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Editorial

This issue of NIU *Journal of Humanities* touches on Development Administration, Educational Psychology, Climate Change, Social Philosophy as well as Language and Literary Studies.

The first part of the Journal focuses on Development Administration. Using the Fiscal Federalism of Nigeria as a case study, one of the papers in this section empirically identifies the major challenges proterty tax and fiscal federalism to include: centralization at the state level, the absence of a comprehensive database, tax evasion, legal exemptions, skill shortages, lack of political will, and corruption. The paper recommends, amongst others, that the state government should states to relinquish the unconstitutional centralization of property tax functions and empowering local governments for independent assessment and collection.

One of the papers, in the second section on Educational Psychology, argues that moral education as a means of regenerating social norms and moral values. It is revealed in the paper, among other things, that job decision latitude was the main contributor to the prediction of burnout of academic staff of public universities and that university academic staff members are not immune to burnout and other-work related challenges affecting workers generally. It is therefore, recommended that Government, university administrator and university management should improve on university work environment by providing necessary facilities that will enhance favourable work environment. This in turn will reduce the level of burnout among the university academic staff.

In the third section on Climate Change, one of the papers reveals that temperature and precipitation affected soil moisture and organic matter from 1996-2016 and recommends the application of organic materials on soil to increase organic matter content and the practise of mulching will also conserve soil moisture.

One of the papers, in the fourth section on Social Philosophy, examines those cultural practices in the bible that are similar to African cuture. These biblical practices are juxtaposed with similar African cultural practices in order to better illustrate the teaching of the Bible to the Africans with the tool of “inculturation hermeneutics” for the exegetes.

Papers in the last section deals with issues in Language and Literary Studies. Several lierary works are examine in order to provide a useful contribution to how different worldview unites and differs in the human search to unravel 'truth'.

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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The Impact of the 2023 Cashless Policy on Live Music Performance in Nigeria: A Study of Selected Popular Musicians and Audience

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Abstract. A live music performance is an event where musicians perform in front of an audience, playing instruments or singing live. The cashless policy in Nigeria is a policy established by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to curb excesses in the handling of cash in the Nigerian federation. The policy was enforced not to eliminate the use of cash, but to reduce the volume of cash in circulation. This study reflects on the problems and prospects associated with the live music performances during the 2023 cashless policy in Nigeria. The study employed both primary and secondary data. The primary includes journal, books, internet and magazine. It also relied on interview and participant observation method. Findings revealed that the cashless policy was very hard-hitting especially for musicians whose brands are based on the money they are being sprayed at events. For them, it has been bad business since people have been unable to spray them at events during the cashless policy. It conclusion, the exchange for money between a live music performer and an audience through cash is a changing landscape that is left presently, only with the option of appreciating a musician through bank online transactions but calls for emerging a fascinating digital method of appreciation

Keywords: Cashless Policy, Live Music, Musicians, Performance.

1. Introduction

Nigeria's Central Bank introduced a cashless policy in 2023 to promote digital payments and reduce cash transactions. A cashless economy is one in which payments are made for products and services using electronic media rather than entirely eliminating cash from circulation. A cashless economy, according to Woodford (2003), is one in which it is considered that there are no transaction frictions that may be lessened by using money balances and that, as a result, give a cause for maintaining such balances even when they generate income. How much cash you have in your wallet is essentially meaningless in a cashless economy.

A cashless economy does not mean that currency will completely disappear since for the foreseeable future, people will still need cash to exchange products and services.

While other forms of payment especially electric based payments are utilized, that is a cash- based payment system and electronic payment systems. The CBN's cashless economy program intends to provide mobile payment services, eliminate historical barriers to financial inclusion for millions of Nigerians, and provide the country's rural, semi-urban, and urban areas with accessible, secure, and useful financial services. But now this is seen as a millstone by some elites, the poor, the stupid, and traders (Eromosele and Obinna, 2012).

It has been observed in Nigeria, the entertainment sector is not generally taken into account when calculating the country's GDP. This is a result of the constant focus on manufacturing, telecommunications, oil and gas, and agriculture. Even though the cashless policy in Nigeria is meant to have economic benefits, it also presents ecumenical issues. Luckily, the cashless policy has exposed this enormous gap in the music industry. It leaves the Nigerian music industry with reasons to now adapt and keep up with digital trends in order to survive its racing currents.

A cash-based economy also imposes some costs on the banking system, individuals, and the government. The higher the velocity of cash usage, the higher the processing cost borne by those in the value chain. The introduction of cashless system is therefore meant to ameliorate the sluggish nature of banking transactions. But the recent evolution of information and communication technology (ICT) has influenced every facet of life, transforming subsistence societies

into modernized societies. The adoption of electronic-based payment instruments worldwide has increased due to the introduction of this technology into the banking sector, which has redefined banking operations (Nisda, 2020). In respective of the introduction of any economy policy such as cashless policy, it is imperative to consider how the policy impacts on commerce and entrepreneurship of the people not leaving any stone unturned. The music industry is such that also impacts on the economy and the commercial life of the people in a community. Live Music performance is a source of livelihood to people in a society or community. The music business has so much been so enterprising especially now in the entertainment world. A single show or concert opens opportunities for many other business specialists to include videographers, photographers, decorators, sound engineers, food vendors, security outfits, printers, event planners, stage and set design, costumiers, fashion designers, Music journalists, Make-up artists and a lot more (Akande,2022).

In addition to being an essential source of revenue for most performers and event planners, music concerts also support the social, economic, and cultural lives of their communities (Manners, Kruger, & Saayman, 2012). According to Getz (2008:403), live music events have a significant economic impact and give attendees the chance to spend money on a variety of things such tickets, lodging, food, and mementos (Earl 2001:345; Hausman 2000:411; Moskalyak 2008).

2. Challenges with Cashless Policies in Live Music Performances

Despite the benefits of cashless policies, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed. It is important to consider that not all audiences are familiar with cashless payment systems, especially in rural areas where access to technology and the internet is limited (Adebona, 2023). This could exclude some potential audiences and limit some audience to be part of the live performance due to lack of cash to obtain ticket. Also, a member of the audience who peradventure was able to find his way to the live performance will be constrained to appreciate the musician in the course of the performance in cash and would not also be able to make a transfer. The risk of technical failures is unlikely to occur, such as network downtime or payment system errors, which could disrupt the smooth running of live music performances. Because cashless policies demand investments in payment infrastructure and staff training, it raised the cost of putting on live music events (Bankole, 2023). Consequently, this has an impact on music venues' bottom lines and reduced the quantity of audience in live music events.

3. Benefits of Cashless Policy in Live Music Performance

Live music performances in Nigeria have been significantly impacted by the adoption of cashless policy in music venues. It has decreased theft and fraud, improved transaction efficiency, and raised money for musicians and music venues (Adeyemi, 2023). In a situation where the musician is paid cash and attacked by rubbers, this would have effect on the level of preparation for the performance because fund will not be available to cater for logistics and other instruments needed to hold the performance. Psychologically, the musician and its band member will be affected and might not perform as they could. To note in one of the benefits of a cashless policy is to reduce the tendency of audience from spraying cash during a live music performance. The spraying of cash has been a major issue as Nigeria government frowned at it the act. There is a belief by some Nigerians that when cash is available, money is usually spent recklessly, but if transferred or paid into a bank account, it is usually well managed and spent. The difficulty and stress encountered sometimes in Nigeria banking system to withdraw cash might be a blessing in disguise to help manage spending especially when the user of the bank account does not like going through stress to have cash withdrawn.

However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed, such as limited access to technology in rural areas, the risk of technical failures, and the cost of implementation. Therefore, it is essential to strike a balance between the benefits and challenges of cashless policies to ensure that live music performances continue to thrive in Nigeria.

4. Live Music Performance and Spraying of Cash

Events including live music have long been a popular form of entertainment because they provide attendees the opportunity to mingle with their favorite musicians, experience new sounds and cultures, and have a good time dancing. However, a recent development that has sparked debate and worries among many in the music business and beyond is the custom of throwing money about during these concerts. Basically, spraying cash involves throwing large amounts of cash into the air during a live music performance, usually as a way to show off one's wealth or charity (Sokunbi, 2018).

This is generally regarded as a joyful activity during a live music performance, but the Nigerian government recently forbade it. Throwing money might be risky in confined or crowded areas, according to a reply for a live music event, since people can be motivated to fight or trample each other to get the cash. In the past, money has been sprayed at concerts, which has resulted in injuries, panic attacks, and even stampedes. Furthermore, some people may find it impolite or inappropriate to splatter cash, especially if it's done in an arrogant or inconsiderate manner. This may perpetuate unfavorable perceptions or attitudes about wealth and achievement, which can be particularly troublesome in areas where poverty or other forms of economic hardship are common. Aside from these issues, performers may find it difficult to stay focused or composed amidst the bustle, so spraying cash might be distracting or disruptive. Due to their potential inability to see or hear what is going on around them, artists may provide poor performances or even have accidents. In addition to these immediate dangers, spraying cash may have wider cultural or social repercussions, especially if it starts to gain acceptance or glamorization in some quarters.

In addition to adding to a culture of excess or materialism that is frequently criticized in the music industry, this can put pressure on or expectations on artists to participate in this behavior, even if they do not want to. Of course, not everyone considers the practice of spraying cash to be harmful or undesirable. Some contend that it's just a way of celebrating or expressing oneself, and that those who engage in it are only having fun or spreading their good fortune to others.

Some audience members argue that it should be recognized as a cultural practice with strong roots in particular communities or traditions. Even proponents of the practice admit that if done carelessly or incorrectly, it might have unfavorable effects. In order to prevent this, a lot of music venues and festivals have put in place policies regarding the spraying of cash. These policies may include caps on the quantity of money that can be tossed or demands that it be done in a specific area away from the stage or crowd. The controversy surrounding the dousing of cash at live music events is a reflection of broader conflicts concerning capital, society, and civic duty. In addition to celebrating the variety of music and performances that can be found all over the world and honoring people's right to free speech, it is crucial to make sure that these events are carried out carefully and properly, taking into account the safety of everyone around.

5. The Audience Attendance and Participation in Live Music Performance

The success of live music performances is heavily dependent on the audience, and is a crucial aspect of the music industry. The mood of the performance is greatly influenced by the audience, who also has the power to affect the performers' enthusiasm and rapport with the public. The performance can be significantly impacted by the size and makeup of the crowd. An enthusiastic environment produced by a sizable crowd can spread and uplift the performers' spirits. The performance may be significantly impacted by the actions of the audience. An attentive and involved audience can inspire performers to give it their all and produce a stronger performance. However, a bored or unruly crowd can divert the artists and make it difficult for them to stay focused and energetic. For this reason, it's critical that patrons show consideration for both the artists and other guests while they're performing.

The ability of fans to obtain tickets and attend a live performance comes first before their engagement and enjoyment of the performance. If there are no cash to obtain tickets, it will discourage some potential attendees from attending, resulting in a smaller and less engaged audience. On the other hand, if the audience who believes in spraying money as a show of appreciation and enjoyment of the music do not have cash, it may attract a less committed and less engaged audience.

The audience's experience may be impacted by the social setting of the performance. For instance, going to a live music performance with loved ones might make for a more pleasurable and social occasion. Similar to this, going to a performance with people who share your interests can foster a sense of belonging. The audience's general energy and disposition might influence the performance's atmosphere, either positively or negatively. A typically upbeat and passionate crowd can make the experience more pleasurable for all parties involved.

A live music performance is only as successful as its audience. The crowd can affect the entire mood and experience for both the performers and the listeners, from their size and demographics to their behavior and engagement. A successful live music performance is ultimately a collaborative effort between the artists and the audience, and when both are involved and, in the moment, it's magical.

6. Findings from Interviewed Musicians

According to (Johnson, 2023), whose performance is mainly based on entertainment and hyping. He has specific songs that aids and lifts the celebrants and audience's Ego to spray money and show off their wealth, the likes of "*sho le na wo yen tan*", "*Ju ju ju jubadi*", "*feyi fine gan*" etc. He now sees his job as a way of having fun with his band and other people, so whether or not he's been sprayed, his aim is to entertain and create fun moments for the celebrants. Meanwhile, this cashless policy has been a major problem to the celebrants too as they are unable to show-off their spraying skills while they are being praised by the musicians. This has also affected the performers time on the stage since that's the only thing that gears and keeps them singing for hours, so they spend limited time on stage after entertaining their guests. This inability to spray money is also a discouragement to them as people would just be on their seats since they are unable to spray money and most times it's the disc jockey (DJ) that covers up for the rest of the event. The cashless policy has thereby affected both the performers and the celebrants from portraying the cultural and regular mannerism of an owanbe party.

According to (Adedeji, 2023), a popular live music performer whose music is mainly aimed at entertainment and popular in Ogun state and other south west state, Music performances has not really been enjoyable for him but he has disciplined himself to love and enjoy his music whether he is being appreciated and sprayed money or not to uphold his integrity and brand name. Due to his high fan base, transfers are being made to appreciate him (though might not be as much as when sprayed on stage), and he's blessed from other aspects like assets, material gifts etc. He settles his band members by compiling their names and charges, sends them to his band captain who then transfers the money to each band member's. He also has a way of appreciating his band members even when they aren't sprayed money on stage by taking them out to have fun and explore and buying them gifts. His determination to perform regardless of the cashless policy has made it less tiring for him on stage as he's bent on just delivering his services and entertain the celebrants.

7. Conclusion

It is clear from the selected musicians' and members of the audience reactions and experiences that the cashless policy has had a mixed impact on live music performances in Nigeria. Positively, the policy has increased digital payments, which has decreased the rate of non-payment and made it simpler for artists to get paid for their performances. Better revenue tracking has also been made possible, which can aid in royalties and copyright protection.

However, there are also negative effects to consider. Some artists have reported increased transaction fees, which can cut into their profits and reduce the viability of live performances. Access to digital payment channels is another problem, especially for smaller and unofficial artists who do not have access to the required technology or infrastructure.

The effect of the cashless approach on audience attendance is another major worry. Live music performances are seeing fewer people show up, according to some musicians. This is especially true in smaller venues or less developed places where digital payment infrastructure might not be as widely accessible. Long-term effects on the industry can result from this, as fewer people attending shows may mean less money and possibilities for performers.

All things considered, it is evident that Nigerian live music performances have been significantly impacted by the cashless policy, both positively and negatively. It is imperative that politicians take these effects into account and endeavor to establish a more equal and sustainable environment for audiences and artists. This could entail taking steps to lower transaction costs, expand access to digital payment infrastructure, and assist less established and smaller performers who would be more susceptible to the policy's consequences.

To properly comprehend the impact of the cashless policy on live music performances in Nigeria, more investigation is required. This is especially important when considering the policy's possible long-term implications on the industry as a whole, as well as its effects on smaller and more informal artists. Through this approach, policymakers and industry stakeholders can gain a deeper comprehension of the opportunities and problems associated with the policy, and collaborate to establish a flourishing and long-lasting live music sector in Nigeria.

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Historical Review of Terrorism and Out-of-School Children Indoctrination and Radicalization: A Preliminary Investigation into the Child Abuse in the Boko Haram Suicide Bombing in Yobe Sate

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Abstract. This research paper intends to examine how the activities of terrorist cell especially those in West African sub-region initiates under age into their operation. The work looked at the nature of terrorism in Nigeria as to how their network spread to various parts of the country. It is believed most of the origin of the terrorism was influence by foreign ideology with specific target of a common belief. The paper also focused on the formation of the terrorists' cell in Nigeria and how they succeeded by indoctrinating children into the main stream of terrorism for various missions. The research discusses the way and processes those terrorists followed or applied to achieve their objectives. It should be noted that throughout the period of the crisis, particularly in north-eastern Nigeria, there are several cases of attacks by the teenagers in various places with devastating effects on the society. It has been estimated that more 43% of the attacks in Yobe state which is the scope of the research and its surrounding has been attributed to suicide bombing attacks by either young girls or boys who were trained by the insurgents to attack their targets, with emphasis on the child abuse and radicalization, as well as how it affects the growth and development of youth in the society. Other aspect of consideration in the research include factors responsible for the successful enrolment and initiation of the underage into the organization. These factors include: poverty level of the society, materialism, ideological warfare, Islamism or secular radicalism, drugs addiction etc. Recent world report reveals that more than 20,000 people were killed and over two million displaced by the insurgency. Although the crisis has bedeviled almost 60% of the country, northeastern Nigeria was one of the most affected region of this terrible terrorist's act. The overall effects of this indoctrination and radicalization of the youth by these groups have been a tremendous increased rate of crime within the region, hunger and starvation as well as general psychological trauma and fear of the unknown which was brought by the consequences of the general insecurity. The research also come up with the level of psychological damage done by the terrorists and examine whether the recent de-radicalization centers established by the Nigerian government shall serve its purpose or there is need for more measure to revert the victims back to the normal and official thinking of the decent society.

Keywords: Children, Boko Haram, Indoctrination, Radicalization, Terrorism

1. Introduction

Nigeria has been engulfed with series of attacks by terrorists for almost two decades. This has been largely attributed to child neglect and crass youth underemployment. Even though different scholars have diverse opinion as to the main causes of the problem, one common universally accepted argument is, nothing has been done engage the youthful population of Nigeria in terms of employment or productivity. The youth have been abandoned to survive amidst terrible economic policies.

Terrorism is globally condemned as an act of unconventional measure or retaliation by an individual or groups of individuals who felt aggrieved with has been done particularly some great injustice to done in the past them. Terrorism is an armed uprising in form of guerrilla war, contesting against a government or state that presume to have failed in the system of governance. According to {M. (E. Okem) terrorists are actors who do not belong to any recognized armed forces or who do not adhere to the laws of war and who are therefore regarded as rogue actors.

Ius Gentium, defined the term Terrorism as a situation or condition of revolt against a recognized government that does not reach the proportion of an organized revolutionary government and is not recognized as belligerency. Terrorist is a person who rises in forcible

opposition to lawful authority especially person who engages in armed resistance to a government or to the execution of its law, rebel. (Collins English Dictionary). According to Human Rights Watch, the military recruitment of children under 18 years of age and their use in hostilities occurs in at least 86 countries and territories, with Amnesty International estimating that there are approximately 250,000 children fighting in conflicts worldwide. (K, Lakhani:2016) Taliban commander Qari Hussain when interviewed by Journalist Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, he mentioned:

Although young militants are generally teenagers when asked to carry out suicide attacks, the indoctrination of children often starts at a much younger age. We recruit children as young as five, six and seven years old, emphasizing, "Children are tools to achieve God's will. And whatever comes your way, you sacrifice it. (ibid)

This work intends to examine the factors and forces behind the course and causes of one important historical epoch that engulfed one of the West African societies- Nigeria, i.e Terrorism. As a nation, Nigeria has about thirty-six states including federal capital territory. These states have been divided into six different geo-political zones, namely South-South, South-East, South-West, North-West, North-Central and North-East respectively. The purpose of this research is to look at how terrorism beclouded the North-Eastern region in recent years with the emergence of Boko Haram terrorist cell and their systematic approach to indoctrinating children below the age maturity as their agents of destruction through suicide bombing and bomb blast. Historically, it is assumed that terrorist's activities started with the emergence of two global developments. One is the endless crisis between Palestinians and Jews of the Israel which continue to have serious negative impacts on the lives of the Palestine nation. As a result, majority of the people there lost confidence in the global justice and took up arms to defend themselves through guerrilla warfare which to the believe of many political governments of America and Europe is, but terrorists reactionary forces. The second development was after the end of Russian/Afghanistan war which subsequently led to the establishment of the Taliban government. The relation between Afghanistan and the west turned sour to the extent a serious Islamic agitating network known as Al-Qaeda was founded, which was later condemned by the west and America as a terrorist group. It was against this background other agitating movement in Africa south of the Sahara such Al-Shabab, MUJAO, ISWAP, Boko Haram, continue to emerged in the name of Jihad with the view to established Islamic government free from western ideology and civilization. This research work will therefore discuss how such movement and network penetrated into Nigeria and the various factors that strengthen the consolidation of the terrorists group. Emphasis shall be focus on how teenagers were recruited, radicalized and indoctrinated in order to achieve their targets. The work will inquire on the level of negligence of the society and government particularly in the course of the crisis.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Between 2006 and 2016, various attacks were carried out by the terrorists' cell of Boko Haram and other criminal groups using little boys and girls of underage as their agents, informants and suicide bombers. Why? The attacked was so devastating that many lives were lost and the teenagers carried out the attacks without fear or regrets. Was there any method used to achieve that purpose? What was the method used to succeed in radicalizing and indoctrinating such little kids to convert them into such deadly act? Was there no enough security measure and other reversal method from the side of the government stop such ugly development? What was the ideology used to convince the kids? Was it huge material deception or psychological re-orientation? Was there the influence of drugs to addicts them for the purpose of that mission. The need to carry out a research on this particular issue especially regarding the victimization of the substantial number of children that were wasted during these terrorists' activities which lasted for almost a decade is indeed paramount. There is every justification to critically examine the whole scenario as to how possible measures could be taken to curtail the re-occurrence of such situation.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate the various menace associated with Out of School Children in Yobe State metropolis with the view to proffer effective communication approaches that can be used for reforming the system. To achieve this, the following objectives are set to be achieved:

- To determine the menace associated with the indoctrination of out of school children in Yobe state major cities during the Boko Haram crisis.
- To examine the factors behind the radicalization and indoctrination of teenagers by the terrorist's group in Nigeria especially north-eastern region.
- To examine the extent of which the terrorist used teenagers as agents of attack in the insurgency fight.
- To explore effective communication approaches that can be used to reform the indoctrinated children and to eradicate the menace associated with it in Yobe state.

2. Research Methodology

This study has employed mixed research method. The population of this study comprised people from the ages of 20 to 50 years which include both gender from different religions and occupations and professions. The population of the study location was projected by the recent UNDP 2023. The sample size was drawn by using Monkey Survey calculator software, which gave the researcher positive approach level of 93% and thus this research has arrived at 165 people that were administered with questionnaire. At the end, the returned questionnaire which number about 158 were objectively analyzed.

Common causes of Terrorism in a Society

Among the points usually raised is that the system prepares breeding grounds for fanatics to transformed and form terrorists' cell. For instance as observed by Joseph G. (2017), out of school children whose parents have neglected paved a way for terrorism and banditry to emerged going by the difficult lifestyle they undergo during their formative period, which has been full of deprivation, frustration, oppression and lack of education and other basic social amenities they should have provided by the government as legal members of the society.(S Garba:2022) This study analyzes the empirical on-field evidences on the menace associated with Out of School Children who were targeted as part of the terrorists operation in Yobe state. among some of the factors include:

- School drop out
- Parental negligence and dogging of responsibility
- Poverty and hunger in the society
- Absent of Child-care system
- Illiteracy/ignorance
- Materialism

Based on the above causes, the researcher having collected the questionnaire distributed have analyzed and decoded the information and below results were obtained.

Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-35	55	31.40
35-40	65	37.41
30-above	50	27.10

Source: *Field Survey, ,2024*

Table 1 provides insight into the age distribution of respondents who took part in the survey. The table suggested that most of the respondents were between the ages of 35– 40.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	120	65.40
Female	85	45.53

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

Table 2, indicates that male gender 110 (59.45) are more than the female respondents 75 (40.54) who took part in the study.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Islam	135	72.97
Christianity	47	25.40
Traditional	3	1.62

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 indicates that majority of the respondents were Muslims followers of Islam (75.67%)while (24.32%) were Christians, traditionalists were only (1.08%).

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Housewife	23	12.43
Students	37	20
Farmer	35	18.91
Public servant	50	27.02
Trader	40	21.62

Source: *Field Survey 2024*

Table 4 sheds insight into occupational distribution of respondents who took part in the study. The table indicated that, majority of the respondents (27.02) were public servants, while 23 (12.43) of the respondents were housewives and they were the least who took part in this study.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by educational qualifications.

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Degree/HND	15	9.72
NCE/OND	35	20.65
Secondary	50	28.41
Primary	30	18.44
Quranic only	23	12.41
None	0	0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Boko Haram Method of Recruitment

Table 5 sheds light on the educational qualification of the respondents. Majority of the respondents 60(32.43%) were secondary Certificate holders while 42 (22.70%) of the respondents were NCE/OND holders, 20(13.51%) have Qur'anic Education only.

Menace Associated with Out of School Children

Table 6: Does Out of School Children system promote laziness?

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	145	78.37
No	40	21.62
Not sure	5	2.70

Source: *Field Survey*

Table 6 shows that majority of the respondents 14(78.37%)were on the view that Out of School Children System promotes laziness. Forty (21.62%) of respondents who took part in the study did not believe that Out of School Children system has promote laziness.

Boko Haram and the Vulnerable out of School Child

Majority of the people that took part in this study were between the ages of 36 to 45 and they were about 39.45%. This age category can be in the parental stage, most of them may be guardians or have their own children hence they are the right people to answer most of the questions regarding the issues of Out of School Children.

However, in this study male respondents were majority, they were about 59.45. % eventhough the gap between the male and female respondents was not much but still the disparity of 19.39% can make significant differences on the results of this study. Moreover, the percentage of women who participate in this study is also encouraging when consider how women were left behind in some social issues in this part of the country.

Religious play a very vital role in the social life of the people of Yobe State Metropolitan Council. As indicated in the Table 3 of this study majority of the respondents who took part in study were Muslims which were about 72.97% and 25.32% of the respondents were Christians while only 1.62% were traditionalists and followers of other believes. The issue of this study has a strong tied with Islamic religion hence there may be sympathy from the Muslims respondents in answering some of this study questions.

Occupational activities are essential aspects of the people of Yobe State, Metropolitan Council. In this study the highest numbers of the respondents were public servants that occupy about 27.02% and followed by the traders which were 21.26% of the respondents. Previous studies have shown that in some areas children that were sent for Out of School Children in the urban centers worked as domestic servants in the houses of Public Servants or well to do houses in order to get food to eat. Hence the response of Public Servants in this study is very crucial. However, the author has the view that Almajirai usually used the market area where most of the traders are doing their business to conduct their begging activities; therefore, traders have a very crucial role to play on the existence of Almajirai. However, farmers' respondents were 18.91% and may be also benefited from the labour of Almajirai in their farms. In other words, farmers at times used Almajirai as a chief source of labour in their farms. This is also a tradition in some places that Almajirai were used to work in the farms with little pay. Undoubtedly, those who have, opportune to study in tertiary institutions they might be aware that Almajirai were used to serve students for washing their cloths and to Education is fundamental in the social life of the people. As indicated in the tables 4 of this study majority of the respondents have obtained secondary school certificates. This shown that they were literate and they could read and write. In this study there was no single individual respondent that did not attend school. Among the respondents 13.51% have studied Quranic education only. In the view of the author, it is only when people are more enlightened that the issue of Out of School Children will be sanitized and reformed.

The result of this survey confirms that 78.37% of respondents have agreed that Out of School Children system promote laziness. The system is considered as counter-productive. The system encourages children, adolescence and able-bodied young men to leech on economic system. This ultimately reduces the Gross Per Capital Income (GPCI) with negative neglect on standard of living.

Although 54.05% of respondent in this survey did not confirm that Out of School Children system denies producing future professionals but about 35.67% respondents have agreed that Out of School Children become a serious barrier for producing professionals in Yobe State metropolitan council. Without doubt, the high number of Almajirai in Northern Nigeria in which Yobe State Metropolitan Council inclusive portend a great danger to the development of professionals that will champion the cause of the region and the country in the future. This position has reinforced by Perverz (2005) who concludes that the practice of Out of School Children in Northern Nigeria is denying the region from producing future professionals that would contribute to positive economic development of our nation. Given that the Northern Nigeria is arguably the region that is mostly, in dire need of professionals to champion its economic

transformation, finding solution to Out of School Children in this region is sacrosanct.

The menace associated with Out of School Children is tremendous it includes child neglect among parents. Naja'atu Bala Muhammed a woman activist in northern Nigeria from Kano:

You gave an Islamic scholar 40 children. You did not know him and he did not know you. As parents, you didn't know anything about the shelter and feeding of these children. It is as a result of this some (of them) they become home sexual, some kidnappers and if these children were stolen by ritualists or human organ traders, who will know this. (BBCnews:2022)

The above statement confirms by the result of this study where by about 83.78% of the respondents as indicated in table 8 have agreed that Out of School Children system encourage child's begging which exposes them to all sort of hazards. Moreover, it noted that begging exposes the Almajirai to all manners of environmental hazards which affects them psychologically and instill inferiority complex, dependency, sense of defection and all sorts of negatives psychological feeling and make them vulnerable and susceptible to social vices. They often come in contact with all kind of people and experiences in the society; the good, the bad and the ugly. As juvenile, they can hardly differentiate the right from the wrong. In other words, psychological deficiencies leading to other vices arise from the young people's exposure to the Out of School Children system [26]. However, in the Course of Out of School Children moving from one place to another to seek alms having been neglected by their parents, teachers, society and the government, the children become exposed to danger and susceptible to becoming extremists. Several authors alleged that Out of School Children lifestyle provided a cheap source of man power for terrorists and contributory to the growth of the Boko-Haram security challenges in Nigeria [14,15]. Undoubtedly, in this regard, the present study further confirms that Out of School Children system has provided a breeding ground for terrorist where by about 32.43% of the respondents in table 9 have agreed with this. Although majority of the respondents who were about 44.32% have contrary view but the 32.43% the respondents have established enough evidence that Out of School Children system has provided a breeding ground for recruitment of terrorists in the country. The reason behind the large percentage of those who were not affirmed that Out of School Children is contributing for Boko-Haram might be because this study has taken place in Yobe State Metropolitan Council in which the Out of School Children issue is almost a culture to the people of the area.

Processes of Indoctrination and Radicalization of Child as terrorist

Radicalization is perceived as a grievances and moral exploitation. Grievances that emanated from human action thus involve violence and norms resulted due to injustice. (Sageman:2008).

However, in numerous armed conflicts all over the world, children continue to be used as weapons of war. According to Human Rights Watch, terrorist's recruitment of children under 18 years of age and their use in hostilities occurs in at least 86 countries and territories, with Amnesty International estimating that there are approximately 250,000 children fighting in conflicts worldwide. (opp cit)

In Nigeria especially Boko Haram troubled area, a significant number of suicide bombers were children between 12 and 18 years of age. Although according J Tahir, young militants are generally teenagers when asked to carry out suicide attacks, the indoctrination of children often starts at a much younger age. (L J Tahir: 2018).

However, below are some of the identified factors that facilitated the recruitment, indoctrination and radicalization of children in Yobe state.

Role of Traditional Islamic School (Tsangaya)

Wider argument has strongly condemned the attitude of local Islamic school in the way the tutors handle the students, in fact the actual number of madrasas (religious schools) in Northern Nigeria or even the scope of the research is not known precisely even by the government. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, "Experts say there is no credible information for the number of unregistered madrassas, but estimates of registered madrassas range from twelve thousand to twenty thousand in northern part of the country. (NCAOS: 2024) When looking at the numbers of children who attend Tsangaya school in the country, it is not an exaggerated when one concludes the system prepares ground for the terrorists to easily lured the children into the cell with all what the school could not offer them. The factor behind this easy access to the children was the vulnerability of low-income families that almost give up their children to then larger society through the weak and greedy tutor as the last alternative to the child survival.

Children at a young age are deeply vulnerable, malleable and impressionable, traits often manipulated

by group leaders in conflicts throughout the world to indoctrinate child soldiers. (Ibid) According to Azhar Hussain, a consultant with various international organizations on madrasa enhancement in Pakistan, the curriculum in these Tsangaya schools is focused on religion especially science Quran only, and rarely incorporates other fields that ultimately foster critical thinking and analysis. In many of these school, students are also not allowed to watch television or read any western materials not prescribed by their tutors and are "severely reprimanded based on the teaching and instruction of their teachers. This research therefore discovered that indoctrination is therefore use as an important tool in radicalizing those children. There was absent of wider interpretation of Islam.

Financial inducement.

In 2013, US Institute of peace commission, a study clean foundation in Nigeria had examined factors responsible for youth radicalization or recruitment into armed group. The field research which selected affected areas revealed financial crisis which brought wide spread poverty and growing population of destitute children led Boko Haram to exploit the situation and paid them 5000 naira which was equivalent to 30 Dollars then as a mean of seducing them to achieve their target on enemy. It is clear that poverty level in Yobe state is below the development index by UNDP. For Instance. Percent of population living on less than poverty thresholds as at 2012 which was the peak of book Haram crisis in Yobe state was 59.0% ($2.15), and 99.2% when Dollar was ($6.85). (Wikipedia :2014) going by this economically terrible condition, it is pertinent Boko haram should have upper hand in the recruitment of vulnerable child.

Social support as a beacon of hope

The emergence of such children on the street as beggars and out of scholl children gave room for the terrorists to exploit the social anachronism in the country. Probably the newly established commission for Almajiri and out of school children was an attempt to curtail the menace of child indoctrination and radicalization by the Boko Haram and other terrorists' cell. In north-eastern part of the country, the percentages of out of school children between the ages (6-15) are as follows: Bauchi 55.7%, Borno 54.2%, Gombe 48%, Taraba 28.8%, Adamawa 21.7% and Yobe which is the case study of the research has 62.9%. (NNPI:2022). It is also buttressed that children were not only economic actors, beginning apprenticeship at the age of 12 or younger, but they were also use as political agents, often initiating resistance and uprisings. (Yakubu M. J:2016)

Moral decadence of the system

Common thins that makes society amoral include rampant rape, stealing, violence, drug abuse, pornography etc. however, the consequences of all these moral decadences include: underdevelopment, collapse of the family, disintegration of communities, lack of religious faith and general widespread of insecurity. (A Safadekan: 2016) Yobe state has found itself in such social mess prior to the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency. The debut of such terrorist's organization thus easily exploited the vulnerability of such moral collapse which made it easier for recruitment, indoctrination and radicalization a common thing in the one decade of the terrible insurgency.

Impact of child terrorism on a society

The overall discussion of this research work has found the consequences of activities so drastically that fanaticism has become part of the behavioral attitude of the children especially when it come religious teachings and interpretations. In addition to that, the child usually become too upset on a simple interaction with believe that the society has offended him. (L J Tahir: 2018).

There is also a risk of PTSD and post-traumatic stress symptoms, behavioral and emotional symptoms. Psychosomatic symptoms etc. these usually manifest after post-indoctrination and during the de-radicalization moment which is being manage by psycho-therapy experts.

Another impact of child terrorism is becoming an agent of Societal Destruction. Most of the suicide bombing and Bomb detonation are carried out by the radicalized and trained children leading to heavy loss of lives and property. During the Boko haram period an estimated forty-eight suicide bombing were said to have taken place in Yobe state between 2012 and 2017 delivered by children below the ages of fifteen. (A Salisu: 2015) the most devastating impact of such action is family disintegration, with virtually long-term rehabilitation or sometimes even no rehabilitation at all. This has created bitter experience by the kids which shall have impact on them for several years.

Psychological fear, xenophobia, fearlessness to kill or destroy other communities or hostile to stranger whose appearance in the society maybe positive. Aggression and curious against people around them for violent

approach all clear manifestation of consequences of child indoctrination by the terrorist's cell.

Finally, the negative impact of this action is general underdevelopment of various aspects of life such as market uncertainty, with financial crisis and absent of investor both within and outside the country. For instance, one the greatest cattle market in West Africa (Potiskum) had lost billions of naira due to several attacks and bomb blast by the terrorists. In fact, there was complete absent of tourism because of fear of unknown.

Conclusion

From so far what has been identified in the course of the above research on child indoctrination, it is pertinent to note that several factors as mentioned above have contributed the easy access to the vulnerable child by the Boko Haram terrorists. Among them include negligence of the parents, failure of the system, poor household training, poverty and lack of proper religious interpretations. The field work carried out and the questionnaire distributed have shown the different categories of opinion related to the problem which has been tabulated for intellectual consumption. Finally impact and implication of child indoctrination and radicalization has been outlined which in a nutshell affect the socio-economic development of a society. The only way out is to follow as mentioned by Convention on the Rights of the Child, art. 39.

"*State parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of, any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery or reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect, and dignity of the child*".

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Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), the Culture of Silence: Telemedicine as Panacea and Its Challenge in Nigeria

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Abstract. In today's world, the unchecked devastation imposed by intimate partner violence (IPV) continues to be a serious concern. The destructive effects of IPV span across many societal strata - socioeconomic, cultural, and demographic. Physical, sexual, and psychological abuse all fall under the umbrella of IPV, the ramifications of which can severely affect the physical and mental well-being of survivors. Even as awareness grows and efforts to combat IPV increase, a disconcerting silence continues to surround this issue. This silence is a major stumbling block to effective intervention and further support for survivors. Recognizing the need to defuse such 'cultures of silence', a new helping hand has emerged - telemedicine, which provides healthcare services through electronic communication technologies. The paper found that there is no specific legal framework for telemedicine in Nigeria although there are relevant laws, regulations, and policies governing telemedicine. This paper will explore the role of professional entities, such as the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) and the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN). Scrutinizing their guidelines, ethical standards, and policies related to telemedicine. Within the scope of this paper, the focus will be on delving deep into this intertwining of IPV, the culture of silence, telemedicine and law. The aim is to better understand how law can aid telemedicine to provide solutions to the challenges that survivors confront while seeking help and aid.

Keywords: Intimate-Partner, Violence, Culture, Legal, Telemedicine, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is not confined to a single country, social class, or race. It has evolved into a major global health hazard (WHO, 2022) such that the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that up to 71% of women aged 18 to 60 who have ever been in a relationship have been subjected to some sort of abuse, which can include emotional, physical, or sexual violence (George and Bhila, 2019), between 15% and 29% of women in the world have been subjected to various forms of abuse(Majekudumi et al., 2022, Aidonojie et al., 2022; Majekudumi et al., 2022), 30% of women are affected by intimate partner violence and male partners are responsible for up to 38% of all female killings (WHO, 2022).

In Nigeria, an average of 1 in every 4 women has experienced IPV which involves, hitting, kicking, starvation, exploitation, emotional, verbal, psychological, economic abuse and sometimes death., IPV is prevalent worldwide, and the evidence point to the need for an immediate and effective response to the problem (Haleem et al., 2021). Cases of IPV are under-reported globally but despite this challenge, there is a due diligence duty placed on the states by the WHO (WHO, 2022). Member states supported a worldwide plan of action on enhancing the role of health systems in tackling interpersonal violence at the World Health Assembly in May 2016 (Dunham and Senn, 2000), this because, globally it has been observed that healthcare providers have multiple contacts with the survivors through the different stages of the abuse.

The transformative power of telemedicine in addressing the menacing issue of intimate partner violence (IPV) has been gradually coming to the forefront in the last few years. Essentially, telemedicine is an innovative way of delivering healthcare services via newer technologies such as video calls or phone sessions (Gurupur and Miao, 2022). For those caught in the storm of IPV, it poses as a lifeline, providing critical services such as therapeutic aid, counseling and screenings. Its uniqueness lies in its ability to bring care closer to survivors who may be trapped in a web of fear and obstacles preventing them from seeking help at health facilities.

This paper explores the legal framework of Nigeria's telemedicine sector, focusing on the role of professional entities like the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) and the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN). It aims to understand the laws, standards, and policies that shape telemedicine operations, their impact on IPV survivors, and any hurdles that might obstruct its smooth rollout. The paper aims to demystify the conditions surrounding telemedicine regulation and its implications for improving healthcare services and support for IPV survivors in Nigeria.

1.1 Definition and Types of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Intimate partner violence (IPV) (Douglas, 2021) is defined as physical or sexual assault, emotional abuse, or controlling conduct by a current or previous intimate partner, according to the World Health Organization. IPV also known as spousal violence is one of the forms of domestic violence that has been declared to be a human rights violation (Nnyombi et al., 2022) because it infringes on the right to dignity of the person of the survivor, The issue of IPV is not narrowed down to specific relationships or social classes; it prevails in both heterosexual and same-sex partnerships and does not discriminate on any background or lifestyle (Inagbor et al., 2023; Aidonojie et al., 2023; Edetalehn and Aidonojie; 2023).

Physical abuse, which can involve actions such as pushing, restraining, slapping/punching, kicking, scratching, and so on, is the most common form of IPV. Emotional Abuse usually starts with a verbal assault. Abusers utilize it as a means of humiliating and belittling their victims. Their purpose is to make their partner feel worthless. Economic Abuse occurs when a partner refuses to let their spouse manage their own money. In this instance, abusers frequently refuse to let their partners work or attain any kind of independent achievement. While the last form in this classification is Psychological Abuse which includes the use of words or actions to instil fear in another person (Absi and Williams, 2018). Lastly, in the digital era where technology is deeply entwined in our lives, digital abuse has surfaced as a prevalent form of IPV. Harassment through electronic devices, threatening messages, stalking via GPS, or online rumours all fall under this category.

1.2 Prevalence and impact of intimate partner violence

There's a global crisis that permeates through diverse cultures and societies, and it is intimate partner violence (IPV). This term, IPV, encapsulates a range of harmful behaviors like physical, sexual, or psychological abuse enacted by a current or past partner. It is indeed a troublesome issue, alarming due to its widespread nature and its massive toll on the safety and welfare of the people enduring it. IPV is not particular to a specific gender, but women are undoubtedly its primary survivors. A startling report from the World Health Organization in 2013 revealed that one in three women globally has suffered physical and/or sexual harm inflicted by an intimate partner. In Nigeria, 33% of women age 15-49 in Nigeria have experienced physical or sexual violence: 24% have experienced only physical violence 2% have experienced only sexual violence, and 7% have experienced both physical and sexual violence (Achan and Saqib, 2021) The news is flooded with news of spouses killing their partners one on Wednesday, February 17, 2021, the Ondo State Police Command arrested one Queen Beatrice for allegedly killing her husband, Emmanuel Ikujuni, at Omotosho town, in Okitipupa Local Government of the state while same day in Lagos state, David Idibie was arrested for the death of his 42-year-old wife, Juliana Idibie, who was found dead in their apartment (Aderson et al., 2017). In November, 2022 Segun Ebenezer beat his wife Bukola to death, between January 2021 and March 2022 at least 49 spouses reportedly died, 35 women were killed by their husbands while wives killed their husbands on 14 different occasions (De Carvalho and Bandiera-Paiva, 2018) Yetunde killed her husband Lowo and in 2017, and then the popular Osinachi's case, the popular gospel singer killed by her husband.

The impact of IPV on the survivor can be physical and often more evident repercussions can be short-lived or long-lasting. Broken bones, sprains, scratches, bruises, digestive disorders, eating problems, back, neck, abdomen, stomach, or genital area discomfort, headaches, fainting, seizures, hypertension, urinary tract or vaginal infections, sexually transmitted illnesses, and sexual dysfunction are just a few examples, or non-physical which may include PTSD, high blood pressure (hypertension), mental health challenges, for this reason, hospital come in handy. As a result, healthcare providers have more connections and possibilities to assist them.

Social norms and gender disparities or dread of retaliation and, quite often, the simple lack of awareness often discourage survivors from reaching

out to help (Carter et al., 2021). This silence becomes an integral part of the IPV problem. Societal shame, stigma, and the unjust view that domestic violence is a private issue plays a part in it (Cheng et al., 2017). It is crucial to break this silence, the availability of necessary resources and aid for the survivors, and this could be the much-needed step towards breaking away from the violence cycle.

Telemedicine, offering health care services remotely via technology, appears as an efficient way to tackle the challenges faced by IPV survivors. It offers a safe and confidential communication line for IPV survivors to get medical and psychological support (Adrawal and Alharbe, 2019). This way, health care providers can offer essential services like trauma evaluations, counseling, and assistance while maintaining the safety and confidentiality of the survivor. Advancements in telemedicine in providing support services might pave the way towards liberating survivors from violence, potentially offering them access to recuperative resources and empowerment. According to Acumen Research and Consulting, telemedicine is projected to garner growth at a compound annual growth rate of 14.19% from 2019 to 2026 (Adewale, 2014). Telemedicine is here to stay; thus, it is de rigueur for the government and key stakeholders to fully embrace it.

1.3 The Culture of Silence Surrounding Intimate Partner Violence

Those who have encountered IPV usually keep mum out of sheer terror. The thoughts of repercussions from their abuser or the social stigma they might endure are powerful deterrents. The fear takes hold of them, binding them with chains that hinder them from reaching out for the help they desperately need (Emezue et al., 2022). The hush that surrounds IPV is far from an isolated phenomenon, it finds fuel in societal mindsets. Regrettably, we live in a world that masks the truth behind domestic violence, downplaying the intensity of such horrors. What is more distressing is how our society tends to wrongfully place the blame on the survivors rather than pointing the finger at the actual wrongdoers (Gunawan et al., Aidonojie, 2023; Idahosa et al., 2023; Aidonojie et al., 2023).

The sheer ignorance surrounding IPV contributes to the silence. Many people don't even know what IPV is or its consequents. Worse, those who are in a position to help, such as friends, family, and health workers, may lack the necessary tools to react appropriately upon stumbling upon such situations (Agbedo, 2023). Amid these grim realities, there is a glimmer of hope through the increasing adoption of telemedicine. This term refers to using digital media to offer healthcare services remotely, such as virtual health check-ups. This has the potential to overcome several barriers IPV survivors face when seeking help, such as safety and privacy concerns (Okwundu, 2017).

Harnessing telemedicine to provide IPV survivors with accessible and discreet resources. The opportunity for them getting emotional support, legal consultation, and counseling through a single click is a comforting hope and integrating IPV identification into these online check-ups might represent the turning point these survivors need, the focus on telemedicine gives us hope that the silence enshrouding IPV can eventually be shattered. The integration of telemedicine into our strategies against IPV signifies a step towards a change, providing a means for survivors to break their silence, seek help and gain access to the resources they require, directly from the safety of their homes.

Consequences of the culture of silence

When we dive into the grim world of 'domestic abuse', or more formally referred to as 'intimate partner violence' (IPV), we come face to face with a chilling reality. This disturbing and incessant issue creates a ripple effect that surpasses survivors, impacting the entire society. Starting off, we should consider the emotional havoc survivors are forced to deal with. IPV is such a muffled issue, survivors often feel inhibited from asking for help. As a result, they end up shouldering a massive psychological burden of suffering silently. This profoundly damaging situation can trigger a multitude of mental-health-related disorders like depression, anxiety, PTSD, and worst of all, suicidal thoughts (Heise and Garcia-Moreno, 2002).

It is critical that society recognizes the blame and stigma that often engulfs survivors, thus solidifying the oppressive dynamics in abusive relationships. This environment of shame and blame leaves survivors cornered, seemingly trapped in a violent circle due to fear of societal backlash, financial instability, and the lack of communal support (Bartolomei, 2015). Simultaneously, we should scrutinize the limitations of our established healthcare system in handling IPV. The setbacks are many, ranging from scarce resources, inadequate professional training, to an ineffective IPV identification technique (Heise and Garcia-Moreno, 2002). Unfortunately, survivors may not receive the needed healthcare assistance due to these flaws, and this could lead to serious physical repercussions such as injuries, chronic pain, and even sexually transmitted diseases.

This web of silence that envelopes IPV, along with poor reporting, leads to a gross underestimation of the actual IPV incidents, curtailing our ability to comprehend the real magnitude of IPV. This impedes the effective allocation of resources and the establishment of successful intervention strategies. In turn, it hampers public health initiatives to tackle IPV, indirectly endangering the well-being of the community (Edetalehn et al., 2023; Aidonojie et al., 2021; Ikubanni and Aidonojie, 2021; Aidonojie et al., 2021). Interestingly though, telemedicine might just be the silver lining in dealing with IPV. By offering survivors a safe space to seek remote medical advice confidentially, they might not need to endure uncomfortable in-person consultations, a lifesaver when living under an abusive partner's watchful eyes. Moreover, telemedicine paves way for survivors to safely disclose IPV, enabling apt evaluations and pertinent referrals for complete treatment (Bartolomei, 2015).

Overall, IPV's destructive influences are broad and convoluted, touching upon emotional trauma of survivors, the struggle to escape abusive relationships, healthcare constraints, impediments to public health, and a self-nourishing cycle of violence. Although at varying rates of development, several developed and developing countries throughout the world have embraced telemedicine as a proactive means of providing health care services to their citizens (Heise and Garcia-Moreno, 2002). Telemedicine, with its assurance of confidentiality and remote support, might offer some answers, hence playing a crucial role in addressing this deeply rooted issue.

1.4 Introduction to telemedicine and its potential in addressing intimate partner violence

Innovative technologies bring forward new strategies to assist survivors of IPV. Telemedicine, notably known for its application of electronic communication tech, provides a fresh avenue for aid to IPV survivors. This system efficiently maneuvers around obstacles that may prevent survivors from reaching out for help, offering them secure and readily available access to support services (Adronis and Moysey, 2013). An important facet of telemedicine's effectiveness in combatting IPV lies in its ability to offer secret, trustworthy assistance. Unfortunately, fear of backlash often keeps survivors silent, especially if they live in close proximity to the perpetrator. The inherent confidentiality of telemedicine becomes a lifeline for such survivors, letting them confide in healthcare professionals without risking exposure, subsequently reducing anxieties of possible revenge (Adronis and Moysey, 2013). Going beyond this, telemedicine increases the accessibility of support services to individuals hindered by geographical or logistical constraints. In rural regions, the lack of resources and expert assistance in dealing with IPV often leaves survivors stranded. By connecting survivors to specialists from afar, telemedicine fills this gap, enhancing their exposure to specialized care. This technology becomes progressively vital for those under constant watch or restricted movement, eliminating the need for travel to health institutions or shelters.

Telemedicine serves as a valuable tool to overcome barriers posed by cultural and language differences, often a major obstruction for IPV survivors in seeking help. When local support services lack an understanding of their particular cultural or ethnic background, survivors might feel their struggles trivialized or ignored. By facilitating connections with culturally knowledgeable professionals, telemedicine ensures survivors receive care cognizant and respectful of their unique circumstances.

1.5 Background of telemedicine in Nigeria

Reflecting on telemedicine's journey in Nigeria, one can see a journey marked by innovation, challenge, and growth. Providing healthcare services remotely using various communication technologies, telemedicine is increasingly gaining global recognition and acceptance. In the context of Nigeria, telemedicine reveals itself as a beacon of hope against the backdrop of limited access to quality health services, particularly in rural regions. Rewinding a couple of decades, this innovative treatment approach first took root in Nigeria in the early '90s. Back then, the World Health Organization (WHO) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) initiated pilot projects to give telemedicine its first Nigerian foothold. These early adopters focused on harnessing telecommunication technologies' potential to link urban healthcare professionals with rural communities, facilitating remote medical consultations, diagnosis, and treatment. While these initiatives marked milestones, telemedicine's wide-scale adoption hit a road bump due to several infrastructural, sociological, and regulatory barriers.

Fast forward to today, the telemedicine landscape in Nigeria has changed significantly over the past decade (Adronis and Moysey, 2013). Enhanced accessibility and affordability of communication technologies like mobile phones and internet connectivity have stimulated the growth of telemedicine services across Nigeria. These services span various healthcare

domains, and a whole host of public and private telemedicine platforms have emerged, providing the underserved populations remote access to medical care.

However, the journey of telemedicine is not devoid of obstacles. Key challenges persist that inhibit telemedicine's complete implementation and impact. Primarily, the absence of comprehensive laws concerning telemedicine practices provides a stumbling block. This regulatory vacuum brews uncertainty and potential legal complications for healthcare professionals and institutions practicing telemedicine. Further, infrastructural deficiencies, like unreliable internet connectivity and electricity supply, act as significant barriers in the path of telemedicine's adoption in remote regions. Plus, the trust and compliance of patient's edge on ensuring data privacy, security, and confidentiality, necessitating rigorous attention to these issues (Adyatollahi and Shagerdi, 2017).

Summing up, the story of telemedicine in Nigeria, till now, is a tale of its evolution from experimental pilot projects to a burgeoning sector in healthcare. Yet, hurdles like undeveloped legal structure, infrastructural shortfalls, and data privacy and security issues impede its full potential. Effective remediation of these challenges via exhaustive regulations, infrastructural advancements, and capacity-building measures is essential to ensure the successful assimilation and expansion of telemedicine services in Nigeria.

2. Overview of the Legal Framework for Telemedicine in Nigeria

The practice of telemedicine falls under the oversight of the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN) and the National Health Act made some provisions for telehealth (Ibeneme et al., 2020), Anyone who wishes to offer the professional services of providing telemedicine consultations, would need an authorized medical license and council registration to get started, providing a mandatory safety net that only qualified professionals are involved in these services (Adyatollahi and Shagerdi, 2017). This requirement aligns with the standard of care present in traditional healthcare settings. The principles of privacy, informed consent, and sound advice are not neglected in telemedicine. Any divergence from the standards set by authoritative organizations like the Nigerian Medical Association is not tolerated.

Telemedicine, however, comes with its unique set of challenges, especially regarding data protection and privacy. In the digital era, the privacy of medical details is paramount when it comes to telemedicine. The Nigerian Data Protection Regulation (NDPR) guides telehealth professionals on how to securely manage personal data (Adyatollahi and Shagerdi, 2017). Another vital consideration in telemedicine is malpractice and liability concerns. In simple terms, the existing legal standards do not exempt telemedicine. If the quality of care falls short, the practitioner can be held accountable, and patients are entitled to legally pursue compensation for any identified medical malpractice. Just like in-person consultations, telemedicine requires measures to manage any unexpected incidents or complications (Adyatollahi and Shagerdi, 2017). The efficacy of telemedicine is heavily reliant on telecommunication technology. So, institutions like the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) play a pivotal role in regulating and ensuring the stability of these services. Their main objective being to provide the necessary infrastructure for successful telemedicine consultations.

Insurance is also a critical factor that can influence the accessibility of telemedicine services. The willingness of insurance companies to acknowledge and reimburse telemedical consultations is vital in widening the outreach of health services. This is where the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) steps in, regulating health insurance in the country, including telemedicine services. From obtaining a license to ensuring privacy and accountability, the legalities around telemedicine in Nigeria are extensive and affect every facet of its operation. These laws play a major role in the quality and effectiveness of telemedicine services. Hence, there is a need for regular reviews to ensure they keep up with the evolving landscape of telemedicine.

3. Analysis of the Nigerian Telecommunications Act and its impact on telemedicine

Looking closely at the Nigerian Telecommunications Act, it becomes apparent that the law has a significant bearing on the provision of telehealth services in the country. This legislation, brought into force by the Nigeria Communications Commission in 2003, not only dictates the operational elements of telecommunications within healthcare but is also essential in fostering the growth of telemedicine in Nigeria. At its core, this Act puts the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) in a regulatory role over the nation's telecommunications industry. It includes guidelines for telecommunication service provision, emphasizing their reliability, efficiency, and accessibility. Broadly speaking, these standards are of great importance in telemedicine as the effectiveness

of telehealth services largely depends on the robustness of the underlying telecommunications infrastructure.

The impact of this Act extends beyond mere regulations, playing a pivotal role in promoting the development of telecommunications, which in turn guides the steady expansion of telemedicine. Take for instance the Act's directive that necessitates the deployment of modern telecommunications infrastructure, such as broadband networks. This essentially paves the way for telemedicine to reach the nooks and crannies of Nigeria's expansive geographic scape, even to the most underserved rural communities. It is a directive that proves vital in closing the accessibility gap in healthcare provision, most especially within the country's remote regions.

Drawing from the Act's provisions, it is also evident that it takes a strong stance on data protection. It calls for the implementation of stringent security checks to safeguard patients' personal health data, and by this, strives to uphold the integrity of telemedicine practice. That this guarantees the confidentiality of patient data cannot be overstated; it not only fosters patient trust but is also key in maintaining the reputation and dependability of telehealth services. Moreover, the Act encourages innovation in telemedicine. It does this by fostering collaboration between the players in the telecommunications field and those in healthcare, leading to novel, tailored telemedicine solutions. This provision thus stirs up growth and dynamism in healthcare provision through advanced technology and research, further bolstering the place of telemedicine in Nigeria's healthcare sector.

To conclude, the Nigerian Telecommunications Act proves to be foundational to the practice and growth of telemedicine in Nigeria. It regulates, guides, and fosters innovation in all aspects of telehealth services' provision, preserving the integrity of the system, and making it an efficient tool in addressing healthcare provision challenges. And from this exploration of its impact, it's clear that the Act is an indispensable tool in fostering telemedicine in Nigeria.

4. Examination of the National Health Act and its relevance to telemedicine

The National Health Act of 2014, is the bedrock on which the Nigerian healthcare system lies. It is our rulebook to ensure that healthcare delivery run smooth. The Act champions telemedicine, even labelling it an essential part of healthcare delivery. Defines it as medicine with a technological twist, knocking down walls, analyzing, treating and researching diseases from afar, while also giving doctors a knowledge boost (Appari and Johnson, 2010). Section 58 of the the National Health Act with Nigerian Medical Council provides guidelines for telemedicine, spelling out all that is needed for a seamless and secure practice. Stripped down to basics, patients get the best, can access services from the comfort of their homes knowing their health and privacy are non-negotiable.

Telemedicine links patients to doctors when miles come between them. It can cut down on travel, saves precious time, and spruce up the healthcare situation, especially where it is crying out for attention (Curtis, 2018). However, dodgy internet connection in parts of Nigeria is part of the problem. For telemedicine to run like clockwork, you need a stable internet (Appari and Johnson, 2010), which is not always available, thereby limiting accessibility. The National Health Act, validates the telemedicine while laying down the law for quality control and access. But to unlock the true potential of telemedicine, roadblocks such as unstable internet connection need to be tackled head-on (Curtis, 2018).

Evaluation of the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria's guidelines for telemedicine practice

Having a glance at the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN) and the crucial role they play in crafting telemedicine practice standards in Nigeria paints a telling picture. The MDCN has hit the nail on the head with these directives. They go beyond legal dilemmas to explore areas such as technicalities, ethical factors, and issues related to professionalism (Appari and Johnson, 2010). The Council presents these guidelines in a coherent, understandable order, making it breezy for healthcare professionals to grasp and implement. It accentuates the significance of patient safety and confidentiality. It clearly stated that patient data should be transmitted securely and their privacy respected (MDCN, 2018). This principle is a root element of ethical practice in telemedicine, and it is commendable that MDCN does not mince words about it. The MDCN directives' emphasis on thorough documentation and record-keeping is another winning point (Garcia, 2006). The need to maintain comprehensive reports of every telemedicine interaction, both for the sake of ongoing care and legal purposes, cannot be overstated. This requirement promotes responsibility and enhances the quality of telemedicine practices (Benebo, et al., 2018).

However, the directives could certainly use more depth on licensure and approval protocols for healthcare practitioners within the scope of telemedicine (Khalifa, 2013). While the guidelines do

note registration and licensing prerequisites, they skim on the specifics for the context of telemedicine. More clarity here could amplify the overall trustworthiness and standard of Nigeria's telemedicine services (Ferrari, 2014). In the same vein, it might be worth the Council's time to ponder including intricate instructions for telemedicine technology standards and compatibility rules. Given the technology-dependent nature of telemedicine like video conferences and secure messaging systems, integrating these norms could make the practice run more smoothly (Douglas, 2021).

In wrapping up, it is clear that MDCN has made significant strides in framing guidelines for telemedicine practice in Nigeria, spanning areas like ethical, legal, technical, and professional aspects. They have solidly laid down the groundwork regarding patient safety, confidentiality, and record-keeping, but there's still scope for refining standards related to licensing and technological aspects (Onyemelukwe, 2015). With continual refinement and advancements, MDCN has a fair shot at propelling the growth of telemedicine in Nigeria.

5. Overview of the Challenges of the Current Legal Framework for Telemedicine in Nigeria

The innovative world of telemedicine is transforming the delivery of healthcare services, using the power of technology to revolutionize patient care. However, in Nigeria, there are numerous challenges and restrictions that come with the current law governing telemedicine. Much like a treacherous hike, this path is laden with potential pitfalls that may hamper the efficient implementation and regulation of these services, ranging from overarching laws to minute operational details. Peering into the perplexing labyrinth that is Nigeria's legal framework for telemedicine, it is apparent that it is plagued by myriad issues. One of the most glaring cracks in this framework is the glaring absence of explicit legislation addressing the unique characteristics and requirements of telemedicine (Ekata et al., 2023). The existing law, responsible for steering healthcare and medical practice, fails to explore the complexity of technology-based healthcare delivery. The absence of such legislation impedes the development of clear-cut guidelines and standards for telemedicine integration, thereby chilling the fervor towards its wider adoption.

Further adding to this predicament is the muddled regulatory climate that emerges in the absence of specific telemedicine benchmarks. Without sharp delineation, issues around licensing, qualifications, and privacy protections continue to hover in a state of ambiguity. This leaves healthcare providers, investors, and patients alike navigating choppy waters of uncertainty, and could even make telehealth practitioners reluctant to step foot into these waters, due to fears of potential legal backlashes.

Nigeria's federal structure, a patchwork of state-specific legal domains, adds another stumbling block. Consequently, telemedicine services bridging state boundaries might confront potential legal roadblocks (Ekata et al., 2023). The lack of uniform regulations and licensing procedures among states casts a shadow over the provision of seamless telemedicine services, particularly for patients scattered across different regions. This is a significant issue that impedes the wide-scale adoption and accessibility of telemedicine services, especially in remote and poorly serviced areas of the country. Telemedicine inherently involves collecting and processing sensitive patient data, a practice that is not sufficiently addressed by Nigeria's existing law (Ekata et al., 2023). Without comprehensive data protection legislation, patient data could be broadly exposed to unauthorized access, potentially damaging the trust bond that underpins the patient-telemedicine operator relationship and curbing acceptance of these services.

Dark corners of Nigeria’s legal structure also fail to address the lack of an efficient healthcare infrastructure, a glaring shortfall that could stymie the successful use of telemedicine. From constant internet connectivity and telecommunications systems to broad-spectrum technology readiness, these represent crucial pillars supporting telemedicine services – and their absence can severely affect the growth of telemedicine within the country. In essence, Nigeria’s legal framework for telemedicine is a minefield of challenges. It’s hamstrung by the absence of dedicated legislation, regulatory murkiness, jurisdictional complications, and nagging issues around privacy and infrastructure readiness. To harness the true potential of telemedicine, it’s high time to tackle these obstructions, starting with specific legislations targeted towards telemedicine, transparent regulatory guidelines, robust data protection rules, and a massive overhaul of healthcare infrastructure.

6. Utilizing Telemedicine to break the Culture of Silence

Telemedicine is evolving into a crucial ally for those affected by intimate partner violence or IPV. In India, National Tele-Mental Health Programme was launched by the Government of India with the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences

(NIMHANS), Bengaluru, as the nodal center to network with 23 tele-mental-health centers of excellence across the nation (Erceg, 2019). In addition, a series of telehealth guidelines have been prepared for MHPs, based on the framework of the Medical Council of India (Enabulele and Enabulele). It is a good discovery that IPV survivors were able to depend on telemedicine as a trustworthy, secure, and confidential channel to access medical aid and also improve the ease of access to healthcare, especially in areas where healthcare infrastructure is sparse while promoting the use of open conversations over the culture of silence as a stepping stone towards preventing further instances of violence (Enabulele and Enabulele).

Adding weight to IPV solutions through telemedicine, Markowitz and his team, in 2017, imagined an optimistic future where telemedicine offers crucial resources and assistance for survivors. They spotlighted telemedicine's vast potential capacity in tackling digital safety and privacy concerns. Continuing the discussion, Rossi and co. dissected various schemes and research projects in 2020, addressing violence against women in the wake of COVID-19. Their work underscores telemedicine's crucial role in managing and preventing IPV in a world of social distancing and lockdown (Erceg, 2019).

In a nutshell, telemedicine holds the potential to dismantle the defense of silence that often shrouds IPV. It can span geographical barriers, assure the safety of survivors, and offer vital resources and information. Despite these strides, challenges remain in ensuring the accessibility of these services for every IPV sufferer, while also addressing valid concerns about digital safety and privacy. The studies featured here unveil both the advantages and hurdles in utilizing telemedicine to counter IPV, hence forging the path ahead.

7. Benefits of telemedicine in addressing intimate partner violence

Understanding the implications of telemedicine in the context of intimate partner violence, or IPV, we can appreciate both its strengths and weaknesses. Offering numerous benefits, telemedicine is especially beneficial for those trapped in IPV situations where isolation, transportation difficulties, or concerns about confidentiality make traditional healthcare facilities less accessible. The ability to contact medical professionals remotely fills a critical void, ensuring the needy get appropriate support, regardless of location (Gale et al., 2013). An inherent advantage of telemedicine is the enhanced privacy and safety it confers. Fear of the abusive partner discovering their attempts to seek help often forces IPV survivors into silence. Telemedicine provides a confidential platform, enabling unobserved communications with healthcare professionals and giving them the confidence to seek help from secure locations. Moreover, the immediacy of telemedicine's responses offers a significant boon. Real-time interaction capability allows healthcare providers to evaluate and intervene instantly, enabling early IPV case detection, possibly preventing further abuse, and providing prompt legal and counseling support (Gale et al., 2013).

8. Limitations of telemedicine in addressing intimate partner violence

Conversely, telemedicine also poses certain challenges. The lack of non-verbal cues in a setting reliant only on the visual and audio elements is a significant limitation (Garba and Bade, 2021). Key indicators of IPV, such as subtle demeanor changes or non-verbal distress signals, may be overlooked or misinterpreted during virtual interactions.

Access to telemedicine can be challenging due to technical constraints like unstable internet connections or absence of essential gadgets (Garba and Bade, 2021). This is particularly prevalent among marginalized groups - low-income or rural residents, who already find IPV support hard to come by. Another limitation is the inability to perform physical examinations. When evidence collection for legal matters is necessary, face-to-face consultations may still be required (Garba and Bade, 2021). This limitation underscores that telemedicine should augment, not replace, traditional healthcare facilities.

In essence, while telemedicine is remarkably beneficial in addressing IPV - improving accessibility, ensuring privacy, safety, and immediate responses - its limitations including reduced non-verbal communication cues, technical barriers, and inability to perform specific physical exams are significant. Ideally, it should be integrated into a comprehensive strategy involving traditional health services.

9. Conclusion

Technological advances in healthcare, specifically telemedicine, have become instrumental in tackling intimate partner violence (IPV) and decimating the hush-hush culture that hinders many sufferers from reaching out for help. The beauty of technology is its ability to revolutionise how survivors receive medical aid and support in case of IPV. Equally critical is maintaining the confidentiality of the survivors to

enhance their safety. Diving into the depths of the discussions and studies highlighted in this article, we can see how telemedicine can come to the rescue where traditional strategies are struggling. The advantages of telemedicine for both IPV survivors and healthcare professionals are manifold. It bridges spatial gaps and ensures even those in inaccessible areas have access to lifesaving aid. Leveraging encrypted video calls, health practitioners can conduct private consultations that ensure the safety and privacy of survivors. Also, telemedicine's reach goes beyond singular survivors, fostering educational and intervention schemes designed to cut the cycle of violence at its root.

What's more, its silent but relentless stride against the culture of silence surrounding IPV cannot be understated. Unbound by the limitation of the real-world clinical setup, telemedicine provides survivors a secure and judgment-free setting to reach out without the crippling fear of social stigma. The combination of the ease of accessing help and staunch confidentiality imparts power to survivors to shed their silence and ask for help, safe in the knowledge that their identities are secure, and personal trot will never be public without their consent in doing so, it chips away, piece by piece, at the societal norms cementing the silence around IPV.

A balanced discussion would, however, include some shortcomings of telemedicine concerning IPV issues. Reliable internet and technology reach can be problematic for some, particularly those in economically disadvantaged and sidelined communities. Another possible roadblock is the lack of non-verbal nuance in a virtual setup which might negatively impact the healthcare provider's ability to fully comprehend the survivor's emotional state and safety. Hence, a mashup of telemedicine and traditional face-to-face methods is key to providing comprehensive care for IPV survivors. And so, it is clear that telemedicine has earned its stripes as a worthy ally in curtailing IPV and tearing down the silence that cloaks it. Technology boosted medicine is arming survivors to reach out for help and support within the safety of confidentiality. With technology upgrading at a dizzying pace, the future holds promise for bolstering how care is delivered, refining support services, and, ultimately, stamping out IPV.

10. Recommendations for improving the legal framework to promote telemedicine in Nigeria.

Improving the legal landscape to bolster telemedicine in Nigeria could greatly benefit from these steps. First up, it's imperative that existing laws are reevaluated - relevant statutes like the National Health Act need revising to address telemedicine's growing role expressly. This can pave a legally sound path for delving into remote medical services, allowing practitioners to grasp what is expected of them and ensuring their compliance with the law.

A key requirement is also dedicated telemedicine regulations. Because virtual consultations and digital health tech bring their own unique considerations, Nigeria must have a thorough rulebook that addresses distinct telemedicine aspects clearly. This should encompass issues such as doctors' licensing and responsibilities, protecting patient privacy and data, and setting the standard for remote analysis. Additionally, facilitating a smooth flow of health data between different telemedicine channels and healthcare providers is critical. Encouraging interoperability standards through the legal landscape is key so telemedicine providers can share patient information securely, enhancing the care quality and continuity.

The authorities should also establish licensing requirements for telemedicine, along with accreditation guidelines. This would mean that only suitably qualified professionals offer remote healthcare services, helping maintain high-quality care standards. The government should also spur healthcare insurance firms to develop clear rules and reimbursement policies for telemedicine services, thus catalyzing telemedicine technology adoption among providers, as well as making remote consultations more attainable and affordable for patients.

Consider instituting a centralized body to oversee all telemedicine practices in Nigeria, acting as a regulatory body for ensuring legal compliance and uniformity in telemedicine practices nationwide. This could involve handling licensing and accreditation, monitoring care quality, and enforcing professional codes of conduct. Lastly, a strong legal framework should accommodate telemedicine training programmes for the healthcare workforce, helping bridge any capability gaps and enabling professionals to gain the necessary know-how in delivering telemedicine effectively and safely.

Implementing the above measures could provide Nigeria with a legal framework that fosters wide-reaching adoption of telemedicine and secure its implementation, consequently enhancing access to good quality healthcare for its population.

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Perspective of Boko Haram Insurgency: Beyond the Contours of Ethnicity – Yobe State Experience c.2011-2016

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Abstract. This article examines perspective of Boko Haram insurgency which is beyond the contours of ethnicity as it was experienced in places such as Yobe State that were affected by the Boko Haram insurgency. Boko Haram insurgency is quite contrary to the views of others who misperceived or erroneously interpreted the insurgency alongside ethnic/tribal inclination as Boko Haram sect is a combination of multiple tribal groups within and beyond Nigeria that came together and formed the terrorist's cell which over the years became a serious security threat to the entire Sahelian Region. Boko Haram sects are Islamic extremists who are now operating even at transnational level and as such, the question of likening or linking the sect to tribal or Kanuri sentiment projection per-se does not even arise as the violent attacks by Boko Haram insurgents did not discriminate against tribe, religion or otherwise. This shows that everybody is a victim of Boko Haram insurgency irrespective of a Kanuri person or not. Beside, the Kanuri's were the most affected and a vulnerable person in as much as Boko Haram insurgency is all about.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Insurgency, Sect, Contours, Ethnicity.

1. Introduction

Most people especially those living outside the North-Eastern Region of Nigeria have misperceived Boko Haram insurgency regarding its operations as to who really constituted the terrorist cell. This had led to the erroneous interpretations of Boko Haram sect whose terrorist acts constituted serious threats to peace and security within and beyond the country.

However, the misperceptions or misinterpretations of Boko Haram terrorist cell do occur and exist even among some few individuals or groups of people found living across the North-eastern of Nigeria who viewed Boko Haram insurgency alongside ethnic/tribal inclination. These misperceptions could not be unconnected to either lack of proper insight regarding issues and cases surrounding Boko Haram insurgency or inconsiderate opinions developed due individual selfish interest and biased nature of people regarding Boko Haram insurgency. (A B Modu: 2019)

Boko Haram in whatever perspective or angle, it is a religious movement constituted by Islamic extremists or fundamentalists whose aim is to evolved an Islamic State rather than anything else. In the ab initio, the need or quest to create and establish an Islamic State which could be governed under Sharia-law precipitated the Boko Haram insurgency that culminated into killings of incalculable Nigerians to such an extent even worshiping places like Mosques and Churches were not spared. It was as a result of these violent acts of Boko Haram insurgents that made a clergyman in the person of Reverend Hassan Martins Kuka to called the Boko Haram insurgency as "a war against Nigerians", while the English-literature icon – Professor Wole Soyinka tagged the Boko Haram sect as "Butchers of Nigerians".

The term or phrase Boko Haram was a media coinage and came to be heard by the general public in Bauchi town due to an encounter between the sect members and the security operatives (Policemen) in which a number of Boko Haram members were killed by the Police at then and later, the name Boko Haram spread across Nigeria and the world at large. (BBC News:2009).

Thereafter, the name Boko Haram became to be used and even institutionalized. However, the name Boko Haram was not the real name of the sect whereas the sect members called themselves or their group as "Jama'atu Ahlissunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad" (i.e People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's teaching and Jihad). (M S Abdulmumin: 2009)

The epicenter of Boko Haram insurgency is Maiduguri, the Borno State Capital and the founder of Boko Haram ideology – cum – its pioneer leaders is Muhammad Yusuf who died under the custody of security operatives in the year 2009 following the sect members encounter with the Nigerian security operatives at Maiduguri. Prior to the eruption of Boko Haram insurgency or violent attacks, these very sect members were used to be called Yusufiyya sect as the name is being derived from their leader's name Yusuf in which suffix is added to Yusuf making it to stand for the followers/disciples of Yusuf.

The irony is this, no one could tell or say with obsolete certainty as to the real or accurate fact concerning the origin of Boko Haram as a group. That is to say reasons for its emergence and when it is started as an Islamist extremist group. In fact, there were incalculable views postulated to arrive at possible reasons for its emergence into the public scene. (Ibid) Hitherto, the precise date of the advent of the Boko Haram sect is contradicting, especially if one depends on social media books or articles. All the same, most local and international media trace its cause to 2002, when Muhammad Yusuf emerged as the leader of the sect. (M A Ali: (2018).

Consequently, the sect's name is widely called as Boko Haram, that is widely translated as "Western Education is Sin", for the group rejection and dismissal of Western concepts/cultures. But the sect members never christened or associated themselves with the name Boko Haram which as earlier stated as a mere media coinage. Muhammad Yusuf himself was a trained Salafist (i.e an ardent adherent of the school of thought generally associated with Jihad), and he was strongly influenced by the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah – a 14th Century Islamic scholar who preached the gospel of Islamic fundamentalism that served as a road – map for the emergence of militant/radical groups in West Asia. (S Garba:2021). As such, Boko Haram can be said as an indigenous Salafist group that metamorphoses into a Salafist Jihadist group in the year 2009 (Umar, M. S. 2012).

2. Beyond Tribal Inclination

Boko Haram insurgency or terrorism as opposed to the views of a mere or ordinary observers of the scene, the insurgency had gone far beyond the borders of ethnic/tribal issue or affair as the insurgency had expanded from its initial local/regional and national outlook rather appeared to be of transnational perspectives. As such, in the recent past, Boko Haram insurgents or militants were drawn from different socio-cultural backgrounds and from far places beyond the borders of Nigeria. Infact, across West African region and even upto Maghrib – North Africa. (M Tanchum: 2021).

This shows that Boko Haram insurgency is neither Borno/Yobe affair nor North Eastern Region let alone Nigerian federation but the Boko Haram insurgency had adversely affected the West African countries especially the Sahelian countries, Chad Republic inclusive. The Socio-economic activities of these countries were negatively affected due to Boko Haram terror and that the agonies of Boko Haram terrorism were felt all over as the insurgents did not spared any community or tribal group, religious group inclusive as the insurgents made attacks and killed indiscriminately and anyhow. (D Molomo: 2014).

Ideally, no one can deny that the city of Maiduguri served as a birth place of Boko Haram sect and that Maiduguri which is also called "*Yerwa*", served as the Home – town of the Kanuri people. As such, the bulk of the sect members in the early days or years of the insurgency were from the Kanuri tribal group that constituted the majority of people of Borno, and perhaps Yobe State. (Primary Source). However, still in the early days Boko Haram movement, the sect had a reasonable members and influential figures in Potiskum, Bauchi, Wudil, Azare, Danja – (Katsina State) and other towns across Northern Nigeria. (Opcit). The afore-mentioned places or towns were neither Kanuri catchment areas nor the people were of Kanuri stock.

Therefore, Boko Haram likes any other terrorist groups spread across the globe has/have no any other ethnical inclination or language rather than causing havoc and agonies to humanity. The agonies and cruelties that Boko Haram insurgents meted against humanity are too numerous to mention in this article, ranging from killings of innocent people, abduction, arson, destructions of properties, lootings/stealing of properties worthy millions of Naira, cattle rustling inclusive which served as a source of income to Boko Haram terrorists' cell. (M I Bare: (2021). In fact, the agonies of Boko Haram insurgency is somewhat incalculable in nature as no one can actually and accurately tells the exact level or magnitude of destructions or threats caused by Boko Haram militants to both individuals and communities affected by the insurgency.

Of these agonies of Boko Haram insurgency, the Kanuris seem to have been largely the most affected people by the Boko Haram insurgency as they became the major victims of Boko Haram terrorist acts more than any other people or group in Nigeria and beyond.

The issue is this, Boko Haram insurgency is unlike the ongoing ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria in which a particular group is targeted and killed, and vice-versa and also, the operations of the Boko Haram militant group is quite contrary to that of Niger Delta Avengers or Militants whose militancy revolves around oil bunkering. Likewise, the first Nigerian military coup d'etat of 1966, which is not unconnected with the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War. To that effect, a book was even authored in the year 1981, titled "Why We Struck", by one of the coupists so as to explain the reasons for their coup which was bloody nature.

However, another was written in 1982, also titled "Why they Struck", as a rejoinder to the coupists as the coup was an Igbo conspiracy since its targeted and killed solely the Northern political elites of the First Republic with some few non-Igbos politicians of South-Western Nigeria. Not only that even top military ranking officers of Northern origin or descent were not spared as they were killed by the 1966 coupists, whereas no single Igbo politician or military man that was killed. (A M Mainasara: 1982).

Hence, Boko Haram extremists do not spare anybody or anything as they can violently attack at any given point in time regardless of location, tribe and religion. They are like any other terrorist group in Africa and beyond, such as Al-Shabab in Somalia whose attacks are unpredictable as the attacks are both incessantly and sporadically depending on the circumstances. The Boko Haram insurgents were said to have nexus/links with the Islamic State in West African Province (ISWAP) as in 2014, (Daily post:2022). Boko Haram pledged allegiance to the self-proclaimed Islamic State and rebranded as the Islamic State in the West African Province under the leadership of Abu-Musab Al-Barnawi who died in 2021. (Crisis group: 2022). With this development, the tentacles of Boko Haram militants had gone far beyond the borders of Nigeria into not only the countries that shared the Lake Chad but across the entire region of West Africa in which the sect is linked to the global Islamic terrorist groups as such Al-Qaeda and ISIS. (Viginia Comoli:2022)

Accordingly, Boko Haram insurgency is not even confined or restricted to a particular geographical location tackle of tribal induce motives as the insurgency appeared to be of transnational network operating at a global scale in the perpetration of evil deeds against humanity. Had the Boko Haram sect is built on the premised of tribal sentiment or Kanuri agenda per-se, then, there would be no tendency for the sect members to be intersected with other groups of terrorists operating in other parts of Africa and beyond.

Moreover, in an event, if Boko Haram is viewed and likened to Kanuri conspiracy or whatever that might have been related to the Kanuri as a people, then, the sect members who were said to be majority Kanuri by tribe could have spared and prevented their fellow Kanuri-Kinsmen from the menace and manslaughter of Boko Haram insurgency. As earlier made mentioned, the Kanuri tribe despite the involvement of their people in the on-going insurgency, yet they emerged to be the number one victim and for that matter, the most seriously devastated people in as much as the insurgency is all about. (L Abdu: 2021). For instance, the "BAY States" (i.e Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States) were the most disastrously affected by Boko Haram insurgency compared to the rest of the states in the Federation. (FGD:2023). Thus, the Boko Haram insurgency is beyond tribal issues, most of the displaced persons were the Kanuri's and equally important, most of the communities destroyed as a result of the insurgency were predominantly Kanuri settlements/villages and towns.

As such, Boko Haram insurgency knows no barrier and at the same time, has no preservation whatsoever in so far as carrying or executing its inhumane activities of terrorism as Churches, Mosques, public buildings, public gatherings, road and travelers, markets, schools e.t.c. all were neither save nor preserved by the terror of Boko Haram. in all that could be said, the insurgents are not selective in approach as they attacked their own communities, thereby killings their own relatives and in some instances the insurgents even do kill their immediate family members, their parents inclusive. (B M Goniri: 2021). The Boko Haram insurgents were unlike what A. M. Mainasara noted in his monograph on the 1966 coup plotters who were selective in their killings.

Equally worthy to note is that the membership of Boko Haram sect has cut across tribal lines or groups as people of different tribes and from different cultural background formed and constituted the membership of the sect. other than the Kanuri's, there are several tribes or tribal groups that constituted the sect members of Boko Haram terrorist cell especially in the North-Eastern Nigeria comprising the Margi, Babur, Gwoza people, Shuwa Arab/Mare e.t.c. (Derrick J.:1959). Of course, the so-called Hausa/Fulani joined the Boko Haram sect, though their number is scanty. However, there are also other tribes along the shores of the Lake Chad Basin areas that formed and joined the Boko Haram sect particularly in countries such as Cameroun, Chad and Niger Republic. The tribes that constituted the Boko Haram sect along the shores of the Lack Chad included the Buduma, Bulala people, Zaghwah and the Tubu or Toubou who are even

refered as the "Black Nomads of the Desert". (C Baroin:1997). Then, comes the Mang/Daghra people who also of the Kanuri stock in Zinder and Diffa prefecture in Niger Republic but whose dialect differs slightly from that of the Kanuris of Borno/Yobe States. As for the Shuwa Arabs, there is a great figure or leader of one of the factions in the sect against Abubakar Shekau whose name is Mamman Nur that held from the Shuwa tribe. Though, a little bit softer and not as extremist as Shekau. (L Agujja:2021).

By the account of a pastoral aristocrat, whose two sons together with four (4) others were killed by Boko Haram militants on the 25th June, 2015, in Uba-Askira area of Borno State, stated that most of the Boko Haram insurgents operating in Yobe East (i.e Gujba/Gulani areas) and Southern Borno areas such as Damboa, Uba-Askira, Gwoza, Chibok e.t.c were Marghi youths more than any other tribe. (L rido:2022). The Pastoral leader added that these areas mentioned were formerly their grazing orbit area but due to the insurgency, they left the places to another more secured environment in North-Western Yobe State. Of course, the Marghi people joined the Boko Haram sect or terrorist cell en-masse yet there are other tribal groups found as Boko Haram insurgents both indigenous and non-indigenous tribes/people as the areas shares borders with the Sambisa Forest that served as the major hideouts – camp if not the base of Boko Haram insurgents. (Ibid).

In this regard, these issues and matters arising concerning the insurgency will suffice any reasonable and matured mind that Boko Haram insurgency is beyond the contours of ethnography which is the fundamental objective of this article.

The idea of linking Boko Haram insurgency with tribal or Kanuri sentiment per-se does not even arise as the Kanuri people especially their elites or leaders should be saved and protected in the hands of the insurgents and which is not. In Yobe State only, not to talk of Borno, and in the year 2012 alone many innocent people were killed by the insurgents, majority of whom were the Kanuri's including two prominent District of Heads of Geidam town and Mafa-Muri in Tarmuwa Local Government Area who were respected and highly admired Kanuri figures in their respective domains.

These instances or circumstances should be enough for thoughtful mind to view Boko Haram insurgency not on ethnical grounds rather as threats against human survival that needed an urgent concerted efforts and actions to arrest the situation. (A Y Ahmed:2022).

3. Yobe Experience

In the eve of the 2009 Maiduguri Boko Haram uprising that resulted into the death of Boko Haram leader Muhammad Yusuf, frequent visits were made by Muhammad Yusuf himself and other figures of Boko Haram sect such as Abubakar Shekau, Mamman Nur and their likes to Damaturu purposely for preaching the gospel of Boko Haram sect especially to the youths. These people were able to have convinced many youths in Damaturu in joining the Boko Haram sect as they have good system approach while preaching towards their ideology (M. I. Bare: 2009).

In Damaturu metropolis, apart from Ajiri and Lawanti ward which are traditionally Kanuri settlements or residential areas, other places like Pawari, Abasha, Nayi-Nawa ward e.t.c that are predominantly non-Kanuri areas rather inhabited by the Hausa and other tribes also served as a strong-hold of Boko Haram sect members. The issue is this, colloquially the term "*Pawari*" in Kanuri dialect means "an abode of butchers". So, ideally, in the Kanem land or Kanuri world, Pawari and Hausari are synonymous as it is the Hausa man that brought the business of meat selling. (M S Bille:2022).

The youths of Pawari responded to the call of Muhammad Yusuf actively and earnestly to such an extent of building an Islamiyyah School and a Mosque for the purpose of spreading Boko Haram ideology. With the eruption of 2009 Maiduguri Boko Haram attack many Pawari youths have left and joined Muhammad Yusuf fighting against the Nigerian security operatives. As such, only a small portion of them escaped. (M Bigela:2022). Likewise, in Nayi-Nawa ward where Adamu Yallabai – a gang leader of Boko Haram insurgents played their merciless game of slaughtering innocent people secretly and tactfully some of whom were his business associates and neighbours. This act of manslaughter or killing scenario undertaken by the likes of Adamu Yallabai prior to his or their detection and apprehension by the security operatives in Damaturu is been described in Hausa terminology as "*Dauki Daddaya*", literally means killing one by one. (Ibid).

Therefore, the question of linking Boko Haram insurgency to a tribal or Kanuri sentiment/conspiracy does not even arise looking at the historical antecedent insurgency in Yobe State by the so-called Taliban – Group that went and established their camp in Kanamma area of Yunusari Local Government Area in 2004. The Boko Haram insurgents were said to be an off-short of the Taliban sect whose camp was destroyed via a military action in the same 2004, and

it was some of the escaped Taliban members that later metamorphose into Boko Haram terrorist cell. (M Kompasa:2022). In the Kanamma Taliban camp, the Taliban sect members comprised not only the Kanuri's but also the Yoruba's and Nupe – cum – Ibra people who were mainly students of University of Maiduguri. (R Boye: 2018).

Likewise, in Potiskum area, a notorious Boko Haram gang leader popularly called Ali Dogon-Kuka – named after hi village along Damaturu – Potiskum road, and one of his lieutenants called Dan-Madinah were not of Kanuri tribe or stock but Boko Haram militants to the core as they were solely behind the attacked and killings of Potiskum cattle market of March 2, 2012. Information gathered on the attack of Potiskum cattle market revealed that over a hundred business men and women as well as under aged hawkers were killed, over seventy persons sustained severe injuries and getting to a hundred cattle shot dead while others perished. (M Yamel:2023).

Consequently, the December 1st, 2014, Damaturu attack by the Boko Haram insurgents was of a disastrous type. On that very attack, the insurgents came out en-masse and attacked Damaturu with the intention of taking over the whole of Damaturu the State capital just as they took over Mubi town in Adamawa State. However, the fight appeared to be waterloo on the side of the insurgents as the military/security operatives, the vigilante groups inclusive fought gallantly against the insurgents in which the insurgents recorded an incalculable loss of their sect members. Though, few casualties were recorded on the side of security men and civilians as some were injured while others lost their lives. (R Konti:2018).

On the 1st December, attacked of Damaturu which was on Mondays, information obtained revealed that some insurgents were even foreigners that served as mercenaries brought to fight the Nigerian Government – some of them were killed, while others apprehended and made to surrender by the security operatives. Those that surrendered like resembled the Tuaregs of Mali and some like the Tubu (Toubou) of the Chadic stock as they were Caucasian or light in complexion, lean and hairy unlike our indigenous kinky haired people. (Ibid). Of the apprehended insurgents, some of them could not even understand or speak Kanuri and Hausa language as well as other indigenous dialects spoken in Yobe State and the North-Eastern region at large. This happening and other events or cases surrounding the Boko Haram insurgency had no doubt dismisses the notion or idea of relating or linking Boko Haram insurgency to a particular tribal affiliation as the components and composition of Boko Haram sect as well as its modus operandi goes beyond the contours of one ethnic group (i.e Kanuri) and even exceeded geographical lines or borders as the Boko Haram insurgency had been terrorizing the entire Chad Basin Region/Sahelian Countries of West Africa and even beyond.

In this regard, Boko Haram terrorist cells were not composed or constituted by one or two tribes rather a coming together of multiple tribes with different background from far and near according to an abducted aristocrat by Boko Haram insurgents from Tarmuwa Local Government Area of Yobe State who was taken to Sambisa Forest and stayed for more than one Month in the custody of Boko Haram terrorist prior to his released via a ransomed. In fact, the aristocrat was highly flabbergasted as he saw the representation of Nigerian tribes in the Sambisa Forest including people Southern Nigeria, whereas others insurgents belong to foreign nationals. (A Hussein:2019). The abducted aristocrat, being a Fulani by tribe, his experience in Sambisa had broaden his horizons of not seeing Boko Haram insurgency from the angle of tribal or Kanuri and if not, he would have left in the picture of an Alice – in Wonderland.

So also, by the account of an ex-Boko Haram sect member (i.e repented Boko Haram), who acquired a certificate of DE-radicalization training school of Malam Cidi Local Government in Gombe State, and now certified as a free and good citizen – community member stated that the Malam Cidi school otherwise known as "Operation Safe Corridor" is just like any other conventional school or institution where students of diverse cultural background and ethnic groups converged in order to acquire a certain knowledge or skill. The repented Boko Haram member is a Kanuri man, however, asserted that there were equally numerous non-Kanuri persons whom they undergone the DE-radicalization training together including those individuals from Southern Nigeria. (B. Bur:2023). At the end, they were all graduated and certified.

4. Conclusion

Conclusively, Boko Haram insurgency is like any other terrorist organization spread across the globe such as the Al-Shabab, ISIS, Al-Qaeda, e.t.c and therefore, not affiliated or confined to either tribal group or to a particular geographical territory. Boko Haram cell have no preservations or limitations regarding their terror activities or violent attacks as they can attack any person and anywhere – cum – at any given time. Boko Haram insurgency to a reasonable and thoughtful mind, knows no barrier

regarding tribe, religion or otherwise as the insurgents do engage in an indiscriminate killing of innocent people to such an extent Mosques and Islamic clerics were not spared. Besides, the Kanuri people/communities where the worst had happened and still happening in Borno and some communities of Yobe State.

These experiences of incalculable agonies against meted against humanity due to Boko Haram insurgency is not a tribal uprising or Kanuri sentiment and as such, the Boko Haram insurgency is far beyond the contours or boundaries of ethnographical considerations.

Endnotes

Primary Source:

Alhaji Bukar Modu Jumbam, 67 years, a retired Permanent Secretary of Cabinet and Security Yobe State Government, Commissioners Quarter, Damaturu, 11th April, 2019.

Alhaji Hussein, 76 years, Village Head of Biriri/Vizier of Jajere Emirate, Biriri town, Tarmuwa Local Government Area on 27/08/2019.

Alhaji Yawudima Ahmed, 68 years, retired Civil Servant Yobe State Government, Mairi ward beside Emir's palace – Damaturu. 20/10/2021.

Anonymous source, 67 years, a retired military officer, Buhari Estate – Damaturu, September 9, 2021.

Ba Bukar Manya Goniri, 67 years, a displaced retired primary school teacher from Goniri-Gujba Local Government Area at Ajari ward – Tashan Kurma, Damaturu on 28/08/2021.

Ba-Bura, 48 years, now a trader at Tashan Kurma along Gashua road, Damaturu on 5/05/2023.

Dr. Raji Rafiu Boye, 57 years, Yobe State Co-ordinator of Humanitarian Dialogue "hd", Oasis Resort Hotel Sabon Pegi – Damaturu, on September 9th, 2019.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD), with the Village Heads under Damaturu Local Government Area organized by Humanitarian Dialoque "hd" (Workshop) at Oasis Hotel Damaturu.

Lamido Rido, 72 years, pastoral leader, Tashan Kurma – Gashua Road Damaturu on 11/6/2022.

Lawan Abdu, 75 years, the Village Head of Damaturu town, Lawanti ward along Gashua Road, Damaturu on June 17, 2021.

Lawan Agujja, 47 years, Village Head of Shuwari – Buni-Yadi, Gujba Local Government Area, at Damaturu Sunday Market on 17/10/2021.

Mahammadu Bigela, 58 years, Driver/Transporter, Sarkin-Pawa Street, Pawari ward Damaturu, 17/01/2022.

Malam Sani Bille, 64 years, Ward Head of Pawari, old abattoir – Pawari ward, Damaturu, January 15, 2022.

Mamuda Yamel, 47 years, Cattle Dealer at Potiskum cattle market, 29/12/2023.

Mohammed Komfasa Ibrahim, 65 years, former Chairman of Yunusari Local Government, Ajari ward, Damaturu. 20/01/2022.

Ruwa Konti, 53 years, Commander of Sarkin Baka – Vigilante group at vigilante camp beside Shagari Housing Estate Damaturu, 19/07/2018.

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An Examination of Property Tax within the Context of Fiscal Federalism in Nigeria

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Abstract. This study critically examined the role of property tax in local government revenue generation and governance in Nigeria, particularly within the fiscal federalism framework. It highlighted the constitutional principles and challenges associated with property taxation, emphasizing the dichotomy between the constitutional empowerment of states to impose property tax and the delegated responsibility for assessment and collection to Local Government Councils (LGC). In this regard, the study adopted a doctrinal method of study, and descriptive and analytical methods was adopted in analyzing primary and secondary sources of material. The study identified the following challenges: centralization at the state level, the absence of a comprehensive database, tax evasion, legal exemptions, skill shortages, lack of political will, and corruption as major challenges of property tax and fiscal federalism in Nigeria. The study therefore concludes and recommends that there is a need for a recalibration within the federalist spirit, urging states to relinquish the unconstitutional centralization of property tax functions and empowering local governments for independent assessment and collection. Furthermore, the study also recommended the empowerment and support of local governments to independently execute these functions, thereby enabling them to generate revenue and effectively fulfill their constitutional obligations.

Keywords: Property Tax, Federalism, Fiscal Federalism, Local Governance, Revenue Generation.

1. Introduction

In the intricate tapestry of Nigeria's fiscal landscape, the nexus between property tax and fiscal federalism principles emerges as a compelling subject for legal scrutiny. As the nation grapples with the challenges of economic diversification (Usman, 2022, p.312), regional development, and the quest for sustainable revenue generation (Amasike, 2016), the role and impact of property taxation demand meticulous examination. As a foundational concept in Nigeria's constitutional order, fiscal federalism envisages a harmonious distribution of fiscal powers and responsibilities between the federal, state, and local governments (Ozo-Eson, 2005). Within this framework, property tax assumes a pivotal role, standing at the crossroads of revenue generation and decentralized governance. Against the backdrop of a diverse and dynamic nation, characterized by economic disparages among regions, the implementation and impact of property taxation acquire a nuanced legal significance.

As Nigeria's legal system grapples with the imperatives of decentralization and regional autonomy, the legal contours of property tax jurisdiction become subjects of both academic inquiry and practical import (Aidonojie et al., 2024; Aidonojie, 2024). The constitutional provisions delineating the powers of state and local government concerning property taxation demand meticulous analysis, offering insights into the delicate equilibrium envisioned by the framers of the 1999 Constitution as seen in Section 7(1); Second Schedule, Part II, Paragraph 9; Fourth Schedule, Paragraph 7(1)(j)

where the Legislative and administration powers are different.

Concerning the above, the study will delve into judicial cases that have significantly influenced the legal discourse surrounding property taxation and fiscal federalism in Nigeria. Through an examination of judicial decisions, the paper seeks to distill legal principles governing property tax in Nigeria, contributing to a broader understanding of fiscal federalism within the legal framework. Recognizing the dynamic interplay between property tax and broader issues of economic development, regional autonomy, and sustainable fiscal practices, this paper aims to transcend mere legal doctrine and impact the broader socio-economic landscape. Furthermore, the paper concludes with a discussion of the challenges confronting property tax administration, providing a platform to proffer practical solutions and reforms. By addressing these challenges, the paper aspires to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse on the harmonization of fiscal powers within Nigeria's federal structure, fostering a more equitable and efficient system for property tax administration.

2. Constitutional and Legislative Power to Impose Property Taxation

Section 4(7) of the CFRN (1999), confers authority upon the State House of Assembly to enact laws aimed at ensuring peace, order, and good governance within the State. This authority extends to matters not explicitly covered in the Exclusive Legislative List outlined in part I of the Second Schedule, matters within the Concurrent List, and any other subject empowered by the Constitution for legislative action (Aidonojie et al., 2024; Mutawalli et al., 2024). A review of the Exclusive and Concurrent Legislative lists, makes it evident that property tax does not find explicit mention as a subject for exclusive or concurrent legislation by the National Assembly as provided in the Second Schedule, part I and II. Notably, the only tax-related matters included in the legislative lists pertain to stamp duties, taxation of incomes, profits, and capital gains. Given that property tax falls outside this purview, it resides outside the scope of the National Assembly's jurisdiction and falls within the scope of the State legislative house as a residual matter, as provided for by section 4 (7a) CFRN, (1999).

Furthermore, the Constitution in section 7(1), confers authority upon the State House of Assembly to legislate on the establishment, structure, composition, finance, and functions of the Local Government Council. This legislative power extends to the formulation of laws governing the collection of taxes, fees, or rates, as well as the administration of laws facilitating such collections by the Councils. The CFRN (1999), in Paragraph 9, Part II of the Second Schedule, explicitly states that: "A House of Assembly may, subject to such conditions as it may prescribe, make provisions for the collection of any tax, fee or rate or for the administration of the law providing for such collection by a local government council."

Additionally, Paragraph 7(1)(j) of the Fourth Schedule of the CFRN (1999), also provides that: "The main functions of the local government council are as follows: … (j) assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of a State." An illustrative example of the exercise of this constitutional power is observed in the actions of the Lagos State House of Assembly. In 2001, the Assembly enacted the Land Use Charge Law (2001), imposing land use charges on all real properties within Lagos State. This law has now been repealed by the LUC Law (2018), with exemptions specified in section 12(1). The LUCL (2018) in section 2(1) and (2), designates each local government area in the State as the collecting authority, exclusively empowered to levy and collect tenement rates within its jurisdiction.

The implication is that the constitutional framework delineates the legislative authority for property tax, placing It within the jurisdiction of State Houses of Assembly and Local Government Councils. Hence, in the case of *AFDIN Ventures Ltd & 2 Ors. V. Chairman Abuja Municipal Area Council & 1 Or*. (2017), the plaintiff argued that paragraph (1)(j) of the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution (CFRN, 1999), should not be accorded constitutional effect until the relevant State House of Assembly enacts an enabling law. The plaintiff contended that paragraph (1)(j) is not self-executing and necessitates authorization or activation by the relevant State House of Assembly. In essence, the argument suggested that a local government council cannot assess and collect property tax unless the relevant State legislature has passed a law authorizing such action. This underscores the significance of an enabling law from the State legislature to empower local government councils to assess and collect property tax.

3. Relevant Legal Legislations

In Nigeria, the legislative landscape governing property tax is primarily shaped by the Land Use Act (1978) and the Land Use Charge Laws enacted by individual states. The Land Use Act, a pivotal legislation born out of a military regime, holds

significant sway over land tenure and property rights across the nation. Under this act, section (1) provides that all lands within a state's territory (Aidonojie et al., 2023; Imoisi and Aidonojie, 2023), except those expressly vested in the federal government, are exclusively vested in the state governor. The Land Use and Allocation Committee, established under section 2(2) Land Use Act (1978), plays a crucial role in allocating land within the state and determining the applicable ground rent.

Crucially, each state in Nigeria possesses the autonomy to enact its land-related laws, including those governing land use and taxation under Section 7(1); Paragraph 9, Part II of the Second Schedule (CFRN, 1999). While the Land Use Act of 1978 sets a federal framework, individual states can tailor their legislation to suit their specific needs and circumstances (Gunawan et al., 2023; Aidonojie, 2023). This interplay allows for a dynamic relationship between federal law and state-specific land use laws. Consequently, several states, recognizing this autonomy, have introduced Land Use Charge Laws as a property tax.

Among the states, Lagos stands out with its Land Use Charge Law (2018), a specific and noteworthy piece of legislation. This law, enacted by the Lagos State government, plays a pivotal role in regulating property tax within the state. In examining the legislative landscape influencing property tax in Nigeria, it becomes imperative to delve into the nuances of the Land Use Charge Law, particularly in Lagos.

However, the Land Use Charge Law in the different states of Nigeria are significant legal instrument that governs the imposition and collection of charges on the use of land and property within the country. The legislation typically applies at the state level, with individual states enacting their Land Use Charge Laws to address local peculiarities and administrative nuances. This Land Use Charge Law, serves as frameworks for the assessment and collection of charges on real estate in the different States. These laws empower the State government to levy charges on property owners based on the market value of their land and improvements, taking into consideration factors such as location, size, and permitted land use as seen in section 10 of Lagos Land Use Charge Law (2018).

According to Oyedele (2018), the primary objective of Land Use Charge Laws is revenue generation for state governments. The collected charges contribute to funding initiatives focused on enhancing public services and infrastructure development, thereby elevating the overall living standards of residents. Furthermore, the law typically outlines mechanisms for assessment, payment, and dispute resolution to ensure transparency and accountability in the implementation of the land use charge system. Overall, the Land Use Charge Law represents a crucial aspect of fiscal policy at the state level, playing a pivotal role in sustainable urban development and resource mobilization at the local government. An example is the Lagos State Land Use Charge Law (2018), which serves as a comprehensive framework for the assessment and collection of charges on real estate in Lagos State. This Lagos LUCL (2018) shall be further considered.

The tenement rate did not achieve success in most local governments in Nigeria due to several factors including a lack of effective policy, and legal and administrative machinery (llobinso, 2018). In its determination to strengthen its revenue base, the Lagos state government introduced the Land Use Charge Law (2001) which consolidated the Land Rates Law (1994), the Neighborhood Improvement Charge Law (1994), and the Tenement Rate Law (1994) to form a new land-based charge, to be called Land Use Charge Law (2001). However, the Land Use Charge Law (2001) has been repealed and replaced with the Land Use Charge Law (2018).

The main goal, as stated by the Lagos State Government, is to generate additional revenue essential for the development of the state, in response to its rapidly growing population, without any corresponding increase or improvement in its physical and social infrastructure (Lagos State Government Ministry of Finance, 2016). Furthermore, they stated that the Lagos Land Use Charge Law (2018) aims to streamline the tax landscape by serving as a single property charge, replacing all other State and Local Government taxes on real property. Section 2 (1) LUCL (2018) provides that it was intended to levy a land-based charge on all real properties in Lagos.

However, crucially, the scope of the LUCL (2018) as provided in Section 12, does not encompass all properties in Lagos State. Exemptions are granted to government-owned properties and those used for public, religious, and charitable activities. However, it further provides that the exemption is subject to the submission of an exemption application to the Commissioner for Finance, Lagos State. This nuanced approach ensures that the LUCL (2018) aligns with the broader objectives of revenue generation while accommodating specific exemptions based on the nature and purpose of properties within the state.

4. Property Tax and Fiscal Federalism

According to Dang (2013), fiscal federalism, as a concept, delineates the intricate relationship between revenue generation and expenditure control among the various tiers of government within a nation, encompassing the national government, state government, and local government. At its core, fiscal federalism accentuates the nuanced processes by which revenues are garnered and then allocated to different government echelons for development (Dang, 2013). Nyong (1999), highlights that fiscal federalism, within the context of a federation, is inherently concerned with distributing national resources, delegating functions, and apportioning tax powers to constituent units.

In the Nigerian context, section 7(1) of the constitution (CFRN, 1999), positions local governments as the third tier of government, entrusted with the mandate to provide public goods and services whose impact is localized. Therefore, local government councils in Nigeria play a distinctive role as agents of grassroots mobilization and governance participation, serving as catalysts for rural transformation and development. Notably, the constitutional framework in Paragraph 9, Part II of the Second Schedule and Paragraph 7(1)(j) of the Fourth Schedule (CFRN, 1999), designates the legislative jurisdiction of property tax to state governments, while the administrative jurisdiction is vested in local governments.

The rationale behind conferring the administrative jurisdiction to levy property tax on local governments lies in its potential to empower them financially for the effective execution of their responsibilities. Property tax, within this framework, is envisioned as a viable means for local governments to generate internal revenue, thereby mitigating over-dependence on financial allocations from state and federal governments. This underscores a crucial aspect of fiscal federalism, where local autonomy in revenue generation becomes instrumental in fostering self-sufficiency and sustainability at the grassroots level.

However, Nigeria's fiscal federalism still grapples with significant challenges, particularly in the local governments where their revenue-raising power faces a myriad of challenges (Coker et al., 2015). Local governments consistently voice concerns about the inadequacy of their resource base in comparison to their fiscal responsibilities. While considerable attention has been given to discussions on intergovernmental fiscal relations and the imperative for enhanced allocations to local governments from the Federation Account (Shiyanbade, 2017), little regard is paid to the persistent inability of local governments to leverage their available tax resource base. The Local governments must break free from the perpetual dependence on federal allocations and bailouts.

Taxation emerges as a linchpin for the economic wellbeing of local governments and their constituents, an aspect often underestimated. (Compaoré, et al., 2020) emphasizes the pivotal role of tax revenue as a promising, long-term source of funds for development, presenting a politically attractive avenue for addressing revenue shortfalls. The infusion of tax revenue plays a crucial role in alleviating the fiscal challenges faced by local governments. In this context, the significance of property tax cannot be overstated in the pursuit of fiscal autonomy for local governments.

Given these considerations, local governments must proactively establish effective tax administration mechanisms to harness the latent potential within property tax. This strategic approach becomes paramount in their pursuit of an expanded revenue base and fiscal independence, steering away from dependence on oil-related revenues (Aidonojie et al., 2022; Aidonojie et al., 2022; Majekudumi et al., 2022). By embracing property tax as a potent revenue generator, local governments can chart a course toward increased financial self-sufficiency, thereby enhancing their ability to meet diverse fiscal obligations and contribute meaningfully to the developmental trajectory of the nation (Awasthi, et al., 2020).

Therefore, Property tax plays a pivotal role in decentralization by strengthening the autonomy of local government by serving as a primary revenue source. It grants local governments the authority and opportunity to generate funds independently and allocate them within their legal boundaries (Oladele et al., 2022; Aidonojie et al., 2021; Aidonojie et al., 2020). However, practical autonomy is often limited due to the need for central government grants to fulfill local duties, which compromises independence. Nevertheless, enhancing self-sufficiency by empowering local governments with greater revenue-raising capabilities through property taxes is essential. This shift would promote financial autonomy, enabling local authorities to fulfill their responsibilities more independently and contribute significantly to local development.

5. The Contending issue in Property Tax and fiscal federalism

The central point in the realm of property tax and fiscal federalism in Nigeria revolves around its potential to bolster local government fiscal autonomy. An emerging issue, however, is the centralization of property tax systems by various state governments as seen in section 2(3) LUCL (2018). This entails consolidating the collection and assessment functions at the state level, sidelining the roles of individual Local Government (LGs). Despite legal frameworks designating LGs as the exclusive entities empowered to levy and collect property tax under section 2(3) of the LUCL (2018), similar provisions in other states such as Enugu and Edo allow LGs to choose the state government as their agent for assessment and collection. This provision contradicts the fiscal autonomy principles outlined in the fourth schedule of the Constitution (CFRN, 1999), thereby eroding the intended independence of LGs.

As a result of this centralization, there is a challenge to the envisioned decentralization of fiscal powers, raising concerns about the genuine exercise of local government autonomy in property tax administration. This underscores the need for a careful examination of the interplay between property tax, fiscal autonomy, and the broader principles of federalism in Nigeria.

6. Does it matter which level of government collects Property tax?

The determination of the entity responsible for collecting property tax in Nigeria holds significant constitutional implications, particularly within the context of fiscal federalism in our federated constitutional structure. In such a system, each tier of government must operate within the boundaries of its prescribed powers and functions. In the case of *AGF v AG Lagos* (2010), the Supreme Court ruled that any actions exceeding specific limits are considered ultra vires, leading to their nullification. The case of *AGF v Abubakar* (2007) emphasized the paramount importance of this issue in a democratic society governed by a written constitution, where any deviation from constitutional provisions, regardless of good intentions, cannot be accepted. Furthermore, in the case of *Bamidele & ors. v. Commissioner for Local Government and Community Development* (1994), the court held that allowing such transgressions to go unchallenged sets a dangerous precedent, creating fertile ground for more severe constitutional violations.

Therefore, unchecked constitutional breaches pose a direct threat to the relevance of the Constitution, potentially leading to a shift towards authoritarianism. This negative trend occurs when legal and constitutional norms are disregarded and allowed to persist without challenge. Therefore, the examination of the appropriate level of government responsible for property tax collection goes beyond procedural considerations; it acts as a safeguard against the erosion of constitutional principles and the potential weakening of the federal structure. It emphasizes the crucial role of upholding legal frameworks to prevent any deviation from the democratic ideals upon which Nigerian society is firmly grounded.

In essence, determining the jurisdiction for property tax collection is not just an administrative or procedural exercise; it is a safeguard against the erosion of constitutional principles and a defense against potential deviations from the democratic foundations on which our society is built. This underscores the critical importance of upholding legal frameworks and constitutional provisions to maintain the integrity of our federal structure and prevent any dilution of the democratic ideals that form the bedrock of Nigerian governance.

7. Argument in favour and against delegation of Property Tax

The argument stems from the delegation-friendly approach outlined in Section 1(3) LUCL (2018), where conditions for local government authorities to collect LUC can be set. Section 1(3) of the LUCL (2018) specifically allows local government authorities to delegate their collection functions. Advocates for the delegation of property tax highlight the constitutional support provided in Item 9, Part B of the Second Schedule (CFRN, 1999). Osibajo (2003) argued that this provision empowers the House of Assembly to enact laws imposing taxes within the state, subject to conditions it may prescribe. Furthermore, Osibajo (2003) argues that Section 1(3) of the LUCL (2001) is harmless, merely providing statutory authorization for local government authorities to delegate as they see fit. This delegation, they contend, is a flexible arrangement, allowing for revocation at any time (Osibajo, 2003). He argued that the envisioned result is a mutually beneficial scenario, to ensure the fulfillment of constitutional purposes while optimizing operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Osibajo, 2003). This argument positions delegation as a pragmatic approach, aligning with constitutional provisions and fostering a system that achieves its objectives without unnecessary impediments.

The argument against the delegation of property tax posits a critical examination of a notable omission regarding sections 1(3) and 7(5) CFRN (1999) that would have provided clarity on the legal stance. It is submitted that the delegation authorized by section 1(3) of the LUCL (2018) contradicts the explicit provisions of section 7(5) of the CFRN (1999), rendering it null and void to the extent of the inconsistency as stipulated in section 1(3) of the CFRN (1999)

While acknowledging the authority granted to the House of Assembly to legislate on tax collection in Item 9, Part B of the Second Schedule, CFRN (1999), it is contended that this power does not extend to prescribing conditions in conflict with express constitutional provisions. It is emphasized that unchecked power granted to the House of Assembly in condition-setting for tax collection could lead to limitless authority, a scenario incompatible with the constitutional framework. Section 1(1) CFRN (1999) underscores the supremacy of the Constitution, asserting that any law inconsistent with constitutional provisions shall be null and void to the extent of its inconsistency as provided in Section 1(3) CFRN (1999). An explicit limitation on the power of the House of Assembly in this context is evident in the combination of section 7(5) and Paragraph 1(j) of the Fourth Schedule of the CFRN (1999). These provisions stipulate that the functions conferred by law (by the House of Assembly) must align with those outlined in the Fourth Schedule to the Constitution. Specifically, Paragraph 1(j) of the Fourth Schedule outlines the main functions of a local government council, which include "assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly."

This infers that the main functions of a local government council, include the assessment of privately-owned houses to levy prescribed rates by the House of Assembly. A community reading of these provisions makes it evident that the Constitution mandates states to confer specific functions, such as the assessment of tenements, on local governments, without granting discretionary power to prescribe conditions that undermine this purpose. The implication of section 1(3) of the LUCL (2018) thus attempts to circumvent the constitutional provisions by allowing the delegation of property tax through the back door. This is perceived as an encroachment on the constitutional mandate, raising concerns about the potential erosion of the constitutional framework in favor of delegated powers that could compromise the intended functions of local governments. This argument is in line with the statement of Uwaifo (JCA) in the case of *Bamidele & ors. v. Commissioner for Local Government and Community Development* (1994). Here, Uwaifo asserts that it would be unconstitutional for any entity other than the Local Government to exercise functions assigned to it by law and that the Local Government possesses an inherent duty to perform these functions, either directly or through lawful delegation, with an explicit emphasis that it cannot be deprived of or surrender these duties. The essence of this statement lies in the unequivocal assertion that local governments are safeguarded from deprivation or relinquishment of their functions outlined in the Fourth Schedule. Moreover, as explained by Sanni (2003), the qualifier "by lawful delegation" implies that local governments have the authority to delegate the performance of their functions to agencies, officials, private agents, or contractors. Notably, this delegation is logically interpreted as flowing from a higher authority to a lower one, reinforcing the autonomy and hierarchical structure (Sanni, 2003). The contextual interpretation of Uwaifo's statement is essential in the case of *Bamidele & ors. v. Commissioner for Local Government and Community Development* (1994). Here, the Lagos State Government sought to regulate the day-to-day operations of the Alayabiagba Market within the Lagos Island Local Government, prompting the Court of Appeal to declare the action unconstitutional. This underscores the specific context within which the statement was made – addressing an attempt by a higher level of government to intervene in the affairs of a local government. Therefore, the logical inference is that lawful delegation pertains to entities or agents within the purview of the local government, excluding higher levels of government such as the State and Federal Governments. The overarching principle is the preservation of local government autonomy and the constitutional integrity of its functions.

The Court of Appeal declared the action as unconstitutional and held, inter alia: "By the Local Government Edict No. 16 of 1976 of Lagos State Section 63(a) thereof, Local Governments were given exclusive responsibility and power to make bye-laws for markets and motor vehicle Section 7(5) of the 1979 Constitution provides for the functions Local Government Council in the 4th Schedule of the Constitution, among which as stated in paragraph 1(e) thereof, is the establishment, maintenance and regulation of markets, motor parks and public toilets. It will be unconstitutional for any person or authority to purport to exercise that function on the state of the Law. The function has been given to the Local Government. It has the duty to perform it. It may do so

directly or by lawful delegation. It cannot be deprived of it nor can it surrender it. Any person who shows sufficient interest can take action to ensure that only the local government and no other continues to do or take responsibility for that duty" (*Bamidele & ors*., 1994, p. 220).

The Supreme Court has consistently defended the exclusive jurisdiction of local governments, as exemplified in *Knight, Frank and Rutley (Nig.) Ltd. v Attorney-General of Kano State* (1990). In this instance, the Kano State Government engaged the estate valuation firm of the appellants to assess the ratable value of private residences in the State for tenement rates, without recognizing that, under the 1979 Constitution and Kano State Local Government Edict No.5 (1977), only local governments held the power to levy such rates. As a consequence, after the appellants had initiated the survey and assessment, receiving an initial payment of N100,000, the Respondent identified the legal error and repudiated the contract. Despite contesting the matter in the High Court, the appellants faced successive defeats at the Court of Appeal and ultimately at the Supreme Court, which declared the contract void. Mohammed J.C.A.(as he then was) emphasized in the lead judgment that when state legislation designates the local government as the entity responsible for valuing tenement rates, only the Local Government Council possesses the authority to address the subject matter. The crucial assertion was that the State lacks the power to intervene in this area, and even if the Local Government Council desires to do so, it cannot divest itself of these constitutionally conferred powers. The voluntariness of a local government's acceptance of the delegation becomes immaterial in light of this constitutional constraint.

Also, in *Grinaker v. Attorney General of Rivers State* (2010), the court deemed the Rivers State Property Tax null and void. It held that a state law granting the state authority over functions reserved for local governments conflicted with the constitution, deeming it unconstitutional to strip local governments of their constitutionally recognized functions. In essence, all these collectively establish a formidable precedent, safeguarding the constitutional autonomy of local governments in matters of fiscal jurisdiction. These rulings affirm that the constitutional assignment of specific functions to local governments cannot be circumvented, ensuring the preservation of their exclusive authority over tenement rates and preventing any unwarranted encroachments by higher levels of government to enable their fiscal autonomy.

8. Challenges in Property Taxation in Nigeria

The challenges confronting property taxation in Nigeria are multifaceted, encompassing a range of issues that impede the effective implementation of the Land Use Charge Law (LUCL) or property tax at the local government level. These challenges include the absence of a comprehensive database, widespread tax evasion and avoidance, centralization of the tax system at the state government level, numerous legal exemptions, a dearth of specialized skills such as qualified valuers, a lack of political will, complex tax rates, as well as instances of bribery and corruption involving both taxpayers and tax collectors (Massajuwa and Aidonojie, 2020; Imoisi, 2023). The primary challenge arises from the dearth of a comprehensive database containing information on taxable properties. Data collation and storage present significant hurdles to efficient tax administration across Nigeria's component states. While the law empowers taxing authorities to acquire information for tax administration purposes, the lack of readily available data hampers the effective execution of this mandate.

The Nigerian Supreme Court, in the case of *Attorney General Ogun State v. Aberuagba*, (1985), identified this absence as the crux of taxation challenges in Nigeria. Justice Bello, J.S.C. (as he then was) held that: "In developed countries where retail trade is carried on in departmental stores, supermarkets, drug stores and shops where all sales are accounted for and the business address registered, it is convenient and safe for any government to appoint retailers as its agents for the collection of sales tax. Every penny collected will ordinarily reach the government. The position is entirely different in Nigeria. It is a notorious fact that except in few departmental stores, shops and drug-stores where accounts of sales are kept, the bulk of retail trade is carried on by a swarm of amorphous traders in the market places and in their homes, on our streets and highways, under our bridges and trees. They do not keep record or account of their business dealings and they cannot be reached by any Government." (Attorney General Ogun State v. Aberuagba, 1985, p. 427, para. F-H)

Furthermore, tax evasion poses a considerable threat to the effectiveness of property tax in bolstering the fiscal autonomy of Nigeria's component states. Tax evasion, characterized as a deliberate misrepresentation or concealment of a taxpayer's true financial status to reduce tax liability, is viewed as both immoral and illegal. Dishonest tax reporting, false invoicing, and manipulating transaction costs are

common tactics employed in tax evasion (Odenyi, 2011). On the other hand, tax avoidance, while not considered illegal or immoral, involves exploiting legal loopholes to reduce or eliminate tax liability. The English court, in *Ayrshire Pullman Motor Services v. IRS* (1929), affirmed the right of taxpayers to arrange their financial affairs within the bounds of the law to minimize tax liability. The intricate nature of property valuation and charge rates further complicates the landscape. A clearer, more streamlined system would facilitate compliance.

The prevalence of bribery and corruption among taxpayers and tax collectors exacerbates the challenges to the success of property tax in Nigeria, adversely affecting the efficiency of tax administration. Corruption, broadly defined as any reciprocal behavior or transaction where power/office holders initiate inducements to each other for preferential treatment against the principles and interests of specific organizations or public institutions, has far-reaching consequences in the realm of taxation (Aluko, 2002). On the part of the taxpayer, corruption manifests as tax evasion, where individuals either pay lower taxes or evade payment altogether. Simultaneously, tax authorities, influenced by the complexity of tax laws, low salaries, the absence of professional ethics, and a predisposition to corrupt practices, engage in illicit activities to augment their income through their official positions. Exploiting the intricate tax laws, tax authorities may inflate the tax assessment of a taxpayer, often ignorant of tax regulations, compelling the taxpayer to negotiate the assessed tax liability downward. This manipulation creates a façade of collaboration between the tax authority and the taxpayer, fostering an illusion of shared interests (Massajuwa and Aidonojie, 2020). Consequently, the taxpayer, acknowledging this supposed partnership, is coerced into parting with money, and a subsequent review results in a reduced tax liability. Moreover, corrupt collusion between taxpayers and tax collectors allows for the manipulation of assessments, enabling the evasion of appropriate taxes.

This is further complicated by the complexity of tax rates and classifications within property tax laws. Section 10 of the LUCL (2018) stipulates a formula for calculating the annual Land Use Charge while the applicable charge rates are contained in the schedule of the LUCL (2018). Furthermore, discretionary power is granted to the commissioner of finance to determine the annual tax rate subject to the approval of the House, published in the State Gazette and published in at least one newspaper. Therefore, the LUCL (2018) does not explicitly prescribe what the rates are in Section 10(4). It does not also connect the provision to the schedule where the LUC Annual rates are listed. The ambiguity in the charge rate leaves property owners uncertain about the expected charge for the year. Another prominent challenge is the local government's heavy reliance on federal revenue and funds from the state government, indicating a pervasive lack of commitment to developing an effective tax regime as a viable alternative. Many LGs within the federation struggle to sustain themselves without substantial federal allocations and funds from the state government, raising concerns about the sustainability of their economies and fiscal independence (Coker et al., 2015). LGs must recognize the potential of looking inward, particularly through avenues like property tax, as a means to secure economic sustainability and fiscal autonomy. By enhancing the effective collection of property taxes, local governments can reduce their dependence on monthly allocations, thereby fortifying their financial resilience. Another significant obstacle to the efficient collection and administration of property taxes in Nigeria is the scarcity of qualified valuers, leading to assessment and valuation inconsistencies. The determination of appropriate tax rates often necessitates expert opinion, a resource that is frequently unavailable. The deficiency in skilled personnel significantly impacts the accuracy of collected data. As highlighted by Olusegun (2003), the absence of qualified manpower results in under-valuation, diminishing government revenue, while over-assessment leads to disputes that may impede the timely payment of property taxes. This predicament aligns with the findings of Fjeldstad and Heggstad (2012), who identified the lack of qualified valuers as a hindrance to property tax as a local revenue source in Anglophone Africa, emphasizing the importance of skilled professionals in establishing and maintaining valuation rolls.

The repercussions of relying on non-experts for property value assessments are evident in the arbitrary and exorbitant Land Use Charge. Such discrepancies in valuation contribute to unjust tax burdens on property owners. This issue mirrors the findings of Babawale and Nubi (2011), who exposed administrative challenges in the implementation of the Lagos State LUC, including the imposition of outrageous charges. Dale and McLaughlin (1999), advocate for property taxes to be assessed on a more objective and robust basis to achieve equitable assessment, reinforcing the importance of professionalism in the valuation process. The effective collection and administration of property tax in Nigeria also face a significant challenge stemming from the attitudes of both the taxpayer and the taxing

authority. This challenge is rooted in a prevalent reluctance among taxpayers to fulfill their tax obligations, often citing a lack of knowledge about how the tax funds are utilized by the government. Paradoxically, while individuals protest against tax payments, they still require public facilities and services supplied by the government (Salihu & Bala, 2013). This situation highlights the need for a more serious consideration of tax matters, emphasizing accountability and transparency at both the collection point and in the utilization of tax revenue.

Another significant obstacle to effective property tax collection and administration in Nigeria is the lack of political will. Despite the substantial potential of property tax as a lucrative local revenue source for the government, it is often subject to political interference and corruption. There are numerous exemptions in the law that provide opportunities for manipulation, which can erode the revenue base of the tax. For instance, sections like section 12 of the Lagos LUCL (2018) and section 9 of the Land Use Charge Law in Enugu (2017) reduce the tax base, thereby limiting the effectiveness of property tax as a revenue-generating mechanism. An illustrative example is the exemption of official residences of traditional rulers from Section 12 (f) LUCL (2018), which appears to be against social fairness and equity. The expectation is that both political and traditional leaders should set an example by paying property tax, thereby motivating other property owners to fulfill their tax obligations. Consequently, establishing strong political commitment and providing capacity-building for key political functionaries are imperative for ensuring public credibility in the implementation of property tax (Tomori, undated). The principal challenge is that several state governments have opted to centralize the LUCL, turning the property tax system into a state-level function. This involves delegating the collection and assessment responsibilities of each LG to the state government through written agreements as exemplified in section 1(3) LUCL (2018). While the law explicitly grants LGs the authority to levy and collect the Land Use Charge, it paradoxically allows each LGs to voluntarily designate the State government as its agent for assessment and collection. This dual provision undermines the fiscal autonomy enshrined in the fourth schedule of the CFRN (1999).

Moreover, most states have adopted the LUC model pioneered by Lagos State in light of usurping the fiscal powers of the LGAs, further complicating the landscape (Sanni 2017). This adoption has hampered the intended role of property tax in enhancing the fiscal capacity of local governments. Many state governments persist in actively participating in the levy, collection, and assessment of property tax, to the detriment of local governments. This departure from the original intent of decentralizing property tax administration impedes the autonomy of LGs and hinders their ability to independently manage fiscal matters, as envisaged by the constitutional framework. The challenges confronting property tax collection and administration in Nigeria encompass a range of interconnected issues. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and integrated approach. It is essential to foster collaboration between local and state governments, taxpayers, and relevant stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of property tax in achieving fiscal autonomy, fairness, and transparency in Nigeria's taxation landscape.

9. Recommendations and Conclusion.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria establishes a federal system of government, wherein local governments are positioned as a third level of government tasked with providing public goods and services with localized benefits and impacts. As the closest tier of government to the people, local government councils play a crucial role in grassroots mobilization, governance participation, and rural transformation. To fulfill their constitutional functions, local governments are granted the authority to raise funds internally, and one such provision is property tax, aligning with the principles of fiscal federalism. Property tax is recognized as one of the most lucrative taxes globally, offering significant revenue potential for local governments. However, the effective administration and collection of property tax require a concerted effort from both the state, which holds legislative power, and the local government, responsible for administrative functions. This collaboration is essential to reduce overdependence on the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) disbursements.

Identified challenges in property tax administration include a lack of political will, tax avoidance and evasion, insufficient data, corruption in tax administration, complex tax rates, overreliance on federal and state funds, a shortage of qualified valuers, taxpayer and taxing authority attitudes, and centralization of property tax at the state level. These challenges have resulted in paralyzed property tax systems in many local governments, leading to poor revenue generation and dependence on fluctuating federal and state allocations, posing a threat to their survival, especially with the declining income from crude oil. To address these challenges comprehensively, several recommendations are proposed. Firstly, there is a need for substantial

investment in robust data collation and storage systems to enhance property tax administration. Legal loopholes enabling tax avoidance should be closed, and collaboration between state and local government tax authorities must be improved to detect and prevent evasion and avoidance. Also, Corruption within the tax administration system requires attention, necessitating the strengthening of anti-corruption measures, strict penalties for corrupt practices, and comprehensive training and oversight to instill professional ethics and transparency. The complexity of land use charge rates can be mitigated through a transparent and fair review of the formula, potentially shifting to a more straightforward and objective approach. It is recommended that the rates and reliefs should be specified and enumerated in the schedule and the relevant provision should make reference to the schedule. This would enhance clarity for property owners and align with global best standards. Furthermore, the shortage of qualified valuers contributing to assessment inconsistencies calls for deliberate efforts to invest in training and developing skilled personnel in property valuation. Local governments should prioritize investing in qualified valuers and fostering collaborations with relevant professional bodies to ensure the availability of skilled personnel for accurate property assessments. Additionally, legislative reforms would be required to establish standardized and transparent processes for property tax assessments, reducing inconsistencies, under-valuation and disputes thus fostering trust in the system

Addressing the challenge of taxpayer attitudes requires a comprehensive approach that involves fostering awareness about the essential role taxes play in supporting public infrastructure and services. Public campaigns and education initiatives can elucidate the tangible benefits derived from tax contributions, thereby encouraging a sense of responsibility among taxpayers. Additionally, the taxing authority must prioritize transparency in communicating how tax revenues are utilized, instilling confidence in the public that their contributions are allocated for the betterment of society. Interference and corruption in property tax administration necessitate a strong political commitment to property tax. Therefore, to overcome the hindrance posed by the lack of political will, there is a need for legislative reforms that reduce opportunities for political interference and enhance the equity of property tax implementation. Capacity-building programs for political functionaries should emphasize the importance of property tax in local revenue generation and the positive impact it can have on community development. Exemptions, particularly those benefiting political elites and traditional leaders, should also be reevaluated for fairness and equity in the property tax system. Simultaneously, tax authorities must uphold accountability and transparency in the collection and utilization of tax revenue. The over-reliance of local governments on federal and state funds, rather than developing effective tax regimes, hampers fiscal autonomy. Recognizing property tax as a viable alternative revenue source and investing in its effective collection can shift the mindset, reducing dependency on monthly allocations and ensuring local economic sustainability.

Most importantly, the centralizing of the property tax system at the state level, contradicts constitutional provisions for local government fiscal autonomy. It is advised that the LUCL (2018) and other State land use charge laws with such provisions be amended to ensure that state governments do not usurp the constitutional function of local governments in assessing, levying, and collecting property tax. This would empower local governments to generate income and perform their functions satisfactorily. The policy behind constitutional provisions mandating local governments to assess tenements remains logical. Unless the constitutional framework changes, state governments should enact laws to enhance the fiscal autonomy of local government councils rather than usurping their revenue base.

In conclusion, the challenges in property taxation in Nigeria are intricate but surmountable. Addressing these challenges necessitates coordinated legal reforms, capacity building, and a paradigm shift in property tax administration. Implementation of the proposed recommendations can pave the way for a more effective and equitable property tax system, contributing to the fiscal autonomy and development of local governments in Nigeria.

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Part Two
Educational Psychology

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Determinants of Burnout among Academic Staff of Public Universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

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Abstract. This study investigated determinants of burnout among academic staff of public universities in Southwest, Nigeria. Eight hundred and twenty-seven (827) academic staff were randomly selected from public universities in Southwest Nigeria. Biographical Data Form (BDF), Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS; α = 0.90), Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ; α= 0.79), Work Environment Questionnaire (WEQ; α = 0.72) were used for data collection. Multiple Regression Analysis technique was used for data analysis Findings showed that the three organizational variables predictor (job demand, job decision latitude and work environment) compositely and independently predicted the burnout. Findings also showed that job decision latitude was the main contributor to the prediction of burnout of academic staff of public universities. The study concluded that university academic staff members are not immune to burnout and other-work related challenges affecting workers generally. The implications of the findings for stakeholders interested in effective functioning and general wellbeing of workers in the workplace – employees, employers, policy makers, and government - were discussed.

Keywords: Job Demand, Job Decision Latitude, Work Environment, Burnout, Academic staff

1. Background to the Study

Increasing daily life pressure and the attendant socioeconomic challenges faced by workforce have led to mental health issues in the workplace, particularly in modern societies. One of the widely discussed mental health problems is burnout. Burnout is a serious mental health issue among academic staff academic staff in universities. It could lead to serious illnesses, such as insomnia, cancer, ulcers, and abdominal pains among others all of which are capable of terminating lives. Burnout negatively affects day-to-day human activities due to symptoms like tiredness, frustration, and speech malfunction. Every University community has students, personnel, and residents with varying demographic characteristics in terms of academic background, nativity, religiosity, and cultural orientation among others. Thus, people are bound to respond to workplace issues differently as workers in the University are also expected to multitask.

This foregoing engagement in the University system could make burnout among the employees almost inevitable. Consequently, employees, workers, and even managers, in various industrial and other human sectors worldwide are prone to work-related fatigue, exhaustion, stress, which are profound signs of burnout. Burnout results from continued exposure to high job demands that are not matched with needed resources to aid performance (Hu *et al.,* 2020). Burnout has been seen as work-related mental-health impairment which often relates to anxiety and depression. Burnout in not only personally distressing but manifest in mental health issues. Some physical outcomes of burnout include absenteeism, social withdrawal, lowered morale, poor emotional regulation, reduced efficiency, and performance.
In the universities, some lecturers play the dual roles of guardians and counsellors when they are made Director of students' affairs, Heads of Departments, Deans of Faculties among others, all these are combined with the already overloaded teaching engagement. At the same time, they are to meet up with research publications to earn their promotion as and when due. It is obvious that university lecturers can easily be overwhelmed and exposed to burnout. All over the world, the issue of burnout has become a serious concern for management at different levels because of its effects on workers and the organisation. For the employee, it reduces performance, increases ill health and lack of stability on the job.

Burnout can be classified as the result of long-term chronic stress, which is characterised by emotional exhaustion, mental fatigue, negative perceptions of others, depersonalization, and decreased personal accomplishment (Gyaki, 2014). Maslach and Leiter (2016) in Barlow (2020) identified three dimensions of burnout to include (i) the manifestation of an increased and continuous expression of emotional stress or fatigue, (ii) development of negative and pessimistic attitudes towards other people due to stress and (iii) having poor personal self-evaluation feelings of lack of accomplishment. According to Hu *et al.* (2020), there are three categories of determinants of burnouts among people generally. These are individual or personal, interpersonal, and organisational determinants.

Personal factors which could lead to burnout include individual traits and characteristics. Manifestation of burnout among teachers could lead to other health and antisocial problems such as anxiety, depression, drug abuse and psychological related challenges. School settings can also contribute to incidence of burnout among teachers due to unfriendly rules and regulations, too many students' population per teacher, lack of adequate resources and motivation. Burnout is generally associated with workplace health problem resulting from an employee's view of lack of stability between demands and the needed resources for a long time. Workers experiencing burnout are easily detached from their jobs and often loss interest in their primary responsibilities (Bilehsavar *et, al*, 2017). They can also be identified through their introverted disposition at work and lack of interest in most of the activities they engage in. Workers in this category are burned out both socially and psychologically (Butao *et al.*, 2021).

Burnout and work stress have been attributed to high job demands at work and that of family life which is also known as new way of life for most people in the 21st century (Tran, 2018). This concept is enshrined in the popular job demand control and support model (JDCS model) by Karasek, (1998). The assumption behind the job strain model is that burnout results from a combination of low social, extreme job demands, low decisional latitude (Bakker, 2017). Again, the 1979 version of the theory explains that job with high control is expected to be free of stress even when there are presence high demands. This may imply that stressful jobs are those with little or no control and high demand. Tasks that are needed to be performed by employees with a particular effort at workplace are referred to as job demand. It is more of a psychological construct than being physical. Elements of job demand include stressors arising from intrapersonal conflict which could have been as a result work pressure and lack of job security. Another important component of job demands is employee's workload (Bakker, & Demerouti, 2017).

Generally, job demand can be defined as those efforts that must put into a particular work for maximum performance. Such efforts could be cognitive, emotional, or physical in nature such as reasoning or thinking, interpersonal relationship and deliberate physical force in making things done which are evident in every available job (Bakker, & Demerouti, 2018). It is worthy of note that job demand should not be considered as a negative construct in its entirety. But it may become a source of stress for workers to meet up with expected tasks associated with the job. This may also lead to several ill health conditions such as depression, obsession, and burnout. This could be the basis for establishing relationship among job demands, workloads and burnout by Bakker *et, al.* (2014), Bakker (2017) and Demerouti *et al*. (2019). In the same vein, Bakker, *et al.* (2020) related job demands to stressful circumstances. A lengthy exposure of employees to high job demands may lead to psychological detachment from their work and chronic exhaustion (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Job control is a workplace concept that is also related to psychological demand. It explains the extent at which a worker can influence the work environment. It is the capacity to bring a lot of rewards and benefits to workers and the organisation at large. This can only be achieved with the deployment of the needed skills (Bakker, & Demerouti, 2017). Some of the ways by which job control takes place is by observing the required short breaks and holidays such as annual leave (Nguyen, *2010;* Llorens *et al*., 2016). In some cases, job control is also called job decision latitude which describes the level at which workers make decision in respect of their jobs in terms of utilization of personal skills at work and ability to employing individual initiative to promote organisational performance (Bakker, & Demerouti, 2018). Accordingly, job demand and job control (DC) Model postulates that two work characteristics, that is, job demands, and job control determine the general wellbeing of workers and possible job strain (Karasek, 1989). Job demands are stressors that are psychological in nature, job control also known as decision latitude deals with authority of an individual worker in workplace and how the expected tasks are performed. This also relates to the interactions between work engagement and family life responsibilities (Bakker *et al*., 2019).

Another important variable of interest that has been perceived to contribute to incidence of burnout among workers is work environment. This is an all-encompassing construct that includes intra and interpersonal relationship among the employees vis-à-vis the working atmosphere of the organisation which influences the behaviours of workers either inwardly or outwardly (Salunke, 2015). In the view of Raziq, & Maulabakhsh, (2015), work environment is a determinant of knowledge and information sharing which is good for the general wellness of the organisation. It also facilitates optimal performance of employees and the entire institution. In other words, a conducive working environment is beneficial to both the workers and the organisation. The workers can easily find fulfillment on the job as the organisational goals and objectives are easily achieved. Work environment is classified into distinct but intertwined three forms - These are physical, psychological, and social work environment (George *et al.*, 2017). Salunke (2015) posited that supportive work environment aids human resources to effectively perform assigned duties, manage available resources and utilise their knowledge, skills, and competences to provide quality services.

Opperman (2002) in George *et al.* (2017) revealed that work environment is divided into subunits, that is, technical, human, and organisational environments. The technical environment encompasses working instruments and equipment used in executing most of the activities carried out in the workplace. The skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled professionals that work together as a team and interact together to the managerial level is regarded as a human resources environment. Part of the responsibilities of human environment is to formulate polices that would enable other work environment works. The third component, also known as organisational environment, encompasses the organisational structure, policies, principles, laws, and rules that are used in controlling all other work environments.

Findings have shown that the work environment can be favourable or toxic. A favorable or conducive environment is the one that makes workers to be comfortable and find satisfaction in their jobs. A favourable work environment is capable of influencing workers' lives positively and makes them to be productive. The toxic work environment, on the other hand, does not allow personal growth and expression among the employees. Such an environment has a way of promoting negative attributes and attitudes among workers generally and eventually leads to low productivity.

Despite several studies on issue of burnout among scholars over the years, in relation to other variables, there is still dearth of information on the relationship among the identified variables discussed above, particularly in Nigerian setting. Hence, this study investigated determinants of burnout among academic staff of public universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

1.1 Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were formulated to guide this study and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- There is no significant combined effect of job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment in the prediction of burnout among academic staff of public universities in Southwest, Nigeria.
- There is no significant relative effect of job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment in the prediction of burnout among academic staff of public universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Design and Participants

The study employed the use of ex-post-facto research design. This is because the independent variables being investigated have already occurred and the researcher is only interested in knowing the influence of the independent variables (job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment) on the criterion variable (burnout) without necessarily manipulating the independent variables.

827 academic staff selected from 6 public universities in Southwest Nigeria (3 Federal and 3 State universities) participated in the study. It reflects about 10.2 percent of the total number of academic staff in all the public universities in South-West Nigeria. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select the sample. The first stage involved simple random sampling procedure and non-proportional stratified sampling. A total of one hundred and twenty (150) academic staff academic staff (male and female) were randomly selected (across each faculty and colleges) in each of the public universities, making a total of nine hundred (900) participants in all. However, after data cleaning only 827 properly filled scales were subjected to data analysis. At the second stage, proportional stratified sampling was used to ensure gender and cadre representation of academic staff.

Finally, the simple random technique was used to select the participants.

2.2 Instruments

Four instruments and Biographical data form was used to collect data for the study. The instruments are described below:

2.2.1 Biographical Data Form

A Biographical Data form was a self-constructed tool used to collect data on the demographics, that is, name of the institution, age, gender, faculty, department, participants' highest qualification, status, work experience, marital status and working duration.

Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS): This is an adopted survey by Maslach and Jackson (1986) to measure burnout among workers. It has 22 items on a 7-pointLikert scale with response inform of 0 (never) to 6 (every day). The scale has three components including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment having 9, 5 and 8 items respectively. Reliability values of 0.90, 0.76 and 0.76 have been reported for the respective domains by scholars like Iwanicki and Schwab (1986) and Gold (1986) using Cronbach alpha method for the internal consistency.

Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ): This is an adopted questionnaire designed by Karasek's (1989) to measure job demand and job decision latitude. The two terms are also regarded as job control. It has been reported that the questionnaire has internal consistency of 0.79 and 0.88 alpha coefficient by past researchers (Chay, 1993; Jex, & Bliese, 1999; Xie, 1996;). The entire instrument is a 5-pointLikert scale instrument having responses ranging from 1 (*never)* to 5 (*extremely often)*. Example of the items in the questionnaire include *"To what extent does your job require your working fast?", "To what extent does your job require a great deal of work to be done".* The job decision latitude subscale has nine items with reported alpha coefficient values 0.77 to 0.85 (Chay, 1993; Xie, 1996;).

2.2.2 Work Environment Questionnaire

Copenhagen psychological questionnaire designed and developed by Kristensen et al. (2005) was adopted for measuring work environment. This was used because of its application to measure different domains of work environment such as social, cognitive, and emotional aspect of workplace affecting workers. Different versions of the questionnaire had evolved of the years. But the recent and adopted one for this study is the short version having 23 items with 8 dimensions. It is a 5-point Likert scale with responses like 1=do not agree at all, 2=agree to some extent, 3=agree, 4 = agree to a great extent and 5=fully agree. A high reliability value from 0.72 has been reported by Nuebling *et al*. (2005) with confirmatory factor analysis for the validity.

2.3 Procedure for Data Collection

The five instruments were compiled into a battery and administered on the participants in their various offices. To reach the individual respondents, visits were made by the researcher to the sampled universities to conduct the study in their institution. A total of four weeks and four days were used for the administration and collection of the questionnaires. Out of the one thousand 900 only 827 were properly filled in and deemed adequate for analysis. The response rate of the survey was 91.9%. The data resulting from the scoring of the instruments and coding of the demographic items were then subjected to multiple regression (stepwise).

3. Results

Two issues were addressed by the present study. One of the issues was to know the extent of the contributions of job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment to the prediction of public universities academic staff burnout. The second issue of concern was to find out the variable that is most potent in predicting burnout among public universities academic staff. The results of the data analysis that provide answers to the hypotheses are presented below:

Table 1: Model summary of the multiple regression analysis between the predictor variables (job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment) and the outcome measure (burnout).

Regression Model	ANOVA					
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
R = .391	Regression	35257.195	4	88814.299	37.228	.000 (a)
R Square = .153	Residual	194857.675	823	236.765		
Adjusted R Square = .149	Total	230114.870	827			

a. Predictors: (Constant), job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment

b. Dependent Variable: burnout

The results in Table 1 above revealed that job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment when taken together significantly predict burnout among public universities academic staff ($R = .391$; $R^2 = .153$; R^2 (adj) = .19; $F(4,823) = 37.228$; $p < .05$). This revealed that 15.3% of the variance in the burnout among public universities academic staff was accounted for by the combination of job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment. These results implied that the first hypothesis of no significant combine effect of job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment in burnout among public universities academic staff is rejected.

To determine the contribution of each of the job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment in the prediction of burnout among public universities academic staff, a stepwise regression analysis was undertaken. Results are as shown in table 2 below:

Table 2: Model summary of the Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis for the combined effect of job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment to the prediction of burnout among public universities academic staff

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df 1	df 2	Sig. F Change
1	.289(a)	.083	.082	15.98096	.083	75.029	1	826	.000
2	.356(b)	.127	.125	15.60595	.044	41.175	1	825	.000
3	.383(c)	.147	.144	15.43609	.020	19.257	1	824	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), job decision latitude
b. Predictors: (Constant), job decision latitude, job demand
c. Predictors: (Constant), job decision, job demand, work environment

The results in Table 2 above indicated that when job decision latitude was entered into the regression model as the first predictor variable based on the strength of its relationship with burnout, there was a significant contribution to the prediction of burnout ($R = .289$; $R^2 = .083$; Adj $R^2 = .082$; $F_{(1, 826)} = 75.029$; $p < .05$). By this, job decision latitude alone accounted for 8.2 percent of the variance in burnout. When job demand was introduced into the regression model as the second predictor variable, together with job decision latitude, it revealed a significant effect on burnout ($R = .356$; $R^2 = .127$; Adj $R^2 = .125$ $F_{(1, 825)} = 17.931$; $p < .05$). This revealed that job decision latitude and job demand together predicted 12.5% of the burnout. In effect, job demand was able to add about 4.3 percent to the prediction of burnout of academic staff of universities in Southwest, Nigeria. When work environment was introduced as the third independent variable into the regression model together with job decision latitude and job demand, it revealed a significant effect on burnout ($R = .383$; $R^2 = .147$; Adj $R^2 = .144$ $F_{(1,824)} = 19.257$; $p < .05$).It was revealing that Job decision latitude, Job demand, and Work environment together predicted14.4% of the burnout. In effect, work environment was able to contribute about 1.9% to the prediction of burnout.

Table 3 below provides information on the potency of the predictor variables at predicting the criterion variable.

Table 3: Beta Coefficients and t-ratio for relative effect of job demand, job decision latitude, and work environment to the prediction of burnout among public universities academic staff

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t-Ratio	Sig.
	B	Beta		
(Constant)	25.314		7.517	.000
Job demand	.403	.119	3.005	.003
Job decision latitude	.507	.192	5.544	.000
Work environment	.188	.136	3.766	.000

a. Dependent Variable: burnout

The results table 3 shows that the independent variables (Job decision latitude, Job demand, and Work environment) made significant relative contribution to the prediction of burnout among academic staff of universities in Southwest, Nigeria. Job decision latitude made the highest contribution ($\beta = .192$; $t = -5.544$; $p<.05$) followed by Work environment ($\beta = .136$; $t = 3.766$; $p < .05$), follow by job demand ($\beta = .119$; $t = 3.005$; $p< .05$). This implies that burnout among academic staff of universities in Southwest, Nigeria to a large extent depends on (job decision latitude and work environment) ability of workers to control tasks given to them and the way they are carried out in relation to workers' decision-making authority, chances to be involved in decision making and use their skills and knowledge in the work place and the settings, situation, conditions and circumstances under which people work.

4. Discussion

This study investigated whether job demand, job decision latitude and work environment could predict burnout among academic staff of universities in Southwest, Nigeria. This study is hinged on the need to provide an empirical basis for the improvement academic staff of universities performance in Southwest Nigeria, and secondly, to provide further empirical support to the predictor variables used in this study in contemporary literature, particularly in the developing country like Nigeria. Findings showed job demand, job decision latitude and work environment significantly predicted burnout.

This finding has demonstrated the effectiveness of the predictor variables in determining burnout among academic staff of universities in Southwest, Nigeria. This, in effect, attests to the strong relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion measure. This outcome agrees with earlier ones by other scholars that the problem of stress has relationship with burnout which is a product of many factors such as high job demand, work-family conflict, role ambiguity, inadequate resources, problem of deviant behaviours among students, lack of participation in decision making and role conflict among others (Gyaki, 2014; Hu, et al., 2020; Marchand, 2018). Other scholars like Jackson et al. (2006) also confirmed an association among burnout, job conditions and workers personal expectations. However, this finding does not agree with the position of Zhao and Namasiyayam, (2012) that work-family conflict was solely responsible for burnout and job dissatisfaction among workers.

This study also corroborates the findings of Schieman & Glavin, (2008) stating that workers identified with high decision latitude at work have tendency of overcoming burnout and the associated stress compared with those with low decision latitude who are prone to experiencing psychological stress. This work is again line with that of Özkanal and Arıkan (2010) who opined that work environment is a significant predictor of burnout among university workers. This contradicts the position of Voydanoff (2004) that job autonomy and burnout are negatively related. Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (2001) in their work established job demands and lack of resources as predictors of burnout.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study reveal that University academic staffs are not immune against burnout and other work-related challenges affecting workers generally. It can be deduced therefore, burnout could be a product of prolonged stress because of excessive workload, poor working relationship with colleagues at work, unconducive working environment, inadequate resources for teaching – learning process, role conflict, lack of social support and inability to be involved in decision making among others. It is important to note that the effects of burnout differ from one person to another based on varying social and emotional supports received at different levels. However, the concept of burnout is an essential issue to be critically investigated among the University academics because it could serve as one of the indicators for measuring quality of education in any society.

The present study, therefore, has contributed to knowledge on some determinants of burnout among university academic staff which makes it unique among other studies on burnout. The outcome of this study showed a very high prevalence of burnout among university academic staff, therefore there should be programs which will facilitate the recognition, prevention, and treatment of burnout related problem.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are necessary as a follow-up to the findings and conclusion of this study:

Government, university administrator and university management should improve on university work environment by providing necessary facilities that will enhance favourable work environment. This will help in reducing the level of burnout among the university academic staff.

Work incentives should be given to academic staff to make them relaxed and refreshed on their jobs. Such incentive should include opportunities to observe annual leaves with due benefits with favourable working condition of service also adequate payment of salaries and other welfare packages for academic staff should be of paramount to university administrators.

University academic staff should be encouraged to make use of counselling facilities around for guidance and general wellness.

Recreation facilities should made available within the University premises for relaxation of staff and there should be seminars, programs, and workshops where the academic staff in the university can discuss burnout related problem and find a solution through the help of a psychologist and counselor.

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Music Education in Nigeria: Problematic Issues of Cultural Diversity and Juxtaposition of Cultures

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Abstract. This article examines music education in Nigeria with a close look at the issues of cultural diversity. The study objectives centred on the history of music education in Nigeria; Indigenous (Traditional) music education in Nigeria and Western music education in Nigeria. Some useful information concerning this study was got from some books, journals and classroom experiences as a music educator who has taught in Nursery, primary and secondary schools, taught in the College of Education and at the University level to support my research evidence. The outcome of this study reveals that music education in Nigeria could be traced to the singing of hymns in the church by the earlier pioneer of Christian Missionaries that visited Nigeria. Traditional music education (indigenous) had been in existed for so many years before the advent of Christian missionaries. Today, western music education could be seen dominating indigenous music education in our educational system in Nigeria. The paper concludes that music education in Nigeria will be improved upon when it is not considered in isolation from its social context (society need) and from other arts with which it is looked upon. The nature of music education in Nigeria should centre, promote and be relevant to Nigerian indigenous music. The paper recommends that music educators in Nigeria should adopt an intercultural approach that will enhance better performance of music education in all its ramifications.

Keywords: Music, Education, Indigenous, Western, Culture.

1. Introduction

Music education is a very important subject in the development of the social and cultural aspects of a nation. It is through music education that, a nation can realize and utilize its human resources in terms of norms, customs, folklore, folkways and generally their traditions, but before this can be realized and utilized, they have to be discovered and developed. Music education will be improved upon when it is not considered in isolation from its social context and from other arts with which it is looked. The nature of music education is such that, it requires a special approach that will enhance a better performance of music in all its ramifications. Today, many students had no flair for music; hence, they are unable to regard or attach importance to music education. Many students were scared away from music education because of their difficult experience with the theories and applied music because of the unsuitable methods (approach) used by some of the teachers handling the subject. The resultant effect of this is the continued drop in the percentage of students who pass or offer music in the Senior Secondary (S.S.S) classes. Moreover, it is difficult for many students to balance the equation between the theory and practical aspects of music.

Music education is a broad concept in the teaching and learning process of music in Nigeria. Music education is the processes and techniques followed and employed by a teacher to make teaching and learning of music effective and ensure that, the specific objectives of the lesson are achieved. Music education helps the teacher to approach music teaching according to orderly procedures. Many researchers and music scholars such as Kodaly (1967); Orff (1982); Bartola (1945), Suzuki (1973), Omibiyi (1992), Ekwueme (1994), Adeogun (2000), Faseun (1994), Okafor (1991) among others demonstrate and showcase the functional role and values of music education in the teaching-learning process. As it enables music educators to successfully deliver to students in the school setting.

Ajewole (2000) remarks that music education is the orderly arrangement of musical ideas, facts and the materials of instruction to facilitate learning. Music education brings good results in the teaching and learning of music. It also covers both the strategy and tactics of teaching music and involves the choice of what is to be taught at a given time; how it is to be taught and the order in which it is to be taught. Music education is aimed at bringing about a change in the behaviour of learners. The extent of the achievement of this aim will depend on the teacher's ability as the facilitator of knowledge, the materials he uses and the methods he adopts to pass across his message. Megary (1980) dropped a warning that for genuine changes to occur in classroom practices, teachers and educators must alter not only their rhetoric but also their methods. A dimension of music education is the engagement of some innovative strategies. In this situation, innovation is taken to mean a new way of doing things. A teacher in the class is said to be innovative if he can think of new and better ways of teaching his lessons and carry out his ideas through experimentation. After all, is said and done, the ultimate objective of teaching is learning.

Hoffer (1985) explains the role of music education that, the purpose of music in the school curriculum has not always been made clear to the public. Simply stated, schools offer music for the same reason that they offer languages and science. Music instruction cannot be equated with other subjects in the school curriculum. It cannot be belaboured that, the quality of music education we have today in Nigeria suffers as a result of such gap in teacher preparation. Lucy Ekwueme (1994) stressed the need for adequate music education and that, an effective arts education programme in our secondary school is intended to develop our youth's functional knowledge and skills about music and the arts in our culture.

It must be noted that not all competent musicians are competent teachers. One might excel as an excellent musician but lack the theoretical background in teaching and or cannot effectively communicate the essence and attributes of music to a learner. Every music educator is naturally concerned with what is taught and about and how it is taught. The increasing explosion of knowledge in all fields of endeavour in the world today has brought about innovative methods for teaching them. Music educators are not left out of the race. Development in music education is almost absolutely aligned with developments and innovations in general education. Music is only perceived as singing in our societies. This evidence can be seen through the charlatan attitudes of some students, teachers and even principals. Faseun (1994) noted that academic music education in Nigeria proceeded from a perception of the subject as hymn singing. It has since the years gone by passed through various changes and modifications which have always been in line with the changing patterns of our society. The changes mentioned above have affected music teaching–learning at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

Orawo (1996) noted that music by its very nature is a specialized subject that required talented individuals to handle. And more so, if we go by what is in the syllabus, music education is no longer mere singing. The role of music educators cannot be overemphasized in strengthening the growth of music education in Nigeria. Yirenkji (1996:3) remarked that a child can be put off totally and forever if teaching employs unfamiliar irrelevant and completely foreign ideas and methods to impart knowledge.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The scope for music education research in Nigeria is limitless. Although, Nigerian music is quite different in nature, theory, and performance from Western music. If we examine music education in Nigeria as at present (today) one may question how relevant is music education to Nigerian societies. Nigerian music educators will have to play a dominant role in furnishing answers to these issues if a comprehensive music education programme from primary school to University level is to have any measure of success. The growth of music in Nigeria requires comprehensive support of music education programmes in all the primary and secondary schools up to the tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

At present, very little research has been done to study review, and reduce to a system between Indigenous and Western music education in Nigeria. Music education is often inadequately considered by musicologists researching music. Many scholars in the field of music think the area of music education has little to study. But it should be noted that many concepts abound in Junior secondary school music that proves potentially difficult for students to grasp especially in the theory and applied aspects of music that require the attention of a professional music educator. Questions may arise on the methodological approach. What methods are we going to use to teach these concepts? Can such methods be built into a model? Can such methods be used for teaching theory and applied music? A further complication in the problematic issue of music education is the nature of

what is being taught and the manner and approach to communicating the knowledge about it to the students.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim and objectives for this study are threefold as stated:

- To examine the history of music education in Nigeria.
- To explain indigenous music education in Nigeria and
- To discuss western music education in Nigeria.

2. Research Methodology

Survey method was adopted for this study. There are three aspects to the survey method in research; viz

- observation
- interview
- questionnaire

The survey method is selected for the following reasons:

- It seeks a response directly from the individual to be studied.
- It is adequate for representative sampling and
- It allows carrying out the research in the natural setting of the individuals to be studied.

A review of the literature was done on the stated objectives of this study to ascertain the standard of music education in Nigeria compared to other countries.

Some useful information concerning this study was got from some books, journals, and classroom experiences as a music educator to support my research evidence. This write-up is mostly based on my Master of Arts (MA) research work titled. The Pedagogy of Teaching Music in Nigerian Junior Secondary Schools in Ibadan Municipality.

3. Discussion and Findings on Music Education in Nigeria

The findings, discussion and analysis of this study centre on the stated objective for this study as stated below:

Objective 1: To Examine the History of Music Education in Nigeria.

3.1 Historical Background of Music Education in Nigeria

It is significant to trace the historical background of music education in Nigeria, to know its trend and development. The process of formal education in Nigeria and some parts of Africa has been widely discussed by many researchers such as Omibiyi – Obidike (1992). Akin Euba (1996): Vidal (1996): Kuture (1996): Omojola (1995): Akinbote (1988): Horton (1993): and Obiwusi (1979), among others.

Music education developed as a result of the introduction of Western education brought by the Christian missionaries. Thus, early education in music within the Western school system was introduced by the Christian missionaries to promote their proselytization activities. The aim was merely to produce catechists, priests and headmasters who could read music, and play hymns and chants on the harmonium from staff notation. Given this aim, the contents of the curriculum were confined to singing, rudiments of music and harmonium playing.

At the elementary school level, the curriculum was mainly singing of Christian hymns, European folk songs and songs with vernacular texts utilizing pre-existing English folk melodies. In secondary schools, the singing of European folksongs continued with the addition of rudiments of music. In some special secondary schools, the keyboard mainly the piano and western music history were added to the curriculum. Exceptional students were thus able to take graded examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in Britain as external candidates. In teacher training Colleges which supplied most of the personnel for the Christian missionary schools and churches, the curriculum comprised rudiments of music and harmonium playing.

Students at the University level were exposed to music through the music clubs in the university community. With the contents and instructional materials being devoid of African traditional music the school started to produce educated Africans who lacked the knowledge of their indigenous musical culture. This marked the beginning of the discontinuity between the school and the socio-cultural environment of Africans who went to school. Because they did not hear or participate in traditional music within the school system. Educated Africans unconsciously grew to reject their music and in its place developed a taste for Western music both folk and art (Omibiyi 1992:30).

Another factor in the development of modern Nigerian Society, and one factor that played a key role in the

westernization of Nigerians, is the Christian missionary. The missionaries became active and established important missionary centres at Abeokuta and Badagry. The first practical contact that Nigerians had with European music was through the hymns which they sang in church on Sundays. Even within this context, there was already a juxtaposition of cultures, for the hymns were translated into Nigerian languages and sung to European melodies (Akin Euba, 1986:38).

The missionaries in West Africa were hostile to traditional music and kept it firmly outside the church. The reason for their hostility was that music and other traditional arts in Africa were associated with what the missionaries believed to be 'pagan' practices and were therefore unsuitable for the church. The missionaries barred their converts from participating in the performances of traditional arts and some cases, even from watching them.

The attitude of the missionaries prepared the way for a thorough Westernization of Africans who became Christians. The adoption of European music by African Christians facilitated the introduction of European-type schools which at the initial stages of modern education in West Africa, were the only schools available under the control of the missionaries. In such schools, the emphasis was on European music. The singing of hymns with African vernacular texts to pre-composed European tunes resulted in chaos as far as the meanings of words were concerned.

Omojola revealed the great schisms within the church and the genesis of cultural nationalism. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, for political, economic, and cultural reasons, the black community in Lagos began to question the dominance of the Europeans.

It was a general belief among the Saros that as time went on there would be more opportunities for them to occupy senior cadre posts within existing institutions; the church, mission schools and the civil service. The reverse was the case. They were also largely deprived of participation in political decisions. In 1872, the Lagos Local Government, which was established in 1861, employed its first African representative only after much agitation. In addition, European Commercial activities increased in Lagos especially after it became a colony in 1861.

Within the various Christian denominations, tension was beginning to develop in the hitherto cordial relationship between Africans and Europeans. African Clergymen were not appointed in sufficient numbers. The few existing African clergy were not being promoted. European church leaders wanted Africans to abandon some of their traditional customs, such as polygamy and traditional ritual ceremonies. As a result, the Africans began to reassess their relationship with the Europeans. As they become more self – assured they simultaneously demanded a more positive approach to traditional African culture from their European colleagues. In 1881, the first pamphlet advocating the establishment of an African church was published. Seven years later the first "African" church was formed, the Native Baptist Church.

According to Webster, the precedent set in 1888 was repeated in 1891, 1901 and 1917 until every mission in Lagos – the CMS, the Wesleyan Church, the Baptist and the Catholic – had been fragmented.

Thus, the United Native African Church, a breakaway faction of the African church and The Methodist Church (UAM) was formed on August 14th, 1891. The United African Methodist Church was founded in 1917 while the African Church was founded in 1901 by a breakaway faction of St. Paul's Church, Breadfruit, Lagos. The Aladura church and the Cherubim and Seraphim which epitomize the Africanisation of Christianity in Nigeria were founded in the 1920s and it is in these missions that we find the earliest use of African music within the Christian church. Despite the alleged offensive and pagan character', African songs were, from the beginning of this century, allowed to be used in the Anglican Churches. This is because the Orthodox churches began to lose converts to the new African Churches in increasing numbers. Music became the chief means of propaganda among the churches – new and orthodox – a feature which sheds light on the age-long importance of music in religious worship in Africa (Omojola, 1995: 16 – 20).

African church music then represents a marriage of African and European elements. The pioneering work was mostly done by African priests and choirmasters whose training in the mission school usually included the ability to use staff or solfa notation. The teaching of Africans to read and write music is one of the major achievements of the Africanized church music, they only partially succeeded in doing so (Akin Euba, 1986:38).

It was clear that early music education in West Africa was meant to serve the interest of Western European missionaries rather than African. Hence, it was patterned after the European music system and its legacies continued until today (Vidal, 1996:7) Nketia, 1982:14) remarked as quoted by Kuture:

The church preached against African cultural practices while promoting Western cultural values. Drumming suffered the most as it was linked to "Pagan Practices" (Kuture, 1996:1).

The church through its mission schools, also provided opportunities for the training of students in the theory and practice of European music, a feature which still exists. European-influenced musical idioms have been present in Nigeria since the beginning of the 20th century. The greatest challenge to European power took place, naturally, in the church, since the church was the most important focal point for educated Africans in nineteenth-century Nigerians (Omojola, 1995: 6-9). Formal education in Nigeria is usually associated with Christian missionary education which was first introduced by the Portuguese traders who visited Benin and Warri in the present-day Bendel State in the sixteenth century.

However, it was the second coming of the whites as represented by the Christian missionaries that successfully planted Western formal education in Nigeria in the Nineteenth Century. From Badagry where Mr. and Mrs De Graf of the Methodist mission opened the first school in 1842, Western education spread to other parts of what is now known as Nigeria at varying speeds (Akinbote 1988:15). The missionary bodies laid the foundation of Western education in Nigeria. Later, voluntary agencies, the government, including native administration and commercial firms joined in the establishment of schools. Thomas Birch Freeman of the Wesley Methodist Mission Society came from Gold Coast and established the first missionary station at Badagry in 1842, which marked the beginning of missionary activities in Nigeria. The missionary bodies like the Methodist, Anglican, Roman Catholic etc. combined religious activities with educational work (Obiwusi, 1979:3).

The missionary bodies laid the foundation of curriculum development in Nigeria. When they came in 1842, their specific objective was to convert a vast majority of Nigerians to Christianity. Thus, the establishment of a church always went hand in hand with the opening of a school. Young children were taught to read the Bible and to write (Obiwusi, 1979:154).

In the colonial period, music was synonymous with singing since it was dominated by the latter with a smattering of music theory. Where music theory was emphasized, it was taught by the use of tonic-solfa syllables which were handy for choral rehearsals (Horton, 1993: 155).

The teachers then were mostly church organists who for the most part taught music or took correspondence at the National College of Music (Horton 1993:155).

Objective 2: To Explain Indigenous Music Education in Nigeria

3.2 Indigenous (Traditional) Music Education in Nigeria: An Overview of Traditional Methods of Music Education

Nigerian traditional music is entirely different from that of the Western Europeans. Akin Euba described Nigerian Music as:
A combined vocal and instrumental effort. Music-making seldom takes place without its participants indulging in dance movements. (Akin Euba, 1961: 130).
Omibiyi remarked that:
Music in the African context is an integral part of life: everybody participates in its performance (Omibiyi, 1992: 29).

The music of our society reveals a great deal about our beliefs and sentiments. Although in society music may not have an equal effect on everybody because people do not generally have the same preferences for music. Music has always been used in traditional culture to celebrate various ceremonies such as marriage, child-naming house warming and so on. Institutions that patronize music in Nigeria include hotels, nightclubs, restaurants and drinking bars. They also include private clubs and associations. The practice of using music in traditional culture cannot be over-emphasized. Music is part of the culture. It is the reflection of the culture of the society.

Culture is a way of life; music permeates our way of life and helps in preserving the culture of society. A question of attitude, whereby both the students and the teachers are products of colonialism and Christianity and feel ashamed to learn traditional music, affects traditional music education in Nigeria. This attitude also affects the Government Education ministry which does not seem to enforce and recognize the importance of music in general.

One wonders, how a secondary school student who is not well grounded in the basic music knowledge of traditional music performance, will take part in traditional musical performances in his society, which knows next to nothing about the Western classical music learnt in the school. All Western music components mean nothing to the majority of Nigerians. Nigerian traditional society has methods and approaches to music education. The training is

part of a wider education process in which the indigenous societies of Nigeria pass on their music and cultural heritage from one generation to the next. Learning represents a very important step in the assimilation of societal and cultural values. Like other aspects of culture, music is learnt through enculturation. This is an aspect of the learning experience when man achieves competence in his culture" (Herskovits 1948).

Orawo emphasized that:

Learning music is part of the socialization process. The simplest and most differentiated form occurs through imitation (Orawo, 1996:5).

The process of musical education in traditional Africa has been widely discussed (Nketia, 1961: Smith, 1962: Akin Euba, 1986; Wachsmann, 1966; Vidal, 1996; Omibiyi, 1975). The traditional methods of music education are well analyzed by these scholars. A summary of their writings on the adopted methods will be given.

The training process starts very early in the life of the child. The African mother sings to her child who begins to develop sensitivity to music right from the cradle. The mother also teaches her child to become aware of rhythm by rocking the child to music and singing nonsense syllables in imitation of drum rhythms. African mothers often carry the babies on their backs when attending ceremonies and rituals and this gives the children early exposure to actual musical situations. Furthermore, the mothers dance with the children on their backs and this enables the children to begin to experience the rhythms of dance about music. As soon as the child's motor reflexes are sufficiently developed, he or she is given a toy instrument to play with. This is more evident in the drumming, especially among the Ayan family. It is a practice in the Ayan family to give a child his first drum around the age of five. This is a miniature kanango (drum) which is the smallest of the varieties of tension drums. While using the drum as a toy the child begins to acquire the technique of handling the instrument and to use it to play simple speech phrases.

Traditional music education programmes are in two stages. The first stage which is for everybody, begins informally from infancy and is continuous throughout adult life. It aims not only at integrating members of the community into their culture but also at making them active participants in traditional musical activities. The teachers at this level are mothers and peer groups whom themselves have undergone similar training. The Institutional methodology involves observation and imitation. Further training at the early stages of a child's life is developed through involvement in games and storytelling sessions accompanied by songs. The second stage, which is for the talented or professional, is aimed at making learners proficient and skilled performers within the norm of their culture. It is formalized and guided. Instruction is given by the father if the learner is from a musical family or another relative or any other person who is skilled in the medium of performance. The instructional method involves role learning and imitation.

Moreover, to supplement the individual efforts of children in the learning process adults would occasionally offer formal instruction. Learners are taught by a master musician, especially among the Ayan family and it is the training received by learners: musical perception or lack of it as well as their life's experience and environment that partly accounts for what they perform, how they perform, why they perform what they perform and the way they perform it. In addition, to supplement the individual efforts of children in the learning process, adults would occasionally offer formal instruction. Among the Chopi of East Africa, a xylophonist would sit and direct the hands of the child. Through this procedure, the child acquires a feeling for the motor movement necessary for xylophone performance. Akan drummers in Ghana teach drum rhythms to their children by tapping the rhythms on the shoulders of the children. drummers also teach children by using appropriate sentences and nonsense syllables to illustrate drum patterns. One of the most important methods is to allow trainees to learn on the job. Children are often permitted to supply background rhythm for flute players by playing rattles. Children also feature in adult ensembles by playing minor instruments or singing in choruses. The technique of sound production in African drumming is acquired comparatively quickly. The most difficult aspect of drumming is the mastery of the language of talking drums. A pupil sometimes has to wait for long periods before getting opportunities to hear drum texts appropriate to certain ceremonies when such ceremonies are infrequently performed. The slow process of music education in African traditional society demands that the mastery of a given type of music should take a very long time.

Although, the length of training varies with the natural abilities of individual pupils. It is quite usual for music specialists to spend up to twelve years learning their craft. Ijala chanters among the Yoruba of Nigeria begin their pupilage at the age of six and usually continue to receive tuition up to the age of 18. A comparable length of time is also required before a trainee Dundun drummer can graduate to mastership.

There has always existed a system of music education in Nigeria's traditional society.

Objective 3: To Discuss Western Music Education in Nigeria.

3.3 Western Music Education in Nigeria (An Overview)

According to Faseun, a study carried out by Osuji revealed that:
The music curriculum of secondary schools pays more attention to examination requirements rather than aiming at developing the musical talents of the students (Osuji, 1984:24).
A look into the curriculum used in our primary, secondary and tertiary institutions shows a very clear preponderance of Western musical history, literature, theory and harmonic concepts. According to Faseun, the Junior Secondary School music curriculum has six segments. These areas are:

- Introduction/Singing
- Theory/Music Reading
- Instruments
- Rhythm
- Listening/History
- Creative Music (Faseun, 1994:40)

For effective teaching of the syllabus contents for the JSS III students according to the division suggested and the stated objectives in the National Policy on Education which emphasized:
The acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society (NPE, 1985:8).

The syllabus was divided into six pillars.

A California State University and Colleges quarterly newsletter titled FUTURE TALK emphasized competency-based instruction and identified generic and specific areas of instruction for general education programs. It explains further:
The principal strategy of competency-based instruction seems straightforward enough. Specify the learning outcomes desired. Design a curriculum that has a better–than–chance prospect of modifying students' cognitive, affective, and skill behaviours in the direction of the outcomes sought (1975:2)

The generic and specific areas of instruction suggested above were adapted to the Nigerian music syllabus to improve the teaching and learning process.

The suggested six pillars based on generic and specific areas are listed in columns A-F in Table 1 below.

A-Pillar of Music Instruction in JSS III

A. Rudiments & Theory	1. Writing scales-Major & Minor 2. Rhythmic Pattern 3. Sight-reading 4. Conducting various meter 5. Composition/Harmony
B. Applied Music	1. Singing – Solo/group (Folksongs) 2. Keyboard (Piano) 3. Guitar 4. Recorders 5. Drums (Local & Western)
C. General Musicianship and Aural Training	1. Simple Dictation a. Melodic b. Rhythmic 2. Ear Training
. African/Western Music	Identification of musical genre: Traditional – Rara, Esa, Ewi, Ekun-Iyawo, Ijala etc. Islamized – Sakara, Apala, Fuji, Were, Seli, Waka. Christianity – Native air, choruses, Anthem, Gospel, Chant. Western Civilization, Western Pop, Juju, Highlife, Afrobeat, Concert music, Theatre music, Church music.
E. Music Appreciation	1. General Listening 2. Recognition of the Families of Instruments aurally 3 Musical forms 4. Identification of major/minor 5. Musical periods
F. Test & Measurement	1. There should be a board to monitor the teaching of the syllabus. 2. Syllabus should be available in all schools 3. All schools are given adequate musical instruments and facilities for teaching. 4. Choice for practical & theory exams.

Several inferences can be made from the above table on the teaching of Western music in Nigerian schools. According to the above table, the summary of the pillar of music instruction in JSS III suggests the teaching of the following sections of Western music:
Section A - Rudiments & Theory
Section B - Applied Music
Section C - General Musicianship and Aural Training
Section D - African & Western Music
Section E - Music Appreciation and
Section F - Test & Measurement

It is clearly shown that Nigerian children are severally handicapped in their abilities to sound Nigerian music education. Western music curriculum superimposes indigenous music education in Nigeria. Why? No wonder Nigerian music students have no flair for indigenous music education but patronize Western musical culture daily in Nigerian schools. The results of these were the poor performance of students in music examinations and the continued drop in the percentage of students who pass or offer music in the Senior Secondary (SSS) class in Nigerian Secondary Schools.

4. Conclusion

For effective music education programmes in Nigerian schools, trained music instructors with knowledge of the educational process should be allowed to handle the subject.

Kuture, (1992:2) stated that training of secondary school teachers is very important. The learners in this segment of education are surrounded by and later bombarded with a very powerful mass media. Here is also a stage when these tendencies of colonialism and misguided Christian principles are present.

In Nigeria, research has shown that the majority of students and teachers prefer Western music, such an unfortunate state of affairs affects music education in Nigerian schools.

There have been many music casualties in the past because of the lack of a sound foundation coupled with irrelevant methods in teaching and learning music in school. Therefore, the teaching of music should arouse the interest of students through adequate music education. The teaching of music in Nigerian schools raises so many questions such as, Are we teaching music in Nigeria today? or should we continue to teach music tomorrow? How the Nigerian music makers in the society perceive music education, most especially in Nigeria Junior Secondary Schools.

However, we ask ourselves, which music we should teach. Western or traditional music? What methodology will be appropriate and suitable for the curriculum? Experts in the music field need to provide answers to these questions if we want music education to have a good impact and relevance to the need of Nigeria and Nigerians.

Government should organize workshops and seminars to work out an acceptable curriculum that projects Nigerian culture for the teaching of music in Secondary Schools. Ministry of Education should draw up and control the curriculum of music in secondary schools as well as monitor the standard of music education that is Nigerian oriented.
University experts should be encouraged by Government to conduct research and review the areas of Western music education to effect necessary changes in the teaching of music to suit our traditional music education in Nigeria. The content of the curriculum for secondary school should incorporate more aspects of African music covering vocal and instrumental repertory, structured form, history as well as biographical study of African musicians. Textbooks used in the teaching of music should be relevant to the experience and background of the students. Sophisticated aspects of Western music should be learnt to improve on Nigerian music because the present curriculum is too foreign in orientation to the students understanding. The history and literature of African music should be studied. There is no need to study Western history and literature of music in detail. The philosophy and content of our literary music education must drive from our African or Nigerian resources and realistic experiences is worthy of note.

Local instructors should be invited to our schools to teach how to play, repair and make traditional musical instruments. The present curriculum should be revised to remove defects and to meet the educational and cultural challenges of a constantly changing Nigeria, politically, socially, economically and historically. The next few years should see an intensive re-awakening of music education in Nigeria.

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Robotic Process Automation in School Administration: Exploring the Integration of RPA Solutions to Streamline Administrative Processes and Reduce Workload

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Abstract. Robotic Process Automation (RPA) holds immense potential for revolutionizing school administration by automating repetitive tasks, streamlining processes, and enhancing operational efficiency. This paper explores the integration of RPA solutions in school administration to streamline administrative processes and reduce workload. Beginning with an overview of RPA technology and its underlying theoretical underpinnings, the paper examines the importance of administrative efficiency in educational settings and the challenges faced by school administrators. It discusses the potential benefits of RPA integration, including improved accuracy, reduced manual effort, and optimized resource allocation. The paper also addresses considerations for implementing RPA in schools, such as data security, staff training, and scalability issues. Furthermore, it recommends among others, future directions and opportunities for leveraging RPA in school administration, including emerging trends in RPA technology, potential applications for further automation, and research directions for exploring the impact of RPA on educational outcomes. Through a comprehensive evaluation of the existing systems against the proposed RPA solutions to streamline administrative processes, this paper provides insights into the transformative potential of automation technologies in enhancing administrative efficiency and effectiveness in educational institutions.

Keywords: Robotic Process Automation, School Administration, Administrative Processes, Workload Reduction

1. Introduction

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) is a technology that automates repetitive, rule-based operations by using software robots, also referred to as bots. Usually, these jobs entail data entry by hand, data processing, and system or application communication (Mohamed et al.,2022). RPA functions by simulating human user interactions with digital system user interfaces, including button clicks, text entry into fields, and information copying and pasting

In recent years, robotic process automation (RPA) has emerged as a disruptive technology, replacing human labour in a range of industries with automated versions of repetitive and rule-based operations (Pramod, 2021). In RPA, software robots, sometimes known as "bots," mimic human interactions with digital systems and applications to perform tasks related to business (Syed et al., 2020). These bots can do a wide range of operations, such as data entry, data validation, report creation, and more, fast, precisely, and consistently.

RPA bots carry out tasks in accordance with preset guidelines and directives. These guidelines specify the steps the bot must take in order to finish a task precisely and effectively (Yadav et a., 2023). Neither the underlying systems that RPA interacts with nor the current IT infrastructure need to be modified. Rather, it functions at the level of the user interface, utilising the same interfaces as human users do to engage with programmes and systems (Hofmann et al., 2019. Implementations of RPA can grow quickly to handle more jobs or higher work volumes. Because bots are software-based, it takes little work to deploy them across numerous systems and procedures. (Kokina, 2019). RPA bots are capable of managing a variety of jobs in many systems and applications. They are appropriate for dynamic and changing contexts since they can adjust to modifications in processes or interfaces (Kokina, 2019). Accuracy and Consistency: RPA bots reduce errors and improve data quality by completing tasks with a high degree of consistency and precision. They do their jobs without getting tired or inconsistent, and they carefully follow the rules that have been set forth (Kokina, 2019). RPA installations provide thorough logs and audit trails of bot operations, organisations are able to track and monitor the execution of processes. This facilitates adherence to both internal and external regulatory obligations

(Syed et al., 2020). Quick Return on Investment (ROI): RPA can automate repetitive tasks quickly and effectively, which means that deployments typically have a short payback period. By relieving human resources from low-value chores, organisations can concentrate their efforts on higher-value projects (Bonfante et al., 2021).

All things considered, RPA provides a flexible and scalable way to automate repetitive, manual processes in a variety of industries, such as manufacturing, banking, healthcare, and education. Organisations may increase worker productivity, increase efficiency, and streamline operations by utilising RPA technology.

Software platforms, bots, development environments, integration tools, cognitive and AI technologies, analytics and monitoring tools, governance and security features all play a part in RPA installations. Organisations can create, implement, and oversee efficient RPA solutions that automate business processes, boost productivity, and promote digital transformation by utilising these parts and technologies.

The success and efficient operation of educational institutions depend heavily on administrative effectiveness (Thorave, 2022). The increasing pressure on educational institutions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their administrative procedures in today's dynamic educational climate is highlighting the potential of RPA to change school administration. This is the focus of this study. The study therefore aims to investigate the possible advantages, difficulties, and factors associated with integrating RPA technologies into school administration. Additionally, it aims to shed light on how RPA might improve school operations overall and transform administrative procedures in educational establishments.

2. Theoretical Framework

The paper examined several theoretical underpinnings that provided a comprehensive framework for understanding and appreciating how RPA integration aligns with existing administrative practices, shapes organisations dynamics and influences the work processes of school administration. The following but not limited to these conceptual theoretical bases offer a lens to understand the place of RPA in school administration

Organizational Theory: This perspective provides insights into how organizations, including educational institutions, function and adapt to changes. Within this framework, the study can explore how the integration of Robotic Process Automation (RPA) solutions impacts the structure, processes, and culture of school administration (Zhang et al., 2022). It examines factors such as organizational readiness, communication channels, and power dynamics that influence the adoption and implementation of RPA.

Technology Adoption Frameworks: Drawing from models like the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) or the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), the study can assess the factors that influence the adoption and utilization of RPA solutions by school administrators. These frameworks consider variables such as perceived usefulness, ease of use, social influence, and facilitating conditions, offering a lens to understand the behavioral aspects of technology adoption within educational contexts.

3. Overview of Academic Institutions' Administrative Tasks

- Overseeing the enrollment procedure, which includes gathering data about the student, confirming the accuracy of the paperwork, and making sure that the enrollment standards are being met (Asatiani et al., 2022).
- For administrative and legal reasons, keeping an eye on student attendance, keeping track of absences, and producing attendance reports.
- Keeping current and accurate records of all academic work, including transcripts, grades, test results, and requirements for graduation.
- Curriculum Management: creating, revising, and putting into practice academic programmes, course outlines, and curriculum standards in order to satisfy legal and educational obligations.
- Budgeting, accounting, and financial reporting to manage school finances, allocate resources, and ensure fiscal responsibility.
- Recruiting, employing, and supervising employees, including support workers, administrators, and teachers. It also involves managing payroll, benefits, and performance reviews.
- Keeping up with the upkeep of the buildings, grounds, and equipment of schools in order to provide a clean, safe, and comfortable learning environment (Madakam et al., 2019).

- Encouraging community members, educators, parents, administrators, and students to collaborate and communicate with one another through meetings, emails, and newsletters, among other avenues (Somasundaram et al., 2022).

4. Challenges and Inefficiencies Faced by School Administrators

A large portion of administrative work in educational institutions is still done by hand using paper-based procedures, which leads to inefficiencies in record-keeping, data input, and communication as well as delays and errors. In order to handle administrative activities, educational institutions frequently use a variety of systems and apps. This leads to data silos and fragmentation, which makes it difficult to share, integrate, and analyse data (Uskenbayeva et al., 2019). It can take a lot of time and resources to comply with the complicated regulatory regulations, accrediting standards, and reporting demands that school administrators must manage. Educational institutions may find it challenging to invest in technology, staff development, and facility upgrades that will improve administrative efficiency due to budgetary and resource constraints. The high workloads that school administrators and staff must handle while juggling multiple projects and deadlines can result in stress, burnout, and a decline in job satisfaction. The diverse needs, preferences, and communication styles of students, parents, staff, and community members can make it challenging for stakeholders at educational institutions to work together and communicate effectively (OLUÇOĞLU> et al., 2023). Financial software, learning management systems, and student information systems are a few examples of technology solutions that can be challenging to set up and maintain, needing specific knowledge, help, and training.

5. Importance of Administrative Efficiency in Educational Institutions

An important factor in the success and efficient operation of educational institutions is good school management. The administrative operations of schools involve a wide range of tasks and responsibilities, including financial administration, curriculum management, resource allocation, student enrollment, attendance tracking, communication, and regulatory compliance (Thorave, 2022). The significance of administrative efficacy in learning environments is summed up as follows:

Effective administration guarantees the prudent allocation and effective utilisation of resources, including persons, cash, and time (Asatiani, 2016).

Schools can optimise resource utilisation, reduce waste, and improve overall operational efficiency by simplifying their administrative procedures. School employees can focus more time and energy on their primary responsibility of teaching pupils when there is efficient administration in place. Teachers and school administrators can improve teaching and learning results by giving priority to curriculum creation, student support services, and instructional activities by automating mundane administrative procedures. Staff and administrator productivity in schools is directly impacted by administrative effectiveness. Schools may minimise errors, boost staff efficiency, and accomplish more with less by automating processes, cutting down on manual paperwork, and getting rid of unnecessary duties. Effective administration ensures that student and institutional data is accurate, correct, and confidential. This paves the way for better data management strategies. Schools that implement effective procedures for data collection, storage, and analysis will be better able to fulfil reporting requirements, monitor student progress, and make educated judgements (Munawar, 2021). When schools have effective administration, they can better address the needs and expectations of various stakeholders, including children, parents, staff, and community members. By providing accurate and timely information, promptly answering inquiries, and encouraging open communication, schools may contribute to the development of strong connections and trust in the community. Effective administration ensures compliance with laws, customs, and policies controlling education. By maintaining accurate records, ensuring mandate compliance, and implementing internal controls, schools may demonstrate accountability, lower risks, and maintain their reputation as respectable educational institutions (Kokina, 2019). Effective management creates the foundation for creativity and ongoing development in educational institutions. Schools may meet changing demands, remain ahead of the curve, and adapt to changing educational landscapes by adopting new technologies, developing an innovative culture, and looking for chances for process optimisation.

The success and efficient operation of educational institutions depend heavily on administrative effectiveness. Schools may optimise resources, boost productivity, respond to stakeholder demands, maintain compliance, improve data management, and stimulate creativity by putting efficiency first. Therefore, in today's dynamic educational climate,

schools that want to deliver high-quality instruction and encourage student success must invest heavily in administrative efficiency

6. The Need for Automation to Streamline Administrative Processes

Due to the aforementioned challenges and inefficiencies faced by school administrators, innovative approaches like robotic process automation (RPA) are required to increase operational efficiency in school administration, reduce workloads, and simplify administrative processes. By automating repetitive tasks, integrating disparate systems, and improving data management strategies, school administrators can use Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to free up time and resources for supporting student success and accomplishing academic objectives.

Automation reduces manual labour, reduces errors, and speeds up process execution, all of which can significantly boost administrative job productivity and efficiency (Kavitha, 2023). By automating tedious and repetitive tasks, administrators may focus more of their time and energy on more important duties that benefit the business. Automation can save costs because it removes labour costs associated with labor-intensive manual data entry, processing, and administrative tasks. Organisations can achieve lower overhead expenses and better operational efficiency by allocating resources and optimising processes. Inherently more accurate and consistent than manual procedures, automated processes do away with human error and unpredictability. By automating data entry, validation, and processing procedures, organisations may improve the accuracy, integrity, and dependability of their data which will help them make better decisions and adhere to rules. Automation enables organisations to scale their operations more effectively in response to shifting demand or rising job volumes. Automated processes are scalable and adaptable enough to accommodate shifting business needs since they can handle large volumes of jobs or transactions without the need for extra workers (Desai, 2020). It also helps businesses ensure compliance with industry standards, internal policies, and regulatory obligations by enforcing standardised procedures and controls. These procedures can assist reduce the risk of fraud, mistakes, and non-compliance by implementing audit trails and role segregation (Vitharanage, 2021). Customer experience can be improved by automation by providing faster response times, reducing wait times, and streamlining service delivery processes. By automating processes that include interaction with customers, such as transactions, requests, and queries, organisations can expedite and streamline customer service. Insightful analytics can be generated by collecting, analysing, and interpreting data from automated processes. By capturing and analysing data in real-time, organisations can make data-driven decisions that drive process performance, uncover opportunities for improvement, and optimise operations. Employees can focus on more fulfilling and thought-provoking work by giving uninteresting and repetitive tasks to automation. Automating monotonous tasks can help organisations improve employee engagement, morale, and satisfaction while also increasing productivity and retention.

7. Considerations for Implementing RPA in Schools

7.1 Data Security and Privacy Concerns

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in the US and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the EU are two examples of pertinent data protection laws that educational institutions must make sure their RPA implementation complies with (Kedziora, 2021). To protect confidential student and employee data processed by RPA systems and avoid unauthorised access or data breaches, schools should have strong encryption and access control measures in place. Similarly, to stop data leaks or security flaws, RPA solutions should be safely linked with current IT systems and apps, using the right encryption and authentication techniques. Also, educational institutions should thoroughly inspect RPA vendors to make sure they follow industry best practices for data security and privacy as well as any applicable legal obligations.

7.2 Staff Training and Readiness for RPA Adoption

Schools should provide training and educational resources to staff to raise awareness about RPA technology, its benefits, and its potential impact on their roles and responsibilities. Schools could have to spend money on training courses to give employees the abilities and know-how to use RPA systems efficiently. These abilities include process analysis, bot creation, and monitoring.

In order to promote a culture of acceptance and ownership of the technology, educational institutions should involve staff members early in the RPA adoption process by asking for input, addressing concerns, and involving them in decision-making (Siderska, 2021). When employees start utilising RPA systems, schools want to provide them with ongoing

assistance and resources. Technical support services, training materials, and user manuals should be among them.

Additionally, schools may effectively use RPA technology to protect sensitive data, increase operational efficiency, and expedite administrative procedures while helping staff adapt to technological change. This can be accomplished by attending to privacy and data security issues, making sure staff members are prepared through education and training, and putting in place supportive measures.

7.3 Benefits of Integrating RPA in School Administration

RPA reduces manual labour and streamlines administrative processes to speed up work completion. It automates repetitive, time-consuming tasks like data entry, record-keeping, and report preparation, boosting the output and operational efficiency of school personnel. Similarly, it reduces labour costs associated with manual administrative, processing, and data input tasks. By automating repetitive procedures, educational institutions can reduce expenses and better deploy resources to support student services and projects. By eliminating human mistake and the unpredictable nature of manual procedures, robotic process automation (RPA) provides data quality, integrity, and dependability in administrative duties. By reducing errors and inconsistencies, RPA improves data quality and helps school administrators make better decisions.In school administration, RPA ensures compliance with industry standards, legal requirements, and internal rules by enforcing standardised processes and controls (Balasundaram, 2019). RPA helps educational institutions reduce compliance risks and uphold regulatory compliance by automating compliance-related tasks like document management, data privacy, and regulatory reporting (Bhamidipati, 2022). It's precise and fast data insights and analytics enable better strategic planning and decision-making in school administration. RPA collects and analyses data from automated processes to help educational institutions spot trends, patterns, and areas that need development. This makes it possible to make better decisions and use resources more effectively. Additionally, it improves communication, transparency, and service delivery, which benefits kids, parents, teachers, and other school administration stakeholders. By automating communication processes like email management and letter processing, RPA fosters timely and individualised communication, fostering positive relationships and stakeholder involvement. It gives school staff members more time to focus on higher-value tasks that improve student learning and achievement by relieving them of tedious and repetitive tasks. RPA enables schools to reallocate personnel and resources to more crucial learning objectives, such as curriculum development, student support services, and teacher professional development. By using RPA, educational institutions can increase their flexibility to adapt to changing business requirements by more effectively expanding their administrative operations to meet changing demands or increasing workloads (Singh, 2022).

8. Challenges and Limitations of RPA in School Administration

8.1 Complexity of Administrative Processes

Administrative procedures in schools frequently contain a variety of jobs with differing levels of complexity and dependability, making it difficult to identify and efficiently automate every component using RPA (Huang, 2019). The use of many legacy systems and software programmes by educational institutions that don't have standardised interfaces or APIs makes it more difficult to integrate RPA solutions and necessitates extra work for seamless interoperability (Baidya, 2021). In the same vein, RPA may not be able to handle unstructured data formats, such as handwritten forms or scanned documents, even while it performs well with structured data. In certain situations, human intervention or alternative solutions might be necessary. It is necessary to identify and map out administrative processes for automation. However, this can be time-consuming and resource-intensive, requiring thorough analysis and collaboration among stakeholders to ensure accurate automation workflows. RPA deployment and data handling procedures are hampered by the stringent regulatory requirements and data protection rules that apply to some school administration functions, such as financial reporting and student records management.

8.2 Potential Resistance to Change from Staff and Stakeholders

Since employees and stakeholders accustomed to established workflows may be reluctant to change, effective change management tactics are required to allay worries and encourage acceptance of new technology or procedures. Employees may not have the requisite training and capacity-building programmes to improve their competency in process automation, bot development, and maintenance (Desai, 2020). This is because staff members may not have the skills and knowledge to operate with RPA

technology. They may also worry that using RPA would lead to job losses or layoffs; thus, it's important to be transparent and provide reassurances about how automation will complement human labour rather than replace it. Ensuring that automation projects fulfil the needs and expectations of stakeholders', teachers, administrators, parents, and students during the RPA adoption process requires gaining their support, resolving challenges, and soliciting their input. Effective change management may be difficult for schools, especially if there is opposition or skepticism about the adoption of RPA. To help with this, schools should provide proactive training, support, and communication in order to ensure a smooth transition and lessen resistance.

Through acknowledgement and resolution of the obstacles and constraints related to RPA integration in school management, learning establishments can devise approaches to surmount hurdles, cultivate an innovative atmosphere, and utilise automation technologies to augment operational effectiveness and bolster academic goals (Allison et al., 2016).

8.3 Maintenance and Scalability Issues

RPA systems require ongoing maintenance to function at their peak. Software updates, bug patches, and troubleshooting automated workflows are all included in this maintenance. If RPA solutions are not adequately maintained, they may have dependability issues or not be able to adapt to changes in operational requirements. For educational institutions, scaling RPA implementations to handle growing workloads or expanding automation initiatives may provide scalability issues (Syed et al., 2020). Infrastructure constraints, the difficulty of overseeing a large number of bots, or the RPA platform's functional limits can all lead to scalability issues. Scaling RPA implementations may need additional investments in infrastructure, licencing, and staff in order to provide higher automation capacity. This creates challenges for educational institutions with limited financing or competing objectives when allocating resources. It may become more difficult to integrate RPA installations across several departments or campuses with existing IT systems and applications. Careful planning and coordination will be needed to ensure smooth interoperability and data exchange. In order to identify bottlenecks and optimise resource allocation, educational institutions require strong monitoring and reporting tools to track the performance and scalability of RPA deployments. These mechanisms should include critical parameters like bot utilisation, transaction volumes, and processing times.

8.4 Ethical and Societal Implications

When RPA is widely used in school administration, employees who perform routine administrative tasks can become concerned about losing their jobs (Shidaganti et al., 2021). This could have negative effects on workforce reorganisation and job instability. The use of RPA could exacerbate already-existing disparities in staff and student access to technology and digital literacy, widening the digital gap and sustaining inequalities in academic performance (Madakam et al., 2019). RPA systems manage sensitive employee and student data, raising concerns about data security vulnerabilities, privacy infringement, and compliance with regulations like as GDPR and FERPA. RPA systems-enabled automated decision-making processes, run the risk of introducing biases or prejudice based on socioeconomic class, gender, or race, raising ethical questions about responsibility and justice. Educational institutions need to make sure that there is accountability and transparency when using RPA. This includes having clear policies about automation, systems in place for oversight and auditing, and channels of recourse for any mistakes or disagreements.

Educational institutions can reduce the risks associated with implementing RPA in school administration and encourage the responsible and equitable use of automation technologies to support educational goals and improve operational efficiency by addressing maintenance and scalability challenges, taking ethical and societal implications into consideration, and so on (Bonfante et al., 2021).

9. Evaluation of Existing Systems against Proposed Systems

9.1 Existing Systems

Numerous administrative duties in schools are done by hand, including manual data entry, paper-based paperwork, and staff members' repetitive administrative work. These procedures take a lot of time, are prone to mistakes, and may produce inefficiencies. For administrative duties, some schools could employ outdated software programmes that don't support integration, demand a lot of user training, and aren't as flexible or scalable as they could be to meet changing needs (Desai, 2020). Schools may use several software programmes for various administrative tasks, which can result in inconsistent data entry, fragmented data management, and system compatibility problems. This division may make it more difficult for departments to collaborate and share data.

9.2 Proposed Systems

RPA has the ability to automate data entry, document management, and repetitive procedures, which can streamline administrative processes (Leshob et al., 2018). RPA bots may complete jobs quickly and accurately, saving time and effort when it comes to administrative work.

RPA solutions, as opposed to legacy systems, may easily interface with databases, systems, and other software programmes that are currently in use in school administration. Data synchronisation, real-time updates, and interoperability between various administrative processes are made possible by this integration. Because of the scalability and flexibility of its solutions, educational institutions can modify automation procedures to accommodate expansion and alter administrative needs. Schools can adapt RPA procedures to meet particular administrative requirements and progressively expand automation initiatives. Robotic Process Automation (RPA) systems can increase administrative efficiency, decrease errors, and free up staff time for higher-value work by automating repetitive operations like data entry, form processing, and report preparation. Improvements in overall productivity within school administration are facilitated by this enhanced efficiency (Choi et al., 2020).

RPA systems may involve an initial financial outlay, but over time, the savings, increased productivity, and decreased workload may make up for the original expenditures. RPA provides an affordable way to optimise resource usage and streamline administrative procedures in educational institutions.

10. Summary

The paper looked at the advantages and disadvantages of using RPA in educational settings, as well as the potential applications and future paths of utilising automation technology to further educational goals. In order to automate repetitive operations, streamline procedures, and improve operational efficiency, robotic process automation (RPA) has the potential to completely transform school administration. This research examined this possibility.

The incorporation of RPA in school administration bears major implications for boosting administrative efficiency, minimising manual work, and maximising resource allocation (Sutipitakwong., 2020). RPA adoption can result in cost savings, improved data accuracy, and stakeholder satisfaction, positioning educational institutions for success in a rapidly changing educational landscape. Automating repetitive tasks like data entry, record-keeping, and communication handling allows educational institutions to reallocate staff time and resources towards more value-added activities that support student learning and achievement.

11. Conclusion

RPA offers educational institutions a promising way to improve organisational performance, change their administrative procedures, and better meet the needs of stakeholders, employees, and students (Sutipitakwong., 2020). Schools may establish themselves as industry leaders in education and set up pupils for success in the digital age by grabbing this chance and utilising RPA as a tool for innovation and progress.

12. Recommendations

It is crucial for school administrators to carry out a comprehensive needs assessment in order to identify administrative procedures that can be automated before putting RPA solutions into place. Stakeholders from all departments should participate in this assessment in order to comprehend their unique needs and difficulties.

After the needs assessment is finished, rank the administrative activities according to their automation potential, estimated return on investment, and ability to reduce workload. It is best to concentrate on repetitive, rule-based, and time-consuming procedures while implementing RPA.

Make RPA technology, tools, and best practices known to staff members by offering training and skill development programmes. Encourage a culture of ongoing learning and creativity among employees and provide them the tools they need to become RPA advocates in their departments.
Work together with RPA consultants and specialists to take advantage of their knowledge in developing, putting into practice, and refining RPA solutions for school administration. Get in touch with respectable suppliers or service providers who have expertise dealing with schools and who specialise in educational RPA solutions.

Create oversight and governance frameworks to efficiently monitor and manage RPA projects. Establish performance targets and KPIs, define roles and responsibilities, and put controls in place to guarantee risk management, data security, and compliance.

Encourage experimentation, feedback loops, and knowledge exchange to foster an innovative and continuous improvement culture within the school administration. Encourage employees to submit suggestions for automation, and honour and promote creative solutions.

Over time, assess the efficacy and efficiency of RPA solutions and make necessary adjustments to automated processes. Track important performance metrics, get input from interested parties, and spot areas that can be improved and optimised.

Encourage candid dialogue and teamwork among interested parties during the RPA deployment process. To guarantee employee buy-in and support, educate staff members on the advantages of automation, resolve any worries or misunderstandings, and request feedback.

Examine how the use of RPA affects staff satisfaction, cost savings, efficiency benefits, and workload reduction. Assess the advantages and return on investment (ROI) of automation projects using both quantitative and qualitative data, then report the findings to stakeholders.

To stay competitive and future-ready, keep up with new developments in RPA and school administration. Examine ways to improve administrative operations even further by utilising cutting-edge technologies like cognitive automation, machine learning, and artificial intelligence.

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Historical Development of College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, Nigeria, 1977-2009

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Abstract. The paper examined the historical development of college of Education, Ikere Ekiti, Nigeria. The paper traced the origin of the college. Historical research design relying on primary and secondary sources of information was adopted. The variables considered in this paper included the origin, objectives, milestones, staffing, students' enrolments, facilities in place and impact of the college on the host communities. Findings obtained confirmed that college has succeeded in producing teachers for the basic education in Nigeria thus fulfilling the national objectives of producing teachers and the required manpower for primary and lower level of secondary education in Nigeria. The staffing, students' enrolments and the infrastructural facilities of the college have improved; and that the college is financed by the Ekiti State Government and Tertiary Education Trust Fund assistance. The alumni of the college had contributed immensely to their alma mater. The college had impacted positively on its host communities. Based on the discussions of this paper, it was recommended that additional infrastructural facilities be provided by the Ekiti State Government and other stakeholders in teacher education. Ekiti State Government should endeavour to increase is budgetary allocation to the college.

Keywords: Historical, Development, College of Education, National Commission for Colleges of Education, Nigeria.

1. Introduction

The National Policy on Education (FGN, 1998 and 2004) stated the goals of Nigeria education is the building of a free and democratic society and a just and egalitarian society among others. Nigerian Colleges of Education emerged from the implementation of Ashby Commission Report of 1960, which recommended the establishment of the Advanced Teachers' Colleges (ATCs), the precursor of Colleges of Education to produce holders of the Nigeria Certificate in Education, a non-degree but highly qualitative Professional Certificate in Education (Ashby, 1960, Banjo 1961, and Adeyinka, 1990).

It is important to note that the two reports emphasised the need to train Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) graduates also to be able to teach in Nigerian primary schools. Olayanju (2013) recorded that the views of Ashby (1960) and Banjo Commissions fell in line with, and were shared by the Federal Government of Nigeria Policy on Education (1998) where it was clearly stated that NCE will ultimately become the minimum basic qualification for entry into the teaching profession.

Taiwo (1980), Adeyinka (1996) and Osokoya (2002) recalled that the creation of more states in Nigeria in 1976 and the introduction of Universal Primary Education in the same year (1976) had some positive impact on the growth of Colleges of Education. Therefore, more colleges were established in the country immediately after 1976. By 2009, the number of Colleges of Education in Nigeria had risen to 85 (NCCE, 2009) with 21 Federal, 43 State and 21 Private Colleges of Education as reflected in table 1 below:

Table 1: Trends in the Development of Colleges of Education in Nigeria as at 2009.

S/N	Types of Colleges of Education	Number Established
1.	Federal Colleges of Education	21
2.	States Colleges of Education	43
3.	Privately Owned Colleges	21
	Total	**85**

Source: *Olayanju (2009)*

This paper therefore aimed at answering the following questions:

- How did College of Education Ikere-Ekiti, Nigeria originates? Specify some important milestones of the college between 1977 and 2009.
- For what purpose was College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti established and the extent to which these objectives been met between 1977 and 2009?
- What were the trends in the curriculum development, student enrolment and staffing in the college between 1977 and 2009?
- What has been the pattern of infrastructural development and funding in the college between 1977 and 2009?
- In what ways has the impact of College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti been felt by its host communities between 1977 and 2009?
- What were the major challenges facing the college between 1977 and 2009?

1.1 Research Methodology

Historical research method was adopted for this study which depended much on primary and secondary sources for its data especially the documentary analysis through library search, internet, newspapers, relevant textbooks, relevant higher degree thesis and the records from the registry and the establishment unit of College of Education, IKere-Ekiti and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) over the years. On the historical development of Colleges of Education Nigeria. The instruments used were questionnaire and oral interview with Gbenro (2010) and Babatunde (2011).

1.2 Origin of College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti (1977-2009)

College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti formally took off on December 3, 1977 at its temporary site, the campus of the defunct St. Benedict's Modern School, along Akure Road, Ikere-Ekiti with 496 students. As a gesture of good will, the neighbouring Ekiti Teachers' College loaned two blocks of hostels to the College for accommodation purposes. The government took the practical steps of constituting a special task force under the headship of a Chief Inspector of Education and subsequently the founding Principal of the College, Late Chief M.O. Josiah, to prepare among other things, the groundwork for the academic programmes, physical facilities, staffing and financing as well as the issue of affiliation. In order to avoid unnecessary bureaucratic processes, the Ministry of Education was charged with the duty of governing the College as well as supervising it for the government.

A total of four hundred and ninety-six candidates for eighteen subject combinations formed the pioneer student population. They were inducted by the then State Commissioner for Education, the Late Professor Kola Folayan (later, Chairman of the Governing Council) on February 25, 1978.

The lists of past and present principals / provosts of the College were:

- Chief M.O. Josiah – The Founding Principal, 1977 – 1979
- Mr. M.A. Ajayi – Acting Principal, 1979
- Dr. C.B. Oguntonade – The Provost, October, 1980 – 1983
- Dr. S.A. Adewuya – Administrator, April 1984 – Dec. 1986
- Prof. W.O. Olu-Aderounmu – The Provost, 1987
- Prof. (Mrs.) Omotayo Olutoye – Sole Administrator, 1994
- Dr. Akin Adegboye – Acting Provost, August 1997, Provost Feb. 1998
- Prof. A.A. Oshodi – Sole Administrator, July 1999 (Five months tenure)
- Dr. Afolabi Popoola – Provost, February, 2000
- Dr. Adewumi Adelodun – Acting Provost, June 2003
- Dr. (Pastor) Timothy Ikudaisi – The Provost, June 2004 – Feb. 18, 2008
- Dr. Gabriel Olusegun Olowoyo – The Provost, Feb. 18, 2008 – up to the time of this study in 2009.

1.3 Important Landmark of College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti

February 13, 1976 - The school was established on February 13, 1976.
December 3, 1977 - The College formally took off on December 3, 1977 at its temporary site, the campus of the defunct St. Benedict's Modern School, along Akure Road, Ikere-Ekiti.
Pioneering Students - A total of 496 students for eighteen subject combinations formed the pioneer student population.
February 25, 1978 - The governing council of the college was inaugurated and it was headed by Late Professor Kola Folayan.
February 1979 - To give respectability and acceptability to its programmes" the College was affiliated to the then University of Ife (now Obafemi

Awolowo University).

Official Renaming of the College – The official renaming of the institution from Advanced Teachers' College, to College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti was effected.

October 1979 - In October 1979, another milestone was reached in the institution's march to maturity. A new set of officers consisting of late Dr. Akin Akinsulire as Principal.

The Death of Dr. Akin Akinsulire - Dr. Akin Akinsulire, the Principal, died in December 1979, causing a temporary halt to the steady speed of progress.

October, 1980 - In October 1980, a new principal, now redesignated Provost, was appointed in the person of Dr. C.B. Oguntonade.

1983 - By 1983, the Governing Council was dissolved and replaced; the College was closed down, and a Visitation Panel instituted.

(NCE) Primary Sandwich Programme – The (NCE) Primary Sandwich Programme was among the enviable projects and schemes undertaken by Prof. Aderonmu led administration.

1992 NCCE Achievements - Until the restructuring of Schools as directed by the National Commission for Colleges of Education in 1992 and the classification of courses, the College was effected to conform to the structure initiated by Dr. Oguntonade. Each School was (and is still) headed by a dean.

The Dissolution of the College Governing Council - The dissolution of the College Governing Council and the appointment of Professor Mrs. Omotayo Olutoye as Sole Administrator.

August 1997 - Dr. Akin Adegboye assumed duty as Acting Provost in August 1997 and he became a substantive Provost in February, 1998. His appointment as the first Chief Executive of the college witnessed tremendous progress in the history of the college.

November 6, 2008 – The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) Area Manager, Mr. S. K. Oluwasanya, led other top officials of the agency to the college to congratulate the acting provost, management and students of the college for emerging as the second best higher institution in Nigeria in the performance of Students Industrial Working Experience Scheme (SIWES).

November 13, 2008 – The award mentioned above was bestowed on the college by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF).

January 25, 2010 - Dr. Gabriel Olusegun Olowoyo, the provost of the College was kidnapped by Kidnappers alongside some other prominent Nigerians on January 25, 2010 and later died in their hands.

February 3, 2010 - Dr. (Mrs.) Eunice Titilayo Ogunmola became the Acting Provost of the College on February 3, 2010.

Monumental Achievements of Dr. (Mrs.) Eunice Titilayo Ogunmola - the construction of ICT compliant Complex of the Directorate of Examination and Records, the complete renovation of the dilapidated metal workshop, introduction of inaugural lecture to the academic system of the College.

1.4 Objectives for Establishing the College

College of Education, IKere Ekiti was established with the primary aim of training teachers for the primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria.

The objectives of the college like all other Federal and State Colleges of Education in Nigeria are listed below:

- To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom Teachers for all levels of our educational system;
- To encourage a spirit of enquiry, creativity in teachers;
- To help teachers fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitments to the national goals;
- To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments; and make them adaptable to every situation.
- To enhance teachers' commitments to the teaching profession.

This is in line with the National Policy on Education (1981. p.38, 1998 and 2004) where it has been stated: *Teacher Education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all our educational planning because no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Teachers will be regularly exposed to innovations in their profession… Government will introduce measures to enable teachers to participate more in the production and assessment of educational materials and teaching aids, planning and development of curriculum … innovations and new techniques (National Policy on Education, 2004).*

The extent to which the objectives for establishing College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, Nigeria has been met and its contribution to the development of teacher education in the state between 1977 and 2009 were:

One of the objectives of Colleges of Education is the production of teachers to teach in the various programmes of elementary and Basic Education and the mandate to train teachers for this level of education in the country. To this end, there are no institutions

better suited to produce teachers for the current Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme than Colleges of Education (Tahir, 2003).

Furthermore, these colleges strived in ensuring that the teachers produced were of good quality and were able to handle different instruction situations, whether in literacy, special education and vocational centres or the elementary levels of primary education.

Findings from the paper also revealed that College of Education, Ikere - Ekiti is to some extent endowed with competent teachers and adequate facilities in promoting a conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning and that the burden of steady supply of the required teachers for the Universal Basic Education programme in Nigeria was hinged on the colleges of education. Moreover, these colleges were up to the task in their quest of preparation and production of teachers for providing basic literacy, numeracy and initial learning skills in Early Childhood Care Education, and Basic Education as reported in a study by Olayanju (2006).

As part of the ways of producing teachers for every segment of elementary and Upper Basic levels of education, the colleges of education in conjunction with the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) organizes and runs in-service teacher education programme. This is done in bid to augment the shortage of teachers produced by regular NCE pogrammes to service both primary and junior segment of secondary schools. By doing this, Colleges of Education are fulfilling one of their basic functions of community service as provided by the various laws establishing them. Colleges of Education had performed creditably well in this respect.

To this end, Colleges of Education were also consistent and proactive in reaching out to the larger society with a variety of in-service short training courses, seminars and workshops for educational managers, inspectors, supervisors, teachers and instructors, who deal with the day-to-day operations of the Universal Basic Education programme at the grassroots level.

To a very large extent, the college has contributed immensely to engender conducive learning environment and eradicate illiteracy in Nigeria through its efforts of introducing Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) and expanding facilities for primary education studies in the college in line with the new Universal Basic Education (UBE) and Education for All (EFA) initiatives of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

Table 2 below reflects the curricula offerings in College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, Nigeria and other conventional colleges of education in Nigeria.

Table 2: Courses currently offered in Nigeria Colleges of Education

S/N	Arts & Social Sciences	Education	Languages	Sciences	Vocational & Technical Education
1.	Geography	Primary Education Studies	Hausa	Physics	Business Education
2.	Political Science	Curriculum & Instruction	French	Computer Sc.	Agricultural Education
3.	Economics	Educational Foundations	English	Mathematics	Home Economics
4.	Social Studies	Education Psychology	Arabic	Integrated Sc	Fine & Applied Arts.
5.	Christian Religion Studies	General Studies	Igbo	Chemistry	Technical Education
6.	Catechetical programme – Theology & Education	Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE)	Yoruba	Biology	
7.	Islamic Studies			Physical & Health Education	
8.	History				
9.	Music				
10.	Cultural and Creative Arts				

Source: *Student Handbook (2009): College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti*

Olayanju (2006) reported that in line with the Philosophy of Nigerian Education as stipulated in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) Section 1 and the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the colleges of education have performed creditably well by ensuring that the provisions of the National Policy on Education on teacher education were achieved.

1.5 Staffing

There are human resource needs for administration, management, research and teaching as well as for support and technical staff which calls for an urgent need for capacity building in the Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Nigeria. The "academic and professional competence of the teaching force is one of the chief determinants of education quality" at all levels of education.

As at April 2009, the College has adequate human resources. Table 3 presents a summary of academic staff on ground.

Table 3: Distribution of Academic Staff in College of Education, Ikere- Ekiti between 1977 - 2009

Year/Session	College of Education, Ikere- Ikiti
2000/2001	232
2001/2002	214
2002/2003	214
2003/2004	298
2004/2005	301
2005/2006	291
2006/2007	295
2007/2008	297
2008/2009	300

Source: *Fieldwork (Olayanju, 2009)*

Table 3 above shows the staffing situations of the college across the years; the number of teaching staff increased based on the needs of the college. There were variations from school to school as staff strength is often determined by the population of students among other factors. As at April 2009, the college has adequate human resources. Currently, the college has a high number of well qualified academic staff members.

1.6 Admission Process

Initially, all the colleges of education admitted their students based on an internally conducted entrance examinations. Later, the process was harmonised and this responsibility was transferred to the Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB) and later Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME).

2. College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti, Students Enrolment Trends, 2000 – 2009

College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti, started operating with the initial enrolments of 496 students in 1977. And as at 2008/2009 session the students' enrolment was 6,181. From the students' enrolment trends, the college is progressing in terms of growth. This is evident from table 4 and fig. 1 as illustrated graphically below.

Table 4: College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti, Students Enrolment Trends, 2000 – 2009

Year /Session	Students' Enrolment Trends
2000/2001	1900
2001/2002	5033
2002/2003	5033
2003/2004	14069
2004/2005	13535
2005/2006	11276
2006/2007	5972
2007/2008	7961
2008/2009	6,181

Source: *Fieldwork (Olayanju, 2009)*

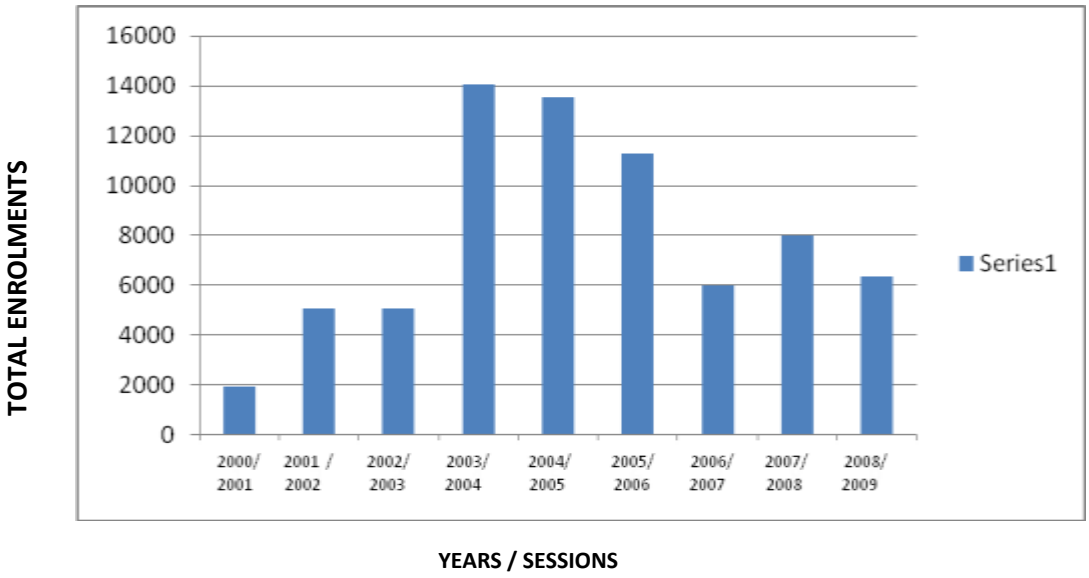

Fig. 1: College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti, Students' Enrolment Trends 2000-2009

The student enrolments trend in the college revealed that as at 2000/2001 session, the enrolment was 1,900 while it increased to 5,033 between 2001/2002p and 2002/2003. The students' enrolment however rose to 14,069 in 2003/2004 session but later decline to 13,535, then later to 11,276 and drastically decreased to 5,972 in 2006/2007. Shortly after, it later increased to 7,961 in 2007/2008 session while it dropped again to 6,181 in 2008/2009 session. From the students' enrolment trends, the college's progress in terms of admission was fluctuating due to political problems during those sessions occasioned by crises such as strikes by students and staff of the college. This is reflected in table 4 and fig. 1 illustrated graphically above.

3. Physical Development

3.1 Infrastructural Facilities in the College

Ikere-Ekiti College of Education formally took off on December 3, 1977 at its temporary site, the campus of the defunct St. Benedict's Modern School, along Akure Road, Ikere-Ekiti. As a gesture of good-will, the neighbouring Ekiti Teachers' College loaned two blocks of hostels to the College for accommodation purposes. These hostels were promptly christened "East London" and "USA" blocks by the students. Around this period, physical development began on the permanent campus. Within three months, three students' hostels, the central cafeteria and classrooms had been constructed. At that time, it was envisaged that the College would move to the permanent site before the need of the 1979/80 session.

The construction of the Sports Complex, student hostels, a modern Library and workshops and the initiation of a College commercial Company were among the laudable achievement recorded during Prof. Aderonmu's tenure as the provost while Professor Olutoye recorded the following achievements: improvement of the transportation system and facilities in the laboratories, workshops and students halls of residence. In addition, work was resuscitated on the gigantic Library Complex which had been abandoned for more than three years during his tenure as the provost of the college.

The administrative block was expanded while virtually all other buildings in the college were rehabilitated. A new modern library which can accommodate over one thousand and five hundred (1,500) students at a time was erected. The College has developed and expanded tremendously because the facilities that were not there at inception had been provided. They include:

The school clinic, staff office, the bursary, establishment units and Modern language laboratories were also put in place. All these facilities were provided by the government to foster effective learning with the exception of ETF buildings. A Cybercafé and Information Communication Technology (ICT) centre were also available in the college. All these facilities were provided by the government, the Education Tax Fund (ETF) or NGOs to foster effective teaching and learning in the college.

Some of the physical facilities available in the college are listed below:

- The main administrative block was constructed;
- The Integrated Science Department Building;
- The students' union secretariat complex;
- Some block of offices for the use of academic members of staff;
- Administrative block Annex;
- Building of a new Department of Educational Technology
- The renovation of the College Guest House;
- The establishment of V-SAT based internet services
- A large hall for the Continuing Education Programme.
- Automation of the College Library complex
- The complete renovation of the dilapidated metal workshop,
- The establishment of the college Staff School.

4. Pattern of funding College of Education, Ikere Ekiti between 1977 and 2009

Funding plays a very crucial role in the implementation of any development programme. It is imperative to note that the success of any education project is hinged on adequate funding; no meaningful developmental programme in education can take place without adequate funding (ESA, 2007, p.281).

Fafunwa (1974) acknowledged that the financing of education has been a joint responsibility of the Federal, State and Local governments. In the realisation of the college objectives, the College of Education, Ikere - Ekiti got its funds especially the monthly allocations/subventions from the Federal Government monthly. In some cases, the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) assisted the college.

Apart from this, the college also derived its funds from the revenue from school fees, levies from continuing education programmes, consultancy, letting of halls and other charges such as business centres as internally generated revenue (IGR). Another source of funding of the College was provided through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND). The fund was made available and expected to be used for construction of physical structures and infrastructural facilities in the college and the training of staff both local and foreign.

5. Impact of College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti on the Development of its host Communities between 1977 and 2009

Findings of this paper revealed that the college had produced a crop of educated elite. These classes of people are now manning prominent post in various fields of human endeavour at the state, national and international levels. This is reflected in the lists of the Alumni (Old Students) of the College of Education, Ikere Ekiti cited below:

Comrade Solomon O' Sullivan – The immediate past President of the College Chapter of the Students' Union, Ikere-Ekiti College of Education; Mr. Sola Adeyanju – The Manager, Spring Bank, College Branch, Ikere-Ekiti; Mr. Tayo Bello – SIWES Coordinator, Ikere-Ekiti College of Education; Adejoro Adesoro – A seasoned educationist, Ogba Area, Lagos; Mr. Ohimah Oharie – A Business tycoon, Benin-City, Edo State; Adamolekun Dimeji, – A seasoned educationist, Omuo, Ekiti School; Falusi Dupe – A business guru, Akure; Adejoro Gladys, Idogun School; Akintan Jumoke – A distinguished school teacher.

Thus, within a period of thirty-eight (38) years i.e. (1977 – 2009) College of Education, Ikere - Ekiti has a lot of positive impacts on the society. The establishment of the college also confers economic benefits to the towns in which they were located. Such towns are connected by network of roads to administrative division or the state capital. Facilities such as bookshops, Post office, market, banks are usually established.

The College had other advantages. Its strategic location served as growth points for the communities concerned. The college is usually ahead of many homes in the maintenance of high standard of personal hygiene and sanitation general cleanliness, inculcation of the spirit of respect for elders, development of a high sense of humility, good attitude to work, and preparation for leadership and self-dependence. The college also served as centre of enlightenment and sold the virtues discussed above to its immediate communities.

Findings of this paper also revealed that there were challenges facing College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, between 1977 and 2009: Inadequate Training in Practical Skills (Internship/Teaching Practice Exercise): The time spent on internship or teaching practice is inadequate. Incidentally, the teaching practice/internship is the only practical aspect of teacher education programme (the practicum). Teaching practices is supposed to take a full one session of the three years course.

In addition to the above, some NCE teachers were not computer literate. Indeed, the success of Information

Communication Technology (ICT) in the school system depends largely on teachers and their levels of skills in integrating ICT into the teaching process. The issue of globalisation is a very crucial challenge to teacher education in Nigeria. The teachers of the future need to be trained and retrained in Information Communication Technology (ICT).

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this paper, the following recommendations were made:

- Federal Government should increase its budgetary allocation to College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti so as to meet its target in the provision of social welfare services to the college.
- The Alumni Associations of College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, should rise to the challenges of the upliftment of their alma mater positively.
- The College should explore other avenues to improve its internally generated revenue.
- The Federal government of Nigeria should endeavour to upgrade College of Education, Ikere Ekiti to a full-fledged University without affiliation with other University.
- It was recommended that additional infrastructural facilities be provided by the Federal Government and other stakeholders in teacher education.

7. Conclusion

Findings of this paper revealed that the rationale behind the establishment of College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti between 1977 and 2009 was to prepare and produce teachers for the primary and junior segment of secondary schools in Nigeria were achieved. In addition, the lecturers in this college of education worked under intolerable conditions such as lack of instructional materials, absence of health scheme and several other welfare incentives which their counterparts in the universities enjoyed.

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Exploring the Role of Evaluation in Curriculum Design for Agricultural Science: Perspectives from Educational Measurement Experts

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Abstract. This study investigates how curriculum design for agricultural science education in Nigeria incorporates evaluation. The study acknowledges the value of efficient assessment techniques in improving field education outcomes. The study aims to investigate several methods of evaluation, pinpoint obstacles, and provide suggestions. A conceptual framework that incorporates evaluation-related theories and concepts is created. The framework emphasises how important it is to match instructional methodologies, assessment techniques, and learning objectives. The advantages of implementing assessment techniques at various phases of curriculum development are covered in the paper. In addition, issues like varied learning outcomes and the requirement for multidisciplinary approaches are examined, along with creative evaluation techniques to deal with these issues. With a focus on improved educational outcomes, curricular relevance, ongoing improvement, stakeholder participation, creative assessment techniques, and well-informed policy formulation, the research has implications for educational practice and policy. Long-term impact analysis, comparison studies, teacher competency evaluation, student views, online learning settings, and the effect on sustainable agriculture are some of the suggested future study avenues. In addition to offering insights for enhancing agricultural science education practices in Nigeria, this research advances knowledge of assessment in curriculum design.

Keywords: Evaluation, Curriculum design, Agricultural science education, Nigeria, Educational outcomes, Assessment methods, Stakeholder engagement

1. Introduction

Nigeria, a country with a substantial agricultural industry, is aware of the importance of curriculum design in agricultural science education. The agricultural sector, which also generates jobs, rural development, and food security, is vital to the country's economy. For the agriculture sector to succeed and grow, curriculum developers must consider the special demands of Nigerian students in addition to the sector's requirements (Adamu et al., 2022). Curriculum design is the process of creating educational programmes that include learning objectives, content selection, teaching strategies, and assessment methods. However, developing a curriculum alone is insufficient; evaluating its effectiveness is equally important. Evaluation methods provide useful data on whether the curriculum is meeting the demands of stakeholders and Nigerian students as well as achieving its stated goals (Akanmu, 2016).

Examining the ways in which assessment is included into Nigerian agricultural science curricula is crucial. It first helps educators and curriculum designers assess the effectiveness of the agricultural science curricula that are currently in use and determine what needs to be updated or changed. Evaluation provides incisive criticism on the degree to which learning objectives, assessment methods, and instructional styles align. By identifying any misalignments in the curriculum, educational outcomes for Nigerian students can be improved (Ayeni, 2012). Furthermore, the incorporation of assessment into curriculum design facilitates the identification of programme benefits and drawbacks, allowing educators to focus on the areas that require improvement. Additionally, it enables educators to monitor the growth of their students, identify their individual needs, and provide individualised support. By understanding the importance of evaluation in curriculum design, educators in Nigeria can improve the teaching and learning experiences of students studying agricultural science (Ishaya, 2022).

The primary objectives of this research in the Nigerian context are as follows:

- To investigate various assessment strategies used in Nigerian agricultural science

curriculum design. This entails investigating alternate evaluation techniques appropriate for the educational setting of Nigeria in addition to formative and summative assessment methods.

- To determine the particular difficulties and factors to be taken into account while assessing agricultural science programmes in Nigeria. This includes elements like the variety of farming practices found in the nation's many areas, the requirement for evaluation techniques that are appropriate for the setting, and the use of traditional agricultural knowledge.
- To make suggestions for improving Nigerian agriculture science curriculum design's assessment procedures. This entails making recommendations on how to match assessment techniques with learning goals and outcomes, taking the socioeconomic and cultural background into account, and supporting sustainable farming methods.

2. Theoretical Framework

The conceptual model of curriculum design and evaluation, modified for the Nigerian setting, will serve as the foundation for this study. The approach takes into consideration the distinct features of Nigeria's agricultural sector and educational system, emphasising the interaction between curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and evaluation systems. The theoretical framework takes into account the relevance and applicability of well-established ideas and concepts regarding curriculum design and evaluation to the Nigerian environment. These theories offer a framework for comprehending the function of evaluation in curriculum design and how to use it to improve agricultural science learning outcomes in Nigeria (Kay, 2016).

The design of curricula in Nigerian agricultural science education offers important insights into the ideas and procedures that direct the creation of educational initiatives in this area. We can better understand the variables impacting curriculum design and the tactics used to improve agricultural science education in Nigeria by analysing the body of existing material.

Several academic studies have emphasised the necessity of aligning the agricultural science curriculum with the unique demands and challenges of the Nigerian environment. Nigeria's agricultural sector is large and includes many subsectors, such as crop production, agribusiness, animal husbandry, and fisheries (Onyeneke, 2018). As a result, the curriculum design needs to take the nation's sustainable development objectives, market demands, and regional agricultural practices into account. The literature also emphasises how important it is for agricultural science curricula to combine academic understanding with real-world application. A significant portion of Nigeria's rural populace works in agriculture (Ikeh et al., 2014). Therefore, the curriculum should incorporate fieldwork, hands-on learning opportunities, and opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in real-world agricultural contexts. This approach ensures that graduates are prepared to effectively contribute to the agriculture sector and address the challenges that farmers face in the real world. Furthermore, teaching agricultural science calls for the use of multidisciplinary approaches. Agriculture is a broad field that requires expertise in biology, chemistry, economics, and environmental science. The curriculum design should encourage collaboration between other disciplines and incorporate interdisciplinary modules to provide students a thorough understanding of agricultural concerns. (Pandey et al., 2022)

The importance of including traditional agricultural knowledge in the curriculum is also emphasised by the literature. Nigeria is home to a multitude of cultural customs, many of which date back many years and have been used to sustain communities through farming (Barbieri et al., 2014). In order to preserve cultural legacy and increase the curriculum's relevance and effectiveness in addressing local agricultural challenges, traditional knowledge systems are incorporated into the curriculum.

Lastly, the importance of continuously assessing and improving Nigeria's agricultural science curriculum was emphasised. The agriculture sector is dynamic because of shifting consumer tastes, advances in technology, and environmental concerns. Therefore, the curriculum's design should be fluid and adaptive to enable frequent updates that consider emerging trends and challenges (Ajao et al., 2022). A review of the literature demonstrates the importance of curriculum design in Nigerian agricultural science education. It emphasises the significance of ongoing improvement, the necessity of multidisciplinary viewpoints, context-specific techniques, the integration of academic and practical knowledge, and traditional agricultural expertise (Yin et al., 2022). Curriculum designers can create educational programmes that adequately educate students for the Nigerian agriculture industry by utilising these ideas.

3. Evaluation in Curriculum Design

The utilisation of assessment methods and techniques in curriculum design offers significant insights into the various procedures employed to evaluate the efficacy of educational initiatives (Al-Musawi et al., 2022).

One evaluation technique that is frequently considered in curriculum design is formative assessment. It entails obtaining input from students as well as data on their development throughout time. Formative assessment methods including tests, group or individual projects, and class discussions offer insightful information on how well students are learning the material covered in the curriculum (Ekanem et al., 2019). Instructors can utilise this feedback to identify areas for improvement, adjust their teaching strategies, and provide targeted support to improve student learning results. Summative assessment is another tried-and-true evaluation method in curriculum design. Assessing the knowledge and skills of students at the end of a learning session is its primary goal. Traditional methods like as exams and tests are often used for summative evaluation (METİN, 2013). On the other hand, it was emphasised how crucial it is to include alternative assessment methods such presentations, portfolios, and performance-based evaluations. These alternate techniques enable the assessment of practical skills and the application of knowledge in the real world while offering a more thorough insight of students' abilities (Carney et al., 2018).

It was noted that curriculum design should incorporate peer and self-assessments in addition to formative and summative assessments (Ferris, 2015).

Through self-evaluation, students are encouraged to consider how they have learned so far, identify their advantages and disadvantages, and set goals for advancement. Peer assessment involves students evaluating the work or performance of their peers, which fosters collaboration and the development of critical thinking skills. These assessment methods not only provide many perspectives on students' development but also assist students in being more responsible and self-aware of their own academic journey (Afuwape, 2019).

A different piece highlights how important it is to incorporate a range of assessment methods into curriculum design. Multiple assessment techniques, including written tests, in-person interviews, and practical demonstrations, offer a more thorough and all-encompassing assessment of students' abilities. Teachers can better portray students' abilities and capture all facets of their learning by utilising a variety of evaluation tools (Ishaya, 2022).

Moreover, the part technology plays in assessment techniques. To improve the assessment process, more and more people are using computer-based tests, online tests, and simulation activities. Thanks to these technological developments, evaluations can now be interactive and adaptive, enabling customised learning experiences and individualised feedback (Alordiah, 2023; Ajao et al., 2022).

The literature review on assessment methods and techniques in curriculum design emphasises the significance of using a range of evaluation techniques, utilising technology, incorporating self- and peer-assessment, integrating alternative assessment methods, and combining formative and summative assessments. By using these strategies, curriculum designers can assess student learning outcomes more successfully and make well-informed judgements that will improve the process' efficacy.

4. Theoretical Perspectives on Evaluation

A theoretical framework for comprehending the various ways to assessment is provided by the evaluation in curriculum design, which incorporates a number of theories and concepts. We can learn more about the theoretical stances that guide curriculum design evaluation procedures by looking at these theories.

One prominent theoretical perspective is formative assessment. The notion that assessment should be an ongoing process that fosters and facilitates learning is the cornerstone of formative assessment. It focuses on providing feedback to students at every level of their education so they may recognise their strengths and weaknesses and take the necessary action to grow. This theory emphasises how important it is to utilise assessment as a tool to guide instruction and support students' growth. (Hondrich et al., 2016).

Summative evaluation, however, adopts a different stance. At the conclusion of a learning session, the assessment of pupils' knowledge and abilities is its main focus. Summative evaluation is frequently used to assess students' overall performance and gauge how well they have met learning objectives. According to this viewpoint, assessments serve as a tool for evaluating students' learning outcomes and passing judgement on their skills (Jasmine et al., 2016).
Competency-based evaluation is another pertinent theoretical viewpoint. Competency-based evaluation, as opposed to standard grading systems, concentrates

on evaluating students' knowledge of particular abilities or skills. This viewpoint highlights how crucial it is to evaluate students' capacity to apply their knowledge in practical settings and satisfy predetermined performance standards. The concept that education should concentrate on helping students develop practical skills and getting ready for the needs of the working world is in line with competency-based evaluation (Mickelson et al., 2020).

Constructivist evaluation theories also stress how crucial it is to take into account students' past learning, experiences, and cultural backgrounds while conducting assessments. These ideas emphasise how assessments can create understanding and meaning while encouraging critical thinking and active participation. Constructivist viewpoints stress the need of contextualised, authentic assessment activities that mirror real-world circumstances and motivate students to make connections between what they have learned and their personal experiences (Sunzuma et al., 2022).

The degree to which an assessment assesses what it is supposed to measure and is in line with the learning objectives is referred to as validity. Conversely, the consistency and dependability of evaluation outcomes are referred to as reliability. These ideas are crucial to ensuring that assessments give precise and insightful data regarding students' learning objectives (Ajao et al., 2022).

A wide range of theories, including constructivism, competency-based assessment, formative assessment, summative assessment, and ideas of validity and reliability, are covered in the literature on theoretical perspectives on evaluation in curriculum design. Curriculum designers can choose the best assessment strategies and tactics to employ in their instructional programmes by having a thorough awareness of these theoretical stances. These viewpoints offer a framework for creating evaluations that support meaningful and genuine learning experiences for students and are in line with the targeted learning objectives.

5. Conceptual Framework for Curriculum Design and Evaluation

Table 1: Conceptual Framework for Curriculum Design and Evaluation

Theories and Concepts	Core Principles and Practices	Application in Curriculum Design and Evaluation
Student-Centered Approach	Recognize individual learner needs, abilities, and backgrounds.	Design curriculum that caters to diverse learners, provide differentiated instruction.
Formative Assessment	Ongoing feedback and support, monitor progress, guide instruction.	Employ various formative assessment techniques (quizzes, discussions, projects) to inform teaching strategies and student support.
Summative Assessment	Evaluate overall achievement, measure academic performance.	Utilize traditional methods (exams, tests) and alternative methods (performance-based assessments, portfolios) to evaluate learning outcomes.
Competency-Based Evaluation	Assess mastery of specific competencies and practical skills.	Identify key competencies, develop assessment criteria, and design tasks that reflect real-world application.
Constructivism	Contextualized and authentic assessment tasks, promote engagement.	Design assessments that connect to students' prior knowledge, encourage critical thinking, and provide opportunities for active learning.
Validity and Reliability	Ensure assessments measure intended outcomes, provide consistent results.	Establish assessment validity by aligning with learning objectives, ensure reliability by using standardized scoring criteria.
Technology Integration	Incorporate technology to enhance assessment methods.	Utilize computer-based assessments, online quizzes, and simulations for interactive and adaptive evaluations.
Continuous Improvement	Reflect on assessment results, make necessary adjustments.	Analyze assessment data, modify curriculum and instruction based on feedback to improve learning outcomes.
Ethical Considerations	Address ethical concerns in assessment practices.	Ensure fairness, equity, and confidentiality in assessments, consider cultural and contextual factors, and obtain informed consent when applicable.
Stakeholder Engagement	Involve stakeholders in the assessment process.	Collaborate with students, parents, educators, and industry professionals to gather diverse perspectives, gather feedback, and ensure assessment relevance.
Professional Development	Continuous learning for educators in assessment practices.	Provide training and support to educators on effective assessment strategies, data analysis, and interpretation for ongoing professional growth.

A theory that acknowledges each learner's unique requirements, skills, and background is the student-centered approach. It highlights the fundamental idea of creating a curriculum that offers individualised instruction and accommodates a range of learners. This method is used in curriculum design and evaluation by developing teaching tactics and resources that cater to each student's individual needs and learning preferences. It seeks to create an atmosphere that is learner-centered and encourages students to participate actively in their education.

Another theory is formative assessment, which entails monitoring students' progress, directing lessons, and giving them constant feedback and support. The fundamental idea behind formative assessment is to use a variety of methods, including talks, projects, and quizzes, to inform instructional tactics and offer students support. Formative assessment is essential to curriculum design and evaluation since it provides information about students' learning and development. It supports teachers in determining areas for growth, making well-informed decisions about their lessons, and giving pupils the assistance they need.

Comparatively, summative evaluation is more concerned with measuring academic performance and assessing overall success. It entails assessing learning outcomes using both conventional techniques, such exams and tests, and non-traditional techniques, like performance-based assessments and portfolios. Summative assessments are used in curriculum design and evaluation to give a thorough assessment of student accomplishment and to gauge how well the curriculum is accomplishing the intended learning outcomes.

A theory known as competency-based evaluation seeks to evaluate an individual's mastery of particular abilities and practical skills. It entails determining the most important competencies, creating evaluation standards, and creating projects that have practical applications. By incorporating competency frameworks into the curriculum, competency-based evaluation is used in curriculum design and assessment. It contributes to ensuring that students gain the abilities and competencies needed for their next career steps.

Constructivism is a paradigm that emphasises the importance of contextualised, genuine assessment tasks to promote engagement. When designing and evaluating curricula, constructivism is applied by making assessments that are connected to students' prior knowledge, encourage critical thinking, and provide opportunities for experiential learning. This approach ensures that assessments align with constructivist learning principles and facilitate meaningful comprehension.

Validity and reliability, two fundamental concepts in assessment, help to guarantee that tests measure the intended objectives and produce accurate findings. Maintaining validity and dependability is essential for both curriculum development and evaluation. It comprises specifying assessment criteria precisely, using standardised scoring processes, and aligning assessments with learning goals. This ensures that the tests assess the things intended to be evaluated and produce results that are consistent and comparable.

Utilising technology to enhance assessment methods is the concept underlying technology integration. Technology integration is used in curriculum design and evaluation in a variety of ways, including as computer-based assessments, online assessments, and simulations. Because these tools provide interactive and adaptable evaluation procedures, the assessments they provide are more engaging and successful.

A core principle of continuous improvement is taking evaluation results into account and making necessary adjustments. Examining assessment results, identifying areas that require work, and modifying the curriculum and instruction in response to feedback are ways to achieve continuous improvement in curriculum design and evaluation. The curriculum is regularly modified to improve learning outcomes through this iterative process.

It is imperative to consider ethical considerations when performing assessments. When required, informed consent must be acquired; cultural and contextual factors must be taken into account; assessments must be carried out with the assurance of fairness, equity, and confidentiality. The implementation of fair, inclusive, and privacy- and rights-aware assessment techniques addresses ethical concerns in curriculum design and evaluation.

Stakeholder involvement is another important concept that emphasises involving stakeholders in the assessment process. This includes educators, parents, students, and businesspeople. Implementing stakeholder involvement in curriculum design and evaluation involves seeking out different perspectives, gathering feedback, and confirming the relevance of the evaluations. We can ensure that assessments consider the needs and expectations of all parties concerned by cooperating.

Professional development is a crucial strategy in evaluation methodologies that emphasises instructors' continuous learning. It is crucial to provide educators with assistance and training in data analysis, interpretation, and practical evaluation methods if they are to continue developing as professionals. Teachers will be equipped with the necessary skills to administer and evaluate tests with confidence if they get professional development in curriculum design and evaluation.

6. Relevance of this Conceptual Framework to Agricultural Science Curriculum Planners

The conceptual framework that was previously discussed in relation to curriculum design and evaluation is highly relevant for agricultural science curriculum planners. Agricultural science is a specialised discipline that requires a thorough understanding of scientific ideas in addition to practical skills and industry-specific background knowledge. By using the previously described theories, concepts, fundamental principles, and practices, agricultural science curriculum designers can ensure the creation of an all-encompassing and effective curriculum that meets the needs of students and aligns with the goals of agricultural education.

In agricultural science curriculum development, the student-centered approach is especially important. It is essential to consider each student's specific interests and career goals while developing a curriculum, as everyone has different demands, abilities, and backgrounds in the agricultural field. By tailoring the curriculum to the diverse learner profiles, agricultural science curriculum planners may create pertinent and captivating learning experiences that increase student motivation and achievement (Igbokwe, 2015).

Formative assessment is a crucial component of agricultural science curriculum development. Agricultural science teachers can employ ongoing feedback and support to monitor their students' progress, identify areas for improvement, and adjust their course. Through this kind of assessment, curriculum designers ensure that students have learned the ideas and skills of agricultural science while also providing them with the resources and instructional styles they need to meet their unique requirements.

Summative assessments are required in agricultural science curricula in order to evaluate students' overall performance and determine their level of achievement. Curriculum designers can use a range of assessment strategies, such as exams, tests, performance-based assessments, and portfolios, to properly evaluate students' knowledge and abilities. This information helps evaluate the effectiveness of the agricultural science curriculum and offers direction for future developments (Ishaya, 2022).

Competency-based evaluation is highly relevant to the development of agricultural science curricula since it assesses students' understanding of specific competencies and practical skills required in the agricultural sector. By identifying important abilities and designing assessment tasks that reflect real-world applications, curriculum planners can ensure that the curriculum meets industry standards and prepares students for successful careers in agriculture.

Constructivism is particularly helpful for creating agricultural science courses because of its emphasis on real-world context and authentic assessment challenges. Curriculum designers can create exams that build on students' prior knowledge, encourage critical thinking, and provide opportunities for active learning to develop meaningful and relevant assessments that appropriately reflect the complexities of the agricultural economy. This approach promotes a deep understanding and useful application of agricultural science concepts and skills (Nwoke et al., 2022).

Ensuring the validity and dependability of exams is crucial while developing an agricultural science programme. By aligning assessments with learning objectives and implementing consistent scoring rules, curriculum designers may ensure that exams accurately assess students' knowledge and produce consistent, comparable outcomes. As a result, when evaluating the effectiveness of the agricultural science curriculum, the assessment data is more trustworthy and valuable.

Technology integration is highly relevant to the development of agricultural science curricula since it allows for the use of state-of-the-art evaluation procedures. By utilising computer-based examinations, online tests, simulations, and other technical tools, curriculum designers can create engaging and dynamic assessments that highlight the use of technology in the agriculture industry. This approach raises students' digital literacy and prepares them for technological advancements in the agriculture sector (Okeji, 2021).

One of the main tenets of agricultural science curriculum design is continuous development. Curriculum designers can continuously improve the curriculum to match the changing demands of the agriculture sector by considering assessment results, examining data, and making the required modifications. Through this iterative approach, the agricultural science curriculum is kept up to date, applicable, and efficient in preparing students for the opportunities and challenges of the sector (Sutrisno, 2021).

It is crucial to take ethical issues into account while developing an agricultural science programme. Promoting diversity and upholding students' rights requires ensuring assessments are fair, equitable, and

confidential as well as taking cultural and contextual elements into account. When necessary, curriculum designers must also secure informed consent from students in order to guarantee ethical evaluation procedures in the agricultural science curriculum (Samuel et al., 2022).

Finally, the creation of an agricultural science curriculum requires the involvement of stakeholders. Involving parents, instructors, experts from the agricultural sector, students, and other stakeholders guarantees that the curriculum takes into account the needs, expectations, and viewpoints of the agricultural community. In order to ensure that the agricultural science curriculum is relevant and applicable, curriculum planners can obtain insightful input by working together with stakeholders during the evaluation process.

7. Considerations on how the conceptual framework can be applied

Planners of agricultural science curricula should perform in-depth needs assessments in order to comprehend the unique requirements, passions, and professional aspirations of students pursuing agriculture. This will assist in adjusting the curriculum to fit the various learning profiles of the students and guarantee that it is relevant to their future employment.

A programme in agricultural science ought to balance academic understanding with applied capabilities. Curriculum designers may make sure that students gain a solid foundation in both the theoretical and practical facets of agricultural science by fusing scientific concepts with practical experiences.

The agricultural science curriculum must be in line with industry best practices and standards. It is recommended that curriculum planners be current with the most recent developments and developing trends in the agricultural sector in order to effectively integrate pertinent content and skills into the curriculum.

Field excursions, internships, and practical projects are examples of experiential learning activities that should be included in agricultural science curricula. Students will be able to use their knowledge in practical situations and have hands-on experience in a variety of agricultural settings as a result.

It is possible to monitor students' progress and give timely support and guidance by implementing formative assessment tools, such as frequent quizzes, conversations, and feedback sessions. programme designers will be better able to pinpoint problem areas and modify the programme to suit the individual needs of each learner.

Case studies, research projects, and simulations are examples of authentic assessment tasks that can be integrated into the agricultural science curriculum. The development of pertinent capabilities will be ensured if these assignments force students to apply their knowledge and abilities in real-world situations and mirror real-world events (Nwoke et al., 2022).

Technology can be used to improve instructional strategies and assessment techniques in the creation of agricultural science curricula. Digital materials, virtual labs, and online platforms can all be used to give students interactive and interesting learning experiences.

Planners of agricultural science curricula should periodically assess the program's efficacy using data analysis, student input, and industry views. The evaluation approach ought to guide any necessary alterations and enhancements to guarantee that the curriculum stays current and in line with the changing demands of the agriculture sector.

Curriculum designers must ensure that the evaluation processes adhere to moral standards such cultural sensitivity, confidentiality, equity, and fairness. Teachers should acknowledge the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of their pupils while also taking ethical considerations into account when selecting educational materials and activities.

Collaboration with Stakeholders: Planning an agricultural science curriculum must involve all relevant parties, such as parents, educators, industry professionals, students, and members of the community. Their opinions and suggestions can offer insightful information about the requirements and standards of the agriculture sector, increasing the curriculum’s applicability and efficacy.

8. Role of Evaluation in Curriculum Design for Agricultural Science

Evaluation is a crucial part of curriculum design to ensure that the agricultural science curriculum is current, efficient, and aligned with agricultural education goals. Through the use of theoretical perspectives and the conceptual framework, we may examine the role that evaluation plays in the development of agricultural science curricula and potential benefits.

Evaluation first helps curriculum designers assess the current state of agricultural science education and identify opportunities for improvement. By conducting needs assessments, gathering feedback from stakeholders, and analysing data, evaluators can gain valuable insights into the pros and cons of the curriculum. Curriculum designers can use this data as a starting point to produce lessons that satisfy student needs, adhere to industry standards, and highlight the most recent advancements in agricultural science (Ishaya, 2022).

In order to make sure that instructional strategies and assessment techniques are in line with the curriculum's learning objectives, evaluation is also essential. Assessors can make sure that learning objectives are SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound—by carefully examining them. This alignment aids in the development of a cogent and integrated curriculum that directs the creation of teaching plans and assessment designs (Akanmu, 2016).

Practices for curriculum review offer various potential benefits at different phases of development. Evaluation aids in determining the essential knowledge domains and capabilities that must be included in the curriculum during the early stages of development. Evaluators can ascertain the attitudes, abilities, and knowledge that students need to develop in order to thrive in the agriculture sector by performing a thorough needs analysis (Okeji, 2021).

Continuous evaluation enables constant feedback and review during curriculum development. By using an iterative process, curriculum designers can make the necessary changes and enhancements based on feedback from stakeholders and evidence. In order to make sure that teaching strategies, learning activities, and instructional materials are effective in engaging students and achieving the desired learning objectives, evaluators evaluate them.

By incorporating assessment practices into the curriculum during its implementation phase, educators can keep an eye on students' progress and pinpoint areas that need improvement. Formative assessment techniques, like tests, discussions in class, and feedback sessions, give important information about how well students grasp the ideas and abilities of agricultural science. This data lets teachers make decisions about their lessons and adapt their pedagogy to each student's unique needs (ONOKPAUNU, 2023).

Summative assessments, which gauge students' overall performance at the conclusion of a course or programme, also heavily rely on evaluation. Evaluators guarantee the validity and reliability of the assessment results by employing standardised scoring standards and assessment tasks that correspond with the learning objectives. This data sheds light on the degree to which the curriculum successfully equips students for careers in agriculture.

Evaluation also facilitates the alignment of instructional methodologies, assessment techniques, and learning objectives. Evaluators can make sure that there is coherence and consistency between what is taught, how it is taught, and how it is assessed by regularly evaluating the alignment of the curriculum. This alignment helps guarantee that students are picking up the essential knowledge and abilities listed in the curriculum and improves the validity of assessment outcomes (Samuel et al., 2022).

9. Challenges and Considerations in Evaluating Agricultural Science Curricula

When evaluating agricultural science curriculum, there are a number of particular challenges and considerations that need to be made. The unique features of agricultural science education, which necessitate multidisciplinary approaches and integrate academic knowledge with practical application, are the cause of these challenges. By examining these issues and considering innovative strategies for assessment, we can successfully tackle these obstacles.

Assessing agricultural science courses is challenging due to the vast range of learning objectives. Agricultural science encompasses a wide range of subfields, such as soil science, crop science, animal science, and agricultural economics. It's probable that every subdiscipline has different learning goals and outcomes. Evaluators need to consider this diversity in order to develop assessment methods that effectively capture the distinct knowledge, skills, and competences associated with each sub-discipline (Brevik et al., 2022).

To get around this problem, assessors may combine formative and summative evaluation methods. Formative assessments, which encompass laboratory experiments, fieldwork, and hands-on demonstrations, can document the application of knowledge and skills in authentic scenarios. Summative assessments, such as written exams, oral presentations, and project reports, are used to determine how well students can synthesise and analyse information in addition to understanding theoretical concepts. Assessors can fully understand the learning objectives of their

students in agricultural science by using assessment strategies.

Another consideration while evaluating agricultural science curricula is the need for knowledge application in the real world. Students in agricultural science must apply what they learn in the classroom to real-world scenarios because the topic is hands-on. Traditional methods of assessment that just focus on theoretical comprehension may not accurately represent students' ability to apply what they have learned in practical situations (Ferand, 2022).

Assessors might consider this by using real-world scenario-based realistic assessment activities. This category can include case studies, research projects, problem-solving exercises, and simulations. Students can demonstrate their ability to apply their understanding of and competence in agricultural science to solve problems in the real world by using these assessment methods. In addition, assessors should consider industry partnerships, internships, and work-based learning opportunities. These provide students the chance to showcase their practical skills and receive feedback from industry experts.

Furthermore, the interdisciplinary nature of agricultural science creates an additional challenge for curriculum evaluation. Agricultural science integrates biology, chemistry, economics, environmental science, and other disciplines. A comprehensive approach considering the interrelationships and interactions among multiple disciplines is required to assess interdisciplinary learning outcomes (Pandey et al., 2022).

To get around this problem, evaluators can employ interdisciplinary evaluation methods and strategies. This may include cooperative learning experiences where students work in interdisciplinary teams to solve complex agricultural problems by applying their knowledge and skills from a variety of topic areas. Evaluators may also utilise scoring criteria or rubrics that are designed to assess interdisciplinary skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and cross-disciplinary communication. Assessors might focus on the integration of knowledge and skills from other disciplines to efficiently assess the interdisciplinary learning outcomes of agricultural science curriculum.

Innovative methods and strategies for evaluation can also help to resolve these problems. Assessment processes can be made better with the usage of technology. Examples of this include the use of online platforms for formative assessments, virtual simulations for practical skill evaluations, and digital portfolios to showcase interdisciplinary projects. Adaptive assessment systems allow you to customise assessments to each student's particular needs and learning style.

Incorporating teachers, students, and business professionals into the evaluation process may ensure that the results are relevant and in line with industry standards, as well as produce informative outcomes. Regular feedback loops and cycles for continuous improvement can be established in order to gather input and adjust the curriculum as necessary in response to the findings of evaluations.

10. Recommendations for Enhancing Evaluation in Agricultural Science Curriculum Design

To enhance the assessment processes in the creation of agricultural science curricula, several recommendations can be made. These guidelines aim to improve the alignment of assessment methods with learning objectives and outcomes, while also emphasising the importance of continuous assessment and feedback loops in curriculum design.
Clearly stated learning objectives and results are essential for agricultural science curricula. Assessors can create evaluation strategies that directly support these goals by outlining the knowledge and skills that students should possess. The effective measurement of the intended learning outcomes is ensured by this alignment of the assessment tasks.

To capture the numerous facets of learning, agricultural science courses should incorporate a wide range of evaluation tools. This category can include written exams, lab reports, fieldwork assessments, presentations, projects, and portfolios. Assessors can use a variety of ways to evaluate a wide range of knowledge and skill sets while accounting for the different learning styles and preferences of their students.

To enhance the practical application of knowledge, assessment methods should mirror real-world agricultural practices as closely as possible. This can involve incorporating fieldwork, industry internships, and case studies that require students to apply their knowledge to solve agricultural problems. By aligning assessments with authentic practices, evaluators can assess students' ability to transfer their learning to practical situations.

Agricultural science is an interdisciplinary field; thus, students have to incorporate knowledge from different fields. To take this multidisciplinary component into

consideration, assessors had to develop assessment methods that measure students' ability to integrate knowledge and skills from other disciplines. Teachers might utilise cooperative projects, interdisciplinary case studies, and problem-solving activities to assess how well their students have applied multidisciplinary techniques in agricultural science.

The design of an agricultural science curriculum must take continuous evaluation into account. This entails monitoring pupils' development on a regular basis and giving timely comments for development. Formative evaluations, like quizzes, group discussions, and one-on-one feedback sessions, can give continuous feedback and point out areas that require further assistance. The curriculum can be improved and adjusted iteratively in response to evaluation results.
Educators, business people, students, and community people are among the stakeholders who must be involved for agricultural science curriculum design to be evaluated effectively. Stakeholder involvement allows assessors to obtain a range of viewpoints, comprehend industry demands, and guarantee curricular relevance. Stakeholders can offer insightful opinions on learning objectives, assessment strategies, and the general calibre of the curriculum.

Technology is a major factor in the enhancement of evaluation processes. Adaptive assessment methods, virtual simulations, and internet platforms can all provide interactive and personalised testing experiences. Technology may also be useful in the collection and analysis of data, enabling assessors to track students' progress, identify patterns, and make informed decisions to improve the curriculum.

Motivating students to contemplate and analyse themselves is an effective way to enhance the quality of evaluation procedures. By allowing students to reflect on what they have learned, evaluate their own progress, and create growth plans, teachers may promote metacognition and provide students the resources they need to take ownership of their education.

11. Key Takeaway

The most significant takeaway from this study is the significant influence of evaluation on curriculum design in Nigerian agricultural science education. By implementing effective evaluation strategies, teachers can ensure that learning objectives align with assessment methodologies, instructional strategies, and anticipated learning outcomes.
This study's primary contribution is its conceptual framework, which highlights the need of evaluation in Nigerian agricultural science curricula. Through the integration of theories and concepts linked to evaluation, this framework aids in raising awareness of the significance of evaluation in enhancing educational outcomes. Teachers can ensure that students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in agricultural science by integrating learning objectives and outcomes with instructional strategies and evaluation methods. Problems with agricultural science curriculum assessment, such as the need for multidisciplinary methods and different learning outcomes, can also be resolved with innovative evaluation strategies. The study's recommendations are intended to enhance assessment practices and, consequently, Nigeria's agricultural science curriculum.

12. Implications

There are various ramifications for educational practice and policy from the investigation of the function of evaluation in Nigerian agricultural science curricula.

Teachers may make sure that students in agricultural science education attain the intended learning outcomes by implementing efficient evaluation techniques and coordinating them with instructional strategies, learning objectives, and assessment systems. Better knowledge acquisition, skill development, and overall academic success may result from this.

A more authentic and relevant agricultural science curriculum can be created by incorporating assessment procedures into the curriculum development process at various stages. Students can acquire useful skills and information that are immediately applicable to the agricultural industry by integrating interdisciplinary approaches and matching evaluations with actual agricultural activities.

Ongoing monitoring and improvement are made possible by the curriculum design's emphasis on continuous evaluation and feedback loops. Through consistent evaluation of students' progress and comments, teachers may pinpoint areas that require attention and implement the required modifications to elevate the standard of agricultural science instruction.

Participation from a range of stakeholders in the assessment process, such as educators, professionals from the industry, students, and community members, can promote cooperation and guarantee that agricultural science courses are current and applicable.

Their opinions and suggestions can help create well-rounded, industry-aligned curriculum designs.

The recognition of obstacles and factors to be taken into account while assessing agricultural science courses opens the door to the creation and application of creative assessment techniques and plans. This can involve testing students' knowledge, abilities, and competencies in agricultural science through a variety of methods, such as multidisciplinary projects, industrial internships, and technology-enhanced assessment tools.

The research's conclusions and suggestions can guide the formulation and application of policies pertaining to agricultural science education in Nigeria. This research can be used by policymakers to ensure that standards and guidelines for curriculum design incorporate evaluation procedures and to support evidence-based decision-making.

13. Future Research

This investigation on the function of evaluation in Nigerian agricultural science curricula creates opportunities for more study in this area. Some possible topics of investigation for subsequent research include:

It can be insightful to look into how assessment procedures affect students' academic and professional outcomes over the long run. Evaluation techniques can be improved and refined by looking at how curriculum design evaluation methods affect students' achievement in postsecondary education or in their employment in agriculture.

Undertaking a comparative examination of assessment methodologies in agricultural science curricula across several areas or nations might offer a more comprehensive viewpoint. Evaluation processes in Nigeria can be advanced by comparing the efficacy of evaluation techniques, finding best practices, and comprehending contextual elements that affect evaluation in various educational systems.

It is possible to perform research to evaluate agricultural science instructors' proficiency in developing and utilising assessment strategies. Researching the abilities, dispositions, and information necessary for efficient evaluation in curriculum design can help professional development programmes and teacher training initiatives.

Investigating how students view and interact with evaluation in agricultural science courses can provide important information about their participation and academic performance. Assessing students' needs and preferences can be made easier by having a better understanding of how they view and react to various forms of evaluation.

Examining the function of assessment in online agricultural science education is essential given the growing popularity of online learning environments. Research can concentrate on finding efficient assessment techniques and approaches that are unique to online learning environments, taking into account elements like technology infrastructure, assessment authenticity, and student involvement.

Research on how curriculum design evaluation affects the promotion of sustainable agriculture practices can be very beneficial. Comprehending the ways in which assessment techniques can foster learners' comprehension of ecological responsibility, resource administration, and sustainable farming approaches helps advance the more general objective of sustainable growth within the agriculture industry.

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Part Three
Climate Change

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Effect of Climate Change on Soil Moisture and Soil Organic Matter in the Past and Future Years of the Soil Properties in Otta Farm

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Abstract. Increased temperature affects microbial activity both directly and indirectly through its impact on soil moisture and the quantity of organic matter. When soil temperature changes as a result increased atmospheric temperature, the composition of the microbial community and the moisture content of the soil is affected. Increase in temperature decreases organic matter through combustion. This is an important factor to predicting to predicting the effect of climate change on soil properties. In a government farmland (Otta, Agbowa-Ikosi. Lagos state) we determined the effect of climate change on soil moisture and organic matter. The relationship among temperature, precipitation, soil moisture and organic matter was investigated. Two hundred soil samples were randomly collected on the farmland and were taken to the laboratory for the analysis to determine the soil moisture and organic matter content. Precipitation and temperature data were collected from 1996-2016. A correlation analysis was carried out between soil and climatic variables. Findings indicated a non-significant correlation between the soil properties and climatic variables but a negative correlation coefficient between soil organic matter and precipitation (-0.511), soil moisture and temperature (-0.384), a positive correlation coefficient between soil organic matter and temperature (0.377), soil moisture and precipitation (0.517) which reveals the direction and strength of the variables. The study concludes that temperature and precipitation affected soil moisture and organic matter from 1996-2016. However, recommendation includes the application of organic materials on soil to increase organic matter content and the practise of mulching will also conserve soil moisture.

Keywords: Climate change, organic matter, soil moisture, temperature and precipitation.

1. Introduction

In Nigeria, climate change has altered the weather pattern such as increasing cases of dry spells, drought and unpredictability of rainfall. Soils are important enabling resource and crucial to the production of a wide range of goods and services fundamental to ecosystems and the well-being of humans (Abdul et al. 2023). Recent climate change has had widespread impacts on natural systems including shifts in the ranges (distributions) of land, freshwater, and marine organisms. Effects of these biogeographical shifts transcend single-species to impact on ecosystem goods and services resulting in significant social and economic costs to human communities (Aydinalp, 2008). Climate change can alter the spatial and temporal availability of soil and water resources. These changes will result in increased floods and drought, which will have significant impacts on soil and water resource availability. Thomson (2022) explained that increase in temperature causes organic matter to decompose faster due to the enhancement of the mobility of soluble substrates occurring in the soil thereby activating the activities of microbes. Usually, organic matter decomposes faster with risen temperature. In many ecosystems, the decomposition of soil organic matter is greatly determined by the changes in soil moisture content due to climate change. Mandal & Sathyaseelan (2012) explained that the unsaturated zone in the soil may be influenced by sufficient aerobic processes which increase the decomposition rate of organic matter. Also, rise in atmospheric temperature as a result of climate change increases the soil temperature which increases the decomposition and loss of organic matter (Karmakar, 2016)

2. Literature Review

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated that climate change is emerging as one of the cardinal challenges of the 21st century

(Akamigbo and Nnaji, 2011). There is a widespread consensus among the scientific community that the earth is warming and the consequences of this are likely to be severe and this is a challenge to sustainable development (Rebecca *et. al*, 2019). Agriculture, and consequently food security, is already being affected by climate change through flooding and drought (Naschen, et al. 2019). This is because excessive precipitation caused by climate change washes away essential nutrients needed by plant and extreme temperature caused by climate change results into high decomposition of organic matter and soil water deficit which reduce the division of plant cells and cell growth; this ultimately leads into low crop yield. However, Patil and Laminganbi (2018) explained that Climate change can affect soil functions directly by temperature, precipitation, and moisture regime changes, and indirectly by adaptations such as irrigation, crop rotation changes, and tillage practices. Climate change causes rise in atmospheric carbon dioxide levels, elevated temperature, altered precipitation and atmospheric nitrogen deposition on physical, chemical and biological functions of soil (Hamidov et al. 2018).

In addition, changes in precipitation patterns caused by climate change could consequently modify the magnitude of the soil carbon (C) sink, as precipitation has been commonly considered as a modifier of soil C cycling by changing soil moisture and underground hydrological processes (Chen et al.2015). Some of the identified impacts of climate change on the soil are reduction in soil biodiversity, soil erosion, excessive soil wetness, high soil temperature, depletion of soil organic pool and a general decrease in the overall quality of the soil for agricultural (Gelybo et al, 2018).

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Location of the Study Area

The study area, Otta farm is located in Agowa-Ikosi in Lagos State. The area experiences a tropical savanna climate with dry winters, based on climatological records spanning from 1991 to 2021. June temperatures gradually decrease with daily highs averaging around 29°C, rarely dropping below 27°C or exceeding 32°C. Thunderstorms are common during this month, with relative humidity ranging from 68% to 98%, peaking towards the end of June. Vegetation comprises swamp forests along the coastal belt, consisting of mangroves and coastal vegetation, and dry lowland rainforests with economically valuable trees. Soil types include juvenile soils, fluviomarine alluvium, red ferritic soils, and coastal plain sands, with elevation varying from 1 m to 8 m above sea level, underlain by soft clays/silts and loose sands.

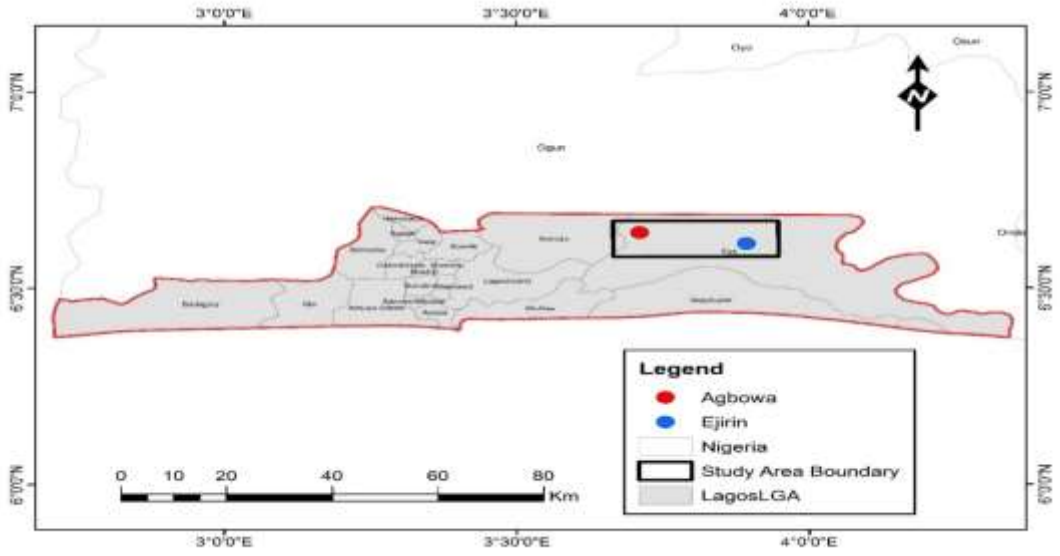

Figure 1: Map of Lagos State Showing the Location of the Study Area

3.2 Data Types and Source

In this study, two types of data were use; primary data, and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from field observation and soil sampling in the field, and Landsat 8 OLI/TIRS image data obtained from USGS website. The Secondary data used were Landsat 8 Imagery which was gotten from earth explorer (30meters) and Monthly

Temperature and Precipitation data of 20 years were gotten from Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NIMET). A person correlation analysis was carried out to determine the correlation between the soil properties Soil Organic Matter (SOM) and Soil Moisture (SM) and the climatic variables (Rainfall and Temperature) from the year 1996-2016.

3.3 Soil Sampling Technique

Twenty sites within the farmland were randomly selected within the study area after being divided into grids of 50cm by 50cm. Using the soil auger, 200 soil samples at 15cm depth with their corresponding geographical coordinates were randomly selected within the grids and taken to the laboratory for analysis to determine the soil moisture and organic matter content.

3.4 Methodology

Below is the methodology of SMI and soil organic matter analysis based on the Landsat 8 images which were selected from climatology of precipitation and Temperature. The Landsat 8 images were selected in February, April and June.

3.4.1 Normalised Difference Soil Index (NDSI)

Normalized difference soil index (NDSI) was used for the combination of bands 7 and 2 of Landsat Thematic Mapper Image. This study used the normalised difference soil index (NDSI) algorithm to see the soil organic matter content using Landsat 8 OLI (Operational Land Imager) as a reference for the determination of soil sampling. The combination of bands in this study used a combination of bands 5 and 4 on Landsat 8 OLI.

3.4.2 Future Forecasting of Soil Organic Matter

a. Linear Regression: Multiple linear regression aimed to see the correlation/relationship between the dependent variable of soil organic matter (%) with the free variable which is the pixel value of the image of the normalized difference soil index (NDSI) result. The results of the linear regression statistical test were used to determine the distribution of soil organic matter content.

$SMI=\beta 0+\beta 1X1+\beta 2X2+\ldots+\beta nXn+\varepsilon$

where $X1,X2,\ldots,Xn$ are predictor variables (precipitation, temperature, land cover), $\beta 0,\beta 1,\ldots,\beta n$ are coefficients, and ε is the error term.

Also, the atmospheric temperature of the study area was obtained from the thermal bands of the same Landsat image.

b. Calculation of Landsat Temperature (LT)

Calculation of Atmospheric Temperature During 1G-product rendering, image pixels were converted to units of absolute radiance using 32 bit floating-point calculations. Pixel values were then scaled to byte values prior to media output. The following equation was used to convert DN(Digital Number)'s in a 1 G product back to radiance unit for TM(Thematic Mapper) and ETM(Enhanced Thematic Mapper)+:

$$L_\lambda = \left(\frac{LMAX_\lambda - LMIN_\lambda}{QCALMAX - QCALMIN} \right) * \left(QCAL - QCALMIN \right) + LMIN_\lambda$$

Where, Lλ is spectral radiance at the sensor's aperture in watts/(meter squared * ster * μm), QCAL is the quantized calibrated pixel value in DN, LMINλ is the spectral radiance that is scaled to QCALMIN in watts/(meter squared * ster * μm), LMAXλ is the spectral radiance that is scaled to QCALMAX in watts/(meter squared * ster * μm), QCALMIN is the minimum quantized calibrated pixel value (corresponding to LMINλ) in DN, and QCALMAX is the maximum quantized calibrated pixel value (corresponding to LMAXλ) in DN. The following equation is used to convert DN's in a 1 G product back to radiance unit for TIRS:

$$L_\lambda = M_L * Q_{cal} + A_L$$

Here, ML is radiance multiplicative scaling factor for the band (RADIANCE_MULT_BAND_n from the metadata), Qcal is L1 pixel value in DN, and AL is radiance additive scaling factor for the band (RADIANCE_ADD_BAND_n from the metadata). ETM+ Band 6 (thermal) and TIRS (Thermal Infrared Sensor) Band 10 and 11 imagery were

converted from spectral radiance to a more physically useful variable. This was the effective at satellite temperatures of the viewed Earth-atmosphere system under an assumption of unity emissivity and using pre-launch calibration constants. The conversion formula is:

$$T = \frac{K2}{\ln\left(\frac{K1}{L_\lambda}+1\right)}$$

Where, T is brightness temperature (K), K2 is calibration constant 2, and K1 is calibration constant 1.

c. Calculation of Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI)

NDVI was calculated from the visible and near-infrared light reflected by vegetation. NDVI can be calculated by the following equation:

$$NDVI = \frac{NIR - VISR}{NIR + VISR}$$

Where, Near Infrared (NIR) is spectral reflectance measurements acquired in the near infra-red regions and VISR is spectral reflectance measurements acquired in the visible red regions. A value between -1 and + 1 was generated from the result of this formula. If it had low reflectance (or low values) in the red channel and high reflectance in the NIR channel, this produced a high NDVI value and vice versa.

d. Calculation of Normalized Difference Water Index (NDWI)

The formula stands for NDWI is given below

$$NDWI = \frac{VISG - NIR}{VISG + NIR}$$

Where, NIR is spectral reflectance measurements acquired in the near infra-red regions and VISG is spectral reflectance measurements acquired in the visible red regions. This formula generated a value between -1 and +1. If it had low reflectance (or low values) in the red channel and high reflectance in the NIR channel, this yielded a high NDWI value and vice versa.

e. Conversion of Atmospheric Temperature to Land surface Temperature (LST)

After calculating NDVI for a specific year, it yielded either a positive or a negative NDVI value. Then using the NDVI value, the proportion of vegetation is calculated from the following equation:

$$P_v = \left(\frac{NDVI - NDVI_{MIN}}{NDVI_{MAX} - NDVI_{MIN}}\right)^2$$

Where, P_v refers to proportion of vegetation.
Then using the value of Pv Land Surface Emissivity (LSE) was also calculated. The knowledge of LSE was necessary to apply the methods of retrieving LST (Land Surface Temperature) from a Landsat image. The final expression for calculating emissivity based on this method is:

$$e = 0.004P_v + 0.986$$

Where e denotes LSE. Finally, LST is derived using the following equation:

$$LST = \frac{T}{1 + \frac{wT}{p} \times \ln(e)} - 273.15$$

Where, W is emitted radiance wavelength (μm), p=h/s=1.438*10-2 mK, h is the constant of Planck's (6.626*10-34 Js), s is constant of Boltzmann (1.38*10-23 J/K), c is light Velocity (2.998*10-8 m/s).

4. Results and Analysis

It was observed that there was no significant association between climatic variables (Temperature and Rainfall) and the soil properties (Soil Organic Matter and Soil Moisture). This result has implications.

4.1 The evaluation of Soil Organic matter in past years (1996, 2006 and 2016).

It can be observed in figure 2 that in year 1996, SOM varied between 0.03gm^2 -0.05 gm^2 where most of the sites fell within 0.04 gm^2 -0.05 gm^2 and the control point fell within the range of 0.03 gm^2 – 0.04 gm^2. In year 2006, SOM varied between the range of 0.10-0.22gm^2 and there was an increase of SOM in year 2006 as SOM increased from 0.03 gm^2- 0.04 gm^2 in year 1996 to 0.10 gm^2-0.22 gm^2 in year 2006 while in year 2016 SOM ranged between 0.07-0.11 gm^2.

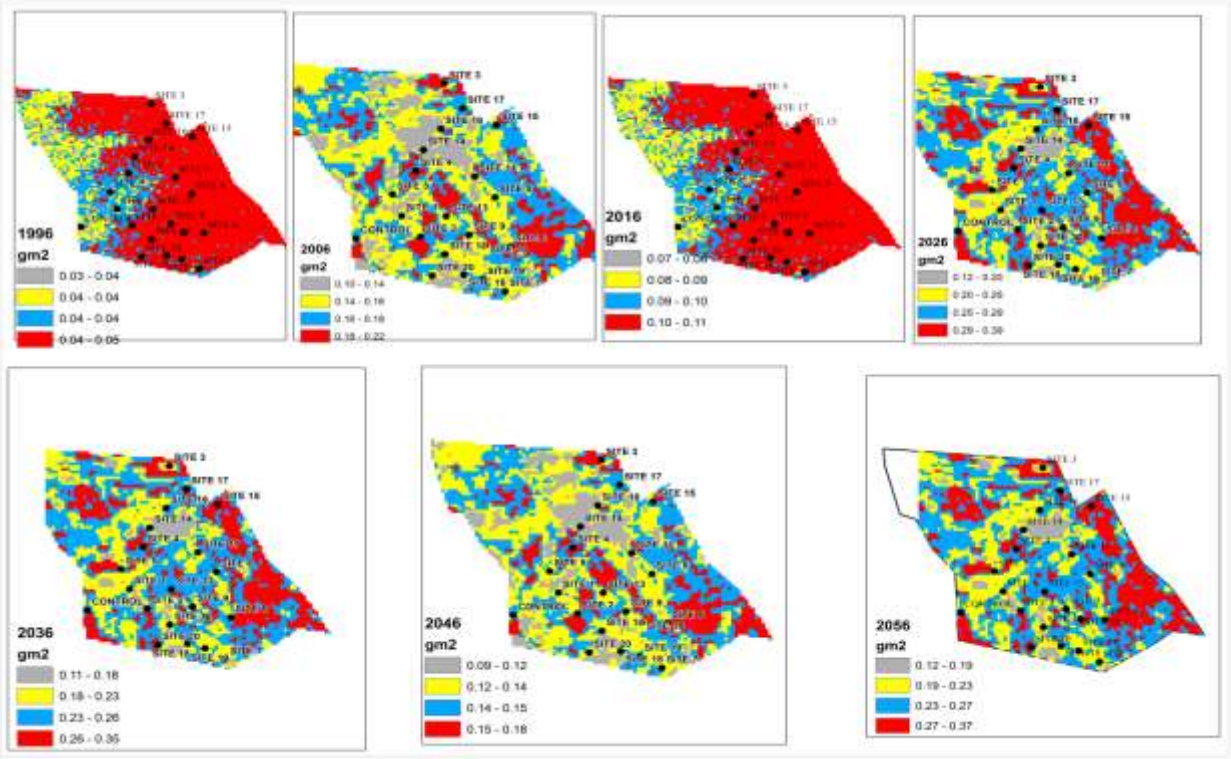

Figure 2: *Map Showing the Soil Organic Matter Content in the Study Area.*

4.2 The evaluation of Rainfall on Soil Organic matter in past years.

It can be observed in table 1 that there was no significant association between SOM and Precipitation from the year 1996 – 2016 but there was a moderately negative correlation co-efficient between the two variables (-0.511) such that as precipitation increased OM decreased. This does not align with many explanations in literature because increased precipitation enhances the rapid decomposition of organic materials to form organic matter (Jiang et al. 2021). Soil organic matter could reduce with increased Rainfall because of the changes in climatic condition that took place during the years, the hydrology of the terrain, changes in land use and vegetation over the years.

Table 1: Correlations between Soil Organic Matter and Rainfall

		Soil Organic Matter	Precipitation
Soil Organic Matter	Pearson Correlation	1	-.511
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.659
	N	3	3
Precipitation	Pearson Correlation	-.511	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.659	
	N	3	3

4.3 The evaluation of Temperature on Soil Organic matter in past years.

According to table 2, there was no significant association between SOM and Temperature from the year 1996-2016 but there was a low positive correlation coefficient between the two variables (0.377). This means that as Temperature increases, SOM also increases. This does not align with many explanations in literature. This is because regions of higher temperature have lesser OM due to the fact that OM decays more rapidly at higher temperature, thus regions with low temperature have more OM content. Thomson (2022) confirmed that increase in temperature causes OM to decompose faster due to the enhancement of the mobility of soluble substrates occurring in the soil thereby activating the activities of microbes. This affirms the Kinetic Theory which explains that the application of heat to a substance makes the particles of the substance to be in vigorous motion because increase in temperature increased the rate of decomposition of organic matter in soil.

However, the increase of Organic Matter despite the increased Temperature that occurred over the years could be caused by the addition of Organic materials such as solid or liquid manures, residues of crops and the deliberate reduction of drainage and the cultivation of soil to reduce the decomposition of organic matter by farmers within the study area.

Table 2: Correlations between Soil Organic Matter and Temperature

		Soil organic matter	Temperature
Soil Organic Matter	Pearson Correlation	1	0.377
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.754
	N	3	3
Temperature	Pearson Correlation	0.377	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.754	
	N	3	3

4.4 The Evaluation of Soil Moisture in past years (1996, 2006 and 2016).

It can be seen in figure 3 that in year 1996, the SMI ranged between 34.85%-60.19% where most of the sites within the study area fell between 49.65%-60.19%. In the year 2006, the SMI ranges between 13.94%-24.07% where most of the sites are within the range of 19.86%-24.07%. Also, there was a decline in the trend of SMI from 1996-2006 and in year 2016, the SMI ranged between 69.50%-99.30%.

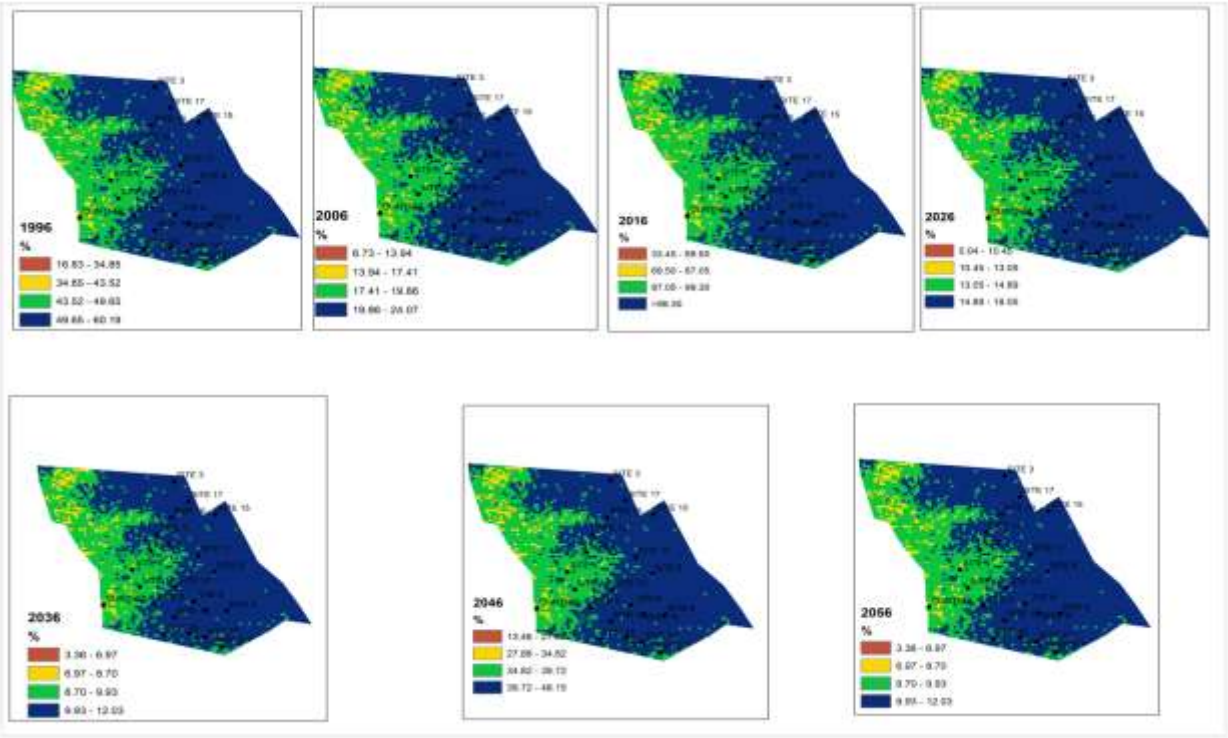

Figure 3: *Map Showing the Soil Moisture in the Study Area.*

4.5 The Evaluation of Rainfall on Soil Moisture in past years.

It was observed in the table 3 that there is no significant association between Soil Moisture and Precipitation from 1996-2016 but there is a moderately positive correlation coefficient between the two variables (0.517). This means that as Precipitation increase, Soil Moisture also increases. This aligns with explanations in literatures. In the work of Dubinin et al. (2020), using LANDSAT 8 and VENUS data to study the effect of Geodiversity on soil moisture dynamics in a semi and shrub land, it was observed that severe deficit of soil moisture is caused by decrease in the rate of rainfall and increase in the temperature due to global warming. Also, using sentinel-2 satellite imagery and SNAP software, Roohi et al. (2021) opined that soil moisture reduced over the years as a result of lack of optimal pattern of cultivation, which also led to land subsidence and increased salinity.

Qin et al. (2023) emphasised that since the 21st century; soil moisture had decreased significantly and would continue to decrease in future due to global warming as postulated in the theory of Anthropogenic Global Warming.

Table 3: Correlations between Soil Moisture and Rainfall

		Soil moisture	Precipitation
Soil Moisture	Pearson Correlation	1	0.517
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.654
	N	3	3
Precipitation	Pearson Correlation	0.517	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.654	
	N	3	3

4.6 The evaluation of Temperature on Soil Moisture in past years.

It can be seen in table 4 that there was no significant association between Soil Moisture and Temperature from the year 1996-2016 but there was a low negative correlation coefficient (-0.384) between Soil Moisture and Temperature. This implies that as temperature increases, soil moisture reduces. Temperature affects the rate of nitrification and soil

moisture content. Furthermore, Onwuka and Mang (2018) explained that factors of the environment influences the temperature of the soil either by determining the amount of heat supplied to the soil or the amount of heat evaporated from the surface of the soil down the profile. Also, increased temperature cause moisture in soil to evaporate rapidly which consequently leads to decrease in soil moisture.

Table 4: Correlations between Soil Moisture and Temperature

		Soil moisture	Temperature
Soil moisture	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.384
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.749
	N	3	3
Temperature	Pearson Correlation	-0.384	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.749	
	N	3	3

4.7 Prediction of Soil Organic Matter (2026, 2036, 2046 and 2056)

A projected content of Soil Organic Matter in year 2026 can be seen in figure 2 where the SOM varied between $0.12gm^2 – 0.39gm^2$. In year 2036 as seen in figure 4.56, SOM within the study area was predicted to be between 0.11 $gm^2 – 0.35\ gm^2$. This shows a decline in SOM from the year 2026 - 2036. A reason for this could be due to the changes in climate conditions, the type of soil texture, hydrology of the terrain changes in the landuse and vegetation Glanz (1995) stated that tillage practices reduce SOM than other practices. This is because tilling the soil aerates the soil, knowing that the decomposition of OM is an aerobic process, thus, the oxygen enhances the action of soil microbes that eat up organic matter-reducing it.

In year 2046, the Soil Organic Matter was projected to be 0.09 $gm^2 – 0.18\ gm^2$ as seen in figure 2. This also shows a decline between year 2036-2046 which fell between the range of 0.11 $gm^2 – 0.35\ gm^2$ and 0.09 $gm^2 – 0.18\ gm^2$ respectively. However, the projected content of SOM in the year 2056 ranges between 0.12 $gm^2 – 0.37\ gm^2$ which depicts an increase in SOM from year 2046 – 2056 which ranges between 0.09 gm^2- 0.18 gm^2 and 0.12 $gm^2 – 0.37$ gm^2 respectively. A reason for the increase of SOM in the prediction could be because Increase in precipitation generally results in an increase in the level of OM, this is because elevated level of moisture in the soil results into a greater production of biomass from the residue of materials from plants and animals (Primavesi, 1984). Rocci et al. (2023) sampled soils from a 30-year precipitation augmentation experiment in annually burned mesic grassland, it was observed that there were no changes in bulk carbon or Nitrogen with increased precipitation but organic matter in soil were modified.

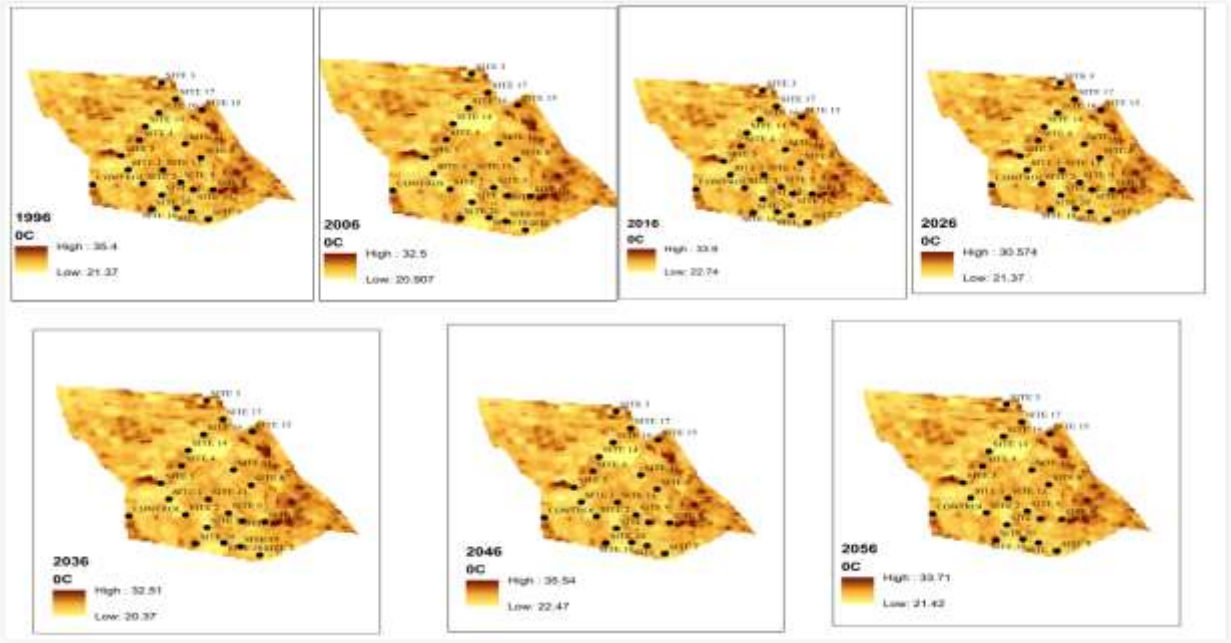

Figure 4: *Map Showing the Soil Temperature of the Study Area*

4.8 Prediction of Atmospheric Temperature and how Soil Organic Matter would be affected in year (2026, 2036, 2046 and 2056)

It was predicted that the temperature increased from year 2026 to year 2056 in figure 4. This was because in 2026, the surface temperature ranges between 21.37^0C -30.57^0C. In year 2036, the temperature ranges between 20.37^0C- 32.51^0C, in year 2046, the temperature was predicted to be between 22.47^0C - 35.54^0C and lastly, in year 2056, the temperature was predicted to be between 21.42^0C-33.71^0C.

Regions with high temperature cause high biomass productivity and the decomposition of microbial organic matter than regions with lower temperature. Lehnert (2014) explained that many microbial processes within the soil which are responsible for the decomposition of Organic Matter are affected by temperature which also alters the rate of mineralisation of various organic compounds. Peera (2020) emphasised that optimum temperature for the decomposition of mcrobes may be between 35^0C - 40^0C. Onwuka and Mang (2018) opined that increased soil temperature affects the rate of decomposition of OM, Soil Moisture content and the availability of water to plants.

4.9 Prediction of Soil Moisture (2026, 2036, 2046 and 2056)

A potential insight into 2026 can be seen in figure 3. The prediction displayed the changes to occur in year 2026. The prediction indicated that within the study area, the SMI would be between the ranges of 10.45% - 18.05%. In 2036 SMI would be between 6.97% - 12.03%. This depicts that there would be a decline of the SMI from year 2026-2036 but would increase from year 2036 to 2046 which ranges between 27.88% - 48.15% as seen in figure 3. The reason for this could be attributed to the fact that soil moisture increases by intense increase of hydrological extreme caused by climate change (Czigany et al. 2023). In addition, high rainfall increases the soil moisture and increases the pore pressure which consequently reduces the strength of the soil (Tajudin et al. 2021).

Furthermore, the prediction displays the SMI within the study area of the year 2056 to be between 6.97%-12.03% as seen in figure 3. This explains a decline of SMI from year 2046 to year 2056. This aligns with the work of Roohi et al. (2021). They used Sentinel-2 satellite and SNAP software to explain that soil moisture reduced over the years as a result of lack of optimal pattern of cultivation, which also lack optimal pattern of cultivation which also led to land subsidence and increased salinity.

4.10 Prediction of Atmospheric Temperature and the effect on the Soil moisture index in year (2026, 2036, 2046 and 2056).

In year 2026, the temperature was seen to be between 21.37^0C – 30.57^0C in figure 4. In year 2036, the temperature increased to 20.37^0C – 32.51^0C. In year 2046, an increase in temperature was predicted to take place. Finally, in year 2056, there was also a predicted increase of temperature of the study area to be between 21.42^0C – 33.71^0C. The reason for the predicted increase in temperature could be attributed to the reason that climatic condition influences soil temperature. Temperature is affected by the factors that affect the transfer of heat through the atmosphere from the sun. This aligns with the theory of Solar Variability which explains that the sun accounts for the warming of the earth's temperature and the earth's temperature will increase and dominate the climate in the 21st century.

The transfer of heat into the soil is dependent on the angle on incident radiation, direction of slope, steepness, altitude, latitude, time of the day and amount of precipitation (Yolcubal & Wilson, 2004). Furthermore, increase of extreme weather events could be caused by climate change which would result into series of intense dryness of the soil and intense increase of wetness of the soil (Dunne, 2019).

Khamidov et al. (2023) stated that soil moisture evaporates rapidly from the soil as the temperature increases which often led to the decrease of ground water. The soil moisture will also be altered by increase in temperature which would lead to altering the composition of microbiological community in the soil through various mechanisms like the changes in metabolic activities (Dowdeswell-Downey et al. 2023).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Soil to a large extent which is dependent on the climate as a whole and on temperature and precipitation in particular, also the negative effect of climate change most often alters the chemical properties of the soil. Furthermore, the fertility of the soil is determined by the content of soil organic matter and soil moisture. This study recommends that cropland should be moved to drought-free areas, planting and harvesting time should be adjusted and mulching should be practised in order to prevent run-off, moderate the soil

temperature and evaporation to retain soil moisture and organic matter.

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Physiochemical Parameters and Groundwater Resource in the Eastern Dahomey Basin, Southwestern Nigeria

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Abstract. Groundwater which accounts for 30% of the estimated earth's freshwater is an essential natural resource stored in the subsurface geological formations in the critical region of the earth's crust for sustaining ecosystems and human well-being. One of the challenges in water resources management in semi-arid and tropical regions like Eastern Dahomey basin, Lagos state, Nigeria is how to sustainably manage groundwater resources in relation to water pollution. Despite its importance, groundwater management in the region has been hampered by lack of comprehensive policies, leading to overexploitation and contamination issues. Therefore, a better understanding of the quality processes to a changing future is necessary. This study delves into assessing the groundwater quality in Eastern Dahomey basin, aiming to provide insights for effective management in the face of growing water pollution, scarcity and in relation to the world Health Organisation (2022) and Standard of Nigeria (2015) standard for drinkable water. Fourteen parameters were investigated on forty samples selected from a transient mapping of 6km square transient and the dug wells samples were selected randomly. The samples were taken to the laboratory for in depth analysis for both dry and wet season to denote seasonal variation and climate change impacts. Findings showed significant variations in physiochemical groundwater quality across seasons and parameters. pH levels fluctuated, likely due to rainfall and evaporation, but remained within standard ranges. Odors varied, with most samples not meeting odorless standards. Appearance showed particle concentrations mixed, with clarity below standard. Temperature also varied between seasons but conformed to standard guidelines. The study recommends the development of integrated water resource management plans, adoption of sustainable land use practices, and robust monitoring systems to ensure the long-term viability of groundwater resources. Moreover, there is a pressing need for stringent regulations, comprehensive awareness campaigns, and collaborative research efforts to address groundwater quality issues and promote sustainable groundwater use. By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change, safeguard groundwater resources, and ensure the well-being of present and future generations in the Eastern Dahomey Basin and similar regions globally.

Keywords: Physiochemical, Groundwater, Resource, Dahomey, Basin

1. Introduction

The most abundant natural resource on earth and a major substance that ensures continuity of ecosystems and biodiversity is water. All organisms, including humans, require water for their survival. Oki and Kanae (2006) opined that ensuring adequate supplies of water available is essential for human well-being. Our planet is often called the "Blue Planet," warnings of increasing water scarcity in the world are common. Adeboye (2015) In specific terms said that over the last 50 years the world has changed from a situation of an abundance of water to a situation of water scarcity. Mancosu et al. (2015); Usha et al. (2021) and Vrbka et al. (2008). Agreed that water having both surface and groundwater sources for human domestic activities, Agricultural, Industrial, flora and fauna uses cannot be over-emphasised; the management of either surface and groundwater resources are highly an interactive study that is very vital to the socio-economic sustainability of a society.

Groundwater is an essential natural resource stored in the subsurface geological formations in the critical region of the earth's crust that accounts for 30% of the estimated earth's freshwater Senanayake et al. (2016) and Arulbalaji et al.. (2019) argues that despite the importance of groundwater, no major public policy has been promulgated to promote sustainable use which poses a significant threat to the future water accessibility of inhabitants of these cities in Sub-Sahara Africa. The West-African coast has some of the largest and densely populated cities (Almar et al., 2022). The increasing population without commiserate development of public waterworks results in the overexploitation of groundwater resources from a fragile coastal aquifer. This leads to among others the saltwater intrusion into the freshwater aquifer (Alfarrah & Walraevens, 2018).

Previous works on groundwater quality were limited by the availability of resources, precision level required, spatio-temporal components, range of research, time and cost constraints. The direct/insitu approach to quality assessment is usually expensive and not feasible for estimation at a large scale that involves a whole catchment area or a system of catchments similar to the southwestern region of Nigeria. The indirect approach, especially the use of tracers is very popular because of its accuracy and reliability and can be used for studies over a relatively large sample area. The approach is however not suitable for areas with rich mineral basement formations like the Southwestern Nigeria as well as densely populated and industrialized southern part of Lagos and Ogun states which can cause anthropogenic mineral leaching into the aquifer and thus obstruct the result of the approach. The use of remote sensing technique is however scarce.

For instance, Healy et al. (2020) indicated that around 70% of Lagosian in Nigeria rely on groundwater for their domestic, industrial and commercial activities since the municipal water agency could currently only serve between 10% and 30% of the state's population. This has resulted in the emergence of individualized water supply infrastructure through borehole and well development across the state. The increasing population in this region without commiserates development of public waterworks results in the overexploitation of groundwater resources from the fragile coastal aquifer leading to imbalance in the hydraulic gradient and eventually resulting in saltwater intrusion into the freshwater aquifer. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the physiochemical parameters of groundwater in the Eastern Dahomey Basin, focusing on southwestern Nigeria. This research aims to address gaps in understanding groundwater quality, especially in densely populated areas like Lagos and Ogun states. By leveraging remote sensing techniques and assessing groundwater quality indicators, the study seeks to inform sustainable water resource management policies and mitigate the risks of overexploitation and saltwater intrusion in coastal aquifers.

2. Literature Review

The physical and chemical characteristics of groundwater can be altered by anthropogenic factors like wastewater, industry, agriculture, and natural phenomena. This poses a major risk to the environment as well as the social and economic advancement of many areas (Soceanu et al., 2021). Adebayo et al., (2021) conducted a study on the physicochemical properties of groundwater in parts of Irun Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. Their research aimed to assess the suitability of this groundwater for drinking and irrigation. Ten groundwater samples were collected from hand dug wells within the local basement complex. Analysis included pH, Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), turbidity, and the presence of various ions (Na, Ca, Mg, K, Cl, SO4, PO4, NO3). The findings revealed that the groundwater tended towards neutral to slightly alkaline pH (7.0 – 7.9) and was characterized as fresh based on TDS levels (12.26 – 19.35 mg/l). Cation concentrations ranked in the order of K>Ca>Na>Mg, while anions followed Cl>SO4>NO3>PO4. Notably, potassium and chloride levels exceeded WHO drinking water standards in approximately 90% and 40% of samples, respectively. Other parameters such as Ca, Mg, Na, SO4, PO4, and NO3 fell within WHO guidelines.

Longe et al., (1987) and Edwards et al; (2015) delineated three major regional aquifers, which form part of the Dahomey Basin in south-west Nigeria. The uppermost Coastal Plain Sands Aquifer is characterized by interbedded sand and clay horizons. Below this is the confined Ilaro Formation Aquifer, described as a sequence of predominantly coarse sandy estuarine deltaic and continental beds (i.e., alternating sequences of sand and clay). The Deep Confined Aquifer, which is the most productive, also consists of alternating sequences of sand and clay. In the study area the Coastal Plains Sands Aquifer is the most significant in terms of water supply. This aquifer is divided into three distinct units: a shallow unconfined unit, an intermediate semi-confined unit, and a deeper confined unit. The unconfined unit, accessed by hand-dug wells and shallow boreholes, is vulnerable to pollution from surface activities. Along the coast, the semi-confined and confined units are

found at depths of 30-120m and 120-270m, respectively. In inland areas, the deeper confined aquifer occurs at depths of 30-150m. These aquifer units are utilized through boreholes and serve as the basis for water supply systems in parts of Lagos State. Saline intrusion has been noted in the semi-confined units, particularly along a zone extending from Apapa to Lekki, beneath a freshwater lens up to 5km inland in certain locations. Additionally, further east, freshwater layers are situated between saltwater-bearing sands within the Coastal Plain Sands Aquifer (Oteri and Atolagbe, 2003)

Increasing interest in seawater intrusion as a consequence of over-exploration of groundwater and sea-level rise has been generated in recent years. Alfarrah and Walraevens (2018) contented that groundwater overexploitation and seawater intrusion concludes that arid and semi-arid regions of the world suffer extreme water stress, and the saline water intrusion is more prominent because of the overreliance on groundwater as the main freshwater source. The complex geological formulations in these areas further complicate the issue, such that the aquifer formations are becoming more sensitive and fragile.

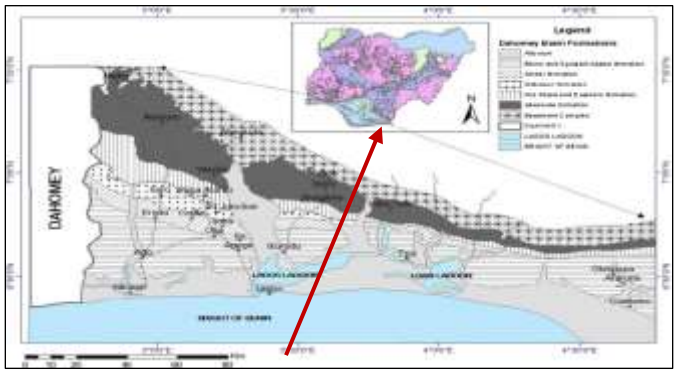
Direct and indirect risks to groundwater quality are posed by a wide variety of human activities and processes (such as agriculture, urbanization, industry, population increase, and climate change). Fertilizers, plant and animal protection goods (such as herbicides, fungicides, and other pesticides), and other agricultural operations are a major cause for alarm and have received a lot of attention across the world (Ascott et al. 2017). The production, processing and treatment processes of the industrial sector are also major contributors to anthropogenic pollutants. Lapworth, et al (2012) showed numerous organic pollutants, bacteria, viruses, and macronutrients all originate in domestic wastewater systems. In areas where shallow groundwater is utilized for drinking and irrigation and wastewater systems like pit latrines and septic tanks are in use, this may pose a serious danger to groundwater quality. Graham and Polizzotto (2013) advocated in respect of agricultural uses that groundwater from the different basins is of low salinity and low alkalinity hazard. This indicates the usability of these waters for irrigation in most soil and crops with little danger of development of exchangeable sodium and salinity. Considering sodium percentage (%Na), the groundwater of the different basins suggests good to excellent quality and can be used for irrigation purposes.

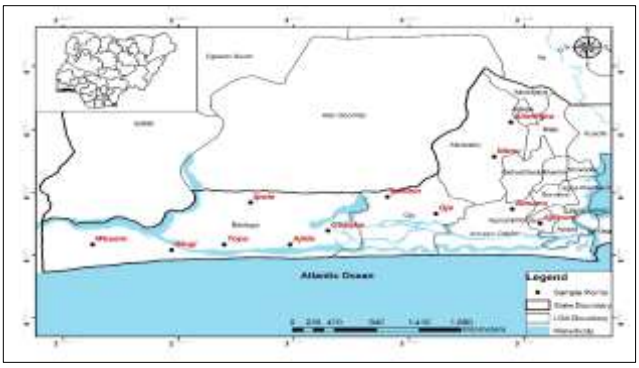
3. Materials and Methodology

3.1 Study Area

Eastern Dahomey Basin is administratively located in the South-Western part of Nigeria. It is bordered to the west, east and north by the Republic of Benin, Okitipupa Ridge, and the Precambrian Basement Rocks, respectively, while tretching into south into the Atlantic Ocean. Geographically, the EDB is located between Latitudes 2°41'10" and 4°59'59" N and Longitudes 6°21'13" and 7°52'42" E along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea. The Nigerian part of th6s basin is known as the Eastern Dahomey Basin which the three states of Lagos, Ogun, and Ondo. The study area is low lying, with several points virtually at or below sea level, which is always saturated with water, and prone to flooding. The highest elevation, 265 m above sea level, is at Abeokuta town, where the basin thins out into the Precambrian basement rocks. The climate of the basin is characterised by wet and dry seasons, within the tropical rain forest belt. Precipitation in this area occurs as rainfall and ranges between 750 and 1000 mm mostly between April and October (wet season) and 250 mm and 500 mm between November and March (dry season).

Fig.1: Groundwater recharge sampling points communities
Source: Author, 2023.





3.2 Methods

Groundwater samples of the forty selected wells were collected and taken to the chemical laboratory for the physiochemical. They were analyzed to establish the baseline groundwater conditions of the study area. At each sampling location of the forty wells, Groundwater sample were collected into a 2-litre polyethylene bottles each and immediately transferred into a rinsed 50cl bottles each with a well labelled samples tag and same taken to the laboratory for general physio-chemical analysis and microbial analysis. The wells were selected within a transient plot of 6km by 6km and the selected wells were randomly selected within the communities/sites within each transient plots. The fieldwork was carried out during the dry season (24th– 28th February, 2023 and also during the wet season (26th–30th June, 2023). The samples were collected and delivered for laboratory analyses within 24 hours for the accuracy of results. The forty well samples were tested with twelve water quality parameters: Colour level, Odour Appearance, pH of water, Temperature T(^{0}C,), Turbidity, Conductivity (mS/cm), Salinity (ppm), Dissolved Oxygen(mg/L), Oxygen (%,), TDS (ppm), TSS(mg/L), Total Hardness (mg/L) and Alkalinity level (mg/L) for the dry and wet seasons. The researchers aim to investigate whether there were seasonal fluctuations in the groundwater quality within the study area. The range and the mean for the samples were also calculated to give adequate information on the study area groundwater quality. The results were compared with the Federal Environment Protection maximum permissible levels), in order to determine their suitability and the significance of each parameter tested despite the season variation to denote the significant level of the water quality of the study area with Standard Organisation of Nigeria (2015) standard limits and the World Health Organization (2022) standard.

4. Result and Discussion

Assessing the Physiochemical quality of groundwater resource in the study area

This section presents findings from the assessment of physiochemical groundwater quality in the study area. Forty wells were sampled during dry and wet seasons, analyzing twelve parameters to explore seasonal variations and compliance with water quality standards.

pH

The pH of the water shows range of 5.0 – 7.4 in the dry season, with mean as 6.2; while the range during the wet season shows 4.2 – 6.8 with mean as 5.5. The Ph of water fluctuate between the two major seasons. During the wet season, increased rainfall can cause runoff, carrying organic matter and minerals from the soil into water bodies, which can alter the water's pH. In contrast, during the dry season, water bodies may have experience more evaporation, which led to the slightly elevated pH levels. Therefore, the pH is in conformity with standard of 6.5 – 8.5. One of the ecology factors that provides an important piece of information in many types of geochemical equilibrium is pH. It was based on this importance the findings revealed that the maximum pH value recorded was at 7.1 and the minimum was at 5.0 during dry season while the maximum pH recorded was at 6.8 and minimum was at 4.4 during wet season. In comparison of the findings to the standard values Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022), the results revealed no significance value. The result was similar in most cases in other studies conducted by various researchers as reported in the literature. Yadav et al., (2012) reported from their study that the pH value of 7.7 was recorded as maximum while 7.2 was recorded as minimum of the groundwater samples collected for the study. In the study of Ayodele et al., (2017), the pH value of 6.77 was recorded as maximum while 5.61 was recorded as minimum from the water samples of hand-dug well collected for the study. Jyothilekshmi, et. al. (2019) from their study reported 7.14 of pH value was recorded as maximum and 6.00 was recorded as minimum value of pH from the water samples collected for the study. In another study of Iyasele & Idiata (2011), 6.54 of pH value was recorded as maximum and 5.30 was recorded as minimum value of pH of the borehole water samples. Isa, Allamin et al., (2013) from their study reported 6.60 of pH value was recorded as maximum and 5.72 was recorded as minimum value of pH. Also, in the study of Nagamani, et al., (2015), the pH value of 7.2 was recorded as maximum while 6.9 was recorded as minimum without considering the seasons.

Odour

The results reveal on the forty samples that some samples are with slight indifferent smell in both dry and wet season; some with slight and major smell of decaying organism matter in dry and wet season respectively; some samples with no characteristic smell in both the dry and wet season; some samples with a slight and major sewage smell in the dry and wet season; some samples with slight smell of rotten egg in both dry and wet season and some samples with slight foul smell in the dry and wet season and samples with no significant Odour in both dry and wet season.

Therefore, the odour range could be said to be from no significant odour to sewage smell in both dry and wet season which indicate that most of the samples are not in conformity with the required standard on Odour for groundwater which is to be odourlessless. This result indicates that most of the samples are not in conformity with the required standard of the Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) standard on odour for groundwater. This result was supported by Shukla et al., (2013); Iyasele & Idiata (2011) as they obtained odourless for the water samples collected for their studies. Similar results were also obtained by Nagamani et al., (2015) from their respective findings as zero value was recorded for Odour.

Appearance

The result shows appearances of small reddish tiny particle, Low concentration of visible particles, High concentration of visible particles and very Clear Appearance. Therefore, the appearance range could be said to be from low concentration of visible particles to very clear appearance in both dry and wet season which indicate that most of the samples are not in conformity with the required standard of Clear Appearance on Appearance for groundwater and drinkable water. The findings of the study revealed that either in the dry or wet seasons, the appearance was recorded as low particles which is significant over the standard values of Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) as no particle. The results is supported by the study of Iyasele & Idiata (2011) that reported the appearance of their samples as clear appearances and two with tiny particles and Okonko et al., (2008) from their study reported that the samples are appearances of small reddish tiny particle, Low concentration of visible particles, High concentration of visible particles and very Clear Appearance.

Temperature (^{0}C)

On Temperature (^{o} C), the result shows the range from 26.9 – 30.5 in the dry season with the mean as 28.7, while the range during the wet season shows 20.0 – 30.2 with the mean as 25.1. Temperature in the study area during the dry season tends to be hotter than the wet season. As a result, Warmer water can influence the solubility of certain substances and affect the rates of chemical reactions occurring in water bodies. Therefore, the temperature is in conformity with Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Standard Organization of Nigeria and World Health Organisation (2014) standard of <40^{o}C. On temperature of water samples, the findings revealed that the maximum temperature value recorded was at 30.5^{0}C and the minimum was at 30.1^{0}C during dry season while the maximum temperature recorded was at 30.2^{0}C and minimum was at 28.1^{0}C during wet season. This result was similar to various researchers in the literature. Nagamani et al., (2015) from their study reported 30^{0}C of temperature value was recorded as maximum and 29^{0}C was recorded as minimum value of temperature. In the study of Isa, et. al. (2013), 30^{0}C of temperature value was recorded as maximum and 26.6^{0}C was recorded as minimum value of temperature. Jyothilekshmi, et. al. (2019) from their study reported 27.5^{0}C of temperature value was recorded as maximum and 27.4^{0}C was recorded as minimum value of temperature. Also, in the study of Okonko, et. al., (2008), 29.2^{0}C of temperature value was recorded as maximum and 28.0^{0}C was recorded as minimum value of temperature. Ayodele, et. al., (2017) from their study reported 28.1^{0}C of temperature value was recorded as maximum and 26.0^{0}C was recorded as minimum value of temperature. Thus, in comparison of the findings to the standard values of World Health Oeganisayion (2022) and Standard Orrganisatiom of Nigeria (2015) the results revealed no significance value as <40^{0}C.

Colour

The laboratory results on Colour shows that the samples range between 4.0 - 305 in the dry season, while the range during the wet season is 3.0-315, of which some colour are seen as out of range for both dry and wet season. Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Standard Organization of Nigeria and World Health Organisation (2014) standard on colour for groundwater and drinking water is to be colourless, It is therefore obvious that some samples fell below required standard On the part of colour, the findings revealed that the maximum colour value recorded was at 48.0 and the minimum was at 33.0 during dry season while the maximum colour recorded was at 53.0 and minimum was at 31.0 during wet season which are average value of colourless. The findings correlate the standard values of Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) that establish the water sample colour to be colourless. This

result was supported by Iyasele & Idiata, (2011) study that colourless was recorded for all the water samples of the study but similar with Okonko, et. al., (2008) who recorded colourless for most of the water samples with exemption to one which was recorded as bluish colour. This was also similar with Jyothilekshmi, et. al., (2019) who reported that seven samples out of ten samples as colourless but difference with two samples as yellow colour and one sample as brown colour. Isa, et. al., (2013) from their study reported not determined for both maximum and minimum values of the colour of water samples.

Turbidity

On Turbidity the results of the analyses showed that the samples range from 1.0 - 37 in the dry season with the mean as 19, while the range during the wet season is 3.0 – 40 with the mean as 21.5. Turbidity refers to the cloudiness or haziness of a fluid caused by large numbers of prticles suspended in it. During the wet season, increased sediment runoff led to higher turbidity levels in water samples than the dry season with clearer and lower turbidity. Therefore, the turbidity is not in conformity with Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) standard of (NTU)5.

Turbidity is an important parameter that affects quality of water due to colloidal and extremely fine dispersions in most waters. The findings of the study revealed that the maximum turbidity value recorded was at 4.0 and the minimum was at 1.0 during dry season while the maximum turbidity recorded was at 6.0 and minimum was at 3.0 during wet season. In comparison of the findings to the standard values of WHO, SON and SON, the results revealed significance value as over 50% of samples shows greater value than prescribed value. Similar results were reported by Yadav, et. al., (2012) with turbidity value of 31.4 NTU which was recorded as maximum higher than the findings and 1.1 NTU was recorded as minimum value of turbidity closely to the findings. Nagamani et al., (2015) from their study reported that an increase value occurs for the value of turbidity. On the contrary, Ayodele, et. al., (2017) reported turbidity value of 0.6 NTU recorded as maximum which is below the findings and 0.1 NTU was recorded as minimum value of turbidity from their study which is also below the findings. Isa, et. al., (2013) from their study reported 0.98 of turbidity value was recorded as maximum which is below the findings and 0.77 was recorded as minimum value of turbidity also below the findings. Also, below the findings, Iyasele & Idiata (2011) reported 0.0 NTU of turbidity value was recorded for all the borehole water samples and Okonko, et. al. (2008) reported 0.56 of turbidity value was recorded as maximum and 0.08 was recorded as minimum value of turbidity.

Conductivity

On Conductivity, the results showed yhe range of 0.1 - 3.54 in the dry season with the mean as 1.82; while the range during the wet season as 0.03 – 2.86 with mean as 1.45. Therefore, the conductivity is in conformity with Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Standard Organization of Nigeria and World Health Organisation (2014) standard of (ns/cm)1000. The usefulness of conductivity in estimating the cleanliness of water cannot be overestimated as this study sees it as an essential tool. The findings revealed that the maximum conductivity value recorded was at 1.52 µS/cm and the minimum was at 0.08 µS/cm during dry season while the maximum conductivity recorded was at 1.12 µS/cm and minimum was at 0.03 µS/cm during wet season. This result was supported by Nagamani et al., (2015) who reported that conductivity value of 290 µS/cm was recorded as maximum and 180 µS/cm was recorded as minimum value of conductivity; Ayodele, et. al., (2017) reported 586.00 µS/cm of conductivity value was recorded as maximum and 129.00 µS/cm was recorded as minimum value of conductivity; Jyothilekshmi, et. al., (2019) reported 625 µS/cm of conductivity value was recorded as maximum and 1.04 mS/cm was recorded as minimum value of conductivity; Iyasele & Idiata, (2011) reported 33 µS/cm of conductivity value was recorded as maximum and 0.02 µS/cm was recorded as minimum value of conductivity; Isa, et. al., (2013) reported 1092 µS/cm of conductivity value was recorded as maximum and 189 µS/cm was recorded as minimum value of conductivity and Yadav, et. al., (2012) from their study reported that the electrical conductivity ranges from 1580 micromhos/cm to 5200 micromhos/cm which they are all higher than the findings. However, in comparison of the findings to the standard values of Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) the results revealed no significance value which is lesser than prescribed value.

Salinity

On Salinity, the analyses show range as 64 - 1579 in the dry season, with the mean as 821.5; while the range during the wet season shows range as 53 - 8020 with the mean as 4036.5. Therefore, the salinity is not in conformity with Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Standard Organization of Nigeria and World Health Organisation (2014) standard of ppt N5. The findings revealed that the maximum salinity value recorded was at 1579 and the minimum was at 64 during dry season while the maximum conductivity recorded was at 8020 and minimum was at 53 during wet season. However, in comparison of the findings to the standard values of WHO and SON, the results revealed significance value which is greater than the prescribed value. Jyothilekshmi, et. al., (2019) from their study reported 0.0 psu for all ten water samples of their study.

Dissolved Oxygen

The result showed range of 1.5 – 4.7 in the dry season with the mean as 3.1; while the range during the wet season showed the range of 1.1 – 4.1 with the mean of the sample as 2.6. The concentration of dissolved oxygen in water can vary between the two seasons. In the wet season, increased water flow from rainfall can lead to higher oxygen levels due to aeration and mixing. In contrast, during the dry season, water bodies may experience reduced oxygen levels due to decreased flow and increased biological activity, such as respiration by aquatic organisms. Therefore, the Dissolved Oxygen is in conformity with Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) standard of Ny02 L = 7.5. The findings revealed that the maximum dissolved oxygen value recorded was at 2.5 mg/L and the minimum was at 1.5 mg/L during dry season while the maximum dissolved oxygen recorded was at 2.1 and minimum was at 1.1 during wet season. Ayodele, et. al., (2017) from their study reported 50.00 mg/L of dissolved oxygen value was recorded as maximum and 29.17 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of dissolved oxygen. However, in comparison of the findings to the standard values of WHO and SON, the results revealed no significance value which is lesser than the prescribed value.

Oxygen

On Oxygen (0_2) the analyses result shows range of 4.1 – 10.0 in the dry season with the mean as 7.0; while the range during the raining season as 3.8 – 9.0 with the mean as 6.4. Therefore, the Oxygen (^{0}2) is in conformity with Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Standard Organization of Nigeria and World Health Organisation (2014) of no particular standard. The findings revealed that the maximum oxygen value recorded was at 8.9 and the minimum was at 4.1 during dry season while the maximum oxygen recorded was at 6.5 and minimum was at 3.8 during wet season. However, in comparison of the findings to the standard values of Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022), the results revealed no significance value which is lesser than the prescribed value.

Total dissolved solids

On Total Dissolved Solids, the results of the analyses show the range of 1.0 – 199 in the dry season with the mean as 100; while the range during the wet season shows the range as 0.5 – 197 with the average range as 98.75. Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) refers to the total concentration of dissolved substances in water. In dry season, due to decreased water flow and increased evaporation, the concentration of dissolved solids may increase, leading to higher levels of total dissolve solids compared to the wet season. Therefore, the Total Dissolved Solid is in conformity with Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) standard of Mg/L500. Total dissolved solids are typically related to conductivity while water containing more than 500 mg/L of total dissolved solids is not considered desirable for drinking water supplies. The findings revealed that the maximum total dissolved solids value recorded was at 186 and the minimum was at 11 during dry season while the maximum total dissolved solids recorded was at 155 and minimum was at 6 during wet season. This result was in contrary to Yadav, et.al., (2012) with total dissolved solids value of 4950mg/l was recorded as maximum and was1020 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of total dissolved solids. On the other hand, Nagamani et al., (2015) supported the findings with total dissolved solids value of 75 was recorded as maximum and 58 was recorded as minimum value of total dissolved solids. Jyothilekshmi, et. al., (2019) from their study reported 297.5 mg/L of total dissolved solids value was recorded as maximum and 34.29 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of total dissolved solids. Iyasele & Idiata, (2011)

from their study reported 14 mg/L of total dissolved solids value was recorded as maximum and 0.1 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of total dissolved solids. Isa, et. al., (2013) from their study reported 547 mg/L of total dissolved solids value was recorded as maximum and 94 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of total dissolved solids. Ayodele, et. al., (2017) from their study reported 1.08 mg/L of total dissolved solids value was recorded as maximum and 0.16 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of total dissolved solids. However, in the comparison of the findings to the standard values of , the results revealed no significance value which is lesser than the prescribed value.

Total Suspended Solid

On Total Suspended Solid, the result showed range of 0.01 – 0.1 in the dry season with the mean of 0.05; while the range during the wet season reflects the range of 0.04 – 4.0 with the mean as 2.02. Therefore, the Total Suspended Solid is in conformity with Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) standard of Mg/L500. The findings revealed that the maximum total suspended solid value recorded was at 0.01 maximum and the minimum was at 0.10 during dry season while the maximum total suspended solid recorded was at 0.04 and minimum was at 40 during wet season. Ayodele, et. al., (2017) from their study reported 0.07 mg/L of total suspended solid value was recorded as maximum and 0.02 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of total suspended solid. However, in the comparison of the findings to the standard values of Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022), the results revealed no significance value which is lesser than the prescribed value.

Table 1. Summary of the Physiochemical Analysis

Characteristics	range		MEAN	MEAN	W.H.O
	Dry Season	Wet season	AVERAGE DRY	AVERAGE WET	& S.O.N
Ph	5.0 – 7.1	4.4 – 6.8	6. 5	5.4	6.5 – 8.5
Odour	Little Odour	Little Odour	Little Odour	Little Odourless	Odourless
Appearance	Low Particles	Low particles	Low particles	Low particles	No particles
Temperature (T ^{0}c)	30.1 – 30. 5	28.1 – 30.2	30.3	29.4	< 40^0c
Colour	33 – 48	31 – 53	Colour code	Colour code	Colourless
Turbidity	4.0	3.0 – 6.0	2.3	4.8	(NTU)5
Conductivity	0.08 – 1. 52	0.03 –1.12	0.95	0. 60	1000(ns/cm)
Salinity	64 – 1108	53 – 8020	571.1	1844. 5	^{ppt} N5
Dissolved Oxygen	1.5 – 2. 5	1.1 – 2.1	2.1	1. 68	Ny02 L=7.5
Oxygen	4.1 – 8.9	3.8 – 6.5	5.9	1. 68	No specification
Total dissolved solids	11 – 186	6 – 155	109.5	91.3	Mg/l=500
Total Suspended Solids	0.01 – 0.04	0.07 – 0.1	0.03	0.08	mg/l ns
Total Hardness	510 – 820	495– 790	625	599	(mg $caco_3$=250l)
Alkalinity	62. 5 – 1012.5	60 – 1010	562. 5	56	No Specification

Source: Author, 2024
Note: OOR was valued as 500 for the plotting of the graph

Total Hardness

On Total Hardness, the result of the analysis shows range of 93 – 980 in the dry season with the mean of 536.5; while the range during the raining season is 82 - 900 with the mean as 491. Therefore, the Total Hardness is not in conformity with Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) standard of (mg $caco_3$ = 250L).The property of water which increases its boiling points and averts the lather formation with soap is refers as hardness. The findings revealed that the maximum total suspended solid value recorded was at 980 and the minimum was at 93 during dry season while the

maximum total suspended solid recorded was at 900 and minimum was at 82 during wet season. Ayodele, et. al. (2017) reported total hardness value of 208.74mg/L was recorded as maximum and 36.20mg/L was recorded as minimum value. Yadav, et. al., (2012) from their study reported total hardness value of 1425 mg/L was recorded as maximum and 240 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of total hardness. However, in the comparison of the findings to the standard values of Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022) the results revealed no significance value which is lesser than the prescribed value.

Alkalinity

The result showed range of 25 – 1012.5 in the dry season with the mean as 518.75; while the range during the wet season is 60 - 1010 with the mean as 535. Therefore, the Alkalinity is in conformity with Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Standard Organization of Nigeria and World Health Organisation (2014) of no particular standard. Alkalinity value in water provides an idea of natural salts present in water and it causes the minerals to dissolve in water from soil. The findings revealed that the maximum alkalinity value recorded was at 1012.5 and the minimum was at 25 during dry season while the maximum conductivity recorded was at 1010 and minimum was at 60 during wet season. This result was supported by Yadav, et. al., (2012) with alkalinity value of 525 mg/L was recorded as mum and 330 mg/L was recorded as minimum value. Isa, et. al., (2013) from their study reported 100 mg/L of total alkalinity value was recorded as maximum and 60 mg/L was recorded as minimum value of total alkalinity. Ayodele, et. al., (2017) reported alkalinity value of 382.20 mg/L was recorded as maximum and 43.26 mg/L was recorded as minimum value. Similarly, Nagamani, SaraswathiDevi and Shalini (2015) from their study reported that an increase value occurs for the value of Alkalinity. However, in comparison of the findings to the standard values of Standard Organization of Nigeria (2015) and World Health Organisation (2022), the results revealed significance value which is greater than the prescribed value.

Dry Season Physiochemical Analysis

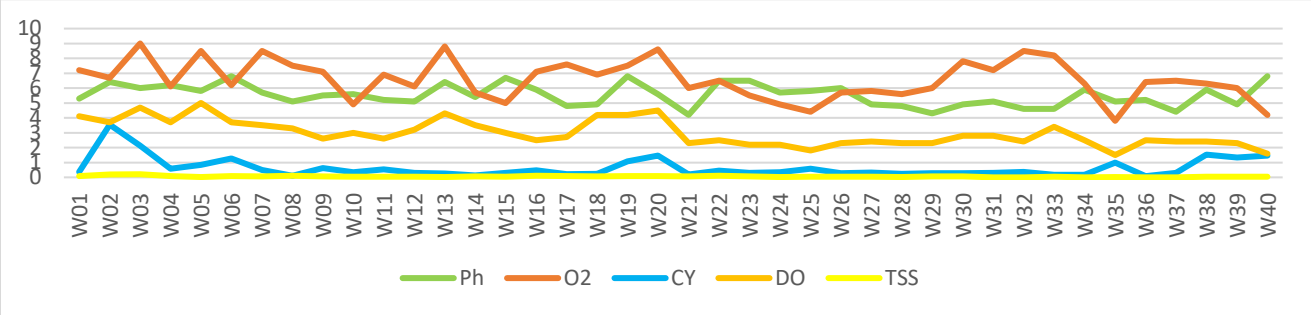


Figure 1.1: Physiochemical parameters of water samples in Dry season

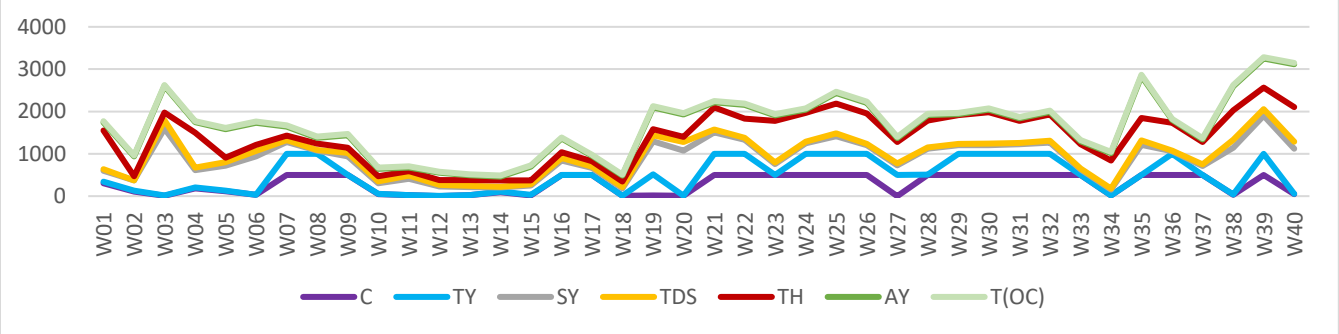


Figure 1.2: Physiochemical parameters of water samples in Dry season

Wet Season Physiochemical Analysis

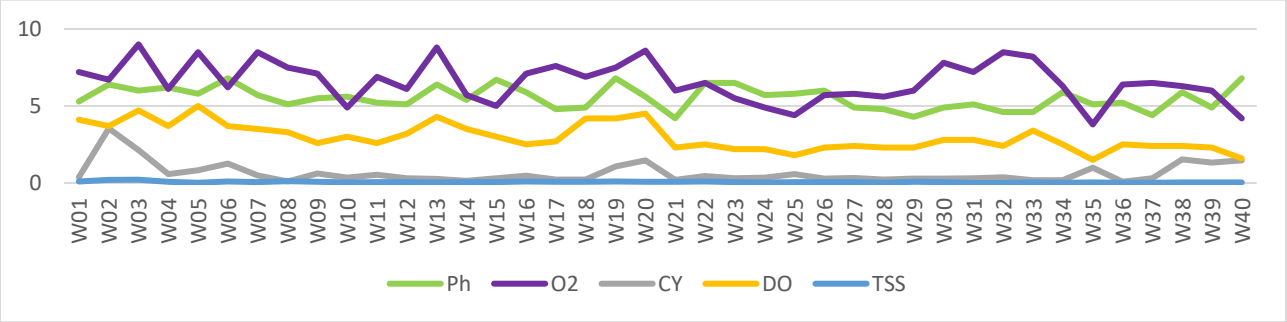


Figure 1.3: Physiochemical parameters of water samples in dry season

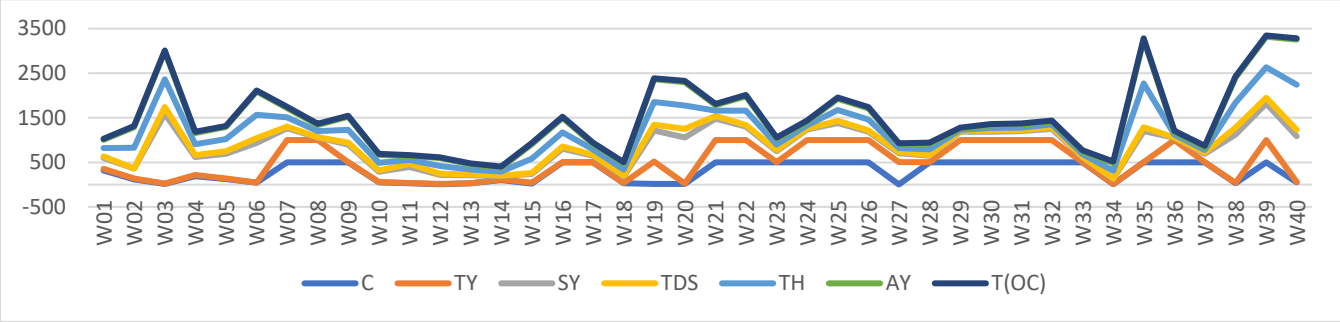


Figure 1.4: Physiochemical parameters of water samples in Wet season

5. Conclusion

The assessment of physiochemical groundwater quality in the study area revealed notable variations across seasons and parameters. pH levels showed seasonal fluctuation, likely influenced by rainfall and evaporation. Despite these fluctuations, the pH values remained within the standard range. Odour assessment indicated a range of smells, from slight to significant, with most samples not meeting the required standard of being odorless. Appearance assessments showed a mix of particle concentrations, with clarity falling below the standard. Temperature variations were observed between seasons, with values conforming to standard guidelines. Similarly, findings related to color, turbidity, conductivity, salinity, dissolved oxygen, and total dissolved solids were reported, showing some discrepancies with standard values. The study advocates for integrated water resource management, sustainable land use practices, and robust monitoring to preserve groundwater. There is need for stringent regulations, awareness campaigns, and collaborative research for sustainable groundwater management to ensure groundwater quality aligns with regulatory standards.

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Analysis of Urban Expansion and Land Use/ Land Cover Changes in Abeokuta, Nigeria using Remote Sensing and Geographic Information System Techniques

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Abstract. Since 1976, Abeokuta has functioned as the administrative centre of Ogun State, Nigeria. During this time, significant changes have occurred in its physical landscape, urban growth, and sprawl. These changes, driven by factors affecting Land Use/ Land Cover Changes (LULCC), pose environmental challenges such as transportation issues, land degradation, and pollution. This research investigates the impact of urban expansion in Abeokuta using Remote Sensing (RS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) techniques to monitor changes in land use and land cover from 1972 to 2022, and assess their environmental implications. The study identifies various Land Use and Land Cover (LULC) types, employing maximum likelihood classification to categorise features based on spectral signatures. Using imagery from Landsat satellites (TM4-5 for 1972,1984, 1992, TM7 for 2002, 2013, and OLI/MSS for 2022), the features were grouped into four primary classes: built-up areas, vegetation, drainage, and soil lands. Each year's data was processed using ArcGIS 10.5 to calculate the area covered by each land use class. The results illustrate notable changes in Abeokuta's LULC over the years. Specifically, the proportion of built-up areas increased from 0.66% in 1972 to 10.93% in 2022, while vegetation cover decreased from 93.66% to 58.82% during the same period. Drainage fluctuated, reaching a peak of 4.07% in 1992 but reducing to 2.23% by 2022. The soil land also varied, with significant shifts observed over the studied years (3.54% to 28.02%). The expansion of built-up areas at the expense of vegetation can be attributed to the conversion of natural vegetative surfaces into settlements and impermeable surfaces. The study underscores the importance of effective urban planning and enforcement of planning regulations by local and state governments in Abeokuta. This proactive approach is crucial to curbing the unplanned growth of the city and mitigating its adverse environmental impacts.

Keywords: Urban Expansion, Land Use/Land Cover Changes, Remote Sensing, Geographic Information Systems, Abeokuta

1. Introduction

Urbanisation refers to the growth in both population size and the geographical footprint of cities over time, traditionally seen as a marker of economic strength. As global urbanisation continues, the challenges of sustainable development increasingly centre on cities, especially in lower-middle-income countries where urbanisation is rapid and often uncontrolled (Cobbinah et al., 2015; Nagendra et al., 2018; United Nations, 2018; Guan et al., 2018; Aniekwe & Igu,2019; Shao et al., 2021; Rana & Sarkar, 2021). Cities concentrate production, knowledge, innovation, and economic growth, benefiting from agglomeration economies. They also facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and provision of public goods, enhancing human well-being. However, this ongoing urban development has led to continuous expansion into new territories, putting immense pressure on natural resources and exacerbating environmental issues concentrated within urban areas (Johnson, 2001; Hartig and Kahn, 2016; Cobbinah & Darkwak, 2016; Mosammam et al.,2017; Guite, 2019; Hosseini & Hajilou, 2019; Auwalu et al., 2021).

The expansion of cities contributes to increased emissions from transportation, loss of green spaces, and decline in ecosystem services, particularly biodiversity, all of which have negative environmental impacts (Rodriguez-Alvarez,2016; Cobbinah et al., 2017; Auwalu et al., 2021). Satterthwaite (2005) and Yakubu et al (2020) noted significant changes in urban areas from 1950 to 2000, underscoring the rapid economic growth and competitive dynamics among global cities (Yakubu et al.,2020). According to the UN-HABITAT (2002) and UNECA (2017), approximately half of the world's population resides in urban areas, with an even higher percentage in

developed regions, marking the 21st century as an "Urban Millennium."

Scholars have differing views on rapid urbanisation in Africa (Cobbinah et al., 2015; Saghir & Santoro, 2018;), with some optimistic about its potential for industrialisation, infrastructure improvement, and economic growth (Guite et al., 2019), while others view it as problematic, driven by population growth without corresponding development (Guan et al., 2018; Yakubu et al.,2020). Despite these varied perspectives, it is clear that African cities are experiencing significant demographic and spatial expansion, albeit with varying dynamics across different cities (Xu, 2019).

The benefits of urban growth must be balanced against its environmental impacts, which are more pronounced today than ever before. The increase in impervious surfaces due to rapid urban expansion contributes to air and water pollution, habitat fragmentation, resource depletion, and traffic congestion, while also influencing local climate patterns (Yang et al.,2019; Rubiera-Morollón & Garrido-Yserte, 2020). This research contributes to understanding urban environmental changes and their implications.

As cities expand, there is an expectation that economic development will improve living standards and transform both urban and rural areas positively. However, this expectation is not always met in developing countries, where urbanisation is often associated with persistent poverty, food insecurity, inadequate housing, transportation issues, environmental degradation, pollution, energy shortages, and poor planning (Yakubu et al., 2020).

The trend toward urbanisation is accelerating, particularly in developing countries, with millions of people migrating to cities each week (UN-Habitat, 2008; Yakubu et al.,2020). By 2050, it is projected that over 70% of the global population will reside in urban areas, with the majority in the Global South (UN-Habitat, 2009; Rana & Sarkar, 2021). In Nigeria, for example, more than half of the population already lives in urban areas (NPC, 2006; World Bank, 2020; Auwalu et al., 2021), driven by factors such as high birth rates, rural-urban migration, and the establishment of educational, commercial, and industrial centres (Mosammam et al., 2017; Wang et al, 2018; Wang & Maduako, 2018; Auwalu et al., 2021).

Abeokuta, a city in Nigeria, has experienced rapid urban growth, resulting in significant changes to its landscape and environment (UN-Habitat, 2018). This growth, driven by economic expansion, has led to the loss of natural vegetation, farmland, forest reserves, and biodiversity (Adedeji et al.,2020). Understanding the dynamics of urban expansion in cities like Abeokuta is crucial for promoting sustainable development, particularly in the context of global initiatives such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Anderson et al., 2017).

In summary, urbanisation is a double-edged sword, offering economic opportunities while also posing significant environmental and social challenges. Managing urban growth effectively is essential for achieving sustainable development goals and improving the quality of life in cities worldwide. The primary aims of this research are to investigate the changes in land use and land cover in Abeokuta from 1972 to 2022, and to assess the scale of urban expansion during this time frame.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Study Area

Abeokuta, situated in Southwest Nigeria, serves as both the gateway and the capital of Ogun State. It shares distinct borders with Oyo, Ondo, Osun, and Lagos, spanning longitudes 3° 31′ to 3° 41′ East, and latitudes 7° 09′ to 7° 23′ North (Fig. 1). Covering an area of approximately 70 km^2 relative to Lagos, within a broader land expanse of nearly 17,000 km^2, the city has a current population density of around 264 individuals per km^2 (Nkwunonwo et al., 2023). Ogun State, where Abeokuta is located, is home to about 4.5 million people spread across 20 Local Government Areas, experiencing temperatures ranging between 26 ºC and 28 ºC, and an average annual rainfall of 963 mm (Ishola et al., 2016). The region plays a vital role as a significant drainage basin in southwestern Nigeria, with the river Ogun flowing through its territories, eventually emptying into Lagos Lagoon and onward to the Atlantic Ocean in the southernmost part of Nigeria (Tobore et al., 2022). Geologically, the area's parent materials consist of basement rocks and sedimentary deposits. However, the rapid alteration of its natural geomorphology and land-use patterns (Komolafe et al., 2015) underscore its susceptibility to sudden and rain-induced flooding. Consequently, spurred by burgeoning economic growth and socio-cultural activities, the area has witnessed substantial industrial and urban expansion (Kabisch and Haase, 2013; Senan et al., 2022).

Abeokuta, the capital city of Ogun State in Nigeria, has experienced significant urban growth over the

decades, evolving from a historic settlement to a bustling urban center. Initially founded by the Egba people in the early 19th century as a refuge from slave trade activities, Abeokuta grew strategically due to its location on the trade routes between Lagos and Ibadan. The city's growth accelerated with the arrival of Christian missionaries and the establishment of various industries, including cocoa processing, which fueled economic development. This period saw Abeokuta transform into a hub of commerce, culture, and education in the region.

In recent decades, urbanisation has intensified, driven by population growth, rural-urban migration, and economic opportunities. The city has expanded outward with new residential and commercial developments, leading to the integration of formerly separate communities into a contiguous urban area. Infrastructure development has been a crucial aspect of Abeokuta's urban growth, with improvements in transportation, healthcare, education, and utilities enhancing the quality of life for residents. The government has also prioritised urban planning and development initiatives to manage the challenges associated with rapid growth, such as housing shortages, traffic congestion, and environmental sustainability. While facing urbanisation challenges typical of developing cities, Abeokuta continues to evolve as a dynamic urban centre, poised for further growth and development in the future.

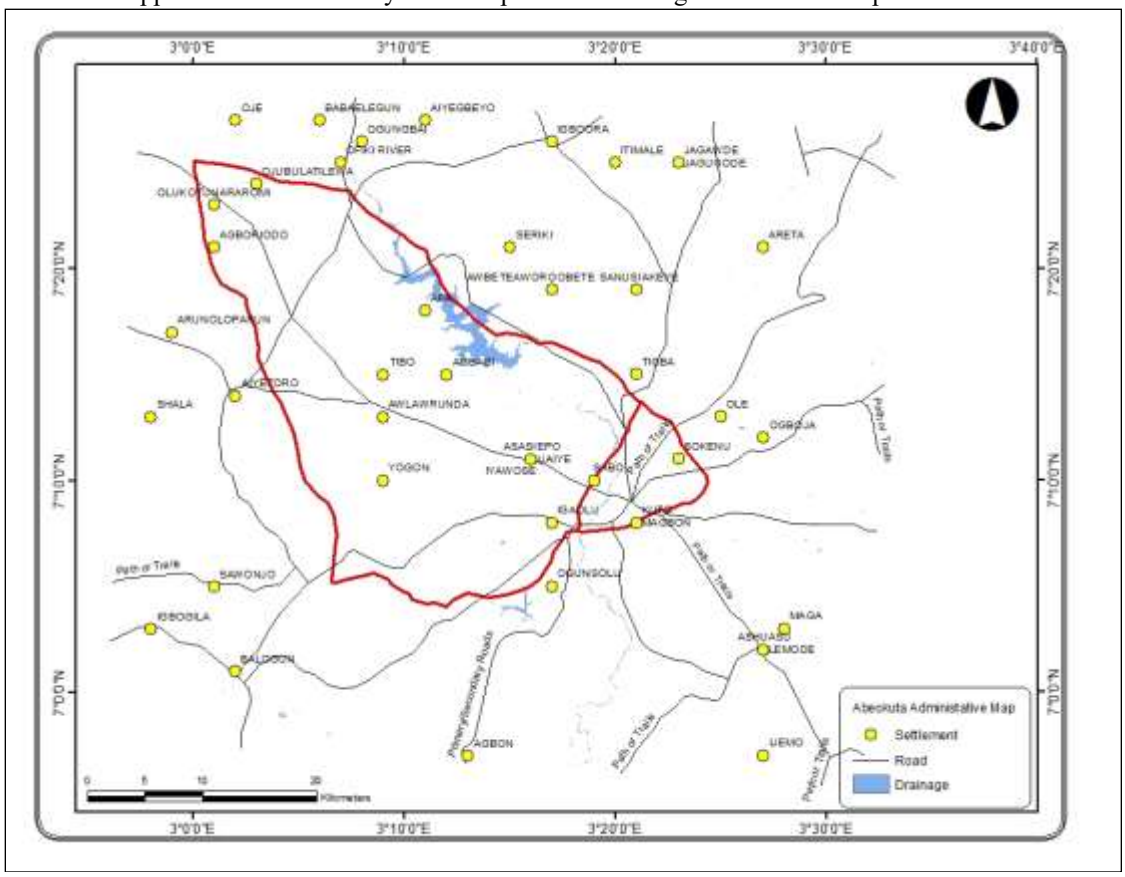


Figure 1: *Administrative Map of Abeokuta*
Source: *Ogun State Ministry of Physical and Urban Planning, Abeokuta, 2018.*

2.2 Data Collection

The study utilised Satellite Imageries of Abeokuta with Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Remote Sensing (RS), and direct observations. Additional data, including Ground Control Points (GCP), topographic maps, Google Earth imagery, and historical land use plans along with digital maps of Abeokuta, were sourced from the Ogun State Ministry of Physical and Urban Planning to aid in analysis and validation. Field surveys were conducted to collect ground reference data using a handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) device. The primary method involved comparing satellite images of Abeokuta downloaded from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) website (https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov) at six (6) intervals over five (5) decades (1972, 1984, 1992, 2002, 2013, and 2022) (Table 1). This approach facilitated analysis of changes in urban growth direction and extent across these periods.

Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) within the study area (Abeokuta), using the Anderson 1976 LULC classification scheme (Table 2), was categorised into Built-Up, Vegetation, Drainage, and Soil areas. Maximum likelihood classification was applied to classify features based on their spectral signatures in Landsat 4-5 (TM), Landsat 7 (TM), and Landsat 8 OLI/MSS images for the respective years (Table 1). The total area of each land use category for each year was calculated using the field calculator in ArcGIS 10.5.

Table 1: Satellite Data Sets Used in the Study

S/N	Satellite Number	Year	Date of Acquisition	Path/Row	UTM Zone	Datum	Spatial Resolution(m)	Source
1	Landsat TM 4-5	1972	18/8/1972	205/55	31N	WGS84	30	USGS
2	Landsat TM 4-5	1984	2/4/2014	191/55	31N	WGS84	30	USGS
3	Landsat TM 4-5	1992	30/12/1992	191/55	31N	WGS84	30	USGS
4	Landsat TM 7	2002	28/12/2002	191/55	31N	WGS84	30	USGS
5	Landsat TM 7	2013	18/12/2013	191/55	31N	WGS84	30	USGS
6	Landsat 8 OLI/ MSS	2022	2/2/2023	191/55	31N	WGS84	30	USGS

Source: *Author's Field Work, 2024.*

Table 2: Land Use/Land Cover Classification Scheme Adopted for The Study

S/N	Land Use/Land Cover Classes	Description
1	Built-Up	Area of land used for residential, transportation, and communication.
2	Vegetation	Terrain dominated by trees, grasses, bushes, and plants.
3	Drainage	Area that are submerged under water, such as lakes, rivers, and dams.
4	Soil	Cultivated farmland & irrigation zones

Source: *Author's Field Work, 2024.*

2.3 Data Analysis

The collected data were imported into a GIS environment for further analysis and computation. The effectiveness of using remotely sensed data to detect changes in land cover hinges on careful selection of the data source (Yakubu et al.,2020). In this study, Landsat TM 4-5, 7, and Landsat 8 OLI/ MSS satellite images with a 30-meter resolution covering Abeokuta were utilised (Table 1). Additional bands (4, 3, and 2) were generated and resampled for a new display. A color composite was created using a Region of Interest (ROI) vector frame from the study area map in ArcGIS 10.5, which was then imported into the IDRISI Selva Version 17.0 environment as a shapefile. This facilitated delineation of the study area's Region of Interest (ROI) from the satellite image scene. For the color composite, band 4 of the Landsat image represented red, while bands 3 and 2 represented green and blue, respectively. This color combination is considered effective for studying Land Use/ Land Cover (LULC), particularly in identifying built-up areas, vegetation, soil, and drainage.

Therefore, prior to the change analysis, it's crucial to preprocess satellite images to establish accurate relationships with biophysical conditions (Abd El-Kawy et al., 2011; Coppin et al., 2004), rectify atmospheric conditions, and ensure reliable data. Successful land cover mapping and change detection analysis hinge on appropriately processing satellite images (Hassan et al., 2016).

Change analysis was conducted on Landsat images from different years to examine patterns and trends in land cover changes within the study area. Areas covered by each land use feature were calculated in square kilometres (Km^2) and as a percentage (%) as shown below in equation 1&2;

Area percentage = Count / Sum × 100…… (1)

Area in km^2 = Count (number of pixels) × Resolution of Image/ 1,000,000……... (2)

3. Results and Discussion

Table 3: Land Use/Land Cover Types Distribution in Abeokuta from 1972 to 2022

Year	1972		1984		1992		2002		2013		2022	
LULC Types	Km^2	%	Km^2	%	Km^2	%	Km^2	%	Km^2	%	Km^2	%
Soil	30.73	3.54	44.49	5.13	66.61	7.68	124.90	14.40	186.67	21.53	242.95	28.02
Vegetation	812.05	93.66	762.64	87.95	728.46	84.01	677.84	78.18	595.01	68.62	510.05	58.82
Drainage	18.53	2.14	29.26	3.37	35.25	4.07	24.70	2.85	27.41	3.16	19.34	2.23
Built-up	5.73	0.66	30.75	3.55	36.77	4.24	39.64	4.57	57.99	6.69	94.74	10.93
Total	867.05	100	867.14	100	867.10	100	867.08	100	867.07	100	867.08	100

Source: *Author's Field Work, 2024.*

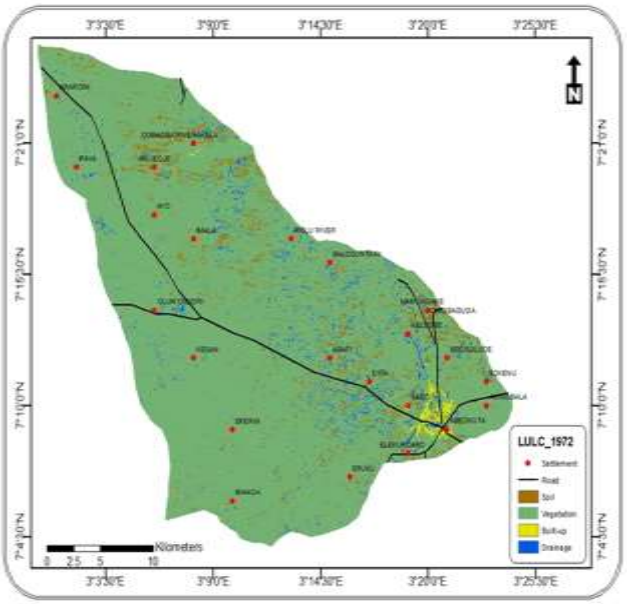


Figure 2a: LULC Classified Map of Abeokuta For Year 1972.

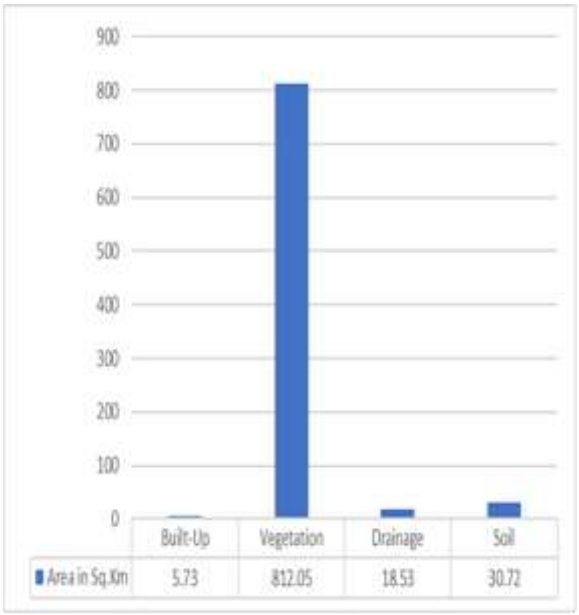


Figure 2b: The Extent of Classified LULC of Abeokuta For the year 1972.

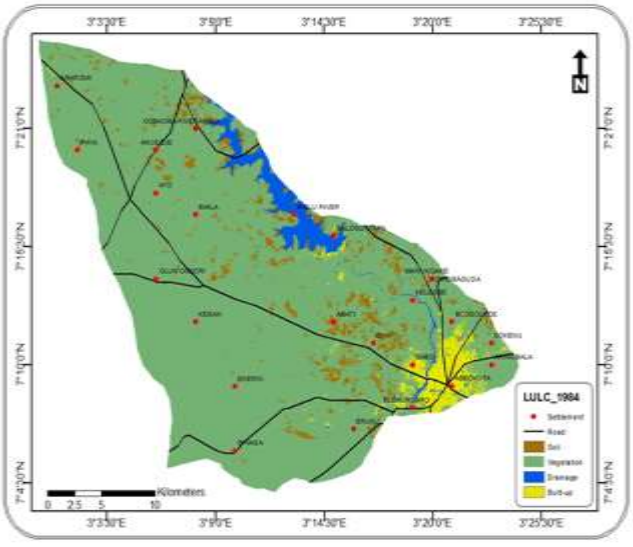


Figure 3a: LULC Classified Map of Abeokuta For Year 1984.

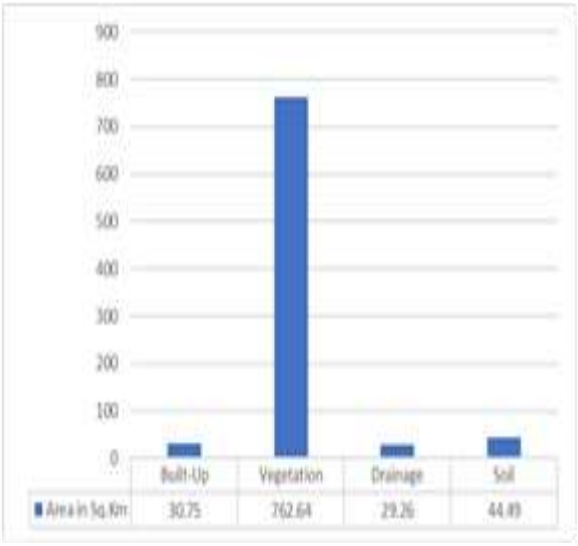


Figure 3b: The Extent of Classified LULC of Abeokuta For the year 1984.

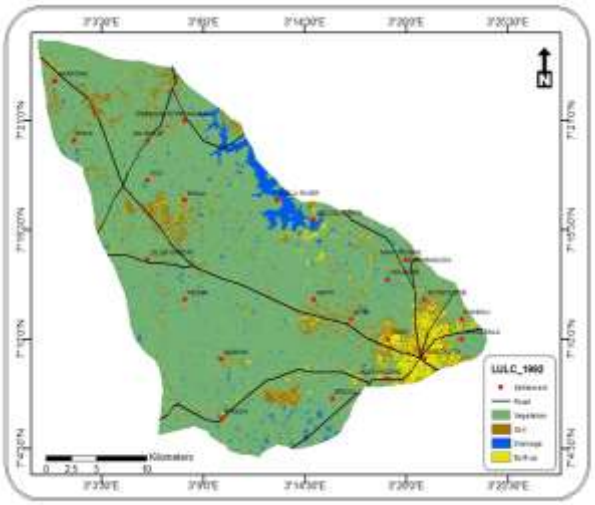


Figure 4a: LULC Classified Map of Abeokuta For Year 1992.

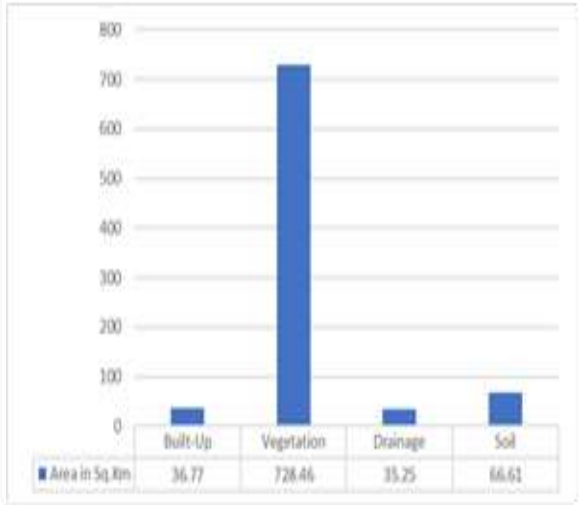


Figure 4b: The Extent of Classified LULC of Abeokuta For the year 1992.

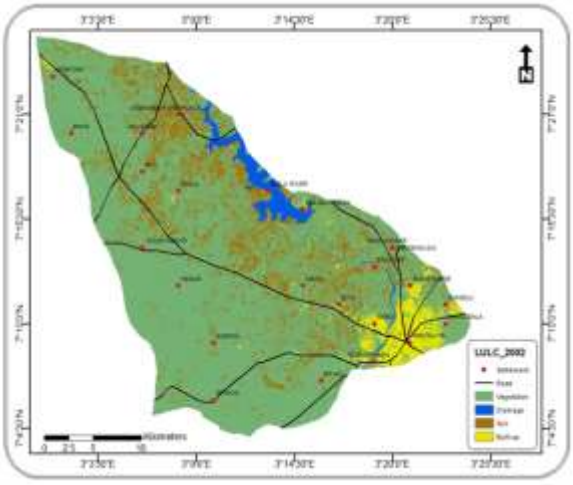


Figure 5a: LULC Classified Map of Abeokuta For Year 2002.

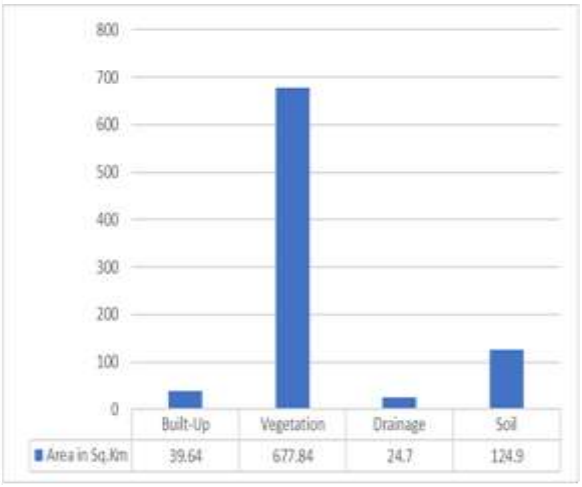
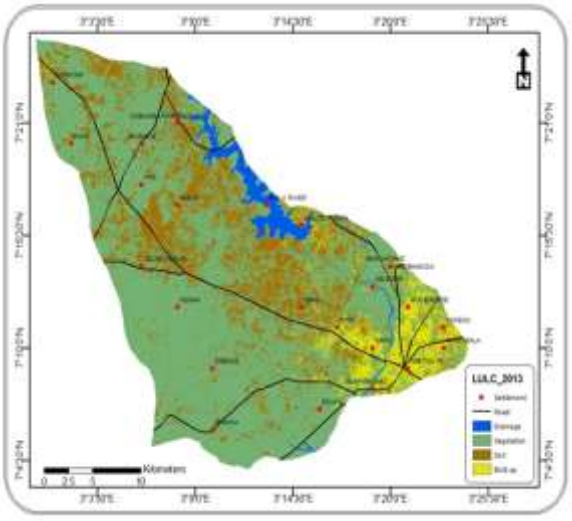


Figure 5b: The Extent of Classified LULC of Abeokuta For the year 2002.



LULC Classified Map of Abeokuta For Year 2013.

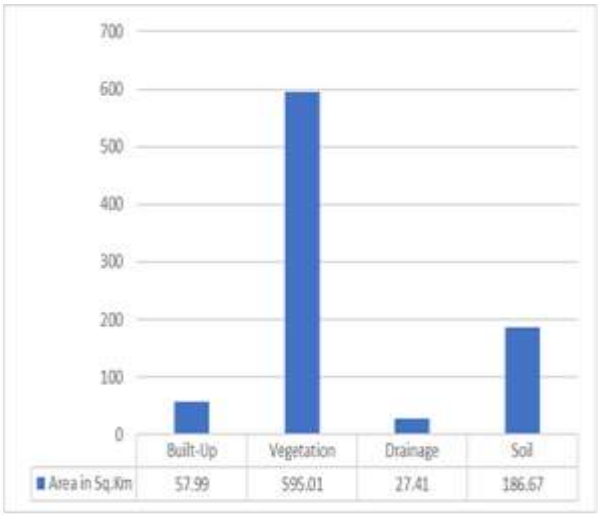


Figure 6b: The Extent of Classified LULC of Abeokuta For the year 2013.

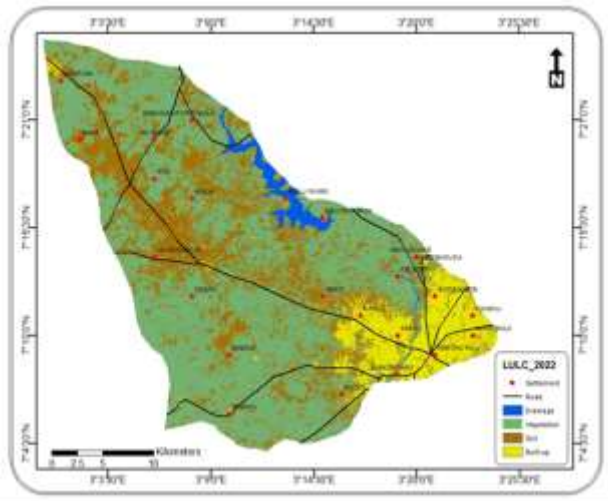


Figure 7a: LULC Classified Map of Abeokuta For Year 2022.

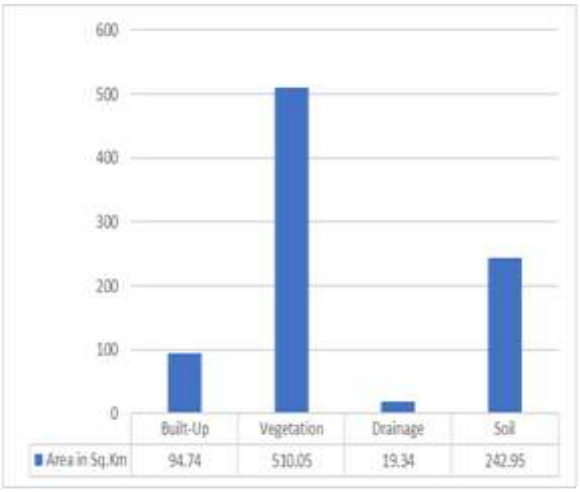


Figure 7b: The Extent of Classified LULC of Abeokuta For the year 2022.

Table 3 summarizes the findings for 1972, 1984, 1992, 2002, 2013, and 2022 regarding the four-land use and land cover categories studied in Abeokuta. Meanwhile, Figures 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6b, 7a, and 7b illustrate the land use and land cover patterns for the years 1972, 1984, 1992, 2002, 20123, and 2022 respectively.

Built-up/Urban Area: The built-up area, which includes residential and commercial zones, expanded significantly over the years. In 1972, it covered 5.73 km^2 (0.66% of the total area), expanding to 30.75 km^2 (3.55%) in 1984, 36.77km2 (4.24%) in 1992, 39.64km^2 (4.57%) in 2002, 57.99km^2 (6.69%) and further to 94.74 km^2 (10.93%) by 2022. This growth is attributed to population increase, influx of migrants, and economic activities driving urban expansion beyond municipal boundaries into peri-urban areas (Boitie, 2018; Hosseini & Hajilou,2019; Omurakunova et al.,2020).

Vegetation: The area covered by forests, shrubs, and agriculture was substantial in 1972, totaling 812.05 km^2 (93.66%). By 1984, this area reduced to 762.64 km2 (87.95%), 728.46km^2 (84.01%) in 1992, 677.84km^2 (78.18%) in 2002, 595.01km^2 (68.62%) in 2013, and by 2022, it further decreased to 510.05 km^2 (58.82%). This decline indicates conversion of vegetated areas for urban development, roads, and public amenities (Cobbinah et al.,2017).

Soil Land: Open spaces and road networks, categorized as bare surfaces, occupied 30.73 km^2 (3.54%) in 1972, increasing to 44.49 km^2 (5.13%) by 1984, 66.61km^2 (7.68%) in 1992, 124.90km^2 (14.40%) in 2002, 186.67km^2 (21.53%) in 2013. However, by 2022, this area expanded significantly to 242.95 km^2 (28.02%), reflecting new land opened for roads and other urban infrastructure (Kuusaana & Eledi, 2015; Cobbinah et al.,2017).

Drainage Area: Areas classified as wetlands and water bodies covered 18.53 km^2 (2.147%) in 1972, expanding to 29.26km^2 (3.37%) by 1984, and 35.25km^2 (4.07%) in 1992. By 2002, this area reduced to 24.70 km^2 (2.85%), 27.41km^2 (3.16%) in 2013, and 19.34km^2 (2.23%) due to urban encroachment and human activities such as water extraction. This poses risks like increased impervious surfaces and vulnerability to flooding from stormwater (Gerald et al., 2020).

In summary, the study highlights significant transformations in land use and cover in Abeokuta over five (5) decades, driven by urbanisation and associated socio-economic factors.

The majority of new land development primarily stems from the conversion of agricultural and forested areas, a trend consistent with findings by Balogun et al. (2011). Urban expansion inevitably impacts the urban environment, introducing uncertainties regarding urban sustainability (Nagendra et al., 2018; Kaur & Garg, 2019; Xu, 2019). Rapid and extensive changes in land use and land cover significantly affect ecosystem services (Wang et al., 2018).

In Nigeria, urban development poses considerable risks due to inadequate planning frameworks and limited resources, resulting in new urban residents often settling in high-risk zones (Balogun et al., 2011; Kaur et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2018; Garg, 2019).

Falade (1985) and Ehrlich et al (2018) advocates for policy makers to adopt strategies that promote effective planning and management of cities as critical drivers of national economic growth and sustainable development.

This study offers valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, and decision-makers into the dynamics of urban expansion in Abeokuta and its implications for future urban planning. Understanding these patterns is crucial for developing effective policies and management strategies to manage urban growth, especially as Abeokuta's urbanisation rate continues to rise.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Over a fifty-year (5 decades) span in Abeokuta, the analysis of land use and land cover revealed a rise in built-up/urban and soil areas, coupled with a decline in vegetation and wetlands/water bodies. The expansion of built-up areas and consequent increase in soil areas resulted from the transformation of natural vegetation into urban settlements and impermeable surfaces. Implementing monitoring systems for the built environment is essential to enable planners and decision-makers to anticipate and address potential issues proactively amidst a changing environment.

This study underscores the need for urban planners, local authorities, and state governments to establish robust frameworks for enhanced planning and enforcement of regulations in Abeokuta. Such measures are crucial to curbing unplanned expansion and promoting sustainable development in the city.

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Part Four

Social Philosophy

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An Appraisal of Niccolo Machiavelli's Political Philosophy

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Abstract. The paper argues the thesis that morality is a significant concept in politics, and as such, one cannot divorce it from politics, or else, the very essence of politics, will be drained out that is, any act could be performed which can brutalise the citizens. While philosophers have through the ages been trying to show that morality is inseparable from politics, Machiavelli tried to do precisely the opposite. He tried to remove morality from politics and advised rulers to ignore morality if they want to be successful politicians or rulers. It is a well-known fact that morality is the soul of the society hence, any attempt to remove it from politics, will spell doom for that society. This is because, morality plays its pivotal role in any nation's development and advancement. It serves as a strong catalyst for nation's development and progress. It is against this background that the paper strongly argues against Machiavelli's political philosophy and all that it stands for. In order to achieve its intended objectives, the paper discusses meaning and definition of political philosophy, the task of political philosophy, Machiavelli's political philosophy and its criticism. The paper concludes that morality plays pivotal role in politics which will of course, catapults the nation to accelerated development.

Keywords: Niccolo Machiavelli, Political Philosophy, Morality, Governance, Development.

1. Introduction

There is no gainsaying the fact that morality, which is concerned with the question of right and wrong in human behaviour plays vital role in the society. It deals with how men ought to behave and why it is wrong to behave in certain ways and right to behave in certain other ways. In other words, morality studies the reason certain kinds of actions are morally wrong and why others kinds of actions are morally right and commendable. It can also be defined as the science of virtue and vice. We cannot deny the fact that the study of morality is of the utmost importance because of the question of right and wrong, good and bad in human conduct can't be overemphasized. Human being is so constituted that it is not all kinds of actions that befit his nature and lead to happiness and self-fulfillment. Certain kinds of actions befit his nature, promote his general well-being and lead him to happiness and self-fulfillment. Other kinds of actions on the other hand, are antithetical to his nature and militate against his general well-being, happiness and self-fulfillment.

By extension, to live a moral life is the law of man's own very nature and to throw this law to the winds and behave anyhow can never, in the final analysis, be in man's own interest. Besides, it must be noted that an immoral society is also a sick society. By an immoral society, we mean, a society permeated with corruption, dishonesty, fraud, selfishness, misgovernance and other social maladies that may affect the development of the society. Any sick society needs to be cured and the best cure is through a moral regeneration. Indeed, such a regeneration is imperative if the country is to make any meaningful progress in development. The relevance of this is to serve as a theoretical framework upon which this paper is based or anchored. It has to be reemphasized that morality should not be separated from politics in contradistinction to the position being supported by Niccolo Machiavelli.

2. A Conceptualization of Political Philosophy

According to Popkin, Stroll and Kelly (1956:56), it is difficult to formulate a precise definition of political philosophy, because, it seems to have no special subject matter of its own. Its main tasks are in part, to describe past and existing social organisations, in which respect, it seems to duplicate the findings of economics, political science, anthropology, biology, and sociology; and in parts, to evaluate these organisations, in which respect, it is like ethics. They opine further that it describes the essential features of various types of governments and at the same time,

asks such questions about them as: what is the ultimate justification for the existence of any form of government?

On his part, Gbadebo (2012:4) opines that by political philosophy, is meant a branch of philosophy that analyses the state and related concepts such as political obligations, law, social justice, constitution, etc. it does this through a concerted effort both to make sense of what we do on the one hand, and to prescribe what we ought to do on the other hand. Political philosophy has also been defined as philosophical reflection on how best to arrange our society in terms of political and social practices (Warburton, 1999:2). This also includes, but not limited to the process and establishment of our economic style. It seeks to establish basic principles that will for instance, justify a particular form of state, showing that individuals possess their inalienable rights. It also helps in establishing ideas of how to share the society's resources among its members. This goes a long way to explain and interpret ideas like justice, freedom, authority and democracy and their critical application to the present and social political institution.

3. The Task of Political Philosophy

Without mincing words, the central task of political philosophy is to prescribe how an ideal state ought to be organized. Given this reality, it is expedient to draw our attention to Machiavelli's political philosophy. The point we want to emphasize here is that his political philosophy is fraught with problems and challenges which this paper seeks to address. This question now is this: can a society be governed rightly or correctly without paying attention to morality? Is it always the case that the end justifies the means? Is this not fallacious, erroneous and misleading? Okolo (1993:1) affirms that political philosophy evaluates ideal forms of social life and group behaviour, how men or group ought to live or behave in pursuit of common goals or ideal life. Moreover, Falaiye (2012:129) affirms that the central issues of political philosophy may be divided into the following areas:

- What is the relationship between the individual and the society?
- Can the existence of government or state be justified?
- What abstract principles should guide the operation of government, regarding its aims and limits of its authority?
- What sort of constitution, political institutions and legal system should a given government have?
- What practical public policies should apply to specialized areas, such as the police, defense and international relations, economics, public finance and welfare?

All these are well addressed in political philosophy through its philosophical tools.

4. Niccolo Machiavelli's Political Philosophy

Having discussed in some details what political philosophy is all about, and the concept of morality, it is necessary to delve into his political philosophy. This will be fully analyzed and x-rayed in order to have proper understanding of his view. This will also serve as a strong catalyst in order to be able to have an in-depth knowledge on the trenchant criticisms or intellectual stones thrown at his political philosophy.

Machiavelli, the man whose name has become synonymous with evil, he was a staunch supporter of the republican forces in Renaissance Florence. His chief enemy was the power-hungry Medici family. Nevertheless, towards the end of his career, he wrote *The Prince*, a startling handbook for totalitarian government, and dedicated it to his political opponent, Lorenzo de Merdici. Ever since, critics have been divided in their opinion of Machiavelli's purpose. Spinoza and Rousseau insisted that *The Prince* was a satire on despotism and that Machiavelli remained loyal to his earlier republican faith. Other critics portray him as a great cynic and opportunist who really believed that the end justifies the means. But the bitter political truths he poured into his book, will continue to plague man as long as man remains a political animal (Machiavelli, 1963:VIII). There is no list of great books or of books that have most influenced men's minds on which Machiavelli's *The Prince* does not appear. *The Prince* marks an important step in the history of western man; a step towards the modern world, with its complexities and conflicts; a step towards the nakedness of modern man deprived of the shields of illusion. *The Prince* is quite simply, one of the great books of our heritage.

The question may then arise: who was Machiavelli? Niccolo Machiavelli was born on May 3, 1469 in the city and republic of Florence. Irele (1998:36) states that Niccolo Machiavelli was an Italian political thinker, and his political thinking revolves around the basic problem that confronted Italy at that time. He was a learned man, indeed a renaissance man who was encyclopedic in terms of learning. He was highly versed in classical studies, history, literature, etc., and all these show in his writings. He stressed further that the fundamental principle of his political thought is that private morality should not intrude into public affairs. His better known (and notorious) work, *The*

Prince was written as a piece of advice to rulers on how to deal with state matters. The point of Machiavelli is that the ruler should divorce private morality from public morality. Further, he believes that Christian morality cannot properly be used in the affairs of the state because, it preaches certain tenets that are incongruent with the public realms. He has a deep-seated pessimism about human nature. He thinks that man is baseless, corrupt, mindless, etc. He argues on the basis of these, that the ruler should possess the virtue of a masculine character and should have the warlike qualities of courage fortitude, devotion and the pursuit of success and glory.

Again, he is for the rule of one man because this will prevent diffusion of power, in other words, power should be concentrated in one man who can use it for maintaining peace and stability in the state. Now, before we go further, the poignant question is: how reasonable, workable and plausible is this? Did he ever think of the dire consequences of such an action? After all, there is this popular aphorism that says power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Is this democratic? Is this not autocratic, totalitarian, and dictatorship?

Moreover, Omoregbe (2010:59) depicts that *The Prince*, has made him famous because it was in this book that he boldly expressed his immoral views which have now come to be known as Machiavellanism. Western philosophers, have in one way or the other linked politics with morality. This has been the tradition. Morality is used as a check yardstick to the activities of rulers and to condemn certain kinds of political actions. Going completely against this tradition, to remove morality from politics and to grant complete autonomy from any moral restraint, or control. Machiavelli advises the prince (ruler) to ignore morality if he wants to be a successful ruler, for he believes that anyone who is able to maintain himself in power by any means (fair or foul) and ensure the security of the state is in order. The essential thing in politics, that is, the ultimate goal of politics according to him is to grab political power and retain it. Any means fair or foul, moral or immoral can be used to achieve this goal. But, taking this to a philosophical realm, is this not funny? Is this ideal at all? According to him, a ruler should be very prudent, shrewd, practical and swift in his actions. If circumstances demand the use of cruelty or brutality, he should not hesitate to use it. He should be ruthless and fast; let the whole thing be over within the shortest possible time. Again, we want to do a critique on this too. Why should a leader be ruthless? What does he want to achieve by being ruthless? Is ruthless being a good attribute a ruler should possess? In addition, he said the leader should be ruthless and fast and let the whole thing be over within the shortest possible time. Now, within a shortest possible time is a vague term. Such term, being vague is not allowed in philosophy. This is because no one knows the exact duration. It can be a year, two years or more. Is like saying "I will soon go"? The question is: how soonest is my soon? This is a vague term. Even, come to think of it, the brutality and cruelty within the short period might have very devastating effect on the people and the society.

Another vital thing in his political philosophy is that, which we have already adverted to, is that a ruler does not need to be morally upright, religious, honest, compassionate or humane. But he must pretend to be all these and use this pretense to achieve his purpose when circumstances demand. The question arises again: Is this a hallmark of a good and ideal leader? Why should someone recommend or advocate this: Is this not antithetical to an ideal society?

In the same vein, he also warns a ruler not to embrace such Christian virtues as patience, meekness, mercy, humility, self-denial, compassion, forgiveness, etc. (2010:61). Now, the issue arises again: What does he want to achieve? What type of leader does he want to produce?

Furthermore, a ruler should not always feel bound to keep his promises at all time. A ruler should not be truthful or honest always. He should not let people know his true intentions always. He should be ready to deceive if necessary. A ruler is not bound by any law or morality. He puts the ruler above morality (2010:63–64). Again, is this ideal? Should a ruler possess these "evil attributes"? These and many more call for serious attention.

5. An appraisal

This part is devoted to some trenchant criticism leveled against Machiavelli's political philosophy. Although some of these criticisms had been explained above, but for clarity sake, we shall now itemize and discuss these criticisms. Let it be clearly stated that once morality is taken away from government, we do not have government anymore. We have a gang of criminals or a gang of thieves with the key to the national treasury in their hands. The truth of the matter is that, it is impossible to separate morality from politics. It is wrong for him to opine that a ruler does not need to be humane. The does not need to be honest or humane; he does not need to be religious or compassionate. But, he must pretend to be all these and make use of this pretense to achieve his aim. Given this, this is abnormal to say the least, why should a leader go in this direction?

Again, Machiavelli's error is in his starting point, his premise. If the premise of an argument is not true, or erroneous, the argument is bound to end up in an erroneous conclusion, thereby making it unsound. His fundamental error lies in his absolutization of power which he erroneously considers as the ultimate goal of politics. The ultimate goal of politics is not grabbing of power, but the rendering of service to the people. The acquisition of power is itself a means, only a means of rendering service to the people. His other error is his view that the end justifies the means; that one can justifiably use and immoral means to bring about a good end. This is morally unacceptable; the end does not justify the means. A good end does not justify an immoral means used in bringing it about. This is not all, Machiavelli's principles are incompatible with democracy.

Similarly, Machiavelli's political ideas have been branded as crude, immoral and highly detestable. The point or hub of his idea can be encapsulated in the aphorism "the end justifies the means".

The politics of power requires that you use all means to retain it, hence, any means could be employed. But the question that looms large is: Is morality beyond the realm of politics? Or framed in another way; can we say that morality is not a significant aspect of politics? It is true that politics is about power, but, then, power is not necessarily all that is in politics. The power politics which he so much romanticized led him to advocate any means to achieve it. Yet, morality is a significant aspect of politics. Indeed, morality is a significant concept in politics, and as such, one cannot divorce it from politics or else, the very essence of politics will be drained out, that is, any act could be performed which can brutalize the citizens.

Furthermore, he was a political realist, he saw the whole essence of politics as a game of power, where one side wins and the other loses, and the loser is worse off for entering the political arena without adequate preparation, tactics and strategies. Also, it is wrong for him to recommend tyranny for the society. We want to believe that this is not ideal.
Above all, the balance sheet of his theory is decidedly not firm because the contemporary age frowns at the method he advocates for gaining and maintaining power, for it is believed now by most political theorists that morality plays an important role in the public sphere. The debate still continues about his theory because some have perceived him as the father of political realism, while his foes cast him as a crude, immoral political theorist. However, he could be better seen as an ammoral political theorist.

6. Conclusion

A cursory look at the paper discusses in detail what Niccolo Machiavelli's political philosophy entails. One fundamental point that runs through his political philosophy is that the means by which political power is acquired raised some fundamental questions on political consent, political obligation and political morality. His political philosophy cannot be fully comprehensively and holistically discussed, without making reference to his major work, *The Prince*. Here, he claims, inter-alia, that the power is the ultimate goal of politics, however, he neglected, overlooked and downplayed the crucial role that politics plays in the welfare of the people. He opined that any means through which power is acquired, is justified, be, via violence, cruelty and brutality. But the poignant question is: How can a state develop when power is acquired through violence means? He said that the end justifies the means, without paying special attention to the ethical implications and dire consequences of this. The truth of the matter is that there is a link, or synergy between morality and politics. We therefore, submit and subscribe tenaciously to the position or view that politics cannot be separated or divorced from morality. Morality is the "soul" of the society. Hence, to remove morality from politics, as wrongly advocated or clamoured for by him, akins, amounts and tantamounts to removing the soul from the body. In order to ensure peace, which will translate into development and advancement, there is dire and urgent need to bring back morality to governance and that, his political ideology which advocates for dictatorship and absolutism should be discouraged, vehemently opposed and radically rejected.

On a final note, Proverbs 29:2 says: when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice, but, when the wicked rule, the people mourn. In the same vein, Exodus 18:21 avers that "Look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate bribe, and place such men over the people to be rulers of thousands and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties and rulers of tens. These Biblical references further emphasize the importance of having moral and just leaders at the helm of affairs.

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A Review of Christians Participation in Nigerian Politics from 2011-2023

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Abstract. This paper sets to examine the challenges facing Christians Participation in Nigeria's political theatre of Fourth Republic. The study relied on empirical data and documented related materials for qualitative analysis. The study established that politics remains the avenue where societies choose leaders to govern and make policy for the popular majority of the masses in a democratic setting. Nigeria's current Fourth Republic seems to be the longest in the history of the nation having spent over twenty years of steady democratic rule. However, what informed this study is the level of Christian Participation in the politics of Fourth Republic that has been adjudged to be below expectation by the right-thinking citizens in the nation. For example, 2011, 2015, 2019 and 2023 general elections results released by Independent National Electoral Commission indicates voter apathy in a Christian dominated states across the country. While Christians are often first to cry foul of any government policy that is perceived to be anti-Christian, their participation however, remains below expectation. Hence the need to look at the challenges facing Christian Participation with aim of proffering solution to the challenges. Therefore, the study is not an attempt to polarize the nation's politics base on religious line but to encourage active Participation of genuine Christians for better representation and national development. The study concludes that for Nigerian project to succeed, Christians must be involved, not passively but actively. Christians are advised to be on the driving seat in bringing about the desired change in the country. This is because Christians are better equipped, placed and specially endowed by God through Jesus Christ to be different. Recommendations were given among which includes the need for awareness creation and mentorship by those Christians who are already in the theatre of Politics.

Keywords: Christians, Participation, Nigerian and Politics

1. Introduction

In a democratic society, political participation is an important tool for the development or underdevelopment of any nation, community or society in general. The level of political participation of any community in a democratic society determines the community's development. The implication of this is that every community need men and women of integrity in politics for the survival of the community. This brings to bear the assessment of Christian participation in Nigerian politics of fourth republic. Because while many Christians sees politics as legitimate service to God and humanity, other sees politics as deviation from God's divine purpose for a Christian. And the later view to a large extent has held many Christians from active participation in politics. Although Nigeria's fourth republic began with a Chr. istian democratically elected president Olusegun Obasanjo 1999-2007, followed by Umaru Musa Yar adua a non-Christian from 2007-2010, followed by Goodluck Jonathan a Christian from 2010-2015, to Muhammadu Buhari a non-Christian from 2015-2023, now Bola Ahmed Tinubu who is serving as the current president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It is important to note that even the Christians that hold power at centre in the fourth republic did so at the mercy of the non-Christians particularly the northerners looking at the indices of political participation. Hence, this work intends to unravel the challenges affecting Christian participation in politics with the aim of proffering solution.

2. Conceptualising Christianity, Politics, Political Participation

A Christian is someone who follows Jesus Christ, the son of the God of heaven. Someone who has resolved on his own conviction to be like Jesus Christ in words, actions and deeds. Christianity is a religion founded on Jesus Christ's teachings. Its followers worship in a

church. The English term "church" comes from the Greek word "ekklesia". This term was in use prior to the formation of the Christian church and essentially means "called out." "Use of the term prior to the emergence of the Christian church is important as two streams of meaning flow from the history of its usage into the New Testament understanding of the church," states the Holman Bible Dictionary (1991:259). Holman (1991:259) aver that the Greek term "called out" has two meanings: first, it refers to "an assembly of citizens of a Greek city" as used in Acts 19:32–39; second, it "was used more than one hundred times in the Greek translation of the Old Testament in common use in the time of Jesus." The Hebrew word for this second meaning is "qahal," which means "assembly." It can be used to describe an assembly of soldiers (Numbers 22:4), prophets (I Samuel 19:20), or God's people (Deuteronomy 9:10).

Ayim (2008:204) defines politics as the art of managing public affairs, or more specifically, the art of controlling the destinies of numerous people with their consent. It refers to the art of exercising authority as mandated by the people who will be affected by it. Politics, according to Mark Carl (2022:np), has existed for as long as people have had to distribute limited resources while resolving differences in opinions, beliefs, preferences, and needs. This suggests that politics will always be an essential part of the human condition as long as people exist. In fact, in his article "Aristotle's Political Theory," Fred Miller (2017) cites the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who argued that humans are "political animals" and that only by engaging in politics can each human achieve his or her highest potential and live fully. Politics encompasses all actions taken by the government and those who work for, serve, promote, and challenge it. In a democratic government, the people's vote determines who becomes the leader. The people lead first by electing a leader, and then the elected leaders begin to lead those who elected them. Politics affects everyone, either directly or indirectly. For example, political scientist Lasswell (1950) defined politics as "who gets what, when, and how." This implies that politics exists in everyday life. Politics exists wherever people interact to make decisions that affect them all.

Political participation refers to a citizen's political awareness and involvement in the governance process. Political participation in a democracy can take many forms, including voting for representatives at regular intervals, voting on political issues in referenda, forming political groups, and engaging in legal or illegal protests. Individuals who participated in such activities most likely expected, or hoped, that their actions would have an impact on the content of government policy. Klein (2005:1) expands on the idea of political participation by stating that "political participation can take many forms, the most notable of which is voting in elections, but also including joining a political party, standing as a candidate in an election, joining a non-governmental advocacy group, or participating in a demonstration." Invoking the United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, one can contend that engaging in politics is an essential civic duty that enables individuals to endeavor to impact public affairs. Further still, Klein distinguishes between general and specific forms of participation in public affairs such as “the activities of civic association, neighbourhood groups, social involvements, and social clubs, as well as formal procedures of governments” the specific form involves participation in elections (Klein, 2005:2).

3. INEC Results of (2011, 2015, 2019 and 2023) General Elections and Voters Turn Out in Christian Dominated States

The total number of voters registered for the presidential election on April 16, 2011, was 73,528,040. Total votes (voter turnout) cast 39,469,484 (53.7%). 1,259,506 votes were invalid or blank. Total valid votes 38,209,978. It is crucial to note that, turnout is the most important indicator of popular participation in an election and, by extension, the legitimacy of the government. Even though Nigeria's democracy was seen to be steadily strengthening, an average participation rate of 53.7% may not be considered low; nevertheless, a higher turnout in the 2011 election was anticipated. This election shows that in the South-South and South-East, where President Jonathan is believed to have strong support, the average turnout was 67% of registered voters, compared to 32% in the South-West, where he is thought to have strong opposition. The average turnout of registered voters in the North-West and North-East, which are considered opposition strongholds in the north, was 54%. This voting pattern reveals not only the likelihood of voter turnout inflation, but also its geographical disparity. If Jonathan's candidacy, an Ijaw man from the oil-rich Niger Delta, is taken as a plausible reason for the massive turnout in the South-South, it can be argued that the presence of three presidential candidates from the North, namely General Muhammadu Buhari of the CPC, Malllam Nuhu Ribadu of the ACN, and Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau of the ANPP, should have produced a similar level of turnout in the region (Omotola & Aiyedogbon, 2011:65-66). While it is true that this was one of the most well-attended elections in the

fourth republic's Christian-dominated states, it is also worth noting that Goodluck Jonathan's support in this region was more ethnic than Christian.

In the 2015 general election, only 31,746,490 (47.08%) of Nigeria's 67,422,005 registered voters were accredited for the 2015 presidential elections; 29,432,083 (43%) of votes were cast, with 28,587,564 (97%) being valid. This also shows a lower percentage of voter turnout in the 2015 presidential election compared to previous elections, when turnout was 52% in 1999, 69% in 2003, 57% in 2007, and 54% in 2011. A state-by-state breakdown of low voter turnout revealed that only 13 states had turnout of 50% or higher, and all of these states are in the country's north, including those ravaged by insurgencies. Other states, such as Abia and Anambra, recorded only 33% and 39%, respectively (Center for Public Policy Alternatives, 2015:1-2).

The final straw that broke the camel's back in terms of Christian voter turnout was the 2019 general election. According to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), the percentage represents 28,614,190 voters who participated in the elections. This is 0.91% less than the total number of accredited voters, who account for 35.66% (29,364,209) of all registered voters. The data further showed that just 33.18 per cent (27,324,583) of the 82,344,107 registered voters were valid votes that led to the final decision. According to NAN, President Muhammadu Buhari won with 55.6% of the total votes cast, or 15,191,847 votes, while his rival, Atiku Abubakar, received 41.22 percent or 11,262,978 votes. While Kano State had the highest number of votes cast 1,964,751 and 1,891,134 valid votes, Jigawa had the highest rate of voter turnout with 55.67 per cent (1,171,801) of its registered voters showing up for accreditation, followed by Katsina State with 48.45 per cent (1,555,473) and Sokoto State with 46 per cent or 871,891 valid voters.
But the greatest shock was seen in states dominated by Christians. For example, Lagos State led the states with the lowest voter turnout of 17.25 per cent (1,089,567), followed by Abia with 18 per cent or 323,291 votes and Rivers with 19.97 per cent (642,165) valid voters. With these results of voters turn out in the above states, it is a clear indication that the contribution of these few mentioned Christian dominated states among others is a thin of concern to all lovers of democracy.

The 2023 general election supposed to serve as an eye opener for Christians who deliberately show indifference regarding politics in Nigeria, to wake up from their slumber. The voter register released by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on January 11,2023, shows that 93.46 million Nigerians were eligible to vote in the 2023 general election, however only 87,209,00 number of PVCs were collected. Sokoto registered 2,172,056 PVCs and 96.6 percent (2,097,798) number of collected PVCs with only 27.9 percent (586,815) valid voters in Sokoto. Sokoto state comprises of 90 percent Muslims and 10 percent Christians. While Enugu which is highly populated by Christians with a percentage of 99 percent Christians and 0.5 Percent Muslims had a total number of 2,112,793 million registered PVCs and 94.4 percent (1,995,389) collected PVCs with only 22.8 percent (456,424) valid voters. In Kano there was 5,921,370 registered voters with a total of 5,594,193 PVCs collected representing 94% with 29.1 percent (1,631,459) voter's turnout. Rivers State had 3,537,190 million registered voters with a total of 3,285,785 PVCs collected representing 92.9. However, only 11.3 percent (369,949) voter's turnout. This analysis revealed that there was more voting participation in Muslim dominated areas than in Christian dominated states. This is a clear indication that areas where Christian are more dominated shows a gross lack of interest regarding politics.

4. Obstacle to Christian Participation in Politics

In Nigeria and other parts of the world today, politics has been associated and described as a game of manipulation, trickery, and deception. Undoubtedly, when described in these negative ways, it becomes challenging for a religious Christian who wants to abstain from the corrupt practices of this world to participate in politics. Nonetheless, wisdom demands that it is better understood from within than by blind judgment, because, poor participation does not change or sanitize the "evil game" as have been described by so many; rather, a good participation from a Christian point of view and Christ-like character can improve the quality of governance and politics in general.

The relationship between Christianity and politics is a historically complex subject that has been a source of contention throughout Christian history, as well as in modern politics between the Christian right and the Christian left. Thinkers have approached the relationship between Christianity and politics in a variety of ways, with many arguing that Christianity directly supports a specific political ideology or philosophy. Along these lines, various thinkers have advocated for Christian communism, Christian socialism, Christian anarchism, Christian libertarianism, and Christian democracy. Others believe that Christians should have little interest in politics or government (Adetoyese, 2019:11).

One of the great tragedies of the Protestant Reformation was the failure of the great Reformers John Calvin and Martin Luther to develop a doctrine of law, politics, and the state based on truly reformed and biblical principles. The Reformers did not make any radical changes in the fields of political science, statecraft, and jurisprudence because, as German scholar August Lang has demonstrated, they were so preoccupied with theological debates, religious controversy, and the struggle for survival that they simply did not have time to develop a reformed and biblical theory of politics and governance. This, among other factors, influences how Christians perceive politics today (Adetoyese, 2019:11).

The Nigerian political system identifies aspects of Nigerian political culture that appear to have discouraged the church from participating in politics. These include:

Do-or-die politics: In the nation, political figures of all stripes have been observed committing violent crimes in an effort to advance their positions of power. Many aspirants are willing to do anything, including murder their perceived political opponents, to advance to positions of leadership. Politically motivated assassinations are therefore common during election campaigns. The first reason according to Osho (2022) is the popular belief which is quite true to an extent that politics in Nigeria is conducted in darkness. the conviction that politicians in Nigeria are deeply rooted in occultism and diabolism. Nevertheless, involvement in occultism is a thing of choice not of force. As a Christian one can choose to be part of a dirty game or become the game changer. This notion of do or die has actually made even well-meaning Christians who go into politics approach it with the mindset of conforming to the evil played in Nigeria politics. As such, majority of the Christians who manage to participate in politics does not even belief in a free and fair conduct of elections.

Politics of bitterness: It is common in the country for politicians to begrudge each other. As a result, many politicians exhibit psendo-loyalty. The common statement, "I am loyal," is frequently heard even when the person speaking lacks any degree of loyalty.

Money politics: It is widely held that money is the answer to everything. This viewpoint has been misapplied to imply that votes can be purchased with money. As a result, politicians exploit the economic downturn in the country to offer money for votes.

Politics without ideology: Ideologies are supposed to guide political practice. This however, does not appear to apply in the country. It is difficult to distinguish the nation's political parties based solely on their ideologies.

Politics full of corruption, hypocrisy and Deceit: Corruption and deceit exist in politics in Nigeria because corruption and deceit exist in abundance in Nigeria as a whole. Corruption exists in almost if not every sphere of the Nigeria society. Undoubtedly, our politicians don't fall from heaven, as such most of them with a close look in the Nigeria society, engage in corrupt practices in other to make head way in the political setting. Unfulfilled promises litter the streets of Nigeria from the mouths of politicians.

Politics of god-fatherism: Some people have attained the status of quasi-gods in the political sphere. These people choose who gets appointed to positions of power on their own, disregarding democratic principles, and they breach engagement agreements with impunity. When their benefactors rise to positions of authority, they are forced to pay "royals" from the masses' common wealth, jeopardizing development (Falaye, 2016:6-7). God-fatherism in Nigeria Politics is one of the major pollutants. This is because even people who may not be qualified for setting offices are granted the privilege by hook or by crook by god-fathers who are in high positions.

Looking at the antecedents of Nigeria's democratic experience, it is reasonable to conclude that undemocratic practices in the polity are the results of moral decadence in our society. Since these have serious ramifications for the growth of the country, it is the church's duty to work toward changing Nigerian political culture. And in response to this quest, Ogunewu (2014) proposes prayers for political system in the country and leaders as advocated in I Timothy 2: 1-2) displaying integrity and decorum in all facets of life. This country cannot undergo transformation unless Christians in all spheres of endeavour set a godly example. Paul warns Christians in Romans 12:1-2 not to follow the ways of this world but to keep shinning. Being exemplary in the conduct of the business of the church. Frequently, Christians lament the violent tendencies in politics, yet show similar tendencies in church denominational meetings. We must, therefore remove the log in our eyes before attempting to remove the speck in the eyes of others (Matthew 7: 3-5). Demonstrating love: Our society is hungry for love – agape love. Those who are Christians, have an obligation to love everyone with sincerity and to lead model Christian lives. The majority of the political space blight in Nigeria can be

eliminated in our country, and those in positions of power will no longer be able to harbor in their minds the sins of arrogance, greed, hatred, hypocrisy, murder, jealousy, lying, and so forth.

5. Biblical Perspective of Politics

The question that often rings in the minds of many Christians is the fact that much has not been cleared on biblical perspective on politics. Particularly the evangelicals in Nigeria grew up with the notion that political participation is not biblical. According to Falaye (2016), most Christians believe that getting involved in politics is very wrong because Jesus refused to be made king by His followers. Many Christians believe that the Christian task is evangelism, not politics, with the belief that being involved in politics will cause a distraction from the Christian task of bringing lost sinners to Christ. Christians who want to enter politics are generally met with criticism: entering politics will be extremely difficult; there will be a great deal of pressure; they will often have to walk a tightrope between upholding their Christian beliefs and dispelling myths brought about by the public's unfavourable opinions of Christianity and so on. Undoubtedly, when Christians submit to such criticism, they arrive at the conclusion that politics is too difficult, which implies that all of leadership and governance have been given over to satan and people who prefer to love power over God. This is nothing less than a catastrophe for the nation.

It is important to note here that the original God's intention for man is not to rule man but to rule over all other creatures that were created by God. (Genesis 1:26-28). However, the need for man to rule man arose as human race increased in numbers and established societies (Genesis 6: 1-5). Falaye (2016) asserts that Genesis 1:26, Psalm 24:1, and II Corinthians 2:10 all support the idea that man is meant to rule and have dominion over creation under heaven. Also, God commands the believers to be involved in Great Commission, which involves discipline nations to observe all that Christ has commanded – (Matthew 28: 19-20). Given the foregoing, it is evident that these two responsibilities cannot be successfully completed outside of this world. Believers should understand that government is of God. Security, a sound legal system, equity, peace, integrity, honesty, and open governance are all desperately needed in Nigeria's fourth republic. This could only happen under a godly government that ensures justice for all. Godly government will suppress evil, stand against abortion, homosexuality, lesbianism, gay-marriage, money laundry, killing, kidnapping, thuggery, and praise the wonderful works of upright citizens and other works. Christians should enter into politics and point to God's righteous laws that can bring good benefit for the populace and lasting happiness as well.

The book of I Timothy 2: 1-4 and Matthew 22: 15-21 – show mutual relationship of church and state in the normal event of life. The state provides a proper atmosphere in which the churches carry on their work, for example, fire, police, protection, national security, postal services, general stability in society, education, water service and electricity. The church in the other hand has been instructed by God with the spiritual welfare of man by praying, for the governing authorities, pray for tranquility, for peace and preaching the gospel to bring men to faith and change their hearts, teach them to live godly lives. The only means it has to accomplish this is through the word of God. If Christians can partake or involve in politics, it can be of help, with the aim to enable every citizen to enjoy a quiet, undisturbed life. In other words, the government is to enact righteous laws that led to peaceful prosperity. Our society is hungry for love – agape love. Most of the ills of society including those in the political space can be traced to lack of love. John 13: 34-35 describe the Christians' identity as love. It is only with love that we can conquer our nation for Christ (Falaye, 2016).

6. Reasons why Nigerian Christians should actively participate in politics

Foremost Christians are to participate in politics because according to Matthew 5:14-16 Jesus admonished his disciples that they are the light of the world and the salt of the earth. There is a rich tradition of political engagement within the Christian faith and that engagement is rooted in a belief in the importance of bringing God's values and principles to bear on public issues. A thorough comprehension of Light's metaphorical meaning in Matthew 5:14–16 has the potential to completely transform Christians' moral and spiritual lives. The light highlights the disciples' missional identity and way of life (Minghat et al., 2023; Glushchenko, 2022). This identity and lifestyle challenge the status quo. Christ is telling Christians not to flee the world and also not to make any compromise. It is important to note that the world and its system are contrary to that of Christ and the church. However, politics and its effect on the Nation directly or indirectly has an impact on the church. As a matter of fact, certain policies which are inspired by ungodly politicians may directly impact the church. Murmuring and complaining of bad policies does not change the country in anyway. Christians should endeavor to be participatory so as to a fair representation in the government. More so, this paper is not centered on voting a Christian rather it is centered on participating

in politics. Hence, Christians should endeavour to shine the light in Nigeria politics. It is common sense to know that he who bears the light supposed to be at the forefront. One should not be thought of bearing the light and been at the rear. In biblical tradition, light has both literal and symbolic meanings of happiness, protection, orderliness, and exemplary life. One common theme in this literature is the idea that Christians have a responsibility to engage in the political process and to bring their faith to bear on public issues (Daanoy *et al.,* 2021).

In addition, if Christians do not participate actively in politics, they may not have a voice in shaping public policy and government decisions, which could lead to formulation of laws and policies that are not consistent with their values and beliefs. This could lead to a situation where the rights and freedoms of Christians and other minority groups are not protected, and where issues such as equity, fairness, and compassion are not given the consideration they deserve.
More so, if Christians do not participate in politics, they would miss the opportunity of using the divine wisdom of God in shaping the society. Joseph the son of Jacob in the Old Testament was appointed the second in command over Egypt. He did not refute the opportunity. Although, Egypt was a heathen nation that served other gods rather than Yahweh, yet Joseph accepted the divine opportunity to contribute to the preservation of lives during the famine that struck the then world, by solving the problem through the wisdom of God upon his life. So also, Christians can engage the wisdom of God is shaping cultures, ideas and corrupt system to the glory of God and the benefit of humanity. According to Proverbs 29:2 "when the righteous is in authority the people rejoice." Hence, the good of the nation is dependent on the kind of people leading her.

Christians are to be and participate in politics because Christian doctrine proposes a God who cares and is involved in the universe He created. The command to replenish the earth in Genesis 1:27 is to be put in paramount consideration anytime a Christian wants to imbue the attitude of political apathy.

Christians need to participate in politics to bring about the full purpose of God on the earth. Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy man from Arimathea, Judea. He was a good and righteous man who served on the Sanhedrin council while also secretly supporting Jesus. At the death of Jesus none of his close disciples the "big 12" could go close to Pilate to ask for the release or permission to take the body of Jesus to be buried. Rather they all fled and hid a secret place for fear of their lives. However, Joseph of Arimathea was wealthy, influential and had access to Pilate. Access to powers that be is crucial for the fulfilment of the will of God on earth. In Nigeria, through politics, one might be privileged to access a certain level of access.

7. Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following are therefore recommended for effective participation of Christians in politics of fourth republic. They are:

- Church leaders are advice to wake up to it responsibility of creating awareness to Christian that political participation is not sin, and in fact approved by God. The only concerns is the need for Christians with integrity to come into the theatre of politics for better representation.
- The church in general need to raise, the standard of the leadership criteria and behavior "as people in the world, but not of this world" who the heads not tails, Priests, Kings, peculiar people, Temple of God and Vessels of honour, ambassadors of Christ, battle axes and one in Christ.
- Christians have to recognize the need to step up sensitization about ethics, righteousness, good character, values particularly the in the politics of Fourth Republic that morality is fast eroding. The church also need to organize seminars on ethics and righteousness and their relevance to the church, politics, leadership, business, investment, partnership and national development.
- Church leaders should invest morally and financially on young Christians who are interested in politics by educating them to uphold their Christian basic beliefs and standards in spite of the temptation to act otherwise.
- Christian scholars should build a doctrine of law, politics, and the state on truly reformed and biblical foundations.
- Christian parents should encourage their children to study politics not just in a conventional manner but to study it personally in other to understand how politics permeates every aspect of the society. By so doing the chances of the future generation Christians participating in politics will become high.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, politics in Nigeria manifest along ethnic and religious lines. Hence, people should not see politics as blight or bad, it should be admitted that politics in any form is not bad but the political players are the ones often exhibit bad character. The paper ends with the observation that, in light of the Fourth Republic, Christian involvement in politics is not encouraging. Also, it is the findings of this paper that politics is biblical and God intention for every believer. It is the will of God for believers to participate in politics. Perhaps, the believer will be able to impart the lifestyle of God over the nation.

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Selected Bibliocentric and Socio-Cultural Practices and Necessity of Inculturation Hermeneutics in the Yoruba Context

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Abstract. Certain cultural practices were allowed by Yahweh of Israel in order to pass His message to His people. In this regard, the Canaanite cultural influences and environmental factors on some Jewish conceptions about their God, Yahweh Elohim could not be covered. Examples are attributing meteorological features to Yahweh in the Sinaitic and Exodus Traditions, such as "pillars of cloud", "fire", "sounding of trumpets", a reminiscence of thunder from Baal, the active god of the Canaanites, mountain patronage, theophoric names, building of altars and sacrificing on them to God and the rest of them could not be denied in order to show elements of inculturation and enculturation. It examined the gap that Christianity and its mission activities cannot only be hermeneutically spread through Eurocentric hermeneutics, which would amount to a fallacy, and which would make Christianity a foreign religion to the Africans that has no bearing to the African religious sensibilities and existential needs. This study filled this gap by drawing attention of the Africans to similar cultural practices in the Bible as they have the same and demonstrated that God of the Bible is also for the Africans. It also focused on the selected bibliocentric cultural practices found on the pages of the Judeo-Christian sacred text in the African context. It examined these cultural practices during the biblical world and juxtaposed them with similar African cultural practices. We located where certain biblical practices are similar to the African socio-cultural practices and how it could better illustrate the teaching of the Bible to the Africans with the tool of "inculturation hermeneutics" for the exegetes. Finally, it argues for the necessity of inculturation hermeneutics and summed up that inculturation hermeneutics is the lasting solutions to entrenching biblical hermeneutics to the Africans and the survival of Christianity in this century.

1. Introduction

The involvement of the inculturation hermeneutics in the biblical interpretation in a peculiar context such as African setting cannot be underrated. The survival and advancement of Christianity in a foreign land depends on its ability to adapt to the culture of the people it spreads its tentacle to. Inculturation Hermeneutics remains a major tool in the hands of the frontiers of the biblical teaching and the missionaries of Christianity to gain upper hands among the competitive religions that are struggling for the souls of the people to be converted. The richness or shallowness of the presence of Christianity in a foreign land is undoubtedly dependent on its sensitivity to the cultures of the natives it has contact with or encounters.

One reality about Christianity is the fact that it is global religion. It has spread to many tongues, peoples and nations under the planet heavens. Akinade (2010, xvi) supports this view when he submits that "this atmosphere has engendered new and creative insights from Christians all over the world that are spreading considerable amount of energy in defining Christianity on their own terms ."[1] People who have contact with Christianity and embrace the Judeo originating religion, termed Christianity, after the Jewish Preacher from Galilee, Jesus Christ and His disciples from various classes of the society, have claimed it to be their own religion and are trying to situate or localize it to their situations or conditions. This "religious possession" by the natives has changed the face of Christianity worldwide. "They have claimed Christianity as their own and they are expressing their faith with stupendous gusto and confidence (Akinade, 2010).

As a global religion, Christianity cannot remain the same or static with Euro-centric face, liturgy, dressing, preaching and expressions. Coming in contact with other natives and peoples with relevant cultures,

inculturation hermeneutics is inevitable. There were many obstacles before Christianity in its inception era, but with divine backing, it navigated across the Mediterranean world and spreads to different cultures. Landing in many different lands and cultures, there have been many forms and expressions of Christianity in the garb of many cultures. It could be affirmed that ability to have elements of cross-cultural contacts and adaptation to the culture it found itself is a life wire of Christianity in these areas. Where its frontiers had been excessively rigid and Euro-centrically inclined to the core, the Christian faith did not have grip footing. Christianity is more diffused now than before in its spread to other nations.

Selected Bibliocentric Cultural Practices in African Context

Undoubtedly, there are evidence of cultural practices, similarities and tendencies in the Judeo-Christian sacred text that are found in African cultural contexts. Suffice to say that these selected bibliocentric cultural practices show that certain cultures in a nation could be found in another tribe. It should be affirmed that the Holy Bible has its own peculiar cultures and it emerged within certain cultural milieu. The divine Author of the Scriptures, the Holy Bible allowed, under His providence, and used certain social-cultural practices to pass His message across to His people and other nations. It is certain that for the Divine to pass His message to the humans, there is a necessity to use human cultures, customs, languages and traditional practices to disseminate and interpret His messages for proper humankind understanding. Among numerous examples, we would select few to buttress our point.

2. The Circumstance- Names and Naming in African Context

Certain names came up in the Jewish culture, which are reflected on the pages of the Bible in order to show that they are circumstance-names (Bruce, 1989:245). For instance, after the death of Abel, who was killed by Cain, Adam gave birth to another son. He gave him a name, Seth, according to the circumstance he found himself. He said, *For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel who Cain killed* (cf. Gen. 4:25). By giving him the name, Seth, Adam found in him a replaced person in the position of Abel. Abel had vacated his position as the second born of Adam through an untimely death from the hand of Cain but Seth had come to fill that position. In a typical Yoruba parlance, such a circumstance is well at home. Investigation revealed taht having lost a son in any Yoruba family, traditionally and culturally, the next birth that survives will be given a names such as "Ropo", or "Firopo". This is a pointer that the family has lost a son or girl. At times, "Ropo" could carry a theophoric prefix or root, "Oluwafiropo", meaning, "God has replaced the deceased with this one". All this is to show the circumstance that revolves around his birth. We can say, Seth is the Hebrew name for Yoruba name "Ropo" or "Firopo".

Another circumstance name is Isaac, meaning, Laughter as given by Sarah, having waited for eighty nine years. In Isaac, Sarah found circumstance of the birth of Isaac to laugh. (Gen. 21:1-7). The circumstance that revolved around the birth of Esau and Jacob called for their names- Esau, meaning Red or Hairy and Jacob meaning, Supplanter (Gen. 25: 21-25). The name, Reuben in Genesis 29: 31-32, Joseph in Genesis 30:22-24, Moses in Exodus 2:1-10, Samuel in First Samuel 1:20 and Ichabod in I Samuel 4:19-22 portray circumstance-name. These are also found in traditional names. Certain names such as

Malomo, Do not go or Do not die again

*Duro*jaiye Stay with me or Do not depart (standing for Do not die again)

Kosoko There is no more hole for digging graveyard

These are all names of circumstance. The tool of inculturation hermeneutic approach to interpret Genesis 4:1-15, 25-26, will be meaningful to the African mothers who have experienced infanticide for years. Equating Jewish or biblical Seth with a Yoruba Rọpo, Firọpo and/or Oluwarọpo will be more meaningful to the Africans with the tool of inculturation hermeneutics in face of infanticide and/or any other disaster in the family.

3. Biblical Theophoric Names in the African Context

Theophoric names are common in the Bible among the ancient Jews. Such names include Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Samuel, Eli, Elimelech, Eliab, Eliakim, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and so on. Joshua, meaning, Yahweh is Salvation; Isaiah from Hebrew *Yesha'yahu* with its shortened form *Yashaiah* means Yahweh is salvation; Jeremiah from Hebrew Yirmeyahu or Yirmeyah literally means Yahweh throws, Yahweh Establishes, Appoints, or Sends." Ezekiel from the root *Yeheziel* means God strengthens or "Strengthened by God; Samuel- Heard by God or the name of God (see preface to the Books in the Bible); Eliab-My God is My Father and so on among others. These are Jewish traditional religious names that show and identify the bearers with their God. People bore names in the ancient near east and the Semitic world for various reasons that are very similar to the Africans. Abba (1989, 245), Rankin (1956, 157)

and Baur (1970, 611) have asserted reasons for given names among the Semites and their influence on the Jews. Olanisebe (2012, 74), in support of these reasons, submits that these factors include circumstances surrounding the birth of the child... the religious and social occasions happening during the birth of the child.

The Africans, especially the Yoruba, Ibo, Tiv, Igala, Nupe and others bore names associated with their traditional gods before their encounter with the Christianity. Examples of the Yoruba names associated with their divinities and gods are:

- Ogunbowale, meaning, Ogun, the god of iron has come home;
- Ogunsola, meaning, Ogun gives honour,
- Ogundare, meaning, Ogun justifies someone
- Sangogboye, meaning, Sango, god of thunder, has won a chieftaincy or excellence,
- Faleyimu, meaning, Ifa god of oracle, has overtaken this one, Faleti, Ifa has ears to hear
- Osunwole, water goddess comes home and so on.

Examples of Ibo names associated with their divinities are:

- Onyedikachi, meaning, who is like God
- Chukwuemeka, meaning, God has done great things
- Chizaramu, meaning, God has answered me or God answers me
- Okechukwu, meaning, God's own
- Chukwudi, meaning, there is God
- Chidima, meaning, God is good
- Chizoba, meaning, God saves

These names do not "folklorize" (Manus, 2002, 49-67) their religious beliefs in their gods only, they also bring or connect the past with the present their faith in them. The importance and meanings of names are well at home with the Africans. The Christians with theophoric and compound names such as Oluwaseun, Jesutofunmi, Olorunfemi, Jesufemi, Tijesuni, Jesulonimi, Olorungbeja, Olorundare, Oluwadarasimi and so forth will understand better the meanings and religious rationale and factors behind their names. The nature, reasons, purposes and circumstance surrounding their names as expressed in these names, the "dictated" destiny through the names they bear and how to protect their names are exposed to the bearers. Or how would African Christian converts know the in-depth meanings of their names beyond religious titles unless it is interpreted to them with the tools of inculturation hermeneutic, especially when they have bearing and similarities with the biblical theophoric names? This is the work of a biblical exegete using what they know already and using inculturation Hermeneutics tool to "net the goal".

4. Death Bed Speeches, Or Patriarchal Blessings and Curses in Africa Milieu

Falola (2016, 136) reiterates the reality of death among the Africans and its relatedness and connectivity with religious rites, celebrations and sacrifice. Precisely, he asserts that "culture (*asa*) and religion (*esin*) are interlocked and both involve services and duties to God, gods, goddesses, spirits, and to human beings. According to him, "people (the dead) are usually buried in their places of birth... Birth and death are united by land and identity (Falola, 136). The dead are buried into the bosom of the earth, mostly in Yoruba cultural practices. Rites are performed in order to bring the dead close to the family and community, where the living can contact them, seek their favour, prayer, guidance in times of disasters, calamities, existential needs and further communication and communion (Falola). All these forms of ancestors' veneration are rooted in Africa. As a result of the beliefs in the "existence" of the dead in the incorporeal worlds and close proximity of the departed ones to the living, their last wishes and speeches are not treated with levity because they are viewed as the "living dead" wishes to be carried out by their posterity.

African religion(s) is intimately associated with the reality of speeches of the elders. The blessings and curses from the old parents and elders in African society are never toiled with by the posterity. At least, there are two prominent death bed speeches recorded in the Bible. The first one is Jacob's blessings and speeches to his children in Genesis 49. Jacob had attained an old age and about to die but before he passed on, he called his children and blessed them. The blessings were in three divisions:

One, Blessings for children that served him, pleased him through their character. Two, curses on the children that did not meet these criteria. The third category was in general statements about the future of the children. The second-death bed speeches were those of David to Solomon in I Kings 2:1-9. He was well aware that he would soon die, I Kings 2:1-2a; Solomon was to be strong and prove that he is a man, that is, matured enough to take charge of the control of the nation as the king after him. Solomon was instructed to keep to pure Yahwism; observe the Torah, Law of Moses, the "ways", "statutes", "commandments", "judgements" and "testimonies" of Yahweh. The purposes are: one, Solomon would prosper if he followed the instruction. Two, God

would fulfil His covenant for him and three that Davidic dynastic might be established through him. Death sentences were passed over Joab and Shimei for their evils but the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite were to be spared and allowed to eat with Solomon on his table. These instructions detailed the wishes of David after his death, which he could not do while alive but to be executed by Solomon.

These patriarchal blessings and/or death bed speeches from Jacob, David and even Joseph in Genesis 50:22-26 show a Jewish cultural practices and in the Semitic world. The belief was that the aged fathers possessed higher authority and power, capable of conferring blessings, curses, futuristic sayings to the children and post-death wishes they wanted their posterity to execute. African fathers with grey hairs are also considered to be religiously powerful while on earth and spiritually potent to command respect, obedience and obeisance from their living ones. It is believed that what they have said or say is bound to be accompanied by powers of word and carry authority of fulfilment. These similarities in the bibliocentric cultures and African cultures cannot be fully interpreted with Euro-centric tools to the Africans and thus opens for inculturation hermeneutics to the Africans. The biblical exegetes have already gained a watered ground through this medium to make these instances known to their hearers. The evils in the speeches of their fathers could be reversed by the higher authority of the God of the Bible. It is no wonder that portions of the Bible such as the Gospel of John 1:1-5 and the epistle of Apostle Paul to the Galatians, chapter 3:13 and Colossians 2:14-16 are often quoted by the Africans while dealing with wrongly spoken words by the ancestors against them. This is to show the pragmatic nature of the religion in Africa.

5. Child Bearing and Adoption in Jewish Conception and Cultural Practices

This first birth on earth, which is recorded in the Bible, is in Genesis 4:1-2. The "occasion-name", Cain, Eve gave to her first born showed that she cherished child-bearing as one of the cardinal blessings of Yahweh to His creatures (cf. Gen. 1:28) after the fall. The infanticide that Adam suffered on Abel, through Cain was a painful one (cf. Gen. 4:25). The quest for child-bearing in the life of Abraham in Genesis 15:1-3 and the promise that followed (cf. Gen. 12:3; 15:4-5; 18:9-14); the prayer of Isaac and his plea that Rebekah his wife should conceive in Genesis 24:20-26; the struggle between Leah and Rachael for child bearing showed the importance of child bearing in the ancient Jewish socio-cultural beliefs and practices. Both the Deuteronomistic blessings in Deuteronomy 7:12-13, 28:1-14 and Davidic covenant contain the blessings of posterity-2 Sam. 7:1-17. The case study of Hannah in I Samuel 1:6-2:5 also shows how important child bearing was to the Jews. It is conceived as a curse and denial of divine blessing if one was barren among the Jews or a punishment from God (cf. Gen. 25:21; 29:31, 30:1-2. 2 Sam. 6:23). Child bearing was significant to the Jews for certain reasons.

- To enjoy the Abrahamic covenant
- To maintain their family line among their tribes
- To continue in the race and the posterity as Jews.
- To inherit the land as promised to Abraham's descendants

The same thing goes for adoption of children through a slave as in the case of Sarah and Hagai in Genesis 16 and cases of Leah, Zilpah, Rachel and Bilhah in Genesis 29:15-30: 24. In a situation where legitimate wives could not give birth to a child, the slaves or handmaids would be married to the husbands and their children would be that of the legitimate wife or wives. The Africans, especially the Yoruba have the same socio-cultural practice that is welcomed. In order to show the importance of child-bearing, the Yoruba have some coded words to describe this. Such include:
Omo l'ere aye, meaning, children are the lasting gains or rewards or profits on earth;
omo niyun, omo nide, meaning, children are gold and bronze,
omo l'aso or *omo l'aso mi*, meaning, children are my clothes for a cover.

Children are the greatest jewels and wealthy possessions because *iyun* and *ide* in Yoruba cultural settings are the priceless and most expensive ornaments, so they compare such with children, even though children could not be bought with money. According to Falola (2016), reproduction maintains this connection. Thus, the most disturbing problem is childlessness to the mothers. Without children, wealth, education, peace, fame and glory become loathsome. Anyone with children is rich because children can go beyond the heights of their parents, take care of them at old age and survive them. Infertility is seen as a great sign of human deprivation and denial of survival after death by the children. In order to procure religious solutions to the causes of infertility among the Yoruba, there is divinity in charge of children and fertility. It is called *Kori*, the Yoruba children divinity. She is a divinity in charge of caring for the children. Adebajo (1989, 12) supports this when he affirms that "the greatest benefit derivable from *Kori* is the gift of children... guides the children in their day to day undertakings. The care and guidance is always total

that within a short time the children would have grown and multiplied The inter cultural relatedness of these cultural beliefs and practice in both Jewish culture and Yoruba culture calls for inculturation hermeneutics. It is a ground well prepared for the biblical exegetes to plant the seed of the word in African soil and souls of the hearers.

Levirate Marriages, Burial rites and Mountain Veneration Versus Bibliocentric Cultural Practices and Inculturation Hermeneutics in African Context

Levirate marriage is another bibliocentric cultural practice in ancient Israel. Levirate marriage is a kind of marriage where a male who is a relative of the deceased gets married to the surviving wife and continues his lineage. (cf. Dt. 25:5-10; Ruth 4) This is found in among the Yoruba though not common in the cities nowadays but among the natives in rural areas. Many children have come out of this kind of marriage. Another one is the burial rites of parents, heroes and kings in ancient Israel seemed to have affinities with cultural practices in Yoruba cultures. The Semitic ancestry from where Abraham hailed from had influenced this practice in Israel. Burial grounds and graves were considered as sacred places and preserved. It was a cultural practice among the Jews to bury their ancestors in the same burial vicinity and caves- (cf. Gen. 23:1-20; 2:7-10.5). Isaac "was gathered to his people", probably he was buried in the same cave of his parents. (cf. Gen. 35:27-29). Jacob was buried in the cave that is in the land of Machpelah- Gen. 49:29-33 where Abraham and Sarah were buried.

Kings were buried in the same city and graveyard. David and Solomon were buried in the City of David (1 Kgs. 2:10; 1 Kgs. 11:41-43). Rehoboam, Jehosaphat, Abijam, Asa and the rest of Kings in Judah were buried in the city of David (1 Kgs. 14:19; 31; 15:24, 22:50; 2 Kgs. 9:28); except Manasseh who was buried in his own garden (2 Kgs. 21:18) and Joash who was not buried in the graveyards and tombs in Jerusalem. Tombs of the Jewish ancestors were part of the chief concerns of Nehemiah while in captivity (Neh. 2:1-3). Burial grounds of ancestors are preserved also in the Yoruba cultural practices. This is a factor for ancestors' veneration in African society.

Mountain venerations, patronage and mountaineering (Alabi, 2013, 44-45) occupy a conspicuous space in Exodus and Wilderness Traditions in the Pentateuchal Narratives. Riggren (1966, 46) submits that the Sinaitic Tradition betrayed the Canaanite culture and influence in the Jewish conception of sacred places and mountain veneration. The patronage of other sacred places such as rivers and pool such as the River Jordan and Siloam for healing respectively (cf. 2 Kgs. 5; Jn. 9: 1-7); sacred sites such as Gethsemane, pilgrimage to religious sites, the Temple and Synagogues are countenanced in the Bible. The incorporation of musical instrument, emotional dancing, the case of David in 2 Samuel 6:14-16 for instance are all at home with the African Christians. The transference of features of animal and qualities from nature to God in praises as witnessed in the Poetic books and the Psalter in particular point to cultural similarities in Africa. These are religious affinities in the Judeo-Christian sacred book with African religious cultural traditions, similarities and practices. They are equally open doors for inculturation hermeneutics in Africa.

Compelling Necessity of the Inculturation Hermeneutics in African Context

Reading through Acts of the Apostles 17 in particular, Christianity came across different cultural practices and religion. Paul sensing the level of the religiosity of people, and he found people of other religious cultures. Yet he could still direct them to the true God and another culture of new gospel of repentance and doctrine of resurrection from the dead. Paul understood the force of adaptation of his gospel in another culture. As the Greek language has a linguistic migration and cultural movement to the Hellenized world including the Jewish nation and Roman Empire, Christianity also demonstrated its migrating power and religious capability to cross to other nations, peoples and cultures. On landing on another man's land and cultures, it cannot be the same again.

Christianity did not survive on mono-cultural influence or factor even in the early years of its existence. The influence of Hellenistic language, Greek, (*koine* Greek), common Greek, certain forms, thoughts, terms, ideas, theological ideas and the rest betrayed the influence of inculturation in the Christianity. The biblical concepts, forms, thoughts, ideas and theological teaching are better expressed to the natives through their own cultural ideas, practices, forms, expressions and context. This calls for inculturation hermeneutics that appeals to the people rather than Euro-centric approaches. The linguistic force and meaning of "Amen" in Hebrew could be better illustrated with its Yoruba cognate *Aṣẹ* (Adodo, 2004, 34-36), which literally means "authoritatively confirmed" or "confirmed by authority". A Yoruba man who says "Amen" to a prayer offered for him might not understand the potency of the word but a traditional Yoruba man who says *Aṣẹ* to a blessing offered for him by an elderly person would better understand the force and/or authority of what is said.

This is because the cultural interpretation of the word *Aṣẹ* in Yoruba would mean so much to him than the Anglo-Saxon "Amen" that he says liturgically to the blessings.

6. Impacts of Translations of Bible into Other Languages and Inculturation Hermeneutics

The translation of the Bible into local languages has already shifted the paradigm from the centre of gravity to Afro centric arena, where the locals would see the message of the living God as their message and proclaim it as its frontiers and possess its blessings as its beneficiaries. A great strategic step was taken for inculturation hermeneutics through the translation of the Bible into various and different native languages. The translation of the Bible into numerous languages of the local doctrine does not support the idea that Christian message is a form of or an expression of any "culture imperialism". Its translations to other tongues rather affirm the original and relevance of other cultures, customs and practices in cultural hermeneutics. And Christianity in the way appreciates, recognizes, affirms, adopts, adapts and utilizes the cultural and traditional practices and values of the peoples and nations that God sends his message (Sammeh, 2003).[18] By implications, this shows that one, God accommodates inculturation and enculturation in the divine task of extending the works of the mission and evangelism. Two, God appreciates the fact that no matter how crude the cultural and traditional values and practices of some "unconverted ones" are, the missionaries or preachers cannot reach them outside their languages. This calls for inculturation hermeneutics. Three, of course, the missionary coming to preach to the nations has his own culture and it is a vehicle of preaching to people of other cultures; it is because Christianity first came to his land and culture that he could also make these factors vehicles of reaching the unreached. Or how could the natives see the message as their own in Hebrew, Latin or Greek language yet they are being told that God is for them? How can they be told to jettison the evident similarities in their traditional values and cultural practices to the biblical cultures, customs, and practices, yet we say the Bible is for them? This again calls for the necessity of inculturation hermeneutics. There cannot be proper and meaningful understanding of the message of the missionary if it is clothed and crowned in the cultures that are dominantly foreign to the natives.

The spread of Christianity to other cultures through translations of the Bible into local languages and rising of the local preachers cannot avoid the inevitability of contextualization and inculturation hermeneutics. The local preachers cannot interpret certain sacred texts with meaningful applications to the natives without contextualizing the message. Gone are the days that Christian message was Euro-centric and colourized with Europeanized garbs and culture. It is without argument that contextualization enriches Christianity in a foreign land. It disrobes the imperialism of Euro-centricity. Using the wisdom, native knowledge and culture of the locals to spread and interpret the Bible is unavoidable as the sacred text witnessed, attested to and accommodated from its origin. Muonwe (2011, 31), addressing this factor, opines that the utilization of the wisdom, philosophy, and in fact, the entire cultural riches of each people in the process of evangelization has been the goal of the Church, since the second Vatican Council. It is a vital key to the promotion of Christianity in foreign lands. Nearly all the African theologians who trained in the Western world and Europe adopted tradition-historical methods of interpreting the Bible and Christian message before their audience. By implication, this form of interpretation is foreign to the natives and insensitive to their God-given identity, uniqueness and fails to appreciate their age long acceptable cultural sensibilities on the platform of religious parlance. It could be said that there is much disdain and disrespect for anything African by the westerners across board. But those missionaries who incorporated elements of African values with deep appreciations made headways than those who did not.

7. Universality of the Christian Mission and Salvivic Message

The universality of Christianity and its very compelling message to the whole coupled with the Divine ownership of the cosmos negates exclusivistic inculturation hermeneutics in foreign lands. The Eurocentric preachers of Christian message and their claim to the Great Commission, which is universal, cannot be purely true if they are insensitive to the traditional values, customs, culture and practices of the locals. The compelling force of inculturation hermeneutics in African lands according to Sugirtharaja (1999, 11), "seek(s) to acquire and celebrate their God-given identity by delving into their indigenous resources" to interpret the Scripture in their own culturally relevant manner to their people. This makes the message of the loving God meeting their unique and existential needs as never before. The universality of the Great Commission, which the church is committed to, cannot be "a lone ranger" with Eurocentric hermeneutics and thrive among the natives. After all, God has given certain general revelation of Himself to other natives, tongues,

peoples and nations according to the Psalmist in Psalm 19:1-6 and the Epistle of Apostle Paul to the Romans in Romans chapter 1 verse 19-20. Inculturation hermeneutics, according to Adamo, may not be rightly observed by the westerners, "not because it is incomprehensible, untranslatable to indigenous languages, but because they (the African interpreters now using inculturation hermeneutics, emphasis mine), but because they employ ground rules which differ from the normal western rules set by the Eurocentric academy (Adamo, 2005, 2).

8. Local Charismatic Preachers and their Positives Waves

The indigenous discovery and acceptance of the Christian religion and message is rising daily. There are many charismatic preachers who now preach the gospel and control big audience and crowd. They are less concerned about the critical tools of interpreting the Scriptures but rather concern with how a particular text would meet the needs of their audience. Taking the text out of context is not their focus but pragmatic results among their audience. The *Aladura* (Owoeye, 2010:305) pioneers and frontiers, for instance, were not preoccupied with the tradition-historical approaches to the interpretation of the Scriptures but the power of the word to produce results that would meet the needs of their members. The new Pentecostals and new generation denominations practically believe in "noise and fire" mode of service for meeting the needs of their followers (Asaju, 2010, 96). These natives want to see how the universal Christian messages are relevant to their life and daily needs. Reading the passages of the Judeo-Christian sacred text, they are finding the relevance of the text to their situations. It should be noted that religion has never been theoretical or academic to the Africans but practical and pragmatic. If the message of God carries potent power that can produce results that meet existential needs of the people, the teaching, preaching, and utilization and interpretation of it must be result oriented and people oriented. If it must do this, inculturation hermeneutics is the wing on which it can fly, ride and thrive.

The fear of syncretism among the theologians and other custodians of Christian faith have risen to a level that it has become problematic to handle. Scholars such as Droogers and Greonfield (2001, 27), Ringgren (1966, 46), Shineller (1992, 52), Schreiter (1985, 145) and Pannenberg (1971, 86) among others have argued for and against the word "Syncretism" when there was debate on inculturation and African Christianity. We would like to call the attention of all to the fact that the cross is the centrality of the Christian message and the Man that was hung on it for the redemption of humanity. These pivotal factors have no corresponding universal positive effects, power and authority among all the religio-cultural beliefs and practices of nations. For instance, the efficacies of the suffering and death of the suffering Servant of Yahweh as the Light to all nations have no parallel and the same effects as Isaiah prophesied (cf. Isa. 49-53). Specifically, Isaiah says:

... It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
... I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth (Isa. 49:6).

Again, in Isaiah 53:11, it says:
He shall see the labour of His Soul, and be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.

The heroic action and sacrifice of Moremi of her only son, Oluorogbo in Yoruba Epic for the deliverance of Ile-Ife people, was not a match for the salvation of the whole Yoruba race but only for Ile-Ife people during the invasion of Ugbo people in the past recent years. We argue for the power behind the Christian faith and message with its penetrating force to root out the origin of man's problems, which is sin. The power behind Christian faith is God and His goal is to make His person and power known to all principalities that He sent His son to come and deal with them ruthlessly. This His son did through His atoning death and resurrection from the dead. Thereby, He offers life to all and Sundry that have faith in Him.

The goal of inculturation, according to Muonwe quoting Derrida, is integrating the Christian faith into a people's culture in such a way that this faith becomes, so to say, their way of life (2011). In the course of doing this, inculturation adopts and utilizes the cultural ways of life of the people such as their religious beliefs where there are similarities with Christian beliefs, philosophy, morals, arts, customs, ethics, traditions, mores, sayings as Paul did in Athens (cf. Acts 17:28) and so on. The purpose among others is to create better understandings and illustrations from among the natives and their environments through sound intercultural exegesis.

Christianity as a revealed religion has its identity beyond mere mind illuminations of humankind. It has survived many oppositions, compromises, cultural infiltrations and/or pollutions. Inculturation hermeneutics does not mean loss of Christian faith and its identity. Rather, it creates better understandings through the illustrations from the native environments of the hearers of its message. As Muonwe (2011) has

submitted, "it seeks to make this identity ever more recognized and appreciated in any specific cultural context. At the same time… helps to promote those values within them that are reconcilable with the Christian faith (Muonwe). There are values, patterns, habits, forms, traditions, practices and beliefs of people in other nations that are compatible with Christian faiths. Inculturation hermeneutics calls for the usage of these elements either by the "foreign" missionaries or the indigenous Church preachers of the Christian faith and message.

9. Imperativeness of the Incarnation of Jesus and Inculturation Hermeneutics

The doctrine of incarnation of the Son of God, came to the world argues for the inculturation hermeneutics. If Jesus Christ had come in angelic or celestial form, no one could have stood to see a heavenly super imposed figure and believed His message of redemption. In fact, it would have been impossible for Him to be arrested, tried, condemned, crucified, died, buried and resurrected because He was in "Spirit" form that could not be approached by the humans. If God had not come "in human flesh", the work of restoration and reconciliation would have been difficult. In as much as God defeated this celestial-terrestrial barrier, through incarnation, He has opened the way to eternal lesson of inculturation hermeneutics in African context. The message from heaven that the incarnated Jesus Christ brought was better understood because He used the "logos" of the Greek, the "light" of the Jews, the "vine", "figs", "bread", "wine from the vine", "the shepherd" of David's conceptions, "mustard seed", "wheat and tares" of the Jewish agricultural life, "the law of Moses" which the Jews were accustomed to, the "Temple", which was the most sacred place of worship to the Jews, "the Passover feast" and so forth as His inculturation hermeneutical tools to speak to the Jews and convince them that He came from heaven. It will amount to cultural pride and religious insensitivity to ignore relevant cultural practices of people we are dealing with and feel that the message belongs to them at the same time.

It is a fact that two nations may have similar culture and traditional values, but they are not exact or carry the same traditional in-depths or meaning and appreciations. Here lies the richness of the two different cultures. The heavenly or divine culture was brought to the world through the incarnated Christ. Here is the honesty of Christianity that the Son of God came from heaven but used the Jewish culture, language and environment to preach His eternal and redemptive message to the lost world. If He had spoken in heavenly language, it would have been meaningless to his hearers. He made His hearers sensitive and conscious to His message by pointing to and using common things in their environment. As a result, they felt at home and understood His message. Even on the cross, when He cried out "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani" the hearers knew that "Eli" means "My God", which was a root of the name of a prominent prophet in the history of their nation, Elijah (cf. Mt. 27:46- 47; Mk. 15:34-35).

Waliggo (1986, 11-12) asserts this fact when he submits that inculturation is "the honest and serious attempt to make Christ and his message of salvation evermore understood by people of every culture, locality, and time. It is the continuous attempt to endeavour to make Christianity truly, "feel at home" in the cultures of each people (Muonwe). In other world, to preach the gospel of incarnated and *inculturated* Christ in a new culture without elements of such environment is to make Christianity a definitive foreign religion in its homeland. Experience has confirmed that where there has been cultural adaptation, enculturation, acculturation trans-culturation and inculturation within Christianity in a new environment, the natives embraced it more than where it is exclusivistic and insensitive to others culture (Uwineza, 2011:103-112). It is to "masquerading" Christianity with its salvivic mission and foreign in look to the beholders. The emergence and revivals of the *Aladura* movements with their Africanized elements corroborates our argument for the necessity of inculturation hermeneutics. The *Aladura* incorporated the mode of worship and music (Adedeji, 2010:231-248) in African cultural practices to the gospel and thereby Africanized Christianity.

10. Inculturation Hermeneutics in African Christianity

Mulrain (1991:1) asserts that in the history of hermeneutics, it is glaring that "there has never been an interpretation that has been without references to or dependent on a particular cultural code, thought patterns, or social location of the interpreter. Sensitivity to one's environment in the areas of cultures, customs, arts, idioms, sayings, mores, traditions, philosophy, cosmological views and the rests is a great tool for the biblical exegetes to appeal to the religious psychics of his hearers in African context. In order to avoid the danger of "culture pride" from the exegete, considerable recognition must be given to the traditions and cultural practices of the Africans where they are in conformity with the teaching of the Word of God. Many African words are rich enough, well explained and illustrating when used to espouse, exposit and teach the Bible.

Just as the African cosmological views accommodates the spirit world, realities of sickness, pains, poverty, death, life, exorcism, blessings, influence of the unseen world over the seen world and the rest as it is found in the scriptures, Eurocentric terminologies cannot explain these better to the Africans. Any form of biblical exegesis and hermeneutics that does not accommodate and tolerate these African cosmological views and values, will definitely make the scriptures a "dead" book to the Africans and incapable of meeting their peculiar and existential needs. Hermeneutical tools such as form, textual, grammatical, historical, canonical, traditional, redactional and other critical approaches to the exegesis and hermeneutics that ignore the inculturation hermeneutics in African lands and for the Africans is amounted to preachers' oriented and a display of the Euro-centric theological brilliance and prowess that has no bearing to the desires and needs of the Africans. As Falola (2016:136) has rightly observed, "culture, defined and lived by the Yoruba (Africans emphasis mine) cannot be fragmented into autonomous pieces.

Religion is mostly pragmatic and practical to the Africans rather than idealistic or philosophical in approach. African religious approaches and practices tend more towards results orientations with a purpose of solving human life challenges, difficulties and problems rather than philosophical favour of the westerners. Anything idealistic, philosophical and theoretical in religion do not appeal as such to the Africans. Here lies the need for inculturation hermeneutics in the biblical interpretation in African soils if more new converts would be made and the converted sustained. This will further the entrenchment and sustainability of Christianity in Africa.

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Understanding the Nature and Functions of *Igbe* Priesthood in the Light of Old Testament Priesthood

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Abstract. *Igbe* religion is one of the variants of African traditional religion that have widespread expression in Urhoboland. It is native to the people of Urhobo the same way Judaism is native to the Jews. One common characteristic of both *Igbe* religion and Judaism is that both are monotheistic in nature; hence the priests are the officiants chosen by the Most High God (*Oghene*, Yahweh*)* to act as intermediaries between him and the people, particularly adherents. However, *Igbe* religion is often derogatorily criticised as fetish and heathenish by majority of people, particularly Christians who brand *Igbe* priests as witches and wizards. The objective of this paper is to present an expository discourse on *Igbe* priesthood to show its relationship with Old Testament priesthood. The essence is to phenomenologically show that the *Igbe* priest is not necessarily or inherently a witch or wizard, but rather s/he is an officiant divinely chosen or consecrated for service in the temple of God (*Oghene*). To achieve this objective, this paper adopted historical, descriptive and comparative approaches. More so, the phenomenological method was employed to investigate the nature and functions of priesthood in *Igbe* religion. The finding of the paper is that *Igbe* priests are officiants of the Supreme Being (*Oghene)* just like the priest of Yahweh in the Old Testament and their role is to connect the people to God (*Oghene*, Yahweh*)* and perform the roles of sacrificing, cleansing, healing and revelation of divine will. The recommendation of the paper is that *Igbe* religion should be closely studied to understand its foundations, nature and operations to avoid baseless criticisms, derogatory assertions and false conclusions.

Keywords: *Igbe*, Old Testament, priesthood, nature, functions.

1. Introduction

Igbe religion is a variant of African tradition religion. It was founded in Kokori Land from where it spread to other parts of the world (Afatakpa, 2016). *Igbe* is a well-recognized and widely practiced religion in Delta State particularly among the Urhobo people. So many people attend their worship and annual festivals. The most prominent officiating minister in *Igbe* religious activities, whether during worship or festivals, is the priest. There is therefore no gainsaying that without the priest, no *Igbe* service will be complete or worthwhile. The impact of *Igbe* religion and the mediatory role of its priests cannot be overemphasized, however many people do not understand the nature *Igbe* religion and its priesthood. Consequently, they treat it with the utmost disdain as fetish. As Omosor (2020) noted in one of his studies, the cultural values, beliefs and practices of the African peoples are often derogated and relegated to the background due to the eroding influence of western culture and civilization of which Christianity is a vehicle. It is the opinion of this study that this lack of understanding should be addressed by a phenomenological study of the religion, particularly to show the nature and function of the priest in relation to the Old Testament priesthood. *Igbe* is a very unique religion that deserves the attention of the world. Apart from Christianity, *Igbe* has the largest number of worshippers in Urhoboland. The religion is found in all parts of Urhobolannd.

The objective of this study is to phenomenologically investigate and examine the nature of *Igbe* priesthood priest in *Igbe* religion from the backdrop of the Old Testament priesthood. The essence is to provide understanding of the religious system and appreciate what its priesthood stands for or entails. To achieve this objective the study adopted the historical and phenomenological methods for the study of religion. The historical method was used in gathering data relevant to the origin of Kokori land and the *Igbe* religion. The phenomenological method used mainly oral interviews and participant observation to gather primary data concerning the office of the priest in *Igbe* religion. In terms of scope, the study limited itself to a brief origin of *Igbe* religion and the origin, nature and functions its priesthood. More so, the study only

highlighted the nature and essence of Old Testament priesthood with a view to showing the nexus between *Igbe* priesthood and that of the Old Testament. The significance of this study is underscored by the need to objectively investigate and document the various forms of indigenous religions in Africa, in this case *Igbe* religion, and also compare them with other monotheistic religions such as that of the ancient Israelites as contained in the Old Testament in order to rebut the derogatory remarks that relegate such religious systems as *Igbe* to the background.

2. Priesthood in the Old Testament

The term priest applies to whoever is dedicated to a divinity or deity and thus, is divinely authorized and empowered to perform sacred rites in a particular religion, particularly as a mediator between the people of a land and the deity or God apprehended as the Supreme Being by the people. It is no quite certain when, where and how priesthood originated. However, It is from the oral and documented information about the Ancient Near Eastern peoples, particularly the Semites, whom God chose as priests from among the peoples of the earth that detailed knowledge of the existence of priesthood comes to us. For example, Aaron was specifically chosen by Yahweh to be his priest and serve the people of Israel in that capacity of which his descendants would also inherit such functions (Exodus 28:1, 44; 30:30; 40:13-15; Numbers 3:3). In the Old Testament, priesthood was a fundamental institution that played key roles in the religious, spiritual and even socio-political life of the people of ancient Israel.

It should be noted that the life of the people of the people of ancient Israel was largely a divine affair. The priest in the Old Testament was one of the four cardinal mediators between God and the people of Israel. Others include the kings, the sages and the prophets. Central in the regular routine of worship and the administration of wisdom in the everyday life of the people are the priests and the sages respectively (Neuhaus, 2010). However, the sages are not often referred to or prominently mentioned in discussions about the Old Testament even though their influence and impacts on the socio-religious landscape of Israel could be inferred from the Wisdom books; but the identity, socio-religious functions and the roles of the Old Testament priesthood in the identity formation of the nation of Israel were unequivocally and indubitably established. Therefore, priesthood was an indispensable institution in Israel. As a priest, the individual who held such office served the people in various capacities as he also served God.

The Old Testament priest saw himself as someone chosen or consecrated for the service of the monotheistic God, Yahweh. Thus, the priest of Yahweh was strongly believed to be the true priest, for there were false priests such as of Median in Exodus 18:1, of On in Gen. 41: 45, of Dagon in I Samuel 5:5, of the high places in Kings 12:32 etc. However, the so-called false priests are so labeled because they were not ordained by Yahweh since, according to 2 Chronicles 13:9, they were of them that had no God. Thus, the major determiner of genuineness of a priest in the Old Testament was whether the priest was dedicated to Yahweh or to another god. Therefore, one major characteristics of the priesthood institution in Israel is the fact that it was underlined by the notion of and the consciousness about a monotheistic God to whom the priest was to be dedicated throughout. Yahweh in Israel was conceived as the one and Supreme Being to whom all other must be subject to.

As Neuhaus (2010) aptly stated, in the Old Testament, the Temple was the realm of the priest, worship was the focus of his activity and the peak of his expression was in the sacrificial cult. Hence, the Torah succinctly spelt out the laws of and the criteria for sacrifice and priesthood particularly in the books of Exodus, Leviticus and numbers. Thus, before the establishment and execution of Israel's liturgical life, there were sacrifice and priesthood systems in place. Sacrifice and priesthood were two inseparably laced phenomena in the Old Testament. It is for this reason that holiness and purity were inextricably associated with priesthood. What holiness entails may not be crystal clear in all religious contexts and cultural parlances due to relativeness of concepts, principles and praxis. As Brueggemann (2003) observed, "The term [holiness] has such rich and varied usage precisely because it seeks to articulate what is most characteristic and therefore most hidden and inscrutable about God" (p. 67).

In attempting to understand what holiness could entail in relation to the Old Testament priesthood, the views of Neuhaus (2010) are helpful. He drew attention to the priestly conception that God is wholly other, totally separate not only from the entire world which he created but also from humans whose yearning is to render worship to him. For the Old Testament priests, holiness entails being godly, the quality of being consistent with God. Nevertheless, despite being totally separate from God, humans are called and expected to emulate this quality of being holy. By this priestly conception, sin (whether deliberate or inadvertent contravention of the will of God) and any form of uncleanness suggesting that the human world is imperfect, are incompatible with holiness.

The calling, duty and functions of the Old Testament priest is thus rooted in the theological conception of holinesses and the commitment of such a functionary to lead the people on such part as well as help to restore the unclean to the state of cleanliness through rituals performances and ethical guidance of the people religious and other aspects of their living that have consequence on their worship to God. It is to this end that the book of Leviticus copiously detailed out the functions of the priest such as is stated in Lev. 10: 10 – 11 thus: You are to distinguish (וּלְהַבְדִּיל) between the holy (הַקֹּדֶשׁ) and the common (הַחֹל), and between the unclean (הַטָּמֵא) and the clean (הַטָּהוֹר); and you are to teach (וּלְהוֹרֹת) the people of Israel all the statutes (כל־ הַחֻקִּים) that the Lord has spoken to them through Moses (Lev 10:10-11). The Hebrew word וּלְהַבְדִּיל translated as "to distinguish" could also be rendered (perhaps more appropriately in the context of this study) as "to separate" while the words הַקֹּדֶשׁ (the holy) and הַחֹל (the common) could as well be translated as "the sacred" and "the profane". As Wenham (1979) analytically submitted, "everything that is not holy is common. Common things divide into two groups, the clean and the unclean. Clean things become holy when they are sanctified" (p. 19)

From the foregoing, it becomes very clear what the office of a priest of Yahweh in the Old Testament entails, which is primarily to offer holy service or worship to God and raise as he guides a community of people that would relate with both God and fellow humans in a manner that would conform to the holy nature of God. Thus, whatever acts, rituals and/or rites (whether physical, spiritual, social, cultural or religious) performed are to the effect of achieving these objectives. It is against this backdrop that the following functions of an Old Testament priest could be understood. It is important to note that there are usually two classes of priests in the Old Testament, namely the ordinary priests and the High Priest. For the ordinary priests, they are teachers to the people (Lev. 10:8-11), they play the role of a judge as they resolve controversies and crises as recorded in Deut. 21:5, they officiate during sacrifices (Ex. 29:38-42), they assess and determine what constitutes impurity as recorded in Lev. 13-15, they burn incense (Ex. 30:7-8), they bless God and the people (Deut. 10:8, Num. 6:22-27), they keep the and maintain the tabernacle (Num. 3:38; 4;16) and are also keepers of the altar, the lambs and the showbread (Lev. 6:8-13; 24: 1- 9) among other functions. As for the High Priest, he is the Chief Priest who presides over or supervises the activities of the other lower ranking priests and also the Levites. While he might also perform the routine duties of the lower ranking priests, he exclusively performs the role of consecrating the other priests (Ex. 29:1-37), inquiring from the Lord (Jug 20:28), officiating especially on the Day of Atonement (Heb. 5:1; Lev. 23: 6, 11, 15, 20).

Having hinted at the nature and essence of priesthood in the Old Testament, we shall now focus attention on the nature and functions of priesthood in *Igbe* religion.

3. The Origin of *Igbe* in Kokori Land

Igbe religion popularly known as *Igbe* is an Urhobo word meaning dance. Their major element is dance (Orhero, 2023). Akpojotor (2005) agrees that one of the main components of worship in *Igbe* is dancing. *Igbe* religion was founded by Ubiesha Etarakpo in Kokori Land. They believe that dance brings them closer to the Supreme God (*Oweya*), who is the creator of everything. The adherents of the religion are monotheist in nature. The founder Ubiesha was the first Chief Priest/Prophet of the religion. He is also called *Uku* (Akpojotor 2011). According to Odje (1995) Ubiecha Etarakpo founded the *Igbe* religion in 1858 in kokori, with its headquarters at 11 Egbo Street, kokori Inland, Ethiope East Local Government Area. Ubiesha allegedly saw an apparition of two divine beings who anointed him to preach against immorality and witchcraft. After the alleged apparition, Ubiesha became eccentric and acted insanely as no day passed without him dancing. This scared the people from coming close to him.

According to Akama (1985), when Ubiecha got back to the community, Oniruesi noticed something mysteriously divine about him, unlike others who thought he had gone mad. He stayed with her, they later got married, and he continued dancing each passing day, eating nothing but *Orhen* (Native Chalk), healing people miraculously by praying for them and giving them the same native chalk to consume. Such were the authority and fame of the late founder of the historic African religion, *Igbe* that the reigning Oba of Benin at the time had to travel incognito as a leper to Kokori, Ethiope Local government area of Delta state to validate his power, (Brisibe 2015). Akponwei (2009) adds that three weeks after, the Oba visited Kokori again, this time, he came in full regalia as an Oba and presented gifts and honoured Etarakpo for his spiritual prowess.

Furthermore, Allman (2005) affirms that due to the increase of Ubiecha's followers, who were trooping to Kokori for consultation and healing, he later built a worship house called *Ogwa*, where he ministered to his devotees and made prophecies with stunning accuracy. He had three children: *Igbe*-Idode, *Igbe*-

Akpokovo and *Igbe*-Emegalise. According to Uku Efe Isievwore (Personal Communication, 2023), "Oghene called Ubiecha when he was working in his farm [and] gave Ubiecha the native Chalk, instructing him to go and heal the people and deliver them from the powers of witchcraft". According to Johnson Oniovwosa (2023) in an Oral interview, Ubiecha was called by *Oweya,* after series of economic setbacks, he practically failed in every attempt to succeed in life, hence he was forced to answer the call. The *Igbe* religion grew from there to other parts of Urhobo land, across the nation, and overseas (Amoah, 1998).
Nabofa (2005) affirms that:
The fame of Ubiecha spread far and wide because of his ability to heal all types of illness, including leprosy, impotence, blindness, deafness and dumbness, mental illness, bareness through the Orhen (native chalk). His spiritual intervention was also seen as capable of mediating freedom from witchcraft manipulations and all forms of evil spirits. Oral history had it that as a result of the spiritual powers of Ubiecha , people began to patronize him from the nooks and crannies of Urhobo land . When the work became too overwhelming for Ubiecha , legend had it that he appointed his first set of disciples and spiritual leaders which include Omonedo of Orhomuru, Okinedo of Ozoro, Ojanogha of Oweh, Idubor of Benin, Tambowei of Ijaw, as missionaries to propagate the religion beyond Urhobo land (Erivwo, 1973)"

4. Priesthood in *Igbe* Religion

Afatakpa (2016) opines that the *Igbe* religion has a hierarchic leadership structure and a spiritual head that goes by the title *Uku* which means High or Chief Priiest. The religion has a unique priesthood order and leadership structure (Afatakpa 2016). In *Igbe* religion, there are high priests, lesser priests and other cultic functionaries. Our focus is on the four categories, which fall broadly under the heads of the different denominations. The priest carries out both spiritual leadership roles such as ritual ceremonies, social and community roles and transmission of knowledge associated with the priestly office in *Igbe* religion, (Afatakpa 2016)

According to Umuze (personal communication, 2023), the Priest of *Igbe* Religion carries out spiritual leadership, rituals and ceremonies, divination and healing practices, social and community roles and transmission of knowledge associated with the priestly office in *Igbe* religion. *Igbe* religion is unique to the people of Kokori land because it was founded in Kokori. The adherents to *Igbe* religion come to the holy land of Kokori for pilgrimage, just as the Muslims go to Mecca and Christians go to Jerusalem for pilgrimage (Arowolo, 2010)

Non adherents of the religion may not understand the religion and the roles of the office of the priest. This leads to misconception about the religious sect and the role of the priest in *Igbe* religion. This is the present reality, especially with the influence of Christianity cum Western civilization. As Africans, it is important to have a sound knowledge about one's religion (Ottuh, 2017).

Like every other African religion and priesthood, the *Igbe* religion has been criticized for rejecting conventional medical treatment and also for using the Urhobo language during worship. *Igbe* members believe and administer native chalk for the treatment of ailments. This has been viewed as dangerous, (Akpojoto 2011). While traditional medicine requires carefulness in usage, there is no gain saying that it is an alternative medical system. As Omosor (2019) submitted, traditional medicine which involves spiritual and mystical manipulation of supernatural forces and the use of natural materials is necessary in addressing certain conditions that defy scientific, orthodox medical applications. Also, although there have been objections to the use of Urhobo language during worship sessions by modern adherents of *Igbe*, the language of worship and liturgy has remained largely Urhobo (Ojaide , 2001). This essentially helps to encourage members to learn and use the language; it is common knowledge that many children of Urhobo land cannot speak the language as a result of modernization. The priest communes with the divine being and members only in Urhobo language. Using Urhobo language during fellowship becomes some sort of a communication barrier, especially with non-indigenes and indigenes that cannot speak or understand the language (Olupona, 2014).

It is common knowledge that *Igbe* religion has been labeled with various derogatory names such as idol worship, juju, paganism, witchcraft and so on. The priests are not given their right place of honor recognition in our society. Most Nigerians who are not familiar with the details of the religion may think that it is polytheist because it draws strongly on local beliefs and practices. However, far from being a pagan religion with belief in many gods, the *Igbe* religion believes in a single God known as "Oghene or *Oweya*". This God is worshipped through dancing and the use of native chalk (Afatakpa 2016).

It is important for both the *Igbe* priest and the worshippers to understand the core elements of *Igbe* worship and liturgy for effectiveness. According to

Panchael (2023), a priest that is not abreast with the liturgy may have issues when faced with challenges. The priest is a traditional leader and traditional leaders like to maintain the Status quo and may be hesitant to adopt a new course of action, it can lead to stagnation and lack of progress. The priest serves as advocate and apologist to the religion; hence it is often the case that some of them become too resistant to other religious systems and what they offer humanity. For example, sometimes the priest may refuse to adopt new technologies in handling health issues, which can affect the members negatively, this happens because he has great influence on members. The adherents believe so much in the *Igbe* priest and as a result the priest can instill fear and intimidation on cult members (Afatakpa, 2016).

5. Categories of Priests in *Igbe* Religion

There are three main categories of priests in *Igbe* religion as discuses below:

The *Uku*

The *Uku* is the earthly embodiment or representative of God. This is reflected in his official status and honor accorded him by his followers. His utterance and advice are highly revered. The congregational head of each *Igbe* assembly is called *Uku* for male and Omote *Uku* for female. No *Igbe* member or non member is allowed to touch the head of the *Uku* or Omote *Uku* willfully. Violation of this is believed to desecrate the *Uku* and consequently leads to very intricate and expensive rituals of cleansing (Afatakpa 2016).

According to Edafe (personal communication, 2023) the chief *Uku* is the representative of *Oghene* or *Oweya*. He is an embodiment of knowledge, always getting messages from the spirit world on how to solve the problems of mankind. with Onoriode (2023), submits that there are also female *Uku* who are known as Omote *Uku*, they also perform the same functions as the Chief *Uku*, in addition to confessions from female members. They are in charge of women affairs. The chief *Uku* performs the highest ritualistic and political ceremonies in the religion. Each of them has a bed as his throne or seat. They perform all major initiation ceremonies, healing process and all serious confessions. Confessions are made to them. They have the final say in every matter in *Igbe* and their words are believed to be as sacred as the sacred *Orhen*.

According Sodje (personal communication), every leader is under the Chief Oku, he is the representative of *Oghene* or *Oweya*. His major function is to direct the hearts of the adherents to *Oweya*, stand in the gap for the members in times of problems, and provide solutions to the people's problems especially non empirical issues. The *Uku* has an assistant who is known as *Ochuko Uku*, and this in turn has a number of junior Priests, under him. The *Ochuko Uku* performs minor initiations and rituals such as minor confessions and healing as the Chief might delegate to him (Akpojotor, 2011).

The *Olori*

This is a Yoruba word which means the head or chief. In *Igbe*, the *Olori* is the priest that the members confess to in secret (Akpojotor 2011). If the confession is a minor one such as backbiting and grumbling, the *Olori* would just caution and counsel the person concerned and the whole matter would end there. Ikuku (2023) in an oral interview stated that it is only serious offence, such as witchcraft, sorcery, stealing and adultery, that the *Olori* would have to direct the person to the *Uku*, who is considered to be the only one that is competent and has the authority to handle issues pertaining to such grievous offences. An adherent of *Igbe* religion, Baby Efetobo (personal communication 2023) claims that it is the duty of the *Olori* to introduce new converts to the *Uku*, or his assistant for initiation into *Igbe*. The *Olori* usually has his own *Ogwa Igbe* in his own compound and he is the one that directs all acts of worship under his jurisdiction (Ikoba, 2014). According to Edafe (2023), the main duty as the *Olori* is to settle disputes among members and offering spiritual protection to adherents and non-adherents of the religion". According to Afatakpa (2016) the *Uku* is supported by his chief priests in the discharge of his responsibilities.

The *Oni-Igbe*

Divination is a part of the *Igbe* religion like every other African Traditional religion (Ikoro,2016). The *Uku* and some members of the priesthood order are believed to have special prophetic powers to see visions and interpret dreams . Every *Igbe* temple has an *Oni-Igbe*. There can be more than one *Oni-Igbe* in an *Igbe* temple (Afatakpa, 2016). The *Oni-Igbe* is the female prophetess who is always very active in every *Ogwa Igbe*. It is believed that they can dig deep to get every secret because they have been given power by *Oweya*. Confessions are made to them by mostly female cult members (Akpojotor 2011).

However, there is also the concept of referrer when the *Oni-Igbe* encounter some difficult cases. They usually send serious cases to the *Uku*. In some *Igbe* sects they have male and female *Oni-Igbe*s. It is a title given to people performing priestly duties in *Igbe* religion.

They in turn bring issues involved to the notice of the *Olori*, who in turn would deal with them or carry them to the *Uku*. In some *Igbe* congregation, there is also male or female *Oni-Igbe* as we have both male and female *Olori*. They are merely official titles attached to people performing specific duties in *Igbe* but not sex titles or gender sensitive.

Furthermore, one of the major duties of the *Oni-Igbe* is that of exorcism. In any healing rituals or spiritual activities, the *Oni-Igbe* plays a very active part. He or she exorcise the evil spirit from the affected person by using his or her fan to tap gently and fan the whole body of the patient and uses the fan to describe several circles round the patient's heads and blows off the evils from the body (Ubrurhe, 2001). It is believed that when the fan is being used to touch all parts of the patient, all impurities in the patient's body which must have caused the ailment, would be attracted into the fan and magnetize or suck into it. Then by blowing or breathing over the ritualistic fan, such impurities would be cleaned off the sick such as ritual bathing, are also carried out by them (Irikefe, 2023).

In an oral interview with Onoriode (2023), an adherent of the religion, the *Oni-Igbe* is like the eyes of *Oweya*, nothing can be hidden from the *0ni-Igbe*, hence members of the cult try to be morally and religiously upright before *Oweya*, to be able to access *Oweya*, and avoid embarrassment. She narrated the story of a female member that committed adultery before coming to the meeting, immediately she entered the *Ogwa* she was exposed by the *Oni-Igbe*. The woman confessed her crime, and ritual sacrifice was done, for her cleansing, because the religion frowns at adultery and doesn't support divorce. Onajite (personal communication) emphasized the efficacy of the treatment of ailments and wwitchcraft by the *Oni-Igbe*. In other words, the *Oni-Igbe* has been empowered by *Oweya* to provide solutions to problems of both adherents and non-members.

6. The Significance of Priesthood in *Igbe* Religion

Priests are regarded as intermediaries between other humans and specific deities, A Priest serves a particular god or spirit and watches over the behavior and needs of its adherents. An elder member of linage group may be the priest of the clan's ancestral cult. In *Igbe*, what actually led to the establishment of priesthood is the simple fact that some people possess spiritual powers and this gave them the power of clairvoyance and strong foresight which enabled them to reveal a lot of mysteries (Odje, 1995). The spiritual power of Ubiesha enabled him to apprehend the revelation about the divine *Orhen* and anyone who become an *Igbe* priest should be one thought fit to have acquired some kind of divine inspiration.

The current Ovie *Uku* claims emphatically that the knowledge he has was given to him through divine inspiration and also by attunement with *Oweya*. This spiritual power is found in various grades among the *Igbe* priests and members. They are the liaison officers or intermediaries between the people and the Supreme Being.

7. Functions of *Igbe* Priests

There are many important functions of *Igbe* priests. The priest is fully in charge of offering of sacrifices and handling confessions of members. The priest is responsible to teach members their social responsibilities in terms of moral uprightness, participating in village festivals, and ordination of leaders in the village, He is expected to be the spiritual watchdog to the community. In view of their leadership roles, they are participating actively in the politics of the community in terms of giving proper direction to political leaders in the community (Afatakpa, 2016). By means of divination and prophecy, *Igbe* priests could detect evil fellows and reveal their devilish acts. In the same vein, devotees could also identify such evil doers by means of dreams, visions and even divination or prophecy. The priests of *Igbe* encourage such persons to confess and turn from evil acts and in addition, they conduct purification rites and perform rituals of cleansing to cleanse and restore the blemish individuals and erring communities. Although *Igbe* worshippers believe that justice is ultimate a divine prerogative as God punishes evil people accordingly, the priests could apply strict disciplinary action and impose sanctions on member who engage in evil acts.

Other areas where the significance of *Igbe* religion and priesthood manifest include spiritual or divine connection through which the adherents seek guidance, get protection and acquire blessing; a sense of community and oneness which the collective religious expression under the superintendence of the priest fosters among the adherents; and cultural preservation which is as a result of the priests' use of the cultural materials and resources of the native people to worship God and serve humanity.

8. Conclusion

This study has shown that *Igbe* religion is an indigenous monotheistic religion founded by Ubiesha in Kokori land. The priests are divinely called as

spiritual intermediaries between the worshippers and the Supreme Being just as it was the case in the Old Testament. The duties or functions of the priests are religious, cultural and social. The study has revealed that the *Igbe* priests are held in very high regard among the worshippers and they play very crucial roles in the practice of the religion. Although there are certainly some key differences and variations, there is no doubt that the essence of *Igbe* religion and the role and significance of its priesthood are not significantly different from that of other religions particularly in ancient Israel as recorded in the Old Testament. Both *Igbe* and the Old Testament religion share the common idea of monotheism; hence, priesthood in both religions is based on the notion of a monotheistic God who selects or consecrates and sets a servant apart to officiate in his temple. Holiness and sacrifice are two inseparable ideas bound up with the priest of God. In both religions, priesthood is meant to offer the people (adherents or worshippers) spiritual guidance, provide ethical and moral precepts as they relate to personal, interpersonal and divine-human relationships in order to create a community that is consistent with God even as they aid the people to navigate and overcome existential challenges. It is recommended that scholarship should focus more attention to indigenous forms of religious experience and expression and investigate the core elements of some of the variants of African Traditional Religion such as *Igbe* religion. This will cure the sickening attitude of derogatory labeling and classification of whatever cultural values or religious expression that does not fit into the criteria of Christian thought.

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Personal Communication

S/N	NAMES	Sex	Age	Occupation	Location	Date
1	Mrs. Rose Ovie Onoriode	F	62yrs	Trader	Idiagbon street Kokori	4/10/2023
2	*Uku* Efe Isievwore	M	68yrs	Priest	Edeke Street	4/10/2023
3	Sir Michael Sodje	M	75yrs	Business man	Edeke street	4/10/2023
4	Mr. Johnson Onievwosa	M	55yrs	Teacher	Ekrose Street	4/10/2023
5	Mr Richard Edafe	M	46yrs	Civil Servant	Ekrose Street	11/11/2023
6	Sir Onome Umuze	M	79yrs	Retired	Egbon Street	11/11/2023
7	Prince Oghenetega Ik*Uku*	F	44yrs	Business man	Egbon Street	11/11/2023
8	Mrs Baby Efetobo	F	53yrs	Trader	Ekraka Street	11/11/2023
9	Madam Felicia Irikefe	F	57yrs	Trader	Uvwedi Street	11/11/2023
10	Madam EseOghene Onajite	F	68yrs	Trader	Uvwedi Street	11/11/2023
11.	Priest Ovie *Uku*	M	70yrs	Priest	Uvwedi Street	11/11/2023

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Ancient Beliefs in the Primordial Forces of Sacred Waters and their Religious Implications in an *Aladura* Church in Nigeria

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Abstract. Water has a central place in ancient myths of creation and mythologies and it has never been viewed as an ordinary element but as having both spiritual and physical potentials and properties in religious circles as well as an elemental force in nature. It has symbolically represented many things in religions, humanity and waters were given mythological venerations in many stories of the ancient Mesopotamian world. The gap filled in this study was the nexus of primordial waters and its implications in the liturgy of a foremost Aladura church, Christ Apostolic Church, which has not been given scholarly considerations and presented. The goal of the paper is to espouse the ancient beliefs in the primordial forces of waters and their cosmic significance to the humans and their implications in the liturgy of the this Aladura church. As a result, this paper is premised on the relevance of water to religions as the ancient people viewed it and its roles in the liturgy of CAC. It used the historical-traditional methods of approach to unravel the mysteries believed to be associated with waters in religions. The study espoused the marriage of water and creation, living entity and procreation force in water and as a cogent healing instrument in the liturgy of the church. The forces and properties of water and its significance in religions are brought into focus in this piece, the crux of this paper is the religious significance of water in this Aladura Church, Christ Apostolic Church, Nigeria and Overseas in her healing ministrations. Findings showed that water is a living entity in many religions and prominently featured in the liturgy of this Aladura denomination thereby buttering contextualization of Christian religion in African context.

Keywords: Primordial Waters, Forces, Implications, Liturgy, *Aladura* Church

1. Introduction

Water occupies a central place in the ancient myths and mythology. This is noticeable in the myth of the creation of the earth and man in the ancient near eastern world, especially the Sumerian and Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh. It is also significant in the practices and beliefs of many living religions in the world today. Scientifically, water is a common chemical substance or liquid. It plays significant roles in the existence of the world. It is an essential elemental force for the survival of all known forms of life. Water exists in three states. The first is the liquid form, which is common to humans; the second is the solid or ice form and the third is the vapour form in the atmosphere. It could be argued that water covers over 71% of planet earth and it covers the oceans and bodies of human beings. It is submitted by the hydrologists that out of 71% of the earth's water, the oceans contain 97.2% of the Earth water (http://en.wkipedia.org/wiki/Water).

In the ancient myths and mythology, water was regarded as a living entity and it was common to nearly all the notable myths and mythology of the Mesopotamian world. It should be noted that water was given a prominent place in the practices and beliefs of many ancient religions in the ancient near east. It could be argued that there has been veneration of water in the ancient myths and mythology. There are many reasons for the prominence given to water. In a region where there was drought and scarcity of water, it could not but be regarded as vital to the survival of mankind. Water was also treated as a primary building block of life.

It is believed that without water, there is no life or existence. Man is inevitably dependent on water

because of its life-giving nature as believed by the ancient people just as he is dependent on God for other means of survivals. In a dry land and season, water could not but be crucial to the existence of humans. The primordial forces of waters manifest in many ways; in the existence of man, religions and beliefs or practices in the ancient and modern world.

In the liturgical practices of many living religions especially in Africa waters still play certain role ranging from ritual baths, healing baths, propitiations, ritual cleansing, during the Holy Communion service, cleaning of the sanctuaries, watering the life flowers and gardens around the church premises and others. In particular, the liturgy of the Christ Apostolic Church Nigeria and Overseas, a foremost classical Pentecostal church in African, water features in her practices and ministry, which is our focus in this study.

1.1 Water in Sumerian Epic

The creators of civilization in lower Mesopotamia in modern Southern Iraq were the Sumerians as Bright (1980:30) rightly observes. And it was acclaimed that it was the Sumerians who introduced the art of writing (1980:31). The Sumerians were pantheistic in religion and the head of their gods was *Enlil,* lord of the storm. Different cults existed for various gods and purposes among the Sumerians. According to the Sumerian Creation Epic or myth, it was *Nammu,* the Sea mother or goddess who gave birth to heaven and earth. This is to show that the creation of the earth was not without the forces of waters. The sea goddess, *Nammu* and *Enki* the god of wisdom were responsible for the creation of humans with the germinating powers of the clay and water of the abyss. The creative force of water was displayed during the creation of man. Human beings were not created without the forces of waters applied (SOURCES). One wonders because over seventy percent of the body of human beings consists of water.

According to Wolkstein and Kramer (1983:139), the Sumerian word for water means *semen.* This was to show the belief of the antiquities in the reproductive property of water that men witnessed in plants and vegetation when they are watered during the agricultural exercises and the resurgence of aquatic mammals according to their belief during rainy season. It was believed among the Sumerians that water has power to create, give life and in actual fact, water is life (SOURCES).. This was displayed in the production power of water in seed, fruits, plants, trees, fishes and other aquatic creatures. When you give water to your plants and other agricultural seeds, it gives them power to produce. After all, water is equal to *semen* in Sumerian language to show its reproductive properties. The Sumerian epic demonstrated and celebrated the generative power of river water in the creation of man and plants.

In the Epic of the Sumerians, *Enuma Elish* here was the existence of paradise–a pure and clean place, a land of the living, which knows no sickness, death or strife (SOURCES).. As peaceful as this place was, it lacked one thing, fresh water. It was *Enki*, the clever water god who brought water to this garden (http: /www.ancienttexts.org./library/mesopotamian/enuma. html). This may be argued to be a mythology for the crucial place of water in the existence of man. With reference to the accounts of the Garden of Eden in the book of Genesis and the mountain of God in Ezekiel, there are pointers to waters in the garden (cf. Gen. 2:8-14; Eze. 47:1-12; cf. Zech. 13:8; Joel. 4:18). There is a similarity here between the Sumerian Epic of creation on a Garden and the Genesis account of the creation and Garden of Eden (cf. Gen. 2:12-14), even though one was mythological while the other was historicized.

Water was regarded as a *creator* in its own right. It was regarded as co-creator of heaven and earth with other gods according to the ancient myth. Water also has other properties other than creative and reproductive properties. It has both punitive and destructive powers according to the Sumerians (Krama, 1961:93-138). This was demonstrated when the gods were annoyed with the sons of men because they disturbed the serenity of the gods and were unruly. The gods decided to destroy the seed of mankind through a flood and this was the Sumerian record of the Flood. (SOURCES). A cross-reference to the Genesis account of the Deluge points to the similarity in this area between the Sumerian epic and Mosaic account in Genesis 6-9 on the Flood in the time of Noah. In the Sumerian mythology, water is also personified as a god who can create. It was regarded to be in existence before the creation of mankind or gods. It was cosmic water according to the Sumerian epic, which has influence over the existence of mankind and hence the universe was portrayed as created out of the chaotic seas. In a dry and desert climate like that of the Sumerians, without modern technology on hydrology, water could not but be seen as essential to life and existence of man. It was seen as a source of life and giver of life.

1.2 Water Cult in Canaanite Religion

Canaanite religions revolved around water cult and fertility due to their topography and agrarian lifestyles. Water cult in Canaanite religion could be linked with the cult of *El*, *Baal*, *Anat*, a consort of Baal as well as

god of fecundity and war, *Asherahs* and *Ashteroths.* This was as a result of the agricultural life of the Canaanites, which surrounded the giving of water by *Baal* who was also believed to be responsible for fertility in the land. The Canaanites were agrarian and the need for water surrounded the cult of *Baal*. *Baal* was believed to be the storm god of the Canaanites and god of fertility who gave water and productivity to their agricultural produce. The cult of *El*, the head of the Canaanite pantheons also existed in the Canaanite religion. According to Pope, as quoted by Clifford, *El's* abode was localized in aqueous and subterranean environs, the place of the subterranean waters.

The waters of *El*'s River are life-giving because the abode of *El* was placed in paradise, the source of life-giving waters (Clifford:1972:50-51). The Canaanite gods were personified nature. *El*, the father of all pantheons and *Baal*, god of storm and fertility gave waters for fruitfulness and abundance in their agricultural life. In one of the monuments of the Phoenicians, as illustrated by Clifford, the mountain of *El* joined the heaven. On this mountain is concentrated the mysterious powers of life, the source of life-giving water (Clifford, 51). It could be argued therefore that the Ugaritic mythology about the abode of *El* was connected with the water cult. The dwelling of *El* is the source of the cosmic waters because it is life-giving water (Clifford, 96). It sustains the soul and body of man and keeps the plants growing and the water cult in Canaanite religion or belief revolved around their gods who gave the water for survival. With this religious belief in mind, water cult played significant roles in the lives of the Canaanites.

1.3 The Babylonian Epic of Creation and Water

The Babylonian epic of creation was composed in order to give an epic of creation and the roles played by primordial waters of the sea. Water was believed to be in existence before the creation of heaven and earth. It was believed that when the heaven was not yet above and no earth beneath, there had been water. The water goddess, *Tiamat* gave birth to the earth, heaven, gods, and other planets. When *Apsu* and *Tiamat* mixed their waters together, the creation was produced. The Assyrio–Babylonian mythology states that the gods and subsequently, all beings arose from the fusion of salt water personified in *Tiamat* and sweet water personified in *Apsu* (SOURCES). *Apsu*, according to Babylon mythology, is the embodiment of the fresh water abyss that lies beneath the Earth. From *Tiamat's* water came forth the clouds and her tears became the source of Tigris and the Euphrates (Krammer, 1961). *Tiamat* is familiar as the primordial sea in the Babylonian creation epic. It was regarded as unruly water; its equivalent was Unruly Sea, personified in *Mot*, the water goddess. The Babylonian epic describes the creation as a result of the victory of *Marduk*, the head of the Babylonian pantheon, over *Tiamat*, the unruly sea. We can submit that water is the creative force behind the planet earth and human beings, according to this epic, once again demonstrates the primordial forces of waters in the ancient beliefs in water.

1.4 Genesis Creation Story and Primordial Waters

The Jewish cosmological narration about the creation of the world includes the primordial water and its forces. The author of Genesis admits that before heaven and earth came into existence, there has been the presence of primordial water. In the Jewish narration, at the outset we have a primordial sea lying in darkness, while the *wind* or *Spirit* (ru'ach) of Yahweh blew over it. There are heavenly waters and earthly waters in the Jewish conception of creation. This may be reference to the ancient world belief that heavenly water in form of rain comes from the heavenly ocean (Riggren: 1966:106) in order to water and fertilize the earth. So, the author of Genesis chapter one and two also supports the water myths but in its historicized manner in his creation narration. The Jews also hold the mythological view of punitive and destructive forces of waters not as the Sumer and Babylonians hold it but in the historical senses of forces of waters. The Jews considered waters as instrument of punishment in the hands of Yahweh and not part of the creation or co-creator with Him.

The author of Genesis creation story admits the primordial forces of waters. The water at the creation was chaotic water. Perhaps, it was viewed as an impediment which the creating activities of Yahweh later overcame. The great sea creatures in Israelite liturgy were waters personified; they were regarded as living creatures that *entered in to battles* with Yahweh. These water creatures are mentioned on the pages of biblical texts such as Sea Dragon, Rahab, Leviathan and the like. Ringgren points out that the Hebrew word for primordial water is *t^{e}hom* and shows that it is etymologically identical with the Babylonian *Tiamat* (1966:107). In the Jewish Psalter, this was sung later on by the Psalmist on the victory of Yahweh over a sea Dragon or Leviathan (cf. Ps.104:9; 148:6; 74:13; Job 26:12). Psalm 109 could be regarded as a composition on the victory of Yahweh over the unruly waters in Jewish historicized account of the Babylonian mythological waters. Nevertheless, it was demonstrated that they were controlled or conquered by the mighty demonstrations of Yahweh and His creative word (cf. Psa. 33:5-6). A comparative analysis of the Babylonian Epic of Creation and

Canaanite mythology with the Israelite story of Creation would show a similitude. Moreover, Canaanite influence on Jewish idea of creation was betrayed on the biblical text of the Judeo-Christian creation traditions.

In a nutshell, it was admitted that water was present at the outset of creation in the Jewish story of creation and played significant roles in controlling the universe and sustaining mankind on the planet. The reproductive power of water was also demonstrated in the Creation story as we see aquatic mammals and other creatures coming out of water during the creation (cf. Gen. 1:20-21) after Yahweh gave the command. The writer of Genesis has also presented to us both the peaceful and life-giving force of water incorporated into the Garden of Eden story. The elemental punitive property of water was not hidden from us as well. The first he did by presenting waters in the Garden of Eden created by God. The second he demonstrated by the Deluge that came upon mankind as a result of their sins. The reason for the Flood according to the Sumerian myth was as a result of the disturbance of the gods by mankind but the Jewish reason borders on moral failure and wickedness of mankind. This marks the difference between the Jewish history and others; it was historicized in the Jewish account while it was mythologized in others. Hence we see primordial water as ancient, present in creation, controlled, curtailed and ''conquered'' by Yahweh, peaceful, life-giving and punitive according to the Genesis account. However, the primordial waters are destructive and inimical to God in the creation. As defeated enemies of God, the primordial waters are now under check (cf. Psalm 104). They are also tools in the hands of God We can see that water was primal, chaotic, in two major divisions-male and female- and productive, comforting, punitive and destructive in nature.

1.5 Mosaic Periods and Primordial Force of Water

It was certain that Moses was born in Egypt. Egypt according to Herodotus as quoted by Kitchen (1982:302-) is regarded as ''gift of the Nile'' based on the fact that the agricultural survival of the nation depended on the Nile. For life-giving water, Egypt depended on the Nile, wherever the Nile waters reached, vegetation could grow, aquatic animals could exist and agricultural produce could be splendorous. Moses as a great leader and prophet in Israel had contact with waters right from the cradle. Noth's criticism (1972:172-177) among other scholars about the historicity of Moses has long been discarded and we maintain a traditional view about the historicity of Moses as he was presented to us in the Pentateuchal traditions. Moses belonged to the tribe of Levi in the clan of Kohath and to the house or family of Amram (Ex. 2:1-2; 6:16ff). Exodus 2:10 gives us a glimpse of his name, Moses, *"she called his name Moseh; and she said, 'Because I drew him (mesitihu) out of the water".* Thus it is glaring that Moses was linked with water and his being taken from the waterside.

The roles played by water, especially the Nile in the history of Moses and the Israelites during their enslavement could be divided into two: *destruction and safety*. The midwives were instructed by Pharaoh to destroy the male children inside the Nile, which they refused to carry out. To Moses, it was safety because he was saved through the intervention of Pharaoh's daughter. To the Israelites, water was a means of Yahweh's intervention and deliverance for them as they crossed the Red Sea which also submerged and drowned the Egyptians. To the Egyptians, it was destruction when Moses commanded the water to turn to blood. One of the plagues performed by Moses was centered on the Nile, which was turned into blood like other water resources in Egypt (cf. Ex. 2:16-19; Ex. 7:14-21). The reason for this was to attack the source of life of the Egyptians. All humans and aquatic creatures were affected by the plague in the water. So, if there was no water, there was no life. This shows the significance of waters to humankind.

2. The Red Sea Episode

The Red Sea encounter was very significant in Jewish history because it was a miraculous intervention from Yahweh. God of Israel enabled Israelites to escape from the Egyptian pursuit in the wilderness after their Exodus from Egypt by parting the Red Sea. In Israelite poetic expressions and their liturgy, the Red Sea was regarded as a contending power and an obstruction to the salvivic activities of Yahweh but which eventually gave way as a result of His instruction to Moses. Here Yahweh was presented as demonstrating His omnipotence over the elemental forces of waters in nature. The parting and crossing of the Red Sea shows that Yahweh, God of Israel has power over nature, even the mighty oceans and that He could determine their fullness or recession. Here again water was portrayed to be powerful and as well as instrumental in the salvation of Israel. It was an instrument of punishment from God against the Egyptians because they were drowned and all died in the water (Ex. 14; 15:1-21). It was a blessing for the Israelites because Yahweh used it to give them a passage to the Promised Land. The theological import of this episode to the Israelites was that the Red Sea was an obstruction to the fulfillment of the promise of Yahweh but was overcome by Yahweh for His people. This was later on interpreted metaphorically in the history of Israel as

water baptism for Israel (1 Cor. 10:1-2). It was believed that the spiritual dirt of Egypt was washed away through the passage of the Red Sea. It was later on metaphorically interpreted as baptism for the Israelites under Moses, their Shepherd. Also, the origin of Christian water baptism was traced to this episode in the Exodus Tradition.

3. Monarchical Periods and Water

The monarchical period in Israel also witnessed the battle for waters. The major battle of Elijah against the prophets of *Baal* was centered on the provision of rainwater and its source. The contention was who gave water, Yahweh or *Baal*? The Canaanites were agrarian and their source of living depended on agricultural produce. As a result, they revered water and had water cults, which revolved around the cults of *El* and *Baal*. The Israelites who were nomads and whose major occupation was animal husbandry fell into this religious error when they got to the land of Canaan (Akao,). They forsook pure Yahwism and pitched their tents withBaal and syncretic Yahwism. Elijah pronounced drought that there would be neither rain nor dew for some periods in order to determine the Giver of water between Yahweh and *Baal* in the land. After his victory on Mount Carmel over the prophets of Baal, he prayed to Yahweh as the true Giver of water and not Canaanite *Baal* and there was water down pour (cf. 1 Kgs. 16-18).

The first miracle that Elisha performed was on water at Jericho. As Yahweh divided River Jordan before the Israelites on their way to the Promised Land, Yahweh also proved the double power of His Spirit on Elisha by dividing the same River Jordan. On the other side of Jordan at Jericho, the people could not drink the water because it was producing death and sickness. The prophetic decree of Elisha with the power in the salt was employed in order to bring healing to the water (cf. 2 Kgs. 2:19-22). The water was crucial, scarce and impure during the time of Elisha and there was a need for cleansing which Elisha did. During the monarchical period, the armies of Israel and Judah could not fight in the battlefront as a result of thirst for water. They had to seek the help of a Prophet in person of Elisha who prophesied the provision of water in the valley (cf. 2 Kgs. 3). Elisha also demonstrated the healing properties of water when he asked Namaan, the Syrian to go and bathe for the healing of his leprosy. Having carried out this prophetic exercise, he achieved the desired result. All these show the importance of water to the living and its crucial role in all seasons in human life.

4. Water in Judaism

It should be noted that there is no water cult, god or goddess in Judaism. So also, there is no water worship in Judaism. This was to avoid the veneration of the various elements of nature, contrary to the Canaanite socio-cultural and religious lifestyles. However, some rivers or waters were regarded to be of higher value than others in Judaism due to the miracles and prophetic contacts of certain personages in Israel who had encounters with them such as River Jordan. It was seen as a means of survival or else, there is no life. God gave Israelites water from the rock in the wilderness lest they die of dehydration. Water marked the last gate of escape from Egyptian enslavement, the Red (Reed) Sea episode. Water marked the first gate or a means of entrance to the Promised Land through River Jordan. The symbolic meaning of which was to display the victory of Yahweh over the unruly Sea, personified in the Sea creatures.

There was a belief in the cleansing properties of water as an elemental force in nature in Judaism. Judaism gives room for the use of water in its religious liturgies. Religious washing was allowed and it was believed to restore or maintain a state of ritual purity. The *Torah* stipulated the washing of hands, the hands and feet; and/or total immersion which must be done in living water that is, the sea, a river, a spring or in a *mikveh*. A *mikveh* is a Jewish ritual bath used for cleansing after contact with a dead body or after menstruation. This was to show the power of the water to remove ceremonial stains, cleanse biological impurity and make the priests fit for Temple Worship in their liturgy.

During the Temple times, ablutions were practised by three categories of people: The first category were Priests during offertory, the second were the new converts to Judaism as part of the condition or initiation rites and lastly, women on the seventh day after their menstrual period.

In a nutshell, water in Judaism is important for its cleansing properties. It is believed to be capable of washing away ritual impurities and pollutants. The cleansing properties, purifying forces and washing effects of water also call for this. It is a rite that must be performed by the Priests before any sacrifice to Yahweh. During inter-testamental period, water baptism or immersion in water was carried out. The Essenes and the Qumran community both practised ablution and baptism for the proselytes (McCain, 2005:40). The Essenes were a sect of Judaism located at Qumran community in the Judean desert (Kafan, 2001:113). They practised the Torah to its strictest

extent and we can say that the Essenes shunned every external impurity. After one has applied to be a member, he would be baptized as a way of washing and cleansing from pollutants. The Proselytes too who were Gentile converts to Judaism were necessarily expected to pass through the rituals of circumcision and water baptism in Judaism (Kafan, 2001:121).

It may be argued that the multidimensional properties and qualities of waters make the elemental forces appear to be living or animated also in Jewish religio-cultural treatment of waters. The religious psychology in man makes waters, be it rainwater, lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, falls, lagoons, and sea and so on to receive vital religious attentions. Water is always in motion, hence we say ‘‘running water’’; in Judaism it is a ‘‘living water’’, meaning any water used for purification must be flowing and running. Water has power to dissolve dirt from objects and, as a result, it is the most suitable physical elemental force for purifying the soul from moral dirt and religious sins. It is glaring that one major usage of water is as an instrument of the religious purification and expiation (cf. Mat. 3:1-4; Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:1-3).

5. Water in the New Testament

The first contact of the New Testament with water is on the baptism of John the Baptist to repentance at River Jordan. It should be said that the miracle of crossing River Jordan in the time of Joshua (cf. Jos. 3-4) and the miracle of washing, cleansing and healing of Naman, the Syrian (cf. 2 Kg. 5:5) would have made this River miraculous to the early Christians. Thus, it assumed purification and expiation properties in the time of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. John the Baptist interpreted water baptism as a symbol of purification and as a mark of cleansing from sin after repentance. The ministry of Jesus Christ has many bearings on the forces of waters. The miracles of Jesus Christ also involved the usage of waters which played major roles. In Johannine account of the miracles of Jesus Christ, the first one was on water, turning it to wine (cf. Jn. 5:2-7) in order to save the bridegroom from social embarrassment during his marriage ceremony. Jesus employed the force of water in His mouth-saliva to bring about a miracle of regaining the sight of the man born blind. In actual fact, the miracle was not complete until there was water contact from the Pool of Siloam (cf. 9:6-7). Jesus Christ also walked on water to show His power over nature and He stilled the storm on the sea, a replica of God’s victory over the sea Dragon in the Old Testament according to the Psalmist (cf. Ps.104:9; 148:6; 74:13; Mt. 14:22-33; Mk. 5:35-41).

The salvation of whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ also involves the forces of waters. The salvation is not complete until he or she is washed and purified through water baptism (cf. Mk. 16:15-16; Mt. 28:18-19). Water baptism seals his or her salvation in Jesus Christ. So, the disciples of Jesus Christ were commanded to go and baptize the converts in the water. The climax of New Testament on water comes out when Jesus Christ declares He is the living Water (cf. Jn. 4:1-42) who can quench the thirst of mankind forever. Jesus promised His disciples a new heaven and earth. In this new place, water is shown to be there for healing of nations and quenching the thirst of everyone forever (cf. Rev. 22:12).

6. Water in African Traditional Religion

African concepts of the activities of God in nature and among human beings extend to area of giving and use of waters. Africans also believe in the fertility power of water just like the ancient Sumerians and Canaanites. Mbiti (1969:65) submits that Banyarwanda women of a child–bearing age are careful to leave water ready, before they go to bed, so that God may use it to create children for them. This is known or popularly called, ‘‘God’s water’’ (Mbiti, 65). This, once again, points to the belief in the fertility power or property of water. Africans do not view waters as ordinary elements in nature. Rather it is spiritually and religiously viewed as potent, symbolic and powerful. Water is personified, animated, potent and powerful from the African cosmological view.

There is water worship in Africa especially in Yoruba land. People living in certain watersides personify waters in these areas especially the riverside areas. There are sacred days and weeks ear-marked for the worship of these waters. There are also certain taboos that are associated with the water cults in Yoruba land. There selected waters which are regarded as sacred and as a result, they are not used for domestic purposes such as cooking, washing and for agricultural reasons. The waters are used for spiritual, liturgical and ritualistic purposes. They make offerings and sacrifices to rivers in order to gain their favour. People who worship certain waters also have water priests and priestesses who mediate between them, the water divinities and goddesses. Also, certain divinities and spirits are attributed to waters, rivers, oceans, ponds, streams and lakes in traditional African settings. According to Mbiti they are often thought to be inhabited by spirits or divinities who generally must be propitiated when people use the water in one way or the other (Mbiti, 1969:126). Awolalu (1979:46) supports this notion when he makes a remark that certain goddesses such as Malokun with waters in

river side areas in Ondo state and *Yemoja*, associated with river *Ògún*; being worshipped by people in Abeokuta. *Oya* who was a wife of *Sàngó* is the goddess of the River Niger, commonly referred to as *Odò Oya*; *Òsun* is the tutelary goddess believed to be the divinity of *Òsun* River in Osogbo, Osun State, Nigeria. It is believed that these gods and/or goddesses provide for man's needs, control the abundant supply of fish and give fertility to barren women when propitiated and patronized. Some water goddesses such as *Oya* can be associated with natural water disaster such as heavy storm, sea surging, flood or the uprooting of trees and house roofs (Awolalu, 1979:47-48).

In African settings, water also plays major roles in rituals and sacrifices performed by the traditionalists. Elements of such sacrifices in Africa include foodstuffs such as fruits, maize, pap, rice, beans, grains, vegetables, and some liquid substances such as milk, beer, gin, wine and water. Another person of higher religious or social status could sprinkle water on the recipient during prayers for healing or blessing in African settings (Mbiti: 1969:22). The forces of waters could be applied for medical and therapeutic reasons in African settings. The healing property of water has been highlighted by Anselm Adodo (2004:63-66) to show its indispensability to mankind. Also, Adamo, (2005: 51) opines that African hydrotherapy involves the use of cold or hot water in their healing cultural practices.

7. Christianity and Water in the Liturgy of an *Aladura* Church: CAC

Nearly all the Christian sects have the initiation ritual commonly called *baptism* or *water baptism*. The Christian baptism has its origins in the symbolism of the Israelites being led by Moses out of slavery in Egypt through the Red Sea. It also originated from the baptism of Jesus Christ by John the Baptist in River Jordan in the New Testament. The practice of water baptism within Christianity could be traced to the command of Jesus Christ commonly referred to as the Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk.16:15-16). It should be noted that water baptism is not believed to be capable of cleansing one from sin but is rather a symbolism of inner purification. It is also a public declaration of a person's belief and faith in Jesus Christ within the Christian fold.

In Christianity, water serves as a purifying elemental force. Water baptism is a crucial rite that one must undergo before he is welcomed to the Church within the Christian fold. The Church also uses water in her liturgical ministry such as the Holy Communion for washing of hands before the service. The cultic acts through water are purposely for purification, sprinkling and immersion in Christianity. Here again in Christianity, it is obvious that religion cannot do without the elemental force of water even though there is no veneration of water or water cult in it but the influence of water as a purifying force cannot not be ignored. Water symbolizes life. It gives life and its coming during winter is a symbol of life to the vegetation and humans.

This may responsible for its use in the healing ministry of the ancients and the indigenous *Aladura* Churches in Africa. The healing ministry of this *Aladura* Church is greatly tied to the apron of the belief in the forces of living water (Alabi, 2016:vii; Olusheye, 2009,12). This started with the epochal ministry of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola in 1928 theophany he had and the great 1930 revival at Oke-Ooye, Ilesa, in the present Osun state, Nigeria (Ademakinwa, 1971:78-103). The first person to use water in the church at her embryonic stage was Sophia Odunlami, later Sophia Ajayi in the year 1918 through rain water for healing from influenza and smallpox (Ademakinwa). God called Joseph Ayo Babalola in 9th, 10th, 11th October, 1928 and he was a great instrument in the global acclaimed revival in 1930. One of the spiritual armaments that Babalola claimed that God gave him was a bottle of water, to be sanctified through prayers and application of the same for powerful healings and miraculous deliverance (Alabi, 2016; AGBARA NLA NINU AAWE, Alokan, 2017:161; Babalola, n.d. 1-12; Oludele, 2007:53). The specific purpose was for faith healing of all kinds and exorcism.

Many streams and rivers were sanctified and dedicated for healing purposes within the denomination such as *Omi-Aayo* (River *Aayo*) at Oke-Ooye, Ilesa (Adebayo, 2017:12; Oludele, 2001: 2008), River Ariran in Ikeji-Arakeji (Olowe, 2007:59) on the spot where God called Babalola, *Omi-Oni* in Efon-Alaaye (Alabi, 2013:164-165), the prominent residence of Babalola during his lifetime, *Omi*-Babalola at Mount of Miracles at Ido-Ile, a prominent Prayer Mount that Babalola frequently patronized (Adediran, 2009:53-54), *Omi-Kosehunti* (River of All Is Possible) at Erio-Ekiti (Alabi, 2013:164-173) among others. It is ardently believed in the church that having prayed into a bottle of waters with selected biblical texts especially from the Book of Psalms and by faith, solutions are bound to come to pass for healing. Many souls have been won to the fold of Christian faith through the healing ministry of the church. A great medium of contact for healing is water as Babalola was instructed to use.

The method of the use of water is for every participant to bring his bottle of water during any of the prayer service, specially organized revival hours, early in the morning or evening prayer meetings, prophetic gathering as a result of the receipt of divine vision, revelation, audible voice, prophetic utterances and/or from any other super sensible message delivered. In the course of the prayers, the prophet or any leader guiding the congregation would give instruction to everyone to raise his/her prayer water bottles for prayers and sanctification. All the selected biblical could be read by an individual or repeated after the leader. After the recitation, potent and prophetic prayer utterances would be offered with thunderous and resounding echoes of Amen to show their believe that having prayed into the water for any Christian adherents there would be healing and solution to any difficulty he is passing through. This bother on the revelation, teaching and practices of Joseph Ayo Babalola as he claimed that he was instructed from God.

The above-mentioned streams and rivers sanctified by Joseph Ayo Babalola during his earthly ministry serves various purposes and functions according the beliefs and traditions of the adherents within the denomination. For example, the River *Ariran* is multipurpose in functions. Various barren women have patronized the water and received their fertility. A case of a lady diagnosed of fibroid and billed for surgical operation came all the way from Lagos in pains. Due to lack of fund of fund, she trusted God for divine intervention and began to pure the water upon her body, to the surprise of many she delivered the fibroid in the clinic of Joseph Ayo Babalola University without any injection or medication. The photograph of the fibroid was kept in the office of the Vice-Chancellor. Various forms of ailments, spirit related sicknesses, diseases and challenges have been taken care of through the patronage of River *Ariran.* A case of one lady who had been insane for thirty-three years got healed when she through divine providence came to drink from River *Ariran* (Olowe, 2007:59-69).

River Kosehunti (All Is Possible Sacred Water) in Erio-Ekiti, Omi Babalola at Mount of Miracles in Ido-Ile and Omi Oni in Efon-Alaaye are believed to serve various spiritual empowerment, fertility, healing, destruction of evil poisons, spiritual manipulations and victory over evil forces and so on (Alabi, 2013:164-172). The belief in and patronage of sacred waters in the liturgy of this denomination flowed the biblical examples Elisha and Naman saga, healing of the water in Jericho, water baptism of John the Baptist and the healing ministry of Jesus Christ (Alabi, 2013). However, certain abuses of such patronage of these sacred waters could not be denied as people have the tendencies to shift their attention from the Author of faith to the use of elements of nature. This could easily make mankind to shift his attention from the Maker to the made and from Object of worship to instrument of worship.

8. Religious Implications of Ancient Beliefs in the Force of Primordial Waters

Undoubtedly, water is an elemental force in nature that has registered its recognition in history among mankind. Man has come to do many things with water both in the industrial and religious circles today. Even though it covers at least 70% of the planet, it is not sufficient for both domestic and industrial uses on earth. The daily need of water by man makes water to be his friend, although the havocs that water has done in human history are untold. Man has suffered many shipwrecks, floods with many tolls of death of both human and live stock, property and the like. It could be argued that based on the various ways that man has had encounters with water and the myths associated with water; it has become an object of worship.

All the ancient mythologies and creation stories of the Sumerian, Babylonian and Jewish origins agree that water existed before the creation of man and the earth. By implication, water is older than all the creation and creatures. Water has been there before the existence of man. Also, water is viewed as a creative force in the universe. This is displayed through the creation stories of the Sumerians and the Genesis account. Water is believed to give power to plants, herbs and seed in order to germinate. Yahweh commanded the water to bring forth the living creature:
And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature
that has life…and every living creature that moves which the waters
*brought forth abundantly, after their kind…(*Gen. 1:20-21).

Sumerian mythological views water as biological elements or having procreative powers to give birth to something and to give life to animate or inanimate things. This may be as a result of dry climate that they found themselves in the ancient world. The *semen* power of water was also shown when seed, fruits, plants, trees and aquatic mammals like fishes and other creatures would come alive again during the rainy season when there is water.

Another implication of water is that there are other numinous or beings apart from biological beings that constitute and fill the creation or the universe. There

were gods and goddesses living inside water sources like fountains, wells, springs, brooks, rivers, marshes, ponds and lagoons and they have bearing on the existence of man. In African Traditional Religion, there is a belief in water spirits. These spirits can be appeased through sacrifices and rituals and show favour to the person approaching and seeking their favour. Water is cosmic and it is a forceful element in nature. The ancient people have never viewed it as an ordinary entity. It affects the Nature and the whole universe. It is powerful and man experiences its power in seasons and daily. It is also cosmic in the sense that it played major roles during creation and affected the course of mankind. Its cosmic power is also extended to man's sustenance on earth. Without water, man would die of dehydration, and there will be no food for him.

In addition to this, almost every religion has significant roles associated with water; in other words, water plays major roles in almost all earthly and living religions. Every religion in one way or the other depends on water in order to carry out its ritualistic activities. Judaism has a long prescription on ritual washing and bathing in order to remove what were considered to be ritualistic uncleanness. The rite of baptism in Christianity cannot do without water. The common ablution in Islam is observed with water. Libation is poured to the ancestors in African traditional religion. Initiation into cults or some other sects of religion is carried out through ritualistic bathing with water. All these show the value of water in all religions.

Furthermore, to people living in a dry climate, water cannot but be precious and symbolic. Genetically, the rain that comes from heaven is regarded by the ancient people as the *semen of heaven,* personified as male coming to fertilize the mother earth for fruition in the cosmological views of early Mesopotamian civilization.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Water is seen as an essential element of purification nearly in all religions. The myth of the great flood in both Sumerian and Babylonian Epics was religiously and theologically viewed as a purification of the old world after which a new world was created. Water removes dirt and stains from objects. This power is believed to be capable of washing and cleansing the soul in a symbolic manner. Water is viewed to be a symbol of purification of the soul especially after someone is regarded to be a sinner, when he has violated the taboo of the society or traditional religion. Both Judaism and Christianity and some other religions engage the cleansing power of water through baptism, ablution and washing to remove what is considered to be religiously and ceremonially dirty or unclean. Not only is water viewed as having a purifying power, it is viewed as a destructive force also.

Nearly all religions have the idea that water can be *annoyed* and man can incur its wrath. That is to say, water has destructive powers. These are manifested through flood, storm, sea surging, seaquakes, water disasters and the like. The Genesis account of the flood story is not regarded as purifying the old world alone in order to give way for a new world, but it is viewed as demonstration of the destructive force of water or water annoyance. These are demonstrated through the seaquakes, ocean surging, floods and storms that rise against vegetation and human society. In fact, in areas where these are experienced, water cults and rituals are carried out in order to appease the water goddess. It is recommended therefore, that modern development of the cities should take into cognizance the effects of flood in urban areas. There are water disasters in the cities because of poor drainage. The gutters are filled with refuse of the urban dwellers and the environmental habits of many are still primitive. This should be taken care of in order to avoid further disasters.

The challenge this belief poses to the church in particular is how to adapt her faith healing to the modern realities of complex sickness such as Ebola, AIDS/HIV, Covid-19 and other pandemic disease and ultra-advanced technology in the medical sector. Will the members of the church prefer faith healing by water in the face of biological sickness that requires medical tests in advanced country or they will be free to act on the extent their faith could carry them? Individuals should be left to his or her decision and this should be forced on them as the doctrine of the faith healing remains steadfast within the denomination.

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Resilience Amidst Adversity: The Journey of the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN)

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Abstract. The purpose of this paper is to give a rich and detailed analysis of the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), which is one of the most influential Christian ministries located in Lagos, Nigeria. This paper drills down into the church history, doctrine, administrative structure, financial practices and societal importance. It also presents such issues as the breaking conflicts, court cases, leadership issues, as well as the pandemic COVID-19. The problems are identified and appropriate recommendations given in response to the problems, which are given strengthened values on transparency, accountability, ethical behavior, compliance with rules and regulations, and adaptation to changes. This paper highlights that despite the challenges the church of all Nations (SCOAN) has a deep contribution to society by the spiritual guidance, humanitarian efforts and also economic contributions. The suggested strategies could increase the spiritual impact of the church while at the same time making it more steadfast and capable to growing. The paper highlights the critical role of flexibility and excellent leadership skills when heading an organization, which is a religious one, in the complex modern world.

Keywords: Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), Leadership Transition, Financial Transparency, Humanitarian Efforts, COVID-19 Adaptation

1. Introduction

The generic term African Indigenous Churches (AICs) referred specifically to those established mostly for and by Africans is also used to describe them as African Independent Churches (AICs) (Ayegboyin, D. & Ishola, 1997, p.19). These churches are different from the ones made by missionaries from America and Europe in Africa. The landscape would be altered by 1888 through the creation of a Native Baptist Church in Lagos. This church split from First Baptist Church Lagos, a mission church which were founded Americans and entirely depended on their operation. The act of independence actually shows to other churches, resulting in the founding of more new churches.

Since then, setting up of these churches the image of which spreads in different countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and notably in Nigeria, has become popular. The African Independent churches have grown to their extremes that some of them identify themselves as the Pentecostal Churches, Praying Churches, Prophetic Movements Churches among other. They have come out to be strong in the teachings of Jesus Christ in Africa and the world. This paper is devoted to the role of the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), the church that over the last 20 years has had a significant societal impact.

2. History of the Founder

The head of synagogue church of Nation is Prophet T.B. Joshua. His date of birth was June 12, 1963, at Arigidi-Akoko, a tiny town in the state of Ondo, Nigeria. In his youth, a friendless Joshua was known for his devotion to God and spiritual matters, and he attended St. Stephen's Anglican Primary School in the village. Next, he shifted to Osun State of Nigeria where he studied at Anglican Grammar School. Having finished his secondary education, what followed was a brief period of lifetime working experiences in different occupations, such as poultry farming and construction.
In 1987, the Church of All Nations ministry was founded by Joshua. The church was composed of a small number of people at the beginning and then later on it gradually increased in size and popularity. SCOAN was what was known for an emphasis on healing, deliverance, and prophecy.

The TV program "Emmanuel TV" made Joshua famous internationally. The program was first broadcast in 2006 and was seen in over a hundred countries around the world which attracted people from diverse background. There were many people at the SCOAN who attended in the hope of spiritual direction and miracles.

T.B. Joshua, the prophet, throughout his ministry reported to have performed so many miracles which include, healing the sick, raising the dead people and deliverance people from bondage of evil spirits. These assertions attracted admiration and distrust from diverse populations.
Moreover, from the spiritual callings, Joshua was an active philanthropist. He launched a humanitarian group known as Partners of Emmanuel TV, being the umbrella organization where the poor who live in our society can turn for assistance. While the organization accepted a variety of causes including education, health and poverty, it focused on some issues.

On June 5, 2021, precisely at the age of 57, the Prophet T.B. Joshua died a natural death. The sorrowful news of his death brought about a sudden shock to those who loved him from all parts of the world. The mission of the Synagogue Church of All Nations is still on under the leadership of other ministers as they continue what had already been started by Joshua.

3. History of the Church

SCOAN, an independent charismatic church with its headquarters located in Lagos, Nigeria, is a Christian mega-church. The Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN) was founded in 1989 by Temitope Joshua Balogun (Pastor TB Joshua) after a 40 days and 40 nights fasting (Joshua, 2006). GO belongs to T.B. Joshua. He believed that he was divinely ordained to start a church, thus the SCOAN Church ("The Synagogue" Church of All Nations). Initially, Joshua began to lead his ministry with a handful of people. Several events of nature like storms, floods and extreme weathers were responsible for destruction of the roof of the first church building, flooding away the second church building and collapsing the third church building, respectively.

The church started as a small group of people who first met in a temporary shelter under a canopy in the middle of the swampy area in Agodo-Egbe, Lagos, Nigeria, the church's aim and mission were simple and clear: him to seek and save is the lost (Luke 19:10). The church upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit moved to a large tract of land (Marcelinus) in Ikotun-Egbe; an outskirt of Lagos where multitudes meet to worship the Almighty. The church that few in number have grown to be one of the most influential in Nigeria with about 50,000 worshippers attending Sunday services weekly as her headquarters in Ikotun-Egbe, Lagos (Joshua, 2006) Following a well-attended praise and worship service, Joshua, founder and senior pastor of the church got a call of the Lord. June 5th,2021 was the day Joshua kicked the dust of the sheepfold. Even though there are revisions to the church's outer look, the vision is still unmoved. SCOAN is a place where millions of worshipers from all over the globe gather together to learn the message of God's saving power, healing and the victory over sin. The church members are generous in donating money and materials in order to support the church's social ministry to the poor long before they enter the Church and even outside of the church matter.

4. Doctrine of the Church

SCOAN Church resonates with a Christian faith based on the Biblical teachings maximizing on faith, healing and deliverance. 'Points of Belief' is the name of the church doctrines. Here is the statement of faith of the Synagogue Church of All Nations: Here is the statement of faith of the Synagogue Church of All Nations:

Through the Father and the Son the Spirit joined God in the creation of the world. The Father ministered the Spirit so that we might become sons/daughters of God like Jesus Christ. It is Jesus as Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit whom we know. He made a wonderful promise in John 14:16-17: "I will ask the Father, and the Father will give an Advocate to you, the one who will stay with you forever— the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot receive Him, because it does not see Him, neither does it know Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and He will be in you." The Holy Spirit is to be with us forever. He is certainly not a well-known figure for everyone but only for those who are ready for Him. The Spirit of God shows up how poor our sin actually is. He leads us to the right path to accept Christ as our Saviour. He does a one-eighty turn to our lives. They call it being saved or being born again.

Thus, Jesus Christ preferred soul-winning. That is what it was all for Him to come for, to live and to die and to rise again for. He is the Messianic figure whom the church expected to come and restore the communion between God and man. Concerning His ship of the flesh, Jesus Christ was David's son. On that point His divine nature is alleged by His rising from the dead on the third day and by His display of divinity while performing many great (and otherworldly) deeds. Now He sits at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2: Paul describes Jesus as "the Son of God, who was appointed by God to be the Savior of the world, according to the good news that we have received" (Romans 1:2-4). He in every respect was subject to these temptations, but in all respects without sin. Jesus Christ loves us, died for us, rules and reigns

in power for us and is also the one who keeps on praying for us.
The message of God was spoken by the people of God that was moved by the Holy Spirit like the channel through which this message was transmitted. Both Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible don't only mean events which happened long ago and ancient wisdoms. It is God's message of grace and truth to us today (2 Timothy 3:(16:21 Peter 2:1) the prophecy came by them from Divine dictation, as the very Scripture says.

If you follow sin, it leads to destruction and death; but, the Word of God leads one to life. Should Christ Jesus be our Lord and Savior, one day, we get a new body, a new soul and a new spirit. God's Spirit joins Himself to our spirit to declare that we are God's children (Romans 8:(16)

Salvation comes when one is set free from the sin and its results and gets it by believing in the cleansing power of the Blood of Christ. Every man should call upon our Lord Jesus Christ as his own personal Lord and Savior; otherwise, the death of Jesus will not accomplish anything for him.

God's word is a good thing to meditate on and God's spirit is a good power to revive my strength. We must have his spiritual word, as well as his spirit, which, mixed with repentance and faith, makes us be born again.

Divine healing is the divine power by which God restores or preserves the physical health of man. It is credited to us by grace through faith in what our Lord Jesus Christ has perfectly done. All the damage Jesus was subjected to before and during His crucifixion He carried for the sake of our healing – spiritual, emotional and physical. His pain healed us. The divine healing is one of the fruits that Jesus Christ died for us at Calvary at.

Water baptism and baptism in the Holy Spirit We also believe in speaking in tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance (Acts 2:e). All who enter into the number of the body of Christ do so because they are baptized in the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12: God's love showcases Hisposture of 13; Romans 8:9). When you are baptized in the Holy Spirit, God's power will come upon you as it did on the first disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:№1-4). The life-changing force of God comes upon you when you are filled with the Holy Spirit. He touches every part of your being. The Holy Spirit produces rivers of life, joy, love, peace and power to flow out of your spirit for the needs of others (John 7:

The Lord's Supper as was celebrated by Jesus Christ and His disciples in Matthew 26:26-28, "While they were eating, Jesus took the bread, blessed it and broke it, and handed it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat for this is My body." Then, He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it."

5. Church Administration

The Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), an African Christian ministry based in Lagos, Nigeria, with large congregations across the globe, is led by the late reverend T.B. Joshua, a renowned televangelist and prophet. Concerning the church administration, SCOAN appointed Prophet T.B. Joshua until his passing on 5th June 2021. The senior pastor and founder of the church was him in that he had the central leadership role and participated in the decision-making process. One can easily notice that hierarchy is usually a feature of such churches since the senior pastor is the one who decides and is responsible for all the church administration.

The church took a serious hit on leadership issues after a vacuum appeared in leadership through the absence of a leadership succession plan after the passing of the Prophet T.B. Joshua. During this period, on September 13, 2021, Punch newspaper wrote that the successor of Prophet Temitope Joshua, is his widow Mrs Evelyn Joshua.

As divulged in written and video post shared on the church's official Facebook page, Joy S. Siko Joshua was referred to as the commander with divine assignment to take the command of the Lagos-based church, according to the text posted on the church's official Facebook page. The sentence read, "We thank you all from our hearts for your prayers and love for the ministry since the dear father of ours, servant of the Most High God, Prophet T.B. Joshua passed away. We thank you for your faith too. It is time for God to see the day, to the glory of God, for us to soldier on with the divine assignment under the guidance of God and the human leadership of Mrs. Ev We strongly invite you all to the prayers sessions as we commend the praying space for her to get God's directions and wisdom. Soonest, Mrs. Evelyn Joshua will have a

3. **Legal Issues:** The church found itself in the middle of legal battles even being a plaintiff in some other occasions. Among these concerns were cases of code violations, land issues and grievances with authorities.
4. **Leadership Transition:** When Prophet T.B. Joshua, the founder and leader of the church, died in June 2021, doubts arose concerning the structural transition of the church and its future orientation.
5. **Impact of COVID-19:** SCOAN, just like the other religious bodies of worship, had to deal with the martials and challenges that COVID-19 pandemic created, some of which included the banning of large gatherings and the limits of traveling.

9. Solutions

At certain stage the religious organizations are faced with a challenge. This paper suggests some general approaches that religious organizations, including the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), can consider to address challenges. This paper suggests some general approaches that religious organizations, including the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), can consider to address challenges:

1. **Transparency and Accountability:** In view of the need to increase financial transparency, religious bodies can set up financial practices that are transparent. This could consist of done releases of financial states and how offerings and donations are being expended for the distraction of gospel, respectively charitable activities.
2. **Ethical Conduct and Integrity:** Integrity and adherence to the highest moral values is an indispensable feature of any religious institution. Addressing the controversies or the criticisms by carrying out internal reviews and suctioning to the high ethical standards can restore the trust to the community.
3. **Regulation Compliance:** The implementation of all provisions of all applicable legislation may have a long-term beneficial impact in terms of the avoidance of legal issues and disputes. Regular reviewing of organizational practices and updating them occasionally in accordance with the laws is essential.
4. **Leadership Succession Planning:** Succession should be well planned and clear when a well-known leader passes, if it is to facilitate a smooth transition. It guarantees a leadership stability and continuity in the company.
5. **Focus on Core Mission:** Religious groups should center their efforts in -following their mission and values, making sure that their actions comply with the teachings they have.
6. **Open Dialogue and Communication:** Holding public debate with the people who support and those who oppose can create way for the resolution of concerns and misconceptions. Communication is one of the ways in which we can create a climate of transparency and awareness.
7. **Adaptation to Changing Circumstances:** Aligning to the dynamic areas of the environment, especially that of Covid-19 pandemic, can be a key to continuation of the religious organizations operation in a way that meets the demand for well-being of their members and the visitors.
8. **Empowerment and Social Impact:** The effect of the community empowerment and social impact of charity initiatives may go beyond the church's activities which can be demonstrated as a commitment to the society.

10. Conclusion

Finally, this research has proved that T.B. Joshua's Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN) is one of fastest-growing indigenous churches in Nigeria. The Church being the branches from the city of Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria has Ghana, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Greece as its headquarter and the number of its followers is growing large. The church has had a positive impact on the society through its charitable projects and being the instrumental force in promoting tourism and local economy in the state of Lagos, Nigeria. In contrast, the church has faced some substantial challenges. The absence of a well-defined leadership succession plan before the death of the founder resulted in a leadership crisis, accussations of financial misuse and later demise of the organization. The church has a hand in conflict and lawsuits. It faces challenges like land issues, building code violations, and disagreements with authorities. The pandemic of the COVID-19 has had an effect on SCOAN as well, just like other religious institutions. The church has had to adapt to the challenges that came alongside the pandemic, like the limitations in number of members attending a service and restrictions with traveling. Believing that its goals are achievable in any circumstances, the church has been seeking to accomplish its mission and serve this community. Resilience is emphasized here as an indication of the value of flexibility and good leadership in dealing with the complex problem of the running of a large church in this current world.

11. Recommendations

Upon examining the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN) and its current situation, the following recommendations are suggested: Upon examining the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN) and its

current situation, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. **Leadership Crisis:** The indigenous church founders ought to draw from the lessons SCOAN succession crisis and identify legitimate successors when they are around.
2. **Transparency and Accountability:** In order to resolve the issues of financial openness that have come up, the leadership of SCOAN as well as other religious bodies can actively adopt transparent financial procedures. This might be made up of constant public disclosures of the financial statements and the descriptions of the donations and offerings' uses for the spreading of Gospel and charitable activities.
3. **Regulation Compliance:** Abiding by all legislation and regulations in place can help to avoid legal cases and conflicts. Keep track of and update organizational procedures to comply with legal requirements all the time.
4. **Humanitarian Efforts:** The church is extremely commendable for its many humanitarian activities, which include food, clothes, and money given especially to the poor both in Nigeria and outside Nigeria. These community projects have the ultimate goal of improving the lives of the disadvantaged and society as a whole, and more things of such nature should be kept up. They are also instrumental in evangelistic campaign with a view to recruit more people into the church and sustain the present members.
5. **Adaptation to Changing Circumstances:** Adjusting to new realities can enable Pentecostal churches such as SCOAN and other religious organizations to be ready for future incidences that may affect their church activities without sacrificing the health and well-being of their members and visitors.

Applying these recommendations will augment the Synagogue Church of All Nations and other similar organizations that will lead to growth in their spiritual influence. It is assumed that the remarks are fully tips and they will be implemented for the church to continue growing even after the departure of its founder.

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Part Five

Language and Literary Studies

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Àgbó Masquerade Costumes in the Service of Democracy in Nigeria

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Abstract. There are many masquerade types in Nigeria. Most ethnic groups in Nigeria have their peculiar masquerade varieties performing different socio-cultural and religious functions in the societies. This accounts for the multiplicity of masquerade types in Nigeria. The Yorùbá, an ethnic group, occupying southwestern parts of Nigeria, have masquerade types namely: Egúngún, Epa, Àgbó, Gẹ̀lẹ̀dẹ, Ìgunnu, Ẹ̀yọ̀ and Agẹmo among others. What differentiates the masquerade types are their unique costumes. For Egúngún, Gẹ̀lẹ̀dẹ, and Àgbó their wooden headdresses, fabric costumes, and other accouterments allow for displays of symbolic images that communicate socio-cultural and religious messages to the beholders. Right from 1999 when the Forth Republic was ushered into the country, masquerade costumes among the Yorùbá, apart from their socio-religious connotations, also serve as media for promoting democratic values among the people. Therefore, the paper examined the symbolic images of some Àgbó costumes in the services of democracy in Lagos State. The study focused on Àgbó masquerade from Àgbowá-Ìkòsì, a coastal Ìjẹ̀bú town in Lagos State. Data for analysis were gathered from primary sources. The data were analysed using formal and contextual methods. The study established that the sacred costumes of Àgbó masquerade are now also veritable media for promoting democratic values and peace in the study area.

Keywords: Masquerade costumes, Àgbó, service of democracy, Àgbowá-Ìkòsì

1. Introduction

Masquerade traditions are widespread among the peoples of the south of the Sahara Africa. It is one of the important ways of life of the people. Being part and parcel of their cosmology, it permeates almost all their socio-cultural and religious lifestyles since masquerades always appear during all-important cultural activities of the peoples. The backing of the spirit beings believed to be embodied in the masquerade is also often sought after in some cultural ceremonies without which they are considered incomplete.

In Nigeria, the story is not different. This is a result of the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic nature of the country. Therefore, masquerade types are multifarious in line with the cultural diversity of the Nigerian peoples numbering over 250. The different masquerades of the ethnic groups perform different social-cultural and religious functions in these dissimilar societies. Their functions vary from place to place depending on the purposes for which they are founded. These functions include ancestral worship, rites of passage, agricultural production, age-grade ceremonies, social commentaries, healings of the lands, blessing of the people, settling of the family squabbles, warfare, burial rights, entertainment, kingship ceremony, judiciary, among others.

Popular Nigerian masquerades include *Ijele* among the Igbo, *ekpo* from among the Efik, Ibibio, and Anang people of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, *and Zangbeto* among the Ogu people of Badagry to mention a few. The compulsive nature of political governance in Nigeria coupled with some factors of

westernisation, have led to some changes to the functions performed by masquerades in the country, which include using their costumes for political campaigns (Plate 1).

Plate 1: *A masquerade carrying a campaign poster of political aspirants in South-eastern Nigeria.*
Source: *https://www.ackcitynews.com Retrieved 10th January 2023.*

When Nigeria gained independence on October 1, 1960, it experienced a severe political setback. Johnson Aguyi-Ironsi became the first military Head of State after Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and Immanuel Ifeajuna staged Nigeria's first military coup on January 15, 1966. Later on, several coups d'état were triggered by this unusual occurrence. Each time, the intermittent coups d'état disrupted successive democratically elected governments. The recurrent military takeovers that ended the first, second, and third republics denied Nigeria and her people the benefits of democratic governance, widened the scope of corruption and corrupt activities, and impeded Nigeria's socio-political and economic advancement.

In 1999 however, Nigeria elected Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the fourth republic President, and all other democratic structures were installed. This relatively stable era has brought about steady progressive democracy and democratic institutions in Nigeria. The 25 years of democracy have influenced all aspects of the people's lifestyles including their religious and belief systems. Masquerades, who represented the presence of spirits and ancestors, now mingle with politicians and the political process are now veritable partakers in the political activities in public places. The sacred masquerade's costumes have also become media for displaying contemporary societal dress culture and artistic forms for communicating democracy-induced messages.

Unfortunately, in the last decade in Nigeria, masquerades have been hijacked for frivolous purposes by political actors leading to acts of sacrilege to the sacred costumes of the masquerades. In some cases, masquerades have been arrested, detained in police custody, and sometimes de-costumed in public. As such, checks were put in place by governments to restrict the spirit's incessant involvement in secular activities such as making masquerade cult groups obtain police permits before festivals and the need to deploy the services of the police during masquerade festivals for the security of life and guarantying of peace by preventing hoodlums from hijacking the process and to arrest of wild masquerades. The use of masquerades for direct political purposes like snatching of ballot boxes, electioneering campaigns, political unrest, fighting maiming, and carrying weapons are reasons they have been curtailed through legislation that prevented masquerades from participating in political activities in the last couple of years.

The Bauchi State Commissioner of Police on November 25, 2012, issued a ban on the use of masquerades for political rallies (Maffi, 2002). Likewise in August 2022, Police in Akwa-Ibom reiterated an earlier ban on masquerades to prevent violent and lawless activities that led to murders, threats to lives, assaults, and other breaches of fundamental rights (Sunnewsonline.com). In August 2022, the Buhari-led administration signed into law, the Electoral Bill 2022 which bans masquerades from attending political campaigns. It states as follows: "Masquerade shall not be employed or used by any political party, aspirant or candidate during political campaign or for any other purpose" (Oludare, 2002).

Different masquerade traditions of the Yorùbá pervade the entire landscape of the region. *Ẹ̀yọ̀* masquerade is found in the Lagos area of the region occupied by the Àwórì, while *Gẹ̀lẹ̀dẹ* is found mostly among the Yewa (Ègbádò) subgroup in the southwestern parts of Nigeria and the Ketu people in the Eastern part of the Republic of Benin. *Epa* is unique to the southwestern parts of the region occupied by the Èkìtì and Ìgbómìnà, and Agẹmọ and Àgbó masquerades are prevalent in the southern part where the Ìjẹ̀bú are predominant. *Ìgunnu* or *Ìgunnukó* are found everywhere in the region where we have the Yorùbá of Tapa extraction and Egúngún is the most widespread among the Yorùbá region. Each of them is easily identifiable by the configuration and materials or media employed for its unique costume. It is worthy

of note that the masquerade costume types, materials, and forms have changed but still retain some of their old elements. These changes have also affected the usage and functionality of the Yorùbá masquerade costumes such that they are now democracy-induced messages since 1999, which, is the beginning of the fourth democratic dispensation in Nigeria.

Field experience has revealed that Àgbó masquerade costumes of the Yorùbá have been more reflective as media of communication to the beholding audience. According to Adepegba (2016) the masks headdresses, and other components of the costume are themselves objects of artistic forms and expressions of the people's creative ingenuity, which bear esoteric symbolism and contextual meanings on quite a wide range of issues from cultural, to economy, to politics, to society and religion.

The masquerade cult groups especially those of Àgbó have devised subtle, effective, and sublime ways of playing political-induced roles by including symbols that promote political values using their costumes. This paper, therefore examines the costumes of Àgbó masquerades in Àgbowá-Ìkòsì Lagos State, which has been in the service of democracy in Nigeria. Fifteen (15) selected costumes communicating the ideals and values of democracy were analysed using formal and contextual methods.

2. Àgbó Masquerade in Àgbowá-Ìkòsì

Àgbó masquerade tradition is celebrated with pomp and pageantry in Àgbowá-Ìkòsì of the Ẹ̀pẹ́ division of Lagos State. Àgbowá-Ìkòsì is one of the Ìjèbú-speaking coastal towns in Lagos State. Its boundary extends westwards to Ìmota, Ìsìù, and Ìkoròdú; eastwards to Ajébọ̀, Òrúgbò and Itọ́ikín and southwards to Àdò and
Ìkosì beach, and bordered in the South by Lagos Lagoon (Olufuwa).

Most of the communities in the Ẹ̀pẹ́ division speak Ìjèbú dialect. This is because the Ìjèbú are concentrated along that region from Ikorodu to Ẹ̀pẹ́ to Ìjèbú-Ode and back to Ìkene and Sàgámú. Ìjèbú is one of the multi-groups of the Yorùbá people that occupy Southwestern parts of Nigeria and spread southwards of the Nigerian borders to the People's Republics of Benin and Togo (Abiodun, 1991). These Yorùbá sub-groups include Ifẹ̀, Ọ̀yọ́, Òwu, Ẹ̀gbá, Ìjèbú, Èkìtì, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Ìgbómìnà, Ìbàràpá, Òndó, Ìkálẹ̀, Ìlàjẹ, Àwórì, Yàgbà, Àkókó, Ọ̀wọ̀ and Yewa, among others. These Yorùbá subgroups are found in Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti, Kwara, and Kogi States in the present Federal Republic of Nigeria (see Figure 1).

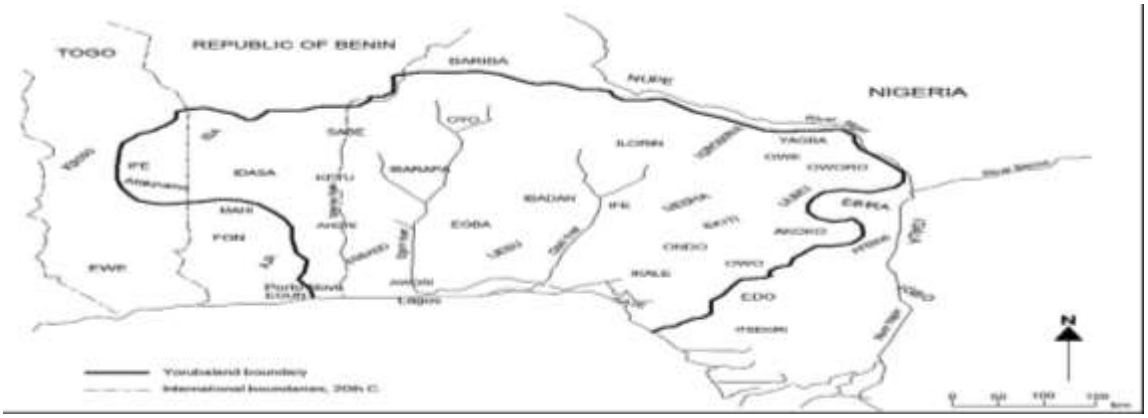


Fig. 1: *Yorubaland showing major towns and Yorùba sub-groups in Nigeria, Republic of Benin and Togo. Source: Cambridge.org (July 18, 2020).*

The Ìjèbú sub-group is found in parts of the present-day Lagos and Ogùn states of Nigeria. These two states have bodies of water around and within them, some of which they share. Their indigenes and inhabitants are either living in the hinterland or around the coastal areas. Consequently, Àgbowá-Ìkòsì by its location in the Ẹ̀pẹ́ division occupies a coastal area of Lagos State along with ancient communities like Ìjẹ̀dẹ̀, Ìkòròdú, Ìgbogbo, Ejìrìn and Itọ́ikín among others. Adenuga asserts that the nearness of the town to Ìkosì water has positively affected their social lifestyle and made them to be predominantly fishers and also to engage in crop farming.

The division of Àgbowá-Ìkòsì into three quarters has been the platform for the celebration of Àgbó masquerade festival. The quarters are: Itún Agbówá, Itún Aledò and Itún Oríwù. Everyone living in the town belongs to one of the quarters and this is by location or residency within the quarters and/or by individual's choice.

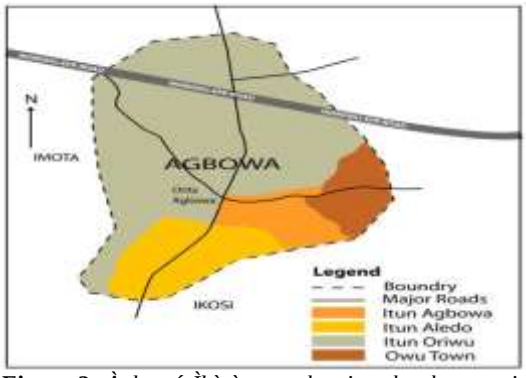


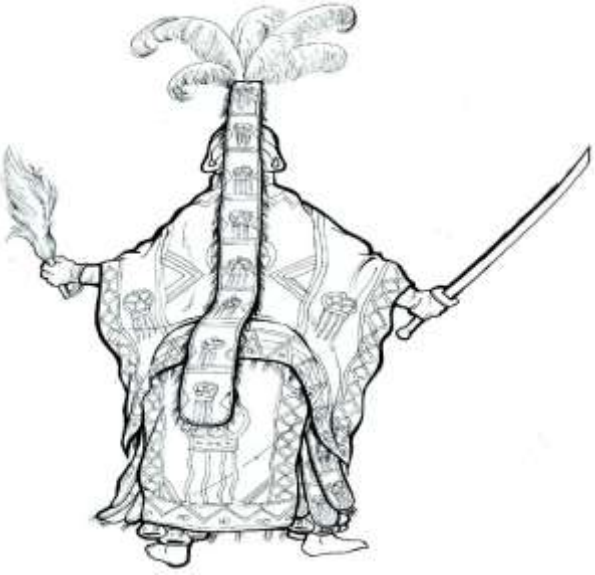
Figure 2: *Àgbowá-Ìkòsì map showing the three main quarters (itún) of the town. Òwu Ìkòsì town is part of the geography of Àgbowá-Ìkòsì but does not partake in Àgbó Rémirékè masquerade celebration.*
Adapted from Google map by Kehìndé Adépégba, 2014.

Àgbó Rémirékè is the most popular traditional religious activity in the town. It is a celebration that brings all the residents and indigenes of the town together. The three quarters are deeply involved in healthy rivalry as they present their Àgbó masquerades in arrays of appealing regalia, best costumes, and dance skills during the festivals. The competitive spirit has increased the quality of its headdresses and applique fabric, which are the main components of the masquerade's regalia. Adepegba and Ademuleya (2015) trace the history of Àgbó costumes as follows:

Historically, the Àgbó Rémirékè appliqué costume of today started with donations of head-ties by women with the view of clothing the masquerade. This gesture later led to the elaborate use of contemporary textile appliqué that has the characteristics of modern machine-generated embroidered patterns and now incorporates attachments of fanciful lace patterns, shining stones, beads, buttons, ribbons, synthetic flowers, sequences, rosettes, etc. Lace, velvet, and damask cloths are the common textile materials used for the applique.

The components of the Àgbó costumes are the wooden headdresses, which depict beautiful woman faces with (or without) facial marks, elegant hair-do showing interesting coiffures, and the attachment of superstructures that embody important symbolism and message. This wood headdress is combined with an appliqued fabric costume. The fabric costumes are segmented into parts that are worn together as one complete whole. The complete costume also reflects a female figure with beautiful facial features, while the headdress serves as the *adé* (crown), and fabric regalia shows protruding buttocks that enhance the masquerade's beauty. The fabric components include *ìró* (wrapper), *àwọ̀tẹ́lẹ̀* (underwear top), colourful plumes, *ìbòjú* (veil), *agọ̀* (main fabric applique membrane), *ìròyẹ̀* (long vertical panel), *ìlédìí* (buttocks panel), and *ìgbáyà/ìlẹ̀dọ̀* (chest panel). The masquerader also wears anklets made of seedpods around his legs to give a rattling sound to his dancing steps. A completely dressed *Àgbó with gloves in his hands also holds a metal sword in his right hand and a horse whisk (iyà)* in his left hand during the performance (see Figures 3 (a) and (b). Every Àgbó that is not costumed with all the costume components is not qualified to inhabit the spirit and cannot reach out nor dance during the festival.

(a)



(b)

Figure 3(a) and (b): Front and back views of Àgbó Rémirékè masquerade in full costume with crown imagery. Illustrated by: Oluseyi Awosika, 2015.

The Àgbó costume tradition is witnessing a lot of transformation and contemporaneity. This is a result of the influence of modernity on the artistic tradition of Àgbó Rémirékè such that new materials, techniques, and concepts are now employed in the design of the costume as evidenced in the depictions of political, sports, and other everyday life objects.

3. Àgbó costumes in the Service of Democracy

The Yorùbá masquerade regalia is a multi-art form. These forms integrate visual, theatrical, and musical art. Poynor (2001) affirms that the Yorùbá masquerade is a component of a large multimedia art that includes costume, dance, music, poetry, and interaction with a participating crowd of onlookers. The masquerade visual art forms (wooden sculpture and fabric costume) utilise colour and other visual elements, signs, and symbols, making it a multi-media art platform.

Àgbó in Àgbowá-Ìkòsì is very profound in the use of masquerade costume art for communicating all kinds of values, especially in the service of democracy, justice, and peace among the people. Àgbó masquerade costumes usually carry their expressive messages on the headdresses and other components of the fabric costumes. For this study, the headdresses and the (*agọ̀*) main membrane of the costume components, which have been the main platform for imprinting of artistic design are selected for this purpose. This is even though the homogenous images are usually fixed on all other parts of the costumes.

As they say among the people: *Ilé la ti ń kó ẹ̀ṣọ́ ròde* (charity begins at home) The Àgbó masquerade cults members are aware of the political structure of the government in the state, which brings Àgbowá-Ìkòsì community under the Ikosi-Ejirin Local Council Development Area (LCDA) of Lagos State. As a way of expressing this knowledge, the logo of the LCDA was always depicted on their costumes (see Plate 2) using the machine embroidery method. This is an indicator of their acceptance of the democratic structure in place and the love they have for their grassroots constituency. The logo reflects images of a fisherman paddling a canoe, tree, convocation cap, hoe, and cutlass. These are elements showing what the LCDA stands for that is Fishing, farming, and education. The Àgbó cult members are proud to be associated with these hence the depictions of the Ìkòsì-Ejìnrìn LCDA logo on the Àgbó costumes.

Figure 2: *Àgbó's agọ̀ fabric costume spotting the repeated logo of Ikosi-Ejinrin LCDA. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.*

Aside from this grassroots affiliation, the community has always shown their pride for Lagos State, its government, and its people, thereby creating images about the state on the Àgbó costumes. Plate 3 is a depiction of Lagos State's coat of arms. This is toward projecting Lagos as the ideal state in terms of providing 'dividends of democracy, such as good roads, education, health services, security, etc. to his citizens. It is believed that that state was lucky to have been led by governors successive over the years from the 1st Republic to the 4th Republic. As a result, it is common to find diverse depictions that relate to Lagos in their Àgbó costumes. The costume has the state catchphrase: *Èkó ò ní bàjẹ́* (Lagos shall not ruin) emblazoned on it as a form of prayer.

Figure 3: *Àgbó's agọ̀ fabric costume showing the coat of arm of Lagos State Government. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.*

The logo of Lagos Television, popularly known as LTV, is one of the designs that support their love for the promotion of Lagos State and other things related to it. Àgbó costumes in Plate 4 (a) and (b) project LTV as the first state government television station in Nigeria. The first civilian governor of the state, Alhaji Lateef Jakande to disseminate information and entertain the people, established it in October 1980. LTV has been a major mass communication medium owned by the state government to promote democratic values in the state and beyond. Reproducing the logo on the Àgbó costumes towards associating themselves with the missions of the television, which include closing the communication gap between the government and the populace. The logo brings the audience to an awareness of the main purpose of the television station, which is bringing the government closer to the people

(a)

(b)

Figure 4: *Àgbó's adé (a) and agọ̀ fabric costume (b) showing LTV logo.*
Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.

In the same way, the rendition of the Lagos Inland Revenue Services (LIRS) logo (Plate 5) on Àgbó costumes promotes the payment of tax among the community dwellers. LIRS is a parastatal charged with the responsibility of collecting tax in Lagos State. Tax payment is a civic responsibility that has been evaded by some of the state's residents. In their show of love for Lagos state, they encourage all and sundry to pay tax. "Pay your tax" is boldly written on the logo, which forms the superstructure of the headdress, and on the fabric costumes, bringing the advocacy for tax payment closer to the people. It communicates the importance of tax payment to the development of the state towards ensuring that the dividends of democracy get to all.

(a)

(b)

Figure 5: *Àgbó's adé (a) and back view of fabric costume (b) in the arena of performance showing LIRS logo. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.*

These three logos: Lagos state coat of Arms, LTV, LIRS are in support of the state towards entrenching democratic values on the audience at the celebration where such Àgbó costumes are performing.

Àgbowá-Ìkòsì indigenes and members of the community are well informed about the Nigerian project, which is yet to be actualized. Plate 6, Nigeria's coat of arms is a national emblem just like green-white-green national flag. The national coat of arms bears the Nigerian motto: Unity and faith, peace and progress. In 1975, the Nigerian government to reflect the change brought about by independence in 1960 and becoming a sovereign state in 1963 adopted the coat of arm. The black shield stands for the country's fertile soil, the 'Y' shape in between the shield represents River Niger and River Benue, two horses symbolising dignity, red eagle represents the country's strength, green and white wreath

at the top of the shield and beneath the eagle represents agriculture and the grassy field and flowers stands for the country's beauty. The values brought to life by the coat of arms are parts of the vision of Nigeria's founding fathers. These are brought to bear through this representation during this fourth republic to support democracy. This particular image shows that they have not given up on Nigeria despite her many political woes, and economics challenges as they wish for their beholders.

(a)

(b)

Figure 6: *Àgbó's adé (a) and back view of fabric costume (b) in the arena of performance showing Nigeria's coat of arm. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.*

Plate 7 is a depiction of the Nigerian map, showing river Niger and river Benue. In the headdress three hands are seen holding the Nigerian map. The three hands represent the three main ethnic groups in Nigeria-Yorùbá, Hausa and Igbo. The work promotes the unity of the three ethnic groups as represented by the three hands holding Nigerian map in place. The map is painted in green-white-green color of the Nigeria flag. The Nigeria flag was designed by Taiwo Akinkunmi symbolising agriculture (green) and peace (white). The work therefore, represent unity, cooperation and love for the country. When there is love, unity and cooperation between the federating units there will be good peace in the country, this in turn will enhance governance.

(a)

(b)

Figure 7: *Àgbó's adé (a) and agọ̀ fabric costume (b) spotting Nigerian map.*
Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.

Justice is very vital in any democracy. The Àgbó costume in Plate 8, displays the symbol of lady justice. Lady Justice is an allegorical personification of justice where the sword represents power and the scale represents impartiality. It originated from Roman Art and was employed by Emperor Augustus. The lady known as Lustitia and Justitia was introduced by Augustus to celebrate justice as an important virtue during his reign (em.m.wikipedia.com). The colorful headdress and fabric costume preach the essence of justice as an important tenet in any democracy. As they say: 'Justice delayed is justice denied'. The purpose of the costume design is to communicate the need to have a state where equality and fairness reign. It makes both the low and the mighty appreciate the importance of justice as an integral part of democracy.

(a)

(b)

Figure 8: *Àgbó's adé (a) and back view of fabric costume (b) in the arena of performance exhibiting Lady Justice, the global symbol of Justice. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2015.*

The Àgbó masquerade in its full costume is comparable to the symbol of lady justice. Àgbó appears like a veiled lady who is armed on the right with a sword and the left with a horse-whisk, which is an insignia associated with kingship among the Yoruba, which the king blesses. While the sword represents power, the horse-whisk characterizes authority. While the sword is sharp and painful, the horse whisk soothes, thus signifying the two sides of justice. The Àgbó masquerade's ceremony has always also served the purpose of passing verbal judgment on the evil-doers in the community. They sing songs to expose evils carried out in the community. In Àgbowá-Ìkòsì , the three quarters (*itún*) try to fish out the bad elements in the other quarters and subject them to verbal and musical social commentaries during the celebration. Examples of such verbal/musical commentaries are:

Itún Àgbọwa:

Àwa laládé mẹ́ta
Àwa laládé mẹ́ta
Itún Àgbọ̀wá Alọ́ba
Àwa alaládé mẹ́ta.

Meaning:
We are the ones with three crowns

We are the ones with three crowns
Itún Àgbọwá the royal ones
We are the ones with three crowns.

Itún Alẹdò:

Ọmọ Alẹdò, ó yá o
Káwa méfà ó yá ní pópó
Àwa ti rówó raṣọ ọlá, raṣọ ọlá
Àwa ti rówó raṣọ iyì, raṣọ iyì
Àwa ti di miḷoníà nitún wa ò.

Meaning:
Children of Alẹdò, it is time
Let us all hit the roads
We have bought the garments of honour
We have bought the garments of prestige
We have become millionaires in our quarter.

Itún Oríwù:

Ayé rè o, Òríwù dọmọ Òréke
Ayé rè o, Òríwù dọmọ Òrékelẹ́wà
Arówó ṣàna ìyàwó.

Meaning*:*
See for yourself, Oríwù are the offspring of Òréke
See for yourself, Oríwù are the offspring of Òrékelẹ́wà
We have money to pay to the bride's in-law.

The ruling party in Nigeria is the All Progressive Congress (APC). The party, which was formed on 6th February 2013, wrestled power from the hands of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in 2015. APC has equally been in power in Lagos since May 29th 2015. In the wisdom of the Àgbó masquerade cult members, they decided to support the ruling party by depicting its logo in one of their Àgbó costumes in the December 2015 celebration (Plate 9). The depiction became necessary because the APC, in 2015 defeated Dr. Goodluck Jonathan of the then ruling party People's Democratic Party (PDP) at the national level and the majority of states in Nigeria. It served as a celebration victory of democracy through the power of ballots. This is one of the ways of promoting democracy and celebrating election victory in a democratic era with peace. They might have as well been drawing the attention of non-partisan people to fall in love with the party in the state through the exceptional rendition of the APC logo.

(a)

(b)

Figure 9: *Àgbó's adé (a) and back view of fabric costume (b) in the arena of performance spotting APC logo. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2015.*

The Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) logo is on Plate 10. EFCC was established in 2003 by the Federal government of Nigeria under the administration of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as a law enforcement agency to investigate financial crimes such as advance fee fraud and money laundering. It is one of the many efforts by the government to curb corruption, which is the bane of our democracy. One of the reasons the dividends of democracy are slow in reaching the masses is because of the monster called corruption. As people who are also feeling the brunt of corrupt practices, they use the Àgbó costume design to drum up their support for the EFCC towards paving the way for democratic progress in Nigeria.

This brings to the awareness of the public the fact that the commission is around the corner while warning them to be weary of corruption as it has devastating effects on our nascent democracy. The logo has the image of an eagle, which symbolizes watchfulness as the EFCC is watching every act of corruption and poised to nab practitioners of corruption.

(a)

(b)

Figure 10: *Àgbó's adé (a) and full costumed Àgbó (b) in the arena of performance spotting the logo EFCC. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.*

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) logo in Plate 11 points the attention of the audience to the role played by the apex bank in putting in place the right economic and fiscal policy to make a successful democracy. The image reflects the people's awareness of the role played by the banks in ensuring a good life for all.

(a)

(b)

Figure 11: *Àgbó's adé (a) and agọ̀ fabric costume (b) spotting the Central Bank of Nigeria logo. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.*

Since democracy is incomplete without the parliament, where laws are made, the Àgbó costume showcase a maze of office an important symbol of the power of the parliament. In Nigeria, the parliament comprises of national and state parliamentary houses: Houses of Representatives and Senate, and the State Assemblies. They are people's representatives at the hallowed chambers to make laws that strengthen democracy. The depiction of the maze (Plate 12) is to appreciate their contributions to make democracy worthwhile.

Figure 12: *Àgbó's agọ̀ fabric costume showing mace of office of a typical Nigerian parliament. Photo by Kẹ́hìndé Adépégba, 2014.*

4. Conclusion

The paper has established how masquerade costumes serve conventional and contemporary purposes. Àgbó which is a Yoruba masquerade type as practiced among the Ìjèbú who reside in coastal areas with particular reference to Àgbowá-Ìkòsì, has been the focus of this study and has thus revealed how masquerade costumes are used in the service of democracy in Nigeria.

Fifteen (15) examples of Àgbó costumes in the study area were employed by the author to justify the objective of the study. It was proven beyond doubt that apart from the socio-cultural and religious functions performed by the Yoruba masquerade costumes, Àgbó's costumes have also served as a veritable source of communicating vital information to the audience which includes the commonplace issues that affect the populace, creating order within the society and promotion of democratic governance, justice and peace in Nigeria.

The paper infers that the spirit, which Àgbó represents, has always been interested in the affairs of men, that is, it interferes by overseeing their worldly family and group members. Thereby, the visitation of the spirit creates an atmosphere of family and community peace; and its costumes, with their sublime images, have become effective media of communicating virtues that will bring harmony to the society. In this case they as well serve as a veritable channel of promoting democratic values and peace among the people of Àgbowá-Ìkòsì, Lagos and Nigeria at large.

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Portrayal of Destiny in Contemporary African Drama: Otun's *The Gods are Still not to Blame* and Emoruwa's *Rebirth* in Perspective.

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Abstract. This paper "Portrayal of Destiny in Contemporary African Drama: Otun's *The Gods are Still not to Blame* and Emoruwa's *Rebirth* in Perspective" critically examines the concept of destiny through the lenses of tradition (Greek and Yoruba) and religion (Traditional religion, Islam and Christianity) to study the theme of destiny. The work traces how different dramatists have been able to examine this concept and how it applies to human society. Several scholarly materials are utilized in conducting this study aside from the primary texts predominantly used. Using the aforementioned as the bedrock for the research, some answers are sought to this question by engaging several sources of human endeavours. The work looks at the existence and expression of destiny in human lives through a metaphysical perspective and seeks to unravel the authenticity of the claim that the supernatural controls the lives and other things pertaining to the earthly existence of mortals. It studies the consequences of a 'choiced-destiny' versus 'forced-destiny'. This work, therefore, seeks to make scholarly input on literary works such as adaptations, religious and cultural debates on the influence of supernatural forces on human existence, and the failure/success regarding the quest to overturn negative trails of destiny. In addition, it provides a useful contribution to how different worldview unites and differs in the human search to unravel 'truth'.

Keywords: Destiny, adaptation, rebirth, Yoruba culture.

1. Introduction

The quest to understand and possibly gain control over the mystery called destiny and its influence on both mortals and immortals alike has been an immemorial search spanning different civilizations, periods, cultures, and races. This is why many religions, societies, and philosophical views have tried to seek answer(s) to this critical question without any measure of absoluteness thus far, making the subject open-ended. For a start, there is a dire need to acknowledge the standpoints upon which the concept of destiny has been captured in several ways across many worldviews and philosophical underpinnings. Within the Yoruba worldview for instance, in a bid to unravel the concept of destiny, a popular Yoruba adage affirms; '*akunleyan oun l'adayeba, a d'aye tan l' oju n kan gbogbo wa*. Loosely translated, this sentence means 'all of us (without an exception) have chosen our destiny prior to birth, we only engage in a fruitless search to upturn the tide after birth'.

This accounts for their robust interest in engaging the fundamental questions therein:

- At what point does destiny comes into being in the life of man?
- Who determines one's destiny?
- How can a mortal know what he or she has chosen before birth?
- How can humans augment or upturn and re-chose a destiny if the present one s/he is trailing is bad?
- Is it possible to take a different route beyond that which has been destined for one?
- Assuming it is possible to cheat destiny, what is the consequence if one does not follow the route assigned to him or her?

All these questions and many more are premised upon the assumption that Destiny, like a shadow remains forever attached to its owner; like thunder and lightning, they are forever inseparable. Also, its presence, through uncontrollable circumstances comes and provides imagery of the owner's internal reality.

So, how does one accurately define the concept of 'destiny' as a macro-cosmic entity within the peculiarities of the micro peculiarity of the civilization, religion, and culture or people whose worldview is being mirrored? The Online Dictionary simply defines destiny as 'an event (or a course of events) that will inevitably happen in the future'. Upon further explanation; it adds that 'destiny' refers to 'the

ultimate agency regarded as predetermining the course of events…' Studying the meaning and context of usage further, 'destiny' has 'fate' as its synonym. Some dictionaries use 'destiny' and fate interchangeably. However, they both carry distinct connotations. In a clearer form of language usage, fate is the unseen force that orchestrates the course of events. It is the power governing and setting in motion the occurrence of earthly events as already predetermined by destiny. Etymologically, destiny is coined from the Latin word *'destinare*' and also has its root in the French word 'destinee'; that is, that which has been settled to occur in the future without the possibility of amendment. It could thus be defined as 'the path allotted (by fate) for every human being to travel on in the course of their lives.

Drawing from more religious and distinct geographical definitions, destiny can still be defined in an array of ways. While 'fate' is called '*kadara*' in their language, the *Yorubas* of the South-Western region of Nigeria refer to destiny as '*ayanmo*'. This refers to 'that which has been assigned to an individual before birth'. To the *Kalabari* of Delta in Nigeria, it is known as 'teme'. Ijaw people of the same region refer to destiny as '*Oru Agbani'*. In Upper Benue of Nigeria, the Idoma people call it '*Owo*'. To the Nupe indigene in Niger State in Nigeria, destiny is '*Kuci*'. To the *Akan* people of Ghana, destiny means '*Okra*' while to the Greco-Romans, it means 'fate'. (Orangun, 1998:1).

In religious circles nonetheless, destiny has different nomenclatures. In Islam, it is '*Qadar*' or '*Taqdir*' while in Christianity, it is referred to as 'predestination'. In Greek and Roman mythology, fate is represented by any of the three goddesses assigned to determine and apportion human destinies. Starting from the era of Hesiod the poet, fate is personified and kept under the watchful eyes of three old women (gods) who spin the threads of human destiny. Amongst the three, *Clotho* is the Spinner of the thread. The second one *Lachesis* who is the Allotter while the last personality, *Atropos* cuts the thread to ensure nothing stops destiny from coming to pass once it has been apportioned to an individual. (Orangun, 1998:4). In relation to the belief in fate, the Fates Sculpture has been well captured by Gottfried Schadow and it forms part of the tombstone for Count Alexander von der Mark in the Old National Gallery in Berlin.

2. Culture and the Role of gods in the Affairs of Men

Societies are built and sustained by shared values. Culture is one of them. Every human society has unique components of revered ideals that act as the bedrock of their culture unifying their identity. For instance, the Greek and Yoruba societies have certain similar cultural beliefs. Before delving into these cultural beliefs, the need to understand what constitutes society is sacrosanct as it will aid the picking of the thread of logic in a smooth transition. This is why we shall rely on Zerihun quotes on *Calhounet al's* submission that 'a society is an autonomous grouping of people who inhabit a common territory, have a common culture… and are linked to one another through routinized social interactions and interdependent statuses and roles'. (Zerihun, 2005:62). Going further to provide a more comprehensive definition, he adds that; a society is 'a large grouping or collectivity of people who share more or less common distinct culture, occupying a certain geographical locality, with the feeling of identity or belongingness, having all the necessary social arrangements or insinuations to sustain itself.' (Zerihun, 2005:62). Looking at the Latin word as its root, '*socius*' connotes association, gregariousness, and togetherness'. It is a word that connotes the fusion of a group of people into a distinct unit, identifiable and separate from similar others.

Basically, the human society is made of people sharing a specific geographical location with a sense of belongingness shared by all. However, the heart of a society goes beyond the location, it is the common values shared by the people that define their territory and make it distinct from the others. These shared values are embedded in their cultures and cultural beliefs and practices. These indicate how social groups are formed, structured, and function. From the aforementioned, it is clear that each society has inherent features; people, location, and culture. More often than not, in addition, they share a common origin. To this end, we could have the African society or the European society. These societies are identified and distinguished by their idiosyncrasies.

As earlier indicated, culture is the soul of every society. It is what makes it unique and easily identifiable when it occurs in the company of similar societies. This is why Sofola defines culture as 'the learned pattern of behaviour, ideas, beliefs, and the artifacts shared by a people and socially transmitted from one generation to another'. (Sofola, 1973:5). In order to shed more light on his definition, Sofola indicates that culture is the thing that throws more light on the peculiar character or distinctiveness of a people that distinguish them from other people. These; according to him include the social institution of family, language, systems of economy and government, philosophy, mode of dressing, etc.

While redefining culture to show what it is not and set the record straight regarding some misconceptions about it; Zerihun points out it is different from the term '*kulture*' in German which refers to being civilized. He states 'culture includes more than refinement, taste, sophistication…' (Zerihun, 2005:70). Pressing in on wider definitions, Zerihun clarifies culture as 'the whole ways of life of the members of a society…what they dress, their marriage customs…art…' (Zerihun, 2005:71). Among its many features highlighted by Zerihun, a prominent one stands out; and that is the fact that culture is 'symbolic'. These symbols are the 'central components' of culture as 'they refer to anything to which people attach meaning'. Going further, 'these symbols can be strung together to convey more complex meanings" (Zerihun, 2005:75).

For instance, a common denominator between Greek and Yoruba societies is their possession of a culture that believes strongly in the existence and omniscience of gods. In the traditional Yoruba religious view, according to Hearst, 'the world is made up of two connected realms'. Explaining further, Hearst sheds more light in stating; 'the visible world is called '*aye*' while the spiritual world ruled by the 'O*risas'*, the ancestors and the spirits are called '*orun*'. (Hearst, 2004:21). In traditional Yoruba religion, it is believed the earth functions as a result of the interface of two planes; heaven and the earth. There is a belief in one sovereign God working in conjunction with myriads of other gods.

In a similar vein, due to the polytheistic nature of their religious viewpoint, the Greeks also possess a pantheon of gods presiding over every human activity and every sphere. Hermes (the winged Mercury) is the god of travelers. Athena is the god of wisdom and Apollo is the god of sunlight. It is generally believed that these gods uphold the smooth running of the course of the universe. In the words of Tatlock, 'physical events, like the rising and setting of the sun… the springing and ripening of the grains … are actions of the beings identified with the sun or grain.' (Tatlock 1917: xix).

There are also many important Yoruba deities according to Hearst. These guide events occurring on the two planes; the celestial and terrestrial. *Esu* (Satan) is a great trickster who equally acts as a messenger for the other deities. One of his functions, according to Yoruba belief is to 'assist *Olorun* (God) and the other gods to cause trouble for anyone who offends or fails to worship them.' (Hearst, 2004:24). *Ifa* is the god of divination. To this end, he is 'a great wise man, and he acts as the interpreter between all gods and humans'. Continuing further in the same light, Hearst states the roles assigned to the other deities. *Ogun* is the god of iron and war. Sango is the god of thunder and is married to *Oya* the goddess of the Niger River. (Hearst, 2004:23).

In order to court their favour and have them work for their fortune, people worship these deities. Being the god of iron and war, *Ogun* is revered. He is a great craftsman. To this end, blacksmiths and other craftsmen (including those who use iron objects in their line of trade and engage in the use of iron; e.g. commercial drivers) worship him. Hunters equally pay homage to him. This is understandable. For instance, Hearst points out that 'without Ogun, people would not have tools to farm the land that they live on.' (Hearst, 2004:23). As the god of thunder, *Sango* lives in the sky and works closely with the deity assigned to rainfall. He oversees divine judgment. It is his duty to create thunderbolts and kill those who offend *Sango*. *Sango* works alongside his wife *Oya* who comes to the earth as a strong wind before *Sango* fights his victims with thunderbolts.

In order to appease them and win their favour; in traditional Yoruba society, and even in contemporary times, Yorubas who worship these deities make it a sense of duty to live in awe of them as well as bring offerings to their shrines from time to time. Not only that, they abstain from acts that can incur their wrath. One of such ways is to eat or bring them food items that trigger their wrath. For instance, *Esu* is invoked to fight with anyone who brings *adin* (palm kernel oil) to him.

According to Yoruba culture; as a well-ordered whole, the *cosmos* must be preserved by continuing in these age-long traditions of acknowledging and respecting the structured order of the universe.

Another way of staying in tune with supernatural forces in Yoruba culture is through *ifa* divination. By acknowledging and succumbing to a higher force, mortals seek divination to unravel mysteries surrounding their human existence on this terrestrial plane. They consult *Olorun/Olodumare* (the supreme God) and His messengers (the gods) through divination. *Babalawo* are *ifa* diviners and they are charged with owning divine/ancient wisdom that is not at par with common human beings. These diviners are consulted regarding a wide range of problems that humans find incomprehensible. They in turn inquire from *ifa ('eleri ipin'* – the witness to a man's foreordained destiny) to reveal what the troubled mortal's *Ori* has chosen so that necessary rituals can be carried out, and the required instructions adhered to overcome dilemma troubling the human soul.

3. Ori as the Medium of Destiny

In Yoruba culture, *Ori* (an individual innermost personal god) is acknowledged and revered like the aforementioned deities. There is an interconnectivity between *Ori* and other aspects of a wo(man)'s personality. *Ori* is an individual's 'soul', the spirit of that person; i.e. the central component that initiates and supports external events. Actually, *Ori* is a shortened form of *ori inu* (an individual's innermost being/god).

Amongst its numerous functions, *Ori* protects, wards off evil, and attracts fortune to an individual. Thus, a person with 'good' Ori is 'blessed'; that is, divinely empowered to prosper, while the person with a 'bad' *Ori* experiences maledictions. The Yoruba philosophy of *ori buruku* and *ori rere* (where *buruku* and *rere* signifies bad and good respectively) attests to this concept. *Ori,* being the personality soul, 'the inner person'; according to Sofola, 'rules, controls and guides the "life" and activities of the person. Aside from its symbolic representation, *Ori* basically refers to 'head' in Yoruba. It refers to the head of a person which makes for identity and description of his/her personality. Beyond the physical explanation of its being a part of the human body, Sofola deepens one's knowledge of *ori* by showing how it is interwoven with one's destiny at a deeper level. In his words:

Ori and *ipin* (destiny or portion) are closely related… in consequence of their connection, one is loosely conceived synonymously with the other. …however, the distinction is clear because in the act of taking one's destiny from the origin of life, it is the ori that kneels down and chooses or receives it from the Maker. (Sofola, 1973:104).

The explanation of *Ori* in the words of Sofola sheds light on why it is an object of worship to the Yorubas. To this end, it is a regular occurrence in Yorubaland to see people appeasing their *ori* while killing chickens or other animals. In the words of Sofola, 'two important reasons make the ori an object of worship'. First of all, according to him 'it is the essence of personality'. To this end, 'it must be kept in good condition so that it may be well with the person'. Secondly, 'one must be on good terms with it, so that it may favour one'. (Sofola, 1973:105).

The concept of *ori* does not stop in Yoruba beliefs. In Nigeria, there are three major tribes; *Yoruba*, *Hausa* and *Igbo*. Ori is 'analogous' to the Ibo's *chi*. In Igbo's metaphysical thought, an individual possesses a triad of gods. These are the *ashi, nkwa,* and *chi.* On its part, the *ashi* maps out a man's journey from the womb. It shines light on what his *nkwa* (destiny) is. The *chi* takes over from the *nkwa.* It takes over also from the *ashi* and guides the person through life so that everything that the *ashi* mapped out will be lived out and come out as true.

Moremi a play by Lekan Balogun, gives a graphic illustration between *ori* and destiny. Through *Araba* (a character in the play), the *ifa* speaks about three friends; the Masquerade, the Drum and the Gong. The three of them are told to 'seek the support of their *ori* before embarking on their journey to the earth'. The Masquerade and the Drum forgot the instruction but the Gong complied. At the beginning of their journey, popularity and great substance trailed them until they encountered misfortune that led to their ruin. The Gong on the other hand complied and even though he encountered the same misfortune, he bounced back stronger and was fully restored. (Balogun, 2004:19).

The above story in *Moremi* strengthens the claim by Orangun referring to *ori* as 'the spiritual guardian or man's double associated with him from birth through the passage of life'. The duty of *ori* remains to 'guide, protect and advise'. It is also 'the pathfinder or the forerunner on the earthly 'bush/jungle' to lead man to his fortune.' In addition, *ori* is 'the superior guardian, it wards off evil before man and shields him from evils behind'.

In a nutshell, *ori '*is the personality soul that makes a person whatever he is.' (Orangun, 1998:33). In addition, '*ori* is the personal guardian that determines the earthly success or failure in a man's life.' This is revealed in the following *ifa* corpus:

Ori ni sin ni
It is *ori* that guides us to a state
Ori la fi n d'ade owo
Where we walk with royal beads
Ori la fi n t'epa ileke
Ori is the jewelry chain
Ori lokun
Ori is the source
Abaniwaye ma ju gbagbe
He who creates and never forgets his creature
Ori pele o
Hail ori
Bi mo ba lowo laye
If I am rich in the world
Ori ni n o ro fun
It is ori I shall tell
Ori mi iwo ni
My ori it is your doing
Ori mi pele o
I will hail you my guardian.

The depth of respect accorded *ori* is succinctly captured in E.B. Idowu's book '*Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*'. The book presents well-researched details regarding Yoruba traditional religion where God is the Supreme Being who works in conjunction with other deities, with *ori* being one of them. This is woven alongside Judaeo-Christian attributes of God being regarded as: all-knowing, all-seeing and an all-loving Creator of everything. The reason behind the reverence accorded *ori;* (being a person's guardian angel who accompanies him/her in his/her earthly sojourn) as analysed by Idowu is quoted in Orangun:

The Supreme Being is the Head Source (Orise); the fountain of life, the Author and Disposer of man's destiny… the offspring of the Supreme Being (*Olodumare*) is the personality soul which is the inner person and the name for it is *ori,* the essence of personality which derives directly from the Head Source (Orise), who is *Olodumare.* It has its physical symbol in the human palpable head which is also called *ori.* It is this *ori* that rules, controls, and guides the life and activities of man.
(Orangun, 1998:24).

In Yoruba belief, *ori* can encounter several misfortunes. Orangun makes it known that '*Orunmila* (the divinity who was a witness when individuals chose their *ori*) is in a position to alter destiny or modify it'. Not only that, 'the people of the world; *omo araye* in whom evil forces are vested can change the good predestined lots of man to bad'. To that end, one can deduce that a good destiny can be swapped.

As earlier indicated, in naming human body parts, *ori* refers to the physical head. However, to the Yoruba race, *ori* means so much more. Typically, it is an extension of an individual's core being; the '*ori inu'* which is the symbol of the inner person that represents the essence of a man's personality. Ori is significant to destiny as it picks what has been destined for a wo(man). Sofola shows the difference of both. According to him, 'the distinction is clear because in the act of taking one's destiny from the origin of life, it is the *ori* that kneels down and chooses or receives it from the Maker' (Sofola, 1973:105).

4. Destiny Through Many Lenses

Going further in this discourse, destiny will be examined from religious' (Islam and Christianity) point of view in addition to the exposition of the selected play texts; *The gods are Still Not to Blame* by Rasheed Otun and *Rebirth* by Felix Emoruwa. Before engaging the texts, it is important to point out that *The gods are Still Not to Blame* is an adaptation of *The gods are Not to Blame* written by Ola Rotimi, which in turn is an adaptation of *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. *The gods are Still Not to Blame* treats the same theme as the parent text (*The gods are Not to Blame*). The only difference is, while the former adopts a contemporary Yoruba setting for the play, the latter was placed in an ancient setting, it dates back. *The gods are Still Not to Blame* is an adaptation of *The gods are Not to Blame*.
Adaptation, the retelling of a story refers to the narration of the same or similar story in a new light. Concerning adaptation, Balogun states 'adaptation practice has a complex history of recasting preexisting texts in order for them to speak to the purposes, fantasies and anxieties of various historical movements' (Afolayan, 2021:106). In the words of Iji, quoted by Balogun, adaptation becomes essential in order to 'localize the universal or universalize the local' (Afolayan, 2021:106).

The examination of the expression of destiny orchestrated by fate is dramatically represented in Oedipus' *Sophocles*. The Sophoclean narrative has since been written, adapted, rewritten, and examined closely via numerous dramatic texts to examine the theme of fate and destiny being an inseparable pair of twins that visit mortals at different places and eras; no matter the geographical location and period of occurrence, they leave the same mark. The playwrights who live in different eras and soils examined how destiny turns the hands of the clock to favour one man and place the other at peril. Sophillus Sophocles (c.496-406 BC), Olawale Rotimi (1938-2000), and Ismaila Rasheed Adedoyin planted the concept of destiny in a prince who has been ill-fated to commit the error of killing his father and marrying his mother in the course of living. The subject matter of 'destiny' is expressed in story form in the sequence of: 'from the distant past in Greek culture', to the 'not too distant past of Yoruba culture' and finally, in the contemporary period of 'here and now'.

Listed in order of writing; *Oedipus, The gods are not to blame* and *The gods are still not to blame* point to the relevance of the concept of destiny through the ages and across cultures. On the other hand, Emoruwa planted destiny and its expression (albeit against the wishes of the villain) in a common, every day man. This indicates both the noble and the common man are under the grip of destiny, and can be visited at will.

Literary circles witness the retelling of identical or the same stories using various mediums and in different manners. Sophocles penned *Oedipus Rex* and planted it within Greek setting. Taking the same story, it is planted in the African continent (the Yoruba race) by

Ola Rotimi in *The gods are not to blame.* Taking the story further, Otun Rasheed wrote a contemporary version by engaging the story for modern readers while reiterating the theme of the aforementioned parent texts. Following this adaptation trend, *Othello* written by William Shakespeare becomes *Otaelo* written by Ahmed Yerima. On her part, *Wedlock of the gods* was reshaped by Zulu Sofola to reproduce the dominant theme in *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare.

It is vital to note that novels, plays and biographical accounts can be written and reproduced via films. Such are targeted towards telling the same story in a new/deeper light to take the themes farther to a wider audience and preserve its authenticity/relevance. Plays like *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare, *Fences* by August Wilson and *Cabaret*, (a musical) by Joe have been reproduced into films. The culture of adaptation reinforces the need to reiterate universal themes or recurring subjects that people need to learn from, pay attention to or preserve for generations.

For instance, the trio of *Oedipus Rex, The gods Are Not to Blame* and *The gods Are Still Not to Blame* reiterates the main theme of man's helplessness against fate, and how men sometimes move closer toward their destiny as they struggle fiercely in a bid to move away from it. On its part, *Rebirth* engages the subject of destiny as being changeable and restorable. One should call to heart that, while *Oedipus Rex* is planted within the Greek culture, *The gods Are Still Not to Blame* is planted within the Yoruba culture. Both cultures share a common denominator; their belief in gods in addition to belief in fate as presiding over humans. The latter reflects in their practice of inquiring into a child's future to know what will befall the child on his/her earthly sojourn, in addition to his or her preordained life's path/assignment.

Destiny can also be examined through various religions. For instance, Islam religion is built on tenets; six of them. Belief in oneness of God is the first one followed by belief in angels. The third pillar is belief in the holy books while the belief in all prophets comes as the fourth pillar. Coming fifth as a tenet in Islamic religion is belief in the Day of Judgment; while belief in *al-qudir* (destiny) is the last one. These articles are outlined in the Holy Quran; *Surat Al-Qadr 97:1-5*.

Islam believes destiny exists. To that end, mortals are exhorted to succumb to the sovereign will of Allah as expressed through their preordained destiny. This calm acceptance and disposition towards one's fate is prescribed as the pathway to bliss. Thus, the saying: '*Kadara a'allahu'* translated in Yoruba as '*ka gba f'Olohun n'isinmi'*. Translating this in the English language, this means 'a mortal's path; (according to this religious view), has been carved out before that wo(man) was brought forth through creation to the earth on this transient terrestrial place of sojourn. To that end, humans are advised to accept the Creator's sovereign grand design without any form of questioning or desire to alter life's events. This has been certified as profitable; as adhering to this leads to a tranquil life'.

In Christianity, destiny occurs as 'predestination'. It is believed that some people have been appointed to carry out certain 'unpleasant' assignments and they cannot run away from such no matter how hard they try. For instance, the bible talks about people being 'predestined'; Romans 8:28-29, being 'foreknew'; Romans 8:28, 'chosen' Ephesians 1:11 and 'elected' Titus 1:1. According to Mark 14:17-21; Jesus pointed out one of the disciples (Judas-a traitor) was going to betray Him. He added 'it would have been better if he had not been born'. The prophecy concerning his bargain for the terms of the 'trade', requesting for 30 pieces of silver to betray the Master was given in Zechariah 11:12-13 and fulfilled in Mathew 26:14-16. It could be deduced that his greed for money was the tragic flaw that led to his eternal damnation.

The story of predestination is further strengthened in Genesis 25:23 concerning Esau and Jacob where the younger had been ordained to be served by the older. In the same light, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt might be considered as another epitome of predestination. In refusing the children of Israel to return to their land of nativity, the bible says 'his heart was hardened' (Exodus 9:12). As a result, he perished in the Red Sea.

5. Names as Reflection of Destiny

In line with the aim of moving towards the fulfillment of destiny, or in a bid to deviate from its actualization; names are generally believed to be reflectors of a man's ultimate destiny. To this end, they are chosen carefully in a bid to avert unpleasant incidences regarding the fulfillment of destiny. In several cultures of the world, a child's future is mirrored ahead of time through consultation carried out from several platforms.

In Yoruba culture, names are symbolic. They give insight into the circumstances surrounding a child's birth, the lineage the child is born into and the hopes attached to the future of that child. To this end, the items used in naming a child reflect the future anticipated for the child. For instance, salt, sugar cane,

and honey are used during naming ceremonies and passed around for those who come around to partake to share in the parents' joy. Naming ceremonies in Yoruba land are held in awe and it takes place amidst celebration because it is believed that a child becomes an identifiable entity after being named. It can thus be deduced that a child's life is unveiled during the naming ceremony as his or her *ori* becomes activated to function as a companion/guardian of the child's life's journey.

Furthermore, naming a child in Yoruba culture is a collective effort. Parents, siblings, members of the extended family and grandparents name a child. In some instances, friends and other distant kinsmen are not left behind. This explains why a child can have numerous names in Yoruba land. Those names are pulled together from various sources. Within the Yoruba culture, every of name is tied to a particular journey. In Yoruba worldview, the world is seen as a market place where all and sundry came to sojourn and also to trade. In order to trade profitably, a child's *akosejaye* (fate) is looked into, in order to be named accordingly.

It is not only in Yoruba culture that names are held in awe. All over the world, certain names have been tagged 'accursed' due to some negative historical occurrences of certain people who had earlier been given such names. Two of such readily comes to mind; Jezebel and Delilah. For instance; within Christian circle, people desist from naming their children with such 'stained' names as it is believed a child named after such undesirable characters might live out their woes and fall into their errors.

A similar thought of holding names in high esteem runs through *The gods are Still not to Blame* and *Rebirth*. For instance, in the former, Yeye Oba (the king's mother) being a devout Muslim had prepared the names for her grandson. She has chosen the names for the child in anticipation whilst waiting for the arrival of the Muslim clerics who will perform the naming ceremony. According to her, 'my son's names are Saliu Abisoye, Adeniyi, Akinloye'. (Otun, 2018:3) She reminds the king of her decision based on the fact that the deceased king, (her husband and the current king's father) was a Muslim before his demise. On a conflicting note, she states her displeasure in the king's decision of having Christian priests come around to name 'her' son. The king had converted to Christianity while in the university and named his prince Samuel.

Another conflict ensues regarding the choice of names in *Rebirth* between the father and mother of Esubiyi who are *Ogun* and *Osun* worshippers respectively. The father, a hunter and an *Ogun* faithful had purposed to name the child Ogunbiyi. The mother on the other hand prefers to name him Osunbiyi. The argument that ensues between both parties is laid to rest when the Ifa diviner who came to name the child concludes his name is Esubiyi (Esu's own child).

The boy's father sits among his hunter colleagues
while the mother, amidst Osun worshippers…the
father suggests Ogunbiyi while the mother insists
that the boy's name shall be Osunbiyi.
Baba: *(Cast the Opele – an instrument of divination)*
… Ha! Esubiyi?
Man: … So Esubiyi became my name. (Emoruwa, 2011:26).

In Yoruba culture, it is believed that a child will eventually live out his/her name. Hence the proverb '*oruko ni i ro omo'*. The same worldview is reflected in *Julius Cesar* where Cinna the poet suffers for the sins of Cinna the conspirator by virtue of bearing the same name.

Third Citizen
Your name sir, truly
CINNA THE POET
Truly, my name is Cinna
First Citizen
Tear him to pieces; he's a conspirator
CINNA THE POET
I am Cinna the poet, I am Cinna the poet
Fourth Citizen
Tear him for his bad verses, tear him for his bad verses
CINNA THE POET
I am not Cinna the conspirator
Fourth Citizen
It is no matter, his name's Cinna; pluck but his
Name out of his heart, and turn him going. (Shakespeare, 2001:49).

In the biblical account recorded in 1 Chronicles 4:9-10, Jabez means 'sorrow'. His mother named him 'sorrow' because she bore him in pain. Jabez believes the name has placed a lid on his flourishing on life's journey and had to decide against further answering to the name.

Sofola sheds light on the meaningfulness and profundity of African names by stating that names have 'names have sociological and cultural significance'. Not only that, he states 'there are fundamental philosophy which determines the attitudes of the ethnic groups towards names and naming.' These provide the social, religious and psychological significance that names are, in Sofola's words 'pregnant with' (Sofola, 1973:103). Sofola emphasizes the Yoruba belief that 'there is an agreement between the name given a child and that

child's soul'. To that end, he concludes by indicating that when a name is given to a child, the child's soul or spirit must give assent by saying "yes" to the name. (Sofola, 1973:104). To show the value of this line of thought, Sofola reveals that:
'Yoruba naming ceremonies' (which are usually performed on the eighth or ninth day of the child's birth) serve the dual propitiatory purposes of appealing to Supreme God and Maker and appeasing the child's ori that needs must say "yes" to the name given at the naming ceremony.

To answer the question of 'what's in a name'? Sofola replies, 'to us names are cultural. They tell us who we are…they express our relations with our Maker. Above all, they help us to relate ourselves to the order of things.' (Sofola, 1973:106).

6. The Desire for Early Comprehension of Destiny

As earlier stated, the two texts primarily engaged in this discourse are rooted within the Yoruba culture. The global theme of destiny earlier examined in *Oedipus Rex* has come home to roost in Otun's *The gods are still not to blame* and Emoruwa's *Rebirth* as both texts plant the theme of destiny within the Yoruba culture. Within both play texts, naming a child generates conflict during the naming ceremony; the point at which parents are eager to send the child's life on course via meaningful names that portray their expectation for the child's life. Furthermore, there are other things that are worthy of paying a closer attention to regarding destiny in these two.

The first point that leaps out within the two texts is the fact that mortals realize there is a higher force that governs events in the physical realm. This higher force is the first point of contact that a newborn is exposed to immediately after birth. The first contact is made by the parents/guardians of the child to know what fate holds as they consult the higher force via the deities representing him.

This is done in their quest to know a child's life's mission and the path carved out for his/her life's journey as soon as possible to prepare the child for the road ahead. The journey of fate unfolds in *The gods are still not to blame* as Samuel (also referred to as Saamu) is born to Oba Adedoyin and Olori Ademorin in the land of Agbaye. During the naming ceremony, a priest and an imam were invited to name the child. The essence of this lies in the fact that these 'men of God', aside naming the child will invoke supernatural blessings on his earthly sojourn. (Otun, 2018:3-7).

At the point of naming Saamu, the priest (a Christian) that arrived first for the naming is tagged as 'the most revered priest of all men of God in the land of Agbaye, and is equally a renowned gateway to the divine door, reputed home and abroad'. After naming the child, he felt into a trance and gives prophecy in this state. The prophecy states 'This boy…he will kill his own father and then marry his own mother'. (Otun, 2018:7). Shortly after the priest's utterance, the Chief Imam (a Muslim) walks in and points to the child and says 'this boy …this boy, he will kill his own father and marry his own mother!'

The same thought of evoking supernatural presence/beings to have a glimpse of the future is seen in *The gods are not to blame* where baba Fakunle (a seer) is consulted when King Adetusa and Queen Ojuola gave birth to a son.

[Enter BABA FAKUNLE, a purblind old man, led by a small boy.
BABA sits on the ground, and begins to cast his Opele, stringed objects of divination]
NARRATOR: BABA FAKUNLE,
Oldest and most knowing
Of all Ifa priests in this world…
What is it that the child has brought
As duty to this earth
From the gods?
BABA FAKUNLE: This boy, he will kill his own father,
and then marry his own mother! (Rotimi, 1979:3).

The culture of being eager to know a child's destiny is equally grounded in the Greek culture as shown in *Oedipus Rex* when Oedipus born to King Lauis and Queen Jocasta. Retracing the theme from the most recent to the oldest version regarding the concept of fate, it is glaring that humans are conscious of the presence of 'destiny' and are always eager to discover its expression as determined through fate. People want to know whether it is favourable or otherwise as soon as a child is born, and then move on to the next line of action regarding this.

Rebirth on its part tells the story of Esubiyi whose naming ceremony was done amidst conflict regarding the choice of name from the two religious sects (although both are Yoruba traditional religious sects) invited to conduct his naming ceremony. During the naming ceremony, the father invited hunters who are *Ogun* worshippers while his mother sticks to *Osun* worshippers to name her son.

Call to mind that in Yoruba traditional religion, *Ogun* is the god of iron, he is a custodian of iron-related professions. He is thus revered and addressed as 'the

one who bathes in blood'. It is thus expected that Esubiyi's father, a hunter will desire the blessings of *Ogun* on his son. *Osun* on the other hand is the god of fertility. Equally revered and worshipped, she is the custodian of fertility and she gladdens the heart of the barren. The two gods; *Ogun* and *Osun* are regarded as custodian of whatever belongs to their worshipper, it is to this end that their presence and input is sought at Esubiyi's naming.

7. In a Bid to Outwit Fate

The second point regarding destiny hinges on the fact that, even though humans know there are some forces in charge of their earthly existence, they are not willing to resign to them if they bring evil regarding their lives. Humans reject dancing to their doom as ordained by fate and revealed through destiny. Rather; if possible, they want to avert the ills on life's journey and savour the good part. As stated earlier, 'in the act of taking one's destiny from the origin of life, it is the *ori* that kneels down and chooses or receives it from the Maker'. (Sofola, 1973:104). The moment a child is named and his/her *ori* receives life's lot, mortals try to see ways of averting a pronounced negative allotment accorded to a child.

Dating back to the ancient past, humans have always made attempts to upturn the table regarding destiny as ordained by fate. This approach reflects in *The gods are Still not to Blame* and reinforced in the parent texts. Having discovered Saamu will kill his father and then marry his mother, the king decided hurriedly to put a stop to the possibility of the prophecy coming to pass. To achieve his aim, Oba Adedoyin sends his son to Princess Aderayo his elder sister in the US. He tells his wife the doctor indicates the child has serious complications and must be flown abroad immediately. After departure, the king and the queen had another child and Saamu is left overseas to be taken care of by his aunt.

It is always very frustrating for mortals when they find it hard to outwit fate and stop whatever plague is making their lives unbearable. In *Rebirth*, Esubiyi states 'I became the perfect puppet they destined me for…and became a pun, an instrument of destruction …' (Emoruwa, 2011:27). Whenever he is taken over by *Esu*, he kills people unconsciously. The first time this happened, he killed a fellow laborer accidentally. The second time, he kills his father; and the third time, he kills Iya Onidiri, his aunt who is responsible for his woes.

It should be noted that, at the point of trying to erase a negative destiny, life becomes void of the joy of living for the person whose destiny isn't comely. At his point in his journey, in agony, Esubiyi cries out 'Out of no will of my own I kept hurting, killing and destructing.' (Emoruwa, 2011:32). Being dissatisfied with his way of living, and in an attempt to redefine his existence, Esubiyi explains the remedy he embraced by stating '…my mother, in her maternal anguish sought a way of putting an end to my malady…we met Baba, same one who presided over my naming ceremony'. (Emoruwa, 2011:33). Regarding the pain that comes from being unable to pull out from the grip of fate, looking at Esubiyi's case, we can deduce that no mortal willingly resigns to fate and sit back to accept what destiny brings hook, line and sinker.

8. The Quest for Rebirth

There is another paramount thought regarding the existence/expression of destiny. For instance, in Yoruba culture, it is well-known that a man's destiny can be altered by evil people. When such happens, destiny is said to be reversed. It Yoruba parlance, it is termed '*pa kadara da'*. In such cases, the person's enviable destiny is swapped and his/her life is afflicted with untold woes and agonies.

Esubiyi provides a graphic illustration of an altered destiny. He is a child well-sought-after. His parents gave birth to him after nine years of infertility. Rather than rejoice at his birth, his mother's sister, Iya Onidiri loathes his birth right from the time he was in the womb and seeks his hurt before being born.

The origin of the hatred could be traced to the vacuum in Iya Onidiri's life. Being Esubiyi's aunt, she was initiated into witchcraft by her deceased mother. However, she chose to be second in command and the cost of that stool is her childlessness. Knowing that she apparently can't bear children anymore, she asks a favour from the cult. She demands that: 'As the second in command to Yeye, I decree that my sister must not bear the baby in her womb'. In addition, she states '… I place a curse on the child, let evil follow his path'. (Emoruwa, 2011:22-23).
Despite the child being shown as 'a strong one', she goes ahead to ask for his life's path to be crooked. In order to incur Esu's wrath and agitate him to fight the child's cause, Iya Onidiri gives '*adin*' to Esu. In Yoruba culture, '*adin*' is a forbidden food that triggers Esu's wrath.

In order to pitch an innocent person with Esu, the aggrieved person can go to Esu's shrine and give him 'adin' while informing Esu the act is being carried out as a representative of the person he/she wants Esu to afflict. This action unleashes Esu's fury and it forever

seals the pact. This act perpetrated by Iya Onidiri is what brings Esubiyi at loggerheads with Esu. That marks the point at which his life start travelling southwards. When Esu came visiting, he informs Esubiyi; 'our bond transcends what ordinary mortals could decipher…not even death can snatch you off me…as long as you live, you have no right to divorce me.' (Emoruwa, 2011:30). Iya Onidiri typifies people who are evil for no just cause and will stop at nothing to hurt other people and truncate their choiced destiny and replace it with a plagued version of forced destiny.

Mortals live in constant quest for rebirth. This explains why humans are never satisfied until they reach the point, they are convinced they are living their best life having cheated fate's cruel path earlier marked for them. Different people take several routes to achieve this. In *The gods are Still not to Blame*, King Adedoyin arranges for his son to be taken out of Agbaye town and flown to the US in order to live his life differently from what has been prophesied concerning him. It is the same trend in *Oedipus Rex* and *The gods are not to Blame*. The first thing people do is flee their current geographical location to avert the imminent doom. Many people are of the opinion that the hands of fate might be unable to reach them if they leave the vicinity where what has been predicted concerning them can easily come to pass.

Esubiyi has been in the claws of destiny for long and he has perpetrated acts he wouldn't want to be associated with. While working as a laborer in the farm, his anger rose up for no just cause against a fellow laborer and he killed him. At that point, he contemplated suicide. On another occasion, in his attempt to separate his father and his mother while they were fighting, he kills his father. At that point, according to him, 'he has become an angel of destruction that everyone runs and he ends up being friendless' (Emoruwa, 2011:32). His forced destiny on another occasion pushed him to kill his mother unintentionally. Out of anger, and with the knowledge of Iya Onidiri being the culprit behind his woes, he goes on to commit another murder by strangulating Iya Onidiri.

There is also the possibility of rebirth as people consult supernatural forces to interfere on their behalf. Some might consider changing their names to add the prefix of the new deity they currently believe in, in order to be integrated into the new life they want. They are of the opinion that changing their names will cut them off from the forces behind that name.

Regarding the consultation of supernatural forces, the parents of Esubiyi made efforts on his behalf to intercept the hands of fate and restore him to his original state as ordained before his earthly journey started.

… there is small respite as a group of Aladura church members come in company of Esubiyi's mother to conduct a prayer and deliverance session… Also, Esubiyi's father accompanies a group of Muslim led by the alfa… they too form their own praying arena on behalf of Esubiyi… (Emoruwa, 2011:29).

At his rebirth, Osun wipes the mark on Esubiyi's forehead and Ogun also collects the sword. After his rebirth has taken place, Esubiyi is charged to 'go … be fruitful…impact the world positively…make exploits' (Emoruwa, 2011:43). With his life, one understands that choiced destiny and forced destiny are two sides of the same coin. To this end, while one tends to evil, the other builds up. After his rebirth, Esubiyi is transformed from a child of mischief to a leader that will chart a new path for his people.

Interestingly, the Quran tells the story of a poor couple who were 'destined' by fate to be poor all their lives. They prayed about their impoverished condition and got answers. Their status changed with the promise of having the respite to enjoy the wealth for a while. But at the point of becoming rich, they started reaching out to poor people and surprisingly enough, their wealth was sustained to their amazement. (The Quran, 15:1-11, 13:42). A similar story occurs in the bible about a man named Jabez who is living a life that is not as 'honourable' as his brothers'. In two verses, we read:

9 'And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, because I bare him with sorrow.

10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested', (1 Chronicles 4:9-10).

9. Conclusion

It is established that there is no culture or civilization known to man that does not acknowledge the fact that destiny exists. This is further shown through Otun's *The gods are Still not to Blame* and Emoruwa's *Rebirth* being the texts adopted for this study even though allusions were made to other religious, social, and cultural characters and circumstances to firmly underscore the universality of this claim. In addition, it has been proven that destiny can be altered in both ways; either from good to bad or otherwise. Iya Onidiri

is a good example in *Rebirth* showing how destiny can be swapped and damaged in the process.

Finally, we have argued that battered or contaminated destiny can also be restored. This thought is reinforced in the story from the Quran and its biblical counterpart. Emoruwa's *Rebirth* helped in no small measure to help underscore that a default button can still be pressed to restore order and balance if and when destiny gets misdirected or misinterpreted. To achieve this, prayer is offered in both Islam and Christianity while *'etutu'* a sacrifice is carried out in Yoruba traditional religion through the right quarters.

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Migrants Metaphors, Nimbly-footed Adventurers and the Imaginaries of 'Home' in Eric Ngalle's *I, Eric Ngalle*

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Abstract. Contemporary migrant narratives primarily centralise the wave of movements of largely young people from the lowly-endowed third world nations, northward, defying known and unknown perils and uncertainties that attend to such journeys into the ever-attractive Euro-America economic zones. This phenomenon proffers fertile site for creativity and critical scholarly engagements. This work examines the socio-cultural contexts of the imaginaries of 'home' and trauma of homelessness in Eric Ngalle's novel - *I, Eric Ngalle*. The work interrogates the novel's figuration of the historical facades of 'home' as signification of cultural roots and tension of memories characteristically depicted in the bulk of narratives of African migrants and the diaspora encounters. The historical import of the nimbly-footed migrants with the concomitant sense of loss and nostalgia that intertwine with the experiences of desperate African migrants in their quests for greener pastures in Europe and other parts of the world, inspires this work. This paper further elucidates the strategies which migrants cope with and the disillusionment they face, including the harsh realities of the experience associated with the situation. The paper concludes by extrapolating the global inequalities, the dire situations in weak third world states, and racial shock that characterise African migrants in the Diasporas that seek economic refuge and better world in Europe.

Keywords: Migration phenomenon; parable of 'home'; ultimate dangers; survival strategies, Eric Ngalle.

1. Introduction

Contemporary trope of migrant tales of journeys Euro-America bound adventures emanating from African literary ferments, is often characterised and foregrounded in the intriguing encounters of the narrator-protagonist with the often-breathtaking brushes associated with such narrated journeys. African migrant narratives also spin the tales most often with epic sweep and self-documenting rendition that is woven around the life-drama that unravel around the narrative persona who traditionally pose as both adventurer and informant while leaning on the autobiographical voice as medium of 'truth' telling, self-rememorialisation and as an art of pedagogy particularly to the youths. In its critical theoretical purview, autobiographical voice embodies ingredients of 'truth' and immediacy which involves self-identity production and self-portrait of the subject matter. Leigh Gilmore avers aptly that in the genre of autobiography that discourses of truth and identity meet to produce the subject of the person's life (182). In most cases, anxiety, suspense and breathtaking brushes of the narrative hero with ultimate fate, characterise the eye-witness rendition of the protagonist and other major characters that play roles in typically African migrant stories.

Against the backdrop of contemporary African socio-cultural context of migrant stories of adventures, the authors find veritable platforms for didactic overtures as well as for exposing the nasty experiences uninformed migrants go through, and in the end, it tends to bequeath moral lessons for prospective victims who always look up to Europe as ultimate option in the flight from home for a better world. The stories in the migrant trope also serve to remind younger African generation of the historical realities which many cross-border or intercontinental journeys that root from the African forefathers in the past with the glowing memories or repercussions that have been severally recorded by historians (Bazimaziki 63). Traditional adventurous stories often hinge on the great exploits, conquests in heroic quests, and the like; contemporary tales of adventures of youthful Africans to the western world which often begin with the

turbulence and tumultuous realities of the native homeland, and then dwell on the dire experiences in the numerous encounters migrants face while fleeing their homes through the transit and in the host or new destination countries.

As a global phenomenon, migrant encounters as well as migration occurances in the contemporary context have roused the attention of writers, critics and scholars in diverse disciplines and from equally different perspectives; yet, all seem to be in agreements that the subject matter has a history that is not necessarily new but is as long as that of man's existence, although it has evolved significantly across generations. Karen O'Reilly recounts that:

Migration is simply another social phenomenon, with related social processes, actions, patterns, arrangements, and outcomes, the examination of which illuminate our understanding of human life. International migration (on which I focus here, although the theories discussed are often also employed in relation to domestic migrations) is a particular challenge to theorists because it has 'nation' at its heart. Despite the drive to explain migration that is given impetus by nation states' demands for monitoring, control and limitation, social scientists study international migration because it has the potential to change individuals and societies in diverse and interesting ways, the potential to exploit, to enrich, to bring about competition, and to engender change. It raises questions about identity, belonging, location, resources, social cohesion and social divisiveness (1).

The implication of the above extract confirms that migration issues are diverse, complex and even sometimes complicated.

In contemporary African migrant-oriented literary texts, journeys or quests which are charted or uncharted reminds us of many situations that trigger memories and sensations of African encounters with the outsiders through most of its chequered journeys. For instance, the gruesome episodes overhanging the 'narrow passage' - the transatlantic slave journeys with the concomitant plantation experience in the New World that lasted for centuries, and the tragedies that attended the later abolition movements and periods of civil rights movements engendered bulky volumes of journey-bound narratives across generic forms. The bulk of the journey tales in contemporary context of African migrants' experience, rather than titillate the traveler-victim, they tend to remind the sensitive 'audience' of the broken tapestries in the intercontinental journeys of African ancestors in the past with the evil that went with such memories through history. The frustrations, humiliations and dangers often associated with such journeys persistently trigger the traumatic situations of what seems to be voluntary journeys into second slavery, and depict the endless travails that African migrants have had since the narrow passage of adventure to the present encounters. Erhabor Idemudia and Klause Boehnke, while collaborating others, shed some light on the socio-cultural and psychological encounters of African migrants in their struggles to realise the undignifying life which they face in the strange places they find themselves after their flights from the multifaceted troubles back in home countries:

No matter the nature of migration, whether voluntary/involuntary or authorized / unauthorised, there is always a realignment of daily lives with attendant significant challenges to economic, social and psychological health of individuals and communities (Quesada et al., 2014). Although, migration is a consequence of many root causes ranging from forced displacements to seeking for better economic and educational opportunities, it is also a social determinant of both physical and mental health in its own right (Castaneda et al., 2015). This is so because the relocation process is an accumulation of risks starting from countries of origin to transit and destination countries. Despite successfully "escaping" from strains and difficulties in the country of origin, migrants must face further challenges until they reach their destination countries. Upon arrival, there are still various challenges to encounter, bothering on adaptive coping mechanisms for proper integration, and problems inherent in the reciprocal exchanges between migrants and citizens of receiving countries (Dovidio & Esses, 200) (51).

This trope of narratives constitutes some form of artistic mediation which, as David Udoinwang and Kufre Akpan puts it, "… centers on the prevalent social order, and charts the course for salvaging the disoriented mass from the present socio-cultural pervasion" (185) where most of African states seem to still be grappling with multifaceted developmental crisis and abject existence for the governed.

The quest stories with the encounters sufficed in self-representing tales and story making by key protagonists in the struggles (David Udoinwang and James Tsaaior (2023). In this later strand, the protagonist-narrators often dwell on the thematic area of self-retrieval, human equality and on the need for self-government, national sovereignty and socio-economic development. Unfortunately, the past anomaly seems to be eternally re-echoing in the

successive generations. Eric Ngalle's migrant account thematically reverberates the complex journeys that able-bodied Africans have had to undertake and are still going through even in the present.

Idemudia and Bohnke affirm that "The history of African migration is tied to the period of the transatlantic slave trade which is often referred to as the "great migration". As they put it, sadly, "Report shows that 50% of missing/dead migrants recorded on the Mediterranean Sea are of African origin. Irregular migrants are mostly men in their late 20s with little education. Globalisation plays a pivotal role in modern migration trends by being a major driving force…" (15). It is against this backdrop that modern intercontinental movements among young, energetic but unengaged Africans embark on using dangerous routes without any specific thing to do there that made them to end up in a foreign land in a near-slave situation; and sometimes this involves smacks of a second wave of 'voluntary' slavery outside the African continent. This is compelled by the spates of national disasters, socio-economic and political situation ravaging most of African countries. The disasters that come are in the likes of war, political conflicts, internecine pogroms, endemic poverty, and atrocious leadership that remain the bane of problems in African societies.

The bulk of the circumstantial journeys and movements depicted in migrant narratives, often get punctuated at difficult crossroads and scenes of breathtaking moves of the nimbly-footed troubadours or protagonist narrators. The rendition in such tales often crisscross the natal homes and shifting to the diasporas reverberate memories of what Emmanuel Obiechina refers to as "...coming up from history's monumental wreckages" (21), where overpowered Africans were carted away from their villages through tick forests to the seas, and thereafter across great oceans of the world to the 'unknown'. In creative writings, in epical tales and in autobiographical accounts, writers often portray the adventures where the captives find themselves assailed by the tragic misfortunes of the loss of home and existence of indignity in unknown world. To point out just a few, the 'interesting trope of Olauda Equaino's narrative, Frederick Douglas's 'Life and Times' accounts, Alex Haley's *Roots* (1977), Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* (2017), Ben Okri's the *Famished Road* (1991), and Eric Ngalle's *I, Eric Ngalle* (2021), these texts at some juncture unravel the different layers of memories and trauma that Africans have had to make through history and hostilities which have left lasting imprints on the annals of human progress. Therefore, exists very slim line of demarcation between myth and history in African cultural cosmology and the tales that come in the format narrated in Ngalle's novel that interface with the attempt at fictionalising cultural self-retrieval in an estranged universe, and the realities of postcolonial encounters. Somewhere else David Udoinwang articulated that:

The notion of cultural self-retrieval and belonging as construct of postcolonial politics is pervasive in the literary texts that emerge out of the rupture of colonial history. Such texts, in their different genres are essentially involved with the
project of re-memorialising and deepening interests in cultural and historical self-memory and racial pride in a world of besetting prejudices (10).

The chequered journeys and the momentum created through self-telling, eye-witness voice in Eric Ngalle's novel, not only portrays the travesties of African migrant experience in the contemporary sense, they also follow the folklore, mythic and legendary tales of valor, strength and perils that define human existence in a universe where survival and tragedies run side by side.

In the postmodernist socio-cultural situations, movements across spaces are daily getting more and more porous, made easier and encouraged by technological innovations in digitisation and globalisation. It is of general knowledge that although migration from one part of the world to another have been gingered by different circumstances, but much of movements by African migrants in recent times tend to be problematic, because such trips are embarked out of desperation, and thus are humiliating in the sense that the migrants flowing northwards, tiding onshore towards the Euro-America and Sino-Asiatic directions, could be described as more or less victims of local situations that result in decisions of escape from the multifaceted troubles back in the homelands of the migrants. The movements are understandably not necessarily voluntary as it were, but they are largely informed by the compulsion of economic opportunities and drive for better quality of life in Euro-America that is found lacking in the homeland of the migrants. It could be said that while outsiders come to Africa for investment opportunities and adventures like tourism, the bulk of youthful, uneducated and poorly educated African migrants venturing northward do so as a means of escape from the 'fire' of political struggles, hopeless leadership systems, war and hunger ravaging the homeland. Writers have found in the situations of the escapist journeys a fertile ground for imaginative activities and for the recreation of cultural-self- consciousness in the patriotic bids to

expose the difficult existence of the mass of the populace in the third world African nations.

It is against the foregone that we understand how Ngalle's novel uses the adventure-worn hero of the story to traverse the meeting point between the metaphysical and the physical world of the adventurous protagonist in the quest for 'home' lost and the difficulties of coming to grip with the' better home' earlier imagined. In Europe, the hero is confronted with what is observed best as paradoxes, neither here nor there, suspended in a world that is a direct opposite of what was ever dreamt of, stocked in Russia, yet psychologically astral-travelling regularly back home by the magnetic pull of his cultural ancestral homeland where human dignity was a given, especially each time the journey gets to the crossroads or to dangerous twist of fate or turning points.

Although the mobility of humans from within and outside immediate communities, even at intercontinental level for resettlement, or for one reason or the other, is a global heritage of all mankind, but in recent history African continent has, due to harsh socio-economic and political instabilities, re-enforced with the fast-evolving globalisation socio-cultural compulsions, witnessed a gigantic upsurge in migration traffics and sundry issues. Referring to developments in migration situation in Africa, John Akokpari states it aptly that:
There is evidence of phenomenal increase in the wave of migration on the continent. The conventional causes of migration, including conflicts, political oppression, economic crisis and environmental factors, have in recent years been reinforced by globalisation which unleashes fresh pressure that either facilitate or compound the already huge and seemingly unmanageable migration problematique on the continent (72).

The heart-wrenching experiences of third world migrants, who take to daring and perilous adventures in the flight from broken economies from the tension of cross-sword by power hungry tyrants and hardship in the home countries, often place such persons with or without valid transit documents nor means of survival, in very dire straight and perilous situations. With the new-fangled upsurge in human trafficking and the rising tide of the politically and economically displaced due to conflicts, it remains intriguing to note the magnitude of resilience, daringness and temperament, and of the tenacity with which youngsters dare the unknown destinations. It is obvious to state that such migrants do face the situation of metaphoric choice between the devil and the deep blue seas and get enamored to face ahead into the fantasy of economic Eldorado that tends to beckon them into dangerous adventures without counting the cost of such daring determinations.

The different motivations for transnational, transcultural migration include business travels, tourism, people fleeing from conflict-ravaged zones for safety, voluntary mobility in search of the proverbial greener pastures, among others. However, these reasons appear natural, but the crisis arises when individuals have had to move from their natural homes to another far-reaching countries to settle and work for survival but this is done without any valid travelling documents, and it gets worst when the host countries, most often are found to be hostile to them due to some kind of phobia and feeling of threat or sheer racial prejudices. Of course, such narratives are not just about migrants navigating the dangerous tributaries towards Eurozone, but even in South Africa, cases of xenophobia of Africans against fellow Africans equally reign supreme. There are vexing issues that have continued to stimulate much of the contemporary literary activities and critical engagements in the global ferment. It is intriguing to note how despite the travails, perils, dangers and even fatalities that attend the experience of African migrants, the traffic remains congested, unperturbed yet, it is observed that the weary-won migrants, moved by the fantasies and dreams of a 'promise land' that Euro-zone represents.

It could be stated obviously that global arena is awash with socio-political, cultural and ideological fragmentations. Modern society tends to promote difference more than promot human connectivity in diversity. But of all the developing or less-developed entities of the world, African continent remains at the languishing stage of human trafficking graph and migrants-related crisis at all levels, where the hapless migrants strive by any possible means to construct new identities, acclimatise in new urbanised cultural spaces and exist under the cover of new personalities in the bid to cope with constraining situations. Hassan Mbiydzenyuy asserts as follows:

Mobility to urban centres provides a platform for Africans to construct priorities among affiliations, attach themselves to collective enterprises and connect to distant others who share their aspirations or fears. The vastness of African encounters and confrontations with distant cultures through national and foreign travel results in what Rosenau, calls "fragmegration" (2004): a simultaneity of integrating and fragmenting polarities defining (and sometimes confining) how identities are formed and performed (2).

The assertion above underscore partly the fragility that define the journeys of nimbly-footed African migrants and the sensitivity against which Ngalle's suspense-burdened narration analysed in this work entails.

It is a significant point to note in the novel how the protagonist, having gone far from his natal home and is now caught in-between the new environment and memories of the home that is now far from reach in Africa, serves as the totem for cultural self-preservation. Home in the midst of homelessness in the host country remains a spell of some sort, signifying the persona's attempt at dealing with or surmounting the 'cultural difference', the strangeness, and the disillusionment that results in moral disorientation, anxiety and desperation. Also noted is the persona's wilderness of existence, leading a life, as with other African migrants lost in the streets of Europe, of vagrancy in a frighteningly unfriendly, cold and uncertain universe, are most often left with no choice than to deploy even if illegal, immoral strategies for survival and adaptation. The author's role in the circumstance of the story is that of unravelling the veil and paradoxes of 'the good life' perception of Africans who daily dream of and queue at European embassies with all manners of largely cooked up documents, falling victim to the ploy of traffickers or 'agents' to gain entry visa or venture on dangerous land or seas routes going to Europe to live and work. It is, no doubt, the dire condition of the homeland that sets the able bodies young Africans on such dangerous adventures. Udoinwang and Akpan state aptly that "The efforts at navigating African postcolonial societies out of the miasma of primordial ethno-conscious doldrums, socio-political corruption, moral atrophy, religious and gender violence and related environmentally induced calamities" (341) have put the young, but energetic and jobless natives on the flights of fancy and desperation for survival across the continental shelves.

The African migrants portrayed in Ngalle's story that the reader finds marauding, wallowing and wasting away most often indulging in suicidal adventures found their way at where they are due to the ever-dimming hope in the source countries as part of response to survival instinct. Formation of relationships through creation of solidarities and co-habiting, memories of situations back in the homeland and smartness of the adventurers serve to keep hope of survival or coping alive. Tamuka Chekero points out that "The formation of relationships is analogous to the ideas of nimble-footedness, conviviality and social networks, with conviviality, for example, encouraging migrants to reach out in order to meet new people and learn new ways of surviving" (362). A close examination of the text and context done below sheds more light on the metaphoric perceptions and social realities of the encounters of African migrants in their host European countries.

2. Migrant Journeys, Homeless Wanderers and the 'Totem of Homeland'

Right from the opening part of the novel, the novelist starts by foregrounding the inclement socio-political order at the natal home that creates the instinct for escape. With the painted intolerable situation that leaves no hope for the younger generation sets in desperate and circumstantial quests for the land of promise across the far oceans and deserts. To the African, home is mingled in the blood and flows through the veins of kinship community and ancestral origins. Home symbolises the sole, body and essence of survival and being. To leave home is to go seeking livelihood and return; to leave home therefore entails a temporary physical departure of which the real essence of home moves with the traveller and eternally haunts or keeps companion him until the return. On the other hand, to be forced out of home under any guise is considered calamitous and degrading, but that phenomenon clings like a spell to the person or personality eternally, no matter the distances the journey stretches. In other words, the journey as depicted or imagined in Ngalle's 'self' account does not just originate from the urge to relocate, but it is more of flights from unpleasant situations. David Udoinwang and Chinenye Amonyeze writes of the state of Africa that in most of the societies of post-independence/postcolonial African states, there are sundry manifestations of uncertainties. As they put it "… It is this manifest state of lack that puts the Black continent in perpetual despondency, nagging negativities and state of self-pity" (160). At the very beginning of the narrative, the protagonist of *I, Eric Ngalle* tries to introduce the reader to the circumstances of his life using autobiographical mode, and by this strategy, the reader is inducted into the foliage of the universe that brings the narrative persona under serious pressure to flee the homeland, where he now finds himself embarked on a quest for a better universe to live and pursue a meaningful life:

I grew up in the village of Wovilla near Small Soppo in the shadow of Mount Cameroon. I had Africa in my blood but on passing my A-levels, all I wanted was to get the hell out of Cameroon- it was the only avenue open to me if I wanted to build myself a better life… I turned to the internet and contacted a Canadian immigration lawyer who said he had links to several universities and could advise on sponsorship and how I could study abroad (7).

Aided by forces of globalisation information society, he turns to the internet and in a jiffy, the world of opportunities opens up to receive him. What home could not provide, vision of Eldorado outside the homeland had a ready- made answer and the dreamer being of the savvy digital modernity, grabs it with both hands. David Udoinwang and Ikpe Akpan rightly assert that "The scope of digital transformation has also broadened. Households and organizations tend to welcome digitization with both hands" (1), and even the remote places of the earth has come under the dictates of ubiquitous digitisation.

Having made the contacts, the exit visa secured although after much humiliating encounters, but before one could guess far, the traveler finds himself in the middle of nowhere. At a stopover in Malta, instead of Belgium destination, he finds himself en-route Russia, a destination least expected, but the thought of home, ancestors and mother soon becomes the spell-binding totems that would haunt and pull the adventurer through his tangled journeys, and keep watch over the renegade, as it were. He has been duped, defrauded by barons of human traffickers who parasite on young and hapless Africans that are desperate to locate to Europe for survival. Suddenly he has become a prodigal left with only memories of the homeland. Whatever the unfeeling human traffickers have brought him to, he does not mind, he arrives in Russia by hook or crook, psychologically battered, hungry, without a specific destination to think of, and disillusioned, yet not deterred, though drained of meager resources by fraudsters and fellow uprooted Africans. *He is faced with danger all through. As the protagonist victim puts it:*
When your money was finished, you would be left to your own devices, abandoned. If the Russian skinheads did not finish you off, then the severe Russian weather would… I just stood in the midst of it all and tried to take in my predicament. "Where do I begin? Where do I go? Where are the gods of my ancestors? Why has such a curse been placed upon my young shoulders"? (10).

So far, the Europe he had dreamt of as heaven, ironically seems most unfriendly and unwelcoming. Those he had run into have been mostly dupes and crooks who cashed in on his inexperience to undo him rather than help bail him out of the scary situation of Moscow. At such crossroads, homeland now beckons on him strongly, spiritually and nostalgically. This persistent grip of his ancestral homeland serves to stabilise him in moments of overwhelming confusion and psychological conflict. Among those he runs into are follow Cameroonians and other African migrants whose lives in Russia are nothing enviable to reckon with. His journeys or wandering around Russia in search of opportunities reveals a weird undercurrent as he recollects his brother's history lesson about the harshness and extreme coldness of Russian world which he told him back in the village about the experience and disasters faced by German soldiers in Russia during the World Wars' military campaign there. As he enters train from Moscow heading on a four-day trip to Stavropol, he recollects stories of the harshness of Russia and repeatedly asks himself what he is really doing in Russia. He regularly in moments of introspection and stupors of reminiscences, wonder in utter disillusionment.

He traverses Russia from city to city with nothing fantastic to recon with. This portrays the largely aborted dreams and unpleasant existence of African migrants. He also encounters dangerous street characters like scams, fake friends and all sorts in the likes of Diamond, Rico, and Helga, and other racist peoples who are dangerous to familiarize with. His mind keeps wandering back to his village and ancestral family in Cameroon, his natal roots recall the communalistic closeness under which he was brought up, as he is presently faced with the persistent hunger and loneliness that characterises existence and the society of Russia.

While in Russia, he very often reminisces with trepidation about the tragedies of leadership that exist in Africa with have made life unbearable for young energetic Africans which push them into exile. He casts his mind back with fun memories about the roles of great personalities like Mobutu Sese Seko, former president of Zaire, now Democratic Republic of Congo, Ahmadu Adhijo, the former president of Cameroon, Kwame Nkrumah, former president of Ghana and former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. He did not also forget to think about some important Black great men like Steve Biko, who founded the famous Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, Miriam Makeba, who was nicknamed Mama Africa. She was a South African celebrated singer, songwriter, actress, and civil rights activist who was an advocate against apartheid South African white-minority. He also felt very sad about the works of notable black leaders like Thomas Sankara, Jerry Rawlings, Lucky Dube and a host of other pan-Africanists whose efforts were aimed at creating a truly African renaissance but have been watered down by the activities of white supremacy and dominant activities of the whites, what Elizabeth Enukora refers to as the machinations of the "cannibalistic comprador bourgeoisie and their cohorts" (102).

Eric Ngalle considers the indignities and the undignifying life that Africans have been subjected to in the Western world as "forms of socio-political hindrances that inhibit Africa's sustainable development "and their unending problems of identity and culture (Elizabeth Enukora, 2023:101). The mention of the Rwanda genocide caps it all about how postcolonial and post-independent African states have remained assailed by multifaceted crisis. Faced by many dangers in a strange world of Russia, he often retorts to an outburst: "I wanted to go back to Cameroon; Russia was stranger to me" (30). He journeys around Russia angry having a feeling of revenge against those that have made the homeland uninhabitable, hopeless and have striped or deprived his honor and respect.

It is sad that the narrator sometimes roams about to places where blacks are not tolerated at all. At such times shouts of contempt with the derogatory expression "Black monkey!" (35) is heard which cast a spell of fear on the stranger. In the bid to survive the strange and alienating universe of Russia, he has to become a serial liar, "…living on the kindness of strangers…" (45) black-mailers, fake dollar manufacturers, dealers and tricksters. The picture he paints of life of Africans in Russia is rather very derogatory. The following line points to this fact: "Eventually… I did not have any money, yet strangers who had their own families to take care of were feeding me" (47). When he got sick, he resorts to the use of traditional treatment method, while his friends utilises incantation method and invocation by summoning their ancestors back in Wovilla to come to their rescue. At some other times, he recourses to sodomisation with the family head while he himself becomes a serial sex abuser and addict in that same family that sought to accommodate him for a time. He tells his fellow migrant friends of this escapade: "Again, I told the story how I had engaged in a three-way sex act with a man and his wife" (61). All these are done to depict the fragile, delicate and depraved life of African migrants in Europe.

Indeed, all through the story what seems to be the totem 'Africa' harangues the protagonist like a spell that cannot be exorcised. The scene below depicts this unique feature that plays through the entire movement of the story:

My mother and I have this strong bond, you see, as I stayed in her stomach for almost twelve months- she kept reminding me of this… She even told me that I already had a tooth when I was born… She might be telling the truth, who knows…. I was truly a cursed child. (53)

In most of the breathtaking scenes of his survivalist criminal escapades, his mind wanders back and forth of his village community in Africa. He figures out mentally the scenarios of home, perhaps as an antidote for the indignities that he daily comes face to face with dangers. As he tries to enact a scene of a deal which he intended to dupe people; when he senses that he might be killed this time around, if he is found out, he puts up some kind of bold appearance not to betray the trust placed on him. This extreme situation mentally transports him back to his homeland, invoking the spirit of his ancestors for a supernatural backing. The extract below points to this assertion:

I was getting really scared… I was here in the middle of nowhere, with people who looked like killers. They had strong astute faces, which when they spoke, remained straight- there were no betrayal of emotions… I was far away, far away from the meandering slopes of Small Sopppo and no longer surrounded by the plantains behind my mother's house…. My village only existed in dreams, I was playing the role of an innocent translator trying to scam five thousand dollars from people who could kill us and abandon our corpse in the middle of a forest, and no one would be the wiser (77).

The consciousness of home is ever beckoning and this has taken toll on him, created by a deep sense of nostalgia and dejection in the world which he finds himself.

The next phase of his escapade was to migrate back to his native Cameroon in Africa. However, the back home seems difficult and staying back in Russia is nothing to cherish at all. He has expected to sail through without much ado at the Cameroon embassy to obtain return visa, but the huddles of getting the exit passport is tougher. Now as would be expected, depression begins to set in. He reflects on an earlier date in his life when he had been rejected by his kinsmen, his country that stampeded him on a desperate flight to where he now finds himself. He had taken flight enrooted to Belgium but had found himself in Russia and done all to survive in that strange country. In the situation he found himself, he could not even locate the way back home. He laments:

Not only was I rejected by my paternal kinsmen, but the gods had also conspired to ensure I was rejected by my own country. I felt suicidal. I had to activate my backup plan…. Vincent also told me about a voluntary repatriation programme of the United Nations… and was convinced I would be a perfect candidate… There was no way I could have stayed or survived another winter in Russia (114-115).

In the periscopic line up of events in the narrative of the person's life adventure in Russia, he had been rejected at home by his kinsmen and family and edged out of his immediate world, seeking help from the embassy of his own country, he ended up being frustrated by his government in foreign land, rejected at the country's embassy and even the individuals at the United Nations repatriation programme office where he had sort for intervention for him to return to Cameroun but to no avail.

By the time the temperament of the story begins to drop, the migrant had beaten the tough security at Heathrow security check to the shock of the immigration officer and this aptly points at the extent to which desperate African immigrants fleeing from home in the quest for survival and meaningful life could go. It also underscores the point that the anticipated host country is never the anticipated Eldorado. As a denouement to the gripping suspense that characterise the narrative, the captioned blurb at the conclusion page gives the story a safe-landing, a lasting impression and a great lesson for desperate young Africans who without valid exit visa nor specific skill or qualification to reflect on the narrated experiences. Part of the caption reads:
If you get this far reading this book, you have been reading of very dark times in my life, two years and two months spent in Russia…. The story had to be told, especially with the situation in Cameroon right now. People are still falling victim of human trafficking on a grand scale. This book is a warning. Many Cameroonians died in Russia. Who knows how many are dying in Libya, chasing that dream of going to the 'White man's land, the land of milk and honey' (247).

The author's autobiographical mode of storytelling makes the narration more immediate, dramatic and closer to humanity. What such vividly presented life-drama portrays can be dispersed in its essential meaning because the story reflects the reality of hundreds of thousands of Africans fleeing their homeland, expecting to arrive at Eldorado in Europe but end up in streets as mendicants, vagrants and lost in the world that they least expected.

3. Conclusion

The story in *I, Eric Ngalle* weaves a parable of postmodern, global fantasies and travails that go with such escapes. It is a long spin that captures the picture of what has become modern day problem of human trafficking, massive migration of unwary yet daring young and vibrant men and women who, in their quests to locate enabling, humane and conducive environment often fall victims in the captivity of human traffickers, who deceive the hapless youths, slease them of their hard-earned money with juicy promises of finding them job in Europe without the capacity to do so. Often such merchants fall victims into the world of unknown fate and uncertainties. The story seems to lay the essential outline of what illegal, undocumented immigrants go through in their different host European states they arrive at, and at the same time sounds a strident warning to the prospective victims of such situations. It should also be seen as a clarion call to African leaders and stake holders to make Africa appeal to the youths as 'home' indeed and give society the direction and hope through good governance, patriotic and responsible leadership in the interest of the present generation and the future of African countries for sustaining development and growth.

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Dramatizing Psychic Spaces: Interface between Spousal Relationship and Mental Health in Bode Sowande's *The Spellbinder*

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Abstract. The intersection between mental health and literature constitutes the body of contemporary dramatic literature. The theatre has been a very potent platform for dramatizing different human experiences, including medical and health realities. Literature has been generally perceived as an invaluable tool that orientates the people on the adverse effects of mental health disorder in people. The link between family relationship and mental health appears to be a significant aspect of the theatrical conversation on human health experiences. This paper examines Bode Sowande's play, *The Spellbinder,* discussing the types of spousal relationships depicted, and the impact of such relationships on the psychological health of the various characters. The study adopted Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis, to account for the implication of the spousal relationships in the play on the mental health of the characters. The primary drama text, Sowande's *The Spellbinder,* was selected through purposive sampling, and subjected to qualitative literary analysis, paying attention to characters' conducts and utterances. The analysis revealed that there are instances of strained spousal relationships in the play, which plunge the characters into different forms of mental health conditions like maniac depressive and schizophrenic psychosis. While Damilare manifests guilt-induced maniac depressive psychosis which was engendered by his adulterous relationship with Adura, the wife of his friend, Adamu, Adamu and Adura show signs of schizophrenic psychosis— Adamu's psychotic state is triggered by agony of betrayal by his wife while Adura's madness is also guilt-induced. The playwright deploys flashback, interior monologue/soliloquy, dialogue, action and characterization as dramatic devices, to convey the characters' mental states. The theatre, as demonstrated through Bode Sowande's *The Spellbinder,* explores the link between spousal relationship and mental health.

Keywords: Literature and psychiatry; Psychodrama; Spousal relationship; Nigerian drama; Bode Sowande

1. Introduction

The nexus between spousal relationship and mental health constitutes the body of a good number of Nigerian literary works, especially drama texts. Though there seems to be plethora of publications in the field of clinical psychology and psychiatry on the connection between spousal relationship and mental health condition, scholarly efforts on the subject in Nigerian drama have been inadequate. Spousal relationship is both a social and biological construction that human can hardly do without. In view of this, it becomes imperative for this paper to examine the interface between spousal relationship and mental health challenges in Nigeria drama, with specific focus on Bode Sowande's play *The Spellbinder*.

Drama or the theatre has been very invaluable in portraying mental health condition. In Femi Oyebode's *Madness at the Theatre* (2012), he depicts the role of drama in conveying psychiatric subjects. Oyebode's study has been a major contribution to the role of drama in portraying mental health conditions. Kekeghe (2018) devotes a chapter to analyze representation of mental health condition in Nigerian drama, what he regards as "humoured madness" (54). Kekeghe further identifies different socioeconomic factors that trigger madness in people like socio-political tension, anxiety, obsession, war, economic pressures and inter-gender skirmishes (54). Remarkably, Kekeghe's research which examines the depiction of mental health conditions in Nigeria literature, acknowledge the significance of dramatic literature in such representation.

Essentially, spousal relationships have been portrayed in dramatic texts right from the Greek tradition, though the renaissance era as captured in the works of William Shakespeare and the modern period, is depicted in the dramatic expression of Tennessee William. Since Nigerian Literature is socially committed, it reflects both the sociological and the psychological components of individual and the society (Oyebode; 2009, Kekeghe; 2017). In Nigeria, the culture of espousing spousal relation cannot be overlooked, because virtually all playwrights present family issues which fall out from spousal affairs. Thus, the portrayal of mental health experiences attests to the social function of literature. Gender issues like spousal relationship is part of social experiences which literary writers reflect.

Spousal relationship finds its root in marriage. This is the union between man and woman as enduring companions. Marriage requires courtship or dating, but it must find expression in traditions. The emergence of marriage has its existence in different period in history. The Greek believed that a man must be attached to its companion with the doctrine of help mates. The Romantic period in history is of the opinion that before a man could contribute meaningfully to its society, he must find fulfillment in union. This will avail him the true essence of existence which is beauty. The Medieval scholars believed that women should have dual responsibilities to religion and marriage. The Puritans view marriage as a very blessed relationship that give marital partners an opportunity to love and forgive. As a result of this, many people hold the view that regardless of how they enter matrimony, they are bond into an agreement of legality, as well as commitment and challenge. They are bond to agree with terms and condition of marriage in order to achieve companionship, procreation and relative peace of mind. Mental health in marriage is an integral part of health and well-being, yet it has been neglected in Africa. Therefore, literary or dramatic representation of the experience helps to illuminate it.

Contemporary drama texts in Nigeria have been committed to the prevailing mental health challenges in the society, including experiences of mental health. In line with the submission of scholars, mental health disorders are caused by a number of social factors, including spousal relationship, which manifests in the form of domestic violence, disappointment, cheating and other negative effects. Literary texts written by playwrights are often used to create awareness about mental health disorder. Femi Osofisan's *A Restless Run of the Locust* (2002), Niyi Adebanjo's *A Monologue on the Dunghill* (2008) and Bode Sowande's *Spell Binder* (2021) are some of such plays that explore mental health conditions and their social and environmental triggers. However, it has been discovered that most of the existing works on mental health in Nigerian drama have not given adequate attention to the subject of spousal relationship. Oyebode (2012) acknowledges different triggers of madness in Nigerian drama but no mention is given to spousal relationship. Kekeghe (2018) and (2020) also show different socio-economic factors that trigger mental disorders as represented in Nigerian literature. Though Kekeghe acknowledges the subject of spousal betrayal as a trigger of mental disorder, his focus is on short stories. Kekeghe submits that Tanure Ojaide uses these stories to stimulate public health awareness on the various causes of mental health disorder in the society. The current study, therefore, examines the role of drama and theatre in portraying the intersection between spousal relationship and mental health experiences, with a critical focus on Bode Sowande's play, *The Spellbinder.* Within this context, the present paper seeks to open up new vistas for spousal relationship by interrogating the role of drama and the theatre in enforcing psychological health in marital setting. The selected text for analysis is Bode Sowande's *The Spellbinder*. Specific objectives of the study are to ascertain the nature of spousal relationships depicted in Bode Sowande's play, *The Spellbinder,* and discuss their manifestations on the mental health of the characters involved; highlight dramatic features utilised by the playwright in conveying the subject of mental health. The study is relevant to different academic fields, including literature, clinical psychology and medicine (especially psychiatry). It also promises to create awareness on the common triggers of mental health conditions.

The primary text, Bode Sowande's *The Spellbinder*, was purposively selected and subjected to qualitative literary analysis. Secondary materials in the fields of literature, psychology and psychiatry add credence to the analysis.

This paper adopts Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis as its theoretical framework to account for the negative effects of spousal relationship on the mindscape of the characters involved. According to the view of Nwankwo and Ignatius (2018, p. 2), "Psychoanalytical theory is based on mental disorder that undergoes conflict that occurred in the patient's childhood." Freud argues that conflict is inevitable within the personality of every human being. This is because personality is made up of three conflicting parts— the id, the ego and the superego. Most of these conflicts take place during childhood. If the ego succeeds in resolving the conflict, the child will grow up to be

normal. If the ego fails to resolve a conflict, especially one over important issue, the unresolved conflict will develop in a neurosis or psychosis. The233tress233tt is usually so painful experience that patient experienced. It pushes one into unconscious area of the mind. The conflict manifests itself in the form of psychiatric symptoms such as anxiety, depression and compulsion. To help cure the patient, the psychoanalyst must bring the conflict out into open, so that the patient can understand and solve the problem (Theo, 1995, p. 279). Social 233tresss or crises like divorce, unemployment, rape and death of loved have been acknowledged by psychiatrists and psychologists as common factors that engender mental illnesses (Oyebode, 2009 and Oluwatura, 2008).

The theatre has revealed the significance of the mind in the overall function of people in the society (Oyebode, 2012). Psychological factors have to do with cognitive reasoning and emotional influence. A person's upbringing and stressful incidents can lead to mental derailment. Environmental or social factors have to do with social menace happening within the society, which are capable of causing mental disorders. These include: death, divorce, anger, loneliness, low self- esteem and cultural imbalance. Cognitive reasoning is vital in explaining the emotion of mentally abused persons. In this context, this factor refers to individuals' beliefs in their ability to cope with excessive demands caused by the traumatic events in their environment. The tenets of Psychoanalysis are invaluable to this study.

2. Analysis and Discussion

Bode Sowande's *The Spellbinder* explores different episodes of mental health and therapeutic strategies induced by human and spousal relationship. Through the effective deployment of dramaturgical resources like dialogues, action, scenic descriptions, humour, chracterisation and flashback, Sowande uses *The Spellbinder* to highlight mental health challenges, starting from the family, down to the larger society. Though there are different cases of mental health disorders and clinical procedures depicted in the play, the thrust of the play's action is the psychotic state of Adamu and his wife, Adura, which is engendered by Adura's adulterous relationship with Damilare, Adamu's childhood friend. While Adamu suffers depression, which escalates to psychosis as a result of the wife's betrayal, Adura manifests guilt-induced psychosis. In the play, Damilare also manifests guilt instincts, which plunge him into depression and eventual death.

3. Nature of Spousal Relationships and their Manifestations on the Characters' Mental Health

From the opening of the play, the audience is exposed to the events of mental health challenges and tension that run through the family of Damilare. In what is supposed to be an atmosphere of merriment, presaging the wedding ceremony of Damilare's son, Lanke, and Abayomi Ganzalo's daughter, Bimbola, the audience is left to experiment with a tense domestic environment that shows signs of mental health disorder. It is discovered that Damilare's adulterous relationship with Adura, his friend's wife, leads to a child, Lanke, the very groom being portrayed at the beginning of the play. Damilare's wife, Remilekun, who brings up Lanke, the son of a ravingly mad woman Adura, is afraid to appear in the wedding as the groom's mother, envisaging possible appearance of the groom's biological mother and family. In the midst of this, Lanke is unaware that Remilekun is not her biological mother, a secret mixed with guilt that has plunged Lanke's father, Damilare into depression. Remilekun's quest to let out the secret to Lanke in the eve of his wedding eventually escalates the psychic tension leading to Damilare's sudden death of stroke.

At the beginning of the play, the sexual betrayal manifested by Damilare against his friend, Adamu, takes a greater part of his mental health. He exhibits guilt-instincts which make him to take to excessive consumption of alcohol. The emotional complex of his wife, Remilekun, appears to have aggravated Damilare's mental disintegration. The dialogue involving Damilare, Mama Damilare (his mother) and Remilekun (his wife) unfolds the psychological degeneration of Damilare, which is rooted in the sexual relationship he had with Adamu's wife, leading to the birth of Lanke, the groom. Remilekun declares:

Remilekun: Damilare, this secret is destroying your health
Your inner tension is so hyper that often it is drug resistant
This secret confronts me too.
Especially tonight!
Tomorrow my heart will be pounding in my chest
(*Whispers loudly*) Lanke is not my biological son!
(p. 3)

Remilekun's assertion in the extract above underscores the fact that Damilare harbours some psychological strains engendered by the guilt of having a sexual relationship with Adamu's wife. The fact that the relationship produces a son, Lanke, is a double jeopardy, which Damilare has to suffer. Damilare's manifestation of psychological depression makes him to indulge in excessive intake of alcohol.

The following dialogue conveys Damilare display of psychotic symptoms:

REMILEKUN: You see, Mama.
He is drinking the brandy like it is water.
DAMILARE: I am no alcoholic.
REMILEKUN: You are an insomniac!
You don't sleep.
You have not slept for years!
MAMA DAMILARE: Not slept for years?
…
Damilare, my son, is it true?
You find it difficult to sleep?
…
REMILEKUN: And then, Mama, he has long, very long spells of insomnia.
Sleeplessness that defies any medication.
Mama, during the day, he will cat nap in his office penthouse.
During those spells, Mama, he is a chronic warrior at home. (p. 4).

The dialogue above reveals that Damilare displays signs of insomnia engendered by his depressive state. Insomnia is a mental disorder, which is commonly triggered by depression. Insomnia manifests in people in the form of acute sleeplessness. People who show symptoms of insomnia hardly sleep well. Through the effective appropriation of dialogue, Bode Sowande realistically depicts the psychological states of the characters. For instance, Damilare's wife, Remilekun tells Mama Damilare that Damilare exhibits "very long spells of insomnia" which "defies any medication" (4). The implication is that, the mental disintegration of Damilare affects his wife and the entire family. Remilekun also reports that Damilare manifests symptoms of maniac depression such as aggression, irritability and violence: "During those spells, Mama, he is a chronic warrior at home." (4).

Remilekun's sense of insecurity as a result of her childlessness may have spiraled Damilare's mental disintegration. For instance, upon her revealing the secret to Lanke, Damilare's mental health condition escalates. He eventually dies of a stroke. As stated earlier, his manifestation of symptoms of depression like insomnia (sleep disorder) and aggression is as a result of his committing adulterous act with Adura, the wife of Adamu. He keeps that in his mind for years without sharing it with anybody except his wife and mother. This generates madness, as he cannot sleep for months till the day Lanke is about to get married to his wife, Bimbola. Mama Damilare then reveals the true identity of the biological father and mother to Lanke thus: "I took my son, your father Damilare to Remilekun his wife, with you, the two-day-old baby. Your mother was the wife of another man. Your father committed adultery with a married woman. Lanke, you were that child of destiny." (p. 13).

It can be argued that besides the guilt-instincts that provoked Damilare's mental degeneration, his relationship with his wife does not add much value to his mental health. This is so because the wife is emotionally disturbed by her childlessness, and exhibits feeling of insecurity in the family. Remilekun's insistence to reveal the secret to Lanke that she is not his biological mother is as a result of the insecurity she manifests. This, in a way, generates tension in their family, aggravating Damilare's mental health disorder, and eventually leading to his death. Remilekun confesses the tension in the home to Damilare's mother, Mama Damilare:

REMILEKUN: Mama, my husband and I carry a heavy burden in our hearts
It is killing him.
It is wearing me out.
MAMA DAMILARE: (*Big sigh*) Ahh.
I know.
I know.
The deep coils of our stomach hold the secret of Lanke's birth.
REMILEKUN: (*Rises, peeps here and there to see if anyone is eavesdropping*). Mama, Lanke thinks I am his mother.
MAMA DAMILARE: You are his mother, Remilekun.
DAMILARE: Remilekun! (p. 3).

The dialogue above confirms that there is tension in the family of Damilare, which is triggered by the secret of Lanke's birth and his biological mother. The role of Remilekun in this spousal relationship does not seem to remedy Damilare's condition. This is because Remilekun, like Damilare, nurses her mental stress arising from her feeling of insecurity. Thus, Remilekun refuses to appear as the groom's mother in the wedding that comes up the next day:

REMILEKUN: I shall not be on the high table!
MAMA DAMILARE: Why?
It is your day of celebration.
A day of celebration, merriment and unforgettable joy.
REMILEKUN: Tomorrow, I don't want to be an impostor!
DAMILARE: Remilekun, take hold of yourself!
REMILEKUN: My self is not taking hold of me!
I cannot keep this secret any more. (p. 6).

As shown in the dialogue above, Damilare's wife, Remilekun adds to his mental stress. Bode Sowande uses the play to show the importance of spousal relationship on individuals' mental health. The tension

in Damilare's home seems to have escalated as a result of the unhealthy nature of his spousal relationship. A characteristic gloom occasionally runs through the family. The pensive atmosphere of Damilare's home worsens his mental health state, leading to his eventual development of stroke and sudden death.

A very significant part of the play is the psychosis of Adamu and Adura which is the result of spousal betrayal. While Adamu becomes psychotic as a result of his wife's (Adura's) committing adultery with his friend, Damilare, Adura's psychosis is induced by guilt instinct. Psychosis is a severe mental condition that is concerned with a radical collapse of the ego leading to irrational actions and conducts (Mbanefo, 1991). Common forms of psychosis are maniac depression, schizophrenia and affective disorder (Olatawura, 2008). The spousal betrayal experienced in Sowande's *The Spellbinder* has a profound negative effect on the mindscape of the characters. As evident in the play, Adamu becomes a regular psychiatric patient after the wife's betrayal. Through the resources of flashback, a dramaturgical feature deployed by Sowande, the audience is kept abreast of the triggers of Adamu's psychotic condition. Adamu addresses Damilare after having a sexual relationship with Adura, Adamu's wife. The following extract conveys Adamu's agony, which later escalates to psychosis:

ADAMU: Dear old friends, or should I say dear old foe
I have a spy camera in my house
You and Adura stabbed me in the heart the very dear day
You made love on my matrimonial bed
I visited a psychiatrist the very next day because
I felt I was going mad
The rest is now history in the recording of your sex
And romance under my roof
They will serve my divorce purposes (p. 89).

As evident in the extract above, Damilare, Adura's husband's best friend, commits adultery with Adura on her matrimonial bed. Adamu finds out through the in-built camera he planted in the house. This eventually plunges him into mental disintegration. The psychotic symptoms manifested by Adamu and Adura are of the schizophrenic category. This is evident in their exhibition of perceptual disorder like visual and auditory hallucinations. In *The Spellbinder,* Bode Sowande effectively creates what Kekeghe (2018) refers to as "sociological and psychological dimensions of reality" (p.1). Sowande realistically explores the inner conflicts of the characters in relation to social events around them.

The guilt instincts and the dissolving of the characters' ego in the play bear spiritual connotation through the symbolic portrayal of the spellbinder. As a result of the sexual betrayal manifested by Adura and Damilare, Adamu is said to cast a spell of madness on Adura through the effort of the spellbinder. Here, the spellbinder implies the guilt consciousness that will keep haunting Adura. Spellbinder also takes the form of the hallucinatory traits manifested by the characters, especially Adura and Adamu, which underscores the collapse of their ego (the rationality principle). In the play, the spellbinder, which symbolizes the spirit of madness, reveals its character trait as an agent of darkness that occasionally appears as a spirit to frighten Adura and Adamu. Adura's state of madness becomes heightened to the extent that she sees spirits incognito of herself. She begins to manifests perceptual disorder like visual and auditory hallucinations which are common symptoms of schizophrenic psychosis. Self-talks, thought-broadcast and the sight of invisible things are common hallucinatory symptoms that characterise schizophrenia (Olatuwara, 2008). Through scenic description and effective appropriation of dialogues, Bode Sowande conveys Adura's psychotic state, manifesting symptoms of perceptual disorders:

(*Daytime. Adura, the young woman in her twenties. She is a harmless demented person. A fine gleaming white cord is knotted around her waist and thus sags in its link to Adura 2.*
Adura 2 is radii away and she will in the scene
Be on the circumference of Adura's positions. This is repeated in respective ensuing scenes where Adura is mentally ill.)
…
Adura 2: See what my husband has done to me
Adura: Just see how I sit here
Adura2: Just see how I stand here
Adura: I am also standing
Adura2: I am also sitting (P. 44)

The excerpt above attests to the fact that Adura's psychotic state is triggered by her strained relationship with her husband, Adamu. Her adulterous relationship with Damilare is the root of the damage in her marriage, which further engenders her madness. This dialogue is a recreation of Adura's inner crisis, which manifests in the form of hallucinations. It shows that her mind is gravely damaged, and it affects her thought-process. The dissolving of Adura's ego (her rationality principle) makes her to manifest irrational, uncoordinated thoughts that lie within the domain of her id (the unconscious). The disintegrated mind of Adura, and her display of perceptual disorder is further depicted in the following dialogue:

Adura: Who are you?
Where are you coming from?
Where are you going?
Queen: We are creatures
You created us
Adura: You are so funny
Me, Adura created you?
Queen: Yes, you created us in your head
We live inside your head…
Your head is a cosmos of thoughts
Gleefully as you thought of us you brought us into a magnificent fantasgomora (p.45)

The dialogue above underscores the psychological crisis of Adura in the play. Evidently, her mind witnesses a radical breakdown as a result of her sexual betrayal of her husband, Adamu. Guilt-instinct is a major propeller of Adura's mental condition. She manifests schizophrenic symptoms like hallucinations by seeing invisible beings in the image of herself. This is an act of psychosis. Adura's hearing of strange voices and communicating with invisible persons are symptoms of hallucination, which attest to the splitting of her mind:

ADURA: (*Holds her head in anguish.*)
(*To the Queen*)
I am looking for myself.
My husband threw away myself.
ADURA 2: I am here.
Adura, I am here.
ADURA: (*To Queen.*)
I hear my voice.
I am looking for myself. (p. 47)

The chracterisation of Adura into two— Adura and Adura 2— underscores the dissolving of Adura's mental disintegration. This is why she laments that "I am looking for myself." (p. 47). She acknowledges the fact that the root of her mental crisis is tied to her strained spousal relationship, caused by her adulterous lifestyle. This is evident in her declaration that "my husband threw away myself" (p. 47). Adura's case needs urgent rehabilitation by a psycho-analyst. This professional will understudy her health status with the use of potent drugs and bed rest.

Sowande uses the play to create awareness on the need to strengthen mental health care. The playwright emphasizes the role of competent psychiatrists in the society, for the overall mental wellbeing of individuals. Adura's betrayed husband, Adamu, is a regular patient in a psychiatric hospital. After diagnosing him as a psychotic patient, he regularly frequents health center for resuscitation against mental disorders. Dr. Helen Michael and her father appear to have treated him as a psycho-patient thirty years back. Since he keeps reflecting on the sexual betrayal by his wife, it becomes extremely difficult for him to recuperate from his mental health disorder. He continues to nurse hatred and vendetta towards his friends Damilare and Adura. This is revealed with the use of flashbacks:

ADAMU: I have been speaking to psychiatrists for about thirty years.
And now, I see the daughter of the man who treated me thirty years ago.
If you can permanently send off the spellbinder,
I shall buy you a mansion of your choice
I CAN AFFORD IT.
HELEN:Belief sir is an experience of choice,
Of faith perhaps
The spellbinder is not an entity.
ADAMU: A FIGMENT OF MY IMAGINATION (p.65-66).

Adamu's flirtatious lifestyle with different ladies and the lack of adequate attention to his wife is a major cause of the wife's committing adultery with Adamu's friend, Damilare. So, besides the pain of betrayal which stimulates him to be vengeful, Adamu also has his own share of guilt. The agony of witnessing his wife indulging in sexual relationship with his friend and the self-guilt of not having enough time for his wife affect Adamu's mental plane. The spellbinder, which Adamu refers to as "a figment of imagination", is a reflection of his crumbled mind. That is, like Adura, it is Adamu's constant mental reflection on the anguished experiences that triggers reactive depression, which escalates to psychosis. Sowande's effective appropriation of flashback technique helps to account for the social factor that triggers that characters' mental illness as well as the gradual level of escalation.

The therapeutic strategies adopted in the play underscore a significant part of mental health. Helen, a competent psycho-analyst, after consultation and diagnosis on Adamu's mental health, expresses the need for Adamu to forgive his wife. By implication, forgiveness in this sense is the first step to psychological recovery. She advises Adamu to have a spouse, to create healthy companionship. Dr Helen stresses that a man is expected to be married, father a child and have a mutual love for his family and extended family to live a healthy life. The spellbinder is further given a spiritual undertone in the play. Adamu narrates that the spellbinder is created by his father because his servant impregnated his favourite wife. Since that time the spellbinder has been existing in their family cycle. This psycho-spiritual portrayal of the spellbinder attests to the thin-line between "spirituality and psychiatry" in African society

(Kekeghe, 2022). Spellbinder is the charm the grandfather used to torment his favourite wife as a result of adultery. This psycho-spiritual perspective is reflected in the dialogue below:

HELEN: Your great-grandfather could not forgive his youngest wife?
ADAMU: He was the one who created the spellbinder and infused it in our bloodline.

HELEN: Seven generations will transmit this curse?
ADAMU: I belong to the fourth-generation
A woman who loves me should be faithful to me (p.95)

However, the findings derived from Adamu's mental health status by Helen, the psychoanalyst, are that "he has had a phobia for female sexual experience for about thirty years" and Individual's experiences and life are shaped by culture. Culture cuts across all ages, and it determines values, attitudes and behaviour. It describes and determines psychopathology which influences the general attitude of people within the society. Culture plays an important role in how certain populations and societies view, perceive and process sexual acts as sexual violence. Adamu re-aligned negatively with the culture of his forefathers. A generation ahead of him created the spellbinder, and in his imagination, believes in its potency. While this cannot be subjected to empirical interpretation, it is possible to ascertain that self-guilt and agonies caused by sexual betrayals, are the common triggers of the psychoses in Sowande's play, *The Spellbinder.*

The playwright exposes the discrimination against mental health patients in Nigeria. Yomi Ganzalo, father to Bimbola, the bride, insists that the wedding ceremony should be called off, so that Bimbola will not marry Lanke, the son of a mad woman, Adura. Bimbola remains resolute to her cause, that irrespective of the family background of Lanke, she will marry him. Teresa, her mother, supports the view of her daughter. She reminds Yomi that the fact that Lanke's mother is a mad woman should not derail the love affair between him and their daughter:

TERESA: Unconditional love will destroy the most potent curse
Yes, Yomi Gazzalo
I will not allow you to throw my daughter into mental depression whose end no one
Can predict I am her mother. (P.21)

Teresa goes on to orientate her husband about her experience with mental health. According to her, anybody with a mental disorder should not be left alone. They deserve the love of the society. Mental disorder patients should be taken care of for society to experience positive growth in the area of human capacity development. In her view, she reminds Gazzalo, her husband, that she was once a post-partum psychosis when Bimbo was born …mentally out of sync for about six hours" due to the stress of childbirth" (p.19). The character of Teresa is used to explore the positive impact of healthy spousal relationship on individuals' mental health.

4. Relevance of Dramatic Devices in Portraying the Subject of Mental Health in the Play

In *The Spellbinder,* Bode Sowande utilises different dramatic devices like interior monologue, soliloquy, flashbacks, characterization, dialogues and action, to convey the mental health issues in *The Spellbinder.* Interior monologue or soliloquy involves a character engaging in self-talks. This technique helps to ascertain the mental status of the characters. For instance, all the characters that manifest different mental health disorders in the play— Adamu, Adura and Damilare— engage in different self-talks in the play. This is more common in the character of Adamu and Adura, where the spellbinder, a metaphor for psychosis, is used to speak their mind. For instance, the character of Adura splits into two— Adura and Adura 2, a strategy that is used by the playwright to reflect the compartments of Adura's crumbling mind. This falls within Sigmund Freud's compartmentalization of the human mind into the id, ego and super-ego.

Flashback is also utilized in Sowande's *The Spellbinder,* to ascertain the triggers of the characters' mental conditions. The analysis reveals that flashbacks are used by the playwright to show social factors (negative spousal relationships) and the gradual descent of the characters into psychosis. The historical reflections on the characters' experiences through the device of flashback, help in ascertaining the characters' psychological states.

Dialogues various conversations of the characters help to show the quality of their minds. Through dialogues, the playwright reveals the mental conditions of the characters. For instance, Remilekun affirms that her husband, Damilare, is depressed and insomniac, which is a mental condition that is characterized by acute sleeplessness. The utterances of the characters are used to ascertain their mental states. The audience gets to know of the triggers of Adamu's and Adura's psychosis through their utterances and the utterances of other characters in the play. So, dialogue is an

effective technique deployed by Bode Sowande to communicate the subject of mental health.

Characterization and action are effective dramatic devices appropriated in the play. Through characterization, the playwright is able to explore the psychic components of the characters' mind. The various characters manifest actions, utterances and conducts that are socially and psychologically realistic. In essence, both the telling (explicit) and showing (action) methods of characterization are utilized by the playwright to communicate the subject of mental health. The telling or action method of characterization enables the audience to know the status of the character through what he or she says about him/herself and what other characters say about him/her. The action or showing method enables the audience to know about a character through what the action or conducts of the character.

5. Conclusion

The discussion above shows that Nigerian drama coveys the interplay of spousal relationship and mental health. This has been demonstrated with Bode Sowande's *The Spellbinder*. Such dramatic reflection of Nigerian psychological realities attests to the psychosocial function of literature. Mental Disorder is a deadly disease that currently ravages the Nigerian society. It finds its head in all strata of the society. Health officials over the years have been trained and re-trained to find a lasting solution to this deadly incident. Dramatists are not left out in the quest to facilitate mental wellbeing in the society. Most of them write plays to sensitize the public on measures to take against this trend. Sowande's handling of dialogues and psyches of the characters give the audience the right perception that madness is real, especially when loved ones fall into the predicament. Adamu whose wife caved into the advances of his friend, falls into depression and his mind turns into a spellbinder, which metaphorically depicts psychosis. Despite his wealth, he struggles to regain his mental health. His physiatrist passes away and bequeaths him as a patient to his daughter, Helen who is also a psychiatrist. While Damilare manifests guilt-induced maniac depressive psychosis which was engendered by his adulterous relationship with Adura, the wife of his friend, Adamu, Adamu and Adura show signs of schizophrenic psychosis— Adamu's psychotic state is triggered by agony of betrayal by his wife while Adura's madness is also guilt-induced. Adamu represents one of those Nigerians whose mental challenge may be a creation of their mind, a reaction to an event that has created the spellbinder in his head. The resolution comes from the assurance that his head was playing a trick on him, this shows that the mind rules the body.

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Choreographing "Sunset at Noon?" Towards the Exploration of a Theatre of "Shufflism".

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Abstract. Live theatre practice in Nigeria is arguably suffering from the effects of poor documentation of the wonderful experimental feats practitioners have stumbled upon in the course of their relentless search to push forward the frontiers of theatre practice. Scholars have therefore at best struggled to fit such works (for the few that have been attempted) within the tenets and norms of established theater traditions and conventions of old. This paper has attempted in the face of the many performance poetics that gave credence to the cultures and emerging cultures in music, dance, drama and the technical theatre idioms that gave identities to experimental tendencies wrapped in the traditions of postmodernism, globalization, hybridism, etc, to give scholarly voice to one of such brilliantly put together experimental bid haven come into existence since 2004. Shufflism that is pushed forward as a new radically postulated theatre tradition in this paper was a product of an experimental class by the 2004/2005 M.A class of the Performing Arts students of Unilorin, Nigeria through the production of their play 'Sunset at Noon?'. The paper discovers amongst other things that the tenets that are linked to the new theatre approach are new, original and creative innovations and approaches that suited the cause to which they were set. The paper is both descriptive and analytical of the content and context that gave birth to the new theatre tradition. It is therefore hoped that the paper will generate reactions and counter reactions that will not only give deserving voices to the articulation and spread of this brilliant theatre tradition, but others also which has suffered stunted growth over the years like it shall be liberated.

Keywords: Choreography, Sunset, Shufflism, Exploration, Theatre.

1. Introduction

In the annals of the Nigerian live theatre history, it is noteworthy to emphasize that theatre practice is indeed going through a recession in terms of experimentally evolving newer and better functional theatre traditions that may atone for the limitations of the already established four theatre traditions in Nigeria. Indeed, Effiong Johnson hinted on this gap before now, when he lamented that much attention has been devoted to dramatic theory and criticism in the Nigeria theatre, while little attention is paid to the documentation of the works of the directors. This prompted him to submit that all directors of the experimental works must evolve an approach which;

…guards the aesthetic of … the practice. Haven had one whose work-ability, has been rested… you have the more demanding responsibility of having it documented for the benefit of mankind (Johnson, 2003, p.107)

This is why, adding to the four known theatre traditions, namely; - the indigenous/ traditional theatre tradition, the popular theatre tradition, the literary theatre tradition, and the postmodern theatre tradition; the experimental phase must also be nationally acknowledged while identified prospective endeavors such as the Shufflism tradition be examined in all its ramification and if found adequate, can be adopted and made to flourish like others.

2. Shufflism: A Postulation

This is a performance concept that emanated from the root word 'shuf' which implies, to "walk without lifting the feet or with clumsy steps and a shambling gait. to scrape the feet over the floor in dancing. to move clumsily…" (The Oxford English Dictionary). In the same vein, the term 'shuf' in Arabic public language context means "look", neither "see" nor "lips". This is because "Shuf" is an order for someone to see, which in English means "look". In the case of card playing situation, the term 'shuffle' is used to denote the action of randomly re-arranging or changing the order, placement or position of the cards before dolling them to the players on the table. With all the varieties above, the idea of Shufflism can be said to be eclectic of the total variables as it gained its appropriacy from the constant shuffling exercise that was used as a changing device for the scenes, characters and moments in the card playing theatre-

performance sessions. Besides, a prominent feature of Shufflism is the shuffling movements and actions that the actors engage at the close of one scene in order to transit to the next.

Our artistic yearning draws inspiration from the fact that true art must constantly engage in the quest of finding out what it was fundamentally about as against what it is, and certainly not about the limitations people places on it. This is a quest, Noguchi hinted upon as wanting to "find a way of sculptor that was humanly meaningful without being realistic, at once abstract and socially relevant (Roose-Evans, 1984, p.4)".

Therefore, our search looked for theatre in odd places to see if theatre and sports, and indeed, theatre and card playing sessions can ever share same water source. We intend to move further to know how and the extent to which it can go? To carry such a mantle, we first had to negotiate if from the path where six performance factorial inducements meet. These inducements are identified as being the:

- essence of a performance
- performer
- performance as constituted
- audience
- performance space
- kind of adopted/ required performance elements

The quest, whether seen as a purely radical tendency or a realistic gab to keep stretching the walls of human reasoning in the case of unveiling Shufflism, necessitated an alien approach at looking at theatre both in content and context.

3. Emergence of Shufflism: Stroll down the Memory Lane

The performance was on the 11th of August, 2004 at the Performing Arts Courtyard of University of Ilorin (mini campus) a total of about seven members of the M.A in Performing Arts students that incidentally were the first set of Postgraduate programme were saddled with the task of conceiving and executing a theatre tradition away from the known conventions in existence. The course was taught by Prof. Ezekiel Kofoworola and ???, Being a performance workshop course where each of the pioneering students; Tayo Arinde (Artistic Director) Emoruwa Felix Damilola (Choreographer and Musicologist), Peju Shuaib (Costumes), Adeshina Adegbite (Technical Theatre) and Gbenga Rotimi (the Stage and Business Manager) etc, were expected to bring their expertise to bear.

4. The performance of game and the game of performance in "Sunset at Noon?": towards a Theatre of Shufflism

Following most major postulations in the theatre, there will always be a play to test the weakness or appropriacy of the hypothesis. This is what *Oedipus Rex* did to Aristotle's poetics, it is also what *Death of a Salesman* did to Author Millar's tragedy of the common man, *Mother Courage and her Children* did to Bertolt Brecht's Alienation Theory, what the *Slave Girl* and other plays did to Effiong Johnson's Folkism, Adeoye's the *Smart Games* did to his Neo-Alienation theory, and what *Mountain of Wealth* did to Akinwale's Straight-take performance technique, amongst several other examples. Fort the production of the "Sunset at Noon?", the pre-production and the production phases were done thus:

4.1 Performance approach

In our bid to experiment, the class decided on setting some grand rules that will govern and condition every inch of the production. The card session was considered and adopted in all its entirety. Poka game can go in any direction so there is no rule favoring any actor, be you considered as the protagonist or antagonist, you are temporarily and basically reacting to the antics of the opposition before you. First, each member of the class was made to device a theatre production that essentially highlights their individual areas of interest. Haven done this, we then cut out fragments from these plots to make a new whole story. Based on this, it was not mandatory for the story to teach morals or end well or fall within the expectations of the audience. After all, it is a game and depending on the virtuoso of the gamer/ artistes and their power to enforce and exhaust the power of spontaneity and resilience to match and counter the antics of their opponent.

This is why it is possible for a production to end-up differently if performed more than once. The theatre tradition borrowed from the technique of inquiring from the audience how they want the play to end as seen in the Theatre of alienation by Bertolt Brecht, AbdulRasheed Adeoye's 'Neo-Alienation Theatre', Felix Okolo's 'Aruku Shanka' Theatre tradition and Ayo Akinwale's 'Straight Take' theatre technique, amongst others.

The entire performance duration is flexible. The scenes/ movements/ gamuts in-between the progression is characteristic of sectional game sessions within the complete whole that accounts for the beginning through to the moment the gaming

session is finally called off. This is why at the end of each sectional game/ scene, a re-shuffling ritual of all cards (actors) is a compulsory device. This reshuffling is achieved by the momentary and instantaneous flooding of the entire nooks and cranny of the stage, the duration of which must be very brief, precised and definite according to a deployed rhythm. The dust of event must settle as quickly as possible to set the stage for the next scene. The music and dance is of importance here as the jamming, crisscrossing and entangling movements and actions in the name of re-shuffling must be fascinating yet functional, in creating the ambience for the next scene.

Distortive tendency approach and devices were creatively applied to the play through the characters as weapons to help dislodge whatever obstacles the opponent might intentionally want to pull. Hence, the dialogue in this kind of play is deliberately kept short, rhythmic and repetitive by the dancers/chorus on stage.

4.2 The dancers as human props, actors and set properties.

It should be noted that any one of the dancers on stage can assume any character provided he or she is adorned with the identifiable props or costume fragment that has helped to establish the character in the first place. This is why the actors can dress up in the full gear of the audience the spontaneous maneuvering of any human props to enhance the action of the actor is seen as an applaud-able device.

No narrator is required.

All actors must come on stage from the point of tableaux including the (drummers) and remain visibly on stage from the beginning to the end (curtain call)

No new characters can be introduced following the rule that it is only the doled-out cards that can be used for a game and that it costs one a chance to play if he or she were to seek a bale out card.

All characters on the table must continue to breath to qualify them active and through a metronome beat that was introduced by a striking a gong from the moment the play begins permeating through to the curtain call. The gong device becomes integral to the Shufflism kind of production as it clearly bridges the artistic and gaming notions rolled into one of the theatre traditions.

Minimalist props and costumes on stage since both elements are meant to be symbolic and highly representational. First all, the entire cast wore black leotards serving as basics upon which fragments of cloths, caps or any other pieces of item is hurriedly attached or removed to suggest characters enhanced with the movements, mannerism and action quality of the actor in question.

Theme and character song is helpful. Lighting the production was highly blended as some hand torches were introduced for emphasis sake. Dancers were positioned and made to momentarily climb on one another to form street poles of about??/?? height upon which the turn on and focus on a given area of the stage/ character that is meant to be highlighted. Other dancers/ actors too their own personal torches used at times to demarcate any given performance area for a scene. Doors and entrance positions were creatively achieved using ropes that was held by two dancers and at times just a dancer's arm that is spread out but maneuvered to open in or outside the imaginary set that is created only by the outlining layers of the dancers.

No physical set properties required because it was argued that the game of card can be played anywhere and anytime. It is therefore a formalist inclined theatre technically. This serves both artistic and aesthetic functions. For instance, the ease with which the human lighting poles were erected and dismantled at precised timing was priceless and seamless.

Therefore, "Shufflism" as we have it coined, is anchored on the transitions and the medley of actions whereby movements are explored randomly inward and outwardly to lead the plot lines from one bus stop to the other. It also allows the dancers to change and be prepared for such changes and above all, it allows the audience to relay or detach themselves from any registered or fixated locale/setting/period, into the ones that are newly arrived at by the ingenuity of the performers

4.3 The Audience

The audience in this kind of theatre are defined only in respect to what we expect from a game's session; that is of particular interest to card playing. Often, the audience or onlookers to such instances are rapt in the flow of the game/theatre, while at other times they may just choose to observe the game/theatre but detached nonetheless from it. So, let us say simply that the audiences we expect for this kind of theatre are at liberty to choose how and whether they are going to be at variance with the artistic product or not. Therefore, we expect a mixed reaction from the audience at the end of the day, some disappointed that we did not play a card the way they expected us to, implying that a

scene or action may not be realized in the order(convention) that they are used to, nor expected to be.

Naturally, the gamers/producers are ever out to pull surprises even if it means odd and awkward tricks at times, just to beat the imaginations of their audience. Nevertheless, while the game must abhor cheating and boredom which may arise from not playing according to the agreed criteria, we shall also ensure that the audience understands the plot structures meaning that the story is expected to be as simple as possible.

4.4 The performers

Talking about performers, we shall be talking about two different sets of entities or levels of commitment. First, there is the crew, who in reality are the conceivers and designers of the product and the actors/players who are parts of the medium through which the artistic products are produced, advertised and sold.

Expectations for the crew, in thinking and application of their artistic wares they must first resolve to make the actors come first. If an effect can be achieved using the actors, then it is mandatory that such a member of crew should use them and disregard other devices. The actors must be accessible to all the crew members as tools to display their skills with, on equal basis.

African cosmology was portrayed through mediums that relays the concept of creation as contained in some African myths. Representative of this is the pile-up of 'instruments' as a heap at the Up Stage Centre of the stage comprising props, musical equipment and costumes. Sitting above this heap are the dancers who served as the custodians to these properties or the creator(s)- drummers from whom we believe, the rhythms of the varied actions of the actors/dancers emanates from. They are the only one meant to face the audience from that realm of the stage, 'USC' thereby serving as the back stage.

The second realm (below the heap) sits the entire cast. It is referred as their home ancestrally and this explains why they must back the audience throughout the course of the actions in the play. From these two realms the actors move trance-like to act their parts on stage at the third realm and then returns to the second realm only after the expiration of their actions. This is in line with the popular Yoruba saying "Aye l'ajo, Orun ni 'le" meaning "the world is a place of sojourn while heaven remains our home".

4.5 The Performance

The plot structure and synopsis has been discussed fully in the general introduction section but here lies the sequence of actions for emphasis sake, emphasis because there is need to show clearly how the treatment of the workshop emphasizes our postulations and most essentially its identity- "Shufflism".

Action sequences for the play "Sunset at Noon?"	Realms
The tableaux…negotiations and betting	1&2
The 1st shuffling moment	1&2
Naming ceremony	3
Shuffling	2&3
The flashbacks and the narrator i.e mother, Babalawo, church, mind conflicts	3
The youthful exuberance Tukete and the children	3
Shuffling	2
Aunty arrives for Morenike	3
Lagos/Ojuelegba as shuffling	2&3
Lagos-marriage proposal	3
Shuffling	2
Marriage	2&3
Shuffling+death and burial scenes in dance	2&3
Lagos, Morenike's sickness persists	3
Shuffling	3
Village to parents, to Babalawo - transition to the past, then back to Babalawo	3
Epilogue/score count	1,2&3.

(while in epilogue, the arrangement at '1&2' are as it was in the tableaux)

Now that this background information has been given, let us now attempt to relate the extent to which dance

and music are employed for the final success of the production "Sunset at Noon?"

4.6 Applications of Music in "Sunset at Noon?"

Both the music and dance are mediums that go hand in hand even as we try hard to divorce them from one another. Hence, as the choreographer, I was saddled with the responsibility of treating music along with dance for the workshop. We were resolved and committed to experiment on the old applications of these two mediums, and perhaps, invent new possible ways by which they can be put to use. Therefore, our resolve follows that we cut down on any focus that is aimed at direct entertainment, which implies that the medium is the message and the message remains the entertainment. We cut down/minimized our use of the membranic instruments and concentrated on percussive ones instead.

From the beginning of the piece to the curtain call, a constant beat of the body of a big drum was devised; it remains constant in pitch, velocity and accuracy (of crotchet beat time lag). other compositional sounds/rhythms fluctuate in and out of this constant beat. The constant beat was devised to serve two functions; first, to synchronize with the flow of constancy that the dancers at the second realm were observing, and to also serve as the heartbeat of this game/performance which stops only when the performance comes to an end. Mainly, the instruments employed ranges from two Sekere, Omele Bata, gongs, wooden body of drums as percussive devices etc. We made use of compositional songs that are witty and satirical in nature, we ensured that chants and clapping are done only as at when they may be seen relevant to the setting and context of the plot line in question.

The most remarkable thing done musically (and perhaps via dance too) was in working with silence. Silence was re-enforced at intervals as we belief that rhythms might either be 'audible' or 'inaudible' but as long as certain actions can pass in unison, they of course must follow a definite inaudible timing which only their hearts alone can hear, but through which the choreographer must impose and structure their actions. Hence, momentary silence and pauses are regulated segments of the actions adopted to impose musical emphases on situations, actions or character traits.

4.7 Application of dance in the workshop performance of "Sunset at Noon?"

Like music, we had equal considerations for dance. Essentially, our choreographic concentrations were more stylistic than to appear folk like, by which term we meant that we ran away from dances and steps that have labels attached to them such Bata dance, Swange etc. instead, we created movements that were expressionistic in nature. The choreographic movements were drawn from gymnastic and fundamental loco-motor movements.

The general kinds of fundamental loco-motor movements from where dancers draw from for the execution of their peculiarities include: running, hopping, jumping, kneeling, bending, crawling, walking, sliding, swaying, turning, stepping, springing, twisting etc. In fact, the list here is endless as any kind of action, shape/motif, or posture the body is capable of achieving qualities as a separate unit, a move; that is the idea of movement in the general sense of it. Some of these movements are within the confines of ideational boundaries meaning they tell stories or express implied meanings, while the most concentrative area of movements creation is within the confines of studied movements/dances, by this we mean that attentions are focused on the parts of the body which are isolatedly utilized to function as a dance. Therefore, in outlook, the employed movements might appear acrobatic, subtle, gentle, punctuative and energy packed or may be ritualistically trance-like, swirling, shuffling, or of kicks, jumps etc.

Other determining factors for the degree of execution of these steps ranges from considerations of the extent of the dancer's flexibility, age sex, agility and bearing within the harmonious dictates of the plot structure. Movements therefore may in any case be of high, medium, low or ground levels. Directionally, movements were composed to follow a forward, backward and/or sideways order of progression as they create patterns, ranging from circular, linear, zigzag, serpentine, triangular, semi-circular and of course in the centripetal and centrifugal order. The latter occurs mostly in the shuffling bits creating a kind of distortion, confusion and or disarray, which allows for scene and character transitions and as an avenue to change costumes for the players.

Using human forms to atone for many demands placed by lack of set and other such (supposedly relevant) materials, the dancers/players were used as stage props, stage sets, decor, cyclorama, step unit, risers etc. For instance, all the sitting players at the second realm were backing the audience and the base line of their backs created an imaginary wall, which atones for the conventional cyclorama. Same effect was recorded in the door-creating devise and entrance/exit points using human structures always after shuffling

moments in order to arrive at the next local and scenes in plot lines.

Purposefully, the entertainment values of dance were downplayed in scenes of naming and marriage ceremonies against what might be expected in most conventional theatre practices. However, in order to stress the functionally and independence of dance, two scenes were credited to transmit entirely via dance. These were the 'tableaux' where the summary version of plot-line was most skillfully attempted, and the 'death and burial scene'. which entirely was left to dance even as it devoid of songs, chants etc except for rhythmic sounds.

4.8 Choreography as employed

Choreography is defined by Anderson to simply mean "the craft of making and arranging the dance" (1974, p.9). this view was assented to when the new Encyclopedia Britannica (1998:267) that the only absolute rules in choreography are that "it should impose order upon dance beyond the level of pure improvisation and that it should shape dance in the three dance dimensions of space and the fourth dimension of time, as well as according to the potential of the human body".

Whether dance predates the concept of choreography or both evolved using the same umbilical cord, what is essential is that every dance is a product of choreography as choreography directly manifests the choreographer's capabilities. Hence, it is possible to create dances for any and every occasion of life. These may be in pure dance form, as dance drama or dance theatre or even as an experimental outlook such as this, the over-riding aim of choreographing, is to communicate; to tell a story, emotions or sell an idea through the medium of dance. He is to dance, what the artistic director is to drama or what the musicologist is to music. Essentially, therefore, his primary material with which he works, remains the bodies of the dancers while other elements become only but secondary considerations.

Since the choreographer shares a common creative denominator with the music counterpart in terms of rhythms which is central to both. He/she is often seen working very closely with the musicologist and music conductor. Where such offices do not exist such as was the situation in our experimental crew chart, the onus of devising "music" often falls naturally on the choreographer.

5. Conclusion

The paper has examined the artistic and aesthetic merits in the production of the experimental play "Sunset at Noon?" and have equally brought out the tenets and conventional rules following the propagation of the theatre of Shufflism. The paper therefore, has descriptively and analytically put the Shufflism as a theatre tradition worthy of practice and acceptance by the global theatre community. It is hoped that the paper shall generate more reactions through which the experimental bid can be further improved upon.

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Olakunle Osundina and his Paintings

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Abstract. This study examines selected works of Olakunle Osundina (1971-2018), a contemporary Nigerian artist, and his contributions to Nigerian art. It highlights the underlying Yoruba philosophical expressions encoded in the works of Olakunle. The study relied more on the fieldwork carried out between May 2016 and January 2017 where several studio visits were made to his studio in Akute, Ogun State. Oral interviews were conducted with Olakunle where first-hand information was gathered about his artistic development, studio practice and philosophy. Photographs of some of his works were taken, examined and analysed to bring out his socio-cultural inclination. The study adopted Stuart Hall's concepts of representation to analyse the themes of selected works. It is concluded that Olakununle was not just an artist who was merely interested in the visual representation of events around him, but one with a solid root of his socio-cultural and ethnic background and this is evident in his works, which represent Yoruba philosophical teachings and learnings.

Keywords: Yoruba, visual art, idiomatic expression, Olakunle Osundina, and Onaism.

1. Introduction

In the developmental studies of African art, the early scholars erroneously conclude their criticism and evaluation perhaps because they have a limited understanding of African cultures and artistic traditions. Their perception of African art does not conform to what the ideal work of art is. On this note, they misunderstood the artworks from other regions and labelled them with negative terms such as primitive, childlike, naive, crude, and object of curiosity, (Adrain 1904:14). Later in 1910, Leo Frobenius discovered an equal finesse of western works made of bronze from Africa, particularly the Court art of Benin and the cire perdu cast from Ife. The astonishing quality of the bronze cast from Ife and Benin contributed to a change in their bias, and therefore reasoned that if such great quality cast could come out of Africa, then there must be reasons for the abstraction; the major characteristic lies in the essence of the works. Hence, Trowell (1953: 20 & 60) asserted that the only way to appreciate works of art from Africa is to understand the cultural and historical backgrounds of the people who produced them, as this will inform them about the reasons for the forms and meaning embedded in the artworks. Therefore, this arouses the need to further interrogate the socio-cultural background of the people together with their artworks for proper understanding and appreciation.

Olakunle Osundina (*plate 1*), falls into the group of contemporary artists who adopted the representational canon of traditional African art where forms are loaded with insightful philosophical meanings. This is often in line with the essence and expressive content embedded in his works notwithstanding his exploration of foreign materials and tools. In other to critically examine the paintings of Olakunle Osundina some paintings were purposively selected. The works selected were examined in detail to bring out the interpretation of his symbolic forms and images (iconography) and their expressive connotations. This further reveals the artist's interaction and understanding of his socio-cultural (Yoruba) background thereby, placing his forms in proper perspective and understanding. As insiders of the same cultural background as the artist, the appreciation of his works caught our attention because they are loaded with both ‘exoteric and esoteric’ which only the insiders (initiates) can decode. The appraisal of the

works brings out the messages and meanings embedded in the paintings.

A critical appraisal of Olakunle Osundina's works is geared towards bringing to the fore the underlying interpretations of the 'hiding treasures' in the paintings. This becomes necessary because the paintings selected were rendered in a semi-abstract manner typical of the characteristic of ancient African art that requires logic to comprehend their link to the people and happenings in the built environments. The lack of critical appraisal by the early Western scholars and art critics on traditional African works, as regards the embedded meanings of forms and symbols, contributed immensely to their prejudice in judging the works erroneously based on their physical appearance. Thus, their aesthetic appreciation was in the reverse of the Yoruba aesthetic judgement as exemplified in this saying *ìwà lewà* (the character is beauty). A good-looking person may have a bad character while someone considered ugly may possess a good character that will make such a person preferable and acceptable in society.

To better appreciate and understand the works of Olakunle Osundina; his form, style, theme and message (expressive content) which is the chief goal of this study, his background and creative history are also germane.

1.1 Who is Olakunle Osundina?

Olakunle Osundina was born in Ibadan on 27 July 1971, and until his death on 2 November 2018, he was a strong and active member of the Ona art movement. Olakunle attended Government College Ìbàdàn. He studied Fine Arts at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, where he bagged his B.A. Ed. and MFA (painting) in 1999 and 2014 respectively. His practice from graduation to death was based in Lagos, the artistic capital of Nigeria and Akute, Ogun State. He succeeded in leaving his prints in the sands of time within the short time he lived. Olakunle's name was becoming a force to reckon with in the contemporary Nigerian art scene when he met his untimely death. He has two solo exhibitions to his credit and several group exhibitions. According to Ohiomokhare (2009:2), his love for culture makes his paintings speak from the aegis of tradition.

Sharon Pruitt (1999:76) observes that the individual freedom of expression in pursuit of a personal or national identity led to the emergence of a variety of styles", this is perhaps the case of Olakunle. He consciously rejected stylistic borrowing from Western academic traditions and embraced instead, an approach that addressed the issues of his Yoruba's visual languages and in particular, the Ona Philosophy (Fọlárànmí & Umoru-Ọ̀ké, 2019).

During his rather short time, Osundina lived and worked in his private art studio, a section of his apartment at Akute (which is a border town to Lagos State) in Ifo Local Government of Ogun State. His paintings revealed stylistic renderings influenced by the Ona art movement to whom he was exposed while at the university. He was influenced by most of his lecturers at Ife, who are exponents of the Ona art movement. It had become a tradition that the Ife lecturers have consciously instilled in their students to emulate their footsteps and preach it to the world. Hence, Osundina's paintings revealed high interest in the Ona style, which is an adaptation of the Yoruba artistic traditions and values; the spatial relationships involving flattened shapes, frontal presentation, and stylised forms-elements traceable to traditional Yoruba works in nature.

He was happily married to Yemisi (nee Ajiboye), an artist and the first daughter of Josy Ajiboye, one of the famous Nigerian artists (a painter and cartoonist).

Plate 1 Olakunle Osundina October 31 2010 at the Quintessence Gallery Ikoyi Lagos
Photograph: Nanashaitu Umoru-Oke

Another explanatory concept that influenced Osundina's paintings can be found in *àdìre eléko* (tie and dye) textile design, one of the Yoruba people's artistic heritages. This is evidenced in his painting as the entire scene plays out against a background based on an *àdìre eléko* fabric design, a traditional Yoruba indigo resist-dyed technique. The motifs in *"Diplomatist"* and *"Wasted Libation"* show a typical geometric form and pattern synonymous with the Yoruba indigo textile design as the figures are enclosed in a circular compartment, surrounded by a border with shapes made from stencilled animals, plants and geometric design. He passionately appeals, that traditions are the bulwark of one's identity, personal strength, and means of survival. His worries

were basically about artists who jettison to reflect cultural elements in their artworks, Osundina (2014). He expressed his displeasure with artists who refuse to borrow from their cultural background, according to him, such artist/s are not proud of their identity and forms that could enrich their creativity.

2. Analysis of Olakunle Osundina's Paintings

For a proper and objective appraisal of the selected paintings of Olakunle, the assertion of Feldman (1967) on critical performance is employed. This is a descriptive analytical tool that includes, formal analysis, interpretation and judgment. Critical performance is a systematic approach to investigating the meanings of works of art to understand the themes, including the social and cultural context of the artworks. The basis of critical performance is to arrive at the point of aesthetic or critical judgment, where the context, thematic thrust and stylistic direction(s) of the selected works are analysed.

Description in art criticism draws attention to the elements of art used. To do this it requires *sùúrù* (patience) to painstakingly make a proper observation, identification and understanding of the elements found in the work for descriptive purposes. Formal analysis focuses on the elements and principles of design. That is, emphasis is laid on the arrangement and qualities of the elements of design such as line, shape, colour, texture and space relationship used in the work. This answers the question of the quality, that is, how they all look individually and the interpretation which could be taken for what is the meaning of the work and its essence.

The four paintings selected for analysis in this study have distinct elements that constitute their total form. The work titled "*Question Mark*" *(plate 2)* was rendered using brighter colours, and hues such as red, yellow, blue, green, and violet. Basic shapes such as squares, rectangles, and triangles are represented in the lower left-hand corner and the upper right-hand corner of the painting. In the main body of the painting are people standing by a long queue of kegs and buckets to fetch water. The long queue recessed into the background to a vanishing point that form a question mark '?' to the water tap stand. The water tap-stand is the typical potable water source and a fetching method adopted in Nigeria in the 1970s and still reoccurring to date. This is one of the public water sources mostly in urban cities and towns where people in scores fetch water in containers. The subjects are seen fetching and carrying buckets of water on their heads, suggestive of the scarcity of potable water in Nigeria which brings us to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The colours are harmoniously used, the upper part of the painting to the right-hand side is rendered in a mixture of indigo/Prussian blue, violet and midnight blue with touches of orange and red; while the lower part to the left-hand side contains hues of green, red-orange and yellow. In the middle of the painting are shades of yellow that accentuate the radiating glow that fuses the entire painting. This, thus, gives the work a warm touch with the crisp cross strokes of lines (associated with a cubist style of painting), which are arranged harmoniously and effectively.

The piece *"Question Mark"* has a reason and a message it passed to the audience. A view of the work at a glance raises curiosity in one's mind which leads to self-enquiring why the arrangement of the objects (a keg and buckets) in a form that depicts a question mark icon? This is because; the symbol is usually placed at the end of an interrogating statement. Thus, looking at the artwork will arouse questions as to why this symbol? This could lead to engaging in dialogue or exchanging ideas with individuals, particularly in the situation depicted in the painting. This situation could be linked to Nigeria, a country where infrastructure facilities are inadequate and resources are not well managed. It is also metaphorical and could be likened to the poor situation in Nigeria where crude oil is being mined in large quantities daily and yet, the masses are suffering from the scarcity of its products (Premium Motor Spirit and Diesel). The painting thus raises questions, such as, what are the roles of the government in the welfare of the governed? How are the facilities and resources in Nigeria managed? These and more are the questions being asked by the painter.

Plate 2 Olakunle Osundina *Question Mark* 2007 (Oil on canvas, 36 by 48 inches)
Photograph by: Tolulope Sobowale 2009

Olakunle used this work to make a critical statement about how Nigerian leaders handle the country's resources to which only a few have access to its benefit at the expense of the masses. Nigeria is blessed with natural resources, which are readily available in abundance yet inaccessible. Also, in Nigeria, the few in governance constantly mismanage and embezzle the nation's treasury at the expense of the general populace. Just as the minority in the society anticipates better things to come and watches helplessly at a distance how their political leaders are selfishly enjoying alone what ought to have been enjoyed by everyone, in the manner Osundina depicted the people at the top of the question mark icon in the composition.

The artist's work critiques the pervasive corruption and societal ills which characterise the twenty-first century. Olakunle draws attention to how corruption has become entrenched in our society, highlighting the need for critical examination and collective action to address these pressing issues. By confronting the audiences with the stark realities of our time, the artist invariably encourages us to reflect on our involvement and responsibility in perpetuating or challenging the status quo.

In *"Wasted Libation" (plate 3),* the composition is centred on a gourd (*kèrègbè*) and the content coming out of it. A calabash (*igbá*) is placed close by the gourd, and there is a palm leaf representation at the upper right side of the painting. On the lower left side is also a lizard motif. There are geometric shapes of irregular triangles, squares, circles and rectangles, and various lines are used to create a rhythmic flow on the surface of the work. The lines also create an interconnectedness that prevents the composition from appearing disjointed, thereby allowing each of the hues (red, blue, violet, orange, and brown) to maintain its distinct and vivid appearance.

Plate 3 Olakunle Osundina *Wasted Libation* (2010 Oil on canvas 40 by 48 inches)
Photograph by: Tolulope Sobowale 2010

In*"Wasted Libation"* Olakunle draws inspiration from the ancient customs and traditions of the Yorùbá people of Southwest Nigeria. In Yorùbá culture, a gourd is a versatile domestic object with multiple purposes, serving both sacred and secular functions depending on its intended use. Traditionally, gourds are used for storing various items such as herbs, grains, water, and palm wine, as depicted in this artwork. The gourd and calabash share a common purpose, with the latter serving as a plate for communal dining in traditional Yoruba settings, both in domestic and ceremonial contexts. In this setting, libations are poured on the floor as a sign of reverence to ancestors before communal meals, underscoring the significance of respect and tradition. However, the gourd's precarious positioning suggests a dire situation, abandoned and neglected, with no apparent effort to rescue it from total waste. The round base of the gourd, unable to stand alone, serves as a poignant metaphor for the vulnerability of cultural heritage without support. This scene is creepily reminiscent of Nigeria's political landscape, where elected leaders recklessly squander resources, prioritising personal gain over the welfare of the masses, despite the abundant wealth. Olakunle's artwork is a powerful indictment of this systemic failure, a clarion call to action against the greed, and the neglect that promotes suffering amid plenty.

The calabash in the painting symbolises the plight of the common people, who are helpless and struggling in abject poverty due to the reckless and greedy leadership that has squandered resources. This is a direct result of their wasteful and careless behaviour,

where what could have been sufficient for all has been lavishly wasted. The calabash, which is meant to hold and contain, is not yet full, but its contents are being poured onto the ground, where it will be of no benefit to anyone. In contrast, the fresh palm leaf representation in the painting is a sign of hope and relief. It signifies God's favour and blessing on Nigeria, the land which is richly endowed with lush vegetation and abundant resources.
The background of the painting features surface embellishments in various shapes and degrees, these represent the diverse minerals and natural resources that abound in the country. However, these resources are not equally accessible to all, as they have not been properly harnessed or managed. The use of radiant colours in the painting suggests a hopeful future for the country, where things are done right and resources are utilized for the greater good. The lizard motif, perhaps represents the smaller group of people who are currently benefiting from the country's wealth, but in a way that is wrong and unjust, as depicted by its robust appearance.

In the painting "Diplomatist," the artist demonstrates a profound affinity with Yorùbá iconography, symbolism, and imagery. The foreground features a male figure holding a flower, accompanied by a female portrait adjacent to him. Two silhouetted figures appear on the upper right side, there is also an umbrella and a stick drawing of a zoomorphic representation, likely a goat. To the left of the male figure, a stalk of leaves emerges, juxtaposed with cracked walls beneath and a lizard motif above. Geometric shapes constitute a dominant element of the composition, while a harmonious palette of yellow, red, orange, brown, green, indigo, and blue creates a visually striking effect. This artwork exemplifies the artist's mastery of Yorùbá cultural symbols and his ability to integrate them into a cohesive and aesthetically pleasing whole. A closer examination of the painting's iconography and symbolism reveals a rich tapestry of meaning, inviting further analysis and interpretation.

The silhouetted figures, skillfully integrated into the background, serve as a visual metaphor for the budding stages of the relationship between the two individuals of opposite sexes depicted in the artwork. Their bodily posture and positioning convey a sense of reciprocity and mutual acceptance, underscoring the development of a romantic connection. The central figure's gesture of proffering a flower, a symbol of affection and devotion, signifies his passionate desire to establish a deep emotional bond with the woman. This act of gift-giving, a ubiquitous trope in romantic relationships, necessitates patience, persuasion, and dedication, as the suitor endeavours to win the heart of his beloved. Upon achieving his desired goal, the man's countenance exudes a sense of serenity and fulfilment, accompanied by a subtle, self-satisfied smile. In stark contrast, the woman's facial expression reveals a complex mix of emotions, including remorse, regret, and perhaps a hint of disillusionment, subtly hinting at the power dynamics and gender roles that underpin this romantic encounter.

Plate 4 Olakunle Osundina *Diplomatist* (2010 Oil on canvas 48 by 48 inches)
Photograph by: Tolulope Sobowale 2010

The painting masterfully captures the sorrowful consequences of betrayed trust in a romantic relationship. Accessing the inner world of a woman of dignity requires a gradual build-up of trust, a delicate bond that can be shattered by abuse. The artwork poignantly conveys the emotional turmoil that ensues when this trust is violated, as evident in the woman's facial expression and the warm red and orange hues surrounding her head.

The iconography in the painting is rich in symbolism, reinforcing the artist's message. The cracked wall at the lower right side of the man's arm serves as a powerful metaphor for the woman's vulnerability and consent, echoing the Yoruba adage '*bó gìri ò la nu, aláìgbá kò lè rá yè wọ bẹ̀* that is an outsider's penetration is impossible without an insider's complicity. The lizard motif above, representing the man's interest and ability to exploit any opening, starkly contrasts with the woman's weakness, highlighting the power dynamics at play.

The flower, umbrella, and goat at the upper left of the painting are equally symbolic, reinforcing the themes of love, trust, and betrayal. The artist's skilful use of imagery and symbolism invites the viewer to contemplate the complexities of romantic relationships and the devastating consequences of abuse, making this painting a powerful commentary on the human experience.

The inclusion of the goat in the upper left quadrant of the painting serves as a visual example of the Yoruba proverb, *ohun tó bá di lẹ̀, le wúrẹ́ ngbé*, meaning that when an item is carelessly placed, it belongs to anybody, including animals. This aphorism cautions against the perils of complacency and negligence, highlighting the consequences of unchecked vulnerability. The woman's countenance, beset with regret and remorse, reinforces this message, underscoring the importance of vigilance and discernment in personal and political spheres.

The umbrella, positioned closer to the silhouetted female figure, may be interpreted as a symbol of guidance and tutelage, proffering wisdom and cautionary advice. Its presence serves as a reminder of the need for astute decision-making and critical evaluation, lest one succumb to the whims of circumstance. The painting, in this regard, presents a powerful allegory for the political arena, where the electorate must remain vigilant and discerning to avoid the pitfalls of misguided leadership. Through this masterful deployment of symbolism and imagery, the artist invites the viewer to contemplate the complexities of human action and the consequences of our choices. The painting, in its nuanced exploration of regret, caution, and political responsibility, offers an intense indictment of satisfaction and a clarion call to vigilance.

From a moral perspective, the flower in the painting *'Diplomatist'* symbolizes the man's satisfaction and pleasure after successfully pursuing the woman, while the woman herself appears disappointed, disturbed, and disillusioned. This artwork can be likened to the political landscape in Nigeria, where politicians employ eloquent rhetoric to convince the electorate during election campaigns, only to renege on their promises and fail to deliver on their pledges once in power, leaving the people feeling betrayed and embittered, as reflected in the woman's facial expression. However, if the people stand firm with their conscience and hold their leaders accountable, they will be protected. The umbrella in the painting serves as a symbol of protection and shield, reminding leaders of their responsibility to manage and sustain the mandate given to them by the people. When this mandate is not betrayed or squandered, it can lead to positive and responsive developments in our local communities, environments, and the nation as a whole.

Through this poignant artwork, the artist issues a powerful reminder to leaders to remain true to their promises and commitments and to prioritize the welfare and well-being of the people who entrusted them with power. By doing so, we can foster a culture of accountability, transparency, and good governance, leading to a more just and equitable society.

"A lo ni ti ijapa" (plate 5) by Osundina shows his depth of knowledge about the Yoruba language and culture, encapsulated in the myriads of folktales where animals and plants take on the role of superheroes. They become subjects which, in their daily living, reflect the goodness and imperfections in humans who tell tales. Perhaps it is a means of speaking truth to all indirectly, usually, when a tale such as the one Osundina has visually represented here is told. Yoruba tales usually end in a lesson to be drawn. In this painting, Osundina reflects 'how folktales as a part of communal tradition can invigorate a renaissance in the preservation and sustenance of culture'. Additionally, it suffices to say that most Yoruba tales with zoomorphic characters point fingers at real or imagined people.

Figure 5 Olakunle Osundina *Alo ni ti Ijapa* (2013 Mixed media 60x80cm)
Photographs by: Stephen Folaranmi 2013

In this painting, the main subjects are *Ijapa* (the tortoise) and his in-laws. On a single panel of mixed media rendering, Osundina captures the various scenes in the tales to direct our attention to the roles played by *ijapa* in this tale. In Nigeria, many artists, writers, and musicians use their creative professions to address burning issues in the Nigerian space. This painting, like many of Osundina's paintings, aligns with such perception or intervention. As Babalola and Oananuga (2019:166) put it 'Folklore has many cultural aspects, as it had served, and can also serve to validate a culture, as well as transmit a culture's morals and values. As a nation formulates educational philosophy, economic policies, political philosophy and religious philosophy, the cultural philosophy through which a nation maintains its national identity is preserved in the languages indigenous to such a country. And this can be passed on to the younger generation quite effortlessly through folktales, anecdotes and ditties. Could this be the philosophy that also drives Osundinas visual representations? Is he drawing attention to something that we have to unravel?

From time immemorial, art in Africa has always been for essence and the reason why it is clearly stated that there is no art for art's sake among Africans (Willett: 1971). Thus, contemporary African artists in order not to lose track of their progenitors (traditional African artists) have put conscious efforts to borrow ideas and mannerisms of the old in the execution of contemporary works of art. This is very evident in Osundina's paintings as he employed the use of motifs and iconography known with the traditional African artworks in his modern paintings.
Osundina's use of motifs and symbols rooted in his tradition is a continuous effort to make his work relevant and in line with the philosophy of the Ona art movement to which he belonged. In this regard, he was able through his visual ingenuity, to propagate the act of natural synthesis in his works.

The thematic expression of the paintings in this study is highly expressive as they all communicate to society in the best way the artist could contribute his quota in sanitising the behavioural attitude as regards socio-cultural, political and economic matters. The works are very relevant as they communicate ideas on the present situations of the happenings which they stand to correct. Revealing the essence of the paintings through its contextual analysis also helps in projecting the value beyond aesthetics. Osundina's works in this study could be regarded as having dual purposes as they all possess physical beauty, pleasing to the eyes and fineness (Adepegba (2009:6) and Ohiomokhare (2009:2).

In this regard, a work of art is like a literary work such as creative writing and cinematography. The reader or viewer respectively understands the plot independently of the author. Expressively, the reader or viewer can understand more than the author intended since there are many stories/concepts behind a work of art. In contrast, instrumentalism focuses on the ability of art to serve an end more important than itself. That is, an artwork is excellent or meaningful if it fulfils its thematic thrust or is useful to society.

Conclusively, Filani's word rightly comes into play when he expresses in Osundina's works that "I fancy the appraisal of such paintings using the warmest of words, not only because of the freshness of the colours but also because of the ebullience of the subject matter. However, as the Yoruba often opined there are times when words abound but time constrains; while sometimes time abound but words are limited". The former is the case now. Olakunle's artwork serves as a

powerful indictment of Nigeria's political landscape, where elected leaders prioritise personal gain over the welfare of the masses. Through his masterful use of symbolism and imagery, Olakunle skillfully conveys the devastating consequences of corruption and mismanagement. As an artist deeply rooted in Yoruba culture and tradition, Olakunle's work not only showcases his technical skill but also his commitment to preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of his community. Ultimately, this paper highlights the significance of Olakunle's artwork as a catalyst for social change, urging viewers to confront the harsh realities of Nigeria's political landscape and demand accountability from its leaders.

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Personal Communication

Osundina Osundina (age 43) Saturday, April 4, 2014. At his residence/studio, Akute, Ogun State.

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Yoruba Dundun Sekere Traditional Music in the Palace of the Alaafin of Oyo

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Abstract. This study focuses on the Yoruba traditional Dundun-Sekere music in the palace of the Alaafin of Oyo. It traces and explores the Yoruba traditional music and Dundun- Sekere ensemble; the study also examines the Dundun -Sekere ensemble of the Alaafin of Oyo; and discusses the textual analysis of the Dundun-Sekere music. This study relied solely on oral tradition, written documents, and live musical performance approaches. The research combines historiographical and ethnomusicological approaches. Historical oral information was collected through interviews with twenty (20) Yoruba traditional court musicians found in the palace of the Alaafin of Oyo who specialize in the performance of different types of traditional music in general and the Dundun-Sekere musicians in particular. The results show that Yoruba traditional music is entirely different from that of Western Europe. The music of the Yoruba society reveals a great deal about its beliefs and sentiments. Music has always been used in the Yoruba traditional cultures to celebrate various ceremonies. Musicianship in the Yoruba traditional society is hereditary. One thing about the Dundun-Sekere ensemble is that the musicians play their instruments and sing along at the same time. The Dundun-Sekere music originated from the Alaafin's court before it spread to other parts of Yoruba land. In conclusion, the Oyo Alaafin's court is the home of the Dundun-Sekere music. The Dundun-Sekere musicians in Oyo have experienced professionals. It should be noted that it is only the Sekere of the Alaafin of Oyo that has cowries and shells in Yoruba land. Others have beads. It is suggested that the music – of the Dundun Sekere ensemble should be documented, recontextualized, and repackaged to teach the upcoming generation and the Yoruba in the diasporas.

Keywords: Yoruba, Traditional, Court Music, Alaafin, and the Palace

1. Introduction

Court music traditions in Nigeria are cultivated in the palaces of the Obas and the Emirs, the Alaafin inclusive. The Alaafin is the supreme head of all the Kings and Princes of the Yoruba nation, as he is the direct lineal descendant and successor of the reputed founder of the nation. The succession to the throne is by election from among the members of the royal family. Alaafin is the first organ out of the four major organs that acted as checks on one another in the government of the Oyo Empire. Alaafin is a supreme King; he is not a dictator. He ruled according to the advice of the council of chiefs called the Oyomesi. The majority of musical expressions described by the early European explorers belong to the court tradition. In each society, court music traditions are customized by the court musicians who are employed as part of the entire court administration.

Traditional religious worshippers on waking up, begin the day by chanting praises of their Orisas. Traders and farmers chant incantations for protection and luck. Even children begin their daily life with music. The tonal advantage of the Yoruba language makes it possible for one to perceive music in every spoken word. Traditional music occupies a very important position in the life and history of the Yoruba people. The Yoruba being ancestors and hero worshippers, each defined hero or ancestors in his/her peculiar music and dance which the devotees use in the worship. For this reason, no religious observances are complete without music.

The place of the Yoruba Dundun-Sekere traditional music in the palace of the Alaafin of Oyo is so important that from the early hours of each morning, music is performed. Ajewole (2007) observed that when there is no performance, the musicians in the palace engage in other occupational activities such as

trading and farming to mention a few. The Dundun Sekere musicians are identified and recognized by the community as performing artists of an inherited craft in which they are specialists. Hence, they are regarded as professionals. Meriam (1964) argues that public recognition of Musicians as a distinctive class of specialists is basic support received from his activity. Out of the prominent forms of music played by the court musicians in the palace – Akunyungba, Apinti, Igba-titi, Bata, Sekere, and other forms of music, Dundun- Sekere is the favourite music of the Alaafin of Oyo.

Yoruba traditional music is divided into groups namely, religious music and secular music. Each group has two sub-groups, namely;

- Vocal and
- Instrumental

The Gangan Magazine (Issue No. 3:1) noted that in the vocal secular music, "Rara" is used by the Oyos, "Ege" by the Egba and Owu; "Olele" by the Ijesa; "Iremoje" by the Ife; and "Alamo" by the Ekiti. All are used at the Yoruba social functions in praise of individuals or Oba

Instrumental Music is required for the worship of all Yoruba deities and each deity has his/her special type of musical instrument used in the worship. But it is not forbidden to use any musical instrument belonging to one deity in the worship of another. The traditional importance of these musical instruments in Yoruba land is so well defined by their uses. Other musical instruments also have traditional importance in the Yoruba land. They are referred to as talking drums because they can be used to imitate human speech tones, especially the Dundun Ensemble.

It is however important to examine the importance of the Yoruba Dundun-Sekere musical genre in the palace of the Alaafin of Oyo to appreciate the value of this study.

1.1 Aim and Objectives of the Study

This article engages in the study of the Yoruba Traditional Dundun -Sekere Music in the palace of the Alaafin of Oyo. The main objective of the study is to:

- Trace and explore the Yoruba traditional music and Dundun-Sekere ensemble.
- Examine the Dundun-Sekere ensemble of the Alaafin of Oyo;
- Discuss the textual analysis of the Dundun-Sekere music of the Alaafin of Oyo

1.2 Research Methodology

This study relied solely on oral tradition, written documents, and live musical performance approaches. The research combines historiographical and ethnomusicological approaches. Historical oral information was collected through interviews with twenty (20) Yoruba traditional court musicians found in the palace of the Alaafin of Oyo who specialize in the performance of different types of traditional music in general and the Dundun-Sekere musicians in particular.

2. Findings and Discussions

Analysis and discussion of the findings in this study are in line with the stated objectives of this study as stated below:

(A)The Yoruba Traditional Music and Dundun-Sekere Ensemble.

Yoruba traditional music is entirely different from that of Western Europe. Akin Euba (1961:130) describes Nigerian music as a combined vocal and instrumental effort in which music-making seldom takes place without its participants indulging in dance movement. Omibiyi (1992:29) remarks that music in the African Context is an integral part of life, where everybody participates in its performances. The music of the Yoruba society reveals a great deal about its beliefs and sentiments. In society, however, music may not have an equal effect on everybody, because people do not generally have the same preferences for music. Music has always been used in traditional cultures to celebrate various ceremonies such as marriage, child-naming, housewarming, and so on. Institutions that patronize music in Nigeria include Kings' palaces, hotels, nightclubs, restaurants, and drinking bars. The practice of using music in the Yoruba traditional culture cannot be over-emphasized. Music is part of the culture. It is a reflection of the culture of the people.

The process of Yoruba Dundun Sekere traditional music has been widely discussed by great scholars such as Nketia (1996), Smith (1962), Euba (1986), Wachmann (1966), Vidal (1996), Omibiyi (1975), Ajewole (2008 & 2016) etc. The Yoruba Dundun Sekere traditional music has been well analyzed by these scholars. A summary of their views on the music is as follows: The training process in the Dundun Sekere traditional music starts very early in the life of a child. The African mother sings to her child who begins to develop sensitivity to music right from the cradle. The mother also teaches her child to become aware of rhythm by rocking the child to music and singing some syllables in imitation of drum Melo-

rhythms. African mothers often carry the babies on their backs when attending ceremonies and rituals and this gives the children early exposure to actual musical situations. As soon as the child's motor reflexes are sufficiently developed, he/she is given a toy instrument to play with. This is more evident in drumming, especially among the Ayan (drummers) family in Yoruba culture. It is a practice in the Ayan family to give a child his first drum around the age of five. This is a miniature Kanango (drum) which is the smallest of the varieties of tension drums. While using the drum as a toy, the child begins to acquire the techniques of handling the instrument and using it to play simple speech phrases.

Learners are taught by a master musician, especially among the Ayan family. It is the training received by the learners; their musical perception or lack of it as well as their life's experience and environment that account for what they perform, how they perform, why they perform, and the way they perform. Drummers also teach children by using appropriate sentences and syllables to illustrate drum patterns. One of the most important methods is to allow trainees to learn on the job. The technique of sound production in African drumming is acquired comparatively quickly. The most difficult aspect of drumming is the mastery of the language of talking drums. A pupil sometimes has to wait for long periods before getting opportunities to hear drum texts appropriate to certain ceremonies when such ceremonies are infrequently performed. The slow process of music education in African traditional society demands that the mastery of a given type of music should take a very long time.

Although the length of training varies with the natural abilities of individual pupils, it is quite usual for music specialists to spend up to twelve (12) years learning their craft. Ijala chanters among the Yoruba of Nigeria begin their pupilage at the age of six and usually continue to receive tuition up to the age of 18. A comparable length of time is also required before a trainee Dundun drummer can graduate to mastership. There has always existed a system of music education in Yoruba traditional society.

In Dundun -the Sekere ensemble, the elderly people in each Ayan family are regarded as leaders. The elderly person is usually responsible for the training and instruction of the young ones. Most of the Ayan children start learning the art of drumming, using the Kanango drum which is the smallest among the two-faced drums. The interested people who do not belong to Ayan, are normally taught how to handle the accompanying instruments like Saworo, Gourd-rattles, and the like. The Dundun-Sekere music is hereditary from one generation to another. Due to this fact, the leader of the Ayan family distinguishes themselves by adding to their names the prefix ''Ayan''. Ayangbemi, Ayanlola, and Ayanyemi among others are examples of such names.

Musicianship in the Yoruba traditional society is hereditary. The father who is a traditional musician teaches his children the art of musicianship. The process that is involved is as follows: The scene opens every evening in the inner courtyards of the family compound where there is some privacy. The father takes a turn repeating each item several times for his child to watch, then he invites him to join him slowly and they both perform together for some time. He instructs him to perform alone to find out if he is following the examples well. If there are signs of progress, he introduces a new item or variations of what he had already taught. This continues on regular basis, after which the child performs on his own before a few members of the family, and finally, other members of the public join in.

3. The Dundun -Sekere Ensemble of the Alaafin of Oyo

The process of the musical performance of Dundun-Sekere in the palace of the Alaafin of Oyo is as follows: On the stage, the leader of the Dundun-Sekere music organizes the performance by chanting the praise of the Alaafin in acapella. Everybody, including the Dundun drummers, Iron clappers, and the Sekere group will all be on alert to perform. The leading Dundun drum (Gudugudu) may lead the whole ensemble to start the performance. There are lots of variations in the performance. The lead vocalist may start the music through a signal to other members of the group or by singing the Alaafin's praise to start the performance.

One thing about the Dundun-Sekere ensemble is that the musicians play their instruments and sing along at the same time. The singers repeat the text immediately after the lead vocalist, first without accompaniment, and then follow by playing the Sekere (Maracas) interlude. This is followed by vocal recitation taken by the lead vocalist and the whole ensemble sets the music rolling. This is the style that characterizes and dominates the Yoruba Dundun-Sekere music of the Alaafin's court. The Dundun-Sekere musicians in Oyo have experienced professionals.

The Dundun-Sekere music originated from the Alaafin's court before it spread to other parts of Yoruba land. The Oyo Alaafin's court is the home of the Dundun-Sekere music. The Dundun-Sekere drummers of the Alaafin have a supple wrist with

which they produce the right kinds of tones and dynamics on their drums. The court musicians naturally have a retentive memory. As the Dundun set of drums builds up greater patterns of rhythm and boom with thundering sounds, the master drummer beats the drum to represent the Alaafin's praise. He improvises and makes use of proverbs, while the bells around the drumhead jingle, and add colour to the music. Then enters the onomatopoeic Sekere, which has cowries and shells attached to it to add rhythmic colour to the music and stimulate the dancers. It should be noted that it is only the Sekere of the Alaafin of Oyo that has cowries and shells in Yoruba land. Others have beads.

4. Textual Analysis and Discussion of the Dundun-Sekere Music of the Alaafin of Oyo

4.1 Tonality

Three types of scales have been identified in the music by the Dundun-Sekere musicians in the Alaafin of Oyo's palace. These are pentatonic, hexatonic, and heptatonic patterns. These scales are also rearranged to form modes.

4.2 Melodic Structure

Melodies in the court music of the Alaafin of Oyo with very few exceptions are usually short and repetitive with a central focus on call and response. The melody patterns are shaped according to the speech pattern and in most cases dictate the instrumental rhythms. The melodic structure can be seen in the given musical samples for the study.

4.3 Rhythm

The rhythm of the Alaafin's Dundun-Sekere court music relies on two popular Yoruba rhythms, one slow and sensuous, and the other fast and percolating. The instruments used in the music provide complex and steady beat patterns that can speak to those who can understand. There are elements of divisive, additive, and hemiola rhythms in the music. Cross rhythm sheds light on the temporal dimension in the music. Alaafin instrumental music performed by the Dundun-Sekere musicians is particularly rich and varied. Perhaps the most striking thing about the music is its dynamic rhythmic quality. The following are the characteristics of the rhythmic structure:

4.3.1 Speech rhythm

The Yoruba language possesses a natural order of stress on certain syllables used in speech which is called speech rhythm. This, in turn, gives rise to a natural rise and fall of the voice, and thus speech melody is created. The normal stress from spoken words is the same as the stress used in setting them to music in the court music.

4.3.2 Polyrhythm

The polyrhythmic effect is created on talking drums by the Dundun-Sekere musicians. Different autonomous rhythmic patterns that enter at different entry points are commonly found in various court music of the Alaafin of Oyo.

4.3.3 Hemiola

Several instances in the music also reveal the juxtaposition of triplets against two notes of the same value. This is found in the rhythmic patterns of common songs – "Laye Olugbon", "Toba Lase", Eni sun m'oba". Other rhythmic features in the Dundun-Sekere court music of the Alaafin of Oyo include cross-rhythm, syncopation, and irregular rhythm. It is observed that the harmonic structure used by the Dundun- Sekere court musicians of the Alaafin of Oyo involves the doubling of melody above or below at intervals of seconds, fourths, fifths, and sixths which automatically results in parallelism. The harmony is mainly parallel in progression.

4.4 Form

The most common forms used by the Alaafin Dundun-Skere court musicians are 'Call and Response' and Solo. In the call and response, the songs are usually already familiar songs that the audience joins spontaneously after the lead. Though the cantor merely introduces the first phrase or the whole song, there is no clear-cut demarcation between the leader and the chorus like in the songs 'Eni sun m'oba', "Ki le n f'oba pe', 'Layiwola j'oba, etc. In the solo, the song is usually performed with the speech surrogate like in the Dundun ensemble. The implicit response is manifested in the actions of the people to whom the message of the music is directed. Songs 'Aye Atoba', 'Toba Lase' etc. are examples of this type of form.

4.5 Text

The song texts of the Alaafin of Oyo Dundun- Sekere court music consist largely of traditional materials, including proverbs and praise chanting (Oriki). The

texts are derived from proverbs, and folk songs and feature a lot of Yoruba idiomatic expressions. It should be noted that contextual occurrence and current affairs provide necessary stimulus from the composition of the text. The texts are also reflective or philosophical, sentimental or satirical, and humorous. It requires some knowledge of oral tradition before one can fully understand and interpret the texts. For instance, the song 'Kile n foba pe' is used to extol the Alaafin in other to reiterate the high esteem in which Oyo people hold their King. The song 'Layiwola O Ju won lo' is used to show respect to the -Late Alaafin – Oba Olayiwola Adeyemi III who happened to be the first literate Alaafin in Oyo town. The song 'Oba Toto' reinforces the traditional belief of the Oyo people as regards the respect and dignity ascribed to the Alaafin. In the song 'Toba Lase', the Oyos are pledging their full obedience to their King.

5. Conclusion

Apart from the general appraisal of the music, this study has revealed some of the various activities of the Dundun-Sekere court musicians in the palace of Alaafin of Oyo. The presence of the Dundun-Sekere court musicians seems inevitable in the success of the palace activities. The Dundun-Sekere ensemble has the goal of praising the Obas, the Chiefs, and some other highly placed people who are connected with the palace. They achieve this goal in their different performances as described in this study. Based on the significant place of court music among the Yoruba, it is suggested that the music – of the Dundun Sekere ensemble should be documented, recontextualized, and repackaged to teach the upcoming generation and the Yoruba in the diasporas.

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The Articulation of English Liquids by Annang-English Bilinguals

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Abstract. This paper investigates the articulation of the English liquids by Annang-English bilinguals. It identifies the liquid sounds and analyses them, taking into consideration the similarities and dissimilarities in both languages. As a result, the theoretical framework employed for the study is provided by the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) propounded by Robert Lado in 1962. Forty subjects drawn from a population of one hundred and twenty (120) Annang-English bilinguals of the Faculty of Arts, Akwa Ibom State University (AKSU), were given a production test of twenty-five (25) items containing the liquid lateral sound and the rhotic. Each subject was required to articulate the words containing the liquid sounds. This was done to ascertain the subject's ability towards articulating these sounds. From the study, it was realised that the subjects had difficulties pronouncing some of the words. Researches in bilingual analysis have shown that the similarities of sounds in both languages facilitate learners' ability to speaking the language appropriately and differences hinder. This study revealed that although the two liquids are present in the Annang language, the subjects had difficulties articulating the sounds when they were preceded by plosives. These consonant clusters posed a problem to the subjects. It also showed that since the subjects' speech community uses these liquids in free variation, some of them transferred it to the target language and this affected their pronunciation. Worthy of note is the fact that these problems were not observed at the initial word positions as the subjects were able to appropriately articulate the sounds. In conclusion, if Annang speakers make conscious efforts and are intentional about articulating the right sounds, they will certainly do so. This paper therefore submits that these set of speakers face these problems because of the positions in which these liquids appear in a word. That, the use of liquids in free variation in Annang also hinders them from articulating the words accurately.

Keywords: Liquid sounds, Articulation, Free Variation, Bilinguals, Speech community.

1. Introduction

In every human community, language serves as a basic tool for information and communication (Utin, 2016, p. 79). This tool helps us to interact, share our beliefs, opinions, knowledge and feelings. Language could be seen as a social event because of its relevance in the social setting of any community. Sapir (1921) quoted Eka & Udofot (2015) observe that language is primarily human and non -instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. The primacy of speech upholds that the spoken medium of language exists before the written medium. Some languages exist in the spoken form while others exist in both forms. It also refers to the basic way in which the spoken word is communicated between people. Learning a second language basically requires knowing the letters and sounds of the language, the spellings, the pronunciation, the right perception and the correct or proper articulation of the words in the target language. Essentially, contrastive analysis is to systematically study any pair of language with the view of identifying the similarities and differences. The process of learning a new language could be tasking and quite demanding, but the right efforts, interests and commitment to the course can make it less cumbersome.

Egbokhare (1992: p.11) quoted in Eka and Udofot (2015: p.5) observe that studying a language is important since every language has a definite number of sounds which it employs for communication by speech, some of these sounds are peculiar to it, others are shared with other languages.

It should be noted that the speech sounds of a language are assigned certain symbols which are used for its illustrative representations. In spite of this, since English does not have a one-to-one relationship between letters and sounds, it is pertinent for learners to make a conscious effort in learning the language and identifying the intricacies involved in the letter-sound relationships. This confirms the reason for Sapir

(1949:p.1) notion of a language. It observes that in the first place, language is primarily a system of phonetic symbols for the expression of communicable thought and feeling. In other words, the symbols of language are differentiated products of the vocal behaviour which is associated with the larynx of the higher mammals.

These symbols are common to all languages and Annang is not an exception. Annang language has its sound system which shares some peculiarities with English. As far as spoken language is concerned, it is pertinent to study its speech sounds as this will facilitate proper articulation of the words. Appropriate knowledge of the sounds of English and Annang facilitates effective production of the sounds and articulation of the words to a large extent. To this end, the lack of knowledge in this direction hinders proper comprehension and articulation of the words. Eka & Udofot (2015: p. 15) aver that every language has its own inventory of sounds, some of which are unique to it while some occur in other languages. All the sounds that occur in other languages of the world have traditionally been classified into two groups: vowels and consonants.

Just as the languages are different, their sound systems are also different in shapes and numbers. These variations to a great extent either hinder the proper articulation of words, while similarities of some of these sounds facilitate the proper articulation of the words. For effective information and communication (Utin, 2016: p.77) proper learning of the sounds is necessary as this will enhance correct articulation of the words. Good speaking and proper enunciation of words become integral part of the speaking skills which are quite pertinent for proper comprehension.

This paper investigates the problematic areas of sound articulation by Annang-English (Utin, 2023, Enang & Utin 2023, Utin, 2024, Udoka, Enang & Utin 2018) bilinguals with specific attention to the liquid sounds. English liquid is an expression used to describe /l/ and /r/ sounds otherwise known as lateral and rhotic (voiced alveolar approximant) respectively. The lateral liquid is a sound in which the airflow out of the body is redirected around the tongues and towards the sides of the mouth before passing out from the lips. Rhoticity in English is concerned with the pronunciation of the consonant /r/ in all r positions while non rhoticity refers to the dropping of the /r/ sound in particular r position. This category of sounds is complex in articulation as they exhibit a great deal of variation in different accent varieties with respect to the different syllabic and phonological contexts. In Annang language, it is interesting to note that these liquids are used in free variation and as a result, they affect the spoken English of Annang-English bilinguals.

The method for data collection used in this study was a reading test comprising words with liquids at all word positions. The test items were carefully selected to capture the essence of the study. The kernel of the production test was to ascertain the ability of the selected subjects in articulating the liquid roll /r/ and the liquid lateral /l/ at all word positions. This was done taking into consideration the positions of these sounds in the selected words. The respondents were selected through a purposive random sampling method which was targeted at a specific group of students in the Faculty of Arts in Akwa Ibom State University. There were mainly Annang-English bilinguals, purposively selected from the five departments in the faculty. They include ten (8) each from the departments of English, Religion, History, Performing Arts and Philosophy. A total number of forty (40) subjects was used for the study. Each subject pronounced the selected words containing the liquids, data collected were analysed using the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH).

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework used for this study is the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. It was propounded by Robert Lado (1957) in his book, *Linguistics Across Cultures*. It is the systematic comparison of two or more languages, with the aim of describing their similarities and differences. The concepts of 'interference' and 'transfer' as proposed by Weinrich (1953) and Lado (1957) respectively constitute the main subjects of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH). Contrastive Analysis results from the fact that in languages, there exist similarities and dissimilarities. This explains the reason for a thin sort of analysis. It also offers some strong claims in the area of teaching language usually characterised as the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis.

Avery & Enrich (1992) observe that the native language affects the ability to produce English sounds as well as the ability to hear the sounds. It further states that the nature of a foreign accent can be determined by the native language of the learner. This is sequel to the fact that in every language, there exist a particular inventory of phonemes. It should be understood that learners' mispronunciation of words does not reflect random attempts at producing the correct sound but they indicate sounds, stress and more. Also, (Utin, 2024) has shown that the sound system of the mother tongue can influence the pronunciation of some

sounds in English. The authors have also pointed out that the sound system of the native language can influence the pronunciation of English in the following ways. They include:

- When learners encounter sounds in English that are not part of the sound inventory of the learners' native language.
- When the rules of combining sounds are different in the learner's mother tongue

This influence could be positive or negative as the presence could facilitate the articulation while absence of the sounds could hinder the proper articulation. It is pertinent to note that, in Anaang, the liquid /r/ and /l/ exist in free variation and as such affects the pronunciation of these sounds at different word environments. Some Annang speakers tend to replace one for another in the different contexts, as in 'urua' and 'ula' meaning 'market'. As a result, it is observed that some Annang-English bilinguals have problems articulating words with these liquid sounds /l/ & /r/ in words like 'fly' and 'fry'. Here, 'fly' becomes 'fry', while 'fry' becomes 'fly', ' glory' becomes 'grory' and 'landlord' becomes 'randrord'. It should be noted that the wrong pronunciation of words does not only affect the learner but it also affects the social, professional and other aspects of the speaker interaction and communication. Beyond this, it undermines the speaker's confidence and self-esteem. It also interferes with one's ability to communicate clearly, and effectively with speakers from different linguistic and professional backgrounds (Yadugiri, 2013). To this end, it is worthwhile to note that the non-native speakers should make conscious effort to learning the correct pronunciation of words (Utin, 2023) in respect to the correct sound and also strive, by making a conscious effort to overcome these problems.

Eka (2000: p.40) observes that when two languages come in contact with each other, interference usually occur which involves the transfer of some elements which are found in one's first language into the target language. Quite often, Annang- English bilinguals usually have problems articulating words with liquids especially when they occur more than once in a word. For instance, words like 'reiterate', 'irrelevant', 'deteriorate', 'contemporary', pose problems to some Annang-English bilinguals. In situations like these, they tend to either delete one or replace one with the other as in 'retret', 'irrerevant', 'deteriate', 'comtempraly' respectively. This deleting or replacing one sound for another is to ease pronunciation on the part of the speaker of English as a second language.

Table 1

	Word	**Received Pronunciation**	**Correct Pronunciation**	**Correct Pronunciation/ Percentage**		**Wrong Pronunciation**	**Wrong Pronunciation/ Percentages**	
1	Green grass	/gri:n gra:s/	/gringra:s/	15	37.5%	/gli:nglas/ /gri:nglas/	17 8	42.5%20%
2	Landlord	/lændlɔ:d/	/landlɔ:d/	20	50%	/lanrod/ /dandod	12 8	30% 20%
3	Problem	/prabləm/	/problem/	10	25%	/probrem/ /plobrem/	20 10	50% 25%
4	Celebrate	/se'libreit/ʃ	/selibreit/	13	32.5%	/seriblet/ /seribret/	17 10	42.5% 25%
5	Browse	/braʊs/	/braus/	25	62.5%	/blaus/	15	37.5%
6	Less	/leꞩ/	/leꞩ/	40	100%	-	-	-
7	Little	/'litl/	/litl/	40	100%	-	-	-
8	Bride price	/braid praiz/	/braidprais/	5	12.5%	/blaidplais/ /braidplais/	20 15	50% 37.5%
9	Blame	/bleim/	/blem/	20	50%	/brem/	20	50%
10	Plug	/plʊg/	/plʊg/	18	48%	/prog/	22	52%
11	Blind	/blaind/	/blaind/	20	50%	/braind/	20	50%
12	Complex	/kɒmpleks/	/kɒmpleks/	15	37.5%	/kɒmpreks/	25	62.5%
13	Inferiority	/infiəripriti/	/infioriti/	20	50%	/infirioliti/ /infilioriti/	10 10	25% 25%
14	Priorate	/prʌipriət/	/prʌipriət/	13	32.5%	/priolet/ /pliolet/	19 3 5	47.5% 7.5% 12.5%
15	Deteriorate	/detərioret/	/detərioret/	13	32.5%	/detərioret/ /detərioret/	23 4	57.5 10%
16	Referral	/rifɜ:rəl/	/rifɜ:rəl/	18	45%	/refral/	22	55%
17	Like	/laik/	/laik/	40	100%	-	-	-
18	Protocol	/prəʊtəkɒl/	/prəʊtəkɒl/	24	60%	/plotokol/	16	40%
19	Ground	/graʊnd/	/graʊnd/	14	35%	/glaʊnd/	26	65%

20	Election	/iləkʃn/	/iləkʃn/	13	32.5%	/erəkʃn/	11 16	27.5.% 40%
21	Proclamation	/prɒkləmeiʃən	/plokrameiʃən/	5	12.5%	/plɔkrameʃən/	16 19	40% 47.5%
22	Theoretical	/Θiəretikəl	/tiɔretikɒl	15	37.5	/ tiɔletikɒl	25	62.5
23	Framework	freim wɜ:k/	fremwɔk/	13	32.5	fremwɔk/	27	67.5%
24	Proclivity	/prəkliviti/	/prəkliviti/	15	37.5	/plɒkriviti/	25	62.5%
25	Let	/let/	/let/	40	100%	-	-	-

3. Data Analysis

From the table above, the subject's performances are presented. In the test item, 25 words containing the liquid sounds were administered to the respondents. From the data presented, a total number of forty (40) subjects, comprising students from the Faculty of Arts were administered the production test.

It was realised that the sound /l/ at the initial position did not pose any problem to the subject, as it was not problematic to the subjects. They were able to properly articulate the sound /l/ at the initial position. At this position, the sound /l/ is technically referred to as "clear" Eka & Udofot (1996). On the other hand, it was also realised that when the same sound was preceded by any of the plosive sounds, the problem of interference became noticeable in the pronunciation. Subjects for this study were purposively selected from the Faculty of Arts. The were students who speak Annang language as their mother tongue and English as a second language. Forty (40) students were selected from the five (5) departments which include Dept of English, Philosophy, History and International studies, Religious and Cultural studies and Performing Arts.

4. Discussion

From the data presented, it shows that words with the sound /l/ at the initial position recorded 100% articulation from all the subjects. In items no.6, 7, 17 and 25, the words less, ladder and let were articulated correctly by the subjects. It should be noted that there was a variation in item number 2 'landlord', as the presence of the /l/ sound at two different positions in the word posed a problem to some of the subjects. In this item, some were able to articulate the word with the /l/ sound at the different positions while others used /r/ to substitute for /l/ as indicated on the table. Here, it should be noted that some subjects were unable to articulate the word due to the problem of interference or outright transfer of what obtains in their language with regard to these sounds. The first item, 'greengrass' had a total number of 15 subjects representing a percentage of 37.5% who were able to articulate the word correctly. While 17 and 8 subjects articulated the word as /gringras/ and glinglas representing 42.5% and 20% respectively who were unable to properly articulate the word. The second item 'landlord' is an everyday word among the students. The result of the production test indicated that 20 subjects representing 50% were able to articulate the sound correctly in the word 'landlord' and 20 subjects representing 50% were also not able to produce the sound correctly. Results of the articulation of the word showed that "landlord" had other versions which were produced as [landord] by 8 subjects representing 20%, and 12 representing 30% of the subjects articulated [lanrod] and [lanlord], respectively. The experience in this item could be linked to the fact that some dialects of Annang , use /l/ /r/ and /d/ in free variation as in the case of "Urua", "Udua", "Ula" (Unang, 2007) meaning 'market'.

Item number 3, recorded seven (7) appropriate articulation as /problem/and another 13 as /ploblem/ and [probrem]. The item "celebrate" was articulated as /selibreit/, [seriblet] and [seribret] in the following 13,17 and 10 respectively. The percentage representations recorded showed 32.5%, 42.5% and 25% respectively.

The word "browse" also posed a problem to our subjects as 25 of them articulated 'blaus" and 15 articulated /brauz/. Items number 6,, 7, 17 and 25 were articulated correctly by the subjects, where they recorded 100% in all the items. They include less, little, like, and let.

Another problematic item for the subjects was number 8 "brideprice". Here, the subjects had difficulty articulating the word. This item has two rhotic preceded by a voiced/b/ and a voiceless/p/. It should be observed that because of the nature of these plosives, that is being released among other things with a sudden parting of the organs, it obstructed the free articulation of the sounds by the subjects. In this item, 5 subjects representing 12.5%% articulated the word as/braidprais/. The remaining 32 subjects representing 87.5% articulated [blaidplais] and [braidplais]. In items numbers 9,10 and 11, being "blame", "plug", and "blind" respectively, 10 subjects representing 25% were able to articulate the items correctly. For the other 30 subjects representing 75%, it was difficult for the subjects to articulate the words

as the liquid sounds are preceded by the voiced /b/ and voiceless /p/ plosive sounds. The results of the production test in these items were /bleim/, 20 representing 50% /plʌg/ 18 representing 48% /blaind/ 20 representing 50% of those who were able to produce the sound and [brem], 20 representing 50% of those who were unable to articulate the sound. it was also realised that 22 subjects representing 52% articulated the item as [prʌg]. This could be attributed to the fact that the rhotic in this item is preceded by a plosive sound. As a result, they were unable to produce the sounds appropriately.

Item number 12, the recorded results of production showed that 25 of them representing 62.5% articulated [komprek] while 15 subjects articulated it as /kɒmplek/ representing a percentage of 37.5% of those who were able to articulate the sound in the word. “Inferiority” being item number 13 was another difficult one for the subjects to articulate, as it had two rhotics at two different positions in the word. Here, 20 representing 50% of the subjects articulated it as [infiliolity] and 10 representing 25% of the subjects produced it as [infilioditi] and another 10 being 25% were able to articulate the word /infiəriɒriti/. The presence of two rhotics in this item, posed a great deal of problem to some of the subjects.

For items numbers 14 and 15, the subjects also had difficulty as these items also had two rhotics at two different positions in the words. The items were “priorate” and “deteriorate”. In these items, the following articulations were isolated [pliolet] [prioret] /prairiət/ with the following percentage distributions,13 representing 32.5%, 19 representing 47.5%, 3 representing 7.5% while 5 representing 12.5% articulated the word with only one of the rhotics as [praiət]. In addition, the second item in this category was articulated as /detərioret/ by 13 subjects representing 32.5 %, and [detolioret] by 23 subjects representing 57.5% and 4 representing 10% articulated the item as [detoliet].
“Referral” which is item number 16 was articulated as /ri`fərəl/ and [rifəlal] by 18 representing 45% and 22 representing 55% respectively.

Item number 17, 'let' was not difficult for the subjects as they recorded 100% in their articulation. For “protocol” and “ground”, being items numbers 18 and 19, the subjects had a challenge with the rhotic as it was preceded by the voiceless bilabial plosive /p/ and the voiced velar plosive /g/. The subjects articulated the words as [plotokol], /prəʊtəkəl/ with 24 subjects representing 60% and 16 subjects representing 40%. It is worthwhile to note that even though the major attention of this paper was on the liquid sounds, it was observed that other details like articulating wrong pure vowels and diphthongs were also displayed by the subjects. Here, it was observed that the subjects monophthongised the diphthong sounds, reducing the qualities of the diphthongs to that of pure vowels. Item number 19, was articulated as /graʊnd/ by 14 subjects representing 35% and 26 articulate [glaʊnd], representing 65%.

The statistics for item number 20 being the word “election” was articulated as /ilekʃn/ by 13 subjects representing 32.5% [elekʃn] by 11 subjects representing 27.5%, while 16 representing 40% articulated the item as /irekʃən/. It should be observed that beyond the wrong pronunciation of the words as in this item, it has the ability of changing the word meaning and communicating an entirely different idea to the listener. To avoid this, care should be taken by speakers of English to enunciate every syllable of the word completely and appropriately.

Item number 21, was the word 'proclamation ' and it was articulated as /plɒkləmeiʃən/ by 5 subjects representing 12.5%, 16 articulated [plokremeʃn] and 19 articulated [ploklemesn] representing 40% and 47.5% respectively.

Item number 22 “Theoretical”, also posed a problem to the subjects as the voiceless interdental fricative(ϴ) was articulated as /t/. This resulted in the articulation of the word as /tiɔretikal/ by 15 subjects representing 37.5% and 25 subjects articulated it as [tiɔletikal] representing 62.5% for item number 23 ‘framework’, 13 subjects representing 32.5% articulated it as [`fremwɔk] while 27 subjects representing 67.5% articulated the word as [flemwɔk].
Item number 24 was the word “proclivity”. Here, 15 subjects produced the word as [proclivity] instead of /prə`klivəti/, while 25 subjects articulated it as [plo`kriviti] representing 37.5% and 62.5% respectively.

In summary, this study has shown that Annang-English bilinguals experience different challenges in the articulation of the liquids /l/ and /r/. This is sequel to the fact that in Annang these sounds are used in free variation (Utin 2023). As a result, there is a transfer of the sounds from one language to the other and also being influenced by their mother tongue. They transfer the use of these sounds in free variation in their mother tongue to the English language, therefore, posing a problem to the speaker. A comparative study of any language reveals the similarities and the differences that exist in the languages (Lado, 1957).

This study has revealed that some Annang speakers are not adequately exposed to the phonological systems and rules which exist in both languages. It has also shown that at the initial and final positions of words, Annang speakers of English do not have challenges articulating the liquid sounds as experienced at the medial position. At the initial position, the liquid /l/ is regarded as being "clear".

5. Conclusion

A phonological study of the language is an interesting aspect of language study. Unfortunately, a lot of people shy away from it and this becomes a problem to the learners. It is worthwhile to know that the wrong pronunciation of any word can change the meaning of the word completely, thereby sending a wrong message or signal to the listener/hearer. For instance, one of the items used in the production test was 'election' but some of the subjects articulated it as "erection" and this becomes an entirely different word with a different meaning. To avoid this, learners are encouraged to make a conscious effort to learn the rules of a second language and the sound system to enhance effective communication and comprehension. Finally, it should be noted that to overcome this, learners should be intentional about learning the sounds one by one, as this will help them differentiate one sound from another, in this case, the liquid lateral from the rhotic. Studies have also shown that the presence of sounds in both languages facilitate effective production of the sounds and absence hinder. But in this case, despite the fact that these sounds are present in Annang, it should be noted that the problem of interference, deletion and insertion of other sounds result from the fact that these liquids are used in free variation in Annang.

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