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Editorial

This issue of NIU *Journal of Humanities* touches on Development Administration, Literary Studies, Educational Management and Social Psychology.

The first part of the Journal focues on Development Administration. One of the papers in this section reveals the contemporary issue of revenue allocation and identified challenges which embedded as outlining prospects for it. It is uncovered that in a bid strategy to resolve the controversial issues surrounding the contentious revenue allocation in Nigeria, a high level of fiscal decentralization is required in replacing the unfair revenue sharing formula currently on operations. This paper, therefore, recommends that revenue formulae for revenue sharing should be guided by national interest, which should take precedence over individual or primordial attention and reactions.

One of the papers, in the second section on Literary Studies, is a reaction to the brazen exploitation of petroleum resources in the Niger Delta without compensation and environmental impact assessment by the Nigerian government and the international oil companies. Three representative poems are selected from different collections of the two poets. They are analysed using Systemic Functional Grammar as theoretical framework. The systemic functional analysis of the Nominal Group brings out the eco-critical features of the poems.

Papers in section three explore issues in Educational Management. Examining the perception of school counselors on family therapy as a panacea to the phenomenon of empty nest syndrome in Southwest Nigeria, it is postulated in one of the papers that school counselors are experts in using different approaches and therapies in handling various challenges that humans are facing in their daily livelihood. Hence, their inability to unanimously agree in their choice of family therapy as an antidote to empty nest syndrome. It is, however, recommended that the use of family therapy and other approaches and therapies may be appropriate in handling empty-nest syndrome.

Papers in the last section deals with issues in Social Psychology. While advocating that culture and parents' socioeconomic status strongly influence students' career choices, one of the papers in this section, recommends that school leaders should teach students about social factors that may influence their career choice. Also, parents are admonished to stop pushing their kids into careers they don't fit into but they should rather work with school advising or professional guides to help their children choose smart careers. Moreso, guardians should be cautious about pushing their children toward unrealistic careers.

On the whole, this issue of *NIU Journal of Humanities* features many empirical and theoretical based articles which can be of great benefit to every reader.

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Part One

Development Administration

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Financial Remittance and Growth in Nigeria: Does Financial Development Matter?

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Abstract. This study explores the complex relationship between financial remittances, financial development, and economic growth in Nigeria by investigating whether financial development serves as a mediator in the effect of remittances on Nigeria's economic performance. Thus, this present study focuses on the interactive effect of financial remittances and financial development on economic growth in Nigeria using secondary data for the periods of 1984 to 2022. The results of the Dynamic Ordinary Least Squares (DOLS) and Fully Modified Ordinary Least Squares (FMOLS) showed that, individually, remittances do not significantly increase economic growth in Nigeria, but when we considered the moderated effect of financial development, remittances become growth-enhancing in Nigeria. The findings reveal a positive and statistically significant interactive effect of remittances and financial development on economic growth, confirming the role of remittances as a source of external finance that stimulates domestic investment and consumption. Furthermore, the study provides compelling evidence supporting the mediating role of financial development in this relationship. A well-developed financial sector, characterized by depth, efficiency, and access, enhances the positive impact of remittances on economic growth. In light of these findings, the study underscores the importance of policies aimed at fostering financial inclusion, promoting financial literacy, and expanding access to formal financial services. These measures empower remittance recipients to make informed and productive financial decisions, thereby maximizing the developmental benefits of remittances.

Keywords: Remittances; Growth; Financial Development; Nigeria; DOLS.

1. Introduction

Money sent home by migrants, known as financial remittances, has grown to be a crucial part of the world economy. These capital inflows have become increasingly important to the economic landscape of emerging countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Nigeria has seen a significant growth in the flow of remittances from its diaspora populations around the world. Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and one of the top beneficiaries of remittances on the continent (Ali-Bare, Bani, Ismail, & Rosland, 2022). Researchers and decision-makers have been quite interested in this phenomenon, leading to investigations into the connection between money remittances and Nigerian economic progress (Adediran, Okunade & Aor, 2022; Adams, & Page, 2005). Nigeria's economy, which is distinguished by its plethora of natural resources and young labour force, has encountered several difficulties, such as budgetary deficits, inflation, and unemployment. Financial remittances have attracted interest in this context as a possible engine of economic growth and development. In an effort to determine if remittances act as an accelerator for economic growth in Nigeria, scholars have made an effort to investigate the complex dynamics of remittances (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2020).

To unravel the complex relationship between financial remittances and economic growth in Nigeria, it is essential to consider the mediating role of financial development. Financial development encompasses a range of factors, including the depth and breadth of financial markets, access to financial services, and the efficiency of financial intermediaries. Understanding how these aspects of financial development interact with the influx of remittances is crucial in comprehending their impact on Nigeria's economic landscape (Acharya, & Leon-Gonzalez, 2019).

Financial remittances, the transfer of money by migrants to their home countries, have emerged as a significant source of income for many developing nations, including Nigeria. As one of the largest recipients of remittances in Africa, Nigeria has seen a substantial influx of funds from its diaspora communities, which has raised important questions about the impact of these remittances on the country's economic growth. While there is a growing body of literature that suggests a positive relationship between remittances and economic growth (Hines & Simpson, 2019; Ngoma & Ismail, 2013), the mediating role of financial development in this relationship remains relatively underexplored (Okunade, 2022; Okunade & Ajisafe, 2022; Gao, et al. 2021). Despite the increasing inflow of remittances into Nigeria, there is a lack of comprehensive research that empirically examines the extent to which financial remittances contribute to the country's economic growth. While some studies suggest a positive relationship, others question the magnitude and sustainability of this impact (Akcay, 2020; Olayungbo & Quadri, 2019; Bhattacharya et al., 2018).

The role of financial development in mediating the relationship between financial remittances and economic growth is not well understood in the context of Nigeria. Financial development encompasses factors such as the depth and efficiency of financial markets and the accessibility of financial services. It is unclear how these aspects of financial development interact with remittances and whether they amplify or mitigate their effects on economic growth. Policymakers in Nigeria are faced with decisions on how to harness the potential of remittances for economic development. Without a clear understanding of the mechanisms through which remittances influence economic growth and the mediating role of financial development, it becomes challenging to formulate effective policies that can maximize the positive impacts of remittances while addressing potential challenges (Okunade, et al., 2023). Given these gaps in knowledge and the importance of remittances for Nigeria's economic development, this study seeks to address these issues by empirically investigating whether financial development mediates the relationship between financial remittances and economic growth in Nigeria. This research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play and provide valuable insights for policymakers and development practitioners seeking to leverage remittances as a tool for sustainable economic development in Nigeria.

This paper aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by exploring the following questions:

- Is there empirical evidence supporting the notion that financial remittances positively influence economic growth in Nigeria?
- To what extent does financial development mediate the relationship between financial remittances and economic growth in Nigeria?

To address these questions, this study draws on a comprehensive review of existing literature and employs rigorous empirical analyses, utilizing data from reputable sources such as the World Bank, and other relevant datasets. By investigating the relationship between financial remittances, financial development, and economic growth in Nigeria, this research seeks to shed light on the complex dynamics of this relationship, providing valuable insights for policymakers, economists, and development practitioners working to harness the potential of remittances for Nigeria's economic progress.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Following the introduction, Section 2 addresses the theoretical and empirical review of literature. Section 3 presents the methodology while Section 4 discusses empirical results. Lastly, Section 5 concludes the study and provides the practical implications.

2. Review of Theoretical and Empirical Literature

Theoretically, this study draws upon several key economic theories and frameworks. The neoclassical growth theory, rooted in the work of Solow (1956), forms the foundation of many discussions on economic growth. According to this theory, the accumulation of capital is a primary driver of economic growth. In the context of financial remittances, they are viewed as a source of capital inflow that can lead to increased investment, higher productivity, and ultimately, economic growth (Barro, 1991). Remittances are seen as a form of savings or investment in human or physical capital that can contribute to long-term economic development (Yang, 2008). In the same vein, human capital theory, developed by scholars like Becker (1964) and Schultz (1961), posits that investments in education and skills enhance the productivity of labour, thus promoting economic growth. In the context of remittances, funds sent by migrants can be directed toward investments in education, healthcare, and skill development, which, in turn, can lead to a more skilled and productive workforce, potentially fuelling economic growth (Adams & Page, 2005).

New Institutional Economics (NIE) emphasizes the role of institutions in economic development (North, 1990). Remittances can influence institutional factors by reducing poverty and income inequality, potentially leading to improved and sustained growth (Gupta et al., 2009). Furthermore, remittances can stimulate the development of financial institutions and markets, as they create a demand for financial services such as savings accounts, insurance, and investment opportunities (Brown & Jimenez, 2015). In addition, dependency theory, developed in the mid-20th century, provides a critical perspective on the impact of remittances in developing countries (Prebisch, 1950). It argues that heavy reliance on remittances can create economic vulnerabilities, as countries become overly dependent on external inflows (Todaro & Smith, 2015). While remittances can provide temporary economic relief, they may also hinder self-sustained development by perpetuating structural imbalances (Lucas and Stark, 1985).

On the mediation role, financial development theory posits that a well-functioning financial sector is crucial for economic growth (Levine, 1997). In the context of Nigeria, financial development encompasses the depth and breadth of financial markets, access to credit, and the efficiency of financial intermediaries. A developed financial sector can mediate the impact of remittances by facilitating their efficient allocation to productive investments (Hao et al., 2016). Access to formal financial services can enable households to save, invest, and manage risk more effectively, potentially amplifying the positive effects of remittances on economic growth (Beck et al., 2007). Financial Development and mediation have theoretical underpinnings about the relationship between financial remittances, financial development, and economic growth in Nigeria encompass a range of economic theories and perspectives. These theories provide a foundation for empirical investigations into the specific dynamics of remittances within the Nigerian context, shedding light on the mechanisms through which financial development may mediate the impact of remittances on the country's economic growth. This theory is highly relevant if the study aims to understand how financial development mediates the relationship between remittances and economic growth in Nigeria. Financial development theory directly addresses the role of the financial sector in shaping the impact of remittances. Given the importance of financial intermediation and efficient allocation of remittances, this theory is particularly applicable when investigating the mediation effect of financial development.

On empirical side, numerous empirical investigations have examined the relationship between remittances and economic growth in Nigeria. For instance, a study by Nwosa (2014) utilized time series data and reported a positive and statistically significant impact of remittances on economic growth in Nigeria. The study highlighted the potential role of remittances in boosting domestic investment and consumption. Amassoma et al. (2019) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the policy environment and recommended measures to maximize the development impact of remittances. This research underscores the importance of policy frameworks in ensuring that remittances contribute effectively to economic growth and development.

Research on the mediating effect of financial development in the context of remittances and economic growth in Nigeria is relatively recent. Ajide et al. (2017) explored this mediating role by analysing data from 1986 to 2013. Their findings suggested that financial development indeed played a mediating role, positively influencing the relationship between remittances and economic growth. This study provided empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis that a well-developed financial sector can enhance the impact of remittances on economic growth. Empirical studies have also examined the broader macroeconomic effects of remittances on Nigeria's economy. Ayinla and Alimi (2019) investigated the impact of remittances on exchange rates and inflation in Nigeria. Their findings suggested that remittances had a stabilizing effect on exchange rates and helped mitigate inflationary pressures. This research highlights the potential macroeconomic benefits of remittance inflows.

Studies have also examined the influence of remittances on the development of Nigeria's financial sector. Adeniyi et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between remittances and various financial sector development indicators. Their analysis indicated that remittances had a positive impact on financial sector development, particularly in terms of increasing banking sector depth and efficiency. This finding underscores the role of remittances in contributing to the growth and sophistication of the financial sector. Due to Nigeria's dual financial system, numerous research has examined the interactions between remittances and both formal and informal financial channels. Olawumi (2019) carried out a study that concentrated on how remittances were used in both systems. The study showed that recipients frequently use a mix of formal and informal financial channels for a range of financial activities. This emphasises the significance of taking Nigeria's dual financial system's complexities into account when assessing the impact of remittances.

Empirical research has also explored the influence of institutional and policy factors on the relationship between remittances and economic growth in Nigeria. Olaniran and Kehinde (2019) examined the impact of governance quality on this relationship. Their findings indicated that good governance could amplify the positive impact of remittances on economic growth by fostering efficient resource allocation and utilization. This study underscores the role of governance and policy in shaping the outcomes of remittance inflows. Ogunbiyi (2016) examined the effect of remittances on household poverty levels in Nigeria and found that remittances contributed significantly to reducing poverty. This research underscores the potential welfare-enhancing effects of remittances for recipient households. Idris and Alarudeen (2017) investigated how remittances influenced the investment choices of households, particularly in the context of education and small-scale businesses. Their findings indicated that remittances were commonly directed towards education and entrepreneurship, suggesting that remittances can have a direct impact on human capital development and microeconomic growth. Odedokun and Round (2018) conducted a regional analysis and found that the impact of remittances on economic growth varied across states, with some regions benefiting more from remittance inflows than others. This regional dimension underscores the importance of considering localized effects when assessing the relationship between remittances and growth.

The existing empirical literature provides a valuable foundation for understanding the multifaceted relationships between financial remittances, financial development, and economic growth in Nigeria. While numerous studies have confirmed the positive impact of remittances on economic growth, recent research has begun to delve into the mediating role of financial development. Additionally, the dynamics within Nigeria's dual-financial system and the influence of institutional and policy factors are essential aspects of this research landscape. The present study aims to contribute further to this body of research by examining these relationships and shedding light on the potential mediation of financial development in Nigeria's specific context.

3. Methodology

3.1 Empirical Model

Following the theoretical foundation of this study and in line with extant studies in the literature (Ali-Bare, Bani, Ismail, & Rosland, 2022; Akcay, 2020; Acharya, & Leon-Gonzalez, 2019; Adeniyi, Omisakin & Egwaikhide, 2018; Ajide & Raheem, 2017), we begin by investigating the direct effect of remittance on growth in Nigeria by estimating the baseline model explicitly specified equation 1:

$$GRO_t = \alpha_i + \beta_1 REM_t + \beta_2 FID1_t + \beta_3 FID2_t + \beta_4 X'_t + \mu_t \qquad 1$$

where GRO_t is economic growth at time t, REM is financial remittance at time t, FID1 and FID2 are financial development proxied by Domestic credit to private sector by banks and broad money supply (% of GDP), while X'_t is a vector of other control variables such as foreign direct investment (FDI), exchange rate (EXR), real interest rate (RIR), trade openness (TOP) and inflation rate (INF_t) respectively and $\mu_{i,t}$ is the white noise error term. To account for the mediating role of financial development, we modified Equation 1 by including the interaction terms. This is presented in equation 2:

$$GRO_t = \alpha_i + \beta_1 REM_t + \beta_2 FID1_t + \beta_3 FID2_t + \beta_4 REM_t * FID1_t + \beta_5 REM_t * FID2_t + \beta_6 X'_t + \mu_t \qquad 2$$

Where $REM_t * FID1_t$ & $REM_t * FID2_t$ are the coefficients of the interaction terms respectively.

3.2 Data and Sources

The study examines the mediating effect of financial development on the relationship between remittances and growth in Nigeria using secondary data for the periods of 1984 to 2022. The choice of 1984 as the start date is informed by the era of massive policies to encourage foreign personal remittances from Nigerians in diaspora as part of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) introduced in 1986 in Nigeria as well as the data availability. Table 1 shows the description and measurement variables of interest as well as their sources.

Table 1: Data Description, Measurements and Sources

S/N		Description/Measurements	Source
1	GRO	GDP per capita growth (annual %)	WDI, 2023
2	REM	Personal remittances, received (% of GDP)	WDI, 2023
3	FID1	Domestic credit to private sector by banks (% of GDP)	WDI, 2023
4	FID2	Broad money (% of GDP)	WDI, 2023
5	FDI	Foreign direct investment, net inflows (% of GDP)	WDI, 2023
6	EXR	Official exchange rate (LCU per US$, period average)	WDI, 2023
7	RIR	Real interest rate (%)	WDI, 2023
8	TOP	Trade (% of GDP)	WDI, 2023
9	INF	Inflation, consumer prices (annual %)	WDI, 2023

Source: *Authors' Compilation, 2023*

3.3 Method of Analysis

Some of the most important concerns in time series data analysis are serial correlation, endogeneity issues, and variable stationarity. These issues undermine the OLS coefficient estimations. One of the methods that address these issues is the Dynamic Ordinary Least Square (DOLS) or Fully Modified Ordinary Least Square (FMOLS) (Yorucu & Kirikkaleli, 2017; Kirikkaleli, 2016; Yorucu & Bahramian, 2015). The DOLS method is built on the standard error that adopts a parametric covariance matrix estimator that yields adjusted heteroskedasticity and autocorrelation that are robust to spatial and all forms of dependence, while FMOLS is a nonparametric test. The parametric DOLS is preferred over the nonparametric FMOLS because it imposes additional requirements that all variables be integrated in the same sequence, I(1) in contrast to the nonparametric FMOLS, which is the case in this study. Thus, DOLS estimates are reported as the baseline model for this parametric study. However, the FMOLS is also reported for comparison and robustness.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Preliminary Analyses

Before performing model estimations, it is critical to analyse the normalcy, distribution, and degree of multicollinearity among variables. The statistical features of our data are presented in Table 2. The results presented in Table 2 showed that the means of all variables employed lie between the minimum and maximum values, indicating that our data series are consistent. In terms of variability, it is discovered that exchange rate is the most volatile among the variables, followed by inflation rate with standard deviations of 119.17 and 16.977 respectively. The probability of Jarque-Bera statistics showed that most of the variables employed in the study were not normally distributed, which is the case for most economic variables of less developed countries like Nigeria. Also, we present the results of the correlation matrix in Table 3 where the degree of multicollinearity among the independent variables was examined. The examination of the correlation matrix shows that none of the pairs of the regressors has a value higher than 60%, except financial development variables with 81.8% coefficient of correlation. Hence, we run separate models for each financial development construct to overcome the problem of multicollinearity in the model.

Table 2: Descriptive Characteristics of the variables

	GRO	REM	FID1	FID2	EXR	RIR	TOP	INF	FDI
Mean	1.4011	2.8755	9.6076	17.186	124.50	2.5123	32.714	19.077	1.5250
Median	1.4035	2.1913	8.4252	14.669	120.57	4.3424	34.023	12.876	1.1590
Maximum	12.276	8.3338	19.603	27.378	425.97	18.180	53.277	72.835	5.7908
Minimum	-4.5071	0.0048	4.9480	9.0633	0.7665	-31.452	9.1358	5.3888	-0.0391
Std. Dev.	3.6958	2.4600	3.5135	6.0470	119.17	9.5607	11.835	16.977	1.2501
Skewness	0.5054	0.3410	0.9488	0.3213	0.9534	-1.2433	-0.3219	1.8296	1.6922
Kurtosis	3.4894	1.8596	3.6205	1.4203	3.1020	5.6098	2.3412	5.1239	5.9579
Jarque-Bera	2.0496	2.869	6.4782	4.7261	5.9263	21.116	1.3790	29.089	32.832
Probability	0.3588	0.2381	0.0391	0.0941	0.0516	0.0026	0.5018	0.0000	0.000
Obs.	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39

***Source:** Authors' Compilation, 2023*

Table 3: Correlation matrix of the variables

	REM	FID1	FID2	EXR	RIR	TOP	INF	FDI
REM	1.0000							
FID1	0.1219	1.0000						
FID2	0.2703	0.8175	1.0000					
EXR	0.5579	0.5086	0.4979	1.0000				
RIR	0.2561	0.4239	0.3854	0.2624	1.0000			
TOP	0.1697	0.0709	-0.0927	-0.1021	0.0518	1.0000		
INF	-0.3206	-0.3294	-0.2851	-0.3110	-0.3760	-0.0565	1.0000	
FDI	0.1780	-0.0257	-0.0418	0.0406	0.0253	0.3091	-0.0267	1.0000

***Source:** Authors' Compilation, 2023*

In addition, we employed the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Peron (PP) to investigate the stationarity of the variables. The unit root test serves as an important guide to ascertain whether DOLS is applicable. The DOLS requires all variables to be integrated in the same order, I(1). The results from Table 4 shows that all variables are stationary at the first difference, thus validating the application of DOLS as the choice of method to estimate the baseline model in Equation 2.

Table 4: Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Peron (PP) Unit Root Tests

Variables	ADF Test	PP Test	Decision
REM	5.9201***	-4.155**	I(1)
FID1	-5.778**	-3.901***	I(1)
FID2	-5.215***	-5.215***	I(1)
EXR	-5.279***	-5.279***	I(1)
RIR	-4.923***	-4.923***	I(1)
TOP	-8.559***	-2.123**	I(1)
INF	-3.540**	-3.540***	I(1)
FDI	-7.056***	-3.092**	I(1)

Notes: ***, ** and * indicate 1%, 5% and 10% significant levels respectively.

4.2 Interactive Effect of Remittances and Financial Development on Growth

The paper examines the interactive effect of remittances and financial development on growth in Nigeria. Having reported the stationarity of the series after the first difference process in the model, it is imperative to adopt an econometric method that addresses this issue. To this end, the study adopts the DOLS method to estimate the model in Equation 2. The empirical results are presented in Table 5. The first to fourth columns of Table 5 present the empirical results of DOLS as the baseline model, while latter four Columns present the results of the robustness check using the FMOLS. The results of both the DOLS and FMOLS show that financial remittance either has positive effect on economic growth or insignificant effect in Nigeria. This finding implies that financial remittance does not facilitate growth individually in Nigeria. Similar findings were reported on the individual effects of financial development variables that financial development proxied by credit to private sector (FID1) and financial development proxied by broad money supply (FID2) have growth reducing effect on many occasions. The results also imply that the financial sector is underdeveloped in Nigeria to instil growth-enhancing effect.

However, when the effects of remittance were moderated by financial development variables by interacting remittance with financial development proxied by credit to private sector (FID1) and financial development proxied by broad money supply (FID2), the findings became more interesting. The results showed that the coefficient of the interaction terms has a stronger and more significant negative effect on poverty level in Nigeria. This finding implies that when financial sector needs to be well developed for remittances to have growth-enhancing effect in Nigeria.

This finding supports the new institutional economics theories and the expositions of Acemoglu and Robinson, (2013) and Acemoglu, et al. (2005) that institutional quality and economic development reinforce each other in the long run, but less developed intuitions could foster the virtuous circle of poverty and widen the gap between the rich and the poor in an economy, and in turn, reduces growth potentials. It is worth noting that the results of the nonparametric test (FMOLS) in Table 7 are also similar to the effect of remittance and financial development on growth in Nigeria. The implication emphasizes that financial institutions and markets can stimulate the increases of remittances as they create an easy access for financial services such as savings accounts, insurance, and investment opportunities from the gains from diaspora remittance (Akcay, 2020; Olayungbo & Quadri, 2019; Bhattacharya et al., 2018), and thereby increasing growth the such economy.

Table 7: Results of Dynamic Least Squares (DOLS) with Structural Breakpoint Dummies

	Dynamic Least Squares (DOLS)				Fully Modified Least Squares (FMOLS)			
Dep. Var: GRO	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
REM	2.3693 [0.2734]	-0.9697 [0.3425]	0.7112 [0.3287]	-0.2074 [0.334]	0.1762 [0.6574]	-0.1887 [0.3312]	-0.5151 [0.4432]	0.9282 [0.5432]
FID1	-0.5831 [0.284]		-1.9702** [0.0023]		-0.1879* [0.0598]		-0.1148** [0.0023]	
FID2		-0.3531** [0.0125]		0.5549** [0.044]		0.2340** [0.0270]		-0.0372** [0.0467]
REM*FID1			0.295*** [0.0003]				0.0480** [0.0344]	
REM*FID2				0.1079*** [0.0003]				0.0445** [0.0236]
FDI	4.3810** [0.0122]	1.1466** [0.0212]	-0.8640* [0.0673]	0.6745* [0.077]	-0.0055 [0.3324]	0.0596 [0.0232]	0.0563* [0.0224]	-0.1481** [0.044]
EXR	0.0488 [0.1241]	0.0501** [0.0234]	0.0328 [0.4762]	0.0474 [0.742]	-0.0046 [0.1122]	0.0023** [0.0033]	-0.3392 [0.9342]	-0.0004 [0.876]
RIR	-0.0320 [0.3452]	0.6543** [0.0032]	0.0520** [0.021]	0.3332 [0.433]	-0.0114 [0.3332]	0.0978 [0.5567]	0.0196 [0.5421]	0.1159 [0.231]
TOP	0.1653** [0.0023]	0.2255** [0.0421]	-0.1956** [0.0329]	-0.3107*** [0.003	0.0841** [0.0231]	0.0788** [0.0031]	0.0996** [0.0227]	0.0721 [0.023]

INF	-0.2790 [0.8231]	0.1326 [0.4321]	0.1491* [0.0581]	0.0256** [0.013]	-0.0953 [0.1210]	-0.0601 [0.5421]	0.0892 [0.2311]	0.0476** [0.025]
C	-10.511*** [0.0002]	-0.1126 [0.3267]	-16.98*** [0.000]	-16.318*** [0.000]	0.0329** [0.0234]	3.2597** [0.0002]	1.6008** [0.0032]	0.9897*** [0.000]
R^2	0.876	0.781	0.919	0.954	0.917	0.848	0.933	0.878
Adj. R^2	0.841	0.729	0.879	0.899	0.890	0.798	0.899	0.821

Probability values in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Note: GRO, REM, FID1, FID2, REM*FID1, REM*FID2, FDI, EXR, RIR, TOP, and INF represents economic growth proxied by respectively.

5. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

This present study examines the interactive effect of financial development in the relationship between remittances and economic growth in Nigeria for the period of 1984 to 2022. We employed Dynamic Ordinary Least Squares (DOLS) and Fully Modified Ordinary Least Squares (FMOLS) to probe the effect and the key findings provided evidence supporting the mediating role of financial development in the remittances-growth nexus. The results of the DOLS and FMOLS showed that, individually, remittances do not significantly increase economic growth in Nigeria, but when we considered the moderated effect of financial development, remittances become growth-enhancing in Nigeria. The findings reveal a positive and statistically significant interactive effect of remittances and financial development on economic growth, confirming the role of remittances as a source of external finance that stimulates domestic investment and consumption. Furthermore, the study provides compelling evidence supporting the mediating role of financial development in this relationship. A well-developed financial sector, characterized by depth, efficiency, and access, enhances the positive impact of remittances on economic growth. A well-developed financial sector, characterized by financial market depth, efficient intermediation, and access to credit, was found to enhance the positive impact of remittances on economic growth. The findings underscored the importance of diversifying remittance-driven investments. Encouraging investments in education, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and skills development can lead to long-term sustainable growth.

Based on the findings of the study, several policy implications were provided. First, to maximize the growth impact of remittances, policymakers in Nigeria should prioritize initiatives that enhance financial inclusion. This according to Beck, Demirguç-Kunt & Honohan (2009) includes efforts to expand access to formal financial services, particularly in rural areas where remittance recipients often reside. Promoting the use of mobile banking, agent banking, and other digital financial services can help bridge the financial inclusion gap. Second, the regulatory and supervisory framework of the financial sector should also be strengthened. This involves improving transparency, risk management, and compliance standards to ensure the stability and integrity of the financial system. A well-regulated financial sector instils confidence in remittance recipients and encourages savings and investment. Lastly, the Nigeria's government and policymakers should support the development of diverse investment opportunities for remittance recipients. This can include initiatives to promote entrepreneurship (Maimbo & Ratha, 2005), access to credit, and vocational training (Olawumi, 2019). Encouraging the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can facilitate job creation and harness the entrepreneurial potential of remittance beneficiaries.

These policy recommendations, when implemented cohesively, can unlock the full potential of remittances as a driver of economic growth in Nigeria while leveraging financial development as a mediator to enhance their impact. Ultimately, fostering a conducive environment for remittance recipients to make productive investments, combined with improvements in financial development and inclusion, holds the promise of sustaining economic growth and reducing poverty in Nigeria.

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Contemporary Issues and Prospects towards Effective Implementation of Revenue Allocation in Nigeria

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Abstract. The study examined the contemporary issues and prospects towards effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 288 budget Officers under the Federal Ministry of Finance. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire developed by the researchers: Implementation of Revenue Allocation Questionnaire (IRAQ). The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from the Department of Public Administration, National Opening University of Nigeria, Abuja Study Centre and one from the Department of Public Administration and Local Government Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The internal consistency estimates for the structured questionnaire items were established using Cronbach Alpha techniques of estimating reliability which yielded an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.84 indicated that the instrument was reliable for the study. Data were collected by three research assistants using direct delivery and retrieval technique. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions. The findings of the study revealed the contemporary issue of revenue allocation and identified challenges which embedded as outliningprospects for it. The findings of the study also revealed in a bid strategies to resolve the controversial issues surrounding the contentious revenue allocation in Nigeria, a high level of fiscal decentralization is require replacingthe unfair revenue sharing formula currently on operations. Based on the findings, among the recommendations were that revenue formulae for revenue sharing should be guided by national interest, which should take precedence over individual or primordial attention and reactions.

Keywords: Contemporary issues, prospects, revenue, revenue allocation, revenue formula

1. Introduction

The number of resources available to the government, the intensity of economic activity, and the effectiveness of its revenue collection system all have an impact on the amount of revenue it generates at any given time. The government's capacity to promote and maintain a high level of economic activity andthe best possible combination of instruments for generating revenue is measured by the increase and stability of its revenue. Although the amount of revenue accruing to the government has increased over time, their revenue profile is still largely dependent on statutory allocations and the sharing formula, and their performance from internally generated revenue has remained sub-standard (Onyeoma, 2018).

Similar to this, Ijaiya (2009) believed that government resources would be distributed more effectively if each category of public expenditures were delegated to the level of government that most closely corresponds to the recipients of these expenditures. The three tiers of government did, however, rely heavily on their respective portions of the Federation Account prior to the implementation of ValueAdded Tax (VAT), which in turn was dependent on changes in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)-regulated global petroleum market (OPEC). The effects on public finances are significant.

As a result, the distribution of government revenue had been unstable, resulting in deficits and unsatisfactory service delivery, with expenditures for state and local governments being primarily for ongoing operations. This explains why some state governments use tax contractors and why local and state governments have implemented a variety of levies to increase revenue. In order to increase the revenue potential and level of total federally collected revenue, it is therefore made use of, with the ultimate goal of increasing revenue profits obtained to Federal, State and Local Government through statutory allocations (Onyeoma, 2018). It is noteworthy to note that the distribution of revenue in Nigeria often coincides with the encouragement of rapid economic growth and national unity. It is regrettable, however, that despite constant increases in revenue generation, the anticipated impact on economic growth in

Nigeria has not been realized. Therefore, it is necessary to empirically investigate the revenue allocation and formula used in the past and its effects on Nigeria's economic growth.

Revenue allocation is conceived as the transfer of financial resources from one tier of government to another, in the same country, under pre-determined criteria or in any agreement to which all the benefiting units have subscribed. Ikeji (2011) defined revenue allocation as a process which involves manner of distributing centrally generated revenue among levels of government as well how each level shares the allocated amount to its component parts. Sherif (2018) defined revenue allocation as a process which connotes a practice whereby one level of government turns over a portion of the revenue generates from taxation and other sources to another government level which is usually a lower level of government. Study conducted by Edet and Harrison (2021) refers revenue allocation as the practice where the centrally generated and controlled revenues are shared among federal, states and local governments as stipulated by the constitution without determining how the fund should be used. Operationally, revenue allocation is a statutory distribution of revenue from the federation account among different levels of government. Consequently, the implication is that, there are two different levels of governmental authorities in the political unit or country and there may even be more tiers of government. Another implication is that there exists an agreement acceptable to all the tiers of government as to how the sharing of revenue allocation is to be done and such agreement exists (pre-determined) even before the revenue is available to be shared. It is also the starting point for decentralization of government powers and restoration of balance among all tiers of government (Sherif, 2018).

Decisively, every constitution in a federal system contains pre-determined rules for the collection, custody and disposal of revenues as well spell out to each level of government, the sources from which it can lawfully derive independent revenue (Ubok-Udom & Ndiyo 2004). For instance, where revenues are to be collected before shared is normal for such collection to be undertaken at the highest tier of government that is coordinating the activities of the component units in order to generate confidence among the units. Hence, where revenue is shared before it is collected, that is where sources of revenue are allocated to each tier of government, the understanding is that each tier will keep within the limits of the resources allocated and not to seek directly or indirectly to collect revenues from sources not allocated to it (Imeh, 2004). Therefore, the constitution at times contains and often includes an agreement on how to allocate revenue and revenue sources to each unit but not the size of revenue. Moreso, once the conditions of sharing have been determined, it is in the interest of all tiers to work to increase the size of revenue because what each unit gets depends on the size of revenue available to be shared (Edet & Harrison, 2021).

Importantly, there are statutory provisions for revenue sharing and powers to generate revenue through specific sources. For instance, the 1979 and 1999 constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, established the type of fiscal relationships that would exist among the various levels of government. For example, section 149(2) of the 1979 Constitution or section 162(3) of the 1999 Constitution stipulates that any amount standing to the credit of the Federation Account shall be distributed among the federation, state governments and the local government councils in each state on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly (Edet & Harrison, 2021). Similarly, the 1999 Constitution also provided for states-local government financial relationship under section 162 sub-sections. This section states the amount standing to the credit of the local government councils of a state on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of a state. Apart from the constitutional provisions of external revenue to local government, Model Financial Memoranda for Local Government (1991) and section 45 of Decree 19 No 36 of 1998 and the 1999 Constitution as contained in the fourth schedule provide for internal sources of revenue generation by Nigerian local governments. Despite all these constitutional provisions, other tiers of governments almost perpetually depend in part and sometimes very heavily upon transfers from federal governments to finance the services for which they are responsible (Omelle, 2004). This is due to the fact that in most countries whether formally federal or not, there is clearly vertical competition between levels of government for revenue and perhaps because as a rule local government have access only to those revenue sources that higher levels of government do not want for themselves.

Under section 149 of the outdated 1979 Constitution, provision is made for the creation of “Federation Account” from which allocations of revenue are made to the three tiers of government. The 1999 constitution makes a similar provision in section 162 (Law, 2020). But whereas the 1979 constitution left it for the National Assembly to determine the principles to be employed in allocating revenue to each tier and to state or local government councils, the 1999 constitution went further to provide the principles which the government should consider thus leaving it to the National Assembly to determine only the weights which should be attached to each principle (Law, 2020). In the 1979 constitution both the principles and weight were to be determined by the National Assembly. The president, upon receiving advice from the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission, shall place before the National Assembly proposals for revenue allocation from the federation account and in determining the formula, the National Assembly shall therefore, take into account the allocation principles especially those of population, equality of states, internal revenue generation, land mass, terrainas well as population density.

In addition to these provisions section 162 (2) of 1999 constitution even provides that at least 13% revenue should be allocated on derivation principle that is to say that the weight attached to the principle of derivation is at least 13% thus trying to assuage oil producing states that have been complaining about the allocation of 1.5% from derivation before now (Law, 2020).. It should be noted that this provision is not in respect of oil mineral alone but it applies to all other minerals and natural resources which contribute directly to the federation account. Also, it is provided that the principle of derivation shall be constantly reflected in any approved formula as being not less than thirteen percent of the revenue accruing to the Federation Account directly from any natural resources. The principles upon which revenue is to be distributed to the three tiers of government in Nigeria and among states and local government areas as provided by the 1999 constitution include derivation, population, equality of states, internal revenue generation, land mass, terrain and population density. Therefore, the constitution does not, however, compel the National Assembly to use the above principles only but merely says that whatever principles are prescribed by the National Assembly should include these ones (FRN, 1999).. Hence, it would be unlawful for vertical allocation to be made to any beneficiary other than the federal, states and local governments although provision must be made for derivation. There is nothing in the 1999 constitution which forbids the National Assembly from allocating funds for these and other National needs through appropriate Acts of the Assembly provided such provision are not made directly from the federation account.

However, the present vertical allocation sharing formula is as follows: Federal Government - 52.68%; State Government - 26.72% and Local Government - 20.60% (Elekwa and Eme, 2011). It is pertinent at this point to note that derivation is not based on the total amount in the federation account but on that part of it which is derived from mineral resources–example crude oil. It is presumed that the derivation allocation is set aside before vertical allocation as indicated above is made. Interestingly, there are allocations that are mandatory by the constitution. Such allocations are judiciable. That is to say that they are enforceable in law if the president or any other authority fails to make them ((Elekwa and Eme, 2011). When the Obasanjo administration, for example, failed to release the allocation for Lagos State Government as required by the constitution, the Lagos State Government went to the Supreme Court to demand for it. The Supreme Court ordered the release of the funds. There are however, some allocations which the president can make to states which are not enforceable in law. To such, is discretionary allocation; they are made often from the contingency fund in time of natural disasters at the discretion of the president who determines the nature and size of the transfer, if he decides not to do transfer, the beneficiary cannot compel him to do so. Furthermore, section 164 (1) of the 1999 constitution empowers the president to make grants to state government under terms approved by the National Assembly and such grants are discretionary and not mandatory.

The 1999 Constitution as posited by Omelle (2004) noted that there is a refurbishment of the 1979 Constitution, modelled after the American Presidential System without the required political will to address the geo-political structure of the Nigerian federation, as did Canada, Australia and the United States of America. Omelle (2004) further opined that the above three federations, there is hardly any federating component (state) or region as helplessly dependent financially on the centre as we have it in Nigeria. In the United States, for instance, some states pay higher wages on their workers than some federal staff doing similar jobs. In Canada, the region of Quebec is almost independent of the federal treasury, owing to its resourcefulness and Canada's formula of revenue allocation. Before the 1979 constitution it was common for government to institute ad-hoc fiscal commissions to study and advise them whenever the need arose to alter the fiscal arrangements in the country. At least nine of such ad-hoc commissions had been established besides other extant laws (Omelle, 2004).

The ad-hoc commissions and other provisions made in an attempt to arrive at acceptable revenue allocation formulae as Arowolo (2011) opines are: Philipson Commission (1946): This commission recommended the use of derivation and even development as criteria for distribution of revenue. By derivation, the commission means each unit of government would receive from the central purse the same portion it has; Hicks-Philipson Commission (1951): This commission recommended need, derivation, independent revenue or fiscal autonomy and national interests as the criteria for revenue sharing; Chicks Commission (1953): The commission recommended derivation; Raisman Commission (1957): It recommended need, balanced development and minimum responsibility. Percentage division of 0% to the north, 31% to the east, 24% to the west and 5% to Southern Cameroon; The Binns Commission (1965): This commission rejected the principles of need and derivation. In its place, it proposed regional financial comparability and percentage division of 42% to the north, 30% to the east, 20% to the west and 8% to the mid-west; Dina Commission (1969): It recommended national minimum standards, balanced development in the allocation of the states' joint account and basic need; Aboyade Technical Committee (1977): It recommended a national minimum standard for national integration (22%), equality of access to development opportunities (25%), absorptive capacity (20%), fiscal efficiency (15%) and independent revenue effort (18%).

Other criteria are: 57% to Federal Government, 30% to State Governments, 10% to Local Governments and 3% to a special fund; Okigbo Committee (1980): It recommended percentages on principles: Population (4%), equality (4%), social development (15%) and internal revenue effort (5%). Percentages for governments: Federal (53%), States (30%), Local Governments (10%), Special Fund (7%) and Danjuma Commission (1988) recommended percentages: Federal (50%), States (30%) Local Governments (15%), Special Fund (5%). Other laws and decrees on revenue allocation include Decree 15 of 1967, Decree 13 of 1970, Decree 9 of 1971, Decree 6 of 1975, Decree 7 of 1975 and others, just to mentioned but few (Uwat & Umoh, 2004).

Upon all the attempts to generate an acceptable formula for the sharing of revenue both vertically and horizontally in the country, the issue of revenue allocation is still shrouded in controversy. The frequency of changes in revenue allocation formula indicates that the search for appropriate and acceptable revenue allocation model is a continuous process (Nyong, 2004) and the change is continuous. Despite the fact that many commissions had been set in the past to fashion out a formula that will be acceptable to all levels of government, not much has been achieved. This winding up was affirmed by Arugu (2012) who maintained that revenue allocation exercise has been one of the most contentious and controversial issues in the nation's political life. The report argued that though many attempts had been made to devise an acceptable formula for the component units of the country, each of the attempts is more remembered for the controversies generated than the issues settled (Chibuike & Ogbonnaya, 2004).

Nevertheless, the report was further confirmed by Ewetan (2012) who opined that revenue allocation is one of the most controversial issues Nigeria's fiscal federalism as there is no generally acceptable formula for both vertical and horizontal distribution of revenue. The contentions anchored on power that federal government wields on revenue allocation issue that tends to make other tiers of government its subordinate. Hence, the formula only crippled the revenue generation capacity of each state, as state rely completely on the monthly allocation from the federation account. This is because the federal government takes the lion share of centrally collected revenue based on the current formula and other retained revenue, leaving state and local governments with small shares compared to their assigned functions (Ewetan, 2012). Interestingly, there are many good reasons why revenue is shared in a federal polity especially in a federation as big and diverse as Nigeria for instance have justified revenue transfers from federal to local levels of governments on political, economic and social grounds (Diejomaoh and Eboh, 2012). The fiscal underlying justifications for revenue allocation in Nigeria according to Iniodu and Archibong (2004) include efficiency, equity principles and steady economy. Other fiscal justification for revenue allocation according to Baoyun, Anwar and Grant (2008), include to promotes development ofthe society; it creates a sense of belonging; it ultimately promote a spirit of oneness; it equally promote political innovations; it encourages more efficient politics as citizens have more influence; and it lowers administrative costs irrespective of its numerous challenges.

Some federating units are easily satisfied with what they received thereby ignoring the necessity to tap additional internal revenue sources (Edet and Harrison, 2021). This is already becoming a challenge in Nigeria. Federation allocation which should be supplement to internally generated revenue for federating units has become the main source of funding for many states and local governments. Hence, study by Edet and Harrison (2021) slow pace of development nationwide due to inadequate funding while many sources of revenue remain untapped. Additionally, other challenges of revenue allocation in Nigeria as suggested by Sylvester and Sunday (2019) include: political instability, low capacity of the revenue administration, inability to implement the tax system effectively, lack of collection skill and knowledge of the tax collectors contribute to the challenges of revenue maximization and generation of new revenue sources, redundant population, mass poverty, mass illiteracy, mass unemployment and limited absorptive capacities for the teeming population of unemployed youths. Hence, this in turn hinders revenue generation efforts and account for fiscal disequilibrium among the federating units and lower per capital income that distort attempts at even development.

Other challenges of revenue allocation in Nigeria according to Inekwe (2005) include: lack of solid diversified revenue generating base, dependence on mono-cultural economy dominated by crude oil production, inability to deliver the needed dividend of democracy on the Federal government, ethnicity issue based on the level of development, and unequal revenue generation capacity. Population census is a key factor in development planning. Similarly, Omelle (2004) argues that one of the contemporary issues towards revenue allocation in Nigeria is the inadequate attention to the development of executive capacity, especially at the state and local government levels. This has to do with the quality of human resources available to the states and local government for their activities, poor management of financial resources and poor political commitment. Supporting this fact, Oladele (2015) has noted that even where unviable states exist, the fact that monies meant for the development of states are stolen by political representatives and a few collaborators in the bureaucracy further reduces the impact of the allocated revenues.

Study conducted by Edet and Harrison (2021) posited that for a nation to achieve a sustainable economy or revenue allocation requires potentialities, such as discovery of new oil wells, and the availability of raw materials for iron and steel production in the oil industry to fertilizer, liquefied gas and aluminium production, provides new horizon for hope for greater productivity in the future. According to Edet and Harrison (2021), other strategies for implementing revenue allocation effectively in Nigeria include diversifying production to increase revenue allocation and increase country's income, regularly assessing revenue-earning capacities and the fiscal efficiency of the federation's constituent parts, and using the population index as a criterion for revenue allocation with a focus on social recovery. It has been also argued and rightly established by Onayemi and Ishola (2009) that export trade is an engine of growth, being that it enhances revenue allocation and employment generation through the development of export oriented industries, increases foreign exchange earnings and improves balance of payment position of a given economy. Study conducted by Iyola (2008) opined that sustainable increase in income per capita is better achieved under export promotion policy. According to Akpakpan (2004), the exploitation of resources by which revenue is generated leads to the depletion of economic potentials of environment, and unless adequate provisions are made for appropriate compensations some sections of the society may be condemned to deplorable living conditions in the future. This therefore calls for adequate weight for the derivation principle.

Importantly, derivation principle is naturally superior to all other principles, as all other known principles are derived from the primacy of deprivation. In the first republic, for instance, using the principle of derivation, each region had the constitutional right to export certain goods from its area for the purpose of embarking on regional development projects. Produce boards were established and thrived mainly at regional levels, thereby enhancing the fiscal capacity of each region for rapid economic and social development (Omelle, 2004). Other principles of revenue allocation according to Ohiomu and Oluyemi (2018) include: principle of need, principle of national interest and principle of independent revenues. According to the authors, the principle of need advocated that states are not equally endowed with resources, some states are more populated and developed than others, and therefore, more resources should be given to the less developed states to bridge the gap in development; the principle of National Interest: The principle is based on the importance attached to developing all states to increase progress and sense of belonging. Other strategies for implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria according to Hailu (2022) is through the promotion of national unity by sharing the revenue in the federation account equally among states, promoting diversification in capital invested in locally produced commodities, and to encourage local and state governments to increase their investment in modern agriculture.

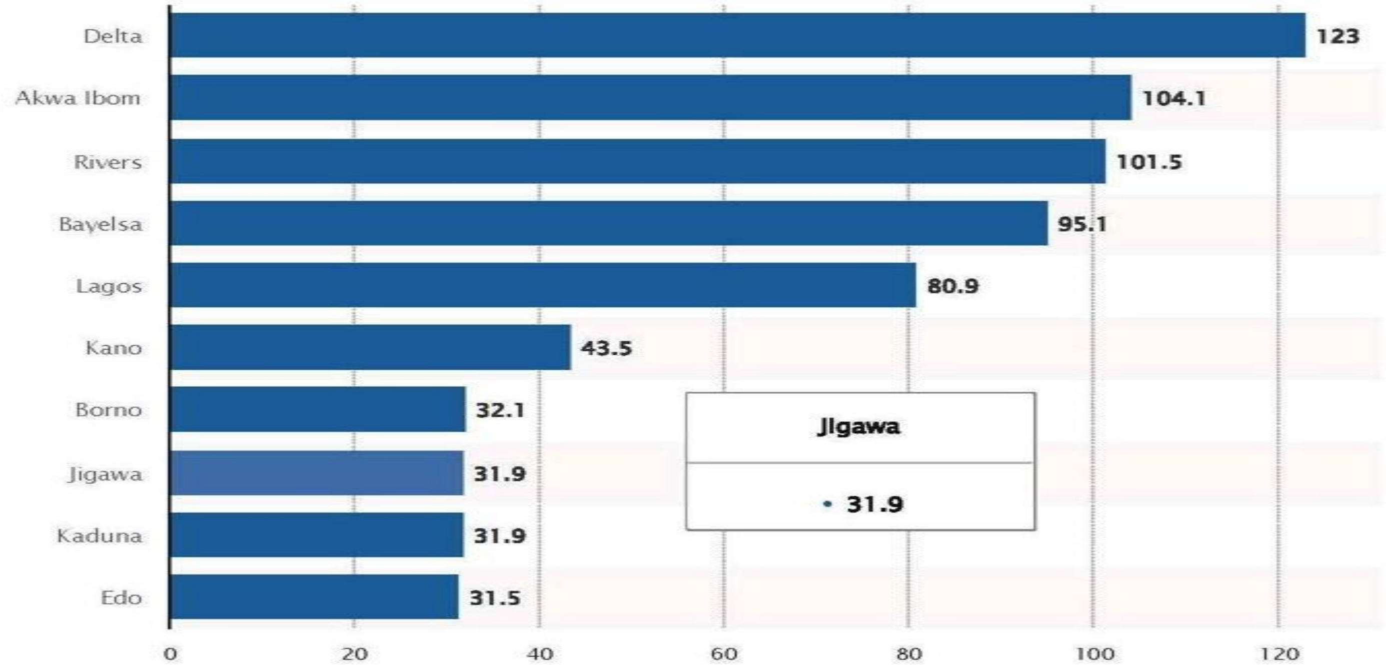

Fig. 1: States with highest Federation Accounts Allocation Committee Revenues in Nigeria 2022

However, this formula was to strike a balance between equity, and needs of national economic growth leading to stability; and the principle of Independent Revenues: This principle advocates that states can introduce or charge revenue yielding taxes within the state as long as it is a stable source of revenue but must conform to the principles of taxation within the economy and take into consideration national interest (Ohiomu & Oluyemi, 2018). According to an interview conducted by Nigeria Vanguard, Ujah (2021) holds the perception that perhaps the federal government has agreed to receive less federation revenue, with a proposal to collect 50%, down from the current 52.68%. Therefore, Boss Mustapha, who spoke on behalf of the federal government at the town hall organized on the New Revenue Formula, the allocations to state governments ought to be investigated downward by 25.62%, while the allocation to local governments should therefore be raised to 23.73%, and the allocation for derivation ought to remain at 13%. The current vertical revenue allocation formula is therefore as follows: Federal Government 52.68%; State Governments 26.72%; Local Governments 20.60%; and Derivation Formula 13% (Ujah, 2021). However, below diagram is an evidence of leading states in Federation Accounts Allocation Committee allocations in Nigeria between January – June, 2022 (Sasu, 2022).

However, study conducted by Ekpo (2004) posited that, crude oil production has been by far the most important economic activity in the Nigerian economy since the early 1970s. Its impact is not limited to its contributing approximately 90% of Nigeria's total foreign exchange earnings but also to the fact that the national budgets are predicated on the expected annual production and price of crude oil. Therefore, ifnot the impact of crude oil impacts on all other sectors of the economy through the aggregate demand it generates, thus making the revenue from the oil sector the primary engine for national economic growth and development, the nation economy would have been affected through series of challenges such as lack of solid diversified revenue generating base, dependence on mono-cultural economy dominated by crude oil production, and inability to deliver the needed dividend of democracy on the Federal government among others. Hence, the study appraised the contemporary issues and prospects towards effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to appraise the contemporary issues and prospects towards effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- examine the fiscal underlying justifications for revenue allocation in Nigeria.
- examine the contemporary issues that hinder effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria?
- determine the strategies for effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria?

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- What are the fiscal underlying justifications for revenue allocation in Nigeria?
- What are the contemporary issues that hinder effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria?
- What are the strategies for effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria?

2. Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 288 Budget Officers under the Federal Ministry of Finance. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers: Implementation of Revenue Allocation Questionnaire (IRAQ). The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Public Administration, National Opening University of Nigeria and one from the Department of Public Administration and Local Government Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The internal consistency estimates for the structured questionnaire items were established using Cronbach Alpha techniques of estimating reliability which yielded an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.84 which indicated that the instrument was reliable for the study. Data were collected by two research assistants using direct delivery and retrieval technique. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. The scales use for the questionnaire was Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagreewith the values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The arithmetic mean of the scale of the items is 2.50, which means any item with a weighted mean value of 2.50 and above was considered acceptable, while any weighted mean of less than 2.50 was considered rejected or not accepted.

3. Results

Research Question One: What are the fiscal justifications for revenue allocation in Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the fiscal justifications for revenueallocation in Nigeria

S/N	Fiscal Justifications for Revenue Allocation	Mean	SD	Decision
1	To promote development of the society	2.66	0.10	A
2	To create a sense of belonging	2.89	0.08	A
3	To promote a spirit of oneness	2.93	0.07	A
4	To promote political innovations	2.75	0.09	A
5	To encourage more efficient politics as citizens have more influence	2.53	0.11	A
6	To lower administrative costs	2.61	0.11	A
7	To promote administrative efficiency	3.00	0.06	A
8	To promote steady economy	2.82	0.08	A
	Grand Mean Scores and SD	**2.77**	**0.09**	**A**

Data in Table one confirmed the mean rating and standard of responses on the fiscal justifications for revenue allocation in Nigeria. The listed items met the standard mean value of 2.50 and above which indicates acceptance according to decision rule. Respondents reacted positively to the statements with the grand mean score of (x=2.77) and standard deviation of (SD = 0.09) relatively.

Research Question One: What are the contemporary issues that hinder effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the contemporary issues that hinder effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria

S/N	Contemporary issues that hinder effective Implementation of Revenue Allocation	Mean	SD	Decision
9	Inadequate attention to the development of executive capacity	2.66	0.10	A
10	Inability to implement the tax system effectively	2.65	0.10	A
11	Lack of collection skill of the tax collectors	2.57	0.11	A
12	Lack of knowledge of the tax collectors	2.55	0.11	A
13	Low capacity of the revenue administration	2.61	0.11	A
14	Lack of solid diversified revenue generating base	2.87	0.08	A
15	Dependence on mono-cultural economy dominated by crude oil production	2.97	0.06	A
16	Inability to deliver the needed dividend of democracy on the Federal government	2.76	0.09	A
17	Ethnicity issue based on the level of development	2.64	0.10	A
18	Unequal revenue generation capacity	2.69	0.10	A
19	Poor management of financial resources	2.50	0.11	A
	Grand Mean Scores and SD	**2.68**	**0.10**	**A**

Data in Table 2 show the mean score and standard deviation of respondents on the contemporary issues that hinder effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria. From the table, listed items range above the criterion mean value of 2.50 which indicate acceptance by respondents as the contemporary issues that hinder effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria with the grand mean score of (x = 2.68) and (SD = 0.10) standard deviation respectively.

Research Question Two: What are the strategies for effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the strategies for effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria

S/N	Strategies for Effective Implementation of Revenue Allocation	Mean	SD	Decision
20	Engage in diverse manufacturing to increase revenue allocation	3.11	0.03	A
21	Expansion of export-oriented industries improves revenue allocation.	3.09	0.04	A
22	Export-oriented industries help a country's balance of payments	3.10	0.04	A
23	Encourage giving the principle of derivation appropriate strength	3.13	0.03	A
24	Provision of resources to less developedstates in order to integrate the development gap	2.67	0.10	A
25	Equal revenue allocation in the federation account promotes national unity.	2.87	0.08	A
26	Promote diversification in capital invested in locally produced commodities	2.98	0.06	A
27	Encourage local and state governments to increase investment in modern agriculture	2.77	0.09	A
	Grand Mean Scores and SD	**2.97**	**0.06**	**A**

Table 3 above shows the mean ratings and responses on the strategies for effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria. Item 20 – 27 reached the standard mean score of 2.50 and above. Item statements were accepted by respondents base on the grand mean score and standard deviation of (x = 2.97) and (SD = 0.06) correspondingly.

4. Discussion on the Findings

The findings of the study revealed the fiscal justification for revenue in Nigeria to include: to promotes development of the society; to create a sense of belonging; to promote a spirit of oneness; and to equally promote political innovations among others. The findings is in agreement with the findings of Baoyun, Anwar and Grant (2008) who posited fiscal justification for revenue allocation in Nigeria such as to promotes development of the society; it creates a sense of belonging; it ultimately promote a spirit of oneness; it equally promote political innovations; it encourages more efficient politics as citizens have more influence; and it lowers administrative costs. The findings of the study is in line with Iniodu and Archibong (2004) who asserts that the fiscal underlying justifications for revenue allocation in Nigeria to include efficiency, equity principles and steady economy.

The findings of the study revealed the contemporary issues that hinder effective implementation ofrevenue allocation in Nigeria which include: political instability, low capacity of the revenue administration, inability to implement the tax system effectively, lack of collection skill and knowledge of the tax collectors contribute to the challenges of revenue maximization and generation of new revenue sources, redundant population, mass poverty, mass illiteracy, mass unemployment, limited absorptive capacities for the teeming population of unemployed youths, lack of solid diversified revenue generating base, dependence on mono-cultural economy dominated by crude oil production, and inability to deliver the needed dividend of democracy on the Federal government among others. The findings of the study in consonance with the findings of Sylvester and Sunday (2019) who posited that the federation allocation which should be supplement to internally generated revenue for federating units has become the main source of funding for many states and local governments, hence, the result is slow rapidity towards the development nationwide due to inadequate funding while many sources of revenue remain untapped. The findings of the study is similar with the findings of Omelle (2004) who argued that one of the major issues towards revenue allocation in Nigeria is the inadequate attention to the development of executive capacity, especially at the state and local government levels.

The findings of the study the strategies for effective implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria such: Engage in diverse manufacturing to increase revenue allocation, expansion of export- oriented industries improves revenue allocation, export-oriented industries help a country's balance of payments, encourage giving the principle of derivation appropriate strength, provision of resources to lessdeveloped states in order to integrate the development gap, equal revenue allocation in the federation account promotes national unity, to promote diversification in capital invested in locally produced commodities, and to encourage local and state governments to increase their investment in modern agriculture. The findings of the study is in consonance with the findings of Hailu (2022) who posited strategies for implementation of revenue allocation in Nigeria can be achieve through the promotion of national unity by sharing the revenue in the federation account equally among states, promoting diversification in capital invested in locally produced commodities, and to encourage local and state governments to increase their investment in modern agriculture.

5. Conclusion

The institutional and socio-political factors that shaped Nigeria's economic policy, including small revenue base, as well as the nature, content, and character of the country's fiscal regime are primarily to blame for the teething issues that crippled the country's fiscal arrangements. Federal, state, and local governments all compete for a piece of the national dessert. In order to satisfy stakeholder interests in receiving an equitable and fair share of revenue allocation from the general pool account, military proclamations and the repeated establishment of commissions with the intention of revenue sharing were both designed. Importantly, the study concluded that Nigeria would experience economic and social progress only if revenue sharing is most beneficial and used efficiently and successfully for investment.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Operations of the multinational corporations should be better regulated in terms of wage control to remove wide disparities, mineral exploration and accountability, and encouragement of diversified investments in new products manufactured locally.
- State and Local government should be made revenue bearing sources rather than mere expenditure units. Therefore, states and local governments should invest more in pilot industries and modern agriculture.
- Matrix parameters for revenue allocation should give more attention to revenue derivation, fiscal efficiency and governmental responsibilities based on investment in pilot and medium scale industries that can widen revenue regeneration capacity.
- Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission should endeavour to come up with a credible review exercise by mapping out programmes that would guarantee full involvement and participation of all stake holders.
- Government at all level should engage in systematic diversification from oil and be proactive in the development projects in terms of infrastructure, education and health.
- Revenue formulae for revenue sharing should be guided by national interest, which should take precedence over individual or primordial attention and reactions.

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Enhancing Peace and Security through Ethno - Religious Tolerance in Nigeria for Sustainable Development

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Abstract. In recent times, the spate of insecurity through ethno-religious intolerance in Nigeria, a heterogeneous society has become an issue of concern. The paper scrutinized ethnic and religious tolerance as means of fostering peace and security in Nigeria for sustainable development. Peace and Security are germane in the development of every nation; but can only be achieved through tolerance among the ethnic and religious groups. The study employed descriptive and historical methods to elicit information. The significance of peace and security to development; together with the synergy between ethno- religious tolerance, peace and security were discussed. Primary and secondary sources of data collection which includes observation, text books, magazines, journals, and others were consulted in the documentation of the outcome of this research. The findings revealed that ethno-religious tolerance promotes harmony and enabling environment for healthy business operations that enhances growth across all sectors. The paper recommended that the government, religious and community leaders should enlighten the masses on the significance of tolerance, sincere dialogue; reconciliation, among others; which would serve as instruments to uphold peace and douse security challenges currently bedeviling the nation. It therefore behooves on the government to employ the necessary template for good governance embedded in peace and security for development to flourish. Religious leaders should ensure that right religious tenets are taught and practiced in order to discourage religious sentiments or fanaticism. Such would entrench national integration and peaceful co-existence among associates of various ethnic and religious affiliations for ultimate stability and sustainable development.

Keywords: Peace, Security, Ethnicity, Religion, Tolerance, Sustainable Development

1. Introduction

A peaceful and secure atmosphere is crucial to every society because it has the capacity to create social, economic and political development. But this is dependent on the level of ethno- religious tolerance in that country, especially that which is heterogeneous in nature. There can be no significant growth and development in any nation where there is lack of peace and security. The current spate of insecurity in Nigeria, a multi - ethnic and multi – religious nation such as armed robbery, cultism, terrorism, kidnapping, insurgency, banditry, ritual killings, assassinations, suicide bombings, among others; have resulted to fear, difficulties, sorrow, demolition of religious centers and indiscriminate destruction of lives and properties (Adedokun & Bolarinwa, 2019). Sadly, these heinous acts have often been attributed to ethnic and religious intolerance. This is consequent upon the emergence of some separatist groups namely: Boko - Haram, IPOB (Indigenous People of Biafra), Fulani Herdsmen, Unknown Gunmen and so on.

Peace and security can only become discernible in a society that encourages ethnic and religious tolerance, hence the necessity to tackle the major problems of Nigeria which are tribalism, nepotism and religious bigotry. The security challenges in Nigeria have prompted the 2020 Global Terrorism Index to grade Nigeria as the third most ravaged country by terrorism across the globe (GTI 2020). Since the Independence in 1960, the Nigerian society has been disfigured by varied levels of ethnic and religiously instigated violence and uprising, which usually manifest in the slaughter of innumerable innocent citizens. Egwuanikwu (2023) reiterates that tolerance is an inevitable apparatus for harmony and security for definitive growth and national integration in Nigeria. Mutual understanding will breed unity among religious and ethnic groups which would ultimately foster sustainable development.

Nigeria is an ethnically diverse country comprising over 250 ethnic groups, the largest, the most populous and politically influential are the Hausas, Yorubas and Igbos. The ethnic groups consist of multiple tribes detailed about 371 in number. It also has over 500 languages, with English as the official language. Besides, the three prominent religious sects in the country are Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion. Rather than being a blessing, the religious and ethnic plurality of the country presently has been adduced as being responsible for her socio-political adversity (USCRIF, 2016). Peace and Security are the most paramount and critical necessities of every society; without peace, no meaningful growth and development can be attained. This explains why the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has continually invested billions of dollars of tax payers' fund to quell insecurity. Irrespective of the fact that this enormous capital which ought to have been channeled to infrastructural and other developmental ventures, are invested on issues pertaining to security; the menace of insecurity to individuals and progress of the country remains unabated (Nnoruga, 2022). Therefore, this paper argues for the imperative of ethno - religious tolerance as catalysts for peace and security; which would ultimately restore sanity and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Based on this backdrop, the paper probes the significance of ethno- religious tolerance in promoting peace and security for sustainable development in Nigerian society. To buttress this fact, the paper explores various areas of discourse, namely: Conceptual Discourse, Significance of Peace and Security to Development; the Synergy between Ethno – Religious Tolerance, Peace and Security; Recommendations and Conclusion.

2. Conceptual Discourse

2.1 The Concept of Peace

Peace is conceptualized as societal acquaintance and concord devoid of resentment, conflict and brutality (Nnoruga, 2022). Banks (2020) defines peace as harmony, order, justice or management of conflict. It is the existence of non-violent attitude. It depicts harmonious living, that is, to live without fear of being hurt or murdered by someone. In Global parlance, peace represents living in unity across societies and the liberty to operate as individuals without assuming the identity or freedom of other persons. Jonah & Olawale (2019) aver that peace is the main value of every society. Presently, peace is interpreted as a public good since it enhances growth and development of human and material resources.

Generally, peace researchers are of the view that peace entails the absence of war; that is, dearth of express disagreement, peace is fairness and progress, which portends the absence of orchestrated aggression; peace is reverence and tolerance among people; inner peace portrays spiritual peace as well as wholeness (Shedrack, 2016). In summary, peace is essential for any significant advancement. Peace is vital in our daily activities such as our businesses, schools, churches, mosques, footballs fields and anywhere humans subsist. Peace is not just the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence; but upholding an organized and sane social order; sheltered from violence or extortion of assailants and honest in being fortified against mistreatment and exploitation by the more influential and oppressive class.

2.2 The Concept of Security

According to Terriff (1999) security is the state of emotional safety; freedom from hazard, threat or destruction; defense, fortification, as well as the absence of any kind of intimidation which could negatively affect individual members of the society. It is the preservation of the prime-values of the people, and the exclusive task of those in positions of authority. This is in accordance with the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which unequivocally affirms that "The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of Government". Inadvertently, there's an affinity between peace and security when social welfares of persons, community and nations are measured. There is an agreement among the intelligence community that security is not necessarily the absence of terrorism or security challenges, but the existence of a vigorous machinery to react proactively to the difficulties caused by these menace with pragmatism, proficiency, and swiftness. Thus, it is believed in contemporary literature that security is imperative for national integration, peace and sustainable development. Therefore, peace and security are both fundamental and critical facets of development. High rate of insecurity is bound to make development impossible. This understanding necessitates urgent reform of a country's security segment in order for development plans to be effective (UNSD 2013).

Ugah, Shemang and Akwanga (2023) emphasize that the security of the citizens of a nation is of great importance. They contend that security is for the citizens, and not vice versa. This implies that the peace and security of the citizenry can only be guaranteed when the basic necessities of life, namely: food; good health; freedom of speech, movement and the right to live; availability of jobs; justice; and all other ingredients of life are readily available. They further observe that there are two types of security which include Human Security and State or National Security. Enu and Ugwu (2011) submit that **Human Security** is liberation from physical and synthetic encumbrances which includes war, poverty, and discrimination, political repression, together with protections from hurtful distractions in the mode of life, jobs, homes and communities. Human security which solely focuses on human affair has seven dimensions which are personal, food, health, economic, environmental community and political security.

National Security refers to orderliness and tranquility within a society. It is regarded as the protection of state sovereignty and territory from external invasion. Besides, it is concerned with defense against criminal activities, safeguarding of lives and properties, as well as maintenance of orderliness within a country (Efeurhobo and Fredrick, 2020). Undoubtedly, national security is a situation where a nation consciously promotes its esteemed principles; legal interests; improves the standard of living; creates a peaceful and safe environment. Essentially, this would enable its citizens to access and enjoy the nation's resources together with the basic necessities of life which translate to development.

2.3 The Concept of Ethnicity

Ethnicity, ethnic groups, or ethnic identity are three interrelated expressions often used interchangeably with reference to tribe or race. They refer to a collection of individuals residing in a common geological setting with mutual philosophy, principles and traditions. This conviction in familiar culture and pedigree is subject to customs and practices regarded as fundamental to the community, or on myths of historical related ancestry (Egwuanikwu, 2023). These three are therefore consistently used in this work in that manner. Obi (2001) describes the phenomenon of ethnicity as the utilization and or mobilization of ethnic identity or diversity as a means of benefitting in circumstances of competition, disagreement or collaboration. Thus, ethnic group signifies individuals whose members possess a familiar distinctiveness and kinship with respect to a similar language and custom, fable of identical ancestry and environmental native land. Typical of these are the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo, three foremost ethnic groups in Nigeria with historical, linguistic, cultural and territorial differences; but have been coerced to subordinate political, social and economic situation in the federation and its component.

Nnoli (1995) attests that ethnicity occurs whenever there is rivalry between ethnic groups at the expense of cooperation. It is typified by cultural chauvinism, and political favouritism. Based on this analogy, ethnic identity which ideally refers to socio- cultural traits exclusively shared by people who claim the same ancestry; is the mechanism through which the ethnic group exploits politics. It could therefore be deciphered that 'Identity' is the avenue through which politicians fan the amber of ethnicity as means of hijacking power. Ideally, ethnicity ought not to be a game of numbers at all times, the reason is because smaller ethnic groups through a mishmash of historical cum socio-economic issues, have the capacities to mobilize and consequently attain positions of authority to control larger groups (Osaghae, 1998).

To Umezinwa (2012), Ethnic group connotes familiar blood or lineage, selfsameness and identicalness which could be imaginary or real. The group may be large or few in numbers or geographical location; but their shared features are the basis of the claim to a common descent. The mental sensitivity associated with the knowledge of this shared foundation stimulates oneness and cohesion among the members. Arising from the above, ethnicity, ethnic identity or ethnic group relate to a person or group of persons with defining and identifying characteristics, traits, cultural mannerisms, financial status and actuality among other facts, which bind them together. Ethnicity is a general belief that connects races distinguished by language, colour, and religion; together with tribes, races, 'ethnic groups, and 'social groups.

2.4 The Concept of Religion

There is no universally accepted definition of religion among scholars due to its ambiguous nature. However, several definitions of the concept have been projected by different people based on their personal experience or perception. Best (2011) defines religion as the entire composite mode of life, beliefs, sentiments, expressions, practice and institution through which individuals fulfill divine mandates and convey their primary affinity with the supernatural. Religion could also be viewed as an established framework within which particular theological dogma and rituals are promoted and adhered to habitually, among a community of people with mutual beliefs (Ojo and Akolo, 2021). Thus, religion refers to a personal response to the supernatural in the quest for significant livelihood on earth. It is a structured incorporated set of beliefs and rituals; articulated principles and symbols based on experience with respect to the holy and profane; in total reliance upon the Supreme Being.

2.5 The Concept of Development

The idea of development is complex, as there are variations of opinion over its conceptualization. Development could be defined as advancement of a nation's fiscal and social situation. Obviously, development signifies strengthening or administration of a country's natural and human resources, as a means of generating wealth and people's standard of living. This should be viewed as a universally acceptable essence of development in order to attain individual's potentials (Osimen, Aisedion, Adi, 2022**).** Development is a multi-dimensional concept which relates to societal transformation ingrained on economic, diverse cultural and ecological contact. It is a process that involves substantial progress ranging from material goods produced through technical means; cultural growth which embraces values, customs and norms of a society; to individuals' advancement (Ofili, 2021). In his view, Menede (2006) avers that development is a notion derived from the French term, *de, un* and *velopper.* While *velopper* signifies to wrap, develop denotes to unwrap.

Factually, development connotes *un-velopping,* unwrapping, unfolding or unveiling, outcome of what was encased, concealed or suppressed. Development could therefore be described as upgrading the initial, in addition to a substance which subsists. Inadvertently, development is the opposite of envelopment. Menede (2006) reiterates that development generally portrays improved standard of living which enables the citizenry to utilize some facilities which include good roads, good houses, stable electricity distribution, quality health care services, hygienic water, high-quality education; overflowing food supply; and social justice. Apenda (2006) opines that development implies purposeful and continuous improvement of society. It indicates unwavering attempt to effect invaluable social change in a preferred pathway, using the accessible funds.

Melkote (2003) concurs with the above assertions as he purports that development is a procedure which has the capacity to create proper and sustainable prospects for advancement of people's lives and that of the communities. From these definitions, it can be deduced that development is man-centred. Ironically, the four features of development namely: mass participation, societal and material enhancement together with sustainable prospects as revealed seem to be lacking in Nigeria, hence it is the major challenge confronting the developing nations, particularly Africa. A country's infrastructure and natural resources can only be useful to development depending on their level of contribution to the enrichment of the people's lives socially, culturally and politically.

2.6 Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development could be conceptualized in several ways. It implies the development that satisfies the yearnings and aspirations of the present and future generations (Brundtland & Mansour, 1987). It is a process of change in the management of human and natural resources in an environment or country with the aim of achieving economic and social development; which would in turn improve lifestyles and preserve the ecosystem for the benefit of individuals within the society and the upcoming generation (Claudia & Ramirez, 2022). This notion precludes ecological obliteration and disintegration of resources. Basically, it entails, among others, two challenges: social justice and equity. Apparently, if sustainable development is a preference to guarantee the continued existence of humanity which engrosses matters of inter and intra-generational equity; it could therefore be inferred that an environment where peace reigns is paramount. Thus, sustainable development doubles as a goal and a procedure, which cuts across existence and efforts in socio-cultural and political organizations.

3. Significance of Peace and Security to Development

The trio peace, security and development are so interconnected that the absence of one adversely affects the other. This is illustrated by the popular slogan: "No peace, no development, no peace, no justice, and no security, no development" (Osimen, Aisedion & Adi, 2022). For instance, peace and security are germane to progress and development in various nations across the globe. This presupposes that they have the ability to create vigorous and equitable economic advancement which could impact positively on the society. Apparently, many nations of the world, whether developed or undeveloped often grapple with insecurity within and outside their territories. Thus, insecurity and lack of peace remain great challenges to the universe at large. Lack of peace and security will definitely impede the development of any nation. Implicitly, the nations experiencing growth are enjoying peace and security since businesses can only thrive in serene environments. Besides, it would attract financiers who would ultimately create job opportunities for the masses and improve individual's standard of living (Jonah & Olawale, 2019).

This underscores the fact that peace, security, alongside good governance and respect for human right are crucial in achieving sustainable development in Nigeria, While the indices for development are viewed as economic growth, well being, competence, potentialities, opportunities and choice; security refers to individual, human and state safety, which could be internal, external, existential or otherwise. The focal points of each of these factors differ, since the menace to security is usually instantaneous, but that of development is generational. Moreover, peace describes nonexistence of all manner of disturbance and discomfort which includes galloping inflation, poverty; fear of engaging in farming in order not to be kidnapped or encounter the Fulani Herd's Men, inability to express one's opinion for fear of being accused of hate speech, oppression and exploitation by the leadership.

In fact, peace expresses fairness and forbearance among people of different religious and ethnic nationalities; hence it is essential for any significant progress. On the contrary, security threats result in lesser investments, disruption of business operations, high cost of business transactions; marginalization of the poor by the higher class, general hardship and frustration on the part of the masses as experienced in Nigeria presently. Additionally, severe destruction of infrastructure could lead to deterioration of health, since health care largely depends on good infrastructural facilities and successful operation delivery sequence; which could ultimately induce several indirect deaths (Siyan Chen etal, 2008). Obviously, Boko Haram menace and Farmers versus Herdsmen clash have made it difficult for people to go to the bush to farm for fear of being molested, raped or killed by Unknown Gun Men.

This negative experience has ultimately contributed to the scarcity of food products as well as hike in prices. This was recently buttressed in a Radio Program tagged "Republic" that the sit at home order imposed on the Eastern State of Nigeria has resulted in serious insecurity and operation of the Unknown Gun Men who unleash severe terror on the innocent citizens, such that some of the women in the market were severely beaten, their goods destroyed; and even pupils who attended their Common Entrance Examination were flogged and chased out of the Examination hall in Enugu and Ebonyi States respectively (Sleek, 2023). What a pathetic experience and indirect means of upholding backwardness! Certainly, the only means to attain sustainable development is through peace and security network in Nigeria. It therefore behooves on the government to make available the template for good governance embedded in peace and security for development to flourish.

4. Synergy between Ethno- Religious Tolerance, Peace and Security

There is emergent acknowledgment that ethno-religious tolerance, peace and security are interwoven and fundamental for socio-political, economic, and sustainable development across the globe. Over the years Africa has witnessed an upsurge in the number of conflicts ranging from religious, interstate, ethnic, to communal strife. Nigeria has been particularly affected, especially with respect to ethno- religious conflicts, engendered by ethno-religious intolerance which has greatly devastated the country and impeded development. Ethno-religious intolerance tops the list of the factors militating against peace and security in Nigeria. This is against the backdrop that every individual in the society has religious and ethnic affiliations; which often results in crises due to poor relationship. Other factors which include Boko-Haram insurgency, poverty, unemployment, porous border, Fulani Herdsmen versus Farmers clash, kidnapping, armed robbery, loss of cultural and communal values, poor attitude of government towards crime control, weak security systems, collaboration of security agencies with criminals, illiteracy, violation of human rights among others (Osimen and Iloh, 2022) are oftentimes ignited by ethnicity or religious intolerance.

Lack of tolerance undermines the benefits of development by obliterating economic resources and infrastructure, which in turn obstructs societal progress. Alabi (2006) claims that African continental differences are undoubtedly evident and overemphasized by Africans, hence the achievement of national identity has been complex in the continent and noticeable through unending conflicts. According to Kane (2008) the incessant violent clashes in the African continent are generally considered her most distinctive features. Gilpin (2015) surmises that frail government's historical animosity, exclusive politics, natural resource contention, exterior opinionated and economic intrusion, coupled with terrorist philosophies have collaborated to the demise of millions of people, with unfathomable material goods shattered, despite several efforts to promote workable peace, security and sustainable development within the continent. A country afflicted by ethno-religious intolerance is bound to experience conflict situations which are often violent and affects economic activities. Consequently, several businesses would fold up, while others would relocate to safer places in the bid to escape structural or cultural violence. Declining fiscal positions and unemployment in a conflict-ridden environment impinges on taxation. Moreover, there would be defective social services, incidence of social problems which includes scarcity of food supply, hunger, poverty and inequality (Osimen, Aisedion & Adi, 2022).

Conversely, Ethno-religious tolerance promotes peaceful co-existence which is an integral aspect of human life. Peaceful co-existence is a pillar that binds humanity together. The reason is because harmonious living is a crucial aspect of human life and it emanates from the inner being. It permits individuals to have deeper understanding of the society, arrive at a compromise; easily resolve challenges and move forward. Since humans are sociable creatures, peaceful and harmonious co-existence guarantees survival and growth. Thus, peaceful co-existence demands a conscientious effort, determination, self will, and commitment to be actualized. Ethno-religious tolerance promotes harmony and enabling environment for healthy business operations that enhances growth across all sectors. Undoubtedly, sustainable development goes beyond averting ecological demolition and collapse of resources, but also entails the creation of a peaceful atmosphere for fulfillment of human potentials. Egwuanikwu (2023) affirms that tolerance is an indispensable quality that entrenches peace and security among people for significant development. Peace among individuals from diverse ethnic and religious affiliations is the principal feature for unity within and among nations. Thus, the pathway to peace, security and sustainable development in Nigerian society is through ethno- religious tolerance.

However, the possibility is dependent on mutual understanding which is capable of instituting cohesion among religious and ethnic groups. Since ethnicity and religion are replete in human societies, tolerance is a sufficient mechanism for checkmating religious and ethnic disturbances for enhancement of peace and security. This can be achieved when adherents of different religions respect other people's faith and do not assert superiority over other religions. Such is also applicable to various ethic nationalities within the country; especially some political office holders who marginalize other ethnic groups in favour of theirs through one sided or biased political appointments, employment, admissions, scholarship awards; provision of basic amenities among others. For instance, the immediate past president of Nigeria, Retired General Muhammadu Buhari was accused by some individuals during his tenure of appointing people from his region into political offices at the expense of other ethnic groups, yet he ignored the complaint. It was therefore not surprising that his regime was bedeviled with diverse ethno-religious conflicts and general insecurity. Religion and ethnicity, if not properly addressed are like time bomb waiting to explode, ironically, anybody could be a victim. Certainly, tolerance creates room for dialogue and good relationships which in turn produces enduring peace and security. People should be educated to desist from religious fanaticism and embrace peace for sustainable development because no religion preaches violence. During football matches, Nigerians watch collectively and celebrate without discrimination, there are several intermarriages between Christians and Muslims which have lasted several decades and have produced children who could be addressed as "Chrilems". The current President of Nigeria, Bola, Ahmed Tinubu is a very good example; as a Muslim, he has been married to a Christian woman for several years and their marriage has been successful. Besides, there are inter-ethnic marriages that have succeeded over the years, which are signals of possible peace. For instance, during the Eidel Kabir celebration which held on the 28th and 29th of June, 2023, some Muslim faithful attested that their Christian neighbors assisted them to clear their prayer ground (Sleek, 2023). Such gestures are often reciprocated during Christian festivals as a means of strengthening their relationships. Thus, peace and security can only be accomplished in a multi-faith and multi-ethnic country like Nigeria in an atmosphere of tolerance for sustainable development.

5. Conclusion

The quest for sustaining development through peace and security is extremely challenged by ethno-religious intolerance in the Nigerian nation. Peace portends freedom from social conflicts, absence of war and violence for the achievement of individuals or groups essential needs, ambitions and aspirations without disruption. Basically, security stems from the process of development, which implies that good development policies can be derived through the provision of security. Thus, the task of peace and security is the responsibility of the government, security agencies and the entire populace. Nigerians must recognize that good security policy produces peace and also facilitates socio-economic development. Nigeria is a certified religiously pluralistic nation that accommodates adherents of different religions and other secular ideologies. This reality necessitates positive tolerance and respect for others faith for harmonious co-existence. Moreover, there should be a democratic culture of patriotic and visionary leadership devoid of sentiments, discrimination, nepotism, corrupt practices, social injustice in national exercises and policy implementation. Equity in the distribution of available human and material resources among the ethnic groups would breed mutual trust and faith among the citizenry.

6. Recommendations

There is need to refocus attention on matters that pertain to national ethos with emphasis on respect and acceptance of internal idiosyncrasies, ethno-religious and cultural diversities, in a multi-faith Nigeria.

The government must educate the masses on the significance of tolerance, sincere dialogue; reconciliation, among others; which would serve as instruments to promote peace and douse security challenges in this multifaceted nation.

Government must be deliberately impartial on matters that relate to religion and ethnicity as an indication of their willpower to gratify the desires of the citizens, and ingrain national unity, peace and sustainable development.

Religious and Community Leaders should emphasize ethno-religious tolerance and accommodation of divergent opinions as measures for intensifying harmonious co-existence with other ethnic and religious sects in the country.

Government should focus action on good governance and encourage ethno-religious tolerance through policies that would unite the various religious and ethnic groups; rather than resolving existing conflicts, which are expensive and unsafe.

Nigerian Government must engage the International community to establish and finance global networks for diplomacy and justice to fortify peace-building within and across the nations.

The government at all levels should collaborate with the Civil Society and other well meaning Nigerians towards ensuring that the country becomes more peaceful and secured for sustainable development.

The government and the organized private sector should complement each other through the enhancement of human capital advancement of the citizenry, particularly the youths and women. Obviously, this is a *sine qua non* for the achievement of a just, secured and progressive Nigerian society.

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Navigating the Efficacy Gap: An Exploration of Training Programs and Service Delivery Challenges in Nigeria's Public Service

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Abstract. Amidst persistent service delivery challenges in Nigeria's Public Service, reformative measures in the latter part of the 20th century, notably the adoption of training programs, were initiated to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. However, the anticipated improvements in service delivery remained elusive. This study delved into the nexus between Human Capital Development (HCD) interventions and their tangible impacts on service delivery, spanning the period from 2003 to 2014 within Nigeria's Public Service. This qualitative study sought to explore the complex dynamics between Training programmes and their impact on service delivery in the Nigerian Public Service from 2003 to 2014. Drawing on interviews and document analysis, the study engaged with staff from various Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) who had undergone training between 2003 and 2014. Findings suggested that while ASCON's training programmes contributed positively to Human Capital Development, they had not yielded the desired level of impact on service delivery. Multiple factors, such as inadequate infrastructure and role duplicity among Management Development Institutes (MDIs) appeared to limit the effectiveness of these programmes. Considering these findings, the study recommends that the Nigerian government should institute policies to make training with ASCON mandatory. Furthermore, a comprehensive Training Needs Assessment should precede any training initiatives to tailor the curriculum more closely to real-world needs. Finally, a substantial upgrade of ASCON's existing infrastructure is imperative for the betterment of future training outcomes.

Keywords: Service delivery, Public Service, ASCON, HCD, Training

1. Introduction

Human capital development is indisputably a catalyst for national development and a significant factor in the economic growth of any nation. The increasing importance of human capital in driving modern knowledge-based economies places an impetus on nations to invest in the development of their human resources continuously. As asserted by Schultz (1961), human capital includes the skills, knowledge, and abilities that are embedded in people, which can be enhanced through education and training. Such an investment, in turn, directly contributes to an individual's productivity and a nation's economic growth (Becker, 1993). While human capital has universally been acknowledged as a catalyst for national development, there is increasing recognition of its significance within the sphere of public service, particularly in emerging economies like Nigeria.

Nigeria's public service sector, as the operational arm of the government, shoulders the significant responsibility of policy execution, thus forming the bedrock of the nation's pursuits towards sustainable development (Anenene, & Oyewole, 2020). This strategic position underscores the necessity for continuous human capital development, as the sector's effectiveness rests heavily upon the capacity of its human resources. Indeed, a robust and well-trained workforce can significantly amplify service delivery efficiency and overall productivity (Babalola & Adebisi, 2016).
As common with other less developed countries with colonial heritage like Nigeria, the departure of the colonialists created a vacuum which required educated personnel to take over the functions of government. Education became crucial in the development of these countries. Those who had education at that time, no matter how minimal gained access to clerical, administrative and teaching jobs.

They became the "creme de la creme" of the society (Zibima, et al., 2023). However, it did not take a long time before it became apparent that performance on a job schedule is more than acquisition of certificates, rather training is of great importance in acquiring required skills to achieve organizational goals and objectives (Fettes, et al., 2020).

Despite substantial investments in human capital development programs, Nigeria's public service continues to grapple with a reputation for inefficiency and ineffectiveness. This contradiction raises important questions, given the significant financial allocations towards training initiatives like those conducted by the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON). Many public servants across the nation have participated in these programs, yet a persistent perception of the public service as a hub of inefficiency remains. (Ojogiwa, 2021)

Historical attempts to ameliorate these inefficiencies—such as the Dotun Philips reforms in 1988, the Allison Ayida reforms in 1995, and the Obasanjo Civil Service Renewal Program in 2000—appear to have had limited impact (Oyelude & Fatile, 2018). This study, therefore, aims to delve deeper into the intricate dynamics that mediate between ASCON's human capital development efforts and the actualized efficiency in Nigeria's public service delivery. By engaging in a qualitative exploration, we seek to understand the lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges that may shed light on this persistent disconnect between investment in human capital and expected outcomes in service delivery. The specific objectives of this study are:

- To explore the perceptions of public service employees regarding the impact of training on their competence, courtesy, and credibility in service delivery.
- To identify and understand the challenges that stakeholders view as barriers to the effective delivery of ASCON's human capital development programmes.

2. Conceptual Review

2.1 Public Service

The public service is an indispensable instrument through which the government implements its policies and programmes. The former head of the Nigerian civil service, Stephen Oronsaye, describes it as the bridge between the government and the governed, stressing that an inefficient public service, therefore, constitutes a barrier between the government and the people (Oyedele, 2015). At its core, the Civil Service, comprising employees in ministries and certain extra-ministerial departments, is responsible for policy formulation and execution at the national and state levels. Supplementing this are government-backed agencies or parastatals designed for specific functions. The nation's security is ensured by the Armed Forces and the Police, while the Judiciary, operating independently, undertakes law interpretation and justice delivery. Additionally, the public service envelope encompasses government-funded educational and health institutions, grassroots-focused local government service, and personnel supporting legislative activities (Olaopa, 2008).

3. Historical Background of Nigeria's Public Service

The origin of the Nigerian civil service can be traced to the beginning of the twentieth century with the introduction of British rule in Nigeria. The Nigerian public/civil service was the creation of British colonial rule to assist the colonial administration in its exploitation of the resources of the country (Koehn, 2019). The colonial masters introduced a dual system of administration: direct rule in the South and indirect rule in the North. A more formal civil service emerged only in 1914 when the Northern and Southern Protectorates were amalgamated to form the present geographical space called Nigeria. This, however, did not immediately lead to a unified civil service until 1945 (Ogunrotifa, 2012). Nigeria became a federation through the instrumentality of the 1954 Constitution, made up of a Federal Government at the centre and three regional governments. Correspondingly, this led to the emergence of the federal civil service at the centre and the regional civil services for each of the regions. As expected, the Public Service Commission was set up to coordinate each of the services (Adewunmi, 2012). Overtime, there has been several reforms in the public service; civil service reform refers to the purposeful modification of governmental human resource management system with the goal of maximizing important administrative values (Anazodo, 2009). According to World Bank (2002), there is a strong consensus in the international development community on the need for Civil Service reform in developing nations. Before and after independence, the Nigerian government carried out series of reforms and before the efforts of the Obasanjo administration, there has been 14 previous major attempts through commissions, committees, and teams, beginning with Hunt's Commission of 1934, at addressing the state of the service, incorporating both conditions of service, staff performance and service delivery (Adegoroye, 2006). A major part of most of these reforms was to address the challenge of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the Public service with training and re-training of her human resources

4. Training Programs in Public Services

Globally, training programs in public services have been recognized as vital for enhancing employee skills and service quality. Countries like Singapore and the United Kingdom have invested significantly in continuous learning and development initiatives for their public service employees (Van Der Wal, & Demircioglu,2020). Training methods vary but often include a combination of classroom learning, online courses, and experiential learning. Research has shown that well-implemented training programs can significantly improve service delivery and employee job satisfaction (Obinna, 2022). However, the impact of such programs is heavily dependent on the quality and relevance of the training content, as well as the effectiveness of the delivery methods.

The importance of an efficient public service is understated by the fact that policies and programmes of government may not be realized without an efficient public administration. Put differently, the best policies and laws of government may remain as mere paper declaration of intent if the administrative machinery does not function efficiently. Service delivery in Nigeria has been variously described as “chaotic” “epileptic” “unsatisfactory” “shoddy”, “deplorable”, “sensitive”, “inflexible”, “non-cost effective” etcetera and has been characterized by such negative attitudes and traits as insensitivity towards customers and their complaints, lateness; absenteeism, needless delay and red-tapism(Oyedele, 2015; Ndema, 2022). An efficient public administration avoids waste, correct errors; limits the consequences of incompetence, while executing laws and public policies (Ahmed, 2012). The exit of the Colonialists created a void, hence emphasis was laid more on getting education which was focused on providing knowledge to the beneficiaries. This led to the availability of a much improved number of highly educated persons in the public service but who did not possess the necessary skills to excel in their jobs. Thus, the phenomenal increase with educated person, came without the corresponding high performance as reflected in various Civil service reforms. On the strength of these reforms the Public service have made remarkable efforts towards the training and retraining of public servants (Aluko & Aluko, 2012).

Basically, according to Olaopa (2012) public service training institutions can be said to have four basic tasks , the first is to impart knowledge to public servants by training them for the challenges they have to grapple with in the course of performing their duties, the second role is practical engagement, public service training institutions provide opportunity for public servants to come together and by so doing exchange ideas by which they can influence one another to adopt better practices. In the course of this, trainers are expected to serve as critics and stimulants who can further introduce ideas, new ways of thinking and new ways of working, the third task of public service training institution is that of analysis and research. Training institutions exist to provide rigorous analysis of ideas and actions in order to come out with the best possible solutions and the fourth duty of the public service training institutions is that they serve as the bridge between, and interpreter of theory and practice (Clarke, 1998; Olaopa, 2012; Berman, et al., 2021).

5. Empirical Review

Human capital development is an asset that enhances organizational and national value. The concept encompasses not just education and skill acquisition but also retraining and alignment with an organization's shared vision. The effectiveness of human capital development policies hinges on how well they're tailored to meet the specific needs and challenges of an evolving economic landscape.

Ibok & Ibanga, (2014), carried out an empirical research that examined the impact of human capital development and economic empowerment in the socioeconomic development in Akwa Ibom State. The study revealed that from 1999 to 2012, the government through her human capital development efforts made the public sector more vibrant, efficient and result-oriented. The study revealed the immense contribution of training to efficiency and effectiveness even in the public service. It is revealed in literature that scholars frequently make the mistake of measuring efficiency and effectiveness in the public service as it is done in the private sector, which is mostly on profitability basis. The private sector seeks the economic effectiveness on a short-term basis, while most public sector investments generate results over a longer period of time, this salient factor is rarely considered in analysis Mihaiu, Opreana & Cristescu, (2010). These factors were put into consideration in the evaluation of the training impact of ASCON.

An empirical study by Agboola (2016) study analysed the role of Service Compact (SERVICOM) on service delivery in selected federal parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria and examined the strategies adopted by SERVICOM in realising its objectives. It also examined the extent of implementation of SERVICOM policy in the study area and analysed the challenges facing SERVICOM in the discharge of its functions in the selected parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria. These were with a view to providing information on the effect of SERVICOM as one of the variants of New Public Management (NPM) on service delivery of federal parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria. Primary data used for analysis included questionnaire and interviews while secondary data also included journals and extracts from the internet sources on service compact and service delivery. The results showed that SERVICOM played significant roles in service delivery and impacted positively on citizens in Southwestern Nigeria. The results also revealed that the strategies adopted by SERVICOM in realising its objectives enhanced service delivery in Southwestern Nigeria. Furthermore, the results showed that the extent of implementation of SERVICOM influenced positively service delivery in the Southwestern Nigeria. Finally, the study identified some of the challenges facing SERVICOM in the discharge of its functions which incapacitated SERVICOM, the performance of its functions in Southwestern Nigeria. The study concluded that inadequacy of human and material resources led to poor implementation of service compact policy in Southwestern Nigeria.

The study carried out by Obaje (2015) sought to identify services delivered by local government and to ascertain the impact of the services on the wellbeing of the people. Two sets of questionnaires were designed and administered, one to the inhabitants of the area and the other to the employees of the local government, so as to capture both the views of the inhabitants of the area and the employees of the local government. In addition interviews, focus group discussions, personal observation were utitilised in the study. The study revealed that, mismanagement of funds, joint account system, lack of transparency and accountability and restricted revenue sources available to local government and inability to effectively utilize its internal sources of revenue generation had impacted negatively on the provision of public goods and services at the local level. This is evidence in the poor educational facilities, poor healthcare centres, roads and several other problems.

This study by Nwachukwu (2015) examines the opportunities and challenges of utilizing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as a means of public service delivery in the Nigerian federal civil service. The study adopted the communications theory as its theoretical framework and argued that ICTs present enormous opportunities to enhance public service delivery in the Nigerian Federal civil service. The study revealed that the utilization of ICTs for public service delivery in the Nigerian federal civil service presents a sustainable and innovative approach to addressing traditional problems of service delivery in the country. The study also revealed that ICTs initiatives for public service delivery in the federal civil service is hampered by many challenges and problems such as lack of ICTs infrastructure; low ICTs literacy and usage; problem of digital divide; inadequate ICTs funding by the government; Nigeria's epileptic power supply; poor institutional governance structure to drive ICTs, etc. Nevertheless, the study argued strongly and concluded that ICTs remain a veritable instrument of enhancing public service delivery in the federal civil service. ICTs have the great potentials to saving costs while improving quality, response time and access to services; improving the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of public administration; increasing transparency in administration due to ease of access to government information, rules and procedures, resulting in openness and accountability; reducing corruption and increasing popular participation; making governments more competitive and reducing bureaucracy; re-engineering administrative processes and modernising service delivery; and bringing about social and economic development.

Sowunmi, Eleyowo, Salako & Oketokun (2015) recognized training and development as the critical variables in the achievement of optimal service delivery. They added that the investment in human capital is the major way through which the knowledge, skill, and attitudes required for the running of organisations are passed on to the people who make up the organisations in order to achieve their goals. The realisation of this fact has made organisations, especially those interested in attaining and maintaining excellent performance, to pay close attention to training

6. Theoretical Framework

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, originally formulated in the context of strategic management, posits that organizations gain and sustain competitive advantage through the deployment of valuable, rare, and non-substitutable resources. First put forth by scholars like Barney (1991), Wernerfelt (1984), and Grant (1991), and popularized by Penrose (2009). The RBV has been widely applied in business contexts (Utami & Alamanos, 2023). However, its relevance and applicability extend to the public sector, particularly when investigating the link between human capital development and service efficiency. The theory identifies four main attributes of strategic resources: Valuable: Resources that contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. Rare: Resources that are not common or widely distributed. Inimitable: Resources that are difficult for competitors to copy or acquire. Non-substitutable: Resources for which there are no equivalent alternatives.(Lubis , 2022).

The Resource-Based View (RBV) offers a robust theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between human capital development and public service efficiency. By classifying human capital as a strategic resource, this theory can elucidate the conditions under which investments in human capital development programs like those offered by ASCON can yield significant improvements in service efficiency. As such, RBV presents a compelling lens for analyzing and understanding human capital development within Nigeria's public service sector.

7. The Administrative Staff College of Nigeria

The Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) is Nigeria's leading Management Development Institute (MDI) with a regional influence in West Africa. Founded in 1973 by Federal Government Decree No. 39, following the recommendations of the 1967 Wolle's Commission, ASCON serves as a pivotal institution for human capital development in Nigeria's public and private sectors. Its objectives encompass advanced management training, comparative studies in management techniques, and facilitating scholarly research and dialogue. The college also offers grants, maintains a library, organizes educational events, and publishes research to further these aims.

ASCON has three core functions: Training, Research, and Consultancy. It facilitates experiential learning, supports a functional library, and disseminates knowledge through publications. In the public sector, ASCON is mandated to build human capacity for effective policy development and service delivery, serve as a governmental think tank, and act as a management consultant across all government tiers. Strategically, ASCON's mission is to offer excellent management training and consultancy services for performance improvement across all economic sectors. It aspires to global leadership in management development, guided by core values such as integrity, professionalism, and accountability.

Located in Topo, Badagry, Lagos State, the facility features 22 training rooms, lecture theaters, a library, 292 guest apartments, and recreational areas. Its curriculum addresses Leadership, Management, Project and Financial Management, among other subjects, tailored to meet diverse training needs. It boasts a faculty of experienced public officers and consultants, supplemented by guest lecturers from various sectors. ASCON has trained over 500,000 senior managers in diverse fields such as general management and policy analysis and trains approximately 15,215 public servants annually, according to 2015 data.

ASCON Staff by Grade Level and Category

CONRAISS	Faculty Staff	Support Staff	Total
Director General	1		1
13-15	42	10	52
10-12	25	50	75
06-09	68	168	236
02-05	-	26	26
Total	136	254	390

Source: ASCON, 2016

8. Research Methodology

This qualitative study aims to probe the intricacies of human capital development and its influence on service delivery within Nigeria's public sector. It situates itself within the framework of "Navigating the Efficacy Gap: An Exploration of Training Programs and Service Delivery Challenges in Nigeria’s Public Service (2003-2014)." The research design builds upon and derives its foundational strength from earlier empirical investigations conducted by the author (Oyelude, 2017; Oyelude, 2023) on ASCON's role in human capital development

8.1 Sample Selection

The sample for this study consists of public service employees who have undergone training programs at ASCON, their supervisors, and ASCON staff, and those who make use of the services of the MDA. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in the selection of sample units, these are employees of government who have had a minimum of five years of experience in the public sector and should have undergone at least one training program conducted by ASCON.

8.2 Data Collection Methods

Structured interviews were conducted in person with the help of research assistants. The interviews focused on capturing the experiences and perspectives of the participants regarding the effectiveness of human capital development programs in improving service delivery. Document Analysis A review of official documents, policy statements, and training documents. Data Analysis Strategy. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Interview transcripts and documents were coded and categorized to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to human capital development and service delivery efficiency.

9. The perceptions of public service employees regarding the impact of training on their competence, courtesy, and credibility in service delivery

To determine the effect of the training program on competencies, courtesy and credibility of the public servants who went through training from 2003-2014. A five-point Likert Scale that consists of seven items to assess the level of satisfaction derived by the customers from the services rendered to them by the MDAs was utilized in the evaluation. The perception of the customers (customers here refer to the all those who utilize services provided by the government) of the MDAs regarding competence, courtesy and credibility in service delivery since the past 11 years showed that there has been very minimal improvement in the services being rendered in terms of the underlisted variables under consideration as shown in the weak correlation obtained

- time taken to deliver service,
- the manner in which services are delivered,
- the mechanism in meeting discrepancies in requested service.
- The value of the service rendered
- Reduced bureaucracy

Majority of the trainees rated themselves "averagely" improved after training on customer service, but a divergent view was obtained from the survey on customers. Competence, courtesy and credibility in this context refers to the end product assessment. How do the public, the users of the services view the services rendered to them from the aforementioned perspectives? 84 per cent of respondents are of the opinion that services being delivered by the MDAs and in essence the Nigerian public service is not satisfactory, 11 per cent believe that there has been minimal improvement in the last eleven years. It is important to note that the answer to this question stems basically from the viewpoint of the customers of the MDAs, in other words, the public; they believe that majority of the public officers have remained rude, sloppy, do not take criticism respectfully, act without paying premium to time and most importantly renege on the promise of delivering valuable services. This study showed that the inability to improve on the job may not be entirely due to faulty training on the part of ASCON, this is because majority of the trainees believe they learnt enough to improve their customer service skills, however it must be noted that the public sector does not always have a common unifying objective, rather varying objectives exist in the different MDAs which makes implementation of training imbibed difficult to localise in the respective MDAs, this does not however rule out the fact that the basic checks of good service delivery especially as it portrays competence, courtesy and as listed above has not significantly improved in most of the MDAs

It was also observed in the course of this study that citizens/customers do not register their demand for better services appropriately hence making the challenges more complex by limiting the MDAs responsiveness in terms of focusing on filling the gaps identified. As we aim to answer the question on the impact of training on competence, courtesy and credibility, in consonance with literature, the field work made it crystal clear that as much as work ethics, values, attitude and behaviour can be positively influenced through interventions like training, motivation et cetera, people cannot be compelled to change since some of those values are intrinsic in nature; this is in alignment with the public choice theory, where self- interest is the central tenet. The Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) (2015) asserts that the primary purpose of any government is to improve quality of life of its citizens and to achieve this goal, it stated that government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) were established to provide quality services to the people of Nigeria. Good quality education involves educating for character, good moral values and civic responsibility. This is what shapes the character of nations (Achimugu, H, Stephen M.R. & Aliyu, A., 2013).

This leads to the conclusion that investment in human capital development through training may not yield the expected result even with an updated curriculum in the area of competence, courtesy and credibility as the case is with ASCON, if the necessary institutional structures that compels officials to conform to certain standards are not in place and in instances where they are in place in principle and not in practice, expected results would always be insignificant

Factors inhibiting the effective delivery of human capital development programms of ASCON

This is also in consonance with one of the specific objectives of ASCON as an institution which is “to act as management consultant to all tires of government in order to improve work processes and systems as well as initiate planned change to address turbulence in the socio economic and political environment". This study would have been incomplete without this part of the work. The researcher was amazed to observe that "training" to most public servants is seen as a period of vacation and therefore they want to get to choose where they would enjoy some "perks" rather than a place where their skills would be honed and prepared for the next level. There is also what is called the "welfare approach" which is very common in the public service; this is a situation whereby the public servants views training as a form of compensation or time off the regular call of duty, this is in consonance with the public choice theory, that is, as long as the benefits of training to the advancement of a public servant’s career is not stated, then training will most certainly not achieve its objectives. Therefore, despite the fact that ASCON was established majorly for the public service to improve the delivery of services to the citizens, there has been a gradual decline in subscription to ASCON's training programmes by MDAs. This has been a source of concern for ASCON as an institution since for about a decade and in the last four years where subscription has nosedived by about 83 percent. Seventy percent of respondents (trainees interviewed) stated clearly that they would rather go to places like LBS (Lagos Business School), overseas, and even private consultants, not necessarily because they would get better or relevant training but because they get some added incentives. ASCON as a Management Development Institute (MDI) makes an effort to ensure that all staff is given the opportunity to develop capabilities and competencies, but the funds made available by the Federal government are grossly inadequate, thereby making them lose many training and development opportunities, especially regional and international programmes. Another major challenge common among respondents are the instances when they are transferred to other departments soon after a training; this implies that training here will not achieve its purpose.

In recent times, ASCON has been able to increase the number of its training rooms, but they are still not adequate and definitely not ideal for an Institution that wants to make a massive difference in the service delivery of the nation. The classrooms are also the typical "traditional classroom," which makes it inappropriate for participatory adult learning methods.

The general lack of good infrastructures is a major challenge to ASCON, power supply to ASCON is extremely poor making the college rely on generators for almost 24 hours daily. Also, the deplorable state of the Lagos Badagry Expressway has posed a serious challenge to ASCON. Most respondents describe their journey to the college as a "nightmare”. The researcher made several journeys to the College from different areas of Lagos State, and none can be described as pleasurable, the terrible state of the road is enough to dissuade trainees from the College. The research undertaken by Atanga (2012) revealed a lopsided relationship between human capital development and economic growth in Nigeria; an indication that, other sectors desire equal attention. He concluded that for a good return on investment in training, a total infrastructure build up is needed to improve human capital for economic growth and development.

Another major challenge to ASCON in the task of improving service delivery progressively through training is the conflict of roles among government agencies responsible for human capital development in the country. For instance, CMD (Centre for management development) was reformed and authorized to statutorily play the role of supervisory/ regulatory agency to training institutions, they are to "train the trainers"; rather they also get directly involved in training and compete to train MDAs, this makes it difficult for them to focus on their mandate and to ensure that quality and standards are not compromised which is very detrimental to human capital development.

The researcher also observed that PSI, Abuja (Public service Institute) plays the same role as ASCON. This duplicity of roles gives the impression of lack of focus by the Federal government on the issue of human capital development and in essence good service delivery which was why ASCON was established in the first place. The researcher was at PSI in Abuja which is located on a very expansive piece of land with several massive buildings which is grossly underutilized. Unlike ASCON which is statutorily established through Decree No. 39 of 1973 now ASCON Act, PSI is not established by ACT. The officers of PSI interviewed insist that there are no duplicity of roles as they focus on Senior management from levels 13 and above while ASCON is expected to focus on the levels 8-13. However, in practice, they both perform similar roles which is a major constraint to the activities of ASON. This is a major challenge as the college appears to be a victim of politics.

The approach to human capital development in the public service has largely been uncoordinated and programmes undertaken by MDAs are not based on identified needs, the implication of this is that performance can hardly resonate enough to be felt by the citizenry. Trainings are sometimes taken up as chore that must be performed grudgingly rather than an investment that should be nurtured. Respondents stated that decisions on what training to attend are mostly made in response to advertised programmes of ASCON and such does not always meet the desired impact.

Training institutions exist to provide rigorous analysis of ideas and actions in order to come out with the best possible solutions (Olaopa, 2012). A major part of ASCON that has not been explored by the MDAs as revealed in this study is the area of research and consultancy, which is a major objective of ASCON. Most of the MDAs have a lackadaisical approach to research and consultancy in problem solving, this is based on lack of confidence in the competence of local consultants/ researchers, subsequently research and consultancy activities have been kept low in ASCON.

In agreement with literature, especially in the developing nations, this study confirms that training is perceived as a "cost" rather than an “investment" in human capital development; this is contrary to the Human capital theory that insists that education/ training is an investment in the human capital Respondents say even when provisions are made for the trainings, it may be diverted or slashed when there is a financial constraint for what is considered "imperative" thereby neglecting training

Evaluation of human capital development efforts are rarely carried out in the public service. Monitoring and evaluation are very important elements of human capital development. It was observed that training/human capital development rules are often ignored. For instance, DTOs (Departmental training officer) are meant to painstakingly ensure that attention is given to details in training matters but hardly is this adhered to. Also guidelines the *Revised Guidelines for Training in the Federal Civil Service,* Lagos (1995) states that –“*in implementing training programmes, ministries and departments should, whenever desirable, feel free to utilise the services of reputable private management consultancy firms. Such firms and their principals should be registered members of recognised professional bodies. This study revealed that one of the major reasons why there has been a decline in the subscription to trainings facilitated by ASCON is the engagement of incompetent consultants rather than competent and experienced specialist for various reason such as corruption, nepotism et cetera.”*

This study showed that ASCON has not been able to achieve its mandate of improving work processes and systems and initiating planned change to address turbulence in the socio economic and political environment as they are still grappling with everyday issues that ought to have been resolved by the government in the creation of enabling environment through infrastructures, policies etcetera. This shows that for any training institution established by the government to achieve its mandate, the relationship must be symbiotic.

10. Conclusion

In conclusion, despite investments in training programs aimed at enhancing competence, courtesy, and credibility among public servants, the perception of service quality remains "below standard" according to customers of the Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). This divergence between self-assessment by trainees and customer feedback suggests that even with a robust curriculum, such as that provided by ASCON, the desired outcomes may not be achieved without adequate institutional structures to enforce standards. Additionally, the study identifies several impediments to ASCON's effective delivery of human capital development programs, including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, low subscription rates, and political interference. These challenges hinder ASCON's ability to serve as a solution provider for governmental issues, underscoring the need for an enabling environment to optimize the impact of human capital development on public service delivery.

11. Recommendations

While the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) introduced commendable initiatives like the Structured Mandatory Assessment Based Training Programme (SMAT-P) and Leadership Enhancement and Development Programme (LEAD-P) in 2015, these programs have since languished in visibility and impact. We recommend the urgent involvement of ASCON in these initiatives to drive implementation across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). The OHCSF and ASCON can collaboratively develop a more skilled, innovative, and leadership-oriented workforce, better equipped to meet the evolving demands of public service in the 21st century.

Mandatory Career Development Programs: In order to foster a culture of continuous learning and career advancement in the public sector, we propose the institution of mandatory career development programs. These should be aligned with ASCON's training modules and be prerequisite for career progression within public service.

To actualize tangible improvements in human capital development, the government should augment budget allocations directed towards this sector. Given that training is an "investment," not a "cost," ASCON requires adequate financial resources for essential infrastructure, such as custom-built training rooms.

Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) should be mandated to comply with established training policies. It is imperative that budget allocations for training are not minimized under the guise of them being less critical to departmental objectives.

To maximize the benefits of training, we recommend a policy preventing the transfer of public servants from their posts within one to two years following training.

Infrastructure and Utilities: The immediate repair of the Lagos-Badagry road and stabilization of power supply are critical for leveraging ASCON's full capabilities. Consideration should also be given to alternative energy sources, such as solar power.

To ensure effective human capital development, a governmental review of the roles and responsibilities of Management Development Institutes (MDIs) like ASCON is advised. This would aid in preventing role conflicts and resource wastage, thereby streamlining efforts in public service development.

A comprehensive reassessment of existing training policies should be expedited to identify obstacles and offer solutions. This exercise will enhance the operational effectiveness of institutes like ASCON.

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Effects of IPOB Sit-At-Home on the Economy of Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State, South-Eastern Nigeria.

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Abstracts. The study examined the effects of IPOB sit-at-home order on the economy of Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State, the South-Eastern region of Nigeria. The study employed both primary and secondary sources of data with the use of the system theory by Talcott Parsons which states that every system is made up of sub-system that has component parts, and each component has a vital role to play for the overall performance of the system as a whole. Questionnaires were administered to respondents and data gathered were analyzed with the use of in-depth summary and coding as well as Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that IPOB sit-at-home order has negatively affected the economy of Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State, south-eastern region of Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study recommends that there is need for IPOB to suspend its sit-at-home order and embrace dialogue with the Federal Government to press down their demand for the release of their leader because this sit-at-home has not yielded any positive results, rather it has deeply eaten up the economy and affected the livelihood of the people which had led to more crimes and even loss of lives and properties. Also, the distribution of resources among the six (6) geo-political zones of Nigeria should be done through proper Federal character principle as this will go a long way to reducing what the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) perceived as gross marginalization to the south-eastern regions.

Keywords: Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), National Economy, National Integration

1. Introduction

The Amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 ushered in the heterogeneous nature of the country with diverse languages, religions and tribes, etc. an ideology that brought national integration with regards to development and progress of the nation; the concept that favors the idea of the awareness of a common identity among citizens of a country. Onwuka (2021) observed that despite the various efforts put towards achieving this goal, the country has over the years been faced with numerous challenges that have impeded national integration. The events that unfolded during the postcolonial periods of 1960 to the beginning of the Nigeria-Biafra civil war in 1967 had a devastating effect on the unity of the nation. Fifty-five years down the line, the unity of the nation is yet to be achieve. Campbell (2017) asserts that the civil war which lasted for about three (3) years recorded an estimated 3.5 million deaths due to hunger and starvations during the war with damaging consequences on the economic activities in Nigeria. McKenna (2021) states that the starvation of children led to airlifts of food and medicine from many countries including Gabon, Cote de-Voire, Tanzania and Zambia to the Biafran agitators and soldiers while France supplied weapons. As a secessionist movement founded in 2012 from south-eastern Nigeria with the aim of restoring the defunct Biafra through peaceful means, the group is said to have originated from a similar group; Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Biafran Zionist Movement (BZM). Ekpo & Agorye, (2018) acclaimed that it was the inability of MASSOB to achieve its goal that paved way for the emergence of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Jacob, Nwobi & Igboji (2020) described IPOB as a group leading the call for the secession of Biafra from Nigeria. They see the group as a reformation of the weakened pro-secessionist groups of Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Biafran Zionist Movement (BZM) with the aim of creating an independent State for the people of old Eastern region.

Nwaiwu (2016) traced the formation of the group to the historical and cultural origin of the Igbos, so as to seek the secession of the Biafran Nation from Nigeria. This is seen as the remedy for what the group (IPOB) perceived gross injustice and marginalization of the Igbo nationality by the Federal Government of Nigeria. More so, Okafor (2017) maintained that the group called for a referendum to be conducted in Igbo territories to settle the issue of Biafra in a civilized and democratic manner. In 2012, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) declared their intentions to restore the defunct Biafra by means of secession. For IPOB, it was a quest for self-determination for the Igbos, an advocacy for the rights and freedom of what was left of Biafra. Since its inception, the group has agitated for an independent State for the Eastern region through referendum. The group rose and gained its ideologies in solidarity to the secessionist Biafra that existed in Southeastern region from May 30th 1967 to January 15th 1970. Various reasons constituted the call for secession by Biafra, such as economic depletion, ethnic and religious tensions as well as failure of the government in power. These challenges can be traced back to the amalgamation of the southern and northern protectorates in 1914, that led to creation of Nigeria Nmezu & Iroanya (2016). The unsolicited amalgamation of the different regions by the colonial administration created a host of problems for the need of national integration. The events leading to the civil war in 1967 and the war itself which was a secession attempt by the Igbos of eastern Nigeria under the name Biafra, further frustrated the nation's attempt towards unity. Hence, this paper seeks to examine the effects of IPOB sit-at-home and how it had impeded on the economy of Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State, South-Eastern Nigeria.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 Concept of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)

The acronym IPOB stands for the Indigenous People of Biafra, a nationalist separatist group that aims to restore the Republic of Biafra, a country that seceded from Nigeria prior to the Civil War (1967-1970) and later rejoined Nigeria after its defeat by the Nigerian military. Allison (2017) holds that the group was founded by Nnamdi Kanu and Uche Mefor in 2012 which was deemed a terrorist organization by the Nigerian Government in 2017 under the Nigerian Terrorism Act. Similarly, Nwanwu (2021) asserts that the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has criticized the Federal Government for poor investment, political alienation, inequitable distribution of resources, ethnic marginalization, heavy military presence, extrajudicial killings in the South-Eastern regions of the country etc. The organization rose to prominence in the mid-2010s and is now the largest Biafran independence organization by membership. Amnesty International (2016) asserts that the Indigenous People of Biafra has gained significant media attention for becoming a frequent target of political crackdowns by the Nigerian government. Amnesty International (2016) further stated that the group has numerous sites and communication channels serving as the only trusted social apparatus educating and inculcating firsthand information and news to its members.

3. Empirical Review

3.1 Historical Background of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)

The birth of IPOB movement can be traced to a secessionist movement which started in the 1960s, led by Lt. Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu, the movement posited itself as representing the interests of the South Eastern region who felt marginalized by the Nigerian government dominated mainly by leaders from the Northern part of the country. Due to this, they sought to break from the shackles of the Nigerian government and form the Republic of Biafra. The failure of the leaders to de-escalate this conflict resulted in a Civil War which lasted from 1967 and 1970. Okoli et al (2021) holds that despite losing the war, the overarching theme of separatism remained, bubbling underground. In a broader sense, the lasting relevance of this idea is proof of the failures of the state to reintegrate the South Eastern region successfully. The group which was founded in 2012 by Nnamdi Kanu, a British Nigerian political activist known for his advocacy of the contemporary Biafran independence movement, was deemed a terrorist organization by the Nigerian government in 2017 under the Nigerian Terrorism Act. On May 2022, the United Kingdom denied asylum to members of IPOB who engaged in human rights abuses, even though the United Kingdom government clarified that IPOB had not been designated a terrorist organization. IPOB has criticize the Nigerian Government for poor investment, political alienation, inequitable distribution of resources, ethnic marginalization, heavy military presence, and extrajudicial killings in the South-Eastern regions of the country. The organization rose to prominence in the mid-2010s and is now the largest Biafran independence organization by membership. In recent years, it has gained significant media attention for becoming a frequent target of political crackdowns by the Nigerian government, and also has numerous sites and communication channels serving as the trusted social apparatus educating and inculcating first-hand information and news to its members (Nmezu & Iroanya 2016).

The tensions between Biafra and the Federal Government resulted in the civil war that lasted for three years with an estimated 3.5 million deaths caused by starvation and hunger, and in 1970, the Biafran forces surrendered through the armistice brokered by the defunct OAU. Anayo (2016) asserts that the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra who is a British and Nigerian citizen created IPOB after gaining fame from his broadcasts on Radio Biafra established in 2009. A radio station from London that broadcast messages called for freedom of Biafrans and criticized corruption in the Nigerian Government. Radio Biafra catalyzed Kanu's rise to the public scene, as he was previously an unknown figure and was arrested by the Nigerian security forces on 19 October 2015, on charges of "sedition, ethnic incitement and treasonable felony. The activities of IPOB have also been condemned by the international community- the United States and United Kingdom have both called on the Nigerian government to respect the rights of IPOB members. The future of IPOB is uncertain, as the group has been weakened by the arrest of its leaders and the military crackdown on its activities. However, the underlying grievances that led to the formation of IPOB remain, and it is possible that the group will continue to operate underground and its activities will flare up again in the nearest future. BBC news (2021) report that young people who belong to secessionist groups such as IPOB are mainly ethnic Igbos who feel they have been discriminated against by those in power. In a similar way, the International Crisis Group asserts that the activities of Biafran separatist groups including IPOB are an attempt to attract attention and spending from the Nigerian Government, based on a cocktail of longstanding and recent economic and political grievances.

Also, Thompson, Ojukwu & Nwaoegu, (2021) stated that IPOB's grievances are that they have been politically, socio-economically, and culturally marginalized by the Nigerian Government. These evidence of marginalization have been pin-pointed by Allison (2017) to include political alienation, inequitable resource distribution, extra-judicial killings, heavy military presence among other factors. Since inception, Nigeria has been plagued with crises bothering on religious, ethno-cultural, political and territorial, and these have proved challenging to the several efforts towards National integration. The major highlight of these crises remains the Nigerian-Biafran war of the 1960s, that characterized the Igbos fight to secede from Nigeria was as a result of the incessant killings of their ethnic members who were residing in the Northern part of the country. Despite the no victor no vanquished system instituted by the then Military Head of State; General Yakubu Gowon salvaged what was left of the Igbo ethnic group and reabsorbed them into Nigeria. Duruji (2019) asserts that they were reabsorbed as conquered people and sheds light that some policies were designed to deliberately limit and demobilize the Igbos from making productive moves. However, the extradition of Nnamdi Kanu from Kenya, and a sit-at-home protest has since become a major pain in the South East, as residents in the region and the Igbos in the diaspora rest on the government and curiously watching what the exercise would ultimately achieve. Undoubtedly, the sit-at-home has cost the residents of the South East a lot in terms of life and property. Since it started, several innocent citizens (both average and prominent) have lost their lives in the most gruesome manner, depriving families of their loved ones who were breadwinners, and truncating the destinies of those left behind while leaving scars that may never heal (Njoku et al, 2021).

4. Implications for National Integration

The Indigenous People of Biafra in a bid to drive home their grievances, have in recent times taken actions that have directly challenged the sovereign integrity of the Nation. Many of these actions are seen as self-destructive not only to the affected states but to the country at large and has in the long run hindered the process of national integration. On the 18th of September, 2017, IPOB was proscribed and declared a terrorist group by a ruling of the Federal High court in Abuja and since then they have been recognized as that under the Nigeria’s Terrorism Act. The IPOB supporters utilize the application of civil disobedience in pressing home its demand for the freedom of Biafrans (Duruji, 2019). Some extreme measures that have been employed by the IPOB members includes, bombing of police stations and killing of security personnel. In many cases the military have been saddled with the responsibility of restoring law and order. Njoku et al (2021) asserts that one of the most severely criticized acts of IPOB is the illegal imposition of the sit at home order which is observed every Monday in all south-eastern states. As a result, businesses, schools, banks, transportation companies, markets and other essential services are forced to remain closed. Omole (2021) asserts that on such days, the atmosphere can be likened to that of a war zone, in which people are terrified to come out of their homes out of fear of what punishment that might be melted on them. So much of human resource and productivity in areas of business, education, commerce, trade and transportation has been affected by the sit-at-home order. Omole (2021) further reported that the group placed a ban on the Nigeria National anthem in schools across the south-eastern region, but has not been very effective as certain Eastern governors have fought to maintain law and order in their states by not making the movement a war against the Federal Government. Also, schools have been mishandled as students are lagging behind in the general curriculum obtainable in other states, as a result of not being able to go to school on Mondays. The decline in market trade and transportation is another worrisome aspect of this imposed order. The main market of Enugu, is considered to be one of the largest markets in West Africa, traders and commuters from all over the world flock in on a daily basis to carry out their businesses. Nwauwu (2021) states that with the sit-at-home, markets are not to open until Tuesday, and this is estimated to average losses of 25 billion naira and about the same sum in other eastern regions.

5. IPOB's Impact on the Nigerian Economy

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has had a significant negative impact on the Nigerian economy. The group's activities, including its sit-at-home orders and its violent attacks on security forces and civilians, have led to a decline in economic activity in the southeastern region of Nigeria. Morgen (2021) found that the South-eastern region of Nigeria loses over N10 billion each time it observes the sit-at-home order directed by IPOB. The report also found that the region's economy has been shrinking since 2017, when IPOB's activities began to intensify. In addition to the economic impact, IPOB's activities have also had a negative impact on the security situation in Nigeria. The group's attacks on security forces have led to an increase in violence in the southeastern region, and have also made it more difficult for the government to provide security and basic services to the region's residents. A report published by Sahara Reporters state that the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) Monday sit-at-home strategy has created fear and lack of security confidence in the mind of students in the Southeast region, the statement which reads: commercial activities are gradually resuming on Monday in some parts of the South-east region but most schoolchildren still prefer to stay at home despite the cancellation of the sit-at-home order (Sahara Reporters, 2021).

Okoye (2021) holds that the prevailing situation of the shutdown of the South-East every Monday has continued to inflict collateral damage on the economy of the South-East States. The street hawkers, who earn their daily livelihoods by hawking sachet beverages, vegetables, fruits and others-bear the brunt of the weekly shutdown of the South-East. Hence, it is evident that IPOB Monday sit-at-home order has continued to disrupt the commercial activities across the South-East States of Nigeria. The same report also maintained that since the commencement of the observation of the sit-at-home order on Mondays, a majority of Igbo people, whose survival depends on their daily earnings, had gone to bed on empty stomachs because they had no money with which to buy food. The implication of this is that; IPOB. Monday sit-at-home order has continued to inflicting suffering, hunger and poverty in the South-east region, as many people could no longer engage on their daily activities on sit at home days. In essence, economic activities are being questioned due to the IPOB Monday sit-at-home strategy. Ogbonnaya, Nwosu & Ogbodo (2021) maintained that the business owners and traders incur losses of every Monday sit-at-home at about #8 billion. The development which they said has robbed the zone of over #50 billion so far; adding that the loss in the private sector amounted to over 60 percent. Of this amount, the transport sector losses at least #3 billion any day there is a lockdown in the region. An average of one million people moves around, in and out of South East each day, at #3,000 per traveler, and that action has dug a big hole in the economy of the five states of the Southeast region.

6. Theoretical Framework

6.1 Systems Theory

Talcott Parsons is the proponent of the theory, and the fundamental proposition of the systems theory rests on the assumptions of Talcott Parsons and the input encompasses the totality of demands and pressures placed on a system by the environment that needs attentions (Akinboye & Ottoh, 2005). The theory states that every system is made up of sub-system that has component parts, and each component has a vital role to play for the better performance of the system as a whole. In essence, each subsystem; no matter how less important it seems to be; must not be left out because each part has its own unique role to play. Talcott Parsons argued that every social system must have the capacity to maintain itself against a hostile environment, which could be sometimes disastrous. In his view, socio-economic environment is not as unique or stable as other system theorists. Thus, every system is characterized by conflict of interests, ethnic crises, agitations and all forms of demands from the environment which place pressures on the system. Nevertheless, Parsons later maintained that every system must possess the ability to maintain a stable equilibrium irrespective of the disturbances from the environment. In view of this, the system's environment is not static neither stable based on varieties of problems such as insurgency, conflict; etc.

Based on this, irrespective of the challenges and changing situations that take place in the systems environment, it is expected of the system to always maintain itself by adjusting; adapting and also responding to these changing situations and problems in the system's environment, otherwise it will lead to total disintegration, collapse or systems' failure. In relation to this study, it is evident in its capability to enrich and update our knowledge on how IPOB sit-at-home strategies has affected the economy of the southeast regions of Nigeria. Since the theory serves as the best tool in analyzing or determine when a system is moving towards disintegration or failure. The inability of Nigeria's government to ultimately respond to the pressures and demands of IPOB has made the organization to employ different strategies towards actualizing its goals; the most recent among the strategies is the IPOB sit-at-home order which has become a quagmire that has continued posing serious security threats to the economic activities of the Southeastern Nigeria. The IPOB sit-at-home strategy has posed series of problems on the Southeast as a subsystem of Nigeria because the demands, and pressure from the organization could not be considered by the Nigerian Government and the inability of the system to handle this crisis has made it escalated beyond the Southeastern regions and if not properly tackled or considered, it will spread to other parts and consequently, lead to disintegration of the Southeast Region from other geo-political regions of Nigeria as a system. Therefore, the inability of Nigeria's government to respond to the pressure placed on it by the IPOB has not only affected her security; but economic activities.

7. Research Methodology

Ezeagu is one of the Local Government Areas in Enugu State with its headquarters in the town of Aguobu Owa and a landmark of 633km (244 sq/mls). The population of Ezeagu Local Government Area is estimated at 170,603 with the males' population of 84,466 and the females' population of 86,137 respectively (NPC, 2006) with a population projection of 244,900 (NPC, 2022). Ezeagu is located twenty kilometers south west of Enugu, bounded on the north by Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Anambra State and on the east and south by parts of Udi Local Government Area, and the west by Awka-North Local Government Area. The people are known for all types of businesses and agriculture. In this study, the sampled population was 870, with this population and the margin of error of 0.05 confidence level of 95% and with the recommended sample size of the study based on the total population of Ezeagu was 246 using the Research Advisors (2006). 246 questionnaires were administered to respondents in the study area, and were filled and returned. Chi square (X^2) statistical tool was used for the analysis at 0.05 level of significance as well as in-depth summary and code methods used for the analysis.

8. Analysis and Discussions

Respondent Responses on the Effects of IPOB sit-at-home on the Economy of Ezeagu L G A of Enugu State.

Responses	**Christians**	**Islam**	**ATR**	**Total**
Males	100	85	3	188
Females	30	20	8	58
Total	**130**	**105**	**11**	**246**

Source: *Field Survey, 2023.*

Contingency Table

Cells	O	E	O – E	$\sum(\boldsymbol{O}-\boldsymbol{E})^2$	(O – E^2)/E
1	100	99.3	0.7	0.49	0.00
2	85	80.2	4.8	23.04	0.29
3	3	8.4	-5.4	29.23	3.48
4	30	30.7	-0.7	0.49	0.02
5	20	24.8	-4.8	22.04	0.93
6	8	2.6	5.4	29.23	11.24
Total	215				∑15.96

Based on the statistical analysis, finding indicates that IPOB sit-at-home has significant effects on the economy of Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. This was seen from the calculated Chi-Square (X^2) value of 15.96 greater than the table or critical value of 5.991 at a degree of freedom of 2 and significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and alternate hypothesis (H1) accepted. This was also seen from previous studies that the social and commercial activities in the South East and beyond have continued to bear the brunt of the enforcement of the sit-at-home order declared by the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) to protest the trial of its leader by the Federal Government. Several attempts to cancel the order and deployment of security operatives have not deterred criminals from enforcing it. The Nigeria government has taken a number of steps to address the threat posed by IPOB, including banning the group and arresting its leaders. Onu (2021) asserts that these measures taken by the government has proved abortive and unsuccessful in stopping IPOB group's sit-at-home order. The continued sit-at-home order had posed a serious threat to the Nigerian economy and security. Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State is not exceptional as the IPOB's order is duly adhered to as people are unable to go about their normal daily activities due to the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) declaration of sit-at-home until their leader is released from prison. This declaration which took effect from August 9th 2021, south-eastern regions has been on lockdown every Monday from 6:00am to 6:00pm. However, institutions- both public and private have been shut down every Monday and the people remain indoors to register their concern over the fate of their leader and other agitators who languish in various security detentions. Okoye (2021) holds that the prevailing situation of the shutdown of the South-East every Monday has continued to inflict collateral damage on the economy of the South-East States. Similarly, Morgen (2021) found that the South-eastern region of Nigeria loses over N10 billion each time it observes the sit-at-home order. The report also found that the region's economy has been shrinking since 2017, when IPOB's sit-at-home order began to intensify.

In addition to the economic impact, IPOB's sit-at-home order have also had a negative impact on the security situation in Nigeria, as the group's attacks on security forces have led to an increase in violence in the south eastern region, and have made it more difficult for the government to provide security and basic services to the region's residents. Interview conducted with a business woman and a mother five children said 'some of us cannot eat without coming to the market'. This business woman who trade on provisions/foodstuff in the market said goods stays longer in her stores unsold because the sit-at-home order has forced them into doing business for five days a week, and lamented that she loses about 30 thousand naira in every sit at home day. A market leader at Iwolo Oghe Market, in Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State, said he usually takes bank loans to run his electronics business, but the last time he took a loan, he did not record enough sales to repay back. He added that businesses have collapsed as a result of the sit-at-home order, and that those whose businesses have collapsed may pick up arms one day to fend for themselves, as insecurity and crime rate will double, he predicted. In an interview with a businessman who deals in home appliances, electronics and gadgets devices and has stores in several parts of Enugu State, laments on how the sit-at-home order has plunged him and many other business people into a state of utter confusion and frustration. He stated that sales have drastically reduced as some of his customers have now turned to other vendors in other part of the states to transact business. The implications of this is that patronage has dropped, customers now move to safer zones in other regions to purchase goods for businesses. Not only that businesses are collapsing but more people both young and old have lost their lives to the crisis since the emergence of IPOB and statistics shows that more people are going to die considering the inhuman approach of the present administration to agitations.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) is a group in Nigeria aimed to restore the Republic of Biafra, a country which seceded from Nigeria prior to Civil War (1967-1970) and later rejoined after its defeat through the civil war. Biafra had existed as an Independent multi-ethnic group consisting of the Igbo, Ijaw, Efik and Ibibio peoples etc. which the Government fought hard to preserve the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and since 2021, IPOB and other separatist groups have been fighting a low-level guerilla conflict in southeastern Nigeria against the Nigerian government. However, it is evident from the findings that the IPOB sit-at-home order has posed a negative effect on the economy of the south-eastern zones particularly in areas of commercial activities, education, transportations, closure of Government and private institutions every Monday. In other to resolve crisis and prevent further damage to the country's economy and security, the Nigerian government should address those grievances that led to the formation of IPOB. Therefore, the study recommends that IPOB should suspend the sit-at-home order and embrace peaceful dialogue with the Federal Government to press down their demand for the release of their leader because this sit-at-home has not yielded any positive results, rather it has deeply eaten up the economy and affected the livelihood of the people which might lead to more crimes or even more loss of lives and properties. Also, the distribution of resources among the six (6) geo-political zones of Nigeria should be done through proper Federal Character principle as this will go a long way in reducing what the IPOB perceived as gross marginalization to the south-eastern regions.

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Part Two

Literary Studies

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A Critical Scrutiny of Cinematic Lighting Technique in Cultural works of Selected Yoruba Nollywood Films

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Abstract. It could be reiterated that, of all the components of mise-en-cadre, cinematographic lighting is one of the most important features but this component had received little attentions from most Nigerian film critics or scholars. In most cases, this element is only used to explain or buttress relevant points in film theory and discourse. However, in this study, attention will be devoted on the deployment of cinematic lights and the various techniques used in selected Nollywood films. In the creative deployment of the 3-point lighting technique in selected cultural works of Yoruba Nollywood films, the researcher employed a library study, descriptive analytical cum studio diagnostic approaches as the basic methods of data gathering. The observation research method is deployed as secondary source of information. While a structuralist hypothetical approach is equally employed as a theoretical framework. In this exploration, the paper reviews the concepts of cinematic lighting before zooming on to discuss the key light, fill light and backlight as components of the 3-point lighting system. Practical analysis and demonstration are thus carried out with concrete sample shots from selected Yoruba films. Finally, it is recommended that a 3-point lighting technique should be creatively utilised as innovative device through which a director and the light-designer could create impressive and wonderful pictures and thus improve on the quality of Yoruba films.

Keywords: 3-Point-Lighting, Cultural works, Nollywood, Yoruba films

1. Introduction

Lighting is basically meant for illumination. However, in videography/cinematography and creativity, lighting is more than illumination. Like the human eyes, it is with the aids of the lights that images could be captured through the lens of a camera and deployed for different dramatic purposes.
In this exploration, the study is divided into three segments of literature review, discussion, analysis and summary, conclusion and recommendation. An attempt will be made in this paper to review relevant literatures and bring in the related theoretical framework. Hence, library study, descriptive analytical cum studio diagnostic approaches and observation research methods will be deployed as means of data gathering while structuralist theory will serve as theoretical framework. Under the discussion and analysis segment, the subjects of the key light, fill light and backlight will be discussed. This will be followed by different analyses and demonstrations with appropriate samples on the manifestations of the key light, the fill lights and the backlight on Yoruba films. Finally, the researcher will summarise and make his conclusion/submission and recommendation.

2. Theoretical Framework

It has been revealed above that, library study and studio diagnosis approaches are used as the basic methods of data gathering while observation is deployed as secondary source of information and that, a structuralist approach is employed as a theoretical framework. In this section of the literature review attempt will be made to define and explain how each of each of the research methods and theoretical framework is employed in this research work.

3. Library Study

In deploying a library research method, which Elmer E. Resmuson library (2020) believes involves the step-by-step process used to gather information in order to write a paper, create a presentation, or complete a project, efforts are made to identify and locate relevant books, journal articles and films that provide required information, analyzing the films before developing and discussing relevant data and ideas from the selected films. In using this research method, the researcher employs meticulous watching of the selected films and engages in systematic analysis that incorporates elements of descriptive analytical and studio diagnostic approaches.

3.1 Descriptive Analytical/ Studio Diagnostic Approaches

According to Rajeck (2017), "Descriptive analytics exists to highlight the features and characteristics of a data set by using a summary. It is typically used to convert a large amount data into a small amount of information which is easier to understand." Furthermore, as Rajeck (2017) states on his overview on diagnostic analytics, the paper engages in diagnostic analytics discusses on what is and examines why it is, using investigative techniques to discover a causal relationship between two or more data sets. That is to diagnose relevant data and determine the factors and the relationship that exist between two or more variables.

From the foregoing, studio diagnostic approach could be described as an enquiry that uses studio equipment to examine different relationships that exist between two or more components/data sets in cinematic sequences/shots or filmic system. In this case, the current research uses diagnostic techniques in identifying or analyzing relevant cinematic components and determines the various relationships that exist between two or more variables of the selected cinematic system.

3.2 Observation and Structuralism.

The observation research method is deployed to complement both the descriptive analytical method and the studio diagnostic approach which are the basic research methods. The goal of the study in using this method is to critically observe in the studio, the various Yoruba films selected for this research exercise in order to gather reliable insights on the working system of each film selected for this research and to capture required information/data on the features of the selected shots.

According to Nasrullah Mambrol (2016):
Structuralists believe that the underlying structures which organize rules and units into meaningful systems are generated by the human mind itself and not by sense perception. …. A structure can be defined as any conceptual system that has three properties: "wholeness" (the system should function as a whole), "transformation" (system should not be static), and "self-regulation (the basic structure should not be changed).

In deploying structuralist approach as a theoretical framework in this study attempt is made to diagnose and analyse the components of a 3 point lighting technique and its functionalities as a section of the cinematic lighting system. Within this context, this essay recognises the key light as the lighting instruments that are within the same directional flow as the key camera. For instance, in a ghost light scenario were all the lightings are rigged and focus as back lighting, the key light are still the dimmed determinant lighting that is substantially dimmed sometime to almost zero percent are the key lights because it is based on this lighting and the increased lighting of the lightings at the back of the scenarios that the camera is manipulated to achieve the ghost effects.

3D LIGHTING.

The Cinematic lighting technique

The lighting technique could be conceived in this study:
...as any system/source of illumination that permits the camera to capture the action on set/location or permits audience to see the various movement/images on screen, draws attention to gesture, articulates textures and when manipulated with shadow conceals important detail to create suspense. (Ola-Koyi, 2017)

In carrying out a detail discussion on a 3-point lighting system and relating it to other features of cinematic lighting, the study engages in critical examination/diagnosis of the lighting system and its manipulation in the selected Yoruba movies.

According to Adorama (2018), proper lighting techniques on screen, "...are essential in creating stylized and natural-looking film scenes that look much closer to real life as digital sensors and film don't react as well to light as our eyes do." Detisch (2020) on his part submits that, "Every cinematographer is an artist who makes creative decisions on how to guide the viewer's eye within the frame using lighting equipment." While in establishing the process on how a motion camera captures images with the aids of light, Branston and Stafford (2006: 400) assert that:

Light is captured by the camera via the lens and passes through the aperture to reach the film or video light sensor. The lens and aperture function just like your eye focusing on the subject controlling the amount of light.

Having looked at how the camera captured and record images with the aids of light, there is a need to examine in detail the various light-set-ups required for a cinematic production or videographic recording.

The Analysis:

As observed above in deploying structuralist approach in the analysis of a point lighting technique in Yoruba films, the study identifies and discusses the underlying lighting structures in selected shots from narrative films, diagnoses various lighting setups/organizations, considers the relevant units of frames in line with the lighting rules and decodes the viewer's perception or how the human mind generate meanings or interprets the various sequences of frames in selected films.

The concept of a 3 point lighting technique (the three point lighting system) is the first to come to mind if one is to examine or consider the various aspects of cinematic lights sources,. This 3 point lighting system is a standard requirement in motion picture production and in film criticism. In film study, it is also required to understand better other aspects of the cinematography lighting techniques. Fundamentally, this 3-point lighting system has to do with creative manipulation of "the key-light", "the fill-light" and "the backlight".

According to Detisch (2020):

The most basic lighting in film is the three-point lighting. Lighting from three directions shapes your subject and sets them apart from their background. To achieve this, your film lighting equipment needs to face your subject from three directions: front, back and side (generally).

From the available documents on this 3-point lighting, one could reiterate that the manipulation which occurs in "...the lighting of the scene will start from the assumption that any subject normally requires two light sources: a key light and a fill light." (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004) However, in a standard Hollywood production the backlight is always added to complete the trinity of the lighting system. At this point, there is a need to look at the nature of (a key light, a fill light and a back light) and the roles of each of these three types of light required in a 3-point lighting system.

3.3 Key, Fill and Back light

A key light is a powerful light that often serves as a primary source in lighting in filming a scene. It is usually very bright, providing the dominant illumination and casting the strongest shadows behind a subject. In reaffirming this fact, Adorama (2018) declares that:

The key light is also known as the main light of a scene or subject. This means it's normally the strongest light in each scene or photo. Even if your lighting crew is going for a complicated multi-light setup, the key light is usually the first to be set up.

The key light is the most directional light and it often diagonally hung/positioned in the front / above the subject. It usually corresponds to the motivational lighting source on set. Using Amelie *(2001) as point of reference,* Detisch (2020) describes the key light thus:

The key light is the light that registers most prominently in your frame. So, when you look at the image of *Amelie* above, you'll see that the screen-right portion of her face is brightest. That's the key light.

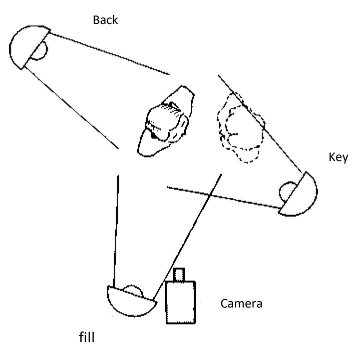
According to school of thought thinks key light is the main light on a subject and it is usually placed at a 45 degree angle to the camera-subject axis. While using a high key lighting method, it is on record that the key light provides all or most of the light in the scene. In a low key lighting situation, the key light provides much less of the total illumination.

A fill light on the other hands, comes from less intense lamp placed at complementary angles. It is usually placed in a position near the camera. As the name connotes, it "fills in," and as a less intense illumination, it softens or eliminates shadows cast by the key light. Another school of thought believes that a fill light is an auxiliary light, usually from the side of the subject that can soften shadows and

illuminate areas not covered by the key light. According to Adorama (2018):
It is noticeably less intense and placed in the opposite direction of the key light, so you can add more dimension to your scene."
Because the aim of fill lighting is to eliminate shadows, it's advisable to place it a little further and/or diffuse it with a reflector (placed around 3/4 opposite to the key light) to create softer light that spreads out evenly. Many scenes do well with just the key and fill studio lighting as they are enough to add noticeable depth and dimension to any object.

A back light is the main source of light placed behind the subject. When used without the key light or the fill light it results in a silhouette. But when either the key or the fill light is used it gives partial silhouette of the subject on screen. In most cases, it is placed higher than and directed towards the camera to separate the subject from the background. Adorama (2018) is of the view that: "Backlighting is used to create a three-dimensional scene, which is why it is also the last to be added in a three-point lighting setup." He equally reiterates that backlighting is usually placed "...a little higher from behind so as to separate your subject from the background." The backlight could also been diffused to reduce the intensity and to cover a wider area of the subject. Although a backlight is located at the back and above the figure and deployed to separate the subject from the background, yet it could be used to create depth in a given shot. In Detisch's (2020) words, "The back light gives an edge light to the rear portion of your subject. Often, the backlight shoots down from a higher angle."

As the name suggests, backlight comes from behind the subject filmed. From all indications, it can be positioned at any angles: high above the figure in a frame, at either sides or at both sides of the frame, pointing straight at the camera, or placed below the frame. As established, when used with no other sources of light, backlighting tends to create silhouettes, as in 02. But when placed at the left back side of the images in this frame it tends to create partial silhouette as in 16. The noonday sunlight could also be employed to serve as backlight as captured in 09 and in 17, where in each of these frames the image is established with noonday sunlight that helps to separate the image for instance, in 09 from the bushy background, while in 17 it helps to sculpt out the actress from her background in the shot.



01. The basic lighting techniques of Hollywood cinema or a Three-point lighting system ,(Bordwell and Thompson 2004:194)

02. In this shot taken from *Ite Oba*, the sunlight serves as backlighting which tends to create silhouettes as it is used with no other sources of light.

03. In this shot, the noonday light is used to establish the fact that the action in one of the staircases of the Onijogbo's palace occurs in daytime.

In demonstrating and summarising the basic arrangement of a three - point lighting system, Bordwell and Thompson (2004: 194) explicate thus:

Classical Hollywood filmmaking developed the custom of using at least three light sources per shot: key light, fill light, and backlight. .....The key will usually be closer to the figure or brighter than the fill. Typically, each major character in a scene will have his or her own key, fill, and backlight. If another actor is added [as in the dotted figure in... 01], the key light for one can be altered slightly to form the backlight for the other and vice versa, with a fill light on either side of the camera.

Thus Bordwell and Thompson identified the movement and fluidity of lighting which is a basic functional characteristic of lighting in all media.

4. **The Manifestations on this Study**.

It could be established that the key lighting could come on the figure in a frame from any angle of the shot. For instance in *Saworoide* (02), one could see how the sun light serving as the key light of a frame comes from the back on the figures resulting in silhouette picture. In this frame, the key light is repositioned from its customary spot (of the left hand side of the camera) to come on the figures from the back. This shooting arrangement in which the characters are placed before the sun thus attests to the fact that the key light could be a backlight for the screen images.

In 03, one could see how the key light is repositioned to come on the characters from the right side of the frame, while in 04, the key light comes from the left side of the frame. From these two samples, it could be stated that the key light stationed in either the right or the left side of the frame is regarded as a *cross-lighting*.

04. In *Saworoide* film, the director used this top lighting technique to depict the effect of the horror of cold blood murder on an innocent boy had just witness the evil of human action .

05. A top lighting technique is used in this shot to glorify the aesthetic structure of the drum "Saworoide" from where the title of the film is derived.

06. The under-lighting technique is used to reflect the synchronization of both the false lighting and the authentic lighting.

The key light in 05 is from top right side of the frame resulting in *top lighting*, while the frame in 06 where the key light comes from down-left side of the frame could be regarded a sample of *under-lighting*.

Based on these samples, it could be stated that the key light in any given frame could come on the image from different angles. As one could see above, the key light could equally be deployed for different dramatic, filmic or aesthetic purposes on screen.

Having considered the key light and the various ways in which it had been invoked in Yoruba films, efforts will now be shifted on the examination of films where only the key and the fill light techniques are used. A sample shot where this technique is used could be found in the film *Aja Meji* (07). In this frame, a strong key light from offscreen left throws a shadow on the curtain at the right. The dim fill light from the right side of the frame inconspicuously highlights the person standing and throws a cast shadow of the standing figure on the blue wall behind the settee, while revealing a diffused face of the actor sitting on the settee.

In examining another frame from *Baba Jayejaye-2* (08) a key light from offscreen left reveals the appearances of the two characters in the frame while casting their shadows on the wall and the door respectively. The fill light from offscreen right on the other hand highlights the frontage of the bar.

07. A strong key light from offscreen left throws a shadow on the curtain at the right. The dim fill light from the right side of the frame inconspicuously throws another cast shadow of the standing figure on the blue wall behind the settee

08. A key light from offscreen left reveals the appearances of the two characters in the frame while casting their shadows on the wall and the door respectively, while the fill light from the offscreen right highlights the frontage of the bar

09. In this shot from *Kolo Kolo* the image is established with noonday sunlight...

According to Bordwell and Thompson (2004:195):
...three-point lighting system demands that the lamps be rearranged virtually every time the camera shifts to a new framing of the scene. In spite of the great cost involved, most Hollywood films will have a different lighting arrangement for each camera position. Such variations in the light sources do not conform to reality, but they do enable filmmakers to create clear compositions for each shot.

10. Due to the fact that the lighting design is fixed throughout the whole scene, the lighting arrangement is just used for illumination, hence, one could not say this is a good example a shot with variations of the light sources, even though there are different shifts in the positions of the camera during the subsequent shots on this scene.

11. In this shot, the key is from offscreen left and the fill light from the offscreen right and there is no backlighting.

They equally feel that when the actors move, the director must decide whether to alter the lighting system. By overlapping different key lights, the filmmaker can maintain a constant intensity as actors move around the set. Although in Nigerian experience, constant shift in lighting may not be particularly possible in all scenes. However it is very advantageous in the sense that, it will prevent distracting shadows and highlights from moving across other actors. From all indications, one could say with some levels of certainty that the tradition or the practice of rearranging the lighting setup in order to keep up with shifting camera positions and refocusing has not taken a deep root in Nollywood film shooting experience for so many reasons. Firstly, majority of director will prefer working with the noon sunlight (09) because it is cheaper and easy to use. Secondly, some of them lack the expertise or technical knowhow. Hence, one could see that, in scenes with presumed multiple lighting demands, one could hardly identify which of the lights used is the key light, the fill light or the back light on these frames.

Samples of some shots with challenging lighting system could be found in 07, 10 and 11. In 07, it could be identified that a two point lighting system of *key* and *fill* lights is used but in this frame, one could hardly point out which of the two lights (the key or the fill) that is throwing any of the cast shadows at the back of the standing figure in this sitting room.

Although one could hardly point out, the specific object/cast to which the light set up is meant for, but one could identify the dichotomy in the key and the fill lighting design in this shot (10) taken from the film: *Alase*. To be specific in 10, one could say the key light is from (offscreen) top left side of the frame while the fill light is from the right side of the frame. From what one can see in this narrative, the lighting design is not adjustable but fixed and static throughout a whole scene. The impression one gets from this is that the lighting arrangement is meant just for general illumination with no special cast as the main focus towards which the lighting setup is directed. Consequently, one could say that, this shot from the film: *Alase* is an example of a frame with unchangeable light sources, thus there is no consideration of changing the key and the fill lights for different camera positions.

In the same way, one could identify another fixed lighting setup with no consideration for different camera positions in 11. In this frame, the setup is established without a back light but used a two point lighting set up of the key and fill lightings. From all indications, the key light is from (off-screen) left, while the fill light from the right. Again, one could hardly point out which of the cast on set the light set up is directed to. Aside from the identified usages of the key and the fill lights, it could be stated that the fill light could equally be used to eliminate cast shadows, create soft lighting environment or reveal diffused lighting system on screen or deploy in generating suspense in a narrative, especially in the horror movies.

With a closer examination of the film: *October 1*, which Ola-Koyi (2018) described as a "...film that tells the story of the night", one would appreciate better the various usages of backlight. For instance, in *October 1* (12), taken from the film *October 1*, the ray of the backlight which comes from the upper left side of this frame, highlights the neck and the right shoulder of the human image from the back.

12. The backlight which is used basically to separate this image in *October 1* from his background could be identified with the ray of the light which comes from the upper left side of this frame, that highlights the neck and the right shoulder of the human image from the back.

13. The backlight invoked in this frame helps in separating the simultaneous actions that are occurring at different levels of foreground and background in this frame.

In 13 which is another shot from the same film, the lighting set up of the shot plays a significant impact on actions in the frame. First on this shot, the backlight deployed helps in revealing two different acting arenas of - the foreground and the background in the frame and the concurrent actions that are going on at both levels. Moreover, the ray of the noon light behind the figure in 16 helps to carve out the image from his background. In each of these cases in 15 and 16 frames, the noonday light used in each frame helps in establishing the distance between each image and the walls or adjacent buildings in the street behind this image. Similarly in 14 the ray of backlighting placed at the left side of the frame helps is sculpting out the image of a smiling girl from her background. Again it highlights the space that exists between the girl's neck and the part of her headgear that falls on her back.

In 17, one could see that the noonday light is again employed in separating the two women by the door from their background which is the outside of their house. Here the sun light outside the house serves as the backlighting, highlighting the view outside the door while sculpting out the images of these two actresses standing by the door and presenting their images in partial silhouettes.

In looking at the use of this back lighting technique from another angle, one could see in this particular frame in 17 that backlight is capable of producing an unobtrusively illuminated contour as revealed with the two figures in this frame. From this frame in 18, this background lighting technique used with other lighting sources results in the projection of an image behind the lead person in a silhouette structure on screen. In this frame, one could see that, the outcome of the image so produced silhouette on screen is a result of the placement of figures within the lighting arrangement in this frame.

5. Conclusion

In this study efforts had been made to review relevant literatures and related frameworks Specifically on the key lighting, it is established that key light can serve many purpose in a cinematic narrative and lighting system. That, when the key light is stationed at different points of the frame, it could result into a top lighting, an under-lighting or a cross-lighting, depending on the needs and the choices of the director of a film project. In addition the previously stated functions, the key light could be deployed in creating harsh shadows, when used in the hard lighting set up/technique. It could also be utilized in drawing attention of the audience to the main object/subject in a sequence or pointing to an area of the frame/scene. As previously demonstrated above, it could be deployed in highlighting the contours of an image or subject. Again, when a key light is deployed as a back light without combining it with the fill light, it results in showing on screen a strong silhouette of the image. The fill light as employed in a shooting process helps to eliminate cast shadows, create soft lighting environment, reduce intensity of the key light or reveal diffused lighting system on screen. In addition to these functions, fill lighting could also be deployed with other techniques when creating directional lighting/side-lighting. It could be utilised in generating horrendous images or in creating other dramatic effect/suspense, or deployed to replicate subtle lighting coming from outside of a set/room. In the case of backlighting technique, attempt had been made to demonstrate in detail how backlight could be placed at any angle of the frame, deployed in separating or carving out the image from its background, revealed its capability of highlighting illuminated contour of images or used in creating silhouette or partial silhouette of any given image on screen, and helped in establishing the distance between two images in a frame.

In conclusion, one could say, having demonstrated with concrete sample of shots/frames from Yoruba and indeed Nigerian films, some directors/light designers of Yoruba films especially those whose works are cited in this study have improved greatly in the creative deployment of a 3 point lighting technique in their productions. Therefore, it could be recommended that cinematic lighting system on Yoruba film screens should not be seen or deployed only as a means of generating or creating mire illumination during the shooting of a production. But, rather, the lighting system (especially a 3 point lighting technique) should be creatively utilised as innovative device through which a director and the light-designer could create impressive and remarkable pictures and improve on the quality of Yoruba films.

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A Systemic Functional Analysis of the Nominal Group in Selected Eco-Critical Poems of Ebi Yeibo and G'ebinyo Ogbowei

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Abstract. This paper examines the Nominal Group in the ecopoetry of Ebi Yeibo and G'ebinyo Ogbowei. Both poets are of the Niger Delta literary tradition of protest literature. This literature is a reaction to the brazen exploitation of petroleum resources in the Niger Delta without compensation and environmental impact assessment by the Nigerian government and the international oil companies. Three representative poems are selected from different collections of the two poets. They are analysed using Systemic Functional Grammar as theoretical framework. The systemic functional analysis of the Nominal Group brings out the eco-critical features of the poems. An analysis of the MHQ structures throws up the vexed issue of environmental injustice and brings to the fore the struggle of the Niger Delta people for resource control.

Keywords: Niger Delta, Hydrocarbon, Environmental Injustice, Resource Control, Ecocriticism

1. Introduction

The discovery of oil in Oloibiri in 1956 sowed the seeds of what would later be a paradigm shift in Nigeria's political economy. Before oil became the cash cow of the Nigerian economy, section 140 of the 1963 Republican Constitution provided for 50% derivation (Federal Ministry of Information, 1963). This led to the economic empowerment of the regions, with groundnut pyramids, tin and hides and skin in the North; cocoa and allied industries in the West; and palm oil and coal in the Eastern Region. At this point in her economic history, Nigeria was on the path of development.
According to Ojarikre (2015) the military adventure into politics in 1966 halted this process and since then there has been a relentless slide towards economic doom. The non-return to "true federalism" in 1979 after the military interregnum fuelled this slide. Successive governments (both military and civilian) abandoned the economic traditions of the past and concentrated on exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons without consideration for environmental impact assessment. This has led to a huge environmental disaster in the Niger Delta. The groundswell of discontent soon snowballed into open protests, defiance, vandalization of oil installations, hostage taking and militancy. It was the intellectual arm of the struggle for the economic liberation of the Niger Delta that threw up a corpus of literature called Niger Delta eco-critical literature.

This paper therefore aims to explore how the Nominal Group is used to expose the situation in the Niger Delta, using Systemic Functional Grammar as theoretical framework. This is with a view to identifying the features that reflect the Niger Delta predicament and the ideology of resource control.

2. Ecocriticism

Glotfelty and Fromm (1996) define ecocriticism as "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment." Howarth (1996) looks at the origin and morphology of ecocriticism. "Eco" and "Critic" both derive from Greek "oikos" and "kritis", which together mean "house judge." Ecocritic could therefore mean a person who judges the merits and faults of writings that depict the effects of culture upon nature. Buell (2005) observes that ecocritical studies have also been enhanced by the formation of ASLE (Association for the Study of Literature and Environment) which has grown from a "localized North American ferment into a thousand-member organization with chapters worldwide from the UK to Japan and Korea to Australia and New Zealand (Buell 2005, p.5)."

Guattari (2000) warns that we are at the brink of ecocide because of the way we have challenged the earth; while Williams (2011) contrasts the country and the city as it relates to English culture and civilization. William Howarth (1998) considers the displacement and deprivation of rural people by modernization as oppressive and a threat to the environment. Ziser (2011) draws attention to the increasing use of fossil fuel and the impending danger to the environment if environment friendly alternatives are not sought. Watts (2014) examines the devastating effects of oil exploration and exploitation; while McColley (2001) considers the issues in Milton's *Paradise Lost* and posits that they are still present in environmental discourse. Siddall (2009) looks at landscape and literature by analyzing extracts that cut across English literary tradition in the works of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Hopkins, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley and others.

Tanure Ojaide in his foreword to Okuyade (2013) says that ecocriticism has to do with ecologically sensitive creative writing and criticism. He observes the health hazards from methane and other chemicals which contaminate the air, land and water. Gabriel Okara in " The Call of the River Nun" and J. P. Clark in " Night Rain," among other such works, present the difficult Niger Delta land and seascape. A deeper level of ecological awareness emerged with Tanure Ojaide's *Labyrinths of the Delta* and Niyi Osundare's *The Eye of the Earth(1986).* Ojaide laments the destruction of the ecosystem in the Niger Delta; while Osundare bemoans the destruction of virgin forests from capitalist encroachment.

Inyang and Orhero (2020) investigate how Saro-Wiwa is employed as a motif in the subject matters of ecological devastation, political persecution, Niger Delta activism and minority politics. Abba and Onyemachi (2020) go beyond highlighting the endangered Niger Delta environment to focusing on eco-alienation which they refer to as the sense of separation between people and nature. Awhefeada (2021) examines the enterprise of a new wave of poets who have written in pidgin and locates them within the Niger Delta literary tradition.

3. Methodology

Data for this study are drawn from the eco-critical poems of Ebi Yeibo and G'ebinyo Ogbowei. Three poems are selected from the collections of each poet as indicated.

Ebi Yeibo: *The Forbidden Tongue*
"No Fireflies Here"
"Rage of a River
Ebi Yeibo: *Shadows of the Setting Sun*
(c) "Oil War"
G'ebinyo Ogbowei: *Song of a Dying River*
"These Starving Streets"
4. G'ebinyo Ogbowei: *Marsh Boy and Other Poems*
(b) "The Tyranny of Greed"
(c) "Marsh Boy"

These poems have been selected based on their eco-critical scope and depth.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Systemic Functional Grammar is used for data analysis. This grammar grew out of the works of Firth in the 30s, 40s, and 50s. Halliday captured the model in his article, "Categories of the Theory of Grammar." It Started as Scale and Category Grammar. As the grammar developed, emphasis moved to meaning and the social functions of language. Lamidi (2000) outlines the reasons why this grammar is used:

Systemic grammar emphasises meaning and communication.
In systemic grammar, emphasis is on acceptability rather than grammaticality.
It is context based and emphasises the sociological aspects of language.
M.T. Lamidi observes that at the level of delicacy, the NMG has the MHQ structure. M is modifier; H is head; while Q is qualifier. Within the sentence, SPCA is the usual form where S is subject, P predicator, C complement, and A adjunct. Bloor and Bloor (1995) tell us that the Nominal Group could be a single word (Head Noun) as in "Electricity"; Modifier and Head as in "most homes"; and Modifier, Modifier Qualifier as in an underground cable. These are contained in the following sentence:
Electricity is supplied to most homes through an underground cable.
Adejare and Adejare (1996) identify the possible patterns under the MHQ structure.

MHQ	=	(M)	H	(Q)
		famous	Ojo	of Ibadan
HQ	=	M	H	Q
		---	Ojo	of Ibadan
MH	=	M	H	Q
		famous	Ojo	---
H	=	M	H	Q
		----	Ojo	---

The patterns show that M and Q are optional elements, while H is obligatory. It is the Nominal Group structure that will be use for data analysis. The relevant structures are italicized and analysed.

4. Data Analysis

The selected poems are analysed within the Nominal Group against the background of the theoretical approach. The data are discussed and interpreted from their ideological point of view.

Text 1(Ebi Yeibo's Poems)

Text 1 Extract 1(No Fireflies Here)

Stanza 1

Fireflies fondle *secret parts*
H M H
Of *the amorous night*
Q
In *a carnival of colours*
M H Q

"Secret parts of the amorous night" shows the beauty, colour, calm and love that existed in the environment. "Carnival of colours" is a nominal group embedded in an adverbial, telling us about the luxuriance and splendour of the environment. The determiner 'the' and the adjective, 'amorous', modify the head noun, night. "Carnival" is premodified by the indefinite article "a" and postmodified by "of colours" in the MHQ structure.

Stanza 2

But without warning
Without *a whiff of warning*
M H Q
Our night is betrothed
To *a carnival of cannibals*
M H Q

The MHQ structure, 'a whiff of warning' shows suddenness. There is a fondness and attachment to the night, 'our night'. The peace of a dear night suddenly disappears. There is a sad movement from 'a carnival of colours' to 'a carnival of cannibals' with the arrival of the international oil companies. The MHQ structure is retained here.

Stanza 3

Who come to you
Garlanded as *a connoisseur*

The nominal group, 'a connoisseur' shows deadly deception and false appearances. It has the MH structure. The reference is to the cannibals. They pretend to be innocuous but are actually deadly.

Stanza 4

O *the mamba* comes to you
M H
With *open fangs*
M Q
Claims it has shed its venom

The MH structure in ' the mamba' and 'open fangs' shows how deadly the situation is. The idea of deceit is continued here. The mamba tells a lie that it has shed its venom, but this is not true. The venom is still there and ready to destroy.

Stanza 5

This mamba comes to you
M H
With *innocuous fangs*
M H
This mamba' and 'innocuous fangs' continue the pretext of harmlessness. The fangs are not innocuous, they are actually venomous.

Stanza 6

It slithers up the throne
In *a ceremony of innocence*
M H Q
Signalling *the new moon.*
M M Q

The nominal groups 'the throne' and 'ceremony of innocence', give the idea of the mamba now in control of affairs, pretending innocence. The mamba has used its wiles to get to the centre stage and call the shots.

Stanza 7

Then *thunder* strikes

H
Without warning, without
A whiff of *warning*
M H Q
Burying *living souls*
M H
In *a mountain* of *murk*
M H Q

The nominal groups, 'thunder' and "a mountain of murk" show the extent of damage and wreckage.

Stanza 8

The innocuous mamba
M M H
Has spit [sic] into *our eyes*
M H

"The innocuous mamba" continues the idea of pretext. The sarcastically harmless mamba has spat into their eyes. The use of 'innocuous' as a modifier smacks of pretence. In spite of the posturing, the oil companies are as poisonous as the mamba.

Stanza 9

Fireflies wilfully fly away
H

'Fireflies' as a nominal group here shows the disappearing animal life resulting from the activities of the oil companies.

Ebi Yeibo's poem laments the destruction of animal life, using the firefly as a symbol

Text 1 Extract 2

(Rage of a River)

Stanza 1

Dwellers of the delta
H Q
Wax wild on *the wings of wreckage.*
M H Q

The HQ structure, 'Dwellers of the delta' as a nominal group locates the people, while 'wings of wreckage' gives an idea of the despoliation of the Delta.

Stanza 2

Who wouldn't *whose paradise*
M H
Becomes *a prostitute's rag*
M M H

The nominal groups 'whose paradise' and 'prostitute's rag' further the idea of despoliation and justifies why the people are wild with rage. The natural resource (endowment) of the Niger Delta, like the body of a prostitute is for all comers. The metaphor of prostitute's rag echoes the proverbial shrivelled and milked cow. The nominal group 'paradise' suggests a prostitute's beautiful body, which together with the rag suggests the rape and pillage of the Niger Delta.

Stanza 3

Whose brooks brim.
M H
With *bilious black blood*
M M H

The head noun 'blood' is pre-modified by "bilious and black". The anger of this deprived people flows and boils over like a raging river.

Stanza 4

Whose dreams host *rabid jiggers?*
M H M H

The nominal group 'rabid jiggers' conjures up the picture of a parasite that slowly eats the toes of man. The dreams of the people are eaten up.

Stanza 5

But who wouldn't *whose nerves*
M H
Are nailed to *anaemic nights*
M H

Even the night is anaemic. The people are lifeless as expressed in the MH nominal group, 'anaemic nights'.

Stanza 6

Whose *savoury swamps*
M H
Are *cauldrons* of *chemicals*
H Q

The modifier "savoury" is a reference to the saline sea. The HQ structure, "cauldrons of chemicals", depicts chemical waste products poured into the sea. It is double tragedy for the people as a naturally salty sea is polluted by chemical effluents.

Stanza 7

Whose patrician pockets
M M H
Hoist *harmattan's flagM H*

The nominal group in the structure expresses the idea of a people supposedly rich but paradoxically poor.

Stanza 8

Whose hallowed virginity
M M H
Is stolen *the wrong way?*
M M H

The nominal group reflects a virgin territory that is desecrated, raped and pillaged:

Stanza 9

O the slaughter of white eagles
M H Q
Leaves the *animal kingdom*
M M H
In sackcloth
H

The group, 'white eagles' shows something valuable, but unfortunately, it has been destroyed. This leads to poverty and regret.

Stanza 10

When *a hawk* swoops on chicks
M H
The mother goes wild.

The nominal groups here are symbolic. The nominal group, 'a hawk' denotes a predator, the 'chick' is the victim,' 'The mother' is a protester. In the Niger Delta, the international oil companies are 'hawks', the people are 'chicks', while activists are 'The mother' of the chicks. The Niger-Delta struggle is thus justified.

Ebi Yeibo uses the Nominal Group to describe the rape and pillage of the Niger Delta.

Text 1 Extract 3 (Oil War)

Stanza 1

As a prologue to *the poaching*
M H
They hold us captive
On *these blackened phosphorus beaches:*
M M M H
The dog glued to the home
Never gets pregnant.

The beaches where the people are held are dirty and polluted with chemicals. The modifiers of the head noun, "these", 'blackened' and 'phosphorus' explain this.

Stanza 2

Above, as the *setting sun*
M M H
Peeps through the *translucent haze*
M M H
With *befuddled eyes*
M H
They float on *an infinite pageantry*
M M H
Of *swollen colours, distended* bellies
Q M H
Even in *the chemical-clogged creeks,*
M M H
Careened, like River Forcados in high tide.

The oil company staff in contrast with the indigenes engage in an 'infinite pageantry'. They celebrate and enjoy themselves. In spite of the polluted rivers and environment, they have developed pot bellies. The modifiers are 'infinite', 'distended' and 'chemical-clogged'. They show that while the indigenes are underfed, the workers are overfed and their environment (the indigenes') is polluted.

Stanza 3

While we, *drifting clay*
M H
In a tattered waist-cloth fit for *a hag*
M M H
Scramble for *a splintered sunlight*
M M H
Floating languidly on *the rusty river,*
M M H
Like *meaningless rubble.*
M H

This stanza uses nominal groups like 'drifting clay', 'tattered waist cloth' 'splintered sunlight', 'rusty river' to capture the squalid condition of the indigenes of the oil producing areas.

Stanza 4

O only *cast-iron libertines*
M H
Carous[sic] with damsels
In *a cursed cavern*
M M H
Or *blackened beach*
M H
Repositories of *poisonous products*
M H
Of *rusty pristine pipes and septic storms*
M M H M H
Roaming through *the womb of the creeks*
M H Q
Sanctioned by *some bloodless god.*
M M H

The company staff being die-hard "libertines" engage in revelry and sexual pleasures with ladies in spite of the murky environment. This is expressed in nominal groups like 'cast-iron libertines', 'cursed cavern', and 'blackened beach'.

In this poem, Ebi Yeibo contrasts the lifestyles of the oil company executives with those of the indigenes of oil producing communities.

Text 2 (G'ebinyo Ogbowei's Poems)
Text 2 Extract 1 (These Starving Streets)

Stanza 1

walking, down *these starving streets*
M M H
you hear the rumble of *angry stomachs*
M H
too proud to beg for bread

The nominal groups here depict the degree of poverty in the land. The people are hungry in the midst of abundance. Even the streets are hungry as reflected in the MMH structure. The intensity of hunger is reflected in the modifier, 'starving'. The MH structure in "angry stomachs", describes the anger of the people, reminding one of the saying that "A hungry man is an angry man."

Stanza II

walking down *these starving streets*
M M H
you hear *the harrowing howls of harried hearts.*
M M H Q

There is the repetition of the nominal group, "these starving streets". We have an MMHQ nominal group structure, continuing the expression of the people's anger.

Stanza III

walking down *these starving streets*
M M H
you/hear *the unsettling screams of street urchins*
M M H Q
abandoned *their headless bodies*
M M H
feast for flies and *scavenging dogs*
M H
extol police patrols prowling city streets
M H M H

keep prowlers from shrine and body parts markets.

The nominal group, "the unsettling screams of street urchins" captures poor, hungry and homeless youths of the Niger Delta. The use of "their headless bodies" and "police patrols" is suggestive of how the Nominal Group is used to reflect the oppressive hands of law enforcement agents.

Stanza IV

walking down *these starving streets*
M M H
you feel *the smouldering of the slum mum*
M H Q
her shoeless shirtless lad denied
M M M H
are clubbed out of the coalition
are mowed down by *a belching machine…..*
M M H

In this stanza, the issues intensify. The nominal group "the smouldering of the slum mum" reminds us of the women of the Niger Delta and how they suffer by the fireside, using firewood to cook and smoke fishes. Her children are "shoeless" and "shirtless" as expressed in the nominal group. In spite of their already poor and neglected situation, they are brought down by the guns of security agents.

Text 2 Extract 2 (*The Tyranny of Greed)*

Stanza I

This is *the tyranny of greed*
M M Q
This seductive violence
M M H
That snares *your scoffing soul*
M M H
that takes captive *your mooning mania*

M M H
takes it on *a tour of killing fields*
M H Q
deep in the *despoiled delta*
M M H

The nominal groups here give a picture of the killings and degradation of the Niger Delta. The title "Tyranny of Greed" describes how the Nigerian state is motivated by greed to keep a tyrannical hold on the Niger Delta as a way of ensuring unimpeded access to oil. The nominal group "seductive violence" hints at the wily ways of government. The tactic is to apply violence in a subtle manner by using the carrot and stick approach. The consequence is that the area is turned into a "killing field" and devastated.

Stanza II

this is the *tyranny of greed*
M H Q
this smash-and-grab relationship
M M H
that does nothing but grab and hide
that strips us of dignity and humanity

Here, "smash and grab" in the MMH structure describes the kind of relationship that exists between government and the people. Government is actually looking for territories to conquer and exploit. As a conquered people, they lose their "dignity and humanity". The nominal groups show that they are actually vassals in their own country.

Stanza III

This is the *tyranny of greed*
M H Q
like a starving pride
M M H
drags down *a compassionate seductress*
M M H
a block buster rape on pleading knees?
M M H

The italicized nominal groups look at the issue from another perspective. Like a woman, the Niger Delta is raped and pillaged.

Text 2 Extract 3 (Marsh Boy)

Locked in *the prison of poverty*
M H Q
Denied the right to rise
out of holes in *sighing swamps*
M H
I sing of creeks *with crushed dreams*
H Q
I sing of rivers with *decaying hope*
H Q
I sing of *rivers the cargo ships and*
H M M H
supertankers sail on
H
I sing of swamps sold to swindlers and
H H
rustlers
H
I sing of swamps demanding dignity
H
and opportunity...
Q
spurned, passed over
I cast aside paddle and net
humble hungry hunter….
M M H

The title “Marsh Boy” as a nominal group hints at the environment that is to be talked about: people that live in a wetland. The image of poverty continues as they are imprisoned by poverty. The nominal group, “holes in sighing swamps” tells how sad the people are. Creeks is postmodified by crushed dreams; while ponds is postmodified by decaying hope. The people are swindled and dehumanized. They, therefore, cry for dignity as reflected in the nominal groups, “swamps demanding dignity and opportunity”.

5. Conclusion

Ebi Yeibo uses the pre- and post-modifications of the Head Noun to reflect the situation in the Niger Delta. In “ No Fireflies Here,”The Head Noun and its modifiers and qualifiers give us an impression of the gaiety, beauty and mirth that characterized the pre-oil era. Then Noun Head “mamba” was introduced and there was thus a movement from “a carnival of colours” to a “carnival of cannibals.” The “mamba” further shows the wiles of the international oil companies and the Nigerian government. This marks a transition from the beautiful and peaceful pre-oil to the squalid and troubled post-oil era.

For Ogbowei, even the streets starve, producing “ unsettling screams of street urchins.”The Head Noun “streets” is midified by “these starving”; while “screams” is modified by “the unsettling.” The different derivatives of the MHQ structure show “the tyranny of greed” and “the prison of poverty.”

The MHQ structure has been used to reveal the nominal group features that capture the ideas of the Niger Delta people. The ideas revealed here are those of environmental degradation, poverty, indignity and dehumanization, among others. All these are geared towards the struggle for resource control.

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Part Three

Educational Management

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Pedagogy and Technical Implication of Blended Learning in Obafemi Awolowo University Centre for Distance Learning, Nigeria

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Abstract. The study examines pedagogy and technical implication of blended learning in Obafemi Awolowo University Centre for Distance Learning. The research design method used for this study was survey research methods. The population of the study comprises of Two hundred and fifty (250) registered nursing students for 2021/2022 academic session at Obafemi Awolowo University Centre for Distance Learning programmes. The sample size of One hundred and fifty-two (152) respondents was selected through the Krejcie and Morgan sampling techniques to select the sample size from the population. The returned rate of the instrument used to elicit the data from the respondents was 142(93.42%). The instrument used to collect data was questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed on a scale of 4 points Likert. The validity of the instrument was done and the reliability of the instrument was tested through the use of Cronbach Alpha reliability tools to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The instrument revealed a coefficient of 0.702 which is acceptable. The method of data analysis used was analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics to test the research hypotheses. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. The findings revealed learners technology skill ($N = 142$; $F = 3.543$; $P = 0.016$ @ 0.05).Teaching flexibility ($N = 142$; $F = 0.908$; $P = 0.439$ @ 0.05). Learner self-efficacy ($N = 142$; $F = 0.277$; $P = 0.842$ @ 0.05). Personal commitment ($N = 142$; $F = 2.220$; $P = 0.089$ @ 0.05) are positively significant with the technical implication of blended learning. Hypothesis one was rejected while other hypotheses were sustained. The implication was that learners portrayed certain IT skills which ease their understanding of blended learning. The study therefore recommended that the tertiary institution stakeholders should fund blended learning for both teachers and students. Also, build a supportive technological environment and creating a technical hub for students will lower education costs and promote academic advancement.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Technical Implication, Blended Learning and Distance Learning.

1. Introduction

The earliest educational delivery mode is traditional face-to-face, hosted in a specific educational setting, and distinguished by physical interaction between teachers and students or instructors and learners. However, technology advancements, rising applicant numbers, challenges related to limited educational access, a focus on refresher training for the working class to keep up with changing knowledge requirements, and the need to keep up with occupational challenges have sparked new ideas among those involved in education about new trends in educational delivery. Therefore, e-learning is a formalised teaching-based learning system that makes use of electronic resources that is primarily based on using computers and the internet. Though, the teaching can also occur face-to-face or outside the formal classroom settings.

Therefore, the term blended learning could be expressed as a combination of in-person and online instruction that frequently referred to as the "new traditional model" of course delivery (Dziuban, Graham, Moskal, Norberg & Sicilia, 2018). It is widely used in higher intitutions, and their inability to monitor a cutting-edge practice that frequently emerged has made it challenging to track the extent of its growth accurately. In an early national study sponsored by the Sloan Consortium, about 65.2% of participating higher educational institutions offered blended learning. The government, curriculum planners, school administrators, teachers, and students all worked together to produce learning as a result of their combined efforts. Thus, learning is blended because it uses a variety of resources, including community-based learning objects, corporately annexed school environments, and human personnel.

The technical implications of blended learning are the challenges faced by the users shift from face-to-face to blended learning is the genuine route that the evolution of blended learning follows a path of abrupt departure from full e-learning mode (Oyeleke, Olagunju, Ayamolowo & Aribaba, 2014). The availability and skill to use these technologies to support learning in a virtual environment are implied by the term "technological trilby." Thus, blended learning gets its name because technology is used to deliver education in this method. This is the core of online learning which sets it apart from more conventional face-to-face instruction. The technology used in e-learning includes electronic communication tools like computers, the internet, intranet, remote evaluation applications, adaptation tools, learning management systems (LMS), and course management systems (Alina, 2007; Oyeleke, et al., 2014).

They further expressed that technology is essential to the success of blended learning, but it also has the potential to stimulate a learner-centered approach that can alter instructors' and students' paradigms. Students take the initiative and develop their learning capacity that can reasonably control their learning outcomes. Effective curriculum planning and design, as well as instructional strategies that differ slightly from those used in face-to-face instruction, are required for effective pedagogy. Because of the unique characteristics and diversity of online students, blended learning should keep in mind that e-learning is not just about technology but a complete transformation of the teaching and learning process using technology and applying relevant learning theories. Therefore, the study examines pedagogy and technical implication of blended learning in Obafemi Awolowo University Centre for Distance Learning. This study is delimited to nursing students registered for 2020/2021 academic session of the programme.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the development of new educational technologies, access to these educational innovations remains a problem (Dziuban, Graham, Moskal, Norberg & Sicilia, 2018). One of the potentials of blended learning technologies is that they can expand access for nontraditional and underserved students by providing a wealth of educational resources and opportunities to those with limited access to higher education available on campus. Adu, Eze, Salako, and Nyangeechi (2013) expressed that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are likely to pursue higher-level postsecondary degrees. However, expanding distance learning has given millions of educational opportunities (Allen et al., 2016). A recent focus on distance learning has also led to significant cost savings without compromising student performance outcomes (Robinson et al., 2014).

Therefore, blended learning techniques are fundamental in teaching and learning processes. Though, the differences can be attributed among other things to differentiate institutional approaches. The problems of technical and technological support, logistical issues, national and subnational overriding policies on pedagogy cannot be overemphasised (Fischer et al., 2015). The technological challenges posed to students from the used of blended learning needs to be understudy. The technical implications of internet connectivity, video conferencing capabilities, web conferencing, television, radio, an electric power supply, an alternative power supply to compensate for an erratic power supply, a computer, and other learning technologies are encompassed (Hilton et al., 2016). Therefore, the question is does learner technological skills influence the blended learning pedagogy? Is self-efficacy solely affected the teachers, the students, or both of them? Is teaching flexibility solely affect the blended learning? To understand the differences, this study sought to examines pedagogy and technical implication of blended learning in Obafemi Awolowo University Centre for Distance Learning. The establishment of part-time degree programs at first-generation universities like the Obafemi Awolowo University is considered as a scope which delimited to nursing degree programme.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The study examines pedagogy and technical implication of blended learning in Obafemi Awolowo University Centre for Distance Learning. The specific objectives are:

- to assess the influence of learner technological skills on blended learning
- to evaluate the efficiency of teaching flexibility on the usage of blended learning
- to investigate the influence of learner self-efficacy on blended learning
- to assess the influence of personal commitment of learner on blended learning

1.3 Research Hypothesis

- Learner technological skills do not have influence on blended learning in pedagogy
- Teaching flexibility does not influence the usage of blended learning
- Learner self-efficacy does not have significance influence on blended learning
- Personal commitment of learner does not have significance influence on blended learning

2. Literature Review

Olugbeko and Izu (2013) found that e-learning techniques that are mostly adopted by most of the Nigerian institutions are in the form of prepared lectures on a CD-ROM that can be played as needed" in the case of Nigerian higher education institutions. This was taken place because there need to be more computers to accommodate all the students, which makes the online learning process less interactive. Additionally, most students come from families with lower socio-economic status and need more experience with or exposure to ICT solutions. This obviously implies that they do not always have access to a computer and the internet at home during their studies. Because of this, students were forced to choose public internet cafés, which also struggle with low bandwidth and hinder the country's ability to implement e-learning effectively.

In Nigeria, open and distance learning needs to be embraced in adopting e-learning as a substitute for imparting educational instruction. However, the study by Mtebe and Raphael (2013) claimed that higher education in Tanzania used blended learning and that, due to limited and slow internet speed, compact disk (CDs) video player was found to be a useful as an alternative approach to learning resources. As a result, face-to-face teaching methods are still in use, and blended learning programs are only seen as tools for enhancing educational activities. In the same vein, the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) instructors use blended learning tools like computers and internet technology for teaching, looking up educational resources, communicating (staff email system), and setting exams rather than creating study materials and giving presentations to students (Nyandara, 2012). Similarly, it has been noted that students find it difficult to access the internet because doing so inside and outside university learning centres comes with a hidden fee which propelled the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) to implement Moodle software. Learning Management System (LMS) is one of the blended learning tools made to implement and support e-learning systems. Additionally, an e-learning program has been put in place by tertiary institutions to make the research and learning processes easier for professors and students (Nagumwa & Lwoga, 2012). The lack of sufficient computers and other ICT resources, such as the internet, prevents the full implementation of the e-learning system, which is why not all students and staff can use it simultaneously. Due to some difficulties, tertiary institutions introduced the e-learning system in 2011 but it was unsuccessful. As a result, both blended learning and face-to-face approach was employed (Oyeleke, et al., 2014).

Shea and Bidjerano (2016) asserted that African American community college students who took distance education courses completed degrees at a significantly lower rate than those who did not take distance education courses. On the other hand, a study of K–12 online learning success factors discovered that only 1 out of 15 courses for ethnic minorities had significant gaps in student test scores (Liu & Cavanaugh, 2011). To better understand how different populations can learn in various modalities, including face-to-face and blended learning environments, more research is needed. Floridi (2014) opine that the world has evolved into an "infosphere" in which we live as "inforgs." What is real for us is changing from the tangible and immutable to the things we can communicate through pedagogy.

Qureshi et al. (2012) found that Pakistani university identified the difficulties in implementing e-learning. The difficulties with technology, including access to the most recent technology, a quick internet connection, and a steady electricity supply, are listed. Other issues include maintenance, administration, security, a lack of technical support, and limited student computer access, both on campus and at home. This is because it is difficult for students to accept and use e-learning technology. After all, most families in developing nations do not have direct access to computers. The existing knowledge of computer technology and the general understanding of e-learning technology encourage students and other learners to participate in e-learning; otherwise, there will be high resistance to changing from traditional education methods. Thus, e-learning implementation in developing countries is generally hindered by a lack of ICT expertise and inadequate ICT infrastructure.

Donovan, Bransfood and Pellegrino (1998) observed that teachers must have a high level of expertise when teaching the students with blended learning to help them truly understand the concepts. It takes time to acquire the level of expertise a teacher needs to ensure that their students comprehend. Odey and Odey (2019) add that one might question whether the high failure rates and poor quality of the students are not a reflection of the instructional quality in the schools given the observed decline in the pedagogy, attitude, and value of students. Little research has been done to understand the impact of routine classroom experiences on the development of learners self-efficacy, and thus potentially on their effort and success in class. Despite the promise that the self-efficacy theory shows for understanding retention and achievement patterns in education settings (Fencl, 2004).

In various pedagogical studies, self-efficacy, or the conviction that a learner can succeed in a particular task, is an effective predictor of behaviours like perseverance and success, as well as of which behaviours are attempted or avoided. The study looks at how classroom elements like teaching methods and the atmosphere in the classroom affect students' sense of self-efficacy. With 121 undergraduates in the first semester as the population, the study employs surveys of research design methods. On outcome variables like self-efficacy, students in sections with various teaching methods performed significantly better than students in the conventional section. When individual strategies were examined, the strongest associations were discovered between climate factors and all sources of efficacy and cooperative learning strategies (Fencl, 2004).

3. Research Methodology

The research design method used for this study is a survey research. The population of the study comprises of Two hundred and fifty (250) registered nursing students for 2021/2022 academic session at Obafemi Awolowo University Centre for Distance Learning programmes. The sample size of One hundred and fifty-two (152) respondents was selected through the Krejcie and Morgan sampling techniques to select the sample size from the respondents. The instrument used to collect data was questionnaire designed on a scale of 4 points Likert. The questionnaire was validated and the reliability of the instrument was tested through the use of Cronbach Alpha reliability tools to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The instrument revealed a coefficient of 0.702 which is acceptable. The method of data analysis used was analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics to test the research questions. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data.

4. Results

The table below shows the schedule of the questionnaire administered and the percentage of the returned questionnaire.

Table 1: Schedule of the Questionnaire Administered and Returned

SN	Number of Distributed Questionnaire	Number of Returned Questionnaire	% of Returned Questionnaire
1	152	142	93.42%

SOURCE: *Researcher Design (2023)*

Test of Research Hypotheses

H0:$_1$ Learner technological skills do not have influence on blended learning in pedagogy

Table 2: The ANOVA Analysis of Hypothesis One

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.351	1	3.450	3.543	.016
Within Groups	134.389	140	.974		
Total	144.739	141			

Table 2 shows the ANOVA analysis that was carried out to check the mean influence of the variables. The table also portrays the ANOVA results used to test the significance of the variable with an *F-statistics* of 3.543. The results displayed the *p-value* of 0.016 of the variable which is less than 0.05 thresholds. Therefore, since the *p-value* is less than 0.05 level of significance, it was inferred that there is positive significance influence exists between the variable understudy. Thereby, the null hypothesis which states that learner technological skills do not have significance influence on blended learning in pedagogy is hereby rejected. The findings revealed that the majority of nursing students sampled have technological skills to set up the blended learning which enable to understand the blended teaching and learning processes.

$H0_{:2}$ Teaching flexibility does not influence the usage of blended learning

Table 3: The ANOVA Analysis of Hypothesis Two

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.120	1	.707	.908	.439
Within Groups	107.429	140	.778		
Total	109.549	141			

Table 3 displays the ANOVA result that was conceded to check the mean influence of the variables. The table also depicts the significance outcome of *F-statistics* of 0.908 with the *p-value* of 0.439 respectively. Thus, the *p-value* is greater than 0.05 level of significance which means that the significance level exists between the variables are varied. Thereby, the null hypothesis which states that teaching flexibility does not influence the usage of blended learning is hereby sustained. Therefore, this implies that the flexibility of teaching through blended pedagogy does not affect the understanding of the lesson. Though, this may not guarantee that there are no other factors impeding the pedagogical flexibilities in attending their virtual lectures.

$H0_{:3}$ Learner self-efficacy does not have significance influence on blended learning

Table 4: The ANOVA Analysis of Hypothesis Three

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.837	1	.279	.277	.842
Within Groups	139.029	140	1.007		
Total	139.866	141			

Table 4 depicts the analysis of variance of the hypothesis three which describes the significance outcome of the variable with the *F-statistics* of 0.277 and the fallout of the *P-value* of 0.842 respectively. This shows that the variable is positively significant. Meanwhile, the p-value of 0.842 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis which says learner self-efficacy does not have significance influence on blended learning is hereby sustained. This implies that learner capacities can be executed through their individual beliefs. Though, some of them may lack certain skills preventing them from executing the blended learning adequately.

$H0_{:4}$ Personal commitment of learner does not have significance influence on blended learning

Table 5: The ANOVA Analysis of Hypothesis Four

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.909	1	1.636	2.220	.089
Within Groups	101.746	140	.737		
Total	106.655	141			

Table 5 shows the analysis of variance result of the variable articulated the *F-statistics* of 2.220 with the significance value of 0.089. The result shows that the P-value is greater than 0.05 significant level. Therefore, the null hypothesis which assumed that personal commitment of learner does not have significance influence on blended learning is hereby sustained. This infers that learners' commitment can justify the efficiency of blended learning adopted in school.

5. Discussion of Findings

The finding of hypothesis one supported the submission of previous scholars like Olugbeko and Izu (2013); Mtebe and Raphael (2013), they claimed that tertiary institutions used blended learning and that, due to limited and slow internet speed, compact disk (CDs) video player was found to be useful as an alternative approach to learning resources. This implies they only sometimes have access to a computer and the internet at home during their studies. Because of this, it required some students to choose public internet cafés, which also struggle with low bandwidth and hinder the country's ability to implement e-learning effectively. Thus, face-to-face teaching methods are still in use, and blended learning programs are only seen as tools for enhancing educational activities. Hypothesis two is also against Nyandara (2012) finding that students find it difficult to access the internet because doing so inside and outside university learning centres comes with a hidden fee. However, the finding of hypothesis three supported the outcome of Fencl (2004) that through self-efficacy, students with various teaching methods performed significantly better than students in the conventional section, despite the promise that the self-efficacy theory shows for understanding retention and achievement patterns in education settings. When individual strategies are examined, the strongest associations can be discovered. The study of Odey and Odey (2019) leverages hypothesis four, that one might question whether the high failure rates and poor quality of the students are not a reflection of the instructional quality in the schools given the observed decline in the pedagogy, attitude, personal commitment and value of students.

6. Conclusion

The study concluded that blended learning technologies significantly impact pedagogy. Even so, most nursing students in the sample said they had the technical know-how to set up blended learning with their information technology tools, allowing them to complete their programme quickly. Additionally, it was found that the teaching flexibility provided by blended learning did not impact the student's comprehension of the lectures. There may be additional factors that limit the pedagogical flexibility of the instruction when attending their virtual lectures. The effectiveness of learner self-efficacy was discovered through the learners' unique beliefs. However, some might need more abilities, making it easier for them to implement blended learning effectively. The learners' commitment determined the effectiveness of blended learning implemented in schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommended that the government's role in funding tertiary institutions should be considered. Administrators of tertiary institutions should support blended learning for both teachers and students. Building a supportive technological environment and creating a technical hub for students will lower education costs and promote academic advancement. Technology should be incorporated into tertiary institutions' curricula by educational institutions. Modernising the current technological infrastructure and creating cutting-edge, competitive education for the populace is necessary. To combat insecurity, the government should fulfil its social responsibility by offering citizens affordable education. Young people should be constantly instilled with a technological mindset through technological empowerment that will enable undergraduates to support themselves.

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Distance Learners' Assessment of the Quality and Satisfaction of the National Open University of Nigeria's Internet-based Service Delivery

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Abstract. This study examined the quality of internet-based service delivery and satisfaction of distance learners of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Abuja through a descriptive survey method, using 875 distance learners which were selected through multi-stage sampling technique from three selected study centres of the University in Abuja, Nigeria. Two research questions were answered and four hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant. Data were collected with the use of a modified 4-point Likert scale validated instrument titled "Quality and Satisfaction of Internet Service Delivery Questionnaire (QSISDQ; r=0.91). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics of t-test and ANOVA. Results revealed good quality and very high extent satisfaction of internet-based services offered based on study centre (F(2,874) = 0.08; p=0.92) and gender (t(1,873) = 2.96; p=0.77). Findings further revealed no significant difference in the extent of satisfaction derived in internet-based services based on study centre (F(2,874) = 0.14; p=0.87) and gender (t(1,873) = -1.24; p = 0.21). Based on the findings, recommendations point to the effect that University management should take the internet-based services offered to an enviable realm.

Keywords: Internet-based services, quality, satisfaction, distance learners

1. Introduction

The internet is a vast network that connects computers worldwide. The internet is a vehicle for transporting information stored in files or documents on a computer (Adedapo, 2021). In comparison to the pre-internet era, the internet has made teaching and learning easier and less expensive to achieve. Today, the internet has established itself as a veritable source of information and a channel of communication, allowing students, faculty, and researchers to access a wide range of relevant data and information. In his review of the effects of the internet on students' studies, Affum (2022) believes that the internet has improved its purpose by making it easier for students to obtain academic materials that are not readily available in the library. Anasi (2006) investigates the pattern of internet use by undergraduates at the University of Lagos Main Campus Akoka, Lagos, and concluded that the internet positively affected the students' learning and career ambitions despite their moderate use of the internet at the time. Mandasari's (2020) study on the utilization of internet service for online learning towards students' academic performance on Business correspondence course revealed that the benefits of online learning are learning accomplishment, commitment, and learning stimulation. Given all of these submissions about the beneficial use of the internet in educational fields, it is clear that distance education has a lot of potential in higher education.

After the covid-19 pandemic, which has created challenges and disruption across the Higher Education sector, the survival of tertiary education institutions will increasingly rely on various forms of electronic delivery and communication. In Nigeria, the recent development following the covid-19 pandemic has raised awareness among the government and universities about the importance of effectively promoting distance education and life-long learning. Many universities had already implemented practices to make their education delivery more flexible and accessible in order to meet the needs of their students. According to Bashir, Bashir, Rana, Lambert, and Vernallis (2021), some aspects of blended learning were already in place.

Regardless of the importance associated with quality internet-based services provided, it may be perceived that distance learners at the University are dissatisfied with the quality of these services provided. Furthermore, it appears that students are having difficulty making adequate use of these internet services. This could be due to the poor quality of the institution's internet-based services. When internet services are not optimal, it will most likely have a negative impact on distance learners' activities and academic results. In most cases, learners are unable to complete their assignments, class work, adequately prepare for their exams, and do an adequate job due to the poor quality of these internet-based services. This has the implication that their academic performance will suffer as a result. The possibility of poor internet-based service delivery and satisfaction affecting distance learners' academic performance is, without a doubt, the crux of the problem investigated in this study.

Distance learners differ from face-to-face students in that they may encounter unique challenges that can lead to misunderstandings (Al-Arimi, 2014; Chapman, Goodman, Jawitz & Deacon, 2016; Heidrich, Barbosa, Cambruzzi, Rigo, Marrtins & dos Santos, 2018). Distance learners had limited access to high-speed internet, infrastructure, and online support from facilitators to learners and learners to facilitators in the past (Maboe, 2017; Munyoka, 2014; Olumide & Iloanya, 2019; Victor & Lufungulo, 2007). Kazondovi, Isaacs, and Lwendo (2022) reported in a study on the challenges distance education students faced during their education degree programme at the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education that the University should improve slow internet speeds, limited internet access, lecturer student interaction, collaboration between distance education students, and a lack of computers, among other things.

As a distance learning institution, the National Open University of Nigeria uses the internet for almost all of its activities. From the admissions stage to the evaluation stage, the university provides web-based services. The University provides solutions to its students' academic and personal problems, and the internet serves as the medium of delivery. Students are the primary users of the institution's internet-based services. According to Adamu (2017), the total number of active learners at the National Open University of Nigeria is over 254,000, which is nearly, if not more than, the total number of students at least 15 conventional universities in Nigeria.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

When compared to the period prior to the invention of the internet, internet-based service delivery has contributed to making teaching and learning easier and less expensive to achieve. Despite the availability of internet-based services at the National Open University of Nigeria, researchers discovered that some distance learners were dissatisfied with the quality of these services. This could be due to the poor quality of the internet-based services provided by the institution and its affiliate study centers. Few studies have been conducted on the quality of internet-based services offered and nothing is reported about studies that have used a combination of gender, age, study centre and level of study in higher institutions of learning especially in context of distance learning institutions in Nigeria. None has been carried out to examine the extent of internet-based service delivery and learners' satisfaction in National Open University of Nigeria hence the problem which the researcher hope to solve. Student satisfaction is not only crucial to institutions, but also to learners themselves. As a result, there is a need to assess the satisfaction of distance learners with internet-based service delivery at the National Open University of Nigeria, as well as individual learner satisfactions based on gender and study center. Student satisfaction was defined by Kuo-shu and Tzu-Pu (2012) as the student's positive feelings or attitude toward his or her learning activities. According to Ahmad, Pramono, and Suratno (2009), satisfaction is determined by the difference between perception and expectation. According to a study conducted by Seeda and Mostafa (2017), students' satisfaction and barriers of e-learning course among nursing students at Mansoura University indicate that the majority of the students are extremely satisfied with their e-learning experience. However, in this study, internet-based service delivery satisfaction is defined as the extent to which learners are satisfied with the quality of internet-based service delivery. This includes admission, registration, facilitation, course materials, e-ticketing, assignment, examinations, practical, research, and other academic activities.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study set out to:

- examine the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN.
- assess satisfaction of distance learners on the use of this internet based services offered in NOUN.

1.3 Research Questions

The study provided answers to the following research questions:

- What is the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN.
- To what extent are the distance learners in NOUN satisfied with the quality of internet based service delivery?

1.4 Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were stated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.
H01: There is no significance difference in learners' responses on the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre.
H02: There is no significant gender difference in learners' responses on the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN.
H03: There is no significance difference in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre.
H04: There is no significant gender difference in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered in NOUN.

2. Theoretical Justification

The study adopted the theory of expectancy disconfirmation which seeks to explain post-purchase or post-adaptation satisfaction as a function of expectation; perceived performance, and disconfirmation of beliefs (Oliver, 1980, 1997). As applied to this study, distance learners of National Open University of Nigeria come to the university with expectations of robust internet-based service delivery they want to get from their study centres. If the services rendered to the learners meet or exceed their expectations, they will be satisfied but if vice versa then they will be dissatisfied. The current study's findings are expected to contribute to improving empirical research findings that can be used to inform teaching and learning practices in higher education. This will also provide learners from open and distance institutions with an understanding of how to use and appreciate internet services.

3. Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used to examine the quality of internet-based service delivery and satisfaction of the distance learners in selected study centres of the National Open University of Nigeria. The design is appropriate for the study because the goal of a descriptive survey research design is to gather precise and factual information about a current phenomenon (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2013). The target population for the study was made up of all distance learners of National Open University of Nigeria who were duly registered during 2022 second semester. Multistage sampling technique was used in the selection of the participating students. Simple random sampling method was used to select three study centres from the study centres in Abuja; this resulted in the selection of Abuja model study centre, Wuse II study centre and Garki II study centre. Accidental/convenience sampling technique was used to select all students that came for examinations while purposive sampling techniques was finally used based on students' readiness to take part in the study. This resulted in a total of 875 students that participated in the study.

An instrument tagged "Quality and Satisfaction of Internet Service Delivery Questionnaire (QSISDQ)" was adapted from the work of Joudeh & Dandis (2018), it consisted of positive and negative statements concerning students' opinions of the quality and satisfaction of internet based services offered in NOUN. It consisted two sections, A and B. Section A consisted personal information about the learners like age and level of study. Section B consisted of statement items. The statements were rated on a four-point Likert scale of Very Good (VG), Good (G), Poor (P) and Very Poor (VP) for the Quality aspect of the items and Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) for the satisfaction aspect of the items. Scores are 4, 3, 2, 1, for SA/VHE, A/HE, D/LE and SD/VLE respectively for positively worded items while reverse was the case for negatively worded items. To ensure validity of the instrument, the original instrument from which initial 60 item instrument was adapted was given to measurement and evaluation as well as ICT experts to review it in the aspect of content, relevance, scope of coverage, language of presentation, clarity of expression and overall adequacy. Based on their comments, some of the items were modified while some were removed, 55 items survived the experts' scrutiny. The 55 items instrument was then pilot tested at a study centre outside the study area. After 15 items have been deleted from the corrected item-total correlation column leaving 40 items, the reliability coefficient of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach Alpha's measure and the instrument yielded a reliability index of 0.91. Data were collected by on-the-spot administration and completion of the questionnaire. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and inferential statistics of t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the hypothesis at 0.05 significance level.

4. Results

This section presents the analyses of the collected data, and the findings were discussed.
Socio-Demographic Attributes of the Respondents

Table 1: Respondents' Distribution Study Centre and Gender

		Freq.	%
Study Centre	Abuja Model	275	31.40
	Wuse II	304	34.80
	Garki II	296	33.80
	Total	875	100.00
Gender	Male	469	53.60
	Female	406	46.40
	Total	875	100.00

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic attributes of the respondents. 275 (31.40) of the respondents were from Abuja model study centre, 304 (34.80) were from Wuse II study centre while the remaining 296 (33.80) were from Garki II study centre. 496 (53.60%) of the respondents were male while 406 (46.40%) were females. 318 (36.30%).

Quality of Internet Based Services Delivery in NOUN

Research Question One: What is the quality of internet-based services offered in NOUN?

Table 2: Respondents' Perception of the Quality of Internet Based Services Offered in NOUN

		Freq.	%	Mean	SD	Remark
The internet service is of neat appearance	VP	54	6.2	2.91	0.77	Good
	P	138	15.8			
	G	508	58.1			
	VG	175	20.0			
	Total	875	100.0			
The materials associated with the service have good visual appearance	P	181	20.7	3.05	0.68	Good
	G	467	53.4			
	VG	227	25.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
Materials associated with the service are informative	VP	10	1.1	3.24	0.72	Good
	P	114	13.0			
	G	407	46.5			
	VG	344	39.3			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet service promises to do something and deliver at the promised time	VP	20	2.3	3.05	0.79	Good
	P	192	21.9			
	G	382	43.7			
	VG	281	32.1			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet is equipped with necessary information to deliver service	VP	21	2.4	3.35	0.68	Good
	P	39	4.5			
	G	427	48.8			
	VG	388	44.3			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet is dependable in handling users' problems	VP	14	1.6	3.20	0.70	Good
	P	100	11.4			
	G	458	52.3			
	VG	303	34.6			
	Total	875	100.0			

The internet is never too busy to respond to the users' request	VP	32	3.7	3.93	0.82	Very Good
	P	232	26.5			
	G	379	43.3			
	VG	232	26.5			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet is always willing to help	VP	7	.8	3.45	0.59	Very Good
	P	24	2.7			
	G	414	47.3			
	VG	430	49.1			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet inspires confidence in the users	P	7	.8	3.56	0.51	Very Good
	G	370	42.3			
	VG	498	56.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet has adequate knowledge to address users' problems	P	43	4.9	3.48	0.59	Very Good
	G	370	42.3			
	VG	462	52.8			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet always give the users' individual attention	VP	68	7.8	2.66	0.87	Good
	P	323	36.9			
	G	322	36.8			
	VG	162	18.5			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet always consider the best interest of the users	VP	54	6.2	3.45	0.82	Very Good
	P	20	2.3			
	G	274	31.3			
	VG	527	60.2			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet always understand the specific needs of the users	VP	10	1.1	3.55	0.62	Very Good
	P	30	3.4			
	G	308	35.2			
	VG	527	60.2			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet is easy to connect	P	33	3.8	3.47	0.57	Very Good
	G	397	45.4			
	VG	445	50.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
Provides strong and high quality network signals	VP	10	1.1	3.18	0.66	Good
	P	92	10.5			
	G	500	57.1			
	VG	273	31.2			
	Total	875	100.0			
Provides prompt and quick services	VP	20	2.3	3.16	0.63	Good
	P	55	6.3			
	G	564	64.5			
	VG	236	27.0			
	Total	875	100.0			
Maintains speed of the services during busy times	VP	27	3.1	3.02	0.72	Good
	P	139	15.9			
	G	500	57.1			
	VG	209	23.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet is competent and efficient	VP	20	2.3	3.09	0.62	Good
	P	72	8.2			
	G	591	67.5			
	VG	192	21.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
The quality of the network is always stable	VP	6	.7	2.96	0.67	Good
	P	196	22.4			
	G	499	57.0			
	VG	174	19.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
The quality and strength of the network is always excellent	VP	22	2.5	2.87	0.71	Good

	P	219	25.0		
	G	488	55.8		
	VG	146	16.7		
	Total	875	100.0		

However, in this study, internet-based service delivery satisfaction experience is defined as the extent to which learners are satisfied with the quality of internet-based service delivery. This should include admission, registration, facilitation, course materials, e-ticketing, assignment, examinations, practical, research, and other academic activities. However, in this study, internet-based service delivery satisfaction is defined as the degree to which learners are satisfied with the quality of internet-based service delivery. This should include admission, registration, facilitation, course materials, e-ticketing, assignments, examinations, practicals, research, and other academic activities. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.55 and 0.62, the internet always understands the specific needs of its users. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.47 and 0.57, respectively, connecting to the internet is simple. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.18 and 0.66, respectively, the internet provides strong and high-quality network signals. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.16 and 0.63, the internet provides prompt and timely services. During peak times, the internet maintains service speed, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.02 and 0.72, respectively. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.09 and 0.62, respectively, the internet is competent and efficient. The network's quality is always stable, with mean and standard deviation of 2.96 and 0.67, respectively, and the network's quality and strength are always excellent, with mean and standard deviation of 2.87 and 0.71, respectively. According to the responses in table 4.2 above, respondents agreed that the quality of internet-based services offered in NOUN is average.

Research Question Two: To what extent are distance learners in NOUN satisfied with the quality of internet based service delivery?

Table 3: Respondents' Perception on the Extent Distance Learners in NOUN are Satisfied with the Quality of Internet Based Service Delivery

		Freq.	%	Mean	SD	Remark
The internet performs the service at the appropriate time	*VLE*	10	1.1	3.47	0.66	Very High Extent
	LE	51	5.8			
	HE	335	38.3			
	VHE	479	54.7			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet informs the user exactly when services will be delivered	LE	25	2.9	3.59	0.55	Very High Extent
	HE	308	35.2			
	VHE	542	61.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
The user is given prompt service from internet	LE	20	2.3	3.62	0.53	Very High Extent
	HE	289	33.0			
	VHE	566	64.7			
	Total	875	100.0			
The user feels secure when dealing with the internet	LE	27	3.1	3.67	0.53	Very High Extent
	HE	234	26.7			
	VHE	614	70.2			
	Total	875	100.0			
The internet is consistently polite in dealing with the users	LE	27	3.1	3.70	0.52	Very High Extent
	HE	209	23.9			
	VHE	639	73.0			
	Total	875	100.0			
I am satisfied with the internet services	VLE	10	1.1	3.59	0.62	Very High Extent
	LE	34	3.9			
	HE	264	30.2			
	VHE	567	64.8			
	Total	875	100.0			
My choice of the internet services was a wise one	VLE	10	1.1	3.59	0.60	Very High Extent
	LE	24	2.7			
	HE	280	32.0			
	VHE	561	64.1			
	Total	875	100.0			
I am satisfied with the internet services	VLE	10	1.1	3.55	0.64	Very High Extent

	LE	41	4.7			
	HE	284	32.5			
	VHE	540	61.7			
	Total	875	100.0			
I am pleased to use the internet services	LE	34	3.9	3.50	0.57	Very High Extent
	HE	373	42.6			
	VHE	468	53.5			
	Total	875	100.0			
Services provided by the internet are excellent	LE	40	4.6	3.50	0.58	Very High Extent
	HE	357	40.8			
	VHE	478	54.6			
	Total	875	100.0			
I will deal with the internet services more in future	LE	17	1.9	3.45	0.54	Very High Extent
	HE	444	50.7			
	VHE	414	47.3			
	Total	875	100.0			
I would consider the internet services as my first choice	LE	40	4.6	3.39	0.57	High Extent
	HE	452	51.7			
	VHE	383	43.8			
	Total	875	100.0			
I will say favourable things about the internet services	LE	34	3.9	3.36	0.56	High Extent
	HE	488	55.8			
	VHE	353	40.3			
	Total	875	100.0			
I will recommend the internet services to other people	VLE	17	1.9	3.29	0.64	High Extent
	LE	36	4.1			
	HE	499	57.0			
	VHE	323	36.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
I will be loyal customer of the internet services	VLE	48	5.5	3.01	0.85	High Extent
	LE	165	18.9			
	HE	390	44.6			
	VHE	272	31.1			
	Total	875	100.0			
I will not switch to competitors if the internet services increase price	VLE	143	16.3	2.69	1.01	High Extent
	LE	193	22.1			
	HE	331	37.8			
	VHE	208	23.8			
	Total	875	100.0			
I am getting good internet connection speed service for a reasonable price	VLE	23	2.6	3.06	0.71	High Extent
	LE	127	14.5			
	HE	498	56.9			
	VHE	227	25.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
As compared to the time and effort I sacrifice, I get reasonable quality of internet connection	VLE	30	3.4	3.44	3.62	High Extent
	LE	62	7.1			
	HE	552	63.1			
	VHE	224	25.6			
	43.00	7	.8			
	Total	875	100.0			
As compared to the total cost incurred, I get good profit by having the internet services	VLE	17	1.9	3.15	0.60	High Extent
	LE	51	5.8			
	HE	589	67.3			
	VHE	218	24.9			
	Total	875	100.0			
When I have a problem, the internet offers the right solution	LE	24	2.7	3.59	0.54	Very High Extent
	HE	307	35.1			
	VHE	544	62.2			
	Total	875	100.0			

According to table 3, respondents believe that the internet provides the service at the appropriate time, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.47 and 0.66, respectively. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.59 and 0.55, the

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Abuja Model	275	63.75	5.21	0.31
Wuse II	304	63.61	5.38	0.31
Garki II	296	63.58	5.15	0.30
Total	875	63.65	5.24	0.18

internet informs the user exactly when services will be delivered. The internet provides prompt service to the user, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.62 and 0.53, respectively. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.67 and 0.53, the user feels safe when using the internet. The internet is consistently courteous in its interactions with users, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.70 and 0.52, respectively. They are pleased with the internet services, as evidenced by mean and standard deviation values of 3.59 and 0.62, respectively. Their internet service selection was sound, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.59 and 0.60, respectively. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.55 and 0.64, they are pleased with the internet services. They enjoy using the internet, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.50 and 0.57, respectively. The internet's services are excellent, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.50 and 0.58, respectively. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.25 and 0.54, they will deal with internet services more in the future. They would prioritize internet services, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.39 and 0.57, respectively. Their choice of internet services was sound, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.59 and 0.60, respectively. They are pleased with the internet services, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.55 and 0.64, respectively. They are pleased with the internet services, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.50 and 0.57, respectively. The internet's services are excellent, with mean and standard deviations of 3.50 and 0.58, respectively. They will deal with internet services more in the future, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.25 and 0.54, respectively. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.39 and 0.57, they would prioritize internet services. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.59 and 0.60, their choice of internet services was sound. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.55 and 0.64, they are satisfied with the internet services. They enjoy using the internet, with mean and standard deviations of 3.50 and 0.57, respectively. The internet's services are excellent, with mean and standard deviation values of 3.50 and 0.58, respectively. They will use internet services more frequently in the future, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.25 and 0.54, respectively. They prioritize internet services, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.39 and 0.57, respectively.

Testing the Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 significance level.
H01: There is no significance difference in learners' responses on the quality of internet based service offered in NOUN based on study centre.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Responses on the Quality of Internet- Based Services Offered in NOUN Based on Study Centre

Table 5: ANOVA of Learners' Responses on the Quality of Internet Based Services Offered in NOUN based on Study Centre

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.61	2	2.30	0.08	0.92
Within Groups	24038.98	872	27.57		
Total	24043.58	874			

Results in tables 4 and 5 above showed that there was no statistically significant difference ($F(2,874) = 0.08$) in learners' responses on the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre ($p = 0.92 > 0.05$). The mean and standard deviation values also show no statistically significant difference in learners' responses the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre. Therefore, the null hypothesis that says that there is significant difference in learners' responses on the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre was accepted.

H02: There is no significant gender difference in learners' responses on the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Responses on the Quality of Internet Based Services Offered in NOUN based on gender

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Quality of Internet Services	Male	469	64.13	5.27	0.24
	Female	406	63.09	5.17	0.26

Table 7: t-Test Analysis of Learners' Responses on the Quality of Internet Based Service Offered in NOUN Based on Gender.

		F	Sig.	T	df	Remark
Quality of Internet Services	Equal variances assumed	0.08	0.77	2.96	873	Accept
	Equal variances not assumed			2.97	859.68	

Results in table 6 and 7 above showed that there was no statistically significant difference (t(1,873) = 2.96) in learners' responses on the quality of internet based service offered in NOUN based on gender (p = 0.77> 0.05). The mean and standard deviation values also show no statistically significant difference in learners' responses on the quality of internet based service offered in NOUN based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis that says that there is no significance difference in gender of learners' responses on the quality of internet based services offered in NOUN was accepted.

H03: There is no significance difference in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Responses on the Satisfaction Level of Internet Based Services Offered in NOUN Based on Study Centre

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Abuja Model	275	68.36	9.18	0.55
Wuse II	304	67.99	10.52	0.60
Garki II	296	68.32	8.44	0.49
Total	875	68.22	9.42	0.32

Table 9: ANOVA of Learners' Responses on the Satisfaction Level of Internet Based Services offered in NOUN Based on Study Centre

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	24.753	2	12.376		
Within Groups	77595.117	872	88.985	0.14	0.87
Total	77619.870	874			

Results in tables 8 and 9 above showed that there was no statistically significant difference (F (2,874) =0.14) in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre (p = 0.87> 0.05). The mean and standard deviation values also show no statistically significant difference in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that there is no significance difference in learners' responses on the level of satisfaction of internet based services offered in NOUN based on study centre was accepted.

H04: There is no significant gender difference in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered in NOUN.

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Responses on the Satisfaction Level of Internet Based Services Offered in NOUN Based on Gender.

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std Error Mean
Satisfaction of Internet Services	Male	469	67.85	10.10	0.47
	Female	406	68.64	8.57	0.43

Table 11: t-Test Analysis of Learners' Responses on the Satisfaction Level of Internet Based Services Offered in NOUN Based on Gender.

		F	Sig.	T	Df	Mean Diff.	Remark
Satisfaction of Internet Services	Equal variances assumed	1.59	0.21	-1.24	873	-0.79	Accept
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.25	872.64	-0.79	

Results in table 4.16 and 4.17 above showed that there was no statistically significant difference (t(1,873) =-1.24) in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered in NOUN based on gender (p = 0.21> 0.05). The mean and standard deviation values also show no statistically significant difference in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered in NOUN based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis that says that there is no significant gender difference in learners' responses on the satisfaction level of internet based services offered NOUN was accepted.

5. Discussion of Findings

Their internet service selection was sound, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.59 and 0.60, respectively. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.55 and 0.64, they are pleased with the internet services. They enjoy using the internet, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.50 and 0.57, respectively. The internet's services are excellent, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.50 and 0.58, respectively. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.25 and 0.54, they will deal with internet services more in the future. They would prioritize internet services, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.39 and 0.57, respectively. This is consistent with the findings of Da-Silva, Meirelles, Filenga, and Filho (2014), who found that higher service quality resulted in higher user satisfaction. This result backs up Ojomo and Opesade's (2019) earlier finding that system quality, service quality, information literacy skill, computer literacy skill, computer anxiety, gender, faculties, and student level were all significant predictors of student satisfaction with the university web portal. Sumi and Kabir (2021) also found a link between perceived service quality and satisfaction. The findings are also consistent with those of Seeda and Mostafa (2017), Arif et al. (2017), Anyim, (2020), and Gorpal et al., (2017). (2021). Ofulue and Ogunleye (2019) found that NOUN students were very satisfied with the ICT infrastructure.

The study also discovered no statistically significant differences in the quality of internet-based services offered in NOUN based on study center or gender. This is consistent with the findings of the Arif, Ameen, and Rafiq (2017) study, which found no significant difference in satisfaction between genders or among students in different study locations. The finding supports the findings of Sook-Hyun and Se-Joon (2013), who discovered no statistical difference between male and female participants in how information quality and navigation quality influenced satisfaction. Furthermore, the study found no statistically significant differences in the level of satisfaction learners had with the quality of internet-based services provided in NOUN based on study center or gender. This could be attributed to the study centers' staff's good human relations and commitment to duty. This report concurs with that of Fasiku, Awoleye, and Oyebisi (2020), who reported that when certain elements are taken into account in judging the quality of internet service, the internet service quality in the study area was remarkable. The findings back up Rasli et al(2012) .'s assertion that there is a need for consistency in ensuring that promises made to customers are realistic and achievable, as this will encourage their loyalty. Additionally, Sukandi (2010) finds a positive relationship between campus facilities and student satisfaction.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The current study investigated the effect of intent-based services on the satisfaction of distance learners. The study's findings indicated that the quality of internet-based services offered in NOUN is average, and the learners were extremely satisfied. The study also discovered that there was no statistically significant difference in learners' experiences with the quality and satisfaction derived from NOUN's internet-based services based on study center or gender. The level of usability and poignancy of internet-based services is largely determined by the level of quality and user satisfaction. The findings of this study revealed a high level of quality and a high level of user satisfaction with the quality of internet-based services. This may, to some extent, contribute to the encouraging value factors. Based on the study's findings, the researchers recommend the following:

- NOUN's ICT management should improve the internet-based services provided.
- University administration should provide the necessary financial, manpower, and technological tools to elevate the internet-based services offered to an enviable level.
- School administration should conduct periodic inspections of these facilities to ensure their availability and usefulness.

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Perception of School Counsellors on Family Therapy as a Panacea to the Phenomenon of Empty Nest Syndrome in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract. This study examined the perception of school counselors on family therapy as a panacea to the phenomenon of empty nest syndrome in Southwest Nigeria. The target population of the study was all school counsellors in Southwest Nigeria. The sample consisted of 1200 school counsellors representing 200 from each of the six states of the Southwest Nigeria using the multi stage sampling approach. A questionnaire was self-developed by the researcher to collect data for the study. The content validity of the instrument was established and the instrument was subjected to reliability test using test retest approach in which Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula was used to establish the coefficient. The Coefficient of 0.75 was obtained for the instrument which was considered high enough for the instrument. Four hypotheses were raised to pilot the study and the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Data collected were analyzed using t-test statistics where two means were being compared while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to analyze data where more than two means were being compared. The findings of this study revealed that there were significant differences in respondents' responses on family counseling as an antidote to empty nest syndrome based on religion [$F(2,1197)=8.61;P<.05$], years of working experience [$F(3,1196)=2.87;p<.05$] and educational qualifications [$F(3,1196)=3.32;P<.05$], but there was no significant difference based on gender of respondents. The findings of this study have implications for school psychologists, school guidance counselors and educationists alike. It was therefore recommended that family therapy should be given a chance by practicing school counselors to help mitigate the effects of empty nest syndrome among parents in Southwest Nigeria.

Keywords: School counsellors' perception, Empty nest syndrome, Family therapy.

1. Introduction

The origin of empty-nest syndrome was linked to the theory of role identity which describes the impact that the childrens' departure from the parental home has on the welfare of their parents. According to this theory, the loss of a very important role brings alleviation and loneliness and dissatisfaction (Phillips, 1957). Duval (1957) explained that 'empty-nest' comes from family life cycle theory and that it is the stage from the time the last child departs from home to one's partner's death. The more roles one has, the less threatening the prospect of empty-nest syndrome (Thoits, 1983). Hence, during empty-nest when couples are no longer having their children around, this may trigger a lot of social problems, feelings that are not helpful may set in most especially when social supports are grossly inadequate (food, shelter, clothing etc) which are essential for physical wellbeing at stages of human life. If emotional support is lacking, it aggravates illogical thoughts which may eventually leads to depression.

An empty nest household usually refers to households without children or whose children have left their parents' home (Gao, Zhang, Gu, Zhang, Zhang & Tian, 2017 & Lv, Jiang, Sun, Ren, Sun, Sun, Wu, & Zhao, 2012). The accelerated urbanization and inequity of economic development in urban and country areas have resulted in the empty nest becoming the main family pattern in rural China. In 2016, empty nesters accounted for 51.1% of the elderly in China, and this proportion will reach 90% by 2030 according to China's National Committee on Aging (Su, Wu, Zhang, Li, Wang, Zhang & Zhou, 2012). Moreover, empty nest individuals are usually older adults who are likely to suffer from a high prevalence of chronic conditions and disability (Chatterji, Byles, Cutler, Seeman & Verdes, 2015; Yang, Chu, Zhou, Medina, Li, Jiang, Zheng, Sun &Liu, 2015 & Jing, Li, Fu, Wang, Yuan, Zhao, Hao, Yu & Zhou, 2021). When their children move out of their homes, their empty nest parents are more likely to suffer from empty nest syndrome, resulting in loneliness, anxiety, frustration, etc (Chang, Guo, Li, Yang, Yu & Sun, 2016; Fahrenberg, 1986 & Pillay, 1988).

An investigation conducted in Sichuan, a Western province in China, found that 30.11% of elderly empty nesters had anxiety-related symptoms (Wang, Shu, Dong, Luo & Hao, 2013 & Cheng, Jin, Sun, Tang, Zhang, Chen, Zhang, Zhang & Hung, 2015). These negative emotions are consistently tied to a subjective feeling of increased pain, disease and tiredness (Pressman, Gallagher & Lopez, 2013; Geiser, Roth, Theisen, Robinson & Riley, 2000 & Liu, Tian, Yue, Wang, Du & Chen, 2015). In general, members in empty nest families are often concerned with poor health statuses, poor mobility and a high risk of chronic diseases.

Ayena, Olanrewaju and Ogunlade (2022) reported that male and female retirees employed social intelligence to overcome empty-nest syndrome differently in Southwest Nigeria. They also reported that retirees of different age group do not employ social intelligence to overcome empty-nest syndrome differently. Furthermore, Ayena et al (2002) reported that retirees of different religious affiliations do not employ social intelligence to overcome empty-nest syndrome differently. Nevertheless, retirees in Southwest Nigeria unanimously agreed that social intelligence is a veritable tool for handling empty-nest syndrome and its associated challenges.

Family therapy is a form of talk therapy that focuses on the improvement of relationships among family members. It can also help in treating specific mental health or behavioural conditions, such as substance use disorder or oppositional defiant disorder. Family therapy can involve any combination of family members. Family therapy is a form of group psychotherapy that focuses on the improvement of interfamilial relationships and behaviours. Types of family therapy includes: Marriage counseling/couples therapy, strategic family therapy, structural family therapy and systemic family therapy.

Family therapy can help with situations such as:

- Adjusting to new life change (like moving) or a medical condition
- Mental health professionals also use family therapy to help treat certain mental health or behavioural conditions for one person within the family unit. For example, family therapy involving all or multiple members of the family can be used to treat anorexia for one person in the family.
- Family therapy is used by trained, licensed mental health professionals, such as psychologists, therapist or counselor, who has specialized knowledge in working with families.

Problems that family therapy can fix include but not limited to strained relationships between family members, stress, anger, communication issues, physical or emotional trauma, coping with acute or chronic illness of a family member such as multiple sclerosis, cancer, stroke, chronic pain or an autoimmune disease, the death of a loved one and grief, divorce or romantic relationship issues and coping with sudden changes, such as unemployment, moving or incarceration. Family therapy can be beneficial if a family member has mental health conditions like anxiety disorders (e.g obsessive-compulsive disorder), eating disorders (e.g anorexia), mood disorders (e.g bipolar disorder and depression), personality disorders (e.g borderline personality disorder), disruptive mood dysregulation disorder and oppositional defiant disorder. Families who have neurodivergent members, such as someone with autism spectrum disorder or attention-deficit disorder can also benefit from family therapy.

Family therapy is an evidence-based treatment that is grounded in theory and skill-based dialogue or conversations. It provides a supportive, nonjudgmental and safe environment that allows empty nesters and their families to talk openly with professionals. These professionals are objective and specially trained to help families with the issues they are having. With the guidance of professionals empty nesters will be assisted to work on improving the interactions and communications among their family members. Empty nesters are assisted to work to incorporate healthy behaviours to improve their family's functioning and well-being.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

There is no gaining saying the fact that empty nest is becoming rampant in Southwest Nigeria. This is due to the fact that children are departing from their parents' home due to academic pursuit, employment, marriage, and other related factors. This condition has become a syndrome associated with other challenges such as chronic conditions and disabilities, loneliness, anxiety, frustrations etc. Ayena, Olanrewaju and Ogunlade (2022) studied the efficacy of social intelligence exhibition as an antidote to associated challenges of empty-nest syndrome and find that exhibition of social intelligence by empty nesters is efficacious in handling the syndrome.

However, the current study is another attempt in finding solutions to the problem of empty-nest syndrome. Hence, this study is exploring the possibility of using family therapy as an antidote to the problem. This is not only because family therapy is an evidence-based treatment that is grounded in theory and skill-based dialogue or conversations but because family therapy can fix strained relationships between family members, stress, anger, communication issues, physical or emotional trauma, coping with acute or chronic illness of a family member such as multiple sclerosis, cancer, stroke, chronic pain or an autoimmune disease, the death of a loved one and grief, divorce or romantic relationship issues and coping with sudden changes, such as unemployment, moving or incarceration

1.2 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were raised to pilot this study

- Male and female school counsellors do not differ significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome
- School counsellors of different religion do not differ significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome
- School counselors of different years of working experience do not differ significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome
- School counsellors of different educational background do not differ significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out the perceptions of school counselors in Southwest Nigeria on family therapy as a panacea to the phenomenon of empty nest syndrome. The objective was to investigate whether empty-nest syndrome could be overcome through the use of family therapy on the basis of gender, religion, years of working experience and educational background of respondents.

2. Methodology

Research Design: The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey. This is because descriptive survey enables researchers to seek the opinion of representative sample of population upon which conclusions, inferences and generalization are made on contemporary phenomenon

Population of the Study: The target population of this study consisted of all school counsellors in Southwest Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Procedure: The Multi-stage sampling method was adopted in selecting participants for this study. This is because multi-stage sampling method consisted of several stages of selection from the larger frame until the actual sample size for the study was obtained. At the first stage, purposive sampling method was used to select all the six states in the Southwest. At stage two, Stratified random technique was used to select participants from six schools from six local government from the six states selected. Hence, in relation to this study, participants from the 6 states of Southwest were selected on the basis of gender, religious affiliations, years of working experience and educational qualifications. At stage three, the simple random sampling technique was employed to select participants from each stratum. Hence, 35 participants from each of the six schools from each of the six local governments selected from each of the six states in Southwest Nigeria.

Instrumentation: The instrument used to collect data for this study is a self-developed questionnaire named ‘’ School Counsellor’s Perceptions on Family Therapy as Antidote to Empty Nest Syndrome (SCOPEFTAENS). The instrument was divided into two sections i.e Sections A and B. Section A sought for information on the personal data of respondents i.e the demographic data such as gender, religion, years of working experience and educational qualification. Section B of the questionnaire contains 20 items that sought information on the perception of counselors on family therapy as antidote to empty nest syndrome.

Validity of the Instrument: The content validity of the instrument was determined by given out questionnaires to a panel of experts in the field of education. These experts following detailed scrutiny, made suggestion which were taken into consideration and necessary corrections were made. The experts affirmed that the instrument covered the intended content and therefore valid for use.

Reliability of the Instrument: the coefficient of stability of the instrument was determined by using the test-re-test method. The instrument was administered to a sample of twenty (20) randomly selected teachers in Ilorin, Kwara State. After the intervening period of four (4) weeks, the same instrument was re-administered to the same sample. The two sets of scores obtained were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation formula. The correlation coefficient obtained was 0.75 which was considered high enough for the researcher to conclude that the instrument is reliable.

Procedure for Data Collection: The administration of the questionnaire in Lagos State was conducted by the researcher, while the administration of the questionnaire forms in the other five (5) states were handled by five well trained research assistants. A total of 210 each of the questionnaire forms were administered in each state. This gave the researcher a total of 1260 questionnaire forms administered. Nevertheless, a total of 1200 questionnaire forms were returned and available for analysis

3. Results

The results of this study are presented in three sections. The first section provides the descriptive analysis while the second section contains the inferential statistics. The third section, however, forms the summary of the findings.

Section One: Descriptive Data Analysis:

Table 2: Demographic Data of the Respondents by Gender, Religious Background, Years of Working Experience and Educational Qualifications

SN	VARIABLES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)	MEAN
1	GENDER			1.43
	Male	690	57.5	
	Female	510	42.5	
2	RELIGION			1.60
	Christianity	571	47.6	
	Islam	545	45.4	
	A.T.R.	84	7.0	
3	YEARS OF WORKING EXPERIENCE			2.25
	10 years or less			
	11-20 years	358	29.8	
	21-30 years	354	29.5	
	31-40- years	317	26.4	
		171	14.3	
4	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS			2.45
	NCE	225	21.3	
	DEGREE	335	27.9	
	MASTERS	423	35.3	
	PH.D	187	15.6	

N=1,200

Source: *Field work (2023)*

Section Two: Hypotheses Testing:

Hypothesis One: Male and female school counsellors do not differ significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviation and t-value of School Counsellor's' Perception on Family Therapy as Panacea to Empty Nest Syndrome

Gender	No	X	SD	Df	Cal t-value	Critical t-value
Male	690	205.12	23.30			
Female	510	204.43	23.70	1198	0.51	1.96

Source: *Field work (2023)*

Table three indicates that the calculated t-value of 0.51 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96. Hence, hypothesis one is accepted. This implies that male and female school counsellors in Southwest Nigeria do not differ significantly in their perception of Family Therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome.

Hypothesis Two: School Counsellors of different religion do not differ significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome

Table 4: Summary Table of Analysis of Variance of School Counsellors' Perception of Family Therapy as Panacea to Empty Nest Syndrome based on Religion

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Squares	Calculated f-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Group	2987.17	2	11893.59	3.45*	3.00
Within Group	656188.08	1197	548.19		
Total	659975.25	1199			

Significant; p < 0.05
Source: Field work (2023)

Table 4 indicates that the calculated F-ratio of 3.45 is greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.00. Hence, hypothesis two was rejected [F(2,1197)=3.45;P<.05]. This means that school counselors of different religion in Southwest Nigeria differed significantly in their perceptions of family therapy as antidote to empty nest syndrome.

Hypothesis Three: School Counselors of different years of working experience do not differ significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome

Table 5: Summary Table of Analysis of Variance of School Counsellors' Perception of Family Therapy as Panacea to Empty Nest Syndrome based on Years of Working Experience

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Squares	Calculated f-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Group	6325.35	3	2108.45	3.86*	2.60
Within Group	653649.90	1196	546.53		
Total	6599975.25	1199			

Significant; p < 0.05
Source: Field work (2023)

Table 5 shows that the calculated F-ratio is 3.86, while the critical F-ratio is 2.60. Since the calculated F-ratio is greater than the critical F-ratio, the null hypothesis is rejected [F(3,1197)=3.86;p<.05]. This means that school counselors of different working experience in Southwest Nigeria differed significantly in their perceptions of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome.

Hypothesis Four: School Counsellors of different educational background do not differ significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome

Table 6: Summary Table of Analysis of Variance of School Counsellors' Perception on Family Therapy as Panacea to Empty Nest Syndrome based on Educational Background.

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Squares	Calculated f-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Group	5082.51	3	1694.17	3.09*	2.60
Within Group	654892.74	1196	547.57		
Total	659975.25	1199			

Significant; p < 0.05
Source: Field work (2023)

Results in Table 6 shows that the calculated F-ratio is 3.09, while the critical F-ratio is 2.60. Since the calculated F-ratio is greater than the critical F-ratio, hypothesis four is rejected [F(3,1196)=3.09;p<.05]. This means that school counselors in Southwest Nigeria of different educational background differed significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome.

4. Discussion of Results

Results of hypothesis one revealed that male and female school counsellors in Southwest Nigeria do not differ significantly in their perception of Family Therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome. This result does not find corroboration in the works of Ayena, Olanrewaju and Ogunlade (2022) who reported that male and female retirees employed social intelligence to overcome empty-nest syndrome differently in Southwest Nigeria. The differences observed in the two results may not be unconnected to the different treatments employed in the two studies.

Results of hypothesis two revealed that school counselors of different religion in Southwest Nigeria differed significantly in their perceptions of family therapy as antidote to empty nest syndrome. This result does not find corroboration in the works of Ayena, Olanrewaju and Ogunlade (2022) who reported that retirees of different religious affiliations do not employ social intelligence to overcome empty-nest syndrome differently. The disparity observed in the two results may not be unconnected to the different respondents employed in the two studies.

Results of hypothesis three revealed that school counselors of different working experience in Southwest Nigeria differed significantly in their perceptions of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome. This result does not find corroboration in the works of Ayena, Olanrewaju and Ogunlade (2022) who reported that retirees of different age group do not employ social intelligence to overcome empty-nest syndrome differently. The differences observed in the two results may not be unconnected with the different moderating variables employed in the two studies.

Results of hypothesis four revealed that school counselors in Southwest Nigeria of different educational background differed significantly in their perception of family therapy as panacea to empty nest syndrome. Whereas, Ayena, Olanrewaju and Ogunlade (2022) reported that retirees of different age group do not employ social intelligence to overcome empty-nest syndrome differently. The differences in the two results may not be unconnected with the different moderating variables employed in the two results

5. Conclusion

This study concluded that school counselors in Southwest Nigeria unanimously agreed that family therapy could be a veritable tool in handling empty nest syndrome. The study also concluded that school counsellors of different religious background, different working experience and different educational background in Southwest Nigeria do not agree unanimously in their choice of family therapy as an antidote to empty nest syndrome. No doubt, school counselors are experts in using different approaches and therapies in handling various challenges that humans are facing in their daily livelihood.

6. Recommendations

This study recommended the use of family therapy and other approaches and therapies that may be appropriate in handling empty-nest syndrome. Hence, an eclectic approach that will be able to employ all forms of approaches as at when due is recommended since empty nest syndrome is always associated with many types of challenges including strained relationships between family members, stress, anger, communication issues, physical or emotional trauma, coping with acute or chronic illness of a family member such as multiple sclerosis, cancer, stroke, chronic pain or an autoimmune disease, the death of a loved one and grief, divorce or romantic relationship issues and coping with sudden changes, such as unemployment, moving or incarceration.

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Part Four
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Scientific Scepticism and Epistemic Justification: Revisiting the Higher Values of Contextualistic Pluralism

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Abstract. Scientific scepticism, fundamentally, questions the veracity and epistemic value of claims not supported by scientific evidence. Motivated by the assumption that only the empirical investigation of reality leads to the truth, the scientific sceptics maintain that only scientific method is best suited for this purpose. Claims found to be wanting in scientific evidence are considered untrue, and of little or no epistemic consequence. Using the analytical and critical methods, this paper interrogates this epistemic criterion of justification of scientific scepticism. It shows the inherent epistemic deficits in this criterion of the scientific sceptics, and how absolutizing its demands in such a manner as to undermine the veracity and epistemic significance of claims outside the mainstream discipline of science is not only to entrap themselves in many epistemic burdens, but to sink under the weight of criteriological egocentrism, detrimental to cognitive progress. As a credible alternative, this paper explores the epistemic fecundity of contextualistic pluralism – the pluralism of contextually underwritten cognitive positions – in case of truth and knowledge justification. It concludes with emphasis on the relevance of this approach to epistemic justification in our age of interculturality, by shifting the focus of philosophical thinking from identity to diversity.

Keywords: Scientific, Scepticism, Knowledge, Contextualistic Pluralism, Truth, Empirical.

1. Introduction

Scepticism is an essential and meaningful component of the search for truth or firm epistemic warrant in epistemology. It is a critical feature of scientific repertoire. Paul Kurtz describes scientific scepticism in his book The *New Skepticism*, as “an essential part of scientific inquiry” (1992: 371). Indeed, many of the most prominent sceptics are and have been some of the world’s prominent scientists. Some of these include Richard Darkins, Stephen Jay Gould, B. F. Skinner and Carl Sigan. A popular misconception, however, is that sceptics are people who generally disbelief things or deny the possibility of knowledge or truth in any given situation. This is not necessarily true about the sceptics; for scepticism, does not necessarily imply disbelief or negating the possibility of knowledge or truth – even extra-ordinary claims – out of hand.

Rather, it also implies examining the available evidence before reaching a decision or withholding judgment until sufficient evidence is had, so that such claim does not rest on faith or preconceptions. Such suspension of judgment can be embraced when evaluating explanations or claims, while the test of the validity of explanations or claims are determined based on objective and empirical evidence they yield. This is precisely what scientific scepticism represents and the idea behind it. Thus, in science, being sceptical does not mean doubting the validity of everything, nor does it mean being cynical.

Rather, it means to suspend judgment of any claim or theory, and to be ready to judge their validity and veracity based on objective empirical evidence (Normand, 2008: 42). The aim of this as Steven Novella states is, to “select beliefs and conclusions that are reliable and valid to ones that are comforting or convenient" (2006: 15). Such sceptical attitude helps scientists to remain objective while performing scientific inquiries and researches. It disposes them for the examination and justification of claims based on the sufficiency of empirical grounds or supports. All these flow from the fundamental assumption in science that empirical investigation of reality alone leads to the truth, and that scientific method is best suited for this purpose.

Doubtless, such a sceptical attitude by scientists is an essential to the growth of scientific knowledge. In order to remain objective, scientists must remain sceptical. In order for scientific knowledge to be advanced, that knowledge must be open to revision or have reproducibility. It is for this reason that they embrace the evaluation of knowledge or truth claims on the basis of verifiability or testability, while at the same time discourage the acceptance of claims based on faith or unreliable evidence. Notwithstanding the value of this criterion to cognitive progress in the discipline of mainstream science, a critical examination of its implications yields a variety of associated epistemic problems, which negate its rational adequacy as a criterion truth determination in science and for other domains of human inquiry, especially regarding its explanatory and predictive completeness.

This paper offers an overview of scientific scepticism and critically examines its epistemic criterion for knowledge and truth determination. It highlights the epistemic weaknesses of this criterion in view of the pursuit of truth and knowledge of reality. It rejects as counterproductive and absolutistic the hubristic attempt to predicate the veracity of claims from other domains of human inquiries or knowledge on it. The paper considers contextualistic pluralism as a more rationally satisfying methodological approach to knowledge of reality, more compatible with the quest for truth about reality than the formalist, exclusivist, and absolutistic route of scientific scepticism.

2. Scientific Scepticism

In a way, scepticism may generally be considered to be part of the scientific procedure; for, "considering the rigour of the scientific method, science itself may simply be thought of as an organised form of scepticism" (Deben, 2013: 1). For instance, an experimental result would generally not be regarded as established until it can be shown to be repeatable independently. As part of the scientific culture:

A theory is accepted not based on the prestige or convincing powers of the proponent, but on the results obtained through observations and/or experiments which anyone can reproduce: the results obtained using the scientific method are repeatable… If the original claims are not verified the origin of such discrepancies is hunted down and exhaustively studied (Studylib.net, 2013: n. p.).

However, scientific scepticism is a practical epistemological position (or paradigm) in which one specifically suspends judgment and questions the veracity of claims unless they can be empirically tested or verified on the basis of scientific understanding or evidence (Kendrick, 2019: 2). This combines elements of scientism and scepticism in the process. Scientism demands an unquestioned trust in science, while scepticism demands the withholding of judgment over certain claims.

Armed with these basic theoretical components, scientific scepticism, has the goal of investigating claims made on issues outside the mainstream discipline of science and determining whether they are supported by empirical research and are reproducible, as part of a methodological norm pursuing "the extension of certified knowledge" (Stemwedel, 2008: 23). It generally focuses on debunking theories or claims believed to be far beyond the mainstream of science, as opposed to a professional science, which focuses on extending scientific knowledge. Scientific scepticism is different from philosophical scepticism, as the latter basically doubts our ability to have or lay claims to any certain knowledge of reality in any situation (Burr and Milton, 1992: 443). It also differs from methodological scepticism, which is "a systematic process of being sceptical about the truth of one's beliefs" (Merton, 1942: 42). On the contrary, scientific scepticism, assumes the trustworthiness of man's power to know as well as the knowability of the physical world. Rooted in the fundamental assumption that empirical investigation of reality leads to the most reliable knowledge of reality, scientific sceptics believe that the scientific method is best suited to verifying such knowledge claims. Science is, thus, perceived as the most reliable system of inquiry and understanding the natural world. It is equally argued that:

The great advantage of the scientific method is that it is unprejudiced: one does not have to believe a given researcher, one can redo the experiment and determine whether his/her results are true or false. The conclusions will hold irrespective of the state of mind, or the religious persuasion, or the state of consciousness of the investigator and/or the subject of the investigation. Faith, defined as belief that does not rest on logical proof or material evidence, does not determine whether a scientific theory is adopted or discarded (Studylib.net, 2013: n.p.).

On the strength of such epistemic conviction scientific sceptics discourage the acceptance or justification of claims which rely on faith or unreliable evidence, insisting only on the acceptability of such claims as they are verifiable and falsifiable. Such claims found to be wanting or ignoring the fundamental aspects of the scientific methods are considered “pseudoscience” and lacking in truth and epistemic merit. Brian Dunning describes scientific scepticism as "the process of finding a supported conclusion, not the justification of a preconceived conclusion” (2004: 1). Whenever an empirical claim is made, whether it is religious, spiritual, medical, social, political, historical, etc., there is a role for scientific scepticism. Novella maintains that scientific sceptics endeavour to protect themselves and others from fraud and deception by exposing fraud and educating the public and policy-makers to recognize deceptive or misleading claims or practices (2006: 23).

The contemporary social movement, known as the sceptical movement is based on this idea of scientific skepticism. The goal of this movement is to investigate claims associated with fringe topics and to determine whether empirical research can support them or whether they are reproducible, as part of the process of pursuing "the extension of certified knowledge" (Stemwedel, 2008: 23).

The overall process of scientific method involves observations of the natural world, making conjectures (hypotheses) about why things are the way they are, deriving predictions from them as logical consequences, and to subsequently undertake experiments based on those predictions. Under modern interpretation of scientific method, as suggested by Karl Popper, a theory or hypothesis must be falsified, that it, it must be possible to identify a possible outcome of an experiment that conflicts with predictions deduced from the hypothesis or theory; otherwise, the hypothesis or theory can neither be meaningfully tested or accorded any truth or epistemic value. In his *Conjectures and Refutations*, Popper contends that although we may not be able to prove a theory conclusively, it is however, always possible to falsify a theory. And indeed, one experiment alone which does not produce the predicted results immediately casts doubt on a theory, provided of course, a careful check has been adequately undertaken. Popper thus points out that progress in science occurs when theories are disproved and replaced by better theories. He therefore advocated that theories must be capable of being falsified to determine their scientific and truth value. For him, theories for which no experiments can be devised that might falsify them are unscientific and untrue (1998: 49). Thus, a good and true theory for him is one which leads to the prediction of an unexpected results, which can be tested experimentally (qtd. in Ojong, 2008: 49). For Wudka the falsification criterion is a crucial aspect of the scientific theory or hypothesis, differentiating it from faith-based claims; for, “a theory must be ‘falsifiable’” (1998: 11).

Another criterion is that of Ockham’s Razor (also spelled “Occam’s razor”), a problem-solving philosophical principle which gives precedence to simplicity by recommending “searching for explanations constructed with the smallest possible set of elements” (Barry, 2006: 1). Though traceable to Aristotle statements in his *Posterior Analytics*, “nature operates in the shortest way possible” (qtd. in Franklin, 2001: 241), this principle, also known as the principle of parsimony, and sometimes paraphrased as "the simplest explanation is usually the best one”, is more commonly credited to the philosopher and theologian of the 14th century, William of Ockham. Ockham is credited with the principle that "Entities must not be multiplied beyond necessity" (Schaffer, 2015: 644). His constant employment of this principle to resolve otherwise complex philosophical problems such as the relations between objects and their universal qualities, substance and accidents, efficient causality, ideas in the Creator’s mind, etc., is to being referred to as “Ockham’s razor” (Duignan, 2004: 3).

In the context of science, this principle has been adapted as a scientific principle in deciding between competing theories. Nicole d’Oresme, a 14th-century French physicist, invoked it as the law of economy principle in deciding between competing scientific theories. Galilee Galileo later adopted it in defending the simplest hypothesis of the heavens. Isaac Newton as cited in Stephen Hawking referenced this principle when he says that, "We are to admit no more causes of natural things than such as are both true and sufficient to explain their appearances. Therefore, to the same natural effects we must, as far as possible, assign the same causes” (2002: 731). Other later scientists stated similar simplifying laws and principles, all of which express the basic idea behind this principle, that, where there are two competing theories over an issue, the simpler explanation of the matter is to be favoured or preferred. Ernst Mach formulated this principle this way in the spirit of scientific scepticism: "Scientists must use the simplest means of arriving at their results and exclude everything not perceived by the senses” (qtd. in Becher, 1905: 535).

A further criterion by scientific scepticism for the truth determination of a hypothesis or theories veracity is its explanatory power, which is the ability of a hypothesis or theory to explain the subject matter to which it pertains effectively. The efficacy of a theory or hypothesis is determined by its Explanatory power is the utility in explaining the real world. A theory or hypothesis possesses great explanatory power where it makes few assumptions, has substantial predictive power and significantly reduces uncertainty in an accurate and precise way (John, 12). Explanatory impotence is the opposite of a hypothesis or a theory's explanatory power. A hypothesis or theory is said to have explanatory power if it has the following characteristics: If more facts and observations are accounted for; if more details of causal relations are provided, leading to a higher accuracy and precision; if it offers greater predictive power, that is, if it offers more details about what we should expect to see, and what we should not; if it depends less on authority and more on observations; if it makes fewer assumptions; if it is more falsifiable; and as David Deutsch recently added, if it is "hard to vary", that is, if it is impossible to change any one detail of it without affecting the whole hypothesis or theory (2011: 11). And, finally, scientific scepticism assumes that the truth of claims and theories are to be judged based on the degree to which they match experimental results.

3. Extra-Ordinary and Paranormal Claims

Scientific scepticism maintains a sceptical attitude towards extra-ordinary claims or paranormal claimed phenomena, which includes issues related to Unidentifiable Flying Objects (UFOs), cryptids, religion or fringe areas of scientific or pseudoscientific research. Other such extraordinary or paranormal claims that scientific sceptics consider as unlikely to be true on scientific grounds include health claims surrounding certain food, and alternative medicine, the plausibility and existence of supernatural abilities (e.g. Tarot Reading, Clairvoyance) or entities (gods, angels, poltergeists, etc.); Creationism/Intelligent design, etc. In his *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science*, which became a founding document in the nascent scientific scepticism movement, Martin Gardner undertook a survey and debunks what he describes as pseudosciences and the pseudo-scientists who propagate it. He even attacked the credulity of the popular press and the irresponsibility of publishing houses in helping to propagate these ideas. According to him, "If anything, scientific journals err on the side of permitting *questionable* theses to be published" (1957: 8).

Since the scientific method generally requires empirical evidence, scientific sceptics do not trust or accept such extra-ordinary or paranormal claims that cannot be subjected to the scientific method of verification. For this reason, their truth or epistemic value is doubted or questioned. According to Olav Hammer, "the bulk of the scientific sceptical movement's literature works on an implicit model, that belief in the irrational is being based on scientific illiteracy or cognitive" (2007: 395). Some scientific sceptics sound out some dangers associated with such pseudoscience. Bertrand Russell, for instance, in his "On the Value of Scepticism" argues that, "it is undesirable to believe a proposition when there is no ground whatever for supposing it true" (1928: 1). He also maintains that "some individual actions based on beliefs for which there is no evidence of efficacy, can result in destructive actions" (1928: 1). Richard Dawkins in *The God Delusion* points to religion as a source of violence, and considers creationism a threat to biology (2007: 22). Paul Kurtz suggests that the "critical examination of religious claims should be part of the sceptical agenda" (qtd. in Hammer, 390).

However, it must be noted here as well that "scientific sceptics do not assert that unusual claims should be automatically rejected out of hand on *a priori* grounds. Rather they argue that one should critically examine claims of paranormal or anomalous phenomena and that extraordinary claims would require extraordinary evidence in their favour before they could be accepted as having validity" (Deben, 2013: 1). Nevertheless, extra-ordinary or paranormal claims may be true only if almost every scientist in the world is wrong. Such extra-ordinary evidence is required for the validity of an extra-ordinary or paranormal claim; for the more extra-ordinary the claim, the more extra-ordinary the evidence required. But until such evidence is provided, scientific sceptics insist that we should hold onto the tried-and-true way of science; for, "the scientific method is the best way yet discovered for winnowing the truth from lies and delusion" (Studylib.net., 2013: n.p.).

4. Epistemic Deficits of Experiential Proof

Apparently, scientific scepticism seems to offers what might otherwise be considered an important yardstick for truth or knowledge determination. It appears that the criteria can promote the objectivity and reproducibility of our knowledge and truth claims. Yet, the relevance and justification of the criteria relates only to its functionality only within the context of scientific knowledge. It cannot be imputed with such relevance outside the domain of mainstream science. In view of this fact, it can be argued that, scientific scepticism's experiential category constitutes a rather limited approach to human inquiry about truth of reality, because it limits knowledge or truth about reality to experience. It is for this reason too that it makes sense to hold that it would therefore be a serious epistemological error of category for the scientific sceptics to dismiss as untrue or epistemically valueless, claims that fall outside the domain of mainstream science, simply because they cannot be verified by scientific evidence. There is therefore, an incommensurable contextual difference between science and those that throw up what is considered as extra-ordinary or paranormal claims such as religion, magic, tradition, alternative medicine, astrology, supernatural abilities and entities, etc., differ essentially.

Even within the context of scientific knowledge, the basis of epistemic justification of knowledge or truth claim may vary with time and circumstance. For instance, given the theoretical prospect of unending scientific revolution that lies before us in the scientific world itself, the scientific theories and methods of verification of knowledge of one generation cannot be used as the criteria for judging those of another. We can be sure that the scientists of the future will have a better science, and an ampler and more understanding of the universe, and thus, a better conceptual scheme. This further shows the epistemic burden or limitation of the scientific sceptic's criteria of scientific, and why it cannot be regarded an *a priori* universal principle for determining the veracity and epistemic value of claims from other contexts of human inquiries or knowledge production. To insist otherwise as the scientific sceptics, tend to do, is to be uncritically formalistic, exclusivist and absolutistic with their epistemic criteria. Such criteriological egocentrism should be tempered by a posture of criteriological humility: "The rules are different and so must their application be" (Etuk, 2016: 18).

Another identifiable epistemic burden of scientific scepticism is that, it tends to place too much confidence in the scientific method of verification to faithfully disclose to us the true nature of reality. However, such triumphalist confidence appears to be misplaced optimism, given the fact of human science as characteristically human as well as the corrigibility of our scientific experimentations and conceptions. The fact is that, we have no knowledge of reality as an unmediated "given" or complete fact of the matter (Quine, 1953: 60). We can only learn about reality by interacting with it, and regarding scientific knowledge of reality everything depends on how hard we can push in our inquiry in situations of observational and experimental interactions. It would certainly be difficult to secure explanatory and predictive completeness of reality even with the most sophisticated scientific theory or method. As Francis Bacon avers, nature will never tell us more than we can forcefully extract from her with the means of interaction at our disposal (qtd. in Rescher, 2003: 214).

Hence, the utmost successes which our scientific method can accomplish "will not enable us to comprehend more than an infinitesimal fraction of what doubtless is to comprehend" (Jevons, 1977: 752). "An what we manage to extract by successively deeper probe is bound to wear a steadily changing aspect, because we operate in new circumstances where old conditions cannot be expected to prevail and the old rules can no longer apply" (Rescher, 2003: 214). Thus, contrary to the misplaced optimism of the scientific sceptics, we cannot realistically that our science and its method of inquiry, at any given stage of its actual development will ever be in a position to afford us more than a very partial an incomplete access to the phenomena of nature or reality. And given the fact that, "we have no direct access to truth or knowledge of reality unmediated by the epistemological resources of rational inquiry" (Rescher, 2003: 169), man's imperfect *physical* control is bound to mean his imperfect *cognitive* control.

Additionally, the scientific sceptics' epistemic criterion for knowledge and truth verification is self-contradictory; for, the criteria cannot itself be empirically or scientifically verified. If the scientific sceptics maintain as their central position that "only scientifically verifiable claims are true", how can this claim itself be verified? Certainly, this claim itself is not scientifically verifiable with any scientific method. Thus, the central claim or principle of scientific scepticism seems to undermine its own status. This is simply because, if the scientific scepticism's central principle itself is not verifiable, the only possibility left for it is that it is merely an emotive statement expressing the feelings or biases of the scientific sceptics. In this regard, it stands as a principle that contradicts itself.

5. Contextualistic Pluralism

Against the backdrop of these identified weaknesses in scientific scepticism it becomes imperative to adopt a different approach to truth or knowledge determination that not only addresses these weaknesses, but also shows greater compatibility with the rational demand for an inclusive methodological approach and functionalism. The understanding that one's view of truth or knowledge is bound to be linked to one's cognitive situation, makes contextualistic pluralism, which emphasizes "plurality of contexts" of experience, a more relevant alternative to scientific scepticism in case of truth or knowledge determination. Different individuals, different eras, different societies, all have different bodies of experience. Therefore, "in matters of cognition as elsewhere, our normative orientations do not come to us *ex nihilo* but emerge from experience" (Rescher, 2003: 162).

With contextualistic pluralism, therefore, our concern is with truth or knowledge justification within the context of discourse. Claims to knowledge is to be judged or understood not from an a-situational or a thorough-going relativistic position, but only in respect of the relative context in which the justification is sought, which Quine calls "background theory or frame of reference" (1953: 60) and which Donald Davidson calls "conceptual scheme" (qtd. in Ozumba, 2015: 177). A notable contextualist, Gail Stint, captures this idea succinctly as he declares: "It is an essential characteristic of our concept of knowledge that tighter criteria are appropriate in different contexts (2012: 254.3); for, "it is one thing in a street encounter, another in a classroom, another in a law court – and who is to say it cannot be another in a philosophical discussion?" (2012: 254.4). With contextualistic pluralism, all truths, including scientific or even the so-called absolute truths are so within their frame of reference. The mere existence of different views and opinions in contextual pluralism is no impediment to, rather, it is compatible with commitment on pursuing the truth about reality. Recognising that others see matters differently in other settings and contexts of inquiry does not and need not discourage our attachment to our own views of the matter where we stand. This is why contextualistic pluralism is not an indifferentistic relativism that looks with neutrality and uncommitted indifference to all points of view as standing on the same footing – where there is nothing to choose. Rather, contextualistic pluralism guarantees such multiplicity of frame of reference, whereby every claim is weighed against its context, which makes it either true or false.

It creates value for the cognitive imperative that we must stay open and recognize that others see matters differently in other settings and contexts of inquiry besides the scientific context, even though this need not daunt us in attachment to our own views of the matter where we stand here and now. And at the same time, we are disposed to adopt as truth or knowledge claims that we deem to qualify for acceptance as universally cogent and rational on the standards that we ourselves endorse, namely: that they serve the purpose of our context better than others. Human endeavours, is essentially teleological-goal oriented. In the context of rational inquiry for truth, some claims or beliefs are bound to serve the purpose of their domains better than others, proving themselves more relevant in this regard than others. This way, they establish themselves as more rationally appropriate with respect to the issues, and deserving our presence in terms of truth or knowledge qualification. Such a functionalistic perspective of contextualistic pluralism is decisive in its impetus against the weaknesses of scientific scepticism, and more rationally inclusive and compatible with our commitment to the pursuit of truth or knowledge about reality.

6. Conclusion

As part of a methodological process of pursuing the extension of certified and objective knowledge, scientific sceptics focus on debunking theories which they believe to be far beyond the mainstream of science. In view of this, they question the veracity or epistemic value of claims lacking scientific evidence, under the assumption that, empirical investigation of reality alone leads to the truth, and scientific method is best suited for this purpose. Within the docket of the scientific observation and experimentation are the operational and principles of verifiability, falsifiability or testability, Ockham's Razor of simplicity, explanatory power of theories as well as the degree to which their predictions match experimental results. Any claim lacking in such scientific evidential criteria and orientation are considered as "pseudoscience", untrue and epistemically deficient.

Whereas such epistemic criteria may be relevant within the scientific context of knowledge production, absolutizing its demands in such a manner as to undermine the veracity and epistemic significance of claims outside the mainstream discipline of science, is not only to entrap oneself in many epistemic burdens, but to sink under the unsavoury weight of criteriological egocentrism. It has also become clear that what was universalised by global imperial designs as a universal science is in fact a Western particularism, which assumed power to define all rival forms of knowledge as particular, local, contextual and situational, while claiming universality (Santos 2007: xviii). Such erroneous disposition is arising from a formalist approach to knowledge, and a clear failure to recognise that others see matters differently in other settings and contexts of inquiry, and that such contexts of discourse must be the basis for which the justification of claims are to be sought. This is the basis of contextual pluralism adopted in this paper as a relevant alternative to scientific scepticism. Here, every claim is weighed against its context, which makes it either true or false; and there is clearly no conflict between our commitment to the truth as we see it in our context and a recognition that the adoption of a variant probative perspective leads others to see the truth differently in other context.

A pluralism of contextually underwritten cognitive position as evident here, does not lend itself to relativistic indifferentism, which holds that all the alternatives ultimately lie on par while committing to none. Rather, it pivots on the idea of contextual appropriateness defined by the experiential circumstance of the subject's situation. Thus, recognising that other standards are used by others in a different context, we nevertheless, do and can deem our own standard of rational cognition as appropriate for ourselves. Since the scientific sceptic's criterion of scientific evidence can therefore not apply across board, such insistence becomes necessary and counter-production in knowledge and truth inquiry.

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'African Time' is un-African

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Abstract. The idea of African time has become very ubiquitous among Africans to the extent that Africans themselves have come to accept it as a way of life. This phenomenon has become so destructive to Africans in their various life's activities; ranging from work places, social gatherings, religious activities to even keeping appointments with government functionaries. Time wasting and mismanagement has therefore been viewed as an African phenomenon that acts as a serious impediment to Africa's development. Adopting the philosophical methods of analysis and hermeneutics, this work argued that the concept of African time does not have African origin and that such an idea is a foreign imposition on Africans and it is a furtherance of colonialism in Africa and on Africans. This is because Africans in traditional metaphysical worldview are very religious and would always keep to time since they are conscious of the consequences of late coming in their appointments with the supra-sensible beings in African ontology. We therefore concluded that we must reinvent Africa's originality on punctuality while conscientiously dropping the colonially imposed African time. That way, Africans would reenact their real identity and tackle any development challenges associated with time wasting.

Keywords: African time, worldview, African ontology, punctuality, African identity

1. Introduction

This study is as a result of the practical motivation from various views on the attitude of Africans towards time. Often times, we hear people even in official places assign responsibilities to people giving specific timeline with the caution: 'no African time'. Again, people come for a meeting behind schedule and they are derided as typical Africans. Sometimes, organizers of an event know that the kick-off time for such event is, say 2pm but they intentionally place 12noon on their notice of invitation with the mindset that invitees are likely to honour the invitation behind schedule because of the phenomenon called 'African time'.

The idea of African time therefore signifies that Africans are not conscious of time. In simple terms, Africans have no sense of punctuality and are likely not expected to keep to time in any engagement. Incredibly, most Africans themselves accept this description as their own identity and joyfully address themselves as such, to the point that they come late to an event and happily remind you that they are Africans and such action (of lateness) must be permitted or overlooked. The situation gets more disturbing when someone in an office being punished for lateness goes about complaining to others of injustice being done to him simply for coming to perform his official function five or ten minutes behind time. Most worrisome is the fact that colleagues of such an offender condemn a boss who simply performed his duties rightly by querying the offender. They (the offender's colleagues) label such a boss wicked and un-African, even though they are aware the boss is a Nigerian, as the case may be.

In view of this scenario, Africans have been accused of being their own problems of development as part of their development quagmire can be attributed to their non-commitment to times. This is why Nyasani advised Africans, saying "…no human progress can be achieved if the progress by which it is attained disregards the flow of time as its most important and indispensible regulator" (2010, p. 259). However, we vehemently reject unpunctuality as an African phenomenon and hold that Africanizing late coming is another form of mental colonisation of Africans by both the West and their African prodigies. This colonisation has been heightened by the idea of westernisation and so-called advancement which have come to destroy the exactitude of time which the traditional African was known for. We are therefore set to achieve the following aims in this work: upturn the view that there exists a brand of time called 'African time', show that the idea of lateness comes with Western concept of time and has been a Western inherited phenomenon by Africans, prove that Africans are endemically punctual in all their activities as lack of it portends so much danger in all aspects of their lives, and finally resurrect the sense of punctuality originally definitive of Africans.

2. Time: Its Evolution among Africans

Time has evolved from the pre-colonial time to the present times in different African cultures. In the pre-literate times, there was no clock time; so there was no exactitude in time calculation. In other words, there was no 24-hourly calibration of time; rather there were different ways of measuring time. Among these different ways were the use of shadows, cock crows, movements of celestial bodies like the sun and the moon, and peculiar sounds from certain birds or animals. In line with these, we had periods such as early morning, morning, mid-day, afternoon, early evening, evening, night, mid-night and late night. Among the Ukwuani people of Delta State in Southern Nigeria, early morning is called *ọkpa ọdụ* (the first session of cock crow), morning is *ụtụtụ*, mid-day is *okeme efifie*, afternoon is *efifie,* early evening can be described as *ichi ekpul'ẹka*, evening is *ẹnyashị*, night is *ngede*, mid-night is *odingede nẹbẹ*, late night is *odingede*. Since in traditional Africa, "actual time is a process measured in terms of events, happenings and occurrences"(Mbiti, 1969, pp. 25-26), there are specific events or occurrences associated with each of these periods of the day or night.

In traditional Africa, there was also time as calendar but not the Gregorian calendar; it could be better described as season and there are events that marked such description. The components of season begin from day to year, which make up the calendar year and specifically progresses among the Ukwuani people and other Western Igbo people of Nigeria as follows:

Ubochi or *Mbochi* Day, not in terms of evening to morning but from morning through evening to another morning.

Izu Four market days: Nkwo, Eke, Olie and Afor, counting of which can begin from any of the days. Four days therefore make one week (*ofu izu*).

ọnwa Month: This is counted as *Izu ẹsa* (seven weeks), that is 28 days. It is counted with the complete circle of moon which also takes about 28days; 14days of shining from evening to about 12midnight and another 14days from midnight to early hours of the morning.

Asụa Year: This is not counted in days and weeks. On monthly basis, it is counted with respect to some annual crops planted, bird migration which is also based on rainy and dry seasons, harvest period, annual festivals, among others.

Although there is no conscious counting of the number of days that makes a year as it is done in the Gregorian calendar, it is counted as 364days; the equivalence of the Gregorian calendar days. Similar calendar has been explained by Nwala (2010, p. 154) to be the held among the Igbo people of Nigeria in his book *Igbo Philosophy*.

Another method of determining time is through the menstrual cycle (*oge nso*) of women which takes place every 28days (*izu esa*). Thirteen of such cycles amount to one year. *Oge nso i*s translated as period of taboo in the sense that a woman menstruating is forbidden from cooking for the husband, sleeping in the same room with him and hanging under-wears outside or along the routes taken by men. This time determinant helped traditional Africans in child spacing because twenty-six (26) of such cycles equate two (2) years. Couples could, within the period of the thirteen (13) to twenty-six (26) cycles, determine whether the woman should get pregnant in order to allow for healthy child spacing.

The lunar movement of the moon in traditional Africa is very fundamental in determining time since a complete cycle takes twenty-eight (28) days. This aspect of time determinant assisted traditional Africa in environmental preservation as they practiced shifting cultivation through land fallowing. This activity which took place every five (5) years for each cultivated farmland is not according to the Gregorian calendar but in terms of the completion of five cycles of a yearly thirteen cycle lunar movements. However, the complete lunar cycles for such period also coincide with the Gregorian calendar for the same period. After each harvest season from cultivated farmlands which are usually communally owned, elders of the families began to drop palm kernels (*mkpulu aku*) at designated places (one for each complete cycle of the moon) and when the palm kernels got to sixty-five (65), then approval would be given for such farmlands to be cultivated again.

All the accounts of time measurement and determinants explained so far were very visible and operational in the pre-literate Africa and were attached to events or phenomena, as the case may be. But the advent of colonialism came with more time accuracy and precision determined by the western clock time and the Gregorian calendar which runs from January as the first month of the year to December as the last month. The literate orientation which came with colonialism and post-colonialism among Africans gave birth to the evolution of time in Africa. One traditional African mode of measuring time that was affected by the western mode was the use of shadows. As the western clock time came into existence, time was no longer determined by what Mbiti calls *highsun* or *highmoon*. Rather the now literate African with the idea of clock time would draw a circle on the ground and calibrate it just like the western clock and tried to find the radius of the circle where he placed a long stick. The direction of the shadow then gave him an idea of what time of the day it was. This was an improvement on the initial traditional situation in which the length of the shadow of any object, including that of human beings, could be used to estimate time; but the problems of accuracy and precision were still not addressed.

The evolution of time in Africa is also reflected in Mbiti's explanation of reckoning of day with significant events among the Ankore people of Uganda as well as the Latuka people's understanding of lunar months also with significant events (1969, pp. 25-26). Both of which are schematically explained below:

Time	**Description of Events**	**Local Name**
6am	Milking time	*Akasheshe*
12noon	Rest time for both cattle and people after milking of the cattle as the day would be sunny and hot	*bari omubirago*
1pm	Time for drawing water from the wells or rivers prior to leading the cattle to drink water in order to avoid polluting the water or becoming obstacles to those going to draw water	*baaza ahamaziba*
2pm	Drinking time for cattle	*amasyo niganywa*
3pm	Grazing time for cattle after leaving drinking water	*amasyo nigakuka*
5pm	Time for cattle to return home after grazing	*ente niitaha*
6pm	Time for cattle to enter their kraals or sleeping places	*ente zaatahas*
7pm	Milking time before the cattle sleep	*Akasheshe*

Table I: Description of Day by the Ankore People of Uganda

Month	Description of Events	Name of the Period
October	The sun is very hot at this time	The Sun
December	People become very thirsty because water is scarce	Give your uncle water
February	People begin to prepare their field for planting because the rains are set to return	Let them dig
May	Grain begins to bear	Grain in the ear
June	Children begin to eat the new grain and as such get their mouths dirty	Dirty mouth
July	The rain stops, grounds get dry and grass withers	Dry grass
August	People eat and harvest sweet grain	Sweet grain
September	The sausage tree begins to bear fruit which looks like huge sausage	Sausage tree

Table II: Lakuta People's Description of Lunar Month

The tables above are clear indications that time had evolved in Africa with the emergence of clock time and the Gregorian calendar as against Mbiti's thought that the African traditional views of time were being presented. The different events described above among the various peoples did not begin with the advent of the western time; they had begun before then and were carried out with time references different from Mbiti's presentation above. However, with western time and calendar, there was precision in carrying out the events.

In all, there was a shift (not complete abandonment) from the inexact and imprecise account of time among Africans to western concept of time introduced by the colonialists. Africans began to calculate time more in terms of clock time and Gregorian calendars of days, weeks, months and years. For instance, the observation of weeks on the basis of market days was lost to that of the colonialists' seven (7) days time calculation which for the Ukwuani and Igbo peoples of Southern

Nigeria turned to be *Izu Uka* (transliterated as weekly church). Church meeting is weekly on Sundays and so calculation and observation of week begins from Sunday till Saturday and another week begins again on Sunday. *Ofu Izu uka* becomes translated as one week, beginning from Sunday till Saturday. Although, we know that weekly calculation can begin from any day of the week but the observation of the week beginning from Sunday was a colonial legacy bequeathed to Africans by Christian missionaries. This shift was also captured by Babalola and Ayodeji (2013) thus:

Emphasis shifted from mere relation of time to events, natural phenomena, and weather. The people begin to see the need for calculating time in the modern way. Somehow, some have derogatorily observed this period as one of the evils in the principle of assimilation which was introduced by the colonialists, especially the French. This was because the principle of assimilation emphasized the submersion of the people's cultural values, ideas, philosophies etc. into the cultural beliefs and ways of life of the colonialists. That notwithstanding, the important thing…is that, the period marks the unset of a vivid process of change among the people, when it comes to the issue of time concept.

Not that the consideration of time in the context of events, weather and natural phenomenon was jettisoned entirely. But the enlightened and the educated among the people see in western education, a better way of time consideration. This was as a result of the fact that the new system was more exact and precise. At this period, both African concept of time and (the western, the linear concept of time) were used by the Africans (p. 145).

In summary, the quest for exactness, accuracy and precision has been seen to be the foundation for embracing the western concept of time. There is also the significant attendant reason of addressing the problem of development of the African continent the moment Africans deal with their 'African time' attitude which signifies non-commitment to duties and responsibilities. How most Africans come to accept the "African time' toga remains puzzling and that constitutes the basis of this research. Therefore, in our next section, we shall reflect on how our identity, as Africans, has become associated with unpunctuality.

3. Is the African Identity Synonymous with Non-punctuality?

Several pictures have been painted of Africans with respect to their attitude of late coming to events or handling responsibilities. Such accounts have become so penetrating in the psyche of Africans that the notion of 'African time' is not just an abstract expression but also a surprisingly accepted phenomenon that is practically affecting every aspect of their life. Victor Dlamini expressed great dissatisfaction on how much rooted such concept of time is in the lifestyle of Africans thus:

…the concept of African Time continues to provide a convenient excuse for the tardiness of those who are lazy or just plain rude. Of course, those who invoke African Time are not stupid, they know that by saying that it is part of African culture to disregard punctuality, very few will have the nerve to challenge them (2010, n.d).

We have so conformed to this concept that a meeting that is supposed to be 10:00am for instance would be advertised for 8:00am because of the notion that people will keep to their 'African Time' attitude and surprisingly, the one who thought and fixed the meeting that way is not disappointed as people would come in accordance to his projections. In political rallies, voters wait endlessly for aspirants to come and present manifestoes to the people; an event scheduled to take place at, say 12noon, never happens until 2:00am the next day when almost everyone had left the venue of the event. The few persons who must have stayed back for the possible spoil that would be shared are simply hailed for being die-hard Party loyalists and within ten (10) minutes, an ordinarily serious event as such had ended. The cause is simply the bug of 'African Time' that had bitten the African mind.

Most amazing are the attitudes of practitioners of Christianity and Islam respectively; worshippers and their heads alike. It is a commonplace seeing worshippers casually strolling into church services more than an hour behind schedule with no sign of remorse. Unbelievably, the Pastor stays back in his office while service has commenced and by the time he projects that church officials must have all taken their seats, he would majestically walk into the service with a loud and standing ovation from the worshippers. It is the same story for most other western religions. All of these are clear indications of the acceptability of 'African Time'.

Scholars of African origin not only accepted this denigrating description of Africans but have advertently come to defend it. Kanu briefly put his defence of the propriety of such appellation thus: "in African time, it is the activity at hand that determines the length of time required to compete it. Thus, activity controlled time and not time to control activity" (2019, p. 5). Kanu's view here shows that Africans do not regulate their activities to happen within certain time frame. They cannot determine when a particular activity should end so that they can meet up with other activities that are proximately taking place within the same time range. There are therefore justifiable reasons for Africans in their not keeping to time for appointment or events at all times. Osita Nnajiofor was very explicit in his defence of the 'African Time' toga as he made this aim unambiguous in his work. In his words,

This section…tries to justify Africa's seeming lax attitude to time and bring to bear reasons why Africans take this posture, contrary to the tag already hung on the Africans that there is nothing African about time and that laxity in time management is one of the highest contributors to productivity loses in the work place and personal life as plans are not well executed per time (2016, p. 268).

Nnajiofor is averse to the claim that Africans have no sense of time and opposes the view that there is no such thing called 'African Time'. He thinks that the 'African time' description of Africans constitutes African identity, so anyone erasing that description is a surreptitious destroyer of our identity as Africans. A specific defence of the African tardy attitude to time is the fact that as Africans, we are more interested in maintaining human relationships than struggling to keep to time. According to him,

Another justification for African understanding of time which is nevertheless portrayed as not being time conscious is Africa's relational approach to life. Here tasks are subjugated to the relational aspect of life and are completed in order to help the family, clan, the village and the tribe (2016, p. 268).

In the African spirit therefore, it is more of our identity for our hospitability to make us engage in activities that constitute providing solutions to people's problems than being punctual in an event when someone is suffering or facing challenges. This is only an extroverted discussion of what Kanu had pointed out about activity controlling time for Africans, hence our laxity in time consciousness.

Another renowned scholar, Chris Anyokwu, acquiesced to the 'African time' description of Africans and attempted a justification of their (Africans') slapdash behaviours towards time in a rhetorical manner. He began his acceptance of the toga by asking:

Has it ever occurred to you that the so-called "African Time" syndrome was developed by the absence of modern conveniences? Imagine, for a second, the usually difficult terrains and topographies of many African communities. Imagine these "s–tholes" made worse by lack of basic necessities and infrastructure such as good roads, rails, waterways, potable water, electricity supply, primary held-care delivery system and recreational facilities (Anyaokwu, 2021, n.p).

In spite of this explanation of why Africans do not keep to time, he condemns the retrogressive implications of the phenomenon on the development of Africa as a continent. He charged Africans to recoil from continuing on the path of unpunctuality to appointments and events in order to make room for all round development of the person and society.

In this work, we are not opposed to the fact that Africans have their peculiar way of reacting to time but what we disagree with is the acceptance of the claim that Africans have a slipshod attitude to time, no matter the justificatory attempts made by these claimants. The idea of 'African Time' is only one of the perspectives of psyche colonialism from the West. The lax approach to time has been singled out as exclusively an African property and quality which has unquestionably been accepted and practiced by Africans. Kanu recapped a story of a Ghanaian king coming late to an event this way:

…on Tuesday, 28 October, 2003, 16:03 GMT, BBC NEWS reported that international journalists in the UK were kept waiting by the king of Ghana's largest ethnic group who was visiting Alexandra Palace in the north London at the climax of a Ghanaian trade exhibition, Ghana Expo 2003. The journalists had been informed Otumfuo Osei Tutu II from the Ashanti would arrive at the exhibition at 11:00. The time was changed to 14:00, but the king did not show up until two hours later when the journalists had already packed and left. The incident made the whites to remark that 'Africans are terrible time keepers' (2019, p. 3).

A similar situation was also recorded of a former president of Ecuador, Lucio Gutierrez, who was widely known to be a perpetual late comer to every event. His situation was so bad that such attitude to time became a national issue as it permeated the country's civil service and the economic sector as well. Gbenga Adebambo captured it expressly thus: "Ecuador, a South American country famed for its lack of punctuality has added up the numbers. In this country, over half of all public events start late" (2018, n.p).

It is obvious how colonialism assesses same actions on the basis of race and makes a people lose their identity and the confidence they ordinarily had of themselves. If lack of punctuality is coming from an African or Africa, then it is 'African Time' but it came from an Ecuadorian and Ecuador, it was not 'American Time'. A German would also come for an appointment behind schedule but that action is not attributed to the operation of 'European Time'. The action of unpunctuality summarily still comes from various peoples of the world in different continents, yet citizens of those continents are not characteristically unpunctual because of their identity. Such discrimination is found in Heimbürger's seminal work titled *Time- A Multidimensional Concept* acknowledges when he asserts that "…in Brazil, it is perfectly acceptable to be three hours late…" (2014, p. 166), yet there is no such description as 'Brazilian Time'. The sentiment of this judgment on Africans characteristically (as well) smacks of the Westernisation and Eurocentricism of colonisation. Lee also holds this view when he posits that:

…the roots of African time are intertwined with Nigeria's century-long colonial rule under the British crown, that it's the result of a deeper lack of understanding between the oppressor and the oppressed. Alas, merely mentioning "African time" can land the speaker in a postcolonial quagmire. "I personally find the concept of 'African time' rather derogatory," wrote Marloes Janson, an anthropologist at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, in an email. "It assumes that African people are lazy and unable to keep time" (2016, n.p).

That people in Africa come behind schedule to events does not mean that 'African Time' identifies them just like we have pointed out that similar action did not define the American identity of Ecuadorians who were perpetually tardy. We therefore logically and existentially hold that Africans are people who are punctual in their activities. This is because an African does not see time as a mere phenomenon of temporality but also that which plays a key role in determining how the different component of beings in African ontology relate with one another. In such ontology, we have three different categories which include spirit and forces, human beings and things (Ogbenika, 2011). An African rather than being "a terrible time keeper" is a fascinating time keeper because he knows that failure to be punctual to activities would create a disharmony between him and the vital forces in the other components of the ontological hierarchy. Africans' punctuality predates the western clock time because when given an assignment to perform certain sacrifices at a designated location at midnight, for instance, he goes to wait for midnight to meet him there. Again, once it is planting season, no one reminds him of his responsibilities. As he saw the different kinds of migrations taking place among animals, he would apply some 'traditional astrological skills' and brace up for planting without wasting time. Victor Dlamini talks about Africans' punctuality thus:

Like many things attributed to some ancient, but still prevalent social norm, African Time does not stand up to scrutiny. If you go to even the simplest village you immediately realise just how much the village folk respect time. If there is a gathering, the ordinary folk will all be there on time. What's more, even the unemployed villager will be up at the crack of dawn to make the most of his day. So African Time is nothing but a myth (2010, n.p).

Therefore 'African Time' is a colonial garb deliberately worn on Africa which refused to abate; instead Africans have accepted it as if it is royal apparel. This situation depicts real suffering from 'mental slavery', which makes mental decolonization an inevitable venture. Those traditional Africans who are erroneously tagged as unrepentant practitioners of 'African Time' because of not giving room to foreign accretions are ironically those who maintain the attitude of punctuality. The so-called enlightened Africans are on the contrary those that have been negatively influenced by the western clock time and who do not really care being behind schedule. All they needed to do was simply to say something like 'my apologies for coming behind schedule' or 'I got some logistic challenges on the way' and it ends there. At worst, following the western public system, a superior person issues a query if such action happens within the public service sector and may even be withdrawn after response. But the African knows that being unpunctual to certain traditional events or activities comes with a heavy price which the western-styled apologies or queries cannot adequately address. So, he most often keeps to time in every activity. This why Pantaleon Iroegbu said that:

As an African value, time is irreplaceable. To tamper with time is therefore to tamper with life. It obstructs that unfolding of being that defines time. Such a tampering with time has calamitous consequences. It annihilates the essence of existence. It also thwarts the face of being. It renders the being into less-than-being. It finally disfigures the human person (2004, p. 202).

We therefore reiterate the position that 'African Time' is not an African phenomenon and we must recover our identity by "…avoiding or reversing through a critical conceptual self-awareness the unexamined assimilation in our thought…of the conceptual frameworks embedded in the foreign…traditions that have had an impact on African life and thought" (Wiredu, 1995, p. 22).

4. Conclusion

All through the work, it would be discovered that the very usual discussions of 'African time' on the space approach where the debate of whether time in Africa is two-dimensional or three-dimensional, or again whether time is linear or cyclic did not constitute our focus. But we examined how Africans manage their time, even in the face of modernization and westernization whether their perspective of time is linear or cyclic, or even both. The basic goal of an African, who has not allowed colonial influences and deliberately designed western education curriculum to determine his sense of time, is to manage time so effectively in order not to cause a disharmonious relationship among beings in African ontology. Hence, unpunctuality is not contemplated by Africans because it is culturally un-African.

In essence, we examined the issue of punctuality which entails the moralization of time; a concept that constitutes a basic problem of Africa's development. Therefore, "we show that the notion of 'time' in general lends itself much more to moralisation than the notion of 'space' – though both are otherwise considered similarly fundamental to human life" (Widlok et al 2021, p. 388). We did not deny the tardiness exhibited by Africans in different areas of life but what we hold as a position is that such tardy attitude is not an African identity but was rather a colonial inheritance that has come to affect the African psyche and from which we must recover by reasserting Africans' originality in punctuality. Such a recovery and reassertion can help deal with any development problem Africa faces as a continent on the basis of time wastage.

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Social Media and the Incidence of Cyberbullying in Nigeria: Implications for Creating a Safer Online Environment

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Abstract. Social media has become an integral part of communication and information sharing worldwide, including Nigeria. However, despite its benefits, social media platforms also pose risks, with cyberbullying emerging as a prevalent and concerning issue. This article reviews incidence, forms, consequences, and approaches to promoting safer online environments in Nigeria. Using a qualitative research design, a comprehensive literature review and thematic analysis of secondary sources were conducted. The findings revealed that cyberbullying is prevalent in Nigeria and exists in various forms such as outing, trickery, trolling, and verbal and visual/sexual cyberbullying. Meanwhile, the phenomenon has negative emotional and psychological consequences. The review highlights the lack of awareness and understanding of cyberbullying among stakeholders, leading to the underestimation and underreporting of incidents. This emphasizes the need for specific policies and comprehensive preventive measures. While the current legislation addresses certain aspects of cyberbullying, a dedicated policy on cyberbullying management is lacking. To promote safer online environments, this study suggests involving various stakeholders and developing tailored prevention and intervention strategies. This includes educating students and staff on cyberbullying, implementing reporting mechanisms, and providing support systems. Further research is needed to explore the role of social media platforms in cyberbullying experiences, involvement of technology companies and stakeholders, and effective strategies for prevention and intervention.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, cybercrime, social media, trickery, trolling.

1. Introduction

The past few decades have seen significant growth in Information Communication Technology (ICT) and the widespread use of social media platforms. The rapid increase in internet usage has transformed Nigerians into active participants in cyberspace. Social media has become an essential tool for young people to build and enhance social connections and to learn technical skills. In today's technologically advanced world, social media has infiltrated almost every aspect of human life. Studies have emphasized the relevance of social media to political efficacy and political participation (Akinyetun, 2022), youth participation and activism (Akinyetun, 2021a), social media and electoral violence (Akinyetun et al, 2021) and social media and democratization (Akinyetun, 2021b). Social media is a veritable tool for enhancing communication and has increased the chances and ability of young people to aggregate their interests, articulate their thoughts, and demand for social and political change.

Despite the advantages that social media offers for development, its facelessness has raised serious concerns about its susceptibility to manipulation to promote violence, hate speech, misinformation, and undermine democracy. In addition, recent pessimism associated with the proliferation of social media includes its potential to exacerbate the incidence of cyberbullying, which poses emotional and psychological distress to users. In some cases, anguish experienced on social media platforms has led to irrational and potentially harmful decisions, including contemplating suicide (Adebayo & Ningga, 2021). Put differently, while advancements in social media offer convenience and freedom in online communication, it also gives rise to substantial challenges such as cyberbullying, which negatively affects individuals (Xu & Trzaskawka, 2021). The Internet has broken down barriers to communication, allowing anyone to be targeted by cyberbullying regardless of their status or background. The phenomenon of cyberbullying has also called into question the place of society role models in dealing with cyberbullying in empowering ways, without suppressing their own thoughts and behaviours (Hackett, 2016), and in creating a safer online environment.

Cyberbullying is a growing issue in Nigeria, although accurate data on its extent are difficult to obtain due to underreporting, especially when it occurs outside controlled environments such as schools. It is a truism that social media usage is growing exponentially in Nigeria. In 2019, Nigeria had 98.39 million internet users, with 54 per cent accessing the internet daily and 12 per cent having active social media accounts. WhatsApp is the most used social platform, followed by Facebook, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, YouTube, and Twitter. With the increasing use of computers and the internet in Nigeria and the minimal inhibitions on social media, online spaces have become breeding grounds for cyberbullying. The widespread use of digital technology has made many users experience cyberbullying either as victims or perpetrators (Adediran 2021).

Cyberbullying poses a significant challenge to the ideals of free-flowing information and discourse on social media. This involves the use of digital means to intimidate, annoy, frighten, or create a hostile environment for the victim. This unwarranted contact disrupts the free exchange of ideas and undermines the online environment's intention (Olonode, 2021). Meanwhile, the incidence of cyberbullying has increased significantly following the global COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in increased screen time for children and young people. With school closures and containment measures, families have relied on technology for online classes and socialization. This heightened virtual presence exposes children to risks, such as online sexual exploitation, grooming, exposure to harmful content, and cyberbullying (UNICEF, 2020).

Cyberbullying encompasses various forms of aggression conducted through different online platforms including text messages, emails, chat rooms, and social media. Social media platforms enable users to create and share content while engaging in social interaction with large or small communities. Common examples of cyberbullying include sending abusive messages and posting inappropriate information. Victims of cyberbullying repeatedly experience intentional aggression, often due to a power imbalance with the aggressor on social media (Agustiningsih & Ahsan, 2023). To address this growing concern, Nigeria has introduced cyberlaws, dubbed the Cybercrimes Act, aimed at combating these unlawful activities (Uba, 2021). The enactment of the Nigerian Cybercrime Act of 2015 addresses various online criminal acts, including child pornography, cyberstalking, and cyberterrorism. Additionally, the introduction of protection from Internet falsehoods, manipulations, and other related matters bills aims to criminalize the promotion of false information on social media (Olonode, 2021).

This study's rationale is grounded in the significance and urgency of addressing cyberbullying and promoting safer online environments in Nigeria. Cyberbullying can have severe consequences for individuals, affecting their mental well-being, self-esteem, and social interactions. Moreover, cyberbullying incidents can escalate and result in offline harm, making it crucial to understand the specific consequences faced by Nigerian individuals.
The growing incidence of cyberbullying on social media in Nigeria reveals a research gap that requires further attention. Existing literature primarily focuses on the challenges of cyberbullying without providing comprehensive solutions or evaluating policy implications. This study aimed to address these gaps by exploring the incidence and severity of cyberbullying, examining its emotional and psychological impacts, and proposing evidence-based recommendations for promoting safer online environments in Nigeria. By examining the specific nuances of cyberbullying within the Nigerian context, this study contributes to the development of targeted interventions that effectively address cyberbullying and ensure safer online experiences in Nigerians. Additionally, this study adds to the existing literature by examining the incidence of cyberbullying behaviours in depth and informing policymakers, educators, and social media platform providers in designing interventions and policies.

2. Literature Review

Definition and conceptualization of cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a complex phenomenon with varying definitions. It is commonly described as an aggressive and intentional act carried out through electronic means, targeting a victim repeatedly over time. The use of the internet, cell phones, or other devices to send text or images with the intention of hurting or embarrassing someone is also recognized as cyberbullying. In Nigeria, cyberbullying is defined as the use of technology to send harmful or embarrassing content (Xu & Trzaskawka, 2021). Cyberbullying encompasses various behaviours, including persistent harassment through emails or texts despite the recipient's request for no further contact. It can also involve public actions such as threats, defamation, ridicule in online forums, hacking or vandalizing online content about a person, spreading false statements to discredit or humiliate the target, spreading rumors with the intention of inciting hatred, and disclosing personal information to defame or humiliate victims of crime (Ifeoma, 2022).

The term cyber stalking is sometimes used interchangeably with cyberbullying, referring to conduct directed at causing fear in a specific person. While there are shared elements such as intent and repetition, scholars have not reached a consensus on the defining properties of cyberbullying. Additional features include power imbalance, direct and indirect forms of cyberbullying, the victim's perception, and harm inflicted. Cyberbullying, a detrimental consequence of technological advancement, takes place primarily on online platforms, particularly social media. The absence of inhibitions in the online environment allows for rapid and widespread victimization (Adediran, 2021).

Cyberbullying refers to the use of technology to harass, hurt, embarrass, humiliate, and intimidate others. It must incorporate the essential elements of bullying, including being intractable, recurring, causing harm perceived by the target, and being perpetrated via computers, phones, or other electronic devices. Cyberbullying primarily occurs among young people, but when adults are involved, it may be categorized as cyber-harassment or cyberstalking (Irabor & Osebor, 2022).

The definitions provide a comprehensive understanding of cyberbullying, highlighting its aggressive and intentional nature through electronic means. They recognize the use of technology such as the Internet and electronic devices to harm or embarrass others as a key aspect of cyberbullying. These definitions do not explicitly address the role of anonymity in cyberbullying, which can contribute to the harmful and widespread nature of this behaviour. Anonymity allows perpetrators to act without fear of consequences and may impact the power dynamics between the bully and the victim. However, these definitions provide insights into the prevalence of cyberbullying using technological tools, including social media.

Incidence of cyberbullying

The incidence of cyberbullying among young people in Africa is of significant concern. This was captured in a recent poll conducted by UNICEF and the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children. The poll, which surveyed over 170,000 individuals aged 13-24 across various countries, including both high- and low-income nations, revealed that one in three young people in the surveyed countries experienced online bullying. Disturbingly, one in five respondents reported school absence due to cyberbullying and violence. These findings challenge the subsisting notion that cyberbullying is predominantly prevalent in high-income countries, as 34% of respondents from sub-Saharan Africa reported being victims of online bullying (UNICEF, 2019). Social networking platforms, including popular platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter, have been identified as the most common spaces in which cyberbullying occurs. Furthermore, the poll revealed the existence of private online groups within school communities where information about peers is shared for the purpose of bullying (UNICEF, 2019).

A recent survey by the Pew Research Center revealed that nearly half of United States teens aged 13 to 17 have experienced at least one form of cyberbullying. The most common behaviour reported was name-calling, with offensive names directed towards 32 percent of the teens. Other prevalent cyberbullying behaviours include the spread of false rumors (22 percent), receiving unsolicited explicit images (17 percent), constant monitoring by someone other than a parent (15 percent), physical threats (10 percent), and the sharing of explicit images without consent (7 percent). Moreover, 28 percent of teens have experienced multiple types of cyberbullying. Gender differences emerge, with older teenage girls (15-17 years old) being more likely to face cyberbullying compared to younger girls and boys of all ages. In terms of motivation, physical appearance is the most commonly cited reason for targeting, followed by gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and political views (Vogels, 2022).

A cross-sectional analysis of US adolescents aged 10–13 years revealed that experiencing cyberbullying was associated with suicidality, while perpetrating cyberbullying was not. This association remained even after accounting for other factors such as offline peer aggression. This study suggests that identifying cyberbullying experiences can help clinicians assess suicide risk in adolescents and inform prevention strategies. Cyberbullying, conducted primarily online through smartphones and the Internet, is linked to greater psychopathology and increased suicidality among youth. Both targets and perpetrators of cyberbullying are at a higher risk for suicidality, with evidence indicating that those who both experience and perpetrate cyberbullying are particularly vulnerable (Arnon 2022).

According to surveys conducted in various countries, including Canada, Russia, Japan, and India, parental awareness of cyberbullying varies. While parents in Russia and Japan expressed high levels of confidence that their children were not experiencing cyberbullying, Indian parents reported increasing concern about their children being cyberbullied. In general, more parents are becoming aware of their children's negative experiences with cyberbullying both at school and online. A significant percentage of parents reported that their children were bullied, with the highest percentage among older age groups. Bullying has been reported in various settings, including schools, social media sites and apps, text messages, video games, and non-social media websites. Some parents have even witnessed cyberbullying (Cook, 2023).

According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (2019), more than one in ten adolescents across the OECD countries have experienced cyberbullying. The highest rates were observed in Latvia, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, and the United Kingdom (Scotland), while Greece had the lowest rate. Cyberbullying, which involves offensive messages, rumors, exclusion, and harassment, is associated with negative outcomes, such as depressive symptoms, substance use, suicidal thoughts, and attempts. Teenage girls are more likely than boys to be victims of cyberbullying, with notable gender differences between Ireland and the United Kingdom. Data on cyberbullying refer to responses from 11, 13, and 15-year-olds who reported experiencing cyberbullying through messages or pictures at least once (OECD, 2019).

Overview of Social Media Usage in Nigeria

Social media is an interactive online platform that facilitates communication and connections among users. This serves as a space for individuals to engage, share, and establish relationships for various purposes. It enables the formation of social networks based on shared interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections. Through social media, individuals interact with, create, and exchange information and ideas within their networks (Tayo et al., 2019). Social media is becoming increasingly important in Nigeria, particularly among young people. The mobile phone industry has responded to this demand by offering affordable smartphones in the Nigerian market, whereas communication companies have introduced cheaper data plans to capture their share of the market (Mbanasol et al., 2015).

As of January 2023, Nigeria has a total population of 221.2 million. Internet penetration in the country was 55.4 percent, with 122.5 million internet users. Additionally, 31.6 percent of social media users were in Nigeria, accounting for 14.3 percent of the total population. Furthermore, the number of cellular mobile connections reached 193.9 million, representing 87.7 percent of the total population. Breaking down the population by age group, 16.1 percent were between 0 and 4 years, 21.9 percent were between 5 and 12 years, 11.6 percent were between 13 and 17 years, 13.1 percent were between 18 and 24 years, and 13.6 percent were between 25 and 34 (Kemp, 2023).

In terms of social media usage, 25.8 percent of Nigeria's internet users engaged with at least one social media platform. Of the social media users, 44.7 percent were female and 55.3 percent were male. Facebook had 21.75 million users, YouTube had 31.6 million users, Instagram had 7.1 million users, Facebook Messenger reached 3.5 million users, LinkedIn had 7.5 million members, Snapchat had 12.35 million users, and Twitter had 4.95 million users in Nigeria as of January 2023. There are fluctuations in the potential ad reach of these platforms between 2022 and 2023. For example, Facebook's potential ad reach decreased by 16.7 percent, YouTube decreased by 4.0 percent, Instagram decreased by 21.5 percent, Facebook Messenger decreased by 13.6 percent, LinkedIn increased by 19.0 percent, Snapchat increased by 30.0 percent, and Twitter increased significantly by 1,421 percent (Kemp, 2023).

3. Research Methodology

The methodology for this study involved a qualitative research design that utilized secondary sources. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to gather relevant information on social media and cyberbullying in Nigeria from academic journals, reports, articles, and online sources. Data collection involved extracting and compiling key findings, theories, case studies, and qualitative insights related to cyberbullying incidents, consequences, and approaches to promoting a safer online environment. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights within the collected data, which were organized into meaningful categories and sub-themes. The analysis was guided by the research objectives, allowing for a critical evaluation and exploration of the relationships between different themes and perspectives. The results are reported in a clear, organized, and coherent manner, synthesizing the identified themes and providing critical insights derived from the analysis. The findings contribute to a comprehensive understanding of social media and cyberbullying in Nigeria to enable the development of recommendations for promoting a safer online environment.

4. Findings

While there is a dearth of research on cyberbullying in Nigeria, empirical research indicates its prevalence. A university study found that around 50 percent of students surveyed reported experiencing some form of cyberbullying. These findings suggest that cyberbullying is a significant concern in Nigeria, warranting attention and further research to address this harmful phenomenon (Adediran, 2021).

Forms of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying encompasses a range of behaviours such as spreading rumors, making threats, engaging in sexual remarks, revealing personal information, and using derogatory labels, including hate speech. However, distinguishing between offensive expressions, hate speech, and cyberbullying can be challenging as boundaries become blurred. The evolving nature of cyberbullying, driven by new tools and methods for online attacks, adds to this complexity (Adediran, 2021). Cyberbullying can take various forms such as direct cyberbullying (insulting messages) or indirect cyberbullying (rumors and fake news) (Iqbal & Jami, 2022).

Several forms of cyberbullying have been identified in the literature (Adediran, 2021; Iqbal & Jami, 2022; Ifeoma, 2022; Kaspersky, 2015; Matulewska et al., 2020; Public Safety Canada, 2015; Xu & Trzaskawka, 2021), which are discussed below:

Outing: A form of cyberbullying that involves the unauthorized sharing of private or embarrassing information for malicious purposes. In Nigeria, outings are commonly performed using imagery and video.

Trickery: A form of cyberbullying in which the victim is deceived into revealing personal information that the cyberbully intends to share or use as a threat. In Nigeria, a common manifestation of trickery is revenge porn, which involves the leaking of sex tapes or nude pictures.

Trolling and Roasting: Common forms of cyberbullying that involve disruptive behaviour and deliberate provocation online. Trolling is characterized by purposefully causing discord and annoyance, whereas roasting entails multiple individuals attacking a single victim to humiliate them. These forms of cyberbullying often blur the line between harmless comments and harmful intentions. Interestingly, research suggests that trolling is often seen as a form of entertainment by those who engage in it.

Visual/Sexual Cyberbullying: This involves the misuse or editing of private photos to humiliate them. The act of sharing intimate or embarrassing visual content without consent falls under this category. It aims to degrade and shame victims by leveraging their personal photos.

Verbal Cyberbullying: This includes insulting messages, hate speeches, and derogatory labels. It encompasses behaviours such as spreading rumors, threatening, engaging in sexual remarks, and using offensive language online. Verbal attacks through comments posted on the Internet are a form of verbal cyberbullying often faced by victims.

Exclusion: A form of cyberbullying that involves intentionally leaving someone out of social gatherings, online conversations, or specific platforms. Cyberbullies aim to inflict emotional harm through exclusion by isolating individuals and denying their participation.

Flaming Harassment: Refers to the act of engaging in heated and aggressive arguments online, often involving offensive language and insults. It aims to provoke and incite negative emotions in the target individual.

Denigration: Involves spreading cruel gossip or rumors with the intention of damaging someone’s reputation. Cyberbullies may use false information or make derogatory comments about victims to humiliate and belittle them.

Impersonation: The act of creating fake profiles or pretending to be someone else online. By assuming another person’s identity, cyberbullies can engage in harmful activities such as posting content in the victim’s name to deceive and cause harm.

Cyberstalking: Involves the transmission of threatening or harassing communication through computers. It induces fear of death, violence, or bodily harm in the targeted individual, and can escalate from online threats to real-life situations.

Cybermobbing: Refers to a phenomenon in which a group criticizes or targets individuals or ideologies on social media, which sometimes leads to real-life conflicts. It involves collective online attacks and can have severe consequences for the targeted individuals.

Hate speech: This is a prevalent form of cyberbullying, where offenders use derogatory language to offend their victims, based on characteristics such as race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation. It involves public expressions of animosity or disparagement of individuals or groups.

Internet trolling: Here, individuals provoke reactions, cause disruption, or seek personal amusement by engaging in online discussions with offensive language and insults. Trolls actively search for contentious topics to attack others verbally.

Harassment: Entails persistent and intentional messaging via the phone or Internet.

Fraping: Involves impersonating victims and posting content in their names.

Dissing: Entails spreading cruel gossip or rumors to damage someone's reputation. Cyberbullies may also use photos, screenshots, or videos to belittle and draw attention to the victims' negative qualities.

Catfishing: Occurs when someone steals another person's online identity, typically by using photos, to create deceptive social networking profiles.

Memes: Matching words with images for entertainment and making derogatory comments about a person.

Others: Cyberbullying encompasses a range of other behaviours, including teasing, cyber-smearing, impersonation, hacking or vandalizing online content about a person, rating individuals, and creating derogatory websites.

Consequences of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is associated with negative emotional and psychological consequences, such as low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, anger, frustration, and other related problems. Research indicates that cyberbullying is linked to various real-world issues, including problems at school, anti-social behaviour, substance use, and delinquency. Despite the prevalence of cyberbullying, traditional bullying remains common. There is a close relationship between traditional bullying and cyberbullying, as individuals who experience bullying at school are also likely to experience bullying online, and those who engage in bullying behaviour at school are prone to bullying others online (Hinduja & Patchin, 2021).

In a report by Xu and Trzaskawka (2021), which explored the impacts of cyberbullying, several concerning consequences for victims were found. The report stated that 37 percent of the victims experienced social anxiety, while 36 percent reported symptoms of depression. Disturbingly, 24 percent of the victims reported having suicidal thoughts and 23 percent engaged in self-harm. These psychological effects highlight the severity of cyberbullying and its potential to harm individuals both mentally and emotionally. In addition to the psychological impact, cyberbullying also manifests as negative behaviours among victims. The study found that 21 percent of victims skipped classes, indicating the interference of cyberbullying in their education. Furthermore, 12 percent of the victims developed antisocial behaviours, indicating a potential impact on their social interactions and relationships. This study also revealed that cyberbullying had an effect on physical health. Approximately 10 percent of the victims developed eating disorders, which can have long-term consequences for their well-being. Additionally, 10 percent of the victims reported running away from home, suggesting that the distress caused by cyberbullying can lead to drastic measures (Xu and Trzaskawka, 2021).

Cyberbullying has a significant emotional impact on teenagers' academic performance and social relationships. Social media bullying raises ethical concerns, including post-traumatic disorder (PTSD), invasion of privacy, emotional harm, and risk of suicide and physical violence. It has negative impacts on various aspects of children's lives, such as increased alcohol and drug use, school absenteeism, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, and difficulties with emotional and social adjustment. Recollections of cyberbullying are complex and remain with victims, sometimes leading to severe post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and potential acts of harassment or violence. Privacy ethics are violated in cyberbullying as they involve intimidating, embarrassing, and humiliating others (Irabor & Osebor, 2022).

Moreover, cyberbullying can impact student attendance particularly when it occurs both online and in traditional school settings. Students may resort to negative coping mechanisms, such as substance use, to manage the stress associated with cyberbullying. In severe cases, individuals may struggle with self-harm or suicidal thoughts as a consequence of cyberbullying (Abramson, 2022).

Victims of online attacks and cybercrime may experience emotional trauma, leading to symptoms of depression and Acute Stress Disorder (ASD). Instances of virtual sexual assault in online virtual worlds have shown evidence of intrusive memory, emotional numbing, and upset. Identity theft can leave victims feeling violated, betrayed, vulnerable, angry, or powerless. Victimization can also result in outrage, anxiety, a preference for security over liberty, and loss of confidence in cyberspace. Victims may go through stages of grief, anger, and self-blame, and experience a sense of shame. Extortion is an example of how the victimization process unfolds (Ogunkuade & Kenku, 2023).

Studies have shown that cyberbullying can negatively impact sleep and mental health. Teenagers who experienced cyberbullying were more likely to experience poor sleep and depression. Additionally, victims of cyberbullying have reported feeling depressed with only a small proportion being able to find helpful resources online to improve sleep (Cook, 2023).

5. Attempts at Promoting Safer Online Environments

Countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and Pakistan have taken steps to combat cyberbullying and protect vulnerable individuals. In Nigeria, efforts have been made to address the negative impact of computer and internet use through legislation. While there is no specific law dedicated to cyberbullying, certain acts of cyberbullying are considered offenses under the existing criminal laws. The Cybercrime Act of 2015 criminalizes cyberbullying, and the elements or methods associated with cyberbullying are also addressed in the Criminal Code Act and the Penal Code Act.

Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.) Act 2015 (Cybercrime Act)

Section 24(a) of the Cybercrimes Act in Nigeria criminalizes the sending of grossly offensive, pornographic, indecent, obscene, or menacing communication through computer systems or networks. This provision can be linked to cyberbullying when the content of the messages used falls under these categories. Section 24(b) prohibits the intentional transmission of false information about another person to cause annoyance, harm, or anxiety. Additionally, Section 24(2)(a) makes it an offense to transmit communications that bully, threaten, or harass another person, causing them to fear death, violence, or bodily harm (Cybercrimes Act, 2015). While these provisions do not cover all forms of cyberbullying, they are applicable to the common types seen in Nigeria. Cyberbullying is widely recognized to have detrimental effects on victims' mental health, including anxiety and suicidal behaviour.

The Act defines cyber stalking as conduct directed at a specific person that would cause fear in a reasonable individual. The Act considers the transmission of any communication through a computer to bully, threaten, or harass another person, causing fear of death, violence, or bodily harm, as cyber stalking. The Act criminalizes such behaviour and imposes penalties of up to N7,000,000.00 in fines or imprisonment for a maximum of 3 years, or both, on individuals who knowingly or intentionally send grossly offensive, pornographic, indecent, obscene, or menacing messages via computer with the knowledge that they are false. The purpose of such communication is to cause annoyance, inconvenience, danger, obstruction, insult, criminal intimidation, enmity, hatred, ill will, or unnecessary anxiety to another person (Cybercrimes Act, 2015).

The Act also includes provisions for severe penalties regarding specific forms of cyberbullying and threats transmitted through computer systems. It stipulates a punishment of up to 10 years imprisonment and/or a minimum fine of N25,000,000.00 for individuals who intentionally bully, threaten, or harass another person through computer communication that instills fear of death, violence, or bodily harm. This includes transmitting information that contains threats to kidnap, harm, or demand ransom for the release of a kidnapped person, with the intent to extort (Cybercrimes Act, 2015).

Furthermore, the Act specifies a term of 5 years imprisonment and/or a minimum fine of N15,000,000.00 for those who intentionally transmit information through a computer system containing threats to harm the property or reputation of the recipient or others, or to falsely accuse them of a crime, with the purpose of extorting money or other valuables from individuals, firms, associations, or corporations. These provisions reflect the legal measures taken to address cyberbullying and related offenses in Nigeria. In addition to the aforementioned provisions, the Act allows courts to issue orders to protect victims of cyberbullying and prevent further harassment or acts that cause fear of violence, death, or bodily harm. Violating such orders can result in a fine of up to N10,000,000.00 or imprisonment for a term of up to 3 years (Cybercrimes Act, 2015).

Criminal Code Act and Penal Code Act

The Criminal Code Act and Penal Code Act are the major criminal laws in Nigeria and are applicable to different regions. They criminalize the distribution and projection of obscene articles. These laws and provisions apply to cyberbullying cases that involve the dissemination of obscene content. Chapters 21A and 17 of the Criminal Code Act provide a legal framework for addressing obscene publications and offenses related to posts and telecommunications, respectively. Chapter 21A of the Criminal Code Act defines ‘obscene articles’ as any material that is capable of being viewed, read, or heard, and tends to deprave and corrupt individuals who may come into contact with it (Chapters 21A, 233 B). This definition sets the foundation for identifying and classifying content that promotes cyberbullying and falls within the scope of law. According to Section 233C of Chapter 21A, an article is considered obscene if, taken as a whole, its effect tends to corrupt or deprave individuals (Chapters 21A and 233C). This provision establishes a standard by which the offensiveness and harm caused by cyberbullying content can be assessed.

To address the distribution of obscene articles, Section 233D of Chapter 21A stipulates that individuals who distribute or project such material, whether for gain or not, commit an offense (Chapters 21A and 233D). This offense carries penalties, including fines not exceeding N400, imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years, or both. These provisions can be used to hold cyberbullies accountable for their actions and to discourage the dissemination of harmful content.

Like the Criminal Act, the Penal Act addresses the question of obscene materials in Nigeria. Section 463 of Chapter 34 which relates to posts and telecommunications focuses on the act of sending dangerous or obscene items. According to the Section, individuals who intentionally send items by that have the potential to cause harm or enclose obscene materials commit offenses. The items mentioned include those that are likely to cause injury to a person or object during conveyance, as well as those that contain obscene books, pamphlets, papers, gramophone records, drawings, paintings, representations, or figures. The punishment for this offense is imprisonment for up to one year, a fine, or both, as determined by the court.

While these Acts (Criminal Code and Penal Code) address the dissemination of obscene materials through post and telecommunications, they do not mention cyberbullying which occurs primarily through digital means such as social media platforms, messaging applications, and online forums. However, by employing this provisions, Nigerian authorities can take legal action against individuals who engage in cyberbullying by sending harmful or obscene content through a postal system.

Educational initiatives

To address bullying in schools, The Minister of the State for Education, Hon. Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba in 2019 released a press statement indicating the government’s intolerance for bullying citing its implications to the psychological, mental and social wellbeing of its victims. However, the policy falls short of addressing this issue effectively. First, the statement emphasizes the broader concept of bullying without specifically highlighting cyberbullying as a distinct and significant problem. Cyberbullying, which occurs through digital platforms and technology, requires specific attention and strategies, owing to its unique characteristics and widespread prevalence among young people. Furthermore, the statement lacks concrete actions or measures intended by the government to address cyberbullying in schools. While recognizing the responsibility of the entire society, including the government, in raising responsible and empathetic children, the statement fails to outline specific initiatives or programmes that will be implemented to tackle cyberbullying. Moreover, the absence of mention of awareness campaigns, educational programmes, or training initiatives for students, parents, and teachers suggests a lack of emphasis on prevention and proactive measures (Federal Ministry of Education, 2019).

Olonode (2021) emphasized the importance of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) in addressing cyberbullying. The implementation of MIL education requires the participation of individuals and organizations. Individuals should develop responsible and ethical media usage, whereas organizations should provide policy guidance and interventions. The proposed strategies include expanding MIL education beyond the Mass Communication and Media Studies departments, integrating it into secondary school curricula, educating parents on appropriate online behaviour, establishing support organizations for MIL educators, and adopting UNESCO’s MIL policy and strategy guidelines nationwide. These measures could contribute to addressing cyberbullying in Nigeria.

6. Discussion on the Findings

The following are the themes arising from a review of the literature:

Lack of Awareness and Understanding of Cyberbullying

The first theme identified in the literature is the lack of awareness and understanding of cyberbullying among stakeholders in Nigerian institutions of learning. There is an emphasis on the need for increased awareness and suggested strategies for school authorities to improve their knowledge about cyberbullying (Ifon, 2023). This lack of awareness is a significant concern as it hinders effective prevention and intervention efforts. It is important to educate students and staff about the nature of cyberbullying, its impact on victims, and ways to address and prevent it. By raising awareness, school authorities can empower individuals to recognize cyberbullying behaviours, report incidents, and provide support to victims. More so, further research is required to investigate the extent, nature, and consequences of cyberbullying among different populations, such as students, adolescents, and the general public.

Prevalence of Cyberbullying and Underestimation of the Problem

The second theme identified is the prevalence of cyberbullying. Many incidents of cyberbullying go unreported, indicating a potential underestimation of the problem. The range of cyberbullying victimization rates reported globally suggests that a significant number of teenagers experience cyberbullying, with an average of approximately 21 per cent having been victims (Hinduja & Patchin, 2021; Ifon 2023). The underreporting of cyberbullying incidents suggests a gap in the understanding of the full extent of the problem. It is crucial for school authorities to conduct investigations and gather accurate data on cyberbullying prevalence to guide appropriate actions. By better understanding the scale and nature of cyberbullying, schools can develop targeted interventions and support systems to address this issue effectively.

Lack of Specific Policy for Managing Cyberbullying

The third theme is the lack of a specific policy dedicated to managing cyberbullying in Nigerian universities. Instead, existing Acts are targeted at addressing specific forms of cybercrime such as cyberstalking. This gap in policy highlights the need for a comprehensive policy dedicated to cyberbullying management. Having a specific policy on cyberbullying is crucial, as it provides clear guidelines and procedures for handling cyberbullying incidents, ensuring consistency and fairness in the university's response. Such policies can outline preventive measures, reporting mechanisms, disciplinary actions, and support services for victims (Ifon, 2023).

The Role of Technology and Social Media Platforms

The role of technology tools and social media platforms in cyberbullying and fostering an online safety culture in Nigeria cannot be undermined. The literature mentions the prevalence of cyberbullying incidents on Facebook, but does not extensively explore the role of other social media platforms in cyberbullying experiences in Nigeria (Ogolla et al., 2022). Further research is required to investigate the specific platforms, features, and dynamics that contribute to cyberbullying incidents in Nigeria. This can help to develop targeted interventions and promote safer online environments.

Influence of Parenting Styles on Cyberbullying

A study involving Nigerian students found that authoritative parenting was associated with the lowest levels of cyberbullying, whereas authoritarian parenting displayed the highest levels (Ibrahim, 2021). This highlights the role of parenting style in shaping teenagers' engagement in cyberbullying and emphasizes the importance of promoting authoritative parenting practices.

Relationship between Traditional Bullying and Cyberbullying

A study conducted among students at Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria revealed a significant correlation between traditional bullying and cyberbullying (Olasanmi, 2020). This finding suggests that addressing traditional bullying can have a positive impact on reducing cyberbullying incidents and vice versa.

7. Prevalence of cyberbullying in other African countries

A study conducted in Kenyan universities found a high number of students who had either experienced cyberbullying themselves or knew someone who had (Ogolla et al., 2022). Also, South Africa has been found to have the highest incidence of cyberbullying among the 28 countries surveyed in a research (iTOO, 2021). This emphasizes the urgent need to address the incidence of cyberbullying not only in Nigeria but in other African countries.

A review of the literature reveals the dearth of research on cyberbullying in Nigeria, indicating a need for further investigation such as exploring the prevalence of cyberbullying on various social media platforms beyond Facebook, considering the diverse social media landscape in Nigeria. The relationship between traditional bullying and cyberbullying highlights the interconnected nature of these phenomena. Addressing traditional bullying can have a positive impact on reducing cyberbullying incidents and vice versa. This insight suggests the importance of adopting a holistic approach that simultaneously addresses both forms of bullying.

Moreover, parenting style plays a significant role in teenagers' engagement in cyberbullying. These findings emphasize the influence of authoritative parenting on reducing cyberbullying levels. Promoting authoritative parenting practices and facilitating open communication between parents and teenagers can help mitigate cyberbullying. It is essential to develop educational programmes and support systems that involve parents and to provide guidance on effective parenting strategies to prevent and address cyberbullying.

The high incidence of cyberbullying in South Africa and Kenya highlights the urgent need for intervention and support systems in these countries. Collaborative efforts between government agencies, educational institutions, technology companies, and civil society organizations are necessary to effectively address cyberbullying and mitigate its negative impact on adolescents and teens.

It suffices to mention that this study is not without its limitations. For instance, there is an inherent subjectivity and potential bias in the interpretation of qualitative data (Suttin & Austin, 2015). Despite efforts to ensure objectivity and rigor, the researchers' perspectives and biases may have influenced the analysis and coding process. The identification and categorization of themes could have been influenced by preconceived notions or assumptions. Although measures such as peer debriefing and member checking were taken to enhance reliability, subjectivity remains a limitation that could have influenced interpreting the study's findings.

8. Conclusion

The incidence of cyberbullying among young people in Africa, particularly Nigeria, is a significant concern. Research and surveys have shown that cyberbullying is prevalent in both high- and low-income countries, challenging the notion that it is a predominant issue in developed nations. The use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter has been identified as a common space for online interaction among young people and where cyberbullying occurs. Major forms of cyberbullying have been examined including outing, trickery, trolling, visual/sexual cyberbullying, verbal cyberbullying, exclusion, flaming harassment, denigration, impersonation, cyberstalking, cybermobbing, hate speech, Internet trolling, harassment, fraping, dissing, catfishing, memes, and other behaviours. The consequences of cyberbullying are far-reaching and include negative emotional and psychological effects, academic and social impairments, and even physical health issues. Cyberbullying can also escalate into real-life conflicts and have a severe impact on victims' overall well-being. Efforts to address cyberbullying in Nigeria have been made through legislation such as the Nigerian Cybercrime Act of 2015, which criminalizes various forms of cyberbullying and provides penalties for offenders. However, there remains a lack of specific policies dedicated to managing cyberbullying in Nigeria, highlighting the need for comprehensive guidelines and procedures. Collaborative efforts involving parents, caregivers, schools, technology companies, and government agencies are necessary to promote safer online environments and to protect young people from the detrimental effects of cyberbullying. Educational programmemes, support systems, and policies should be developed to address the unique challenges and dynamics of cyberbullying in Nigeria.

9. Recommendations and Policy Implications

Combating cyberbullying and creating a safer online environment requires a comprehensive approach involving various stakeholders, including policymakers, government agencies, educators, social media platform providers, parents, and non-governmental organizations. As a result, the following recommendations are made.

Policymakers and government agencies need to focus on enhancing legislation to specifically address cyberbullying. Comprehensive laws should encompass online harassment, defamation and privacy violations. It is important to ensure that the legal framework remains adaptable to the evolving nature of cyberbullying, and includes appropriate penalties for offenders. Collaboration among policymakers, social media platform providers, educators, parents, and law enforcement agencies is essential. By pooling resources and expertise, coordinated strategies could be developed to prevent cyberbullying, support victims, and hold perpetrators accountable.

Raising public awareness of cyberbullying and investing in educational initiatives are crucial steps. Allocating resources to educate individuals on the consequences of cyberbullying and preventive measures is important. Promoting digital literacy, responsible online behaviour, and safe Internet usage empowers individuals to safely navigate the digital landscape.

Educators and schools can play a significant role in addressing cyberbullying. It is essential to incorporate cyberbullying prevention and digital citizenship into school curricula at all levels. It is necessary to provide students with age-appropriate education on online safety, respectful communication, empathy, and responsible social media use. Teachers should receive professional development programmes to enhance their understanding of cyberbullying and equip them with strategies for its prevention and intervention. Developing and implementing comprehensive safe school policies that explicitly address cyberbullying, along with establishing protocols for reporting, investigating, and responding to incidents, foster a positive and inclusive school culture.

Social media platform providers should strengthen reporting systems to facilitate the easier reporting of cyberbullying incidents. Clear guidelines and instructions for reporting cyberbullying should be provided, and anonymous reporting options should be considered. Strengthening content moderation efforts through the use of proactive measures such as artificial intelligence algorithms helps swiftly identify and remove cyberbullying content. User education is crucial for informing platform users about privacy settings, blocking, reporting features, and responsible online behaviour. It is necessary to promote community guidelines that discourage harassment and foster positive engagement.

Parents and guardians should foster open and supportive communication with their children regarding their online activities and experiences. Encouraging children to share concerns or instances of cyberbullying that they may encounter and provide guidance on effective responses is important. Equipping parents with digital literacy skills to understand social media platforms, privacy settings, and online safety measures would be beneficial. Offering resources and workshops that educate parents on recognizing the signs of cyberbullying and providing appropriate support to their children is crucial. Collaboration with schools ensures a coordinated approach to cyberbullying prevention and intervention.

Non-governmental organizations and community groups can establish and promote support services for victims of cyberbullying, including helplines, counseling, and peer support programmes. Creating safe spaces for victims to share their experiences, seek assistance, and access resources for recovery is essential. Organizing awareness campaigns that engage the community, highlight the impact of cyberbullying, and promote responsible online behaviour are important. Partnerships with schools, government agencies, and social media platforms have amplified the reach and effectiveness of these awareness initiatives. Supporting research initiatives to advance the understanding of cyberbullying and to inform evidence-based interventions are crucial. Advocating for the development and implementation of policies and programmes that address cyberbullying and promote safer online environments will protect the rights and well-being of individuals.

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Influence of Culture and Socio-Financial Elements on the Career Choice of Students in Bwari Area Council in Abuja, Nigeria

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Abstract. One of the most important decisions a person makes is their career choice, which will shape their future. The investigation examined cultural factors' impact on Bwari Area Council students' career choices in Abuja, Nigeria. Two hypotheses guided the research. All Bwari Area Council senior secondary school students are studied. The study includes all SSII male and female seniors. The study selected 315 SSII students using simple random sampling. The study included 63 students from each of the five schools. The self-structured questionnaire Influence of Sociocultural Factors on the Career Choice of Students (ISCFCCCS) with sub-instruments (Cultural and Socioeconomic Influences on Career Choice) and Career Choice Questionnaire (CCQ) with reliability coefficients of 0.88, 0.86, and 0.75 were used to collect data. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that culture and parents' socioeconomic status strongly influence students' career choices. The study recommends that school leaders teach students about social factors that may influence their career choice. Parents should also stop pushing their kids into careers they don't fit into. Guardians should be cautious about pushing their children toward unrealistic careers. Parents should also work with school advising or professional guides to help their children choose smart careers.

Keywords: Sociocultural, Financial status, Career choice Culture, Understudies, Influence

1. Introduction

Culture is the convictions and values that shape gatherings' customs, standards, and practices to solve everyday problems (Lillis and Tian, 2015). Thus, culture affects how people work, how they choose jobs, how their careers are shaped, how groups communicate, how they raise their children, how they provide food and security, and how they support themselves.

Therefore, culture shapes people's personalities and work environments. Every person has a social, ethnic, and racial legacy, and sometimes a few social characters shape their circumstances. Austin and McDaniels (2016) found that southern African American women's social foundation depends on race, orientation, and location. Her social background determines her and others' professional assumptions, work availability, and open doors. In a traditional society like Pakistan, youth is subject to their parents' choices; most students choose a career based on family traditions; in conventional society, few calls are chosen deductively based on fitness testing and career guidance (Arif, 2019).

Culture shapes people's personalities and workplaces. Everybody has a social, ethnic, and racial legacy, and sometimes a few social characters shape their circumstances. For instance, Austin and McDaniels (2016) found that southern African American women's social foundation depends on race, orientation, and location. Her social foundation determines her and others' professional assumptions, work availability, and open doors. In traditional societies like Pakistan, youth are subject to their parents' choices; most students choose a career based on family traditions; in conventional society, few calls are chosen deductively based on fitness testing and career guidance (Arif, 2019). The term race is still used in research to compare people of different races. For over 30 years, analysts have examined factors affecting job choices and racial disparities in their fields. Since gatherings have the same capacity, analysts focus on factors like professional dreams, good examples, work values, and professional interests that can influence career choices. Recently, scientists have examined prejudice and segregation as potential ecological contrasts (Bhopal, 2018).

Helmreich and Merritt (2017) say culture affects vocations in many ways. Since people work within the organisation's way of life and setting, culture affects the types of work done, the compensation for different types of work, and the types of communications evaluated. Social factors shape our view of work and respect. Social rates affect organisational and personal career choices. For instance, someone who values family, race, or identity may make different choices than someone who values individual achievement (Helmreich and Merritt, 2017).

In most developed nations, social gatherings are based on work suspicions (Bernal and Adames, 2017). People should make work decisions without consulting others. We also expect the person to be wealthy enough to find valuable job opportunities and that open positions are available to everyone. Finally, professional advancement should be coherent, sane, direct, and bit-by-bit. However, racial/ethnic minority groups don't care about many of these assumptions. Family jobs are important in many societies, and racial/ethnic groups have different access to public assets. Bigotry often closes jobs to racial/ethnic minorities, making career advancement difficult or impossible (Bernal and Adames, 2017).

Culture frames one open door. Racial/ethnic minority workers are underrepresented in some fields and overrepresented in others, according to a survey. Thus, career choices can arise from a mismatch between available jobs and what they want or need (Bernal and Adames, 2017). Culture can be linked to work and profession in two ways. Culture influences a person's view of proper work and its role in daily life. Culture also affects available work. Positive (opening doors in the privately owned company) and negative reasons exist (e g, bigotry that prevents work in the workspace).

Edwards and Quinter (2016) found that data innovation, post-Modern Insurgency crises, and business competition have made career choices difficult. Thus, education is seen as the world's financial solution. Nations and people expect education to help solve poverty, oblivion, joblessness, hunger, poor management, poor communication systems, lack of confidence, and more. Personal satisfaction and social status improve in every nation. Most secondary school students need more career information to make good choices. Thus, after college, the course will change drastically.

Thus, vocational decisions are important for students when making plans. These options have deep meaning. This makes determining secondary school students' vocation choices important. Check if it helps students make objective career choices. Data innovation, post-modern upheaval, and work contests have made professional decision-making a science (Edwards and Quinter, 2016).

The focus on understudies is their lifelong work goals. Everyone cares about profession and expectations, not years. Many secondary school students believe their future is a great opportunity to succeed (Olamide and Olawaiye, 2017). Many think they can work in public or private after college. Like other kids, college students worry about how to manage their daily routines, how adults will live, and what adults will be. Many figure they can work in public or confidential settings after college. Like other kids, college students worry about managing their daily routines, how adults will live, and what adults will be.

Today, despite professional planning, extensive vocational research should be done before career decisions to adapt to changing financial circumstances (Korir and Wafula, 2017). Professional decisions include character, interests, self-idea, social personality, globalisation, socialisation, good examples, social help, data, and financial matters, according to Edwards and Quinter (2016). These variables affect it. It shows that their parents' preferred careers affect the most, while others choose a career with educational options and pursue their interests. Some favour major league salaries (Korir and Wafula, 2017).

Variables affect it. Their parents' preferred careers affect the most, while others choose a career with educational options and pursue their interests. Major league salary force is preferred (Korir and Wafula, 2017). Thus, Agunzi, Momoh, and Mallum (2020) suggested investigating natural factors like family foundation, school climate, religion and co-gatherings, and other sociocultural factors.

Altan (2021) also found that inherent variables influence students (individual interest, self-viability, result in assumptions, and expert improvement open doors). Interest, satisfaction, and delight drive innate career choice. These include character traits, work fulfilment, career advancement, and growth opportunity. The outward factors are money, employer stability, professional respect, and job availability. External guidelines and benefits related to specific occupations, profession accessibility, and well-paying businesses affect career choices and arrangements. Relatives, teachers, friends, and social obligations affect youth navigation. (2021 Altan)

Understudies from individualistic social settings were influenced by characteristic, outward, and, less so, relational factors and encouraged to choose their careers. Mau 2004, Gunlal et al 2013; Altan 2021). Relational (respecting parental and cultural assumptions and parental requirements to follow endorsed career ways) and external factors influenced undergraduates in aggregate societies (esteemed callings). Mau 2000, Gunlal et al. 2013; Altan 2021). Normal professional decisions and arrangements in collectivist societies. The family decides. Thus, the decision is collective. In these cases, the profession that best serves the family will determine the vocation. The family may lead here, not the person. The family chooses a singular vocation (Mau, 2000, Gunlal et al., 2013; Altan, 2021).

Innate, outer, or both factors influence professional decisions (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). Their parents' preferred careers matter most. Others choose a big-league salary career to be open to lifelong learning. Ethnic background, grades, performance, science subject choice, mentality, and work qualities affect students' perception of their suitability for a specific job (McQuaid and Bond (2016). Inner, outer, or both factors affect professional decisions (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). Their family's professions matter most. Others choose big league salaries for a lifelong open to learning. Ethnicity, grades, performance, science subject choice, mentality, and work qualities affect students' perception of their suitability for a specific job (McQuaid and Bond (2016). One study suggests parents' desires and assumptions affect children's aspirations. Parental support and comfort have been shown to affect career choices. The child can choose what the parent needs. According to a Kenyan study, rural students seek help from parents more than city students and educators. Koech, Bitok, Rutto, Okoth, Korir, and Ngala (2016).

Studies show cultural factors influence youth vocation choices (Mama and Yeh, 2015; Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018; Hui and Loaned, 2018). Culture is the psyche's collective programming that distinguishes groups (Hofstede, 2016). Hofstede identified four major social factors in his near study of 40 nations. The foundation is the "independence community". A maverick culture views an individual as a "free unit", while a gathering society views them as a "related unit". Dynamic in a nonconformist culture depends on individual desires and wants; in a gathering society, the direction is "in a gathering" to improve group interests. Next is power distance. Powerful remote societies recognise public eye imbalance and its associations. The third aspect, aversion to vulnerability, shows how much exposure and uncertainty are endured in the public eye. Communities without high destiny are less lenient, and low vulnerability is more avoidable. Finally, manly and ladylike aspects meet general needs. Success and abundance are valued in masculine cultures. Ladies need great connections to live well (Hofstede, 2016).

Hofstede's (2016) "social aspect scores" study suggests that public scores for power distance, independence, manliness, vulnerability aversion, long haul direction, and conviction indicate collectivism or individualism (Hofstede, 2016). In the six social angles, countries with group values may score low, while those with maverick qualities may score high (Hofstede, 2016). This model shows a country's independent or gathering society.

Because of this, Western nations like Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. have had to adjust to independence. Autonomy, fearlessness, opportunity, and freedom define such societies. However, African and Asian nations are more accustomed to groups that compare social dependence to neighbouring states (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). Reviewing culture from Maverick and gathering perspectives can explain youth career choice differences (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). Regulatory practices in maverick social orders encourage children to choose careers and develop professional skills, while group social orders are families. Social principles are also required and often expected to follow standard vocation paths (Oettingen and Zosuls, 2016).

Due to globalisation, communication between nonconformist and gathering societies has grown over time (Santos, Varnum, and Grossmann, 2017). They believe two societies—bunch-related and independent—where traveller families have moved from social legacy to have set different measures for children's career choices. Individual vocation choices are difficult. In a Nation When a family settles in a host country, the adjusted youth may grow distant from the guardians (Santos, Varnum, and Grossmann, 2017).

From 2000 to 2017, the UN reported 173 to 258 million global transients, or 3.4% of the population (UNESCO, 2017). Travellers result from moving. The Global Association for Movement (IOM) defines relocation as the movement of an individual or group across borders or within the state (IOM, 2018). During this time of mass migration, migrant students who move with their families to another country and are still looking for a job are often new to social norms, especially school/education (Zhang et al., 2014). Thus, settler students may struggle to balance their professional needs in the host nation's educational system and their families. These moving kids are vulnerable and complicated because their social legacy may differ from the host nation's way of life (Sawitri and Ideology, 2017). Kids may have a social tendency when choosing a career despite unexpected interests, goals, assumptions, personal experiences, and obligations. This supports their thinking. A few studies have examined how social conditions affect teens' career choices (Tao, Zhang, Lou, and Lalonde, 2018). However, other settler groups may differ greatly.

Given the impact of social legacy on professional decisions and the rising progress between societies, analysing youth career exploration exercises is important. No comprehensive writing audit is available here. This orderly survey examines teens' career choices, particularly social impacts, using Craftsman and Encourage's (1977)'s three-layered structure. An exceptional and well-coordinated career that identifies gaps in existing writing proposes future research and improves the workforce for chiefs, instructional guides, and professional guides. We support strengthening a determined, emotionally supportive network. For instance, Mudhovozi and Chireshe (2017) led a similar report in South Africa on professional decision-making factors. Review members were undergraduate brain research students who had chosen careers. The review was conducted in a similar geological climate, but members' political and financial issues differed. Sultana and Watts (2016) compared Bedouin-ruled Centre East and North Africa. This location is characterised by economic, political, and socio-social factors, and similar studies in other districts may yield results. Lazarus and Chinwe (2016) targeted Nigerian children with special needs. The current review examined the factors influencing Bwari Area Council students' career choices in Abuja, Nigeria.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Many secondary school students are struggling to choose a career. The increased number of calls worsens this problem. Due to a lack of proper direction and guidance, students are not given the appropriate and sufficient professional data and research tools to help them choose a career. As a result, some students became families and larger networks, which influenced their lifelong career choices. This is problematic because students often choose bad careers when forced to choose one. Parental influence, family foundation, parents' financial status, and sociocultural factors affect students' professional decisions beyond high achievement and greatness. Most parents with higher incomes influence their children/wards to focus on professional courses to advance their careers, such as medicine, law, pharmacy, nursing, bookkeeping, designing, etc. Some students may not be interested or capable. Thus, these irrational choices can lead to job dissatisfaction. However, cultural factors affecting secondary school students' career choices are understudied. Understanding these realities, this study examines how cultural and financial factors affect students' career choices in Abuja's Bwari Area Council.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The review examines how sociocultural factors affect career choice in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja, Nigeria. In particular, this study aims to:

- determine the degree of social factors that impact the professional selection of understudies in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja
- evaluate the impact of the financial effect on the vocation selections of understudies in Bwari Area Council in Abuja

1.3 Research Questions

The accompanying inquiries were formed to direct the review:

- Does the social component impact understudies' vocation decisions in Bwari Area Council in Abuja?
- How do financial elements impact understudies' professional decisions in Bwari Area Council in Abuja?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The accompanying two null hypotheses were formed to direct the review:

HO1: Culture has no critical impact on understudies' vocation decisions in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja.
HO2: Socio-financial variables have no huge impact on understudies' vocation decisions in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja.

2. Research Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey design to examine how sociocultural factors affect Bwari Region Board students' career choices in Abuja, Nigeria. The design helped gather data on existing peculiarities (impact of socio-social elements on the vocation selection of understudies). The study included all Bwari Region Board Senior Secondary School (SSII) students. Three hundred and fifteen (315) students from five Senior Secondary Schools (SSII) in Bwari Region Board, Federal Capital Territory, were sampled using a multistage method. The scientist selects the five schools by writing down all Bwari Region Board school names on a small piece of paper, placing them in a box, and shaking it. From then on, the researcher randomly opened the papers to find the names of each school until there were five. Using the fortunate plunge strategy, simple random sampling was used to select sixty-three members from the five schools. They asked students to choose a "Yes or No" paper from the container. Members who chose "YES" were naturally probed, while those who chose "No" were not.
This study used a 38-item self-organised questionnaire titled "Influence of sociocultural factors on the career choice of students questionnaire" (ISCFCCSQ) and "Career choice questionnaire" (CCQ). The ISCFCCSQ had A and B segments. Segment A collected respondents' age, gender, parents' occupation, and highest education. Segment B examined two key factors influencing students' career choices. Financial and social items were weighted in the Likert design with SA=4, A=3, SD=2, and D=l. The (CCQ) has ten (10) questions about why students should choose a career. The poll uses a 4-point Likert scale: strongly agree '4', agree 3, disagree two (2) and strongly disagree 1.

Examiners, directors, and specialists evaluated the instruments' suitability for this research, and their comments and suggestions were used to create the final estimating instrument. A pilot study was completed in one of the optional schools outside the principal review to test the instrument's reliability. The Pilot study data was measured for quality consistency. The test-retest reliability coefficient was used. After that, the reliability coefficient of the following instruments' alpha level was obtained: Cultural impact on student career choices 0.88; Socio financial impact 0.86; and Vocation Decision Scale 0.75. This confirmed that the data collection tool used for this study was reliable.

3. Results

Hypothesis One: Culture does not significantly affect understudies' professional decisions in Bwari Area Council in Abuja. This theory was tried utilising Pearson item second relationship measurements.

Table 1: Correlation between Culture and Career Choice of Students

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r-cal	r-tab	Decision
Career Choice	315	33.68	4.37	0.540	0.1129	Significant
Cultural Influence	315	31.60	4.41			

*Significant at 0.05; r-cal = 0.540; r-critical = 0.1129

Table 1 shows that the mean and standard deviation of students' career choices were 33.68 and 4.37, respectively, while the mean and standard deviation of cultural influence were 31.60 and 4.41, respectively. Since the r-calculated value of 0.540 is greater than the r-critical value of 0.1128 at a 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, implying that culture significantly influences students' career choices in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of Parent Socioeconomic Status on the Career Choice of students in Bwari Area Council in Abuja

The hypothesis was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and the results are presented in Tables 2, 3 and 4.

Table: 2: Descriptive Data Across three experimental conditions

Socioeconomic / Career Choice	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Low Socioeconomic Economic Status	135	31.56	5.09
Middle Socioeconomic Status	110	34.73	3.11
High Economic Status	70	36.08	2.27
Total	315	33/68	4.37

Table 2 above shows the overall perception of students from three socioeconomic class and their influence on career choice. Students from High socioeconomic Status are considered the most influential on students' career choices. With a mean difference value of 36.08 (SD=2.27), followed by Middle Socioeconomic Status with a mean difference value of 34.73 (SD=3.11), followed by students from low socioeconomic status with a mean difference value of 31.56 (SD=5.09), indicating the least influential on career choice of students.

Table 3: ANOVA Test of Difference between Parents' Socioeconomic Status and Career Choice

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1132.916[a]	2	566.458	36.142	.000
Intercept	340523.847	1	340523.847	21726.430	.000
SEF	1132.916	2	566.458	36.142	.000
Error	4890.055	312	15.673		
Corrected Total	6022.971	314			

Significant $P < 0.05$, F-Cal = 36.14 ; F-critical = 3.02 at 0.05 (2 , 312)

The ANOVA results in Table 3 show that for the Socioeconomic Status of student l condition, the F–value of 36.14 was greater than the F-critical value of 3.02, given 2 and 312 degrees of freedom at the .05 significance level. Since the calculated F-value was greater than the F-critical value, hypothesis 2 was rejected. This suggests that the parent's socioeconomic status significantly influenced students' career choices. To determine which parents' socioeconomic status had more impact on students' career choices, a post hoc was used for further analysis, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Post–Hoc Analysis of Influence of Parents' Socioeconomic Status on Career Choice

(I) SEF	(J) SES	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. [b]
Low Socioeconomic Status	Middle Socioeconomic Status	-3.173*	.509	.000
	High socioeconomic factor	-4.523*	.583	.000
Middle Socioeconomic Status	Low Socioeconomic Status	3.173*	.509	.000
	High socioeconomic factor	-1.349*	.605	.027
High socioeconomic status	Low Socioeconomic Status	4.523*	.583	.000
	Middle Socioeconomic Status	1.349*	.605	.027

Utilising numerous examinations test in Table 4, huge contrasts were found between respondents from low financial status and those from Centre monetary status with a mean distinction of 3.173* ($p<0.05$). Huge disparities exist between respondents from low financial status and those from high economic status, with a mean difference of 4.523* ($p<0.05$). Huge contrasts exist between respondents from middle financial status and those from high financial status, with a mean distinction of 1.349. The table additionally showed that respondents from high financial status impacted understudies' professional decisions more than the centre and low economic status. Nonetheless, respondents from centre financial status influenced understudies' vocation decisions more than those from low economic status.

4. Discussion of findings

The first hypothesis expresses that culture does not significantly impact understudies' vocation decisions in Bwari Area Council in Abuja. The discoveries uncovered that social factors fundamentally influenced understudies' professional decisions. The explanation for these discoveries could be understudies' qualities and directions of locally taking advantage of the normal assets. It could be because of the local significance connected to effective financial specialists. Hence understudies need to imitate what rich men or ladies do locally that makes them rich. In supporting these discoveries, Marié, Machdel, Hanlie, Ilias, Yogesh, and Matt (2020) look at the job of culture in ladies' I.T. vocation choices in South Africa. The discoveries demonstrate that culture assumes a significant part when ladies settle on I.T. profession decisions and when females choose to stay in an I.T. vocation. The investigation discovered that culture is critical in I.T. vocation choices for various ethnic gatherings in South Africa. In concurrence with these discoveries, Gibbons. Hughes and Woodside (2015) looked to comprehend what culture, by and large, means for professional improvement. Their outcomes uncovered that social factors essentially affected vocation decisions among understudies.

The second hypothesis expresses no significant impact of Parents' Financial Status on understudies' Vocation Decisions in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja. The discoveries uncovered that financial factors essentially affected understudies' professional decisions. The justification for this could be a direct result of the financial status of certain guardians. For example, most high financial-status guardians naturally urge their kids to pursue proficient courses, while low financial-status guardians urge their youngsters to attend ability-obtaining/specialised classes. In supporting these discoveries, Renabeni and Lata (2017) explored the impact of financial status on the vocation-dynamic challenges of rising undergrad grown-ups in India. In concurrence with the findings, Jamim, Ahmed and Akter (2022) investigate the impact of financial status on understudies' professional decisions. The outcomes uncovered that age, religion, spot of home, and living while at the same time considering guardians' schooling and guardians' occupation decidedly influence understudies' professional decisions.

5. Findings

The study was directed to examine the elements influencing vocation decisions among senior secondary school understudies. Because of the exploration speculations figured out for this review, coming up next are the features of the discoveries:

- Culture critically impacts the vocation selection of understudies in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja.
- Parents' Financial Status greatly impacts the Profession Selection of understudies in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja.

6. Conclusion

This study has analysed two speculations concerning the impact of sociocultural elements on understudies' professional decisions in the Bwari Area Council in Abuja, Nigeria. This study has examined the examination discoveries among free and subordinate factors. Two compelling connections between the free and subordinate elements were laid out. Hence, the total number of respondents in this study was 315. This study centred on social impact and parents' financial status. The outcomes uncovered that culture and parents' economic situation impacted understudies' professional decisions among senior auxiliary school understudies in Bwari Area Council.

7. Recommendations

Arising out of the study findings and conclusion drawn, the probing suggests the following:

- The probing uncovered that culture impacts the professional selection of understudies. It is suggested that school directing should be able to teach the understudies about different social factors that may be influencing their vocation decision.
- The probing uncovered that parents' financial status impacts the understudies' vocation decisions. In this way suggests that parents ought to cease convincing their children into such careers they don't have the necessary limits, abilities, interests, and aptitudes. Guardians ought to circumspectly abstain from driving their kids into seeking after their unrealistic vocations. Moreover, guardians ought to work with school advising or proficient professional guides to assist their youngsters with pursuing canny vocation choices.

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Examining the Influence of Organisational Culture on Employee Retention in Telecommunications Industry, Lagos State, Nigeria

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Abstract. This study examined the influence of organisational culture on employee retention in telecommunications industry, Lagos State. The study used descriptive survey design. The sample size for the study comprised 71 respondents selected using a combination of convenience and purposive sampling techniques because they are subject experts and easily accessible in the human resources management community. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity and the Cronbach's alpha co-efficient r-value of = 0.81 showed good internal consistency after the pilot study. The null hypothesis was rejected because the study revealed a strong positive significant relationship between organisational culture and employee retention at ($r = 0.629$, $p = 0.00$) in telecommunications industry, Lagos State. The level of awareness of the influence organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State was moderately significant in areas of core values, capacity development and change management, and employee engagement and productivity. There was no low significance, however, in awareness of strategic direction and intent as well as team orientation as components of organisational culture. The study recommended that organisations should increase their investment in organisational learning to provide training for employees to enhance their wellness and work life balance.

Keywords: Organisational Culture, Employee Retention, Employee Turnover, Workforce, Telecommunications Industry

1. Introduction

Employee retention is a workforce management problem facing the telecommunications industry and has attracted the attention of researchers and scholars in recent times. Fapohunda (2019) and Gajendra, Naidu, Gajendra, and Gajendra (2020) said employee retention is the biggest challenge that confronts the practice of Industrial Relations in the business environment today. In Nigeria, organisations in the telecommunications industry experience challenges with employee retention (Odunayo, 2022). The telecommunications industry experienced low employee retention and consequent high employee turnover resulting in an employee retention crisis, particularly in Lagos State between 2015-2019, according to Oguntoye and Amoozegar (2021) who reported that the industry's employee turnover rate increased year-on-year within a period from 16.4% in 2015 to 25.5% in 2019.

The telecommunications industry is the fulcrum of the Nigeria Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP, 2017-2020) and the fourth largest sector in Nigeria, with Lagos State as the major hub of the technology ecosystem in the country. The industry contributed 12.685% to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Quarter 3 (Q3) of 2022 (Nigerian Communications Commission, 2022). Nigeria seeks to become one of the top 10 economies in the world and positions the telecommunication and technology industry as pivotal to the attainment of this national vision. The industry is an important infrastructure for economic and social development (Odunayo, 2022). If the industry must be a catalyst that the government and stakeholders envisage, the role of its workforce as a source of its competitive advantage cannot be underestimated.

Industrial Relations in the telecommunications industry has suffered a major setback in the last five years leading to the pre-Covid19 pandemic era as Oguntoye and Amoozegar (2021) reported 23.1% employee turnover within the first year of employment. The authors also stated that the industry could not achieve its goals in Lagos State because of the problem of employee retention caused by a high rate of employee turnover. The business boom experienced by major organisations in the telecommunications industry to boost its growth and drive toward the national agenda may not be sustainable without a viable employee retention strategy (Olomola, Amadi, Akalezi, Emezie-Ezigbo, and Adeniji, 2020).

Despite the improved financial performance of the industry because of the increasing usage of technology during and after the pandemic, the work environment in the telecommunications industry indicated that the issues of low employee retention and high employee turnover are potential time bombs. The Industrial Relations crisis between employers and representative labour union, Private Telecommunications and Communications Senior Staff Association of Nigeria showed that employee retention is still a mirage in the industry (Nwafor, 2022; Oyesola, 2022). A meta-analysis of related research on employee retention in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria revealed that there was massive employee turnover in the industry between 2016 and 2018 where employees defected to other sectors of the economy (Nteogwuija and Wechie, 2019; Zakariya and Shuaibu, 2021; Odunayo, 2022).

Organisations that are desirous of growth, productivity, and profitability must develop a model for sustainable employee retention (Caska, 2020). They cannot afford to do less because employee retention is cost-effective and beneficial to the business on a long-term basis (Chatzoudes and Chatzoglou, 2022). Low employee retention causes increased budgetary allocation for recruitment, staff training and development, and disharmonious industrial relations between management and labour unions in the organisation (Xuecheng, Igbal, and Saina, 2022). Employee retention is an executive management strategic role and Industrial Relations function performed by the Human Resources department of any organisation (Vasantham, 2016). The responsibility encompasses the overarching corporate strategy of the enterprise beginning with the concept that the employees are the greatest assets of the organisation.

Ushakov and Shatila (2021) and Brenyah and Tetteh (2016) identified organisational culture as a major building block of employee retention in organisations. Organisational culture is the driver of the best-place-to-work initiatives in the work environment (Kerl, 2019). They are adaptive. They have the inherent capability to change the shared experience of individuals within a group. Employees' characteristics, knowledge, and skills in the workplace are shaped by the organizational culture which mediates, regulates, and modifies the expectations of their environment (Ashby and Walker, 2015; Brenyah and Tetteh, 2016).

Vuleta (2022) carried out a study that showed that 87% of human resources leaders have made employee retention their foremost priority for the next five years. The challenge, however, is that in the community of practice as in research, less attention has been paid to organisational culture as a component of strategy and practice that influence employee retention in the workplace. Das and Baruah (2013) reviewed literature and identified nine management practices as factors for promoting employee retention and achieving job satisfaction which in turn reduce employee turnover. These factors are compensation, reward and recognition, promotion and opportunity for growth, participation in decision-making, work-life balance, good work environment, training and development, leadership, and job security. The authors subsequently designed an employee retention and job satisfaction model to support their hypothesis but a punctilious review of the model showed that the model would require a foundation to become structurally viable.

Organisational culture constitutes the superstructure that houses the different standalone factors and the basis for employee retention. Without organisational culture, effective workforce maintenance strategy and harmonious industrial relations cannot exist in the organisation. Literature has attempted to show that organisations in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria, particularly Lagos State have experienced low employee retention and consequent high employee turnover. Given the evolution of trends and changes in technology and workforce dynamics in the world of work in the industry since the emergence of Covid19 pandemic, available data on employee retention and driving forces are adjudged relatively old. Oguntoye and Amoozegar (2021) and Odunayo (2022) cited low employee retention statistics in the industry covering 2015-2019. The telecommunications industry has recorded unprecedented growth in the last two years during post Covid19 pandemic and organisations in the industry place a high premium on their organisational culture, and workforce management as their competitive advantages. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the influence of organisational culture on employee retention in the industry in Lagos State.

1.1 Research Questions

- What is the level of awareness of the influence of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State?
- What is the effect of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State?
- What is the impact of the implementation of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State?

1.2 Hypothesis

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between organisational culture and employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Organisational Culture

Culture is dynamic and diverse. Culture shapes how society understands its world, and how others relate to society. Culture is multifaceted and has been an integral part of the human community from antiquity (Williams, 2004; Arogundade, 2020). The culture of a people is the collective matrix of influence that shapes the lives of individuals in the community (Williams, 2004). Culture is the total sum of customs and traditions of a people in a given environment that evolves with time and remains ingrained in their consciousness as a way of life to which every member of the community subscribes and is guided. Culture is the backbone of behaviours and it determines the meaning and extent of interactions and accruing benefits in society.

Organisational culture is the adaption of human culture as an anthropological concept in organisational theory. Manatje (2009) surmised that prevailing interests in organisational culture have roots in studies in Industrial Relations to understand the rational and structural nature of the organisation. Organisational culture was derived from the scholarly disciplines of Anthropology, Sociology, and Social Psychology. The concept was coined in the work of Elliot Jaques titled *The Changing Culture of a Factory* in 19152, it became popular between the 1970s and 1980s and has since become a subset of corporate strategy, institutional culture, and corporate culture in the organisation.

Organisational culture is the sum of the whole of the shared philosophy, values, expectations, experiences, and aspirations of the organisation that shapes the identity of the organisation and behaviours of employees. Organisational culture is a management principle that develops through the evolution of the concept of organisation to regulate the behaviour and activities of employees toward the actualisation of corporate goals through compliance, collaboration, and teamwork (Das and Baruah, 2013; Silva, Carvalho, and Dias, 2019; Kaur, 2017; Arogundade, 2020). Sethi, Vito, and Ongbanouekeni (2021) defined organisational culture as the underlying shared beliefs and assumptions that influence the behaviours of management and employees for socialisation and teamwork and reflected through values, attitudes, and practices. Organisational culture is what is valued, the dominant managerial and leadership styles, the language and symbols, the procedures and routines, and the concept of productivity and profitability that make the organisation different from others in the marketplace (Shah and Sarkar (2017; Paunova and Blagoev, 2021; Joly, 2022).

The day-to-day norms, shared beliefs, values, and assumptions that shape the behaviours of employees in the discharge of their activities irrespective of the industry constitute the characteristics of organisational culture (Bolton, 2018). Leadership, work organisation, scheduling practices, job structure, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are components of culture. Mac-Ozigbo and Daniel (2021) stated that organisations should establish organisational culture for competitive advantage and market leadership. Organisations have culture, whether organisations recognise this or not because organisational culture influences the corporate strategy and management decisions positively or negatively and affects business performance and level of competitiveness in the marketplace.

2.2 Employee Retention

Employee retention is a strategic human resources management issue for organisations in the telecommunications industry (Paunova and Blagoev, 2021). Employees become an indispensable asset and the need to keep them for a longer period of the job becomes more imperative for employers of labour. Allen (2008) posited that there are over 1,000 published research articles on employee retention. Zahoor, Ijaz, and Muzammil (2015) said that employee retention is the organisation's voluntary action to create a convincing environment that contributes to keeping the workforce on the job for a long term. Buny (2019) surmised that employee retention is the systematic deployment of organisational practices toward maintaining the continued employment of valued employees for a maximum period of time through a process of organisational socialisation toward achieving a congruence between organisational goals and employees' interests and aspirations. Darchen and Temblay (2011) and Salanova, Agut, and Peiro (2005) who posited that employee retention rides on the back of organisational culture in the workplace.

The implementation of successful employee retention programmes in organisations is beneficial to employers, unions and the government who have a joint collaborative effort to drive the forces of employee maintenance and longevity in the environment (Paunova and Blagoev, 2021). Allen (2008) stated that organisations should systematically manage retention irrespective of the times because turnover is costly, negatively impacts business performance and becoming increasingly difficult to manage because of employee scarcity and talent migration across industries all over the world. Buny (2019) expressed concerns that problems of retention constitute a major impediment to organisational effectiveness and industry performance in the economy. Organisations that are unable to keep their workforce for a long period of time cannot build knowledge workers and critical mass of talent in the sector may be endangered and the industry can begin to decline because of its loss of appeal to attract qualified professionals from the labour market. Eskildesn and Nussler (2000) in Zahoor, Ijaz, and Muzammil (2015) posited that organisations that undermine employee retention often fail in the marketplace.

3. Research Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study consisted of all human resources practitioners in the human resources departments of organisations in the telecommunications industry in Lagos State. The sample size for the study comprised 100 respondents, from all the human resources practitioners in the telecommunications industry in Lagos State selected to participate in the study. A combination of convenience and purposive sampling techniques was adopted to select the respondents who are subject experts and were easily accessible in the human resources community (through physical and virtual space). The researcher developed a researcher's self-designed questionnaire titled Influence of Organisational Culture on Employee Retention Scale (IOCERS) for the study.

The face and content validity of the scale was ascertained by experts in Industrial Education in the Department of Adult Education and Psychology in the Department of the Psychology, University of Ibadan. The instrument was pilot tested among 10 human resources practitioners in the telecommunications industry in Oyo State, who were not part of the study and the Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient r-value of = 0.81 showed a good internal consistency. The questionnaires were distributed to respondents over a period of eight weeks and 71 were returned as valid for data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze the demographic characteristics of the participants in Section A of the questionnaire while inferential statistics were used to analyze the variables in research questions and hypotheses using regression, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

4. Results and Discussions

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Female	32	45.1%
Male	39	54.9%
Total	71	100%
Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
26 – 30 years old	10	14.1%
31 – 40 years old	23	32.4%
41 – 50 years old	27	38.0%
51 – 60 years old	8	11.3%
61+ years	3	4.2%
Total	**71**	**100%**
Highest Level of Education	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Bachelor Degree	26	36.6%

Master Degree/M.Sc./MBA	43	60.6%
Doctorate Degree/Ph.D.	2	2.8%
Total	**71**	**100%**
Number of Years in the Industry as HR Practitioner	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Less than 5 years	26	36.6%
6 – 10 years	17	24.0%
11 – 15 years	14	19.7%
16 – 20 years	10	14.1%
More than 20 years	4	5.6%
Total	**71**	**100%**
Number of Years working with current Employer	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0 – 2 years	14	19.7%
3 – 5 years	30	42.2%
6 – 10 years	20	28.2%
11+ years	7	9.9%
Total	**71**	**100%**

Source: *Researchers' Field Survey (2023)*

Table 1 showed that participants were female (n=32, 45.1%) and male (n=39, 54.9%). Participants were aged 26-30 years old (n=10, 14.1%), 31-40 years old (n=23, 32.4%), 41-50 years old (n=27, 38%), 51-60 years old (n=8, 11.3%), and 61+ years (n=3, 4.2%). Participants have bachelor degree (n=26, 36.6%), master degree/M.Sc./MBA (n=43, 60.6%), and doctorate degree/Ph.D. (n=2, 2.8%) and have worked 0-2 years (n=14, 19.7%), 3 – 5 years (n=30, 42.2%), 6-10 years (n=20, 28.2%) and 11+ years (n=7, 9.9%) with current employers in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State.

Research Question 1: What is the level of awareness of the influence of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State?

Table 2: Summary of Participants' Responses on the level of awareness of the influence of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State

Items	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	Std Dev
Employees know that their understanding of the strategic goal, vision and mission of their organisation make them happy to work and dedicate themselves to growing their career in their organisation.	3 (4%)	3 (4%)	10 (14%)	23 (32%)	32 (45%)	4.10	1.07
Employees know that the organisation's attitude and culture direction on team development influence their commitment to teamwork and individual contributions on the team	0 (0%)	7 (10%)	7 (10%)	25 (35%)	32 (45%)	4.15	0.97
Employees know that their willingness to come to work every day is predicated on the strength of their organisational culture.	1 (1%)	2 (3%)	8 (13%)	21 (30%)	38 (54%)	4.31	0.90
Employees know that the growth of their career and readiness to stay longer on the job is dependent on their organisation's attitude to workforce capacity development and culture of change in the work environment.	1 (1%)	4 (6%)	5 (7%)	32 (45%)	29 (41%)	4.18	0.89
Employees know that their prospect of staying longer on the job and productivity is driven by the organisational culture of employee engagement.	0 (0%)	3 (4%)	8 (11%)	32 (45%)	28 (39%)	4.20	0.84
Weighted Mean						4.18	

Source: *Researchers' Field Survey (2023)*

Table 2 showed the level of awareness of the influence of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry. The weighted mean (4.18) was determined as the benchmark. The result indicated that that the respondents were aware of the influence of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry as three out of the five items had mean scores above weighted mean which was the set benchmark. Employees knew that their willingness to come to work every day was predicated on the strength of their organisational culture. ($\bar{x}$=4.31). Employees know that their prospect of staying longer on the job and productivity was driven by the organisational culture of employee engagement. ($\bar{x}$=4.20). Employees knew that the growth of their career and readiness to stay longer on the job was dependent on their organisation's attitude to workforce capacity development and culture of change in the work environment ($\bar{x}$=4.18). However, items 1 and 2 ($\bar{x}$=4.10 and $\bar{x}$=4.15 respectively) were below the set benchmark. This indicated that at least 60% of the sampled respondents were aware of the impact of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry.

Research Question 2: What is the effect of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State?

Table 3: Summary of Participants' Responses on the effect of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State

Items	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	Std Dev
The organisation keeps its employees longer on the job because the employees understand the strategic goals of the organisation and its culture of innovation in service excellence.	1 (1%)	3 (4%)	10 (14%)	22 (31%)	35 (49%)	4.23	0.94
The organisation keeps its employees longer on the job because if its strong culture of leadership and commitment to team development.	1 (1%)	3 (4%)	7 (10%)	29 (41%)	31 (44%)	4.21	0.89
The organisation keeps its employees longer on the job because of its culture of positive industrial relations and viable Great-Place-to-Work programmes that resonate with employees' career development.	1 (1%)	4 (6%)	11 (16%)	25 (35%)	30 (42%)	4.11	0.96
The organisation keeps its employees longer on the job because of its strong DEI culture.	1 (1%)	3 (4%)	7 (10%)	29 (41%)	31 (44%)	4.21	0.89
The organisation keeps its employees longer on the job because of culture of consistent positive employee engagement and communications.	1 (1%)	3 (4%)	7 (10%)	29 (41%)	31 (44%)	4.21	0.89
Weighted Mean						4.19	

Source: *Researchers' Field Survey (2023)*

In Table 3, the weighted mean (4.19) was taken as the benchmark to measure the effect of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry. Five items had mean that revolved round the weighted mean which was the set benchmark. The table revealed that four items that had mean above the weighted mean buttressed the fact that organisational culture affected employee retention in the telecommunications industry. Respondents stated that their organisations kept employees longer on the job because the employees understood the strategic goals of the organisations and culture of innovation in service excellence ($\bar{x}$=4.23). Respondents' organisations kept their employees longer on the job because of strong culture of leadership and commitment to team development ($\bar{x}$=4.21). Respondents' organisations kept employees longer on the job because of strong DEI culture. ($\bar{x}$=4.21). Respondents' organisations kept employees longer on the job because of culture of consistent positive employee engagement and communications ($\bar{x}$=4.21). However, item 3 ($\bar{x}$=4.11) was below the set benchmark. This indicated that organisational culture affected employee retention in the telecommunications industry.

Research Question 3: What is the impact of the implementation of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State?

Table 4: Summary of Participants' Responses on the impact of the implementation of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State

Items	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	Std Dev
Planned programmes of career development and continuous performance management give employees a sense of belonging and make them stay longer in the organisation to grow their careers.	1 (1%)	4 (6%)	10 (14%)	29 (41%)	27 (38%)	4.08	0.94
Harmonious labour relations between management and staff/labour union provides motivation for employees to stay	1 (1%)	3 (4%)	9 (13%)	23 (32%)	35 (49%)	4.24	0.93

longer in the organisation to grow their career.							
Employees find the workplace conducive. They are happy to identify with the brand and contribute to building an institution that will outlast them because of the availability of employee-friendly initiatives in the organisation.	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	7 (10%)	27 (38%)	35 (49%)	4.34	0.77
There is a year-on-year low employee turnover in the organisation because of its commitment to and promotion of strong organisational culture in the last two years.	2 (3%)	1 (1%)	8 (11%)	24 (34%)	36 (51%)	4.28	0.93
The organisation has been able to not only retain its core workforce but become attractive to professionals outside the industry who are willing to join whenever there are vacancies due to business expansion and growth.	0 (0%)	4 (6%)	11 (16%)	24 (34%)	32 (45%)	4.18	0.89
Weighted Mean						4.22	

Source: *Researchers' Field Survey (2023)*

Table 4 had weighted mean (4.22) as the benchmark. From the findings, it was observed that the implementation of organisational culture influenced employee retention in the telecommunications industry as the five items had mean scores that revolved round the weighted mean which was the set benchmark. The table revealed that three items that had mean scores above the weighted mean buttressed the fact that the implementation of organisational culture influenced employee retention in the telecommunications industry. Employees found the workplace conducive as they were happy to identify with the brand and contributed to building an institution that would outlast them because of the availability of employee-friendly initiatives in the organisation ($\bar{x}$=4.34). The harmonious labour relations between management and staff/labour union provided motivation for employees to stay longer in the organisation to grow their career ($\bar{x}$=4.24). There was year-on-year low employee turnover in organisations in the telecommunications industry because of commitment to and promotion of strong organisational culture in the last two years ($\bar{x}$=4.28). However, two items had means ($\bar{x}$=4.18 and $\bar{x}$=4.08) closer to the weighted mean which indicated that majority of the respondents concurred with the items. This result indicated that implementation of organisational culture is impactful on employee retention in the industry.

Hypothesis Testing H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between organisational culture and employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State.

Table 5: Correlation between Organisational Culture and Employee Retention in the Telecommunications industry, Lagos State

Variables	No	(r)	P	Remark
Organisational Culture	71			
Employee Retention in Telecommunications industry	71	0.629	0.00	Significant

Significant at 0.05 **Source:** Researcher's Field Survey (2023)

Table 5 presented the Pearson product moment correlation result of the relationship between organisational culture and employee retention in the telecommunications industry. The table revealed strong positive significant relationship between the two variables at (r = 0.629, p = 0.00). The result implied that organisational culture was a determinant of employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State. Therefore, the null hypothesis one that stated that there is no significant relationship between organisational culture and employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State was rejected.

5. Conclusions

The result corroborated the findings of Sawan and Nurhattati (2020) on the impact of organisational culture in the organisation which emphasized the relationship between culture and knowledge management in the organisation. Osibanjo and Adeniji (2013) and Ibeme (2017) agreed that awareness of organisational culture influenced employee retention in selected Nigerian private universities. The study confirmed the findings of previous scholars such as Madueke and Emerole (2017), Idiegbeyan-Ose, Nwokeoma, and Osinulu (2018), Arogundade (2020) that organisational culture affected employee retention in the banking industry, education sector and telecommunications industry. Igbokwe and Elikwu (2019) also corroborated the result of the study that organisational culture impacted quality service delivery and by extension employee retention in the telecommunications industry.

Brenyah and Tetteh (2016), Bolton (2018), Caska (2020) found a correlation between the implementation of organisational culture and employee retention in the organisation. The result corroborated Abayomi and Onya (2020) who established a relationship between organisational culture and employee retention in the mobile telecommunication organisation they studied. However, Ohiorenoya and Obarisiagbon (2017) had previously studied the same mobile telecommunication organisation and found that there was no correlation between organisational culture and employee satisfaction that could influence retention. The difference between Ohiorenoya and Obarisiagbon (2017) and Abayomi and Onya (2020) showed a shift in employee trends in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria over the last five years where Oguntoye and Amoozegar (2021) had reported that the industry experienced high employee turnover between 2015 and 2020.

The level of awareness of the influence organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State was moderately significant in the areas of core values, capacity development and change management, and employee engagement and productivity. There was no low significance, however, in the awareness of strategic direction and intent as well as team orientation as components of organisational culture. The effect of organisational culture on employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State was significant in the areas of strategic direction and innovation, leadership and team development, pursuit of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and internal congruence, employee engagement, and continuity. However, the practice of industrial relations as it related to the promotion of Great-Place-to-Work programmes as a component of organisational culture and its impact on employee retention was not significant in the industry.

The impact of the implementation of organisational culture on employee retention was significant in the areas of industrial relations as it pertained to the promotion of workplace congruence, great-place-to-work programmes, low employee turnover. However, the components of organisational learning and performance management on one hand and outward talent migration as they impacted employee retention on the other were not significant in the industry. The Null Hypothesis One was rejected because the study revealed a strong positive significant relationship between organisational culture and employee retention at ($r = 0.629$, $p = 0.00$) in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State. There was a strong positive correlation between organisational culture and employee retention in the telecommunications industry, Lagos State.

6. Recommendations

The study makes recommendations based on its findings as follows:

- Organisations in the telecommunications industry should overhaul and redesign their onboarding plan and training programmes to reflect the importance of organisational culture considering it as the foundation for employee retention and workplace longevity.
- Organisations in the telecommunications industry should raise the levels of awareness of organisational culture to involve organisational strategic direction and team orientation so that employees can have a sense of ownership about the direction that the organisation is going so that employees can have clarity about the future of their career development and succession plans.
- Organisations in the telecommunications industry should ensure that organisational culture directly impact the practice of industrial relations in the promotion of programmes that encourage employees to deliberately choose to stay in the organisations for a longer time.
- Organisations in the telecommunications industry should increase their investment in organisational learning to provide training and development opportunities for employees to grow their competencies. There should be specific training and continuous training in the areas of operational procedures, employee wellness and work-life balance. Employees should have avenues to explore programmes to enhance their wellness, mental health and work-life balance through initiatives such as Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) in addition to existing healthcare facilities.

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The Relationship between Social Studies Education and Students' Attitude towards Marriage and Divorce

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Abstract. The research aimed at investigating the relationship between social studies education and students' attitude towards marriage and divorce. The theoretical framework of the study is hinged on Bowenian family systems theory. The theory was posit that human beings function as an emotional unit and are easily understood along their problem when they are viewed within the context of their family bonds and relationships. The study adopted the correlational survey design. A questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Attitude towards Marriage and Divorce (QATMD) was used for data collection. A sample size of four hundred (400) students was selected using simple random sampling technique. Four mixed schools will be selected each from Oredo and Orhionmwon local government areas. Fifty students will be randomly selected from each of these schools. Two hypotheses were raised to guide this study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach Alpha statistics and a reliability coefficient of 0.775 and 0.880 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson correlation statistics and linear regression. The results showed that students' knowledge of social studies education have significance relationship to their attitude towards marriage and divorce. Based on the findings, it was recommended amongst that divorce should be discouraged in its entirety through social studies education as it can make some children experience pain, confusion, anger, hate, bitterness, sense of self-doubt, and so on.

Keywords: Social Studies Education, Students Attitude, Marriage, Divorce.

1. Introduction

Social Studies is a unique discipline that deals with moulding of the individual in line with acceptable patterns of behaviour of the society in which they belong (Inyakpor, 2013). Hence, Social Studies is an integrated and a multidisciplinary discipline which uses theories in the field of Sociology, Philosophy, Psychology and other relevant field in dealing with contemporary issues and problems (National Curriculum Standard for Social Studies, 2011). It has the ability to inculcate the right type of value, standard, norms and acceptable behaviour.

Social Studies Education as an integrative field of study which probes man's symbiotic relationships with his environments, endow man with the reflective or contemplative capacities, intellectual, affective, social and work skills to enable him understand his world and its problems, and to rationally solve or cope with them living in the society (Dania & Emuebie, 2012). Dania (2011) asserted that Social Studies Education is a human construct to foster nationalism and patriotism on the one hand and for man to realize his existence as an individual and a citizen in a multicultural society on the other hand. Social studies education touches on all aspects of societal development; be it political, economic, social, cultural, technological or educational (Uzamere, 2018). Also, Dania and Emuebie (2012) argued that Social Studies education is an integrated body of knowledge formulated to equip the learner with significant values, attitudes, skills and knowledge in order to be productively functional in the society. In the context of this study, Social studies Education help students to be endowed with reflective or contemplative capacities, social and work skills to enable them understand the institution of marriage and the challenges that comes with it, so as to rationally solve or cope with them when they come of age.

Marriage is a common tradition in every society which represents a social agreement between two individuals to become husband and wife. It affords the husband and wife the legitimacy to sexual relationship and reproduction of children. According to Uka, Obidoa & Uzoechina (2013), marriage is the legalizing of a special relationship between a man and woman to which the society gives approval; and it places partners under legal and social obligations to themselves and the society. Marriage has significant value for the individual, families and the society. It represents socially sanctioned behaviours and embraces traditionally virtuous, legal and predictable assumptions concerning what is moral and what is proper (Nock, 2005). By virtue of marriage, married individuals are transformed, perceived and treated differently by society and may even enjoy rights/privileges unmarried individuals do not. Married couples are perceived as more mature, committed, stable and responsible.

Marriage provides the atmosphere for companionship, procreation, establishing continuing and sustaining family ties by joining in matrimony two individuals who are of different gender to become husband and wife. Consequently, they become parents who bear and raise children. Infants arrive in the world unable to care for themselves as a result they expect protection, physical and emotional warmth from their parents and guardians. This expectation culminates into a relationship that creates the atmosphere for raising and impacting the child with some life principles. The relationship between parent and child seem to be one of the most significant relationships which is typical of virtually every human being and is formed by people over the course of their life either consciously or unconsciously. The interaction between parents and their children is unarguably one of the longest lasting social ties established by humans. It is a form of interaction which is often laden with nurture, support and care but it also involves some elements of frustration and tension due to the responsibility of training the child in school.

Marriage as a monumental issue elicits a social and legal agreement between adults and in some parts among children and other parts between children and adults; it is an avenue of shared responsibilities and obligations. Marriage is an aid to sustaining a family, it is a room created to nurture the existence of a people who are bonded by blood and other ties. In the days of old, marriage was a necessity for the existence of communities, it was an avenue to produce more members for the community; marriage was and is a symbol of maturity and a medium by which the society rates her members. Marriage has been seen by several authors and scholars as means to attaining sexual needs, creation of children and attending to the economic needs of adults and children. Wait and Gallagher (2000) explained that marriage as a source of happiness has experienced a boost; it is really worth knowing that happiness is necessity for marriage. This is because satisfying the needs of the union must be of both couples as satisfying a particular couple's- needs deter commitment and procure unhappiness; and when the couples are not happy that union is as bad as dead.

Good marriages are the bedrock of strong societies, for they are the foundations of strong families. The future of the human race and all its component societies is embodied in each newborn. The ability to groom a newborn to become strong, contributive and responsible members of the society depends much on the marriage of his or her parents. Marriage as a universal institution is predominantly the platform to nurture generation of young people; it is mostly the platform that assigns positive and negative behaviours to the members of the society. Marriage as a legal union between adults according to Corvino and Gallagher (2012) helps to connect sex with love, men with women, sex with babies, and babies with moms and dads. Marriage has been established for several reasons ranging from love; tribal, political, economic to religious fulfillments and these have been the bane for the progress and retrogress of families.

The inability to satisfy the afore-mentioned reasons has called for several cases of divorce; divorce has been experienced in short-term and long term marriages. It is not a phenomenon that is ascribed due to the time spent but the state of marriage; anytime one of the couple feels uncomfortable or unsecured he or she can file for divorce. As divorce has become a modern-day norm in recent years, it appears that young adults tend to have a distrust of marriage as an institution. Divorce and separation of couples will bring with it some trauma and many issues, as well for the children. The negative side of marriage may alter children's attitudes toward marriage. Parental separation and divorce remains an important factor in our society that contributes to the risks of cognitive, behavioural and emotional development of children today, and it is predicted that 40 percent of children will have experienced parental divorce by their sixteenth birthday (Tanner, 2002).

Divorce elicits the annulment and termination of the civil effects of marriages in an agreed legal marital case; it is applicable to traditional marriages or religious marriages. It has been mostly referred to as a legal event that must be heard in a court of law; though some couples have been separated or divorced without legal consent. They often mutually agree to separate their legal marital status for reasons best known to them; though most of these cases are likely to re-unite. Divorce as a mutual consent of a couple to go their separate ways has been defined by Kaslow (1994) not as a single event that occurred at the court of law but a process that begins early in a relationship and has numerous sequella in the post-divorce; he further narrated that it is a different experience for an adult and a child. This is supported by Pipher (1996) who asserted that divorce as a process poses a different experience for an adult and a child; for the child, there is loss of something that is fundamental to his/her development, namely, the family structure. The family structure lays the foundation for the child's physical, emotional and psychological ascent into maturity. The collapse of this structure leaves the child vulnerable to developmental problems because of changes in support structures.

Divorce was introduced as a law in Nigeria in 1970 under the Matrimonial Causes Act; this act also specified that divorce can take place for marriage that has stayed for one year and above. Divorce has affected the Nigeria populace as it has influenced upcoming youths to see marriage either as a liability or responsibility and constraint or an aid to living a comfortable life. The ordeals of divorced couples have spelt out significant attitudes for marital-aspiring young people, students to be precise; it has created views in them, often prompts criticisms and commitments. Divorce has created different attitude of people towards marriage, several authors have investigated divorce and people's attitude towards marriage; most of these authors have found divorce has a negative influence on people's attitude towards marriage. This is in relation with the aftermath of divorce; Wait and Gallagher (2000) found that divorced parents tend to have more economic hardship, higher levels of poverty, and lower levels of psychological well-being, less happiness, more health problems, and a greater risk of mortality. Morgan and Coleman (2004) stated that usually the spouse who leaves the other often experiences a heightened sense of guilt while the other may not feel ready for the marriage to end. However, these ambivalent feelings about ending the marriage may not be present in all marital situations because this depends on various marital relationship factors. Once the marriage has ended, some of the feelings that are often experienced include loss, anger, rejection, shame, loneliness, abandonment, denial, depression and grief.

An important aspect of students is the formation of attitude. An attitude is defined as, "a set of positive or negative beliefs that we hold in relation to an object, a person, thing, event or issue" (Crisp & Turner, 2007). Attitudes are formed throughout one's lifetime and are affected by how one perceives others, think of a subject; the beliefs that inform attitudes are based on direct observation, acceptance of information from another person or group of people, and inference of new beliefs based on observations, and current knowledge (Pryor & Pryor, 2005).

Several trends and shifts seem to shape the attitudes of a young man or woman towards marriage and divorce, as well as the way they conceptualize the institution of marriage. These include the rising number of single parent headed households, advances in birth control, the gay rights movement, statistics of marital conflict and divorce, support for domestic egalitarianism and the increasing prevalence of dual earner families. Consequently, some young adults are increasingly choosing to delay marriage (Amato, 2004), holding more negative attitudes toward marriage, engaging in premarital cohabitation (Dennison & Koerner, 2008) and are placing greater importance on marital self-expression and independence than on more "traditional" values like obligation and dyadic commitment (Amato, 2004; Ripley, Everett, Worthington Jr., Bromley, & Kemper, 2005; Hall, 2006). There have been continued research and exploration into the potential effects that these political and cultural shifts may have on the marital attitudes, beliefs and intentions of young adults. Lots of individual, family (social) and cultural factors may be associated with the development of the marital attitudes, beliefs, and intentions.

The concept of marriage as a universal institution is one that should be respected, adored and honoured because it provides the atmosphere for companionship, procreation, sustaining family ties responsible for societal stability and growth. Thus, marital issues need to be carefully addressed to avoid divorce cases; this has called for measures and strategies to help address the issues facing marriage in the bid to foil occurrence of divorce cases. One of such measures and strategies is education which is a life-long process to equip an individual with knowledge capable of addressing his or her flaws thereby satisfying his or her quest for survival. Imperatively, Social Studies Education as an educational discipline is an apt discipline of education capable of addressing issues facing marriage and possibly exerting an influence on the attitude of students to marriage.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Nigeria is today an insecure and poverty-ridden society flocked with predicted cases of crimes and consistent infringement of the citizenry fundamental human rights by governmental officials and non-governmental personnel (illegal armed individuals). She is today a democratic and sovereign entity but little has she experienced the joy of democracy and freedom of her sovereignty due to her instability and corrupt state. The root causes of the bad fate of the country have been attributed to several factors ranging from political, economic, tribal, and religious to social factors.

One of the social factors is family which is the smallest unit of any society capable of procreating and grooming the subjects of such society; family cannot be established without marriage, thus marriage is imperative for family establishment and sustenance. Apparently, marriage which is expected to create and groom responsible subjects for the country has also experienced some setbacks leading to divorce. Most marriages in Nigeria have been rocked with issues that have led to divorce and this has effects on their children and the prospective subjects of the country. The divorce of marriages has made some children to experience pain, confusion, anger, hate, bitterness, disappointment, a sense of failure and self-doubt. Family disruption is an experience that follows children into adult life. These children face special challenges and burdens. No matter how unhappy the marriage has been, its break up usually comes as a shock to the children. They feel afraid of the future, guilty about their own perceived role in causing the divorce, hurt at the rejection they feel towards the parent who moves out and angry at both parents for not trying harder. They may become depressed, hostile, disruptive, irritable, lonely, sad, accident-prone or even suicidal. They may suffer from fatigue, insomnia, loss of appetite, inability to concentrate and loss of interest in academic work and social engagement.

These effects of divorce on children do not spell any good fate for the society they belong as they will contribute negatively to the society which they were born to promote. These children who often grow to become adults having no proper up-bringing are easy recruits of cultism, gangsterism, drug abuse, kidnapping, political thugs, armed robbers and other crime-prone activities that have consistently foiled the pace of growing and developing the country. Fortunately, institutions both from government and private parastatals have been established to curb these crimes but have they been able to address the root causes one of which is divorce? The continuous practice of divorce and its consequences has created different attitudes in students who wish to get married someday; the divorce situation in which most children grew with single parents could cause such children to have unrealistic ideals about marriage and can lead to a strong sense of dissatisfaction about getting married and consequently high divorce rate in societies. Hopefully, Social Studies Education was introduced in schools to address man's problems and issues; such problems that have become malignant is divorce. Despite the introduction of Social Studies Education with its rich content to solve the problem of divorce, there is still the practice of divorce and unascertained attitudes of students towards marriage and divorce; it is now ideal to establish if the knowledge of Social Studies Education is related to students' attitude towards marriage and divorce.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the study:

- Is there a significant relationship between students' knowledge of Social Studies Education and their attitude towards marriage?
- Is there a significant relationship between students' knowledge of Social Studies Education and their attitude towards divorce?

1.3 Research Hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between students' knowledge of Social Studies Education and their attitude towards marriage?
Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between students' knowledge of Social Studies Education and their attitude towards divorce?

2. Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on Bowenian family systems theory which was put forward by Dr. Murray Bowen in the late 1960s. The theory was hung on the notion that human beings function as one emotional unit and are easily understood along their problem when they are viewed within the context of their family bonds and relationships. In most relationships, people solicit each other's attention, approval and support and react to each other's needs, expectations and distress. The connectedness and reactivity make the functioning of family members interdependent. A change in one person's functioning is predictably followed by reciprocal changes in the functioning of others.

Lieberman (1979) also mentions that much of Bowen's thinking intertwines with transgenerational theory which holds that family culture is passed from one generation to another, and in this way the sums of individual family culture are passed on as community heritage. Furthermore, the emotional interdependence that evolves in the family helps to promote the cohesiveness and cooperation families require, to protect, shelter, and feed their members. Heightened tension, however, can intensify these processes that promote unity and teamwork, and this can lead to problems. When family members get anxious, the anxiety can escalate and affect other members. The increase of anxiety can undermine the emotional connectedness members experienced towards each other.

According to Bowen (1978) anxiety is a consequence of both the projection and processes within the family of origin. The family projects anxiety onto one or more children who then incorporates or introjects the anxiety within a personal intrapsychic system. The child then carries the anxiety into subsequent relationships. The first feature that may heighten this projection process is fusion, which is the degree to which the family relationships are emotionally bound. The second feature is triangulation in which a third party, in this case a child becomes the focus of tension in the marital dyad.

Triangulation serves to decrease anxiety in the relationship between a couple, but increases anxiety in the individual who is triangulated (Bowen, 1978). Such anxious individuals perceive close relationships as negative and threatening, contributing to lack of intimacy and satisfaction (Benson, Larson, Wilson & Demo, 1993; West, Zarski & Harvill, 1986). The third feature is the amount of control and intimidation by -the parent to the child. Although the rigid expectations and excessive control by the parents over the child's behaviour may alleviate the anxiety in the marital dyad, it merely shifts the anxiety from the marital dyad to the child. The excessive expectations by parents that their children should only conform to family rules in controlling families, raises fears of disciplinary consequences such as parental withdrawal of affection.

Controlling dynamics in which children are not given the chance to express their own opinions and feelings about how they experience their environment also promotes intimidating views about the world. If these expectations and views are internalized, the result is a generalized apprehension across interpersonal situations. Another concept that Bowen uses is that of differentiation. This refers to those individuals who can transcend not only their own emotions but also those of the family system. Such people can extricate themselves from emotional entanglements. People who are differentiated are also flexible, adaptable, and more self-sufficient. They feel their own feelings while being aware of the feelings of others around them and are able to maintain a degree of objectivity and emotional distance.

Amato and Booth (1991), Glen and Kramer (1987), and Conway (1990) used the term intergenerational transmission of divorce to refer to the probability that adult children of divorced parents are more likely to be divorced compared to those who come from intact families. Regarding the intergenerational transmission of marital instability, Beal and Hochman (1991) maintain that it is not the divorce legacy, but the family patterns leading to the divorce that seep into future generations. Divorce also affects the future generations' sense of commitment to relationships in a more profound and lasting way. However, this may not be the case for all children because this depends on, amongst others, the socialization process as well as which parent the child feels more close to. This suggests that parental divorce elevates the risk of offspring divorce by increasing the likelihood of offspring exhibiting behaviours that interfere with the maintenance of mutually rewarding intimate relationships.

Bowen's theory provides a basis for extrapolation of several hypothesis regarding attitudes and feelings about marriage. The experience of fusion, triangulation and control in the family of origin has an influence on the children's ability to develop independent thinking. This suggests that the child is not given opportunities to express his/her views, feelings, beliefs or to learn skills for developing intimate relationships outside the family. Such individuals tend to perceive major life changes such as marriage with fear. Their relatively unsatisfying dating relationships may create negative expectations and feelings about future relationships and discourage them from pursuing a more intimate relationship like marriage. Furthermore, they are more likely than individuals from more functional families to perceive marriage as a challenge and are likely to perceive themselves as less prepared for marriage due to negative feelings (Bowen, 1978).

In the light of the above exposition, Bowen's theory became a preferred theoretical framework because it addresses flaws in families and marriages and fosters a positive view of families and marriages; it is vital for this study because the study tends to investigate the concept of marriage and its later resultant to divorce as well as the influential nature of Social Studies Education on students' attitude towards marriage and divorce. This theory best explains strategic measure in helping Social Studies Education to shape the attitude of students towards marriage and divorce. Therefore, the theory will help us understand how families function and how they deal and cope with situations that is stressful. It will also help to explain what parenting is about that result in children having negative or positive attitudes towards marriage.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was the correlational survey design. This design is applied to a study that seeks to establish if linear relationship exists between two or more variables. Such studies indicate the direction and the magnitude of the relationship between the variables being studied. Correlational studies do not establish causation. It could be the case that both variables are related to another variable which actually causes both variables. Correlational studies are however suitable for prediction, as a correlation coefficient shows how much one variable predicts the other (Omorogiuwa, 2006). The correlation design was used to establish the relationship between students' knowledge of the themes/topics in Social Studies Education and their attitude towards marriage and divorce. The independent variable in this study is students' knowledge of Social Studies Education; the dependent variable is students' attitude towards marriage and divorce

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this study consisted of all public senior secondary school students in Oredo and Orhionmwon Local Government Areas of Edo State. There are a total of 41 Senior Secondary Schools and 18,845 Senior Secondary School students in these local government areas.
Source: Edo State Post Primary Education Board (2022).

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample size of four hundred (400) students was selected using simple random sampling technique. Four mixed schools will be selected each from Oredo and Orhionmwon Local Government Areas. Fifty students will be randomly selected from each of these schools.

3.4 Research Instrument

The instrument for data collection for this study was the questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Attitude towards Marriage and Divorce (QATMD) was developed by the researcher. It has three sections. Section A sought to collect demographic information of the respondents. Section B which is the attitudinal scale was structured into Likert Modified Four Point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The responses will be scored as follows: SA=4, A=3, D=2 and SD=1 for positively worded items, while negatively worded items will be scored as SA = 1, A = 2, D = 3 and SD = 4. Any item that gets a mean of 2.50 and above will be considered a positive attitude, while items that attracts 0 to 2.49 will be considered a negative attitude. The section has twenty two questionnaire items that solicits information directed at measuring students' attitude towards marriage and divorce. Section C is a two scale response mode of True (T) or False (F) and it is made up of test questions directed at ascertaining students' knowledge of the themes/topics in Social Studies Education.

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by the researchers supervisor and two other experts in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology. These experts vetted the items of the instrument in terms of appropriateness and clarity of words and sentences, as well as relevance to the work. Their corrections and modifications was meticulously considered, effected and incorporated into the final draft of the instrument.

3.6 Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of this instrument was determined using a pilot test of 20 students who are part of the population but will not form part of the sample for the study. Data generated was subjected to Cronbach Alpha Statistics. The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.775 and 0.880 for the two instruments (attitude and knowledge scale) respectively which is an indication that the instruments are good and reliable.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected was analyzed using Pearson correlation statistics and linear regression. Pearson correlation was used in answering the raised research questions 1 and 2, while linear regression statistics was used in testing hypotheses 1 and 2. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

4. Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: Is there a significant relationship between students' knowledge of social studies education and their attitude towards marriage?

Table 1: Pearson correlation statistics on relationship between students' knowledge of social studies and attitudes to marriage

		Attitude to marriage	Knowledge	N
Pearson correlation	attitude of marriage	1.000	.102	400
	knowledge	.102	1.000	

The data in table 1 revealed that the Pearson correlation r is 0.102 between student knowledge of social studies education and their attitude towards marriage. This reveals that there is a weak positive relationship between knowledge and attitude towards marriage.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between students' knowledge of social studies education and their attitude towards divorce.

Table 2: Pearson correlation statistics on relationship between students' knowledge of social studies education and their attitude towards divorce

		Attitude to marriage	Knowledge	N
Pearson correlation	attitude to divorce	1.000	.173	400
	knowledge	.173	1.000	
Sig. (1-tailed)	attitude to divorce		.000	
	knowledge	.000		

The Pearson r value of 0.173 and level of significance of 0.000 showed that there is a weak positive significant relationship between knowledge of social studies and attitude towards divorce.
Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between students' knowledge of social studies education and their attitude towards marriage.

Table 3: Summary of linear regression showing relationship between knowledge of social studies and attitude towards marriage

	R	R Square	Beta	T	Sig.
Knowledge and attitude	0.102	0.01	0.102	2.054	0.041

The data in table 3 revealed r value of 0.10, R^2 of 0.01, Beta value of 0.102, t value of 2.054 and p-value of 0.041. The R^2 value showed that knowledge of social studies explains 1% of the variance in their attitude to divorce, while the beta value showed that the magnitude of relationship is weak positive (0.102) and significant as the alpha level is 0.041 which is less than 0.05.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between students' knowledge of social studies education and their attitude towards divorce

Table 4: Regression Statistics showing Relationship between Knowledge of Social Studies and Attitude towards Divorce

	R	R^2	B	t	Sig.
Knowledge and attitude towards divorce	0.173	0.03	0.173	3.501	0.001

The data in table 4 above showed R^2 value of 0.03 which showed that knowledge of social studies explains 3% of the respondents' attitude towards divorce (degree of association), while B value of 0.173 showed that the magnitude of relationship is weak, but it is significant at set alpha level of 0.05 (level of significance is 0.001)

5. Discussion of Findings

The findings of research question 1 in line with hypothesis 1 showed that there is a weak positive relationship between knowledge and attitude towards marriage. This finding somewhat goes with that of Goslin (2014) who in his investigation of the attitudes towards marriage and intentions to marry among young adults found that young adults with divorced or separated parents do not have a negative attitude towards marriage.

The result of research question 2 for hypothesis 2 showed that there is a weak positive significant relationship between knowledge of social studies and attitude towards divorce. This somehow follows the finding of Beal and Hochman (1991) who found that divorce affects the future generations' sense of commitment to relationships in a more profound and lasting way. Thus, suggesting that parental divorce elevates the risk of offspring divorce by increasing the likelihood of offspring exhibiting behaviours that interfere with the maintenance of mutually rewarding intimate relationship.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

Social studies as taught in schools have the capability of moulding students' attitude towards marriage and divorce. Also, divorce as an aftermath effect of marriage can be addressed using social studies education.

6.2 Recommendations

- Social studies education is capable of addressing issues facing marriage and should be used as a tool to positively exert influence on students' attitude to marriage
- Divorce should be discouraged in its entirety through social studies education as it can make some children experience pain, confusion, anger, hate, bitterness, sense of self-doubt, and so on.
- Social workers in understanding students' attitude towards marriage and divorce should properly shape these attitudes as they are potential predictors of actual marital behaviour.

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