted at gender balance, poverty reduction, zero hunger, citizens improved standard of living, good governance and profitably productive entrepreneurship that are crucial to the creation of an enlarged economy that provides men and women with equal opportunity and free access to decision-making, policy formulation and implementation (Mango, 2006). In view of the need for women to actively participate in nation building and developmental processes, the Nigerian libraries have tailored their operations, services and conferences towards the attainment of the national development.

Libraries are established to cater for the information needs of its users and the user communities are the citizens of the country and or the foreigners who resides in the community where the library is located or the researchers who are in need of data from the library. Among the types of libraries that are found in Nigeria are school, public, state, national, academic, special, research and so on. All these types of libraries are headed by the key players (Librarians) who oversees the affairs of the library for effective library delivery. To deliver effective services, libraries must acquire or subscribe to books and journals both in print and non-print formats, process, store, create awareness, organize seminars, workshops on career development and capability building through access to current. Knowledge and training on entrepreneurial and employment skills provided by libraries will enable Nigerian women to identify and utilize their potentials to improve the situation.

Libraries need to partner with vocational institutions to increase the visions and ideas of the users' communities for sustainable development. Young women and adults can be tutored on different apprenticeship skills that improve their knowledge in wealth creation, enable them to be creative and self-confidence; derive fulfillment in their areas of interest, enable the reduction of poverty and increase of employment opportunity and improve standard of living of the users' community.

Bradly (2015) posited that library services aid the development of sustainable development goals in enhancing an excellent and better result through improvement in the provision of universal literacy. Library can subscribe to online employment related information resources, these information resources are to be accessed and used by the girls, young adult and old women for personal, societal and national development provided they have the literacy skills required to utilize them.

Statement of the Problem

Sustainable global goals have been adopted by 193 countries around the world to eradicate poverty, end discrimination against women and girls, to reduce inequality and promote just cities among others. Despite efforts made particularly by Nigerian government, studies still show that nearly "98 million girls were not in school, globally, 1 in 3% of women would experience gender-based violence in her lifetime, in the developing world, 1 in 7 girls is married before her 15th

birthday, some child brides as young as eight or nine" (UN, 2012). Report has shown that in every year more than 287,000 women, 99 percent of them in developing countries, die from pregnancy- and childbirth-related complications, Nigerian President (2017) said that "about 65 million Nigerians are illiterate" Vanguard, (Sept. 2017) which females forms the largest part. It is against this backdrop that the researchers deem it fit to determine the role of libraries in the attainment of sustainable national development through gender equality and women empowerment. Arising from the foregoing, this paper examined the imperative of gender equality, women empowerment and the role of libraries in promoting gender equality and women empowerment for sustainable development in Nigeria

Conceptualization

Information literacy

Access to information is key, knowing how to search and use information is crucial as it helps to support the rapid attainment of national development. The role of information literacy in the attainment of sustainable development can never be over emphasized due to the fact that a well-informed woman will know the information she needs to make effective decisions in her life, home, community and the society at large. While doing this, such woman will be able to support her family, community members and the federal government in the fight against misinformation and mal-information by filtering or fact checking information that comes her way before disseminating it to other people. Women who are literate and educated see the potential and need to filter information before sharing.

Who is an information literate woman? A woman who is literate is she that can determine the extent of information needed in her life; access the needed information effectively and efficiently; evaluate information and its sources critically; add the selected information to her stock of knowledge; use information effectively to accomplish a specific goal; understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information; and access and use information ethically and legally, without infringing on the right of the owner.

Discussion

Role of Gender Equality in Sustainable National Development

Gender inequality is still deep-rooted in every society. Women suffer from lack of access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. In many situations, they are denied access to basic education, health care and are victims of violence and discrimination. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes.

With the aim of better addressing these challenges and to identify a single recognized driver to lead and coordinate United Nations (UN) activities on gender equality issues, the UN Women was established in 2010. The motive behind the establishment was to eliminate any form of discrimination against women and girls, empowerment of women, and achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action, peace and security. For women and girls to reach their full potential requires that they have equal opportunities with men and boys. This means eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against them, including violence by intimate partners, sexual violence and other harmful practices. The goals of the UN Women initiative include to ensure:

i. positive improvement in women and girl child's education through regular sensitization programmes will increase population of educated and literate women in the society;

ii. free access to quality education for adolescent girls will encourage more parents to send their female children to schools and that will boost level of literacy in Nigeria;
iii. political development and good governance through equal access to current and relevant information resources will give women the opportunity to contribute to national development;
iv. general infrastructural development through equal access to job creation resources and entrepreneurship will prosper women to be employers of labour for sustainable growth.
v. improved economic growth through equal participation of men and women in business activities;
vi. promote health care delivery (local, state and global level) through access to health information and free medical services will reduce maternal mortality thereby reduce the risk associated with pregnancies and child delivery.
vii. Promote social development of families, communities and nations through current sensitization exercises, job creation, wealth creation projects and conditioner cash transfers;
viii. Establish more stable and just societies through sustainable cities, equal treatment, human right protection etc.
ix. Increase the capacity of law enforcement agencies to address, investigate and prosecute the high prevalence of child marriage and all forms of harmful practices that will jeopardize women growth.

Impact of Women Empowerment on Sustainable Development

Empowerment plays a vital role in the lives of women, their families, friends, and society at large as it fosters women and girls' empowerment. In view of the need to reduce all forms of violence against women and for women to contribute to national development, the authors have identified and underlisted the roles of women empowerment in national development. When women have equal opportunity with their men counter parts, it will lead to the following:

i. Reduce corruption by changing the conditions that led to economic instability in the country because the pressure on men and quest for men to make ends meet as a result of being the only provider of daily needs in the family will reduce, since the women are also taking care of some financial aspects of the day-to-day running of their immediate family, thus the cash inflow in every family will be from both parents;
ii. Reduce poverty level by engaging women in wealth creation activities which gives them the opportunity of becoming employers of labour;
iii. Reduce the risk of child and maternal mortality through regular antenatal and sensitization programmes, access to current information and health tips will change the perception of the rural women and those who believes in traditional child delivery and health care systems; get above 50% or more likely to have their child immunized;
iv. Make girl informed as a well-informed girl child will develop self-defense mechanisms against being taken advantage of;
v. Sensitize women on regular basis to make them less likely to contact HIV/AIDS through regular attendance of sensitization programmes;
vi. Makes women or girls less likely to become victims of domestic or sexual abuse;
vii. Gives women enabling environment to trade and contribute to their family's income
viii. Ensure women stays healthier and tend to have greater self-esteem and self-confidence at all times;

ix. Reduce discrimination and stereotypes or labeling of women in the society

Role of Library in Promoting Sustainable Development

The role played by libraries in national development can never be over emphasized. A well-informed society contributes greatly to the development of any given nation as the availability and utilisation of relevant and current information resources will promote peaceful and all inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (Bradley, 2015). The role of libraries in promoting sustainable development are underscored by the following:

i. Library provides access to current and relevant information resources in print and electronic formats to ensure citizens are well informed and possibly through literacy sensitization programmes.
ii. Effective library services contribute to improved outcomes across the sustainable development by promoting universal young and adult literacy, digital literacy, media and information literacy.
iii. Library services close information gaps between government and the citizens through provision of current governmental information and access to Information & Communications Technologies (ICT).
iv. Library provides access to information on health, environmental, education, agricultural information, economic, political, social, cultural, legal and other ground breaking development which will greatly enhance national development.
v. Library organizes workshop and training on entrepreneurial skills for women and girls in order to equip them with the relevant skills.
vi. Library create awareness on how women can prevent all forms of abuse to avoid becoming victims of domestic or sexual abuse.
vii. Library creates conducive environment for impactful gathering, makerspaces where women ideas can be turned into realities, spaces for collaboration and networking for serious business engagements.
viii. Library create serene environment for innovation and creativity.
ix. Library provide access to information resources that can help women to learn how to do what they are doing better and to know how to do what the intend doing better and easier.

All the aforementioned roles are possible and achievable if the libraries are well equipped and funded.

Conclusion

As women empowerment is vital to the development of any nation, so also must gender equality be seen as a right that is as fundamental as any other in the national and international bills of rights. This is because in the long run, discrimination against a gender consequently breeds violation of the discriminated persons' other basic rights such as education and right to expression. Women make up for a very vital part of Nigeria's economic, social and political lives. However, due to discrimination against them, their potentials are under-utilized. It is therefore imperative for the Nigerian government to provide enabling environment for women to excel in order to effectively contribute to nation building.

Recommendations

(a) Government and well-meaning Nigerians should empower women and use their labour force for sustainable economic and national growth.
(b) Protecting the rights of women by creating enabling environment for them to make positive contributions to national development is a necessary step to ensure equality and sustainable development.
(c) Libraries should be properly funded to deliver effective services to foster growth and national development.
(d) Librarians should commit to sensitizing the community on the importance of gender equity and women empowerment to enhance the attainment of sustainable development.

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AN OVERVIEW OF PERSPECTIVES AND THEORIES IN SOCIOLOGY

Senator Akaenye
&
Dr. (Mrs.) Juliet Ohenokobosare Esieboma
Department of Sociology, Criminology and Security Studies,
College of Social and Management Sciences,
Western Delta University, Oghara, Delta State, Nigeria
Email: akaenyesenator@gmail.com, esieboma@wdu.edu.ng

Abstract
This study which is on perspectives and theories in Sociology, discussed the various paradigms and theories in the sociological enterprise and affirmed that perspectives and theories are nets neatly cast to catch what people perceive as the real world: to rationalize, explain, embellish and master it. It argued that theories also create a clear picture of the real world, to make it finer. Sociology, theory, sociological theory, sociological perspective and models were some of the related concepts examined in the study. Macro, middle-range and micro sociological theories were also clearly distinguished. The study majorly engaged in a critical analysis of various perspectives and theories such as evolutionism, functionalism, structuralism, conflict (Marxism), ethnomethodology and phenomenology, among others. Theories and perspectives and their various points of convergent and divergence were further interrogated. The study concludes that different perspectives and theoretical debates should be encouraged in academic sociology, as such divergent views and debates have the capacity to enhance the growth of scientific sociology.
Keywords: Theories; Real World; Scholarly debates; Sociology; Sociological Perspectives.

Introduction

Sociology is the scientific discipline that studies human societies and cultures. Sociologists make observations about the various events which occur in different societies and they write down their experience and impressions. In Sociology, experts may also conduct reliable and valid research in various aspects of human societies and their different cultures. And also engaged in writing down their various account of incidence on phenomenon observed as proof of their results. This scenario represents various ways of sociologically periscoping societies and their cultures.Scientific sociology is funded on the premise that the social world is orderly; that social life-like natural realm-is patterned, and hence, amenable to generalization and prediction. Incidentally, there have been substantial disagreements among theorists and Methodists concerning how to go about identifying the science of society. A new theory is frequently presented which promises to explain some phenomena better than an established theory. In the process, new views continually emerge in sociology (Okereke, 2008).

Paradigms, perspectives, approaches, model and schools of thought proliferate with competing claims. Almost all of the specific views have important implications for the nature of sociological theory in terms of its form, range, and the ease with which its basic concepts must be measurable. Apparently, crisis looms large in the discipline as any rational coherent thought is hindered in the situation. Critics deride the state of affairs as giving "appearance of disciples of a cult rather than students of science (Vivas 1960:79).A sociological perspective is a way of viewing and examining any social phenomenon for example criminality, poverty, society, wealth, culture, the economy, man, politics, religion, with the aid of what we refer to as **concept,** this concept provide new lead or central concept which serves as the "compass" the guide, the process of viewing the subject- matter to a logical conclusion. Richard (1978), o pined that the application of concepts to new situations have a gestalt character. Our view of complex set of event tends to be structured in terms of the choice of the concepts used. For example, viewing politics as *dirty* game would make the analyst to search for all that is dirty about politics. At the end of gathering all information that an analyst can find dirty about politics he would produce what could be called the "dirtiness" or "negative" view of politics.

Again, an analyst that views society from the perspective of the concept of "function" would assemble together all the nitty-gritty acts, behaviours, issues, interactions and processes that amount to "functionalism" in society or it culture. The end product of the findings of such an analyst would therefore be called "functionalist" perspective of society. However, the major merit of the perspective is that it provides humanity with the different ways suggested by some particular concepts for analyzing different aspects of subject-matters. There is no perspective that has any built-in assurance that serves as eternal and unshakable "truth" that will or can be provided by a single perspective. But instead, each perspective merely furnishes a body of data about the topic or subject-matter that corresponds to the "lead", "central", or the directing concept (Clark, 2014).

According to Igbo (2003), a theory can be explained as a set of systematically related propositions, which specify the causal relationship among some variables. It is a set of ideas which attempt to explain how a thing or something works. Human society, like any other reality (biological, environmental, physical, psychological etc), their explanation is required for us to have in-depth understanding of the way it works. When human beings understand how their society works, they can objectively predict it future patterns of social change and progress. Sociological theory performed this explanatory duty. It helped us to analyze how society as whole or different aspects of society functions. In academic sociology, there are many competing and contending theories which give various insights to the workings and nature of human society.

A sociological theory therefore connotes a body of organized ideas that is concerned with mapping, describing and providing a more plausible explanation of social relations, as they actually occurred, and not as they ought to be. The sociological point of departure is centred on social interactions and social relationship. Ritzer (1996:4), distinguished between "scientific sociological theory" and other "formal scientific theory". He submitted that scientific sociological theory has a wide range of applications, stood the test of time and deals with centrally important issues, which formal scientific theory does not. In this study, we also add that sociological theory has other additional properties such as the ability to make prediction, being historical and comparative in scope, and can also be subjected to change.

However, the growth of sociological perspectives and theories may be viewed positively. Many are satisfied that the trend demonstrates a condition of intellectual maturity and progress. Expectedly, the competing claims would ideally be examined by research, which compares the accuracy of the predictions derived from each perspective and theory. The truth is that sociology is indeed what has been described as "a multiple paradigm science" (Masterman 1970, Ritzer 1980). Different texts reviews the main currents of thought in sociology analyzing how they diverge from each other, what the major controversies are, and how these controversies have developed. By the discussions, the predictive value of each perspective and theory would have being clearer to the readers. This study attempts a discourse on perspectives and theories in Sociology.

Discussion

Distinction between Macro, Middle-Range, and Micro Sociological Theories

Although, many authorities in sociology, such as Robert K. Merton (1957), C. Wright Mill (1958) and David Willer (1975) have classified the difference between these three categories of sociological theories. Also, the distinction between structural and social action theories is also tied to the distinction between macro, middle and micro sociological theories. Sociological theories are also sub –divided into structural and social action theories. Structural perspectives and social action perspectives differ in the way they approach the analysis of society. Structural theories analyzed the way society as a whole fit together and influence social institutions, social groups, and individuals. In contrast, social action theories refused to base their analysis of social issues upon an examination of the structure of society as a whole. Rather than seeing human behaviour as being largely determine by society, they see society as being the product of human action. Social action theories stress the meaningfulness of human action, denying that it is primarily determined by the structure of society. These types of theories are variously called social action, or interpretative, or micro-sociological theories.

What is apparent from the above discussion is that all sociological theories do not operate on the same premises and do not have the same agenda. Therefore, all sociological theories cannot and should not be lumped together under the same umbrella. Rather, it is better to examine sociological theories separately under the three categories of macro, middle-range and micro-sociological theories.

Macro Sociological theories

These are the theories that cover the entire or wide range of subject matter in sociological discipline. A macro sociological theory is an all-encompassing theory, a single unified theory, and a generalized body of explanation as to what cements a society together or destroys it, and how institutions fit or do not fit into a social framework. They are also called general or grand theories, and they include conflict and functionalist theories. Micro Sociology looks at large scale social

phenomena affecting whole populations, seeking patterns and analyzing social trends. It is generally believed that the central problem which all sociological theories focus upon and seek to address is the problem of social order. Macro Sociological theories can better be used to explain the menace of insecurity confronting contemporary Nigerian society.

Middle Range theories

Middle Range theories are those type of sociological theories that tend to cover middle-range subject matters in sociology, such as the structure and process of social and cultural activities involving social institutions, communities, formal and complex organizations, and social groups. Modern sociology identified middle-range theories to include; Emile Durkheim's theory of suicide, Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy, Robert K. Merton's theory of anomie. Middle- Range theories in Sociology are generally theories that focus on a limited number of topics and provide a bridge between the micro level of individual interaction and the macro level of broad social structures. These theories are based on research data and aim to explain patterns of social behaviour. For instance Emile Durkheim applied Middle-Range theory to explain the link between Anomie and Suicide in the French society of his time. He also employed Middle- Range theories to demonstrate how the structure and culture of society exert pressure on the lower class in society as the blockage of opportunities makes them to be innovative and resort to deviant and illegal behaviours to reach their goals.

Micro Sociological theories

These are those types of theories that seek to cover micro social action, such as the interpersonal relationship/social interactions that involves mostly individual human beings in the micro social order of human societies. A micro theory is one which focuses on individuals and small groups and the interactions between them, rather than focusing on large structures, patterns and conflict across the whole of society. Micro level theories look at very specific relationships between individuals or small groups. Micro- range theories in modern sociology include; interpretive social action, symbolic interactionist, phenomenological and ethnomethodological theories (Clark, 2014). Some of these micro theories were elaborately discussed in this study.

Views on Competing Perspectives and Theories in Sociology

This section of the paper examines the major competing ways that practicing sociologists frequently use to analyze their subject t- matter in sociology. The focus here is on: sociological perspectives, sociological theories and sociological models. The medley of perspectives, theories and methods in sociology generate conceptual competitions on broad realms. On one realm is a bloc of differing ideas as regards the appropriate unit of analysis; the so called micro-macro controversy. On another realm are specific theories trailing one another but each possessing an outlook of a peculiar school or paradigm. Major among them are evolutionism, functionalism, structuralism and conflict theory with their emergent strains Okereke (2008).

There are also newer theories of ethnomethodology and phenomenology. Arising from the micro-macro controversy in sociology is the question of the degree of attention to be devoted explicitly to individuals. Macro sociological theories are the theories which focus upon and seek to account for widest range of social and cultural system, such as entire societies and cultures, a whole nation-states, countries and the entire world in general. Macro sociological theories in modern sociology are also called grand theories or general theories- they include; functionalism and conflict theories. Macro sociology's focal concerns are with an aggregate analysis of the

organization of society, its institutions and organizations, roles and norms. At a point, however, individuals usually enter the picture because it is the actions of individuals that ultimately provide substance to these sociological abstractions. Macro approaches entail aggregate analysis while micro approaches dissect aggregates into components.

Emile Durkheim, laid the foundational argument for macro sociology. He insists that society should be viewed as a separate external phenomenon, ***Sui generis***. It is a fundamental reality of its own kind that could not be reduced to concrete individuals or to organic substances (Durkheim 1938:1953). This view had a domineering influence among the early sociologists. There were always some skeptics of course; but their voices began to grow louder in the 1960s and 1970s. George C. Homans appears to have articulated the most incisive position of the skeptics. His argument begins with "norms and roles". They are, he states, the minimum units of distinctive sociological analysis. People play roles and conform to norms because of rewards and punishments. They determine the form and content of interaction. To propose that people will select among the alternatives they perceive by choosing the one that seems most rewarding is not, Homans notes, a statement about society. Rather it is a statement "about the behaviour of individual men" (Homan 1964:814). Van de Berghe has even chipped in a new dimension to the controversy-the biological basis of social life. His message is that the super-organic quality of social life cannot be ignored, neither can the biological. The idea has introduced "sociobiology" theory (Barlow and Silverberg 1980), thus complicating the already charged debate over micro-macro sociology.

Attention now turns to specific theories. Sociological theories began with positivism. August Comte introduced it around 1830. The theory insists that social phenomena are subject to "invariable natural laws" (Comte 1854). Positivistic philosophy outlined the form and nature of sociology as a contemporary science and for long time remained influential among sociologists everywhere. The positivist method of sociology requires that human society or human behaviour be analyzed based on the principles, procedures, and methods of natural (positive) science such as physics, chemistry and biology. .Comte wanted sociology to be an empirical discipline. He therefore created a positive science of society based on the application of the methods and assumptions of the natural sciences. Positivism is characterized by systematic dispassionate observation of phenomena, objective recording and measurement of data, verifiable evidence or fact. The positive approach is essentially a “system “approach. The positive stage of human mental development according to Auguste Comte, was a new era in human history that was characterized by belief in science. At this stage theological and metaphysical reasoning were abandoned and scientific methods were introduced for explaining both physical and natural phenomena in the world.

Many frequently echoed Comte's assumption that precise social laws could be discovered and that they must be usefully applied to the betterment of the society (Ward 1898). Along with positivism was the evolutionary theory. The evolutionist paradigm attempts to comprehend the whole historical development of societies from their earlier to their latest forms. The theorists reasoned that the world was evolving in a progressive direction, growing better and in the line of the natural law of society. This is what Herbert Spencer called “coherent homogeneity to incoherent heterogeneity". In the last decade of the 19th century however, there was general assault upon positivism (Hughes 1958). Almost at the same period, the "revisionist" controversy developed within Marxism. Between 1920 and 1930, some authors, notable among them Lauaterbach introduced what they claimed to be "a coherent exposition of sociological paradigms (Lauaterbach, 1933). In the 1950s, new sociological paradigms also developed in line with the sociological current of that time. Within the theoretical dimension was essentially functionalism.

Functionalism as a theoretical perspective in sociology holds a view of society as a social system that is made up of different parts that are interconnected and interdependent. These different parts of society such as; school, family, church, economy, government etc. have various roles to play towards the maintenance, survival and stability of the social system.

The Functionalist perspective equates society with the human organism that is the human body. They also stress that parts of the organism cannot be understood in isolation, that proper understanding of each component part of an organism requires knowing it in relation to the entire system. Functionalists sought to analyze the contributions of social elements as components of a specific social system. At its inception, functionalism was very popular but for only a few years. It was criticized for ignoring history and inevitable possibility of change and conflict in human society (Evan-Pritchard 1982). As functionalism was going out of fame, classical Marxism reemerged with a more intense portrayal of the sociological aspect of Marxian theory. As it is well known, the basic elements of conflict perspective in sociology are all clear in the works of Karl Marx. Marx argued that people have an essential element and predefined interest. He also analyzed both the historical and the then contemporary 19th century society in terms of conflict. Karl Marx carefully stressed the link between ideas or ideologies and the concrete interest of those who develop and propagate them; and insisted that the ideologies of an age reflect the interest of the "ruling class", as he and Hegel claimed in the Communist Manifesto that "the history of all hitherto existing society is that of class struggle".

The Marxian perspective criticized what it called "established sociology" in preference for a more radical or critical sociology. This has been a controversial view in sociological theory. Critical sociology was gaining ground when a new strain of functionalism developed by the American Sociologist, R.K Merton emerged. It was an attempt to cure classical functionalism of its shortcomings. Rather than emphasizing equilibrium in the society, Merton's new functionalism recognized that the degree of integration of a given society was an empirical question to be decided by investigation, noting that cultural items and social institutions might be dysfunctional as well as functional, and that there might be functional alternatives to any existing institution or cultural practices (Bottomore 1975). Yet within Merton's functionalism exists some skirmishes in the perspectives of analysis. Functionalist analysis was reduced to nothing more than a perspective in the wider gamut of sociological interpretation.

Functionalist analysis, it was thought could provide only a descriptive classification. It is a different task to discover the function of social fact, and another kettle of fish to search for its cause (Durkhiem 1938). A new controversy was thus introduced about the appropriate realm of analysis; or yet functionalist explanation" (Peter 1958, Hempel 1959, Dore 1961). These paradigms compete among themselves leading to further methodological arguments about explanation" and "interpretation" in sociology. Evolutionism came to the fore again in the 1960s. This time, diverse view emerged from the traditional belief in the gradual growth of society from simplicity to increasing complexity: there were debates on whether social development was a smooth process of continuously increasing differentiation or discontinuous stages showing distinct kinds of societies.

From the competition arose analyses of types of social structure distinguishing, for instance, industrial, postindustrial societies (Aaron 1967, Tourine 1971, Bell 1973) as well as pre-capitalist and capitalist societies among Marxists. In the main, it was a controversy between evolutionary and revolutionary ideas of change in society. From a more incisive dimension was the "episodic" view of Gellner who argued that social change was a function of single event occurring in social history. So social change is a matter of what existed before and after the event

occurred (Gellner, 1964). Though episodic theory is historical it is in conflict with classical evolutionary theory by proposing only one cause of social transformation. Episodic theory appears to have over simplified history. Yet its influence is apparent in the ideas of such great sociologists as Max Weber and Karl Marx both of which over-stressed the role of "the emergence of capitalism" in shaping western social history. Episodic theory inadvertently, revived interest in earlier Marxism but with a change in the traditional outlook: "voluntaristic" theory came to compete with "economic determinism". The modification bred differing schools too. On one lane was a view that saw Marxism as toeing structural analysis by looking at the "deep structure" of modern capitalist society.

On a parallel lane was the critical theory of the Frankfurt school. The school derived its stimulus from critical philosophy as a preferred view to the evolutionary- inspired-thought of economic determinism. The critical theorists focus upon scientific technological society rather than capitalism (Habermas 1970). It rejects the idea of a process of social and political liberation based mainly upon the transformation of the economic system and the preeminent role of the working class in the process (Wellmer 1971). In the main, critical theory seeks to interpret the structure and development of industrial or post- industrial societies. Like Marxism, however, it has an idea of a long-term process of human liberation with an aim to devise a new philosophy of history as a general framework for empirical investigations. Certainly, a more recent paradigm, “radical sociology" is the offshoot of critical theory.

Radical sociology tries to integrate traditional Marxism, critical theory and the varied ideas of the social movements of the 1960s. The attempt however, has not been profound within sociological theory. Another distinctive paradigm worthy of mention is structuralism. The outlook is ahistorical and concentrates on the analysis of basic structures of society rather than pursue an interpretation of a process of historical development. Further war against historical sociology is phenomenological sociology. Phenomenology rejects the assumptions and methods of positivism in sociology arguing that sociology deals with a different subject matter; human society and human behaviour. Since this subject matter differs entirely from that of the natural science, the methods of the natural sciences cannot be appropriated to the study of man and his society. The natural sciences study matter which have no consciousness but simply react unconsciously to external stimuli, hence, natural science phenomena can be observed exclusively from outside. But sociology deals with human beings with consciousness and whose behaviour is driven by feelings, meanings and purpose. Humans have thoughts, beliefs feelings, meanings, intentions and awareness of their being. Because of his consciousness his actions has meaning.

Phenomenology arose in the early 1960s with an emphasis on the understanding of meaning in the study of social life. This again is an assault on positivism and has an affinity with structuralism in terms of common interest in the search for meaning. However, the affinity does not go deep: structuralism looks at the formal structure of relations between meanings but phenomenology leans towards methodological clarifications rather than a formulation of general theory. Trailing phenomenology is a newer paradigm called ethnomethodology. The term ethnomethodology was coined by an American sociologist, Harold Garfunkel who is the founder of ethnomethodological system of thought. Ethnomethodology is a more recent theoretical development and owe much of it insights to the work of Alfred Scutz (1899-1959). Ethnomethodology refers to the study or examination of the methods and procedures used by members of society to construct, account for, or give meaning to their social world. Ethnomethodology takes the view that society exists only in so far as members perceives it or

describe it to exist. So, to the ethnomethodologists, nothing exists except members of society perceive, or account for it as such. It studies everyday life.

Ethnomethodology postulates that social behaviour is a conscious rule-following activity rather than an outcome of structural arrangements; and that rationality of everyday life lies in a theory of society and not necessarily sociological theory scholarly constructed. This calls for an inquiry upon the surface phenomena of social life and is therefore opposed to structuralism's quest for a deep structure. Indeed many paradigms exist in sociology. The much evaluated here are only a few but consist of the major trends in sociological theory at present. The paradigms put together draw from diverse aspects of social, political, economic, psychological, philosophical, cultural and historical ideas to represent general social theory. By this, the sociology discipline is better equipped with perhaps better and broader framework on the basis of which to raise and discuss all the general problems of the age.

The theories may appear to be at sixes and sevens and seemingly offer numerous incompatible and competing schemes of interpretations, but theoretical debates are necessary as a mark of intellectual growth in the discipline of Sociology provided that all paradigms are products of research. Sound theories and perspectives form the foundations for in-depth sociological understanding and analysis. Therefore, newer theories and perspectives are welcome at all times in sociological studies as they help guide researchers on how different social issues are conceived and perceived in human society.

Conclusion

Studies in Sociology are built and embedded on two great pillars; facts and theories. We must understand what the facts are, and also theories must be advanced to explain those facts. But, in the real world, neither facts nor theories reveal themselves to us in prefabricated ways. Theories are in a way nets cast to catch what we call the world: to rationalize, to explain, and to master the world, to help make it ever finer and finer. Sociological perspectives and theories help us to answers questions in the social world; they also explain the relationships between events and provide causal explanation among social variables. Theories confirm and relate to us why or how it is, the facts objectively observed are as they appears. Perspectives and theories constitute the oils with which the yam of knowledge is eaten. Hence, there is a need to interrogate the place of perspectives and theories in the Sociological enterprise. This study on "An Overview of Perspectives and Theories in Sociology" is a clear reminder of the different competing perspectives and theories in academic Sociology.

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AN EVALUATION OF THE SECURITY CHALLENGES CONFRONTING NIGERIA

Abdullahi Usman Musa
Department of Sociology
(Criminology & Security Studies)
Federal University, Dutse-Jigawa Sate

Jamilu Ibrahim Mukhtar
Department of Sociology
(Criminology & Security Studies)
Federal University, Dutse -Jigawa State
Jimukhtar01@gmaim.com

Aliyu Dalhatu Adamu
Department of Sociology
Federal University Dutsin-Ma - Katsina State
aliyudalhatu@fudutsinma.edu.ng
&
Abdulkadir Dauda Raula
Department of State Service
raulerabdoul6@gmail.com
Corresponding author: abdullahiusmannagado@gmail.com

Abstract
This paper evaluated the security challenges confronting Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study were: to evaluate the security challenges confronting Nigeria; to examine the dimensions of internal security; to identify the security challenges confronting Nigeria. The study used secondary data. It also adopted the frustration-aggression theory to provide a direction for the paper. The study found that Nigeria is faced with the burden of security challenges which resulted loss of live and property. The evil activities of Boko Haram terrorists, farmers-herders crashes armed banditry, kidnapping, and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) are among the security challenges threatening the peace and stability of Nigeria. The Federal Government aims to curtail these activities, using various efforts but the security challenges persist, such as killing of innocent people, damage critical national infrastructure and displacement of hundred s of thousands of people across the country. The paper recommends that the government should address poverty and other causes of social exclusion which push young ones into crime and criminality in Nigeria; adopt both kinetic and non-kinetic strategies in the fight against insurgency and other criminal activities as well as ensure robust interagency cooperation among the security agencies involved in fighting insecurity in the country, especially in the area of information sharing and dissemination.
Keywords: Boko-Haram; Internal security; IPOB; Security challenges; Social exclusion.

Introduction

Security is a state of relatively predictable environmental conditions which an individual or group of individuals may pursue without deception of harm and without fear of disturbances or injuries (Okpata and Nwali, 2013). For Terriff (1991), security is the condition of feeling safe from harm or danger, the defense, protection and preservation of values, and the absence of threats to acquire values. Security is an umbrella term under which there are multiple dimensions (Valverde, 2010; Jones, 2012). It can be deployed to describe a subjective feeling of safety or as an objective state of being protected from the possibility of danger, as well as the means of pursuing either of these streams (Zedner, 2003). The safety aspect of security involves protection from physical threats and safeguards for emotional, psychological and financial well-being. This, in turn, suggests that security is much broader in scope and therefore, involves a wide range of governing processes to make it a reality (Valverde, 2010).

Nigeria has of late, witnessed new forms of security threats which have affected the peace and stability of the country. Such threats are linked to crimes perpetrated by groups such as Boko Haram insurgents, kidnappers, bandits, farmers-herders' clashes and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), among others. These challenges have not only posed threats to the corporate existence of Nigeria but also undermined the unity of the nation (Nwagboso, 2018). The security challenges are more endemic and widespread in the seven Northwest states, namely, Kano, Jigawa, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebbi. Of the seven States, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebbi states, have been most affected by the scourge of banditry.

It is however, pertinent to note that, the security challenges are not limited to northwestern Nigeria. Such hiccups are also prevalent in some parts of the north-central region like Niger, Nasarawa, Benue, and Plateau States. The South-East region is also in the grip of for the scourge of the IPOB (Kuna & Jibrin 2016). Other dimensions of the security problems in Nigeria include issues of religious intolerance, subversion, cross border crimes, sabotage, terrorism and insurgency. This paper examines the security challenges confronting Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

This section clarifies the key concepts used in the paper. These are security, internal security and security challenges.

Security

Security is the state of safety, absence of fear, threat or risk to individual members of the society, communities or the entire social fabric, country, sub-region, or the entire globe. It is also the measures taken by a community to enhance the safety of its members. Thus, security is a cherished value of every human society, without which no society can function effectively. Purpura (2011) also argues that security can the strategies for overcoming any threat to society or the institutions that promotes the security, such as the police. In Nigerian context, the institutions that promote security include the Nigeria Police Force, National Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Nigeria Custom Service, Nigeria Immigration Service, Department of State Security, and the Nigerian Armed Forces.

Internal security:

The concept of internal security has been conceived from various perspectives. Internal security means the capability of a state to defend its territorial integrity from all forms of threat, real or imagined as well as acts of aggression from its actual and imagined enemies (Okwori,

1995). According to Walter Lippmann (1943), a nation is said to be secure when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war". For (Harold Lasswell, 1950), internal security is freedom from foreign dictation.
Internal security is the protection, safety and survival of both the state and its citizens from Harm, destruction or some other threats dangerous for human survival (Adebakin and Raimi, 2012). Internal security also means the combined efforts aimed at avoiding, preventing, reducing or resolving violent conflicts at various levels or dimensions of its manifestation (Stan, 2004).

Security Challenges

Having noted that security is the safety and absence of fear and anxiety, security challenge or insecurity is the opposite of security. In other words, security challenges are those threats to the safety and peace of the society. They are the presence of fear, anxiety, and threats to the society. Security challenges, like the security, can affect individual members of the society or community, or nation or the world at large. The security challenges can also emanate from different aspects or structures of the social system, such as threats to health, to the economy, to the political and social sub-systems or to the environment.

Methodology

The method used in the course of this study is secondary source or desk review. The researchers made use of secondary data sourced from text-books, journal articles, internet/online materials, magazines, conference proceedings. The researchers also made use of some search engines like Google-scholar, academia.edu, Research Gate, etc. Primarily, the data collected were related to those for evaluating and identifying the security challenges confronting Nigeria. Analysis of the secondary data was done qualitative method.

Literature Review

Challenges of Internal Security in Nigeria

The internal security situation in Nigeria has seemingly negatively affected the image and status of Nigeria on the African continent and the world at large. Nigeria, which used to be touted as the giant of Africa, and fabled for assisting other smaller countries like Niger, Chad, Liberia and Sierra-Leone, to manage their security challenge, now depends on the support of those countries to fight *Boko Haram* insurgency and other security challenges facing the country. The following are some of the security challenges in Nigeria.

Boko Haram:

Boko-Haram is a group of radical Islamist youth based initially in Borno State of Northeastern Nigeria, which alleged to have links to other international terrorist organizations, such as the ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria), Al-Qaeda and Taliban. The group's objective is to replace the dominance of western education with its own version of Islamic knowledge and to establish *Khilafah* (a Shariah-based government which is rooted in their own perspective of Islam) in place of the democratic government in Nigeria (Mukhtar, 2023). In Nigeria, *Boko Haram* started as a small radical Islamist organization, which then enjoyed limited support from among the *Sufi* Islamic communities in the North eastern part of Nigeria. The agenda of *Boko Haram* is to ensure that Western education has no place in Nigeria, which explains why they have relations with other similar terrorist groups elsewhere. Aside being anti-western in posture, this group carried out attacks on shopping malls, air ports, educational institutions, market places, Police barracks, army

camps, immigration offices, Prisons, and worship centers among others. *Boko Haram* started its attacks domestically in Borno State of North-eastern Nigeria, but later spread its tentacles to other States such Kano, Yobe, Adamawa, Bauchi and Abuja among others (Mukhtar, 2023).

The Famer-Herders Phenomenon

Recently, there appears to be a new paradigm shift in threat perception and of internal security challenge in the Northern part of Nigeria. That paradigm shift is the famer-herders phenomenon. This is because, what used to be a common internal security challenge in the region, has metamorphosed into a more perturbing internal security challenge in the country. Consequently, available documented evidence has shown that in 2012, herdsmen started to move around for grazing of their flock with guns and ammunition and frequently launched attacks on civilian populations (Igbuzor, 2011, as cited in (Audu 2022)). Indeed, such attacks especially against farmers resulted in the destruction of lives and property of most communities in Benue, Kaduna, Adamawa and Taraba States, etc.

Armed Banditry

The current security challenge facing Nigeria which seems to have defied all odds is that of armed banditry. Armed banditry involves the use of force, or threat to intimidate a person with the intent to rob; rape or kill. Banditry manifests in four major dimensions, namely, kidnapping, armed robbery, village raids and cattle rustling. Of these four dimensions, kidnapping and mass abduction of people, especially innocent and unguarded school students/pupils for ransom is gradually taking the lead as no day passes by without hearing on the radio or reading in the national dailies, news of kidnap of innocent citizens in one part of the country or the other (Audu, 2022).
By the end of 2009, police records revealed that a total of 2,148 people had been kidnapped in Nigeria based on reported incidences (Alemika, 2012, p.48). These figures have more than tripled as recent studies tend to suggest (Okoli & Agada, 2014). Between July and October, 2021 alone, armed bandits killed 213 persons while about 676 others were kidnapped across Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Katsina State. On the 28th of March, 2022, a Kaduna bound train from Abuja was attacked by 'unknown gunmen' leaving at least eight persons dead and several others sustaining different degrees of injuries while over a hundred others were kidnapped to 'unknown destinations'. In the same vein, 2 Catholic Priests attached to St. Patrick's Catholic Church and two of their aides were kidnapped at gunpoint in Gidan Maikambo in Kafur LGA of Katsina State on 25th May, 2022 (Ankeli, 2022).

Kidnapping

Kidnapping is a criminal activity that has continued to pose serious threat to the Nigerian state and security. Chukwurah (2011), contended that kidnapping is perceived as the act of illegally taking someone away and keeping him as a prisoner for the purpose of receiving ransom. Kidnapping in Nigeria could be as a result of hostilities, conflicts, crises and violence. Inyang and Abraham (2013, p. 532) defined it as "the forcible seizure, taking away and unlawful detention of a person against his/her will. It is a common law offence and the key part is that it is an unwarranted act on the part of the victim". Another definition offered by Fage and Alabi (2017, p. 289) conceived kidnapping as "forceful or fraudulent abduction of an individual or a group of individuals for reasons ranging from economic, political, and religious to self-determination". Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014, p. 132), also defined kidnapping as the "act of seizing and detaining or carrying away a person by unlawful force or by fraud, and often with a demand for

ransom. It involves taking a person from their family forcefully with the motive of holding the person hostage and earning a profit from their family

Kidnapping in Nigeria is on the increase day by day. Statistically, Nigeria records more than 1,000 kidnapping incidents a year, and there are certainly many that are unreported. The victims include migrants and indigenous people from different locations. International footballer, Christian Obodo was in 2012 kidnapped during church service in broad day light. In the same year, kidnappers abducted a United States citizen in the Niger delta region and killed his driver. In Nigeria, many factors are responsible for kidnapping, among which are, unemployment, underemployment, poverty, political violence and lack of severe punishment for offenders (Catlin Group, 2012).

Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)

One of the greatest threats confronting the unity of Nigeria now is the issue of Biafra separatism. These issue has become a national security concern. The movement has been reinforced particularly with the separatist agitation of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), in such a way that Nigeria's security environment appears to have become more unstable than ever before (Onuoha, 2021). However, the agitation which was initially non-violent, gained public attention when a body known as the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) formed by Ralph Uwazuruike, a lawyer who was trained in India, gained traction. Although the activities of MASSOB led to confrontations with the law enforcement at different times and the arrest of its leader, it received little attention from the international media and community. Worried that the dream for the independence of Biafra will not be realized through MASSOB, Nnamdi Kanu, a Nigerian-British based in London, decided to use the emerging mode of communication, social media, and online radio to drive millions of pro-Biafra independence activists, supporters and sympathizers to his cause (Basil, 2017).

The incitement and violent acts against the Nigerian state by the clandestine *Radio Biafra* on 31 August 2015, the day after the military killed two and injured 30 IPOB members in Onitsha, saw the pro-Biafra agitators threaten violent retaliation against the military. Radio Biafra has also accused the Nigerian security forces of committing "genocide. These incitements were seen as threats to security condition in Nigeria that needs urgent concern. A combination of the foregoing security challenges has led to needless loss of lives and property, destruction of critical national infrastructure and disrupted foreign direct investment, FDI, with dire socio-economic consequences for Nigeria and Nigerians.

Theoretical Framework

This study made use of the frustration-aggression theory to provide a theoretical direction for the paper. The theory is identified with Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer and Sears in 1939 to explain why people behave violently especially when the goals they had hoped for failed, as is th case with criminals like as Boko Haram insurgents, armed bandits and kidnappers who threaten the peace and security of Nigeria. The theory notes that aggressive behavior time and again, leads to anger while anger can transform to perpetration of criminal activities. Moreover, anger caused by frustration, in one way or another, is stored within a person or a group of people and may lead to unbearable frustration that could lead to aggressive behavior. (Samuel, 2011 as cited in Dollard et al., 1939).

The theory is relevant in explaining internal security in Nigeria, because addressing the various dimensions of internal security connotes an effort for preventing frustration amongst the

diverse populations in the country. Most of the security challenges in the country are as a result of frustration and if the potential security challenges are prevented, there is the probability of optimum security in the country.

Findings

The study was designed to identify and evaluate the security challenges confronting Nigeria. The study found that there are numerous security challenges confronting Nigeria, among which are resistance movements and insurgencies by criminal elements such as Boko Haram and IPOB; farmers-herders conflict, kidnapping, and armed banditry. The findings of the study also indicated that the country (Nigeria) has both formal and informal and informal security apparatus whose efforts have not yielded the desired results. The bottom line form the study is that the security challenges have resulted in enormous loss of lives and properties in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study examined the various security challenges bedeviling Nigeria, among them, Boko Haram, banditry, kidnapping for ransom, the farmer-herder crisis and separatist agitations by the IPOB. The study notes that the security challenges have led to loss of lives and property as well as dented the national and international image of the country, including discouraging direct foreign investment (FDI) in the resource-studded nation.

Recommendations

(a) The government should put in place measures to address poverty and other causes of social exclusion which push young ones into crime and criminality in Nigeria.

(b) Government should also adopt both kinetic and non-kinetic strategies in the fight against insurgency and other criminal activities in Nigeria.

(c) There should be interagency cooperation among the security agencies involved in fighting insecurity in the country, especially in the area of information sharing and dissemination.

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THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON MATERNAL MORBIDITY IN SHANGA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KEBBI STATE

[1]**Muhammad Garba Yauri**
&
Auwalu Sale Yakasai Ph.D[2]
Department of Sociology
Al-Qalam University, Katsina
Corresponding Author: muhammadgarbayauri@auk.edu.ng

Abstract
This paper explored the impact of poverty on maternal morbidity, characterized by limited access to essential resources such as healthcare; sustained nutrition and education, which significantly exacerbate maternal morbidity in Shanga Local Government Area of Kebbi State. In most of the lower income communities in developing countries, women often face barriers to accessing quality prenatal care, leading to delayed or inadequate medical attention during pregnancy. It is against this background that the paper examined the incidence of maternal morbidity in Shanga LGA. The Relative deprivation theory was adopted as the paper's theoretical framework. Questionnaire and key informant interview were utilized as the primary instruments of data collection. Purposive sampling technique was used to select only women aged between 15 and 59 years who were included in the study. Data collected from the questionnaire were analysed descriptively using tables and percentages while data from KII were analysed descriptively. Findings from the study indicated that the prevalence of maternal morbidity was high in Shanga Local Government Area of Kebbi State. The study also discovered that due to poverty, most women do not have transport to go to the hospital for antennal care as well as lack money to buy nutritious food and drugs in Shanga Local Government. The study recommends that Government should bring antenatal clinics closer to the communities and also empower women with loans and skill acquisition programmes to enable them cater for their needs, especially during pregnancy.
Keywords: Empowerment, Maternal Morbidity, Maternal Health, Pregnancy,

Introduction

The problem of high rates of maternal morbidity has proved difficult to tackle in many developing countries. Maternal mortality refers to deaths due to complications from pregnancy or childbirth (United Nations Children Fund [UNICEF], 2023). According to the World Health Organization (2023), maternal mortality is unacceptable. In 2020, over 287 000 women died while pregnant or after giving delivery. In 2020, low and lower middle-income countries accounted for about 95% of all maternal fatalities, with the majority of them preventable (WHO, 2023). Maternal mortality is disproportionately concentrated in the world's poorest regions and conflict-affected countries. In 2020, Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for almost 70% of all maternal fatalities (WHO, 2023). According to Galal (2024), the maternal death rate in South Sudan, Chad, and Nigeria exceeded 1,000 in 2020. South Sudan had the greatest rate of maternal fatalities per 100,000 live births. That year, for every 100,000 children, 1,223 mothers died from any cause connected to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management. The maternal death rate in Chad was 1,063. Nigeria had 1,047 fatalities per 100,000 live births.

In Nigeria, the northern areas (North West, north east and to some extent, north central) have the highest maternal death rates in several states (Gulumbe *et al.,* 2018). For example, Kebbi State in Nigeria's northwestern region has one of the lowest reproductive health indices (Gulumbe *et al.,* 2018). More than two-thirds (71%) of pregnant women in the state received no antenatal care, 91% gave birth at home, and less than 10% had competent delivery attendance during their most recent birth, among other factors (National Population Commission, cited by Gulumbe *et al.,* 2018).

According to the World Health Organization (2023), the major complications that cause nearly 75% of all maternal deaths are severe bleeding (mostly bleeding after childbirth), infections (usually after childbirth), high blood pressure during pregnancy (pre-eclampsia and eclampsia), delivery complications, and unsafe abortion. However, beyond these medical causes, poverty remains the key driver of maternal morbidity in low income countries such as Nigeria. According to the World Poverty Clock (2023), 71 million Nigerians are extremely poor. Within Nigeria, data showed further that 65% of the poor (86 million people) live in the North, while 35% (nearly 47 million) live in the South. Kebbi State is the 7th poorest state in Nigeria with 82.2 % (NBS, 2022). Women constitute over 60% of the poorest people in Nigeria and going by the IMF statistics that Nigeria has over 87 million people in extreme poverty that translates to approximately 52 million women on the clutches of extreme poverty (Ifeanyi *et al,* 2019).

Several studies have shown that there is a correlation between poverty and maternal mortality. For example Esperat *et al* (2007) asserted that one frequently stated explanation for the rich-poor difference in pregnancy outcomes is that poorer women receive less prenatal care. Nagahawatte and Goldenberg (2011) also stated that poor women have fewer connections to the obstetric care system than wealthy women, and access to a health care practitioner in the event of an obstetric emergency can be critical. Poor women may face barriers to receiving prenatal care, including inability to pay for otherwise available services, failure to seek services due to prior negative experiences (receiving culturally inappropriate and unsatisfying services, reproach and sanctions for poor health habits), lack of transportation, and depression (Milligan *et al,* 2002).

It is obvious from the above discourse that there is a correlation between poverty and maternal morbidity. It is therefore worrisome looking at the fact that Kebbi State is the 7th poorest state in Nigeria (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). It is against this background that this study examines the effect of poverty on maternal morbidity in Shanga Local Government Area of Kebbi State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The research examined the impact of poverty on maternal morbidity with regards to sociocultural practices on maternal morbidity in Shanga Local Government Area of Kebbi State. The specific objectives were to:

(a) Examine the prevalence of maternal morbidity in Shanga Local Government Area of Kebbi State.
(b) Assess the effect of poverty on maternal morbidity in Shanga Local Government Area of Kebbi State.
(c) Suggest possible solutions to the problem of maternal morbidity in Shanga Local Government Area of Kebbi State.

Conceptual Clarification

Maternal Death

A maternal death is the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy... from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management, but not from accidental or incidental causes. The major complications that account for 75% of maternal deaths are severe bleeding, infection, unsafe abortion, high blood pressure, and prolonged or obstructed labour. Most maternal deaths can be prevented through effective interventions and care during pregnancy and delivery. Often seen as a public health concern, the issue of maternal mortality and morbidity must also be understood as a matter of human rights. International human rights treaty bodies have clarified States' obligations concerning maternal mortality and morbidity and recognized that maternal deaths can amount to violations of women's rights to life, to the highest attainable standard of health, and to equality and non-discrimination (World Health Organization 2018). Maternal death as used in this study refers to the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of the termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, from the cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management.

Maternal Morbidity

Chakhtoura (2019), conceptualized maternal morbidity as an unexpected short-or long-term health problem that results from being pregnant or giving birth. Some common conditions that predispose women to maternal morbidity are cardiovascular disease, infection, bleeding, high blood pressure, blood clots. These problems require additional medical care, such as hospitalization and long-term rehabilitation, and can affect a woman's quality of life. For Vema (2013), maternal morbidity includes near-miss case, meaning women almost die from pregnancy or giving birth but survive. Some women who have near-misses are left with serious lifelong health problems and disabilities. Near-miss cases are sometimes counted separately from general maternal morbidity.

Poverty

The definition of poverty varies depending on the social, cultural and political systems in a particular region (Narayan, *et al,* 2000). Poverty is a multidimensional social phenomenon. In its 2000/2001 World Development Report, World Bank (2001) established that poverty is multidimensional and has important noneconomic dimensions; second, that poverty is always specific to a location and a social group, and awareness of these specifics is essential to the design of policies and programs intended to attack poverty; and third, that despite differences in the way poverty is experienced by different groups and in different places, there are striking similarities in the experience of poverty in very different countries, from Russia to Brazil, Nigeria to Indonesia.

Poor people's lives are marked by powerlessness and voicelessness, which limit their options and shape the quality of their relationships with employers, markets, the government, and even nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Institutions, both formal and informal, mediate and restrict impoverished people's access to opportunities.

The World Bank/CBN (1996) described poverty in Nigeria as "wide spread and severe" despite numerous attempts to tackle the problem. The National Bureau of Statistics (2022) Multidimensional Poverty Index survey revealed that 63% of persons living within Nigeria (133 million people) are multidimensionally poor. The data showed further that 65% of the poor (86 million people) live in the North, while 35% (nearly 47 million) live in the South. Kebbi State is the 7th poorest state in Nigeria with 82.2 % (NBS, 2022). Women constitute over 60% of the poorest people in Nigeria and going by the IMF statistics that Nigeria has over 87 million people in extreme poverty translates to approximately 52 million women on the clutches of extreme poverty (Ifeanyi *et al,* 2019). Poverty is a major cause of maternal death, as it hinders many women from receiving proper and enough medical attention because they cannot afford good antenatal care (Lanre-Abba, 2008). Therefore, Poverty as seen from the lenses of this study refers to the inability of women to access maternal health services.

Antenatal care: This is a basic component of maternal care on which the life of mothers and babies depend however, poverty negatively affects the utilization of health services. According to the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey ([NDHS]2003), 30% of Nigerian women cited the problem of getting money for treatment, while 24% cited the problems of accessibility to health facilities and transportation. Due to poverty, more than seven in ten women who delivered outside a health facility received no postnatal care at all (NDHS, 2003).

Literature Review

This section of the paper examines relevant literature regarding the effect of poverty on maternal morbidity.

The State of Maternal Morbidity in Nigeria

Maternal mortality refers to deaths caused by problems during pregnancy or childbirth. In 2020, about 800 women died per day from preventable pregnancy and delivery complications. In 2020, a maternal fatality occurred nearly every two minutes (WHO, 2023). Between 2000 and 2020, the maternal mortality ratio (MMR, number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births) declined by roughly 34% globally (WHO, 2023) in 2020, low and lower middle-income countries accounted for about 95% of all maternal fatalities (WHO, 2023). According to the UN interagency estimates, the worldwide maternal mortality ratio (MMR) fell by 34% between 2000 and 2020, from 339 to 223 deaths per 100,000 live births (World Health Organization, UNICEF, United Nations Population Fund and The World Bank, 2023). This amounts to an average annual rate of decline of 2.1%. Though there was tremendous progress in reducing worldwide MMR between 2000 and 2015, the numbers have remained stable when average reduction rates between 2016 and 2022 (UNICEF, 2023). The rate of decline in most regions halted, but MMR grew in Western Europe and North America, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean, between 2016 and 2022.

The MMR in low-income countries in 2020 was 430 per 100,000 live births, compared to 12 per 100,000 in high-income countries (WHO, 2023). Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia were responsible for approximately 87% (253 000) of the predicted global maternal fatalities in 2020 9WHO, 2023). In nine countries experiencing severe humanitarian crises, maternal mortality

rates were more than double the worldwide norm (551 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births versus 223 overall) (World Health Organization, 2023)

According to the WHO (2023), the maternal mortality rate in the African Region in 2020 was predicted to be 531 deaths per 100,000 live births. South Sudan has the highest maternal mortality rate, with 1223 fatalities, followed by Chad with 1063 deaths and Nigeria with 1047 deaths per 100,000 live births. Sub-Saharan Africa alone accounted for around 70% of maternal mortality (202 000), with Southern Asia accounting for approximately 16% (47 000) (WHO, 2023). The World Bank (2020), noted that Nigeria's maternal mortality ratio has improved from 1,148 in 2000 to 1,047 in 2020. Maternal mortality in Nigeria is greater than the regional norm. The maternal mortality ratio is the number of women who die from pregnancy-related causes while pregnant or within 42 days after pregnancy termination per 100,000 live births.

In Nigeria, the northern regions (north east and north west) have the highest MMR, with estimated maternal mortality of more than 1000/100,000 live births in various states (Gulumbe, *et al,* 2018). For example, Kebbi State, in Nigeria's northwestern region, has one of the poorest reproductive health indices (Gulumbe *et al.,* 2018). More than two-thirds (71%) of pregnant women in the state never had antenatal care; 91% of women gave birth at home; and less than 10% had competent birth attendance during their most recent birth, among other things (National Population Commission quoted by Gulumbe *et al.,* 2018). In recognition of these appalling statistics, the Nigeria Minister of Health recently established the "Task Force on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Nigeria" and stated that six northern states, including Kebbi, had the highest burden in Nigeria (Adewole cited in Gulumbe *et al.,* 2018). Prior to this, the State Government of Kebbi and Adamawa in 2013 acquired a grant of 30 million Euros (six billion naira) from the European Union Commission to help lower MMR in the two states (Abdul' Aziz referenced in Gulumbe *et al.,* 2018). Despite these efforts, attaining a significant drop in MMR in Kebbi State remains challenging.

Effects of Poverty on Maternal Morbidity

Graham, Fitzmaurice, Bell, and Caims (2004) investigated the relationship between poverty and maternal mortality. According to them, there is evidence of significant differences in access to and adoption of maternity services across a wide range of poor nations, and a tool has recently been devised to reveal similar disparities in the risk of maternal mortality. These risks, they explain, are the result of disparities in underlying health status, different lifetime exposure to pregnancy, unequal physical, economic, and social access to preventive services for normal pregnancy and delivery, and significant disparities in the use of quality emergency obstetric care (Graham *et al.,* 2004). Poverty exacerbates every other risk factor for maternal death and morbidity, from hideous female subjugation to maternal malnutrition and poor medical and physical infrastructure (Harrison, 1998).The link between poverty and maternal mortality highlights the need to address this reproductive health issue (Lanre-Abba, 2008).

Socioeconomic status is a risk factor for maternal mortality (Jeong *et al.* 2020). Some low-income countries (LICs) have more than 100 times the maternal mortality rate of high-income countries (HICs) due to pre-eclampsia/eclampsia (Goldenberg *et al.,* 2011), anesthesia-related problems, obstetric complications, or difficulties with caesarean sections (C-sections) (Sobhy *et al.,* 2016). Furthermore, residential regions, such as rural areas, affect bad maternal health outcomes because of disparities in maternal health care utilization, such as prenatal care at a health facility or facility-based delivery (Long, 2010). Maternal mortality in HICs has been significantly reduced in recent decades, but it remains at approximately 10 per 100,000 newborns (Goldenberg, 2011). Numerous research such as Goldenberg (2011) have investigated the risk factors for

maternal mortality in LICs, but few have looked at the relationship between socioeconomic position and maternal mortality in HICs.

Financial obstacles have had a negative impact on health-care delivery, including limiting access for vulnerable groups such as poor women (Orude, 2021). User fees were implemented in Nigeria's health-care system in the 1980s, during the country's Structural Adjustment Programme (Orude, 2021). However, the harmful impact of user fees on access to healthcare services in underdeveloped countries is widely known (Reproductive Rights and Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre, 2008: 130). User fees pose health concerns and cause many fatalities in poor populations, because they limit people's financial ability to obtain health-care services, as the majority of the world's 1.5 billion poor are women (Reproductive Rights and Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre, 2008).

In underdeveloped nations like Nigeria, women face limited access to quality health care, which has worsened with the implementation of user fees (Cohen, 1994; Alubo, 1999). In Nigeria, status, power, and privilege influence the quality of medical care (Alubo, 1999). Poverty hinders women's access to quality antenatal care, leading to higher maternal death rates (Lanre-Abass, 2008). In rural Africa, women have a one-in-eight risk of dying during childbirth due to high fecundity, complex pregnancies, and limited healthcare access. (Alubo 1999; Mathews 2002). In Nigeria, many women are born into a cycle of deprivation, including lack of education and limited access to medical care (Harrison, 1985). Sub-Saharan Africa has one of the highest maternal mortality rates globally due to inadequate health infrastructure (Giddens, 2006). The high frequency of maternal mortality in various parts of the world indicates disparities in access to excellent health care and emphasizes the wealth disparity (WHO, 2023).

Theoretical framework

This pater adopted the Relative Deprivation theory.The Relative Deprivation theory is associated with Samuel Stouffer (1966). The theory is defined as the lack of resources to sustain the diet, lifestyle, activities and amenities that an individual or group are accustomed to or that are widely encouraged or approved in the society to which they belong. Measuring relative deprivation allows for an objective comparison between the situation of the individual or group compared to the rest of society. Deprivation may also emphasise the individual experience of discontent when being deprived of something to which one believes oneself to be entitled, however emphasizing the prospective of the individual makes objective measurement problematic, (lain walker, 2001). It is a term used in the social sciences to describe feelings or measures of economic, political, or social deprivation that are relative rather than absolute. The term is inextricably linked to similar terms like poverty and social exclusion.

The concept of deprivation theory of poverty has important consequences for both behaviour and attitudes, including feelings of stress, political attitudes, and participation in collective action. The deprivation theory of poverty posits that individuals and families in poverty experience a lack of essential resources, leading to adverse consequences. In the context of maternal morbidity, poverty can exacerbate health disparities and contribute to heightened risks during pregnancy and childbirth. Limited access to quality healthcare, inadequate nutrition, and stressful living conditions can amplify the impact of poverty on maternal well-being. Insufficient financial resources may deter pregnant individuals from seeking a timely prenatal care which may lead to die during the delivery. Nevertheless, increase the likelihood of complications.

In impoverished settings, the absence of proper nutrition and healthcare infrastructure can contribute to higher rates of maternal morbidity, including complications such as anaemia, hypertension, and infections. The stress associated with economic hardship may also negatively affect maternal health. Chronic stress can contribute to adverse outcomes during pregnancy and hinder overall maternal well-being. Moreover, the lack of access to education and information in impoverished communities may result in a lack of awareness about proper maternal care practices. In summary, the deprivation theory of poverty underscores how the scarcity of resources in impoverished conditions can significantly impact maternal morbidity. Addressing poverty through comprehensive strategies, including improved healthcare access, education, and economic support is crucial to mitigating the adverse effects on maternal health.

Methodology

Shanga Local Government area was created from the present of Yauri Local Government Area of Kebbi State on 20th of December 1996, with its headquarters situated at Shanga by military administration during regime of President Sani Abacha, commander in-chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Local Government consists of four (4) Districts i.e. Shanga, Kwanji, Sawashi and Rafin Kirya districts being administered by an appointed district head of 39 village units. The population of the area is characterized by peasant farmers and petty traders.

Survey research design was used to collect the opinion of women on the relationship between poverty and maternal morbidity. Questionnaire and key informant interview were used as the primary instrument of data collection. The population of study consisted of only women attending antenatal care at the General Hospital Shanga located opposite Shanga local government secretariat in Kebbi State. The sample size of study consisted of 40 women who were selected through purposive and accidental sampling techniques. The use of purposive sampling was because only women were the target population while accidental sampling was utilized to pick only women were who came to the clinic for antenatal care. Also, key informant interview was conducted with 4 health officials at Shanga Hospital. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique. Data collected through the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively using frequency tables and percentages while data collected through key informant interview were analysed descriptively to complement the quantitative data.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents and analyses the data collected from the field. Forty Questionnaire copies were administered to respondents in health centres of Shanga local government. A total 32 questionnaire copies representing 84 percentage were completed and returned. Eight (8) representing 16 percent were not returned. The analysis of data is divided into two section: socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and the substantive issues of the research.

Section A: Bio-data of the respondents

Table 1: **Distribution of Respondents based on age**

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
15-30	**18**	**56.25**
31-60	**10**	**31.25**
61 & above	**4**	**12.5**
Total	**32**	**100**

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

The result in table 1 indicates that eighteen respondents were aged between 15 and 30, ten between t 31 and 60 and five respondents aged 61 and above. This represent 56.25%, 31.25% and 12% respectively.

Table 2: **Distribution of Respondents based on level of Education**

High qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	**19**	**59.75**
SSCE/OND	**10**	**31.25**
MBBS/BSC/HND	**3**	**9.75**
Total	**32**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Based on the results in table 2, 59.75% of the respondents have primary certificate as the highest qualification, 31.25% have SSCE/OND, and 9.75% have MBBS/BSC/HND. This shows that majority of the respondents have enough educational certification to respond to the questionnaire items.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents based on occupation

Job Description	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	14	43.75
Business	13	40.25
Civil Servant	3	9.75
Others	2	6.25
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The results in table 3showed that 14 respondents representing 43.75% were farmers, 13 respondents representing 40.25%, 3 representing 9.75% of the respondents were civil servants while 2(6.25%) had other occupations. This indicates that the respondents are well informed about the issue of maternal morbidity in the community

Table 4: **Distribution of Respondents based on working experience**

Working experience	Frequency	Percentage
1-10	**13**	**40.25**
11-20	**12**	**37.5**
21-30	**3**	**9.75**
31 & above	**4**	**12.5**
Total	**32**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2023)

From table 4, 40.25% of the respondents have working experience of 1-10 years, 37.5% have working experience of 11-20, while 9.75% respondents have working experience of 21-30 years and 31 above, each. This shows that the respondents are familiar with subject of the research.

Table 5: Prevalence of Maternal Morbidity

Prevalence	Frequency	Percentage
Low	9	28.13
Moderate	5	15.62
High	18	56.25
Total	**32**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Data in table 5 indicated that majority of the respondents represented by 18 (56.62%) agreed that maternal mortality was high in the study area. Also, 28.13% (9) were of the view that maternal mortality was low while 15.62% (5) said low. In-depth interview conducted with one of the staff in Shanga hospital on the 21st of June, 2023 showed that maternal deaths were a common occurrence in the hospital. He stated that most often, pregnant women do not come for antenatal until when their condition becomes precarious and are often rushed by family and relations to the hospital for intervention. In some cases, the patients are lucky to survive, while in other circumstances; there is little the medical personnel could do to salvage the situation.

Table 6: Does Poverty Affect Maternal Morbidity?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (f)
Yes	**20**	**62.5**
No	**12**	**37.5**
Total	**32**	**100**

Source: Field of Survey (2023)

The result above showed that majority of the respondents represented by 20 (62.5%) agreed that poverty affects maternal mortality in the study area while 12 (37.5%) of the respondents said no. This means that majority of the pregnant women in the study area are economically poor and this can have a negative effect on access to maternal health services. In an interview with one of the health personnel on the 7th of June, 2023 regarding the relationship between poverty and maternal mortality, he not thus:

> It is clear that economy has been crippled in almost every community in this area. This is because of the problem of banditry that affects many markets around us, we cannot sell our farm produce as usual, and many people remain in poverty. As such, it affects all aspects of life including health and pregnant issues, (KII, ward head).

It could be seen that a synthesis of the views of respondents with those of the key informants clearly shows that poverty contributes in maternal deaths in the study area.

Table 7: Consequences of Maternal Morbidity

Consequences	Frequency	Percentage
Eclampsia	12	37.5
Stunted infants	12	37.5
Depression	8	25
Total	**32**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Table 7 showed that 37.5% have eclampsia while 37.5% have postnatal complication and 25% depression. This means that pregnant women in Shanga local government areas suffer from malnourishment, postnatal complications and depression. A participant during an interview revealed that: ''A lot of women during their pregnancy are facing so many challenges which may lead to them suffering from vesico vaginal fistula (VVF), depression, eclampsia and chronic injuries,'' (Women leader).

Table 8: Impact of Poverty on Maternal Morbidity

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of transportation fare to visit antenatal clinics due to distance	15	46.88
No money to buy drugs	6	18.75
Poor feeding due to financial difficulty	9	28.13
Others	2	
Total	**32**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2023)

In table 8, majority of the respondents representing 15 (46.88%) stated that they were not able to access maternal clinics due to lack of transportation fare. The study also noted that majority of the respondents represented by 9 (28.13%) were not able to eat balanced diet required of pregnant women due to financial difficulty. It was also discovered that 6 (18.75%) of the respondents had no money to buy drugs whenever the need arises while 2(6.25%) gave other reasons. This means that poverty in Shanga local government area directly hinders pregnant women from access to basic needs during pregnancy periods due to insufficiency of money.

A religious cleric who was interviewed on the 18th of August, 2023 posited that:

> Poverty can cause any kind of suffering for any person, so long as one remain in poverty, he may never live a good and conducive life. In addition, health issue in this country has become marketized, if one is rich one can have the best healthcare services with all his household members, those that remain in poverty will receive the poorest kind of health treatments (KII, religious cleric).

From the above expressions, it is obvious that poverty is major obstacle to accessing maternal health services in Shanga Local Government Area.

Table 9: Possible remedies for Maternal Morbidity

Remedies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Job opportunities for women	8	25
Provision of healthcare closer to communities	11	34
Women Empowerment Programmes	9	28
Sensitization/Education	4	13
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The results in table 9 indicated that 34% (9) of the respondents suggested that government should make efforts to bring maternal healthcare facilities closer to the door steps of the people, 28% (9) suggested that women should be empowered through skill acquisition programmes to enable them earn income, 25% (8) made a case for the creation of formal job opportunities for women while 13% (4) asked government and NGOs to scale up sensitization on the dangers of maternal morbidity in the study area.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that poverty significantly impacts maternal morbidity in Shanga Local Government, creating a complex web of challenges. Limited access to healthcare services, inadequate nutrition, and lack of transportation fare to access medical health care due to distance are some of those challenges. The findings of this study agreed with those of Orude (2021) that financial obstacles have had a negative impact on health-care delivery, including limiting access for vulnerable groups such as poor women. Additionally, the study found that lack of education and awareness lead to delay or inadequate prenatal care, increasing the risk of complications during childbirth. Addressing poverty through improved socioeconomic conditions and healthcare infrastructure is crucial for mitigating these effects on maternal health in the study area.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, can be concluded that majority of pregnant women in the study area are economically poor and are not be able to take the required protein which help in reducing maternal morbidity. Poverty hinders the pregnant women's right to have access to basic needs during pregnancy due to insufficient money either in their hands or their husbands'. These problems compound the challenges faced by pregnant women which may lead to their suffering from vesico vaginal fistula (VVF), depression, eclampsia and other avoidable chronic injuries.

Recommendations

(a) The Kebbi Sate government, in conjunction with NGOs should make it a matter of public policy to ensure that maternal clinics are built within 5km radius to enhance quick access to medical care.
(b) It should also partner with NGOs to provide different forms of empowerment programmes such skill acquisition to enable women earn income to take care of their health
(c) The Kebbi State government and NGOs should scale up their sensitization/education programmes to educate the people on maternal mortality issues in their communities.
(d) It is imperative for the Kebbi Sate government to abolish all user fee charges that discourage people from seeking medical care in hospitals especially in rural communities.

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