NILDS Journal of Democratic Studies

Copywright 2022

Published by

National Institute for

Legislative & Democratic Studies,

National Assembly,

Abuja.

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AN APPRAISAL OF CORRUPTION FIGHT IN NIGERIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GOODLUCK JONATHAN AND MUHAMMADU BUHARI ADMINISTRATIONS

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Abstract

The research conducted a comprehensive analysis of the anti-corruption efforts during the tenure of Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari through a comparative lens. Employing the institutional theory as the analytical framework, the study utilized a qualitative descriptive method relying on secondary data sources. Results indicated that both Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari employed institutional and legal strategies to combat corruption in Nigeria. Notably, the findings revealed that President Muhammadu Buhari's administration achieved more significant anti-corruption outcomes compared to the Goodluck Jonathan administration. This success was particularly evident in terms of arrests, prosecution of corrupt officials, and the attainment of convictions. Despite these achievements, both administrations faced challenges, including allegations of weaponizing the anti-corruption fight against political rivals and selective prosecution to favour political allies. In light of these findings, the study recommended greater autonomy for anti-graft agencies. Furthermore, it emphasized the importance of the succeeding administration building upon the achievements of the Buhari-led government in the fight against corruption. The study advocated for a comprehensive and transparent anti-corruption campaign that avoids selective arrests and prosecution, fostering a holistic approach to tackling corruption.

Keywords: Corruption, Anti-corruption fight, EFCC, ICPC,

Institutions

Introduction

Over the years, corruption, a hydra-headed monster, has impeded nations' ability to expand and develop sustainably, especially those in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Although corruption exists everywhere, the level in third-world nations, particularly in Africa, has caused severe worries. For instance, numerous consecutive military and civilian governments in Nigeria have tried to combat corruption in various ways. The majority of Nigerian rulers entered as doctors and left as patients concerned (Ijewereme, 2013; Ogundiya, 2009).

Like a cankerworm, corruption has made it harder for developing countries to overcome their problems, leading to repercussions like poverty, insecurity, unemployment, political instability, capital flight, etc., which has led to a general decline in the standard of living for those countries' citizens. Ifedigbo (2023) estimates that if corruption in Nigeria is not immediately addressed, it might cost the country up to 37% of its GDP by 2030. According to Ifedigbo (2023), this expense will amount to over \$1,000 per person in 2014 and almost \$2,000 per person in 2030.

Political and cultural factors exert substantial influence in both instigating and exacerbating instances of corruption. Ineffective law enforcement may also encourage it. However, it is interesting to note that corruption rates are generally lower in non-democratic nations than in democratic ones (World Data, 2021).

The notoriety of corruption and its attendant consequences on national development has over the years attracted the attention of development experts and researchers to understand its nature and dimensions, using different research approaches. Many believe that this will provide the requisite data for prescribing actionable solutions to the menace. Virtually all facets of life have been affected by endemic corruption in Nigeria. This explains why all developmental indices keep turning adversely negative year-in-year-out. The wealth of the nation and that of the unborn generation have been looted by callous political leaders with lesser or no commensurate punishment for culprits thus encouraging the free-for-all looting of public funds in Nigeria (Sulaiman & Olowu, 2023).

On this premise, the study aims to contribute value to the extant literature by evaluating the anti-corruption crusades under Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari. It employs comparative analysis to provide pertinent data for a better understanding of the anti-corruption approaches, recorded successes, and challenges faced during the administrations of Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari.

Conceptual Clarifications

Corruption like many other concepts in social science has no universally accepted definition. The concept can be viewed from different perspectives depending on the perspective that suits one narrative. The World Bank (1997) defines corruption as the exploitation of public office for personal gain, despite the dispute surrounding the term. This definition of corruption focuses on public sector corruption or corruption involving public servants, politicians, or other members of the public. However, because it frequently interacts with the public sector, particularly through contract awards, the private sector is not necessarily excluded. Individuals in the private sector frequently bribe representatives of the public sector, and corruption typically takes place when private wealth and public power collide (Rose-Ackerman and Palifka, 2016).

However, the aforementioned definition of corruption may not apply in situations when the person receiving a bribe works in the private sector. This is referred to as "private corruption" or "private sector corruption" (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, 2023).

Transparency International defines corruption as the misuse of authority for personal gain (Transparency International, 2023) in an attempt to fill the gap in the aforementioned conceptualization. Chen (2022) also characterized corruption as dishonest behavior by persons in positions of power, which is closely similar to this idea. They believe that those who misuse their authority can be either individuals or members of groups, such as corporations or governments. Because they cover varieties of corruption that do not only involve politicians, bureaucrats, or public power, the references to "entrusted power" and "those in positions of power" rather than merely "public office" represent significant developments. Accordingly, corruption is an anomaly

or decay in the decision-making process where a decision-maker in a public or private institution agrees to deviate from the standard that should guide his or her decision-making, or demands that a decision be deviated from that standard, in exchange for a reward or the promise or expectation of a reward, even though these motives cannot be included in the decision's justification (Corruptie, 2023).

Robert klitgaard, in a UNDP training session in Ecuador, argued that corruption can be translated into the following formula: Corruption = monopoly + discretion – transparency and it is possible to think of it as a game of probabilities where the risk of being discovered in the act is evaluated against the personal benefit that could be obtained with the illegal act. For this reason, klitgaard points out that corruption is a crime of calculation and not of passion. (Jairo Acuna-Alfaro and Matilde Mordt, 2022)

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission Acts 2000 (ICPC), defines corruption as bribery, fraud, and other related offences. This definition encompasses various unethical and illegal activities associated with the abuse of power for personal gain. Bribery involves offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting something of value to influence the action of an official. Fraud involves deception for financial or personal gain. These terms collectively describe different facets of corrupt practices, providing a comprehensive range of actions that undermine integrity and trust in both the public and private sectors.

Causes of Corruption

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) lists several important causes and aggravating factors for corruption, particularly in developing nations. These include the liberalization of policy, the deregulation of some businesses, and government involvement in the economy. Others include the lower pay for civil servants compared to that of workers in the private sector, which could lead some workers to accept bribes to make up the pay gap. In third-world nations, where governments frequently interfere by enacting these measures to maintain lower prices for specific commodities and services, price restrictions are also a significant contributor to and driver of corruption (IMF, 2023).

The reduction of international competition due to trade restrictions, tariffs, and trade barriers is another factor in corruption since it allows domestic players to have a semi-monopoly. The latter are more likely to engage in corrupt activity to maintain market access limits for international businesses. Additionally, organizations like firms and NGOs may get government aid even though they weren't the intended beneficiaries (Umah, 2018). Government subsidies are another possible source of rents that encourage corruption. Studies have shown that industrial policies that permit poorly targeted subsidies to be seized by enterprises for which they are not intended can foster corruption. The corruption index rises when more of these subsidies are made available to industries (Dominik & Christiana, 2017; IMF, 2023).

Regarding price controls, which are typically implemented to lower the price of particular goods below their market value, they are also thought to be a significant source of rent and the accompanying rent-seeking behavior. This is because price limits encourage people or organizations to bribe officials to keep the flow of such items or to obtain an unfair share at a price below the market. The phenomenon of various exchange rate practices and foreign exchange allocation schemes is connected to price control. Rent is a result of this too. This is because there may be attempts to achieve the most favourable rate even though it may not apply to the exchange's intended purpose due to differences in these rates. Low pay in the public sector in comparison to the private sector is another factor in low-level corruption. Civil servants may be forced to utilize their positions to collect bribes as a means of making ends meet if their compensation is too low (Umah, 2018), especially if the expected cost of getting discovered is minimal.

Natural resource endowments, such as crude oil, gold, uranium, timber, etc., serve as an additional example of a source of rents in addition to the aforementioned causes of corruption because they can typically be sold at a price that is significantly higher than their cost of extraction and because their sale is typically subject to strict government regulation, which corrupt officials can ignore. Resource-rich economies may have a higher propensity than resource-poor ones to exhibit severe rent-seeking behavior. In countries with strong family ties, public officials are more inclined to conduct favors for

their relatives as a result of sociological factors that may also contribute to rentseeking behavior (Dominik & Christiana, 2017; Umah, 2018).

In addition to the aforementioned factors, corruption is also influenced by a wide range of other elements, including depleting moral standards, a lack of patriotism, perennialism, poverty, greed, and economic insecurities (Usifo, 2013; Nwaze, 2012; Rotimi et al., 2013; Igbuzor, 2013; Bamgboye, 2018). However, this element is the most significant.

Impacts of Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption no doubt has adverse implications on the quality of life of a people and also hinders sustainable growth and development of affected countries. Numerous researches have been carried out to determine the effects of corruption on various economic sectors. For example, entrepreneurs are often told that offering an initial bribe is essential to kickstart a business when corruption is widespread. Therefore, businessmen view corruption as a form of tax that reduces their motivation to invest, albeit one of a particularly destructive nature given the requirement for secrecy and the doubt that the bribe-taker will uphold his end of the contract. Therefore, empirical data demonstrates that corruption significantly reduces investment and slows economic growth (Chen, 2022).

Additionally, talent will be misallocated if looking for a place to live turns out to be more rewarding than doing useful work. Financial incentives may tempt the more gifted and educated to pursue rent-seeking rather than useful employment, which would be detrimental to the growth rate of the nation. Through the misappropriation of funds, widespread corruption, particularly in poor nations, lowers the effectiveness of aid supplies. Because it is fungible, aid could ultimately be used to fund wasteful and ineffective government spending. Perhaps as a result, many donor nations have concentrated on concerns of good governance, and some donors have reduced their aid in situations where governance is deemed to be exceptionally bad (Andrew, 2016; Nwaze, 2012; IMF, 2023).

The government loses tax income due to tax evasion and inappropriate tax exemption claims made by people and corporations, which is a result of corruption. Additionally, detrimental fiscal effects might result from a concomitant drop in tax revenue or a sharp increase in public spending (Rotimi et al., 2013). The provision of inferior infrastructure and public services is another noticeable effect of corruption on the distribution of public procurement contracts in a nation. Additionally, corruption may change how government spending is distributed. Government officials are inclined to pick expenditures based less on the welfare of the public and more on the chance to demand bribes that they present. (Chen, 2022) cites Mauro, 1997.

The provision of high-quality services is significantly impacted by corruption in the recruiting process for a country's civil or public service. This is because the majority of persons hired either lack the necessary training and experience for the position or behave entitled at work, undermining the real spirit and philosophy that supports public service (Nwaze, 2012). The reasons given by historians for the fall of the Roman Empire are useful in determining the effect of corruption on a nation's ability to survive. According to Ramsay MacMullen (1990:19):

Naturally, corruption and abuse always took place. However, by the fourth and fifth centuries, they had evolved into the norm and were no longer seen as systemic abuses but as a distinct option. Everything else was subordinate to the monetary nexus. Access to every level of government, including the emperor, was purchased, and sold, even public office. The conventional web of responsibilities changed into a power market where pure self-interest was the only factor in decision-making. There was a major, ongoing distortion in how the government operated.

According to a PricewaterhouseCoopers report, if corruption is not addressed now, it may cost Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as much as 37% of GDP by 2030. According to Ifedigbo (2023), this expense will amount to over \$1,000 per person in 2014 and almost \$2,000 per person in 2030.

Theoretical Framework

The study will adopt Institutional theory as its framework of analysis. The theory was popularized by Selznick (1957), Stinchcombe (1965), Meyer and Rowen (1977), Powell and Dimaggio (1991), and Scott (1995) among others.

Institutional theory generally investigates how institutions, schemas, norms, and routines come to be accepted as reliable standards for social activity. Theoretical and methodological flaws can still be found in the theory. Some of these are the institutional explanations' mostly static character and the apparent challenges in assessing institutional variables outside of simple, nominal categories. Furthermore, institutional theories frequently give little thought to how human agency plays a part in institutional transformations (Peters, 2000).

The theory uses country and government institutional characteristics, such as pre-existing rule of law, well-defined anti-corruption norms, and independent anti-corruption institutions with enforcement powers, to explain corruption in the public sector, so despite its flaws, it is thought to be suitable for adoption as a framework for analysis in this study. Institutional theory offers a taxonomy for comprehending how corruption may persist in organizations, institutions, and society despite the existence of an anti-corruption framework and incorporates the social environment in its analysis of corruption (Luo, 2005).

President Goodluck Jonathan's Corruption Fight

The nature of the anti-corruption fight under Goodluck Jonathan's administration was legal and institutional. To this end, it signed into law:

- i. The Freedom of Information Act (FOI)which enabled Nigerians to obtain information about government activities to ascertain whether government agencies operate within the rules.
- ii. The administration also implemented the Integrated Personnel and Payroll System (IPPIS) and the electronic payment system, which have assisted in reducing Nigeria's payroll corruption. The fact that the Federal Government was able to eliminate up to 50,000

- phantom jobs and save the nation billions of naira as a result of these institutional reforms is particularly significant.
- iii. Also, the introduction of the Electronic Wallet (E-Wallet) scheme went a long way to sanitize the hitherto corrupt fertilizer procurement and distribution system across the country (Umory, 2014).
- iv. The Jonathan administration was also instrumental in the development of
 - Whistleblowing policy,
- v. The Biometric Verification Number (BVN) and the Treasury Single Account (TSA), among other things (Ogbonna, 2017).

Muhammadu Buhari's Administration

However, just like Goodluck Jonathan, Muhammadu Buhari's administration also adopted legal approaches in addition to institutional approaches in its fight against corruption. This government has implemented several institutional measures, such as the Treasury Single Account (TSA), Biometric Verification Number (BVN), and "Whistle Blowing" policy. It is important to highlight that although the Jonathan administration designed these three institutional anticorruption tools, the Buhari administration carried out their implementation (Tade, 2021; News Agency of Nigeria, 2023; This Day, 2023).

From the legal angle, the Buhari administration initiated and passed:

- The 2017 Anti-Terrorism Prevention and Prohibition Bill, as well as the Money Laundering Prevention and Prohibition Bill.
- ii. Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit Bill 2017 (NFIU).
- iii. The 2017 Proceeds of Crime Bill.

iv. The Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Bill, 2017, and the Public Interest Disclosure and Witness Protection Bill, 2017 (Sanni, 2018).

Table 1.1: Anti-Corruption Fight Under Goodluck Jonathan Administration

YEAR	NO. OF	NO.	NO. OF	NO. OF	NO.	NO. OF
	PETITIONS	PROSECUTED	CONVICTED	PETITIONS	PROSECUTED	CONVICTED
	RECEIVED	CASES	PERSONS	RECEIVED	CASES	PERSONS
	(ICPC)	(ICPC)	(ICPC)	(EFCC)	(EFCC)	(EFCC)
2008	998	87	22	3301	330	74
2000	4000	24	-	2047	221	
2009	1008	24	7	3967	221	64
2010	1117	41	9	6782	206	68
2011	1017	23	4	7737	417	67
2012	708	21	5	4914	502	87
2013	1058	57	8	6089	485	117
2014	N/A	60	12	4941	388	126
TOTA	L 5,906	313	67	37,731	2,549	603

Source: Page (2021), ICPC Annual Reports (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 & 2014), Orokpo (2017)

According to the figure above, the ICPC and EFCC received 43,637 petitions, out of which 2,862 prosecutions were brought and 670 convictions were obtained under the presidency of Goodluck Jonathan. The data shows that the EFCC got the most petitions, with 37,731, followed by the ICPC with 5,906 petitions.

Table 1.2: Anti-Corruption Fight Under Muhammadu Buhari Administration

YEAR	NO. OF PETITIONS RECEIVED (ICPC)	NO. PROSECUTED CASES (ICPC)	NO. OF CONVICTED PERSONS (ICPC)	NO. OF PETITIONS RECEIVED (EFCC)	NO. PROSECUTED CASES (EFCC)	NO. OF CONVICTED PERSONS (EFCC)
2015	1518	60	6	5979	402	103
2016	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	182
2017/ 2018	N/A	87	22	N/A	N/A	501
2019	1934	105	25	N/A	N/A	1246
2020	1364	73	26	10,152	7340	1305
2021	N/A	67	15	N/A	N/A	2220
2022	1357	36	19	N/A	N/A	3785
TOTAL	6,173	428	113	16,131	7,742	9,342

Source: Page (2021), ICPC Annual Reports (2015, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 & 2022), Vanguard (December 31, 2020), Jamo (2021), EFCC (2015), EFCC (2023).

Table 1.2 shows that the total number of petitions received by both ICPC and EFCC were 22,304 out of which 8,170 were prosecuted while 9,455 convictions were secure. Just like the data showed under President Jonathan, the EFCC as an anti-corruption agency secured the highest number of petitions, prosecutions, and convictions when compared to the ICPC.

Table 1.3: Comparing Goodluck Jonathan with Muhammadu Buhari Administration

Administration	Petitions	Prosecution	Conviction	Year
Goodluck Jonathan	43,637	2,862 (7%)	670 (2%)	2008-2014
Muhammadu Buhari	22,304	8,170 (36%)	9,455 (42)	2015-2022

Source: Author compilation

The table 1.3 shows that the Goodluck Jonathan administration received 43,637 petitions but could only secure 2,862 prosecutions and an infinitesimal 670

convictions within 5 years. This figure represents a 7% prosecution rate and a 2% conviction rate. This shows that the administration did not achieve much in the corruption fight despite numerous petitions from both the ICPC and EFCC. Political will, institutional weakness, and lack of enough legal procedures can be attributed to the abysmal performance. Compared to Muhammadu Buhari whose administration received 22,304 petitions, prosecuted 8,170 cases, and secured 9,455 convictions within 7 years. This reflects a 42% conviction rate and a 36% prosecution rate under Buhari's government. It may be inferred from the chart that the President Buhari government, in comparison to the Jonathan administration, had comparable success in the battle against corruption.

Comparative Analysis

According to the information in Table 1.2 above, Muhammadu Buhari's administration has prosecuted and found more corrupt individuals than Goodluck Jonathan's administration in cases handled by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Despite the BVN being created in 2014 to ensure that all bank accounts have the Biometric Identification Numbers of their owners, Dr. Jonathan's lack of motivation and ability prevented the program from being put into effect.

However, BVN now covers almost all bank accounts under the Buhari government. It is also noteworthy that the whistleblower policy was implemented by President Buhari's administration as a real tool against corruption because it gives people a chance to reveal corruption, fraud, bribery, stolen government funds, financial misconduct, government assets, and any other type of corruption or theft. Over 5,000 reports were filed through various channels within six months of the policy's introduction, and 365 of those reports contained useful information. More than N200 billion has already been retrieved. Basically, as of May 29, 2015, when the Buhari government took office, the EFCC recovery account held just N19.5 billion, according to information provided by the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of the Federation. This amount increased to N279 billion after the Buhari administration's new anti-corruption effort had been in place for a year, and much more has subsequently

been collected (Sanni, 2018).

Aiming to foster consensus among judicial institutions and practitioners and develop a justice system that is fairer, more effective, accessible, efficient, and responsive to Nigerians' hopes and aspirations, the Federal Ministry of Justice held the first-ever National Summit on Justice, recognizing the need to strategically address the challenges facing the Nigerian justice sector, particularly about combating corruption. As a consequence of the summit, a National Policy on Justice was adopted in 2017, serving as a roadmap for all judicial institutions without undermining the pillars of our federal system of government.

With the rise of measures such as open contracting, beneficial ownership declarations, and freedom of information, the ministry was at the forefront of the anti-corruption fight, promoting improved openness. The Buhari government has also continued to work to develop institutions specifically designed to ensure the connection between data and policy as well as interagency coordination and collaboration, particularly through the Inter-Agency Task Team of Anti-corruption Agencies (IATT) platform (News Agency of Nigeria, 2023).

Under the Buhari administration, the sale of forfeited property has so far brought in the sum of One billion, eight hundred and twenty-three million, seven hundred and eighty-eight thousand, one hundred- and forty-six-thousand-naira, eighty-six kobo (₦1,823,788,146). The Buhari administration has recovered from various jurisdictions a total of six million, three hundred and twenty-four thousand, six hundred and twenty-seven pounds, sixty-six pence (£6,324,627.66); five million, four hundred and ninety-four thousand, seven hundred and forty-three euros (€5,494,743); and three hundred and ninety million dollars (\$390,000,000.). This is all by presidential mandates and foreign judicial processes. Some of the confiscated monies are being used to finance important national infrastructure projects, such as the Second Niger Bridge, Abuja-Kano Motorway, and Lagos-Ibadan Motorway (News Agency of Nigeria, 2023).

On May 12, 2022, the Buhari government signed the Proceeds of Crime

(Recovery and Management) Act 2022 (POCA) as part of its commitment to fighting corruption in the nation. The POCA is the first piece of legislation in Nigeria to fully outline tools, processes, and procedures for locating, restraining, seizing, confiscating, forfeiting, and managing properties obtained via illegal activity. To break the cycle of crime and stop current offenses and corrupt practices, the primary goal of this piece of legislation is to take away the profits that encourage and finance crime (News Agency of Nigeria, 2023). Along with POCA, the Buhari administration has also been able to pass the following anti-corruption and criminal justice laws to help fight the problem: the Money Laundering Prevention and Prohibition Act of 2017, the Nigeria Financial Intelligence Unit Act of 2018, the Mutual Legal Assistance Act of 2018, the Company and Allied Matters Act incorporating Beneficial Ownership of 2020, the Terrorism Prevention and Prohibition Act of 2022, and the Witness Protection and Management Act of 2022 (Nigeria). The Presidential Advisory Committee on Corruption (PACAC), a government think tank, and the Special Presidential Investigative Panel on Public Property were both established by the Buhari administration (This Day, 2023).

Challenges

One important finding in the analysis of the difficulties President Goodluck Jonathan's administration faced in the fight against corruption was that he lacked the political will to put many of the institutional and legal measures and reforms he introduced into effect, including the Treasury Single Account (TSA), the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS), etc. Therefore, the first Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Malam Nuhu Ribadu, claimed that "nothing positively significant" occurred in the fight against corruption during the Jonathan administration because, in his opinion, Nigeria's national resources were "squandered and largely stolen by those who had the responsibility of managing them" over the years, while oil wells were "shared to individuals at will." (Asadu, 2019).

Nevertheless, despite the documented successes of the anti-corruption campaign under Buhari's administration, it is still hampered by several issues, including the politicization of the campaign and the refusal to look into allegations against

some members of his administration, including Governors Godswill Akpabio and Abdullahi Umar Ganduje. Even though the latter was charged with hiding money on a taped video recording.

Several instances include the suspension of Ibrahim Magu, the interim head of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, on grounds of corruption and the alleged application of different standards to individuals who support Buhari. An example of this was an explicit statement made by Adams Oshiomole, a former national chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), urging defectors from opposition parties to join the ruling party and have their "sins" pardoned (Tade, 2021; This Day, 2023). The various anti-corruption institutions' lack of operational independence, which made their efficiency incredibly difficult due to the system of appointments that depended primarily on the presidency, was another obstacle to the anti-corruption campaign under President Buhari (Chinedu et al., 2018).

However, it was countered that the anti-corruption campaign was not being used by the Buhari administration to persecute his rivals, even though it is likely that the opposition would be targeted by any administration in power. However, under Buhari's leadership, Nigerians have seen the anticorruption agencies bring to justice those who have broken the law. It was clear that the ICPC had targeted lawmakers from all political parties, including the All-Progressives Congress (APC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and other smaller parties, in investigations into the nation's constituency projects (This Day, 2023).

Conclusions

According to the findings, both President Muhammadu Buhari and President Goodluck Jonathan's administrations implemented institutional and legal strategies to combat corruption in the nation. The report highlights that both administrations, under Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari, achieved some success in addressing corruption, especially by prosecuting and bringing corrupt officials to justice nationwide. However, the analysis concluded that the Buhari government outperformed in terms of recorded convictions and the forfeiture and recovery of assets from corrupt

individuals. This success is attributed to the Buhari government's higher political will, enabling the implementation of anti-corruption policies that were introduced during the Goodluck Jonathan administration but lacked the necessary political support.

The study also revealed common challenges faced by both administrations, including allegations of 'weaponizing' the fight against corruption to target political rivals and selectively prosecuting corruption cases to favour political allies. These issues were identified as hindrances to the anti-corruption efforts of both the Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari administrations.

Recommendations

On the basis of the study's findings, the following recommendations are given:

- i. It is imperative to establish robust institutions that remain free from undue executive, legislative, and judicial interference in the battle against corruption. Enhanced independence is essential for the optimal functioning of agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission, and other relevant bodies. Initiating a change in the statutory framework governing these agencies is a potential starting point to curtail excessive influence from the presidency. Augmenting their financial allocations would empower these agencies to recruit additional staff and promptly support the prosecution of numerous corruption cases.
- Upholding the political determination exhibited by the Buhari administration in the anti-corruption crusade is essential for fostering further achievements in the reporting, investigation, and prosecution of corruption cases.
- iii. The battle against corruption should adopt a comprehensive and transparent approach. Under no circumstances should anti-corruption agencies serve as tools for political witch-hunting, and there should be a discouragement of selective arrests and prosecution of corrupt individuals.

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AFRICA'S ASPIRATION FOR A PERMANENT SEAT ON THE UNITED NATIONS (UN) **SECURITY COUNCIL: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF AFRICANITY**

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Abstract

Africa, the second-largest continent by both geographical expanse and population, is home to a wealth of resources juxtaposed against enduring challenges of underdevelopment, poor infrastructure, and inadequate human capital development across its 54 diverse member nations. Chronic issues such as corruption, high mortality rates, diseases, insecurity, inequality, poverty, low literacy levels, and violent conflicts persistently mar the African landscape. This study explores the concept of Africanity, which encompasses shared histories, cultural bonds, and social practices that unite Africans. The United Nations, particularly the influential UN Security Council, serves as a platform through which Africanity can be amplified and projected onto the global stage. However, a counterargument emerges, proposing that articulation and advocacy for Africanity should remain rooted within African institutions. The Security Council of the United Nations consists of fifteen members, including five veto-wielding permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and ten non-permanent members. Africa's exclusion from permanent representation of the Security Council has spurred calls for reform. This study underscores the pressing need to bridge Africanity with Africa's ambition to amplify its presence on the world stage. By examining these facets, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse surrounding Africa's role and influence within the United Nations.

Keywords: United Nations, Africa, Aspiration, Permanent Seat, Africanity, Africaness.

Introduction:

Africa, the second-largest continent both in terms of geography and population, possesses abundant resources. Paradoxically, it grapples with underdevelopment, marked by inadequate infrastructure, limited human capital development, and deep-seated socio-political and institutional challenges across its 54 member countries. This predicament manifests in rampant corruption, high mortality rates, diseases, insecurity, inequality, poverty, low literacy rates, violent conflicts, and entrenched leadership tenures, among other socio-economic and political shortcomings (Abegunrin, 2009; Hyden, 2006; Taylor & Williams, 2004; Ukeje, 2005).

While there have been some incremental improvements over the years, substantial progress remains elusive. Notably, life expectancy at birth remains low. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (2014), the average age of Africans in 2014 stood at 58, which was 12 years below the global average. Additionally, approximately 70% of sub-Saharan Africa's population and around 60% of the continent's overall population subsist on less than \$2 per day. According to the 2016 Human Capital Report, sub-Saharan Africa holds the lowest average globally, with a rating of 55.44. With a meagre export share of only 2.2% and a faltering service sector, Africa's global role remains marginal (United Nations, 2016). Various domestic and foreign remedies have been proposed to address this distressing state (Gberie, 2005, p.: 337).

One such remedy involves the concept of Africanity. This term encompasses notions of shared histories, cultural and social practices that bind Africans, the cultivation of a collective African identity, and geographical and political identification with the African continent (Mkandawire, 2006). It seeks to rectify the denial of African identity by foreign actors during the colonial era, promoting development on the continent and advocating for the continent's institutions and values on a global scale. Despite Western literature's frequent denigration of African indigenous knowledge and identity, African scholars assert the existence of African knowledge and concepts before colonialism. Africanity thus comprises a set of beliefs aimed at reasserting and reestablishing Africa and Africans' identity, a task seen as incomplete without promoting "African wisdom" suppressed and marginalized in favour of "developed knowledge"

from the West. International organizations and institutions, such as the United Nations, are considered platforms to champion African identity, particularly through the powerful United Nations Security Council.

Conversely, arguments exist in favour of confining such articulation and advocacy within African institutions. The United Nations was founded in 1945 on the principle of collective security to prevent future conflicts. In contrast to its ineffective predecessor, the League of Nations, the United Nations has endured for over seven decades (Akindele, 2000; Khanna, 2004). The UN Charter of 1945 established six primary organs: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Secretariat, and the Trusteeship Council. The Trusteeship Council lost its relevance following decolonization (Khanna, 2004). The founding members of the UN, shaped by their roles in World War I, secured membership in the powerful Security Council, whose veto power provides them significant advantages in appointments to key UN positions and decision-making processes (Kugel, 2009). Tasked with preserving global peace and security, the Security Council wields the authority to influence the policies of member states.

The Security Council consists of fifteen members, including five veto-wielding permanent members: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States of America. These permanent members enjoy specific privileges, such as appointments to critical UN positions and participation in decision-making bodies within the organization (Kugel, 2009). The remaining ten non-permanent members are chosen for two-year terms. Since its inception in 1945, the United Nations has expanded its membership significantly, with South Sudan becoming its newest member on July 14, 2011 (United Nations, 2011).

Presently, a paradox characterizes the relationship between Africa and the United Nations. While discussions concerning Africa's developmental challenges dominate discourse, there is limited overall discourse on Africa's role within the United Nations (FES Conference, 2008). During the drafting of the UN Charter, independent African states were scarce, yet Africa actively engaged with the United Nations throughout the 1960s, particularly during the decolonization era. The UN provided a platform for newly independent

nations to oppose colonialism, institutionalized racism, and racist governments in Southern Africa (Saliu, 2005). Africa constitutes the largest regional bloc within the United Nations, representing more than a quarter of all member states. However, this numerical strength does not necessarily translate into active participation or cohesive decision-making, as African Member States often struggle to align their perspectives within the international arena and speak with a unified voice.

Crucially, Africa lacks a permanent representative on the Security Council. This, among other factors, has spurred calls for reform, including the expansion of the UN Security Council (Abegunrin, 2009). Critics argue that permanent members have often abused their veto power to advance their national interests, straying from the original intent of the UN Charter to prevent the UN from taking direct action against its founding members (Okhovat, 2012). Consequently, proponents of reform call for a more democratic, transparent, accountable, effective, fair, and impartial Security Council (Nahory, 2004).

This essay endeavours to establish a connection between Africanness and Africa's mission to project its virtues on a global scale. It explores whether such advocacy is best pursued through African institutions or the potential platforms offered by a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Africa and the Concept of Africanity/Africaness

Africa is a region marked by both cultural and geographical diversity. Except for notable exceptions such as Botswana, Mauritius, and South Africa, most African nations find themselves grappling with the unfortunate distinction of being among the world's poorest. This dire situation, particularly prevalent south of the Sahara, where most African nations reside, is entangled with severe poverty and underdevelopment within the context of the contemporary global economy. Various explanations have been proffered for this predicament, including the legacy of colonialism, entrenched traditional beliefs, and a dearth of human and financial capital, among others (Hyden, 2006).

The continent boasts an astounding linguistic and ethnocultural diversity, with over 2,000 languages spoken among its inhabitants and more than 3,000 distinct

ethnic groupings (Abegunrin, 2009). The linguistic tapestry encompasses Arabic in the northern Sahara region and the Sahel nations, while Mandinke, Yoruba, and Hausa dominate West Africa. Swahili prevails in East Africa, and Zulu, Sotho, and Xhosa are prominent in southern Africa. Many nations now employ their former colonial powers' languages for formal and commercial purposes, with English serving as the official language in twenty-one nations and Portuguese in five. Additionally, Cameroon and Mauritius recognize both English and French as official languages (Hyden, 2006).

Geographically, Africa's vast expanse dwarfs North America and is comparable in size to both Europe and South America combined. The continent predominantly features tropical climates with warm summers and mild winters, while altitude plays a role in tempering the climate, especially in eastern and southern Africa. Africa boasts some of the continent's highest peaks, including Mount Kenya in Kenya and Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania (Brown, 2004).

It is crucial to emphasize that African history did not commence with European colonization, as Africa was home to numerous independent nations and empires before colonialism. There is evidence suggesting that significant portions of human history and civilization originated in pre-colonial Africa (Young, 1994). Nevertheless, the impact of European colonialism cannot be ignored. The Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 initiated European colonialism across the continent, with Britain, Spain, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, and Portugal carving up Africa for their colonial pursuits. Various justifications for colonialism, such as the pursuit of adventure, access to raw materials, markets for finished goods, and the mission to civilize the so-called "Dark Continent," were put forth (Awofeso, 2014, p.:10). Colonialists often sought to eradicate native African cultures, downplaying their achievements and history, and imposing Western civilization as universal and superior.

The denigration of African cultures and values led to the marginalization of African knowledge and traditions by international imperial powers in favour of Western "developed knowledge." The post-colonial era saw a concerted effort to rectify this mindset and place Africans at the centre of their continent's history. This movement gave rise to the concept of Africanity, promoting cultural unity among Africans and the advancement of Africanness worldwide

(Mkandawire, 2006). However, defining Africanness remains a complex endeavour, as it encompasses diverse cultures, languages, and people across the continent. While there are shared aspects of African cultures, inherent differences persist, making it challenging to capture a singular definition of Africanness. Nevertheless, the concept of Africanness aims to consolidate the common cultural heritage, institutions, and ideas that are prevalent among most African societies to reawaken African wisdom and expedite the continent's development.

Overcoming the racial divide that exists between North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa is essential for fostering cultural unity. This racial division has implications in development indicators and international politics, where North African countries are often classified differently from sub-Saharan African nations. The African Union, comprising all African nations, holds the potential as a platform for forging a unified identity, a goal pursued by Africanness.

The foundational element of Africanness lies in recognizing and celebrating one's African identity, appreciating what it means to be African, and promoting indigenous knowledge systems. To embark on discussions about Africanness, it is imperative to acknowledge the shared humanity among Africa's people and their historical ties to the continent's regions. This recognition forms the basis for fostering African unity and advancing the development and prosperity of the entire continent.

The United Nations Security Council and Calls for Expansion

Within the United Nations, there is a widely shared consensus that the reform of the Security Council is imperative (Ade-Ibijola, 2015; Kugel, 2009; Souare, 2005). Numerous member states have consistently called for the reform of this body due to its inherent deficiencies. The prevailing perception of the United Nations Security Council as an exclusive group of fifteen members, whose actions do not always align with the best interests of most member states, frequently gives rise to tensions between the Council and the General Assembly (Okhovat, 2012).

Even though previous reform attempts have yielded limited success, the

desire to revamp this primary organ continues to dominate discussions. The permanent membership structure of the United Nations Security Council fails to ensure equitable geographic representation and does not adapt to the evolving geopolitical landscape of the present day. Moreover, there is a compelling argument that the Council should function in a more democratic, transparent, and accountable manner (Kugel, 2009).

However, the ongoing efforts to reconfigure the UN system, particularly the United Nations Security Council, face obstacles due to the Council's initial composition, which renders it resistant to structural change (Ade-Ibijola, 2015). Nevertheless, the calls for improvements persist despite one restructuring of the UN Security Council and numerous reform initiatives since the late 1940s.

In 1963, the number of non-permanent members of the UN Security Council increased from six to ten. This adjustment followed a campaign led by Spain and several Latin American nations in 1956, which sought to amend the UN Charter to expand the number of non-permanent seats on the Security Council from six to eight. The General Assembly approved this amendment, elevating the count of non-permanent seats to ten, a move later ratified by the United Nations Security Council (Bourantonis, 2005).

In the late 1970s, there was a surge in calls for the expansion of the UN Security Council due to the decolonization of numerous states and concerns about "equitable representation" for Asia and Africa. Latin American, Asian, and African nations advocated for an increase in the number of non-permanent seats from 10 to 16. However, the Cold War climate prevented the adoption of this proposal (Ade-Ibijola, 2015). In 1993, the General Assembly established an "Open-Ended Working Group" to explore reform ideas encompassing a broad range of potential solutions. This included a demand by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a group of nations independent of Cold War alliances, to increase the number of permanent membership seats from 5 to 9. As the UN had not acted on enlargement proposals put forth by India and other member states in 1979 and 1980, the group suggested raising representation for non-permanent seats from 10 to 17 (Bourantonis, 2005).

In 2003, a high-level panel of 16 individuals, chaired by Koffi Annan as

Secretary-General, was established to examine and provide recommendations regarding the best options for restructuring (Ade-Ibijola, 2015; Kugel, 2009). The panel proposed two alternatives for the reform of the United Nations Security Council in 2004:

Option (A): Six new permanent seats without veto power and three additional non-permanent seats.

Option (B): Eight four-year renewable seats and one additional non-permanent seat (Price, 2005).

The Secretary-General endorsed the panel's recommendations and urged member states to adopt these suggestions before the World Summit. However, despite extensive negotiations among member states, the Summit concluded without a resolution on the restructuring of the Security Council. Shortly before the conclusion of the General Assembly session in September 2008, member states decided to shift the stalled reform discussions from the Working Group to intergovernmental negotiations within an informal GA plenary. Consequently, resolution 62/557 was unanimously approved as the basis for discussions on five pivotal issues: the Security Council's membership categories, the veto question, regional representation, the size of an expanded Security Council, the Council's operational procedures, and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly (Kugel, 2009).

Africa's Pursuit of a Permanent Position on the United Nations Security Council

Africa's position within the United Nations (UN) has been a frequent topic of discussion, particularly within the Security Council. This discussion often revolves around concerns related to development in developing nations, the majority of which are in sub-Saharan Africa. However, Africa's involvement in the decisions and discussions made within the UN, especially the Security Council, has been limited. African leaders have expressed their concerns about feeling excluded from the global stage and have argued that a permanent seat on the UN Security Council could empower them to negotiate or veto measures that conflict with their economic interests (Ade-Ibijola, 2015).

The impact of global challenges, such as climate change, disproportionately affects the developing world, including Africa, due to its limited capacity to address these challenges effectively. Africa, as a significant global player, could contribute more effectively to discussions on these matters, and permanent membership in the UN Security Council provides an ideal platform to do so.

The absence of permanent African representation on the UN Security Council is viewed as unfair and unacceptable. Calls for a comprehensive overhaul of the UN system, including the enlargement of the Security Council, have gained momentum (Jonathan, 2011:1). These sentiments echo the concerns of other African leaders and leaders of countries with persistent low socioeconomic development indicators. For example, despite a 40% decrease in global new HIV infections between 2000 and 2013, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 1.5 million of the 2.1 million new infections (United Nations, 2015). Similarly, child mortality rates remain high in Africa, with 46% of all children under five years old who die globally residing in the continent's developing nations (Global Action for Children, 2008).

In 2013, there were an estimated 289,000 maternal deaths worldwide, with sub-Saharan Africa accounting for 62% (179,000) of these deaths (Iaccino, 2014). The Security Council should prioritize addressing these challenges in the same way it does for issues like terrorism. Therefore, it is argued that Africa's permanent membership of the UN Security Council could facilitate finding solutions to these problems. Nabuaki (2005) contends that Africa's inclusion would underscore the UN Security Council's progressive and democratic nature, lending legitimacy to its actions on the continent. It would signify a shift from the 1945 framework to a more contemporary framework that accurately reflects the global community's realities.

The selection criteria for new members of the United Nations Security Council, as outlined in the "Report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change" (the Report on UN Reforms), emphasize contributions to the UN in terms of financial, military, and diplomatic support, as well as participation in mandated peace operations (Okumu, 2005). The African Union (AU),

representing African states, has voiced its opinions on the impact of UN reforms on Africa, known as the "Ezulwini Consensus." This consensus addressed collective security, the use of force, and institutional reform (Okumu, 2005).

Several African nations have been proposed as potential candidates for permanent seats on the UN Security Council. For instance, Nigeria, since gaining independence, has made substantial contributions to UN peacekeeping missions. As of 2005, Nigeria was listed as one of the top contributors of troops to UN peacekeeping missions, ranking fourth behind Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India (United Nations, 2006). Additionally, countries like Senegal, Kenya, and South Africa have played significant roles in promoting peace and security in their respective regions. South Africa has been instrumental in resolving conflicts in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Ivory Coast.

The focus of this essay is to explore how Africa's quest for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council can contribute to the promotion of African identity and the representation of African interests. The UN Security Council serves as a platform where African interests can be properly represented, and African achievements and contributions can be highlighted. Given that many decisions that affect the global community are made within the Security Council, Africa can have a say in matters that directly concern the continent and other parts of the world.

African nations, constituting more than a quarter of all UN member states, can leverage this platform to showcase their African identity and the uniqueness of their cultures and beliefs. This may lead to increased investment in Africa and a greater appreciation of African cultures' potential to drive development. Holding a permanent seat on the UN Security Council offers a significant opportunity to promote African identity on a global scale.

Furthermore, Africa's presence as a permanent member of the UN Security Council would challenge the notion that there was no culture or civilization on the continent before colonialism. It would also place Africa on an equal footing with other continents. As Zimbabwe's Ministry of Foreign Affairs pointed out, the global significance of Europe has diminished since 1945, while Africa, with over 50 countries, lacks a single permanent seat with veto power to represent

the continent and its interests (Mumbengegwi, 2015). Saungweme argues that Africa, with its 54 countries, deserves more than one permanent seat and that the UN should reform its approach to treating all nations equally (Saungweme, 2015).

Conclusion

Africa's pursuit of a permanent seat on the UN Security Council holds promises for advancing its interests and promoting its identity on the global stage. This endeavour can provide a platform for African nations to make their voices heard and assert their significance in international affairs. However, the challenge remains in deciding which African nation or nations should occupy the seat, as competition among African states may lead to tensions and conflicts of interest. To ensure a united front, African nations need to establish clear criteria and reach a consensus on who should represent them in an expanded UN Security Council. Nevertheless, Africa must also focus on strengthening its regional organizations and addressing its challenges internally, rather than relying on external support, to truly assert its identity and significance globally. In conclusion, while "Africanity" may lack a universally agreed-upon definition, there exist commonalities among African countries and peoples that can be amalgamated to construct an African identity. This identity should be reinforced within African nations using African intergovernmental institutions. Simultaneously, it should be promoted and projected on a global scale, leveraging platforms like the United Nations and its Security Council, which serves as a kind of global governing body. Furthermore, Africans residing in the Diaspora should strongly embrace their African heritage and disseminate indigenous African knowledge wherever they reside.

However, for the progress of the African continent, African states and populations mustn't isolate themselves from other cultures and expertise. Rather than relying solely on ideologies and theories, African governments and communities must adopt a pragmatic approach in their quest for solutions to the multifaceted challenges of underdevelopment that have plagued the continent economically, politically, and otherwise.

Recommendations

Certainly, here are some recommendations regarding Africa's pursuit of a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council and the role of Africanity:

- 1. Promoting Unity and Consensus: African nations should prioritize unity and consensus-building within the African Union (AU) and other regional organizations. This unity will enhance Africa's negotiating power and present a coherent stance on Security Council reform.
- 2. Engaging in Diplomatic Outreach: African nations should engage in robust diplomatic efforts to garner support for their cause from both within the continent and among other UN member states. Diplomatic missions, bilateral talks, and alliances with like-minded nations should be pursued actively.
- 3. Advocating Africanity: African nations should continue to emphasize the unique identity, culture, and contributions of the African continent within the United Nations. Promoting Africanity should be an integral part of diplomatic campaigns, helping to garner international support.
- 4. Strengthening African Institutions: The AU and other regional institutions should be strengthened to play a more effective role in advocating for Africa's interests on the international stage. This includes improving financial and organisational capacities.
- 5. Educating the African Diaspora: African nations should invest in educating and engaging their diaspora communities around the world. These communities can play a vital role in advocating for African interests and spreading awareness about Africanity.
- 6. Advocating for Comprehensive Security Council Reform: In pursuing a permanent seat, Africa should advocate for broader reform of the Security Council, including addressing the veto power issue, to make the Council more democratic and representative.

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ASSESSMENT OF THE UNDERLINING DRIVERS OF THE HERDERS-FARMERS CONFLICT IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

The perennial herders-farmers conflict has assumed a lethal dimension leading to wanton loss of lives, destruction of homes and livelihoods and displacing millions of people across the country. Several efforts made by successive governments to nip it in the bud have not yielded the desired result. This paper examined the underlying drivers of the herders-farmers conflict in Enugu State. It drew data from both secondary and primary sources relying more on focus group discussion (FGD). It adopted the ecoviolence theory espoused by Thomas Homer-Dixon to describe the relationship between population growth, resource scarcity and violent conflict in Enugu State. Findings show that the farmers in Enugu State are predominantly indigenes while herders are nomads of Fulani extraction from the north searching for green grassing lands for their flocks. It further revealed that although there has been intermittent conflict between herders and farmers dating back several decades, its modern manifestation in Enugu started in 2015 with the Nimbo attack by herders. This has led to a growing perception among the Ibos that the Fulani are harbingers of violence masquerading as cattle herders using the forest as their hideouts from where they launch attacks on the indigenous population. They also believe that the herders intentionally allow their cows to graze on farms, crops and plantations to provoke conflict. The study also found that these conflicts have persisted because the government has neither been proactive nor demonstrated the political will to address the menace in Enugu State because of the influence of the Fulani on the state and federal governments. The study recommends among others that the government should ensure thorough, effective and impartial investigations and prosecution of any person, including members of security forces, who are found guilty; implement the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons to discourage access and use of such arms to cause large-scale destruction; and Enugu State government to collaborate with the federal government and humanitarian agencies to provide the necessary support to all victims.

Keywords: herders-farmers, conflict, Enugu, Nigeria, violence

Introduction

Herders-farmers conflict has remained one of the social problems posing serious national security challenges in Nigeria. Although this conflict has been on for decades, it has become more pronounced and lethal since the 2000s in Plateau, Nasarawa and Benue States. In the last two decades, the conflict has cost the country a lot in terms of man and materials and worsened the already delicate security situation in Nigeria, especially in the North-central zones. The consequences of the conflict are human casualties (lives lost), material costs in physical and economic terms (i.e., the destruction of properties and people's means of livelihood), and internal displacements. Farming has been right from the time the major occupation of most Nigerian communities especially in North-central and South-eastern Nigeria. However, this occupation has been threatened in recent times with herdsmen forceful invasion and encroachment on farms to graze on any available vegetation without noting these farms are people's means of livelihood. This has engendered an unhealthy rivalry and violent conflict between Fulani livestock herders and crop farmers with lethal effects characterized by loss of lives and properties in North-central states of Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Kogi, Niger and Kwara; South-east states of Enugu, Ebonyi and Abia; South-south states of Delta and Edo, South-west states of Ekiti, Ondo and Osun; and North East state of Adamawa.

Of the affected states, Benue State is the worst-hit in recent times with virtually every part coming under persistent attacks by the armed herdsmen. Available data shows that herdsmen killed close to 2000 people in Tiv communities, over 755, 538 persons were internally displaced, farm produce and other valuables worth N39, 823,798,469 were lost in Tiv communities comprising Zone A and B. Also, 1600 lives and properties worth valued over N6, 232,421,669 were lost in Zone C covering Idoma and Igede communities between 2013 and 2017 (Idyorough, 2017; Ochogwu, 2021). Plateau and Nasarawa States share a similar scenario with Enugu and other affected states having their fairs of human casualties. In Benue, Plateau and Enugu states and other parts of the country, the herdsmen have also had their share of the losses with an estimated loss of over two million cows to killings and cattle rustlers in the last two years while over 600 herdsmen lost their lives (Alao et al, 2019).

The International Crisis Group (2018) observed that farmer-nomadic pastoralist conflicts have become Nigeria's gravest security challenge, claiming far more lives than the Boko Haram insurgency. Ajibo (2018) corroborates this view by observing that the violent conflicts between farmers and nomadic pastoralists have not only spread southwards to the central zones and have escalated in recent years threatening the country's security, stability and peace, but these clashes are becoming as potentially dangerous as the Boko Haram insurgency in the North-east, resulted in an estimated death toll of approximately 2,500 people in 2016 alone. Putting this side-by-side Gbaradi's (2018) assertion of about 3,780 from 2012 to 2018 deaths of Nigerians by herdsmen aside from injuries and abductions, in 2016 alone recorded more than half of human casualties from farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria in the last half a decade.

Amnesty International (2018) in a press release reported that clashes between nomadic pastoralists and farmers in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau States resulted in 168 deaths in January 2018 alone and 2017, 549 deaths. Many were also killed by the Nigerian military airstrikes in the warring communities, and thousands were displaced across Enugu, Zamfara, Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, Niger, Cross River, Adamawa, Katsina, Delta and Ekiti State. The Crisis Group (2018) also observed that from January to June 2018, over 260 people were killed in several incidents in Nasarawa state alone, mostly in the southern zone covering Doma, Awe, Obi and Keana local government areas.

This paper examines the underlying drivers of herders and farmers conflicts in the Southeast geopolitical zone, focusing on Enugu State. To ascertain the underlying drivers of herders and farmers conflict, data were gathered/collected from Enugu state. The qualitative data complemented the quantitative data discussed in the preceding chapter to give a more robust analysis of the problem under study.

Literature Review

Amnesty International (2017) describes the pastoral or herders as people in Nigeria whose major source of livelihood and occupation is rearing and selling cattle, mostly adopting nomadic or semi-sedentary lifestyles. It is on this account that, Ogbonnaya (2010) opines that herders are by their nature migrants

who leave their traditional abode in search of greener pasture for their flocks in most cases; their movement is caused by the absence of good and veritable land for their flock to feed on. Their livelihoods depend on three things: first, access to assets such as land, livestock, pasture, water, animal health services, community networks, markets, credit and education; second, the environment in which these assets are combined for production and consumption, specifically the political, organization and institutional infrastructures within which they operate, which affects their ability to use these assets to achieve positive livelihood; and third, the dynamic context of risk (human and animal disease, marginalization, drought, civil conflict and competition for natural resources) and seasonal and continuous trends that affect assets and their environment and determine the vulnerability of livelihoods (Rass, 2006).

Luqman (2021) added credence to the above that, in Nigeria, the word 'herdsmen' is synonymous with 'Fulani herdsmen'. They represent an ethnic group predominantly in Northern Nigeria with their indigenous language known as 'Fulfulde' but have adopted the Hausa language because of their close-knit relationship with the Hausa tribe. The herdsmen are predominantly Muslims and are widely recognized for livestock keeping particularly ruminants such as cattle, sheep and goats. Interestingly, their women are very enterprising and work downstream in the dairy value chain. Similarly, Stevenson (2016) submitted that a herder in Nigeria is someone who herds livestock and is from a Fulfulde-speaking ethnic group. Corroborated this, Sanni (2015) sees a herder as any individual who owns a large collection of livestock such as sheep, cows, goats, horses, donkeys, camels and lots of others. While these definitions by Sanni and Stevenson are apt, it should be noted that herders are not only Fulani or people who speak the Fulfulde language as people from non-Fulani origin also herd animals in Nigeria.

Farmers, on the other hand, are seen as people who 'plough and plant' and undertake agricultural production (Atim & Gbwamwuan, 2022). In a related sense, Rogers (1998) describes farmers as producers of agricultural products and traditional countrymen, who tend to be relatively modest and most of them consume the foodstuffs they produce. This is a description of subsistence farmers neglecting farmers who are commercial and produce for themselves

and the larger markets. Against this backdrop, it is right to say that, farmers are those who earn a living through agriculture production and the rearing of animals for food or raw materials (Business Dictionary, 2020). On a similar note, Luqman (2021) opined that farmers are a group of people who depend on their farming activities for their livelihood. Their yields and profits are often affected by several challenges such as conflicts with herders, climate change, irregular rainfall, drought, pests and disease outbreaks, activities of armed bandits etc. Both farmers and herders undertake different but interrelated business ventures, especially in terms of their access and usage of landed resources such as water, land etc. which often bring about conflicting relationships.

In a study carried out by Majekodunmi et al. (2014) conflicts between Herders and farmers had increased in Plateau due to several reasons such as:

- a) Accessible grazing and water: Pasture and water are widely available in the wet season, but uptake of more commercial and intensive farming methods and a higher proportion of cash crops mean that arable farmers increasingly demand more land and water for irrigation, so herders are marginalized;
- b) Avoidance of farmers' crops: increasing populations and land pressure have intensified farmer/pastoralist conflicts and increased the frequency of animals trampling crops. In many areas, these issues have been resolved simply by asking pastoralists to remove their cows from the village from the time the crops appear above ground level until harvest; and
- c) Avoidance of tsetse and/or biting flies: In areas where flies are severe nuisance, cattle are moved to more favourable areas of the Plateau or nearby lowlands.

The above aligns with the submission of Ogbonnaya (2010) that, empirical evidence revealed that, damaging or grazing on crops, climate change, freshwater scarcity; negligence and urbanization are the major factors responsible for the violent clashes between herders and farmers in Nigeria. Adeoye (2017) in his study, found deliberate grazing of cattle on crops, farmers'

encroachment on grazing reserves, water holes and cattle path sand, and indiscriminate bush burning by herders as notable causes of conflict between the groups in part of Kano, Yobe and Borno States, Nigeria. Other issues identified were indiscriminate bush burning, sexual harassment of women by nomads, harassment of mads by host youth, theft of cattle and indiscriminate defecation by cattle along the road (Ofem & Inyang, 2014). On a similar note, according to Azaigba (2019), three key variables have informed the conflicting relations between herders and farmers in contemporary Nigeria; first, is the increased quest for grazing land amidst agricultural expansion. Second, is the collapse of the system of burti (i.e. cattle tracks) intended to separate livestock from farms. The third variable is the movement of pastoralists into the new terrain, where language, religion, culture and land-holding patterns are unfamiliar.

However, the International Crisis Group (2018) stated the causes of the herdersfarmers conflicts in Nigeria include; "climate changes (frequent droughts and desertification); population growth (closure of grazing lands and routes due to population expansion of human settlement); technological and economic changes (new livestock and farming practices); rural banditry and cattle rustling, political and ethnic strife accelerated by the spread of illicit firearms and cultural changes (collapse of traditional conflict management mechanisms) and a non-functional legal regime that allows crime to go unpunished has encouraged both farmers and herders to take laws into their hands. Adeniran (2020) also added the ethno-religious divide as another cause of the conflict. To him, many of the Nigerian states implementing the cattle-open grazing policy are predominantly Christians (and non-Fulani), while most of the actors at the federal level, perceived by many to be promoters of the "cattle colony policy;" are both Muslims and of Fulani extraction. Expectantly, the Fulani herders believe that the anti-open grazing policy is merely a means to limit their right to make a living in any part of the country. At the same time, the indigenous landowners feel that the federal government's "cattle colony" policy is a move to advance an intrinsic hegemony of the Fulani agenda. This is the conflicting positions of the two parties. A finding by a study conducted by Odey (2021) titled; "Farmers/Herders Conflict and Food Security in Obanliku, Upper Cross River Region of Nigeria, since 1997" reveals that; the causes of herders-farmers conflicts is the struggle for acquisition and control of arable lands for farming and grazing, crop destructions, cattle rustling, pollution of water bodies and extortion of herders by traditional rulers".

Aside from the humanitarian impact of the crises, it is held that states affected by such conflicts lost an average of \$2.3 million or 47% of their internally generated revenue (IGR) in 2015. Staple food and cash crop production is below average in Plateau State, prices remain extremely high and are expected to continue to rise due to current inflation, recession and violent crisis (Egbejule, 2017). Exploring the gender dimension of the implication of the herders-farmers conflict; Atim and Gbamwuan (2022) carried out a study and concluded that; women are a powerful force in agricultural production, processing and utilization, but badly affected by the conflicts as they have suffered a lot of casualties such as been killed displaced, raped and maimed while their farming activities were truncated leading to joblessness, abject poverty and food insecurity.

Governments over the years have initiated and implemented policies and programmes aimed at addressing the longstanding violent relationship between herders and farmers in Nigeria. A very recent one is the implementation of Rural Grazing Area (RUGA, 2019) to put an end to a recurring conflict between herders and farmers by promoting ranching as a way forward for rearing cattle in Nigeria. The pilot implementation of this programme was in Sokoto, Adamawa, Nasarawa, Kaduna, Kogi, Taraba, Plateau, Kebbi, Zamfara and Nigeria (Aniche & Ngwu, n.d). In 2018, the Federal Government also presented the National Livestock Transformation Plan, an №179 billion while private sector interest and investment between the third and tenth year is expected to be more than №100 billion, a 10-year initiative with the idea that ranching is the way forward for cattle rearing in the country. The initiative was targeted at putting an end to the age-long herders and farmers conflicts and to massively improve the livestock industry.

Again, the location of the ranches within the donated reserves is in the states of Adamawa, Benue, Ebonyi, Edo, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Oyo, Plateau, Taraba and Zamafara. Similarly, the introduction of cattle colonies by the Federal Government following the recent harvest of deaths in rural communities across Benue, Nasarawa and Taraba states. Though, colony and ranches are similar except that a ranch is usually owned by an individual or company with

few numbers of cows while one could find 100, 200 and 300 cows in a facility provided by the government at a reduced rate (Yusuf & Safina, 2018). Even though, the intention of the government in this regard was for it to serve as a measure to tackle the herdsmen and farmers conflicts and create a platform for the government to make more commitments to the development of the livestock sub-sector; there have been agitations from some quarters as to the intention of the Federal Government on Colony policies that is a measure to grant supremacy over communal land to Fulani herdsmen or to forcefully amass communal land nationwide for prowling herdsmen. However, there has not been any strong political will to implement the recommendations of the several commissions of inquiry (Aluko, 2014)

Concerning government and non-governmental organizations' efforts in addressing the herders-farmers conflict, Gukas (2019) conducted a study titled; "Herders and Farmers Conflicts: Government and Non -Non-Governmental Organizations Interventions in Peace Building in Plateau State, Nigeria. The study aimed to assess the impact of government and non-governmental interventions in peacebuilding among farmers and herders in Plateau State. While the study used a cross-sectional descriptive survey design, it revealed that both government and non-governmental organizations have intervened in the peace-building process among herders and farmers in Plateau State, however, it was noted that government interventions have yielded a significant impact, unlike the non-government organization's interventions which have yielded significant impact in the peacebuilding process. Therefore, an important concern for this present study will be to understand why government interventions have failed to address herders-farmers conflicts in Enugu State. Luqman (2021) added that the conflicts between herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria are not new and some government interventions are no longer sustainable due to high population growth, land use change, and ethno-religious sentiments, amongst other factors. Tari and Jonah (2022) in their study titled; "Policy Issues in Managing Farmer-Herder Conflict in Nigeria" agree with Luqman (2021) and Gukas (2019) that; through government policies of cattle colonies, Rural Grazing Area (RUGA), retrieval of defunct grazing route and reserves are all parts of the National Livestock Transformation Plan (NLTP) aimed at mitigating conflicts between farmers and herders, however, Nigerians often received them with disdain, mistrust and ethnoreligious feelings thereby negatively affecting their implementations.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the eco-violence theory propounded by Thomas Homer-Dixon (1999) which seeks to describe the relationship between population growth, environmental scarcity and violent conflict in Africa. Eco-violence theory is in line with the submission of Malthusian demographic theory on the Principle of Population in 1798. According to Malthus, the population will grow exponentially, and if unchecked, there will be more pressure on scarce resources which will lead to violence or war. He further argues that food insecurity will be high as food production cannot match the rapid population growth in the world (Atwi, 2017).

It was argued that, decreased quality and quantity of renewable resources, population growth and resource access combine in various ways to produce scarcity of arable land, water supplies, forests, grazing lands and fish stock. It will be survival of the fittest such that, the rich people in the community may begin to capture and control the scarce resources at the expense of the poor, resulting in unequal access for the poor. They argue that this can reduce the economic productivity of the affected weaker or poorer group, who may, therefore, be forced to move in search of new arable lands for farming/pastures. Those who migrate to new lands may face opposition from the indigenes, which can result in ethnic conflict since they are seen as aliens (Homer-Dixon, 1999).

Notably from the above, conflict that often arises between Fulani herders and farmers is due to the necessity for the scarce grazing and farming land, which is a survival struggle for both parties (Dauda, 2020). This theory therefore, explains the long-term violence between herders and farmers in Nigeria has increased as a result of the increased competition over resources, mainly land and water and is aggravated by desertification, climate change, ethno-religious differences (between Fulani herders who are mostly Muslims and the farmers who are majorly Christians) and population growth as more people compete for diminishing resources (ACAPS, 2017) leading to the destruction of lives and properties.

Methodology

The Study Area: The Southeast geo-political zone, Nigeria is the smallest of the six geo-political zones in the country, accounting for about 18% of the country's population and 3.1% of the country's total landmass. The Southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria covers five states: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states. For this study, one state was selected using the random sampling technique: Enugu. The South East is one of the zones being ravaged by the herders/ farmers conflicts with Enugu state as the epicentre of the crisis in the zone.

Enugu State: Enugu State occupies 556 Square kilometres. It is bordered to the north by Benue and Kogi states, Ebonyi state to the east and southeast, Abia to the South, and Anambra to the west. Enugu State is 29 most populated state in Nigeria with a population of approximately 3,267,837 million based on the 2006 census, but it is currently estimated to have a population of over 4.4 million. Created on August 27th, 1991, Enugu is historically known as the coal-city state for its huge coal deposits. It is strategic as the capital of the Eastern region of Nigeria, making it a major entry port to the geopolitical zone. The state is predominantly rural and agrarian, with a substantial proportion of its working population engaged in farming, although trading (18.8%) and services (12.9%) are also important economic engagements in the state (Obodoechina, 2015). Enugu has played host to administrative offices of the Southeast geopolitical zone since the colonial era (Obodoechina, 2015). The State is predominately occupied by the Igbo ethnic group with some pockets of Igala-speaking communities of Ette in Igbo-Eze-North LGA, Ogurugu and Ojjor in Uzo-Uwani LGA respectively. Enugu State is predominantly a Christian state.

In terms of Education, Enugu State has public, private, community-based, and religious-based schools such as the *Bigard Memorial Seminary*, *Enugu* (Theology institute), *Queen of Apostles Seminary* (Spiritual Year), Imezi-Owa and Sacred Heart Seminary, Nsude (theological schools). Conventional tertiary institutions in the state include the *University of Nigeria – Nsukka*, *Enugu State University of Science and Technology – Agbani, Institute of Management and Technology* (IMT) – Enugu, Enugu State College of Education (Technical) – Enugu, Caritas University – Amorji Nike, Godfrey Okoye University – Emene, Renaissance University – Akpugo, Our

Saviour Institute of Science, Agriculture and Technology (OSISATECH) Polytechnic and College of Education – Enugu, ATCOI College of Education Enugu, College of Education – Ehuamufu, etc. Though a majority of the schools are owned by the Government, some are privately owned and managed.

Administratively, Enugu state has 17 Local Government Areas, which are divided into 3 senatorial zones. The Enugu East zone is mainly made up of urban areas, while the two other zones are mainly rural areas. The LGAs are Aninri, Awgu, Enugu East, Enugu North, Enugu South, Ezeagu, Igbo Etiti, Igbo Eze North, Igbo Eze South, Isi Uzo, Nkanu East, Nkanu West, Nsukka, Oji River, Udenu, Udi and Uzo-Uwani

Some communities in Enugu have reported coming under attacks from gunmen suspected to be Fulani herders. On April 25, 2016, gun-wielding herdsmen attacked the Ukpabi Nimbo community in Uzouwani and killed several persons. These attacks heralded herders- farmers conflict in Enugu which since then has spread to other communities and local governments in the state. Subsequently, there have been herdsmen attacks on Nkanu communities in Nkanu West, Opi-Agu community in Nsukka Local government, Agu-Amede, Abor and Ebor villages in Eha-Amufu community in Isi-Uzo Local Government, and Agbada Nenwe community in Aninri local government area. Communities in Oji River and Ezeagu local government areas have also come under herdsmen attacks.

Population of Study: The target population of the qualitative data included farmers and community leaders in the affected communities. It also included opinion leaders, traditional leaders/elders, youth, women, people living with disabilities and government functionaries in the affected local government areas.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques: For the FGD, some villagers were selected across the Nimbo community in Uzo-Uwani local government of Enugu State as respondents. From the selected LGA, purposive sampling was used to select participants who fit the target population for the FGDs.

Method of Data Collection: For FDG, one session was conducted in the state with the help of a note-taker. The research assistant asked questions and served as the moderator. The FGD guide was constructed in English but translated into

the Ibo language by the Research assistant during the sessions. The questions are constructed in line with the objectives of the study.

Method of Data Analysis: The data from the FGDs were transcribed, cleaned reported, and analysed using ethnographic summary and content analysis.

Results and Findings

Identification of Herders and Farmers in Enugu State

In Enugu state, there is this general perception about the identity of herdsmen as purely Fulani cattle rearers who migrated from Northern Nigeria to settle and carry out their cattle and other livestock breeding business in some parts of the state. The participants' impressions are that other ethnic groups rarely engaged in the cattle and livestock business. It is believed that the Fulani tribe is the tribe that primarily engages in cattle and other livestock businesses in the country. This misconception often leads to the constant used of 'Fulani herdsmen" whenever there is any attack on the farmers. These views were exclusively shared by majority of participants in the FGDs in Nkanu, Opi-Agu, Eha-Amufu and Agbada Nenwe communities. As explained by one of the participants, a farmer in the Nkanu community "The herders are Fulani people that migrate from the north to the east with their cattle and livestock claiming to be looking for green grass and water for their cattle and by extension destroying our farmland from time to time." (Male/62yrs/Christian/Ibo/Nkanu Community/FGD/2022).

Another participant in the Agbada Nenwe community opined thus: "The herders are Fulani people who migrate to Nigeria through our porous borders and come to the east to destroy our farmland by allowing their cattle to eat our farm produce with impunity." (Male/ 70yrs/Christian/Ibo/Agbada Nenwe Community/FGD/2022). They also shared the view that the farmers are exclusively Ibos in Enugu state who had nothing to do with cattle rearing and these views were held passionately by the participants. It was observed that there is ethnic connotation and profiling that all cattle or livestock rearers in the state are of Fulani origin. The study found a general notion that farmers in the state are indigenous Ibo people who reside and ply their agricultural activities in the

Southeastern part of Nigeria. The popular view in the Southeast is that every crop and root farmer is an Ibo man or woman while every cattle herder or rearer is Fulani.

This is erroneous as ample evidence shows that other tribes are currently into livestock farming. Thus, neither Fulani nor Ibo tribes monopolise farming activities or livestock farming in Enugu State. This misconception was further explained by one of the participants, a youth leader in the IDI in the Opi-Agu community: "Cattle herders are predominantly Fulani who migrated from other parts of Africa and came and settled in northern Nigeria. Whereas, farmers are Igbos who are the indigenous people that reside in the Southeastern part of Nigeria especially Uzo-Uwani in Enugu State." (Male/32yrs/Ibo/Christian/Opi-Agu Community/IDI/2022).

Available data from Statista corroborates the fact that Fulani is a minority ethnic group in Nigeria, constituting 6% of the nation's total population while the Ibo tribe is the third largest ethnic group with its population accounting for 15.2% (Statista, 2018). However, it is hard to ascertain the actual population of Fulani herders in Enugu State given their mode of operation, the absence of a harmonized register of herders in the state and the fact that they reside in the bush. In one of the FGDs in Eha-Amufu with the herders, it was confirmed that the herders are the minority in Enugu state and that contrary to the erroneous belief the herders are not all Fulanis. "There is this wrong impression that all herders are Fulanis. This is not true. There are other ethnic groups in Nigeria and even in Enugu that are not Fulanis that are herdsmen. The drought in Lake Chad has made most of the herders migrate to the south looking for water and grass for their cattle." (Male/45yrs/Fulani/Muslim/Eha-Amufu Community/FGD/2022).

In present-day Nigeria, the Fulani are seen as sojourners who occupy nearby bushes and possibly come from there to attack their host community. They have a rough lifestyle as wanderers who are associated with killings, raping of women, kidnapping/hostage taking and other terrorist activities. They are seen as die-hard Jihadists who are bent on capturing the indigenous people of Nigeria by running over them through attacks to expand their coast in terms of socioeconomic gains. They do these things under the guise of religion. This entails that the general perception among Ibos is that Fulani are harbingers of violence, destruction and death. Thus, they are just masquerading as cattle herders and use bushes as their hideouts from where they launch attacks and cause mayhem.

One of the respondents, a community leader in the Eha-Amufu community affirmed that the herders are part of the political system. "The Fulani are part of the political system of Enugu State. We have them under the Hausa Community in the state. They have their groups all over the Local Government Areas and they have their state leaders. Fulani being part of the political system in the state means that they are properly represented in government and other positions of authority." (Male/50yrs/Ibo/Christian/ Eha-Amufu community/IDI/2022). This assertion was vehemently opposed by the majority of the respondents who affirmed that the herders are not part of the Enugu State government, but the Hausa community are recognized as a social/religious group. Their number is negligible but at times one of them may be appointed as the Special Assistant to the governor just for the welfare of the community. This is in contradiction to the preceding response which claimed that Fulani herders are part of the political system of Enugu State.

Underlying Drivers of Herder and Farmers Conflict in Enugu State

The factors responsible for the clashes between Herders-Farmers include competition over access to land, destruction of farmlands, cattle rustling, politics and religious and ethnic intolerance. The causal factors listed by the participants show that the factors responsible for the Herders-Farmers conflict in Enugu State are the same factors that account for the conflict in other states. However, competition over land and the destruction of farmlands stand out. Enugu state is not known for communal clashes. Aside from politically induced assassinations that happened on rare occasions, killings of that nature are rarely experienced in the state. Enugu State has recorded several attacks by Fulani herders. However, the Nimbo in Uzo-Uwani and Nkanu West LGAs become the most pronounced and lethal.

Although the herders-farmers crisis dates back to several decades ago, Enugu State did not experience any form of such crisis. This is because they coexisted

peacefully with their host communities and paid damages each time their cattle strayed into people's farmlands to damage crops. The question is what could have happened to results in these perennial attacks in the state?

In trying to address the seeming conflict between herders and farmers, one of the key informants a police officer attached to Enugu state command explained:

Before now, the herders were regarded as mere sojourners who had come down from Northern Nigeria in search of greener pastures for their cattle. Around the early 1980s and 90s, they were seen as good people and they cohabited with the people of Southeast peacefully. Within this period if by any circumstance their cattle intruded into farmland, the herders were billed for such damages and they paid. However, as time went by the impression of peaceful coexistence vanished. Presently the herder uses their cattle as bait for trouble. They intentionally allow the cattle to destroy farmlands, and when the farmer reacts to the damage done to their crops, the herders would come back after some time to unleash mayhem on the host community (Male/54yrs/Ijaw/Christian/Enugu State Command/KII/2022).

Giving prudence to the view expressed above, another key informant and a vigilante officer explained further.

I strongly think there is more mistrust among ethnic groups now than it was before now. We have been so divided now than we were before. The Ibos no longer trust the Hausa/Fulani anymore. There is the fear that the Hausa/Fulani want to take their land. The suspicion is making it difficult to trust or even allow the herders to move closer or encroach on their farmland. Also, the change in the attitude of the herders who now want to claim that they also have the right to graze on farms and the lack of the political will to resolve this crisis have been responsible for this attack (Male/42yrs/Ibo/Christian/ Agbada Nenwe Community/KII/2022).

It is interesting to note, that the issue of herders and farmers clashes became prominent during the administration of former President Muhammadu Buhari. The majority of the participants affirmed that the government response was poor and that the inability to address the incessant attack clearly shows the lack of political will. It is discernible from this response that although herders' attacks on farmers started 10-15 years ago. As explained by one of the traditional leaders in the Agbada Nenwe community in an interview: "The Fulani have been in the State of Enugu over time, but their heinous activities started about 10-15 years ago. Their terrorist activities worsened since the emergence of the administration of Muhammadu Buhari as the president of Nigeria in 2015." (Male/72yrs/Ibo/Christian/Agbada Nenwe Community/IDI/2022). The lack of power to address the incessant clashes by the President and security operatives in the state shows the complacency of the administration to find a lasting and permanent solution to the herders and farmers clashes not only in Enugu but throughout the country. This view was given credence by many of the participants in the four communities. One of the participants in the Nkanu community enthused:

I think the former President's inability to act as the commander in chief of the armed forces to me, is the major driver of this crisis. Buhari is the Grand patron of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria. Buhari himself is a herder and Miyetti Allah supported his political ambition. That was why he could not exert his constitutional power to address the clashes. He wanted us to give them land so that they could take away our farmland and colonise our land. If he had addressed this problem, it would not have degenerated into killings, maiming, and burning down of houses and farmlands just because of cattle (Male/48yrs/Ibo/Christian/Nkanu community/FGD/2022).

The majority of the participants believed that the herders also have the backing of the security agencies that most often will not come to the rescue of the farmers even when they have information on the attackers coming to strike. This has further confirmed the involvement and connivance of security personnel in the onslaught in the affected communities. In one of the in-depth interviews with a farmer in Nkanu community, he enthused:

These herders have become so powerful now that they go about with AK 47 when moving with their cattle on our farmland. When we complained they insulted us and destroyed our farmland with impunity. When we report them to the security agencies, no arrest is made and that leaves us heartbroken. Our government cannot rescue us, the federal government does not show any willpower to address the situation and many of us are afraid to go to our farmlands because of the mayhem they unleash on us. It is terrible, to say the least (Male/56yrs/Ibo/Christian/Nkanu Community/IDI/2022).

One of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria members interviewed, summed it up thus:

Most of these attacks are not from our members. We have repeated this over and over again. It is coming from those herders coming into our borders from Niger, Senegal, Mali and other West African Countries. We have asked the government to fish out these marauders tarnishing our names. Our members are registered and law-abiding citizens. We have lived together with our host communities before now than to cause problems. Anytime there is any destruction of farmlands, we are the target. Any time there is an attack it is the Fulani herdsmen that is labelled. This is unfair to the Fulani people. Even if they speak other languages, it is Fulani

(Male/60yrs/Fulani/Muslim/ Eha-Amufu community/IDI/2022).

Herders and farmers have enjoyed a peaceful and symbiotic relationship since the migration of the Fulani to Enugu State. However, this relationship was short-lived as it degenerated into violent conflicts with the attendant lethal effects such as the lives, destruction of farmlands, crops and forced eviction/displacement of people since 2015. This aligns with the submission of Atobatele and Moliki (2022) that herders and farmers had enjoyed decades of very cordial and symbiotic before the conflict. This implies that traditional peace-building mechanisms were deployed to amicably resolve disputes and misunderstandings within the communities.

Currently, the herders-farmers conflict in Nigeria has taken a very dangerous and lethal proportion and constitutes a major national security challenge to the country as it continues to slow down progress and development in Nigeria. According to Iheanacho et al. (2022), the herdsmen attacks in Enugu State date back to 25th April 2016 (the attack on Ukpabi Nimbo). Since then, there have been attacks on Neke in Isi-Uzo LGA (April 27, 2017), Umulokpa and Adani, Uzo Uwani LGA (March 22, 2019 and March 19, 2021 respectively), Obie-Aku, Opanda, Nimbo Community, Uzo Uwani LG and Abor Eha-Amufu, Isi Uzo LGA (July 22 and August 1 2021 respectively), and Okpokwu-Mgbuji community in Isi-Uzo LGA (August 1, 2021). Others include -the attacks on Ugwujoro Nimbo, Uzo Uwani and Mgbuji, and Isi Uzo LGA, respectively on October 18, 2021 and 7 January 2022. Herders' attacks on farming communities in Aninri, Oji River, Ezeagu and Nkanu West Local Government Areas are also inclusive.

Official (Government) Response to the Management of the Crisis

Further compounding this issue is the fact that the state government has not shown enough political will and sincerity towards addressing the conflict. Again, the military, police and Para-military institutions do not take orders from the governor but from the centre. The majority of the respondents in the IDI, KII and participants in the FGDs believed that this has greatly hampered the powers of the state governor to take proactive measures to adequately address the situation. The government has not handled the issue of herders/farmers clashes well. Some respondents hold the view that the government is complicit. Others believe that the government of the state has its hands tied. This is because the governor is the chief security officer of the state but the military, police and other Para-military agencies take instruction from the federal government in times of crisis, as against the governor.

The case of the Nimbo attack in 2015 readily comes to mind. Before the attack, it was alleged that the people of Nimbo suspected foul play; they alerted the security agencies who treated the reports with a wave of hand. It was alleged that a day before the herdsmen struck, the military personnel on duty at Nimbo were withdrawn. Following this incident, the host community ensured that all herders and cattle left Uzouwani LGA, but they later came back to Uzouwani

following the intervention of one of their Emirs. Aside from the above, all the security chiefs in the state are Fulani. It is believed that this is a deliberate ploy to ensure that the terrorists function without hindrance.

The prevalent opinion of the host communities is that the federal government in Nigeria make things difficult for the state government to function effectively. They pointed out the fact that the herders were armed with military weapons when it is obvious that the weapons available to police and other Para-military who are anticipated to go after them are not as sophisticated as the weapons of the herders. To authenticate this suspicion, when many attacks of high magnitudes happened, the president would be alerted but the president would look the other way as if nothing happened. No arrests would be made and even when arrests were made, the suspects would not be prosecuted.

The federal government has a major role to play in this circumstance given the overwhelming evidence that shows that marauding herders operate with the help of authorities, wearing military and paramilitary regalia with sophisticated weapons that cannot be matched by police firepower.

The conspicuous silence of the Buhari administration in the face of attacks and severe human casualties bolstered the activities of the attackers. No arrests were made despite glaring evidence.

The respondents agreed that the herdsmen are often time happy about the carefree response of the government because the security agencies in the state help them execute their plans against the host communities. Also, they go ahead to protect them from the wrath of the host communities in situations where reprisal occurs. Herdsmen are comfortable with government complacency and ineptitude in handling the conflict as it gives them the lee-way to continue to advance their course. The farmers and host communities appear helpless following the disappointing attitudes of the federal government which holds firm control of the security apparatus of the system.

Civil rights organisations often raise alarm to draw the consciousness of the government to what happened. According to the group, the NGOs in some situations lend helping hands through relief materials but it ends there. CSOs/NGOs have been of immense help to victims of these attacks and have contin-

ued to draw the government's attention to what needs to be done to handle the conflict. The responses according to the group have not helped in entrenching peace because the animosity is growing by the day. Herder's attacks on farmers in Enugu State have not abated because no sincere and effective measure has been deployed by the government.

Although the state governor – Rt. Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwanyi had on the 14th of September 2021 signed anti-open grazing into law, the bushes in the state still have to graze cattle all over the place. It is not all about the law but the implementation of the law. Although Enugu State has enacted the anti-open grazing Law, the law has not been made effective through implementation. As said earlier, this is purely a security issue and it is the duty of security agencies to respond when attacks of this nature happen, the state security heads have to mobilize their men to action in the case of such inhuman activities, and the official responses are far less the expectations of the people. The group hold the prevalent view that the Buhari administration is known to have failed much more as far as the protection of lives and property is concerned. Buhari government started in 2015 and since then till date, the security situation of the country from all facets has been worsening.

The stakeholders as reflected by the group include the state government, federal government, LG executive council, the traditional rulers, town union presidents, the security agencies, the leadership of farmers' groups, the leadership of the herders at various levels, including the Miyetti Allah, etc. All the above-mentioned stakeholders have functioned one way or the other in trying to bring peace, but all effort has failed because the federal government have been financing and protecting the herders all through this period. This being the case, all other efforts can always be undermined because of the spurious interest of FGN. Stakeholders in the effort to end this conflict cut across government at the three tiers, town unions and traditional institutions, security agencies as well as farmers and herders groups at various levels. The government cannot and has not been able to effectively address the situation. Hence the involvement of all the various institutions and groups such as the CSOs, traditional rulers and community unions, security agencies, farmers, herders groups and leaderships. They worked with the government at times but in some situations,

the stakeholders worked independently. All activities of these stakeholders are galvanized and coordinated by the government. However, certain situations demand the independent action of each of these groups to avoid the situation from degenerating. It is because the attacks affect the system, they operate either directly or indirectly. If one is in a troubled system, that person cannot have internal peace. The involvement of these stakeholders is to bring about a peaceful society. This is because every human organization or group needs a peaceful environment to thrive.

Conclusion

It has been noted that herder-farmers had symbiotic relationships up to the earlier years of colonial regimes but the changes in policies, population growth, limited grazing lands, waters and other commonly used natural resources have brought about a conflicting relationship. The implication of the herders-farmers conflict had brought about ethic reconfiguration where for instance, the Fulani ethnicity is increasingly being criminalized and associated with violence with their dangerous weapons being seen on them rather than their normal long sticks for herding cattle. The failure of the security architecture has led to alternative strategies such as the vigilantes and local hunters. The negative tendencies are the rampant killings of the herders by them without due diligence and reprisal attacks imminent thereby threatening national security. Generally, all government measures so far to address the challenges haven't been successful in dealing with the conflicts between farmers and herders in the country. People perceived government interventions to be ethno-religiously conceived and orchestrated to favour the herders against the indigenous farmers in most instances.

Recommendations

This study revealed that the Government and other stakeholders (including the Civil Society Organizations) interventions aimed at resolving the herders-farmers conflicts have so far been unsuccessful as the desired results have not been achieved. Consequently, to maximize the benefits of government interventions in addressing herders-farmers conflicts the following recommendations are

made:

- 1. The Federal Government to ensure thorough, effective and impartial investigations and prosecution of any person, including members of security forces, who perpetrated abuses; wilfully ignored attacks between herders-farmers in Enugu State, and perhaps other parts of the country where such crisis had taken place. This will help to repose the people's confidence in the intention and capacity of the government to genuinely address the problem and will eventually promote effective implementation of government interventions;
- 2. In a related approach government must implement the ECOWAS convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons to discourage access and use of such arms to cause large-scale destruction. Furthermore, the Federal Government must ensure that it equips and trains police on modern policing techniques compatible with international human rights standards to effectively deal with the herders-farmers conflicts to ensure that their responses to attacks do not result in the violation of human rights;
- 3. The state government should complement and collaborate with the Federal Government as well as humanitarian agencies to provide the necessary support to all those, including farmers and herders, particularly those that are displaced and in dire need of shelter, food, healthcare and protection. It should embrace and vigorously use dialogue and mediation to transform the relationships and promote more collaborative methods in addressing herder-farmer conflicts;
- 4. Civil Society Organizations' interventions must be target-friendly in actually empowering the victims in terms of adequate provision of relief, including protection, shelter, food, and healthcare. This will ensure that all people who have suffered losses from the crisis are provided with adequate Compensation
- 5. This study also agrees with the recommendation of Luqman (2021) that, training herdsmen on local feed preservation techniques such as

silage and hay would make a significant contribution towards seasonal dependency on feed supply. It would further reduce the need for seasonal migration. Feed supply is generally not a problem during the rainy season. The excess herbage can be harvested, processed and stored during the dry season. Private investors can also tap into the business of feed manufacturing for ruminants. The poultry and aquaculture subsectors have well-established feed manufacturing companies and a lot of brands, but the ruminant sub-sector does not. This is in addition to the use of animal trackers; since farmers are complaining about animals grazing on their crops, with these trackers, herders can prevent their animals from eating farmers' crops. In addition, it would protect the animals from cattle rustlers and proper record keeping.

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INSECURITY AND ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA: THE CASE OF ANAMBRA STATE GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION OF 2021

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Abstract

In a liberal democracy, an election is a vehicle that guarantees a non-violent transition of power be-tween civil rule. It serves as a medium of mobilization, accountability, and political choice. However, credible elections must be done in a secure environment that guarantees the safety of both properties and the lives of citizens. Unfortunately, widespread insecurity is a challenge to elections in Nigeria. These have affected voter turnout, which raises a question mark on the legitimacy of the elected offi-cial. This study, therefore, examines the nexus between insecurity and elections in Nigeria. Specifical-ly, the study dwells on the interconnectedness between insecurity, voter turnout, and voter apathy. The study is desk research that used primary data from election observers of the Anambra State 2021 governorship election, commissioned by the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies. The study also used secondary data from similar sources. The theory of electoral violence and militarization of politics was used as a theoretical guide in understanding the nexus between insecurity and elections. The study found that, although there are several approaches to address the threat of insecurity to elections, the Nigerian government has relied more on a military strategy. Un-fortunately, the deployment of heavy security agencies, such as the police, military, and paramili-tary, on election duties has implications for electoral progress. Consequently, the study recommended the amendment of Section 271 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria on mili-tary deployment for election duties.

Keywords: Election, Insecurity, Political Violence, Militarized Election, Voter Turnout, Voter Apathy, Anambra Nigeria.

Introduction

An election is a vehicle that guarantees a nonviolent transition of power in civil rule. It serves as a medium of mobilization, accountability, and political choice. However, credible elections must be done in a secure environment that guarantees the safety of both properties and the lives of citizens. Unfortunately, widespread insecurity is a challenge to elections in Nigeria. Consequently, election stakeholders have raised concerns about whether Nigeria is safe and secure enough to guarantee a free and smooth election as we approach the 2023 elections (Shuaib, 2022). The northern part of Nigeria is engulfed with bandits and terrorists that frequently launch deadly attacks on government establishments and civilians. In addition, militant agitators hold sway in southern parts of the country. For instance, on 14 April 2022, five gunmen killed an official of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Nigeria's electoral management body (EMB), in Imo State, where continuous voter registration was taking place. The gunmen destroyed the INEC registration materials and equipment to warn the Nigerian government that the southern part of the country is not safe to conduct the forthcoming elections (Sobechi, 2022).

Meanwhile, evidence from the Anambra State 2021 gubernatorial election shows a significant correlation between insecurity, voter apathy, and voter turnout. During the election, less than 11 per cent of the registered voters in the state turned out to cast their vote. This raises a question mark on the legitimacy of the elected Governor. The low voter turnout and apathy were not surprising given that there has been an increase in violent attacks by militant agitators in Anambra State (Njoku, 2021). Before the election day, Anambra State witnessed the increased killing of residents, destruction of property, and violent attacks on state institutions. The militant agitators attacked security personnel, politicians, and civilians. These created a sense of fear and apprehension among the ordinary people of the state (Njoku, 2021).

This study, therefore, examines how insecurity impacts voter turnout and voter apathy in Nigeria's electoral process. The study also reviews the policy and institutional efforts to address the threat of insecurity to ensure smooth elections in Nigeria. This study is significant in understanding the effect of insecurity on

voter turnout and voter apathy. The continuous decline in voter turnout has been a source of concern, hence the need to investigate factors responsible for low voter turnout and ways in which they can be addressed.

This study is divided into five sections, namely introduction, theoretical framework, methodology, findings/discussion, and conclusion and policy recommendations.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of electoral violence and militarization of politics is a useful theoretical guide in understanding the nexus between insecurity and elections. The basic assumption of the theory is that militarized elections are elections characterized by the use of violence and a threat to force or displace political opponents by contenders for power. It also involves the manipulation of votes, and intimidation of the press and political/election observers (Staniland, 2015). Staniland (2015) extensively utilized this theory and expanded our understanding of this theory.

Roessler (2005) and Brass (1997) listed two factors that encourage militarized elections. First is when international actors pressurize or force a regime into a partial political liberation, the state sponsors non-state violence to replace state repression. The Second instance is when democracy is weakly institutionalized, there are greater chances of militarized elections. The theory posits that in a weakly institutionalized democracy, political parties secure weapons for their armed wing and encourage armed criminals such as bandits and insurgents to counteract state-backed violence; i.e. state security personnel. Therefore, central to the theme of the militarized election is the threat of electoral armed groups to elections.

Electoral armed groups are non-state armed actors affiliated with either the government/ruling party or opposition parties. Staniland (2015:696) listed them as "insurgents, militant groups, the armed wings of political parties, militias, and criminal networks". According to Eaton (2006), "when electoral armed groups operate independently, they often become power brokers that control patronage and political mobilization with the instruments of violence". He

further argued that "when government controls these armed groups, they are used for social control to discipline and co-opt local communities". In whichever way they are controlled, armed groups affect the quality of democracy. are four crucial areas of political life where electoral armed groups can have an impact:

- (i) Through their actions, governments may be able to elude international plans for post-conflict democracy and election supervision. Armed electoral group frequently exploits or sabotage international involvement and democratization policies through their acts of violence (Wilkinson, 2004).
- (ii) Elections that are militarized can cause civil wars to start in two different ways. Initial internal war may result from electoral armed groups turning against the state or being targeted for destruction by the state. Second, when electoral polarization degenerates into full-scale conflict, electoral armed groups can be used as a tool for ethnic cleansing and the relocation of civilians, acting as the shock troops of governments. This implies that they increase the volatility of tense electoral contests (Snyder, 200).
- (iii) Even in the absence of civil war, the actions of electoral armed groups affect the composition of the governmental power structure. Governments can centralize coercion if they can either include or eliminate these groups. This is a crucial mechanism for state formation. Conversely, strong, autonomous electoral armed groups frequently enact de facto authority over specific regions and operational fiefdoms. When state and non-state violence become entwined in this way, complex "typographies" of governmental authority may arise (Staniland, 2015).
- (iv) Election-related violence lowers the level of democracy. Independently operating electoral armed groups turn into powerful figures who use force to dominate political mobilization and patronage. However, if a government exercises authority over these groups, they are frequently employed as social control devices to repress and subjugate local populations. However, electoral armed groups undermine democratic representation and institutional responsiveness in favour of "armed clientele" in both instances (Eaton, 2006).

Notwithstanding the impact of electoral armed groups, Wilkinson (2004) argued that previous studies assumed that the government could regulate non-state armed actors, allowing them to release and rein in violence to win elections. Staniland (2015), however, demonstrated that armed groups frequently subvert, connive, and negotiate with governments. Armed groups assume various political positions based on their ideologies and electoral significance. The government's treatment of them is determined by these roles. However, armed groups are not always used as tools by governments. Armed groups that are dependent on the government are expelled, assimilated into the ruling party or state, or managed as a proxy for the regime. While, in contrast, autonomous armed groups reject suppression and grow as tenacious opponents of state power, or resist assimilation to become normalized actors combining votes and bullets. Consequently, distinct armed groups may form from these interactions.

Consequently, Staniland (2015) asserted that five types of relationships develop between governments and electoral armed groups. This relationship develops when armed groups become normalized, incorporated, purged, resilient opponents, or proxies. When armed groups are incorporated or purged, they cease to exist. However, when they are normalized or become proxies or resilient opponents, the armed group continues to operate with varying levels of independence from and cooperation with the state.

Therefore, one may try to make sense of the nexus between insecurity and elections in Nigeria from the lenses of the theory of electoral violence and militarization of politics. On several occasions, politicians have tried to use the activities of armed groups in Nigeria to manipulate or win votes. For instance, in the build-up to the 2015 general elections in Nigeria, the opposition party accused the ruling party of allowing the Boko Haram insurgent to fester, putting the blame on the president, and asking for his resignation (Press Release, 2015). In the same vein, Human Rights Watch (2019) reported that the widespread violence in Nigeria ushered in President Muhammadu Buhari's second term in 2019. Murdock (2014) also showed that in a build-up to the 2015 general elections, both the party in power and the opposition parties were using the Boko Haram insurgency as a political weapon. Going by the theory

of electoral violence and militarization of politics this was not surprising, as the 2015 elections were perceived to be the most hotly contested elections in Nigeria's history. Thus, when the opposition party candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, won the 2015 elections there was jubilation due to the erroneous belief that Boko Haram would be defeated because it was allowed to fester by the defeated President Jonathan of the ruling party (Kola et al., 2015).

Methodology

This study is a desk research that used data from secondary sources. The study utilized primary data from election observers of the Anambra State 2021 governorship election, commissioned by the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS). The study also used secondary data from other research reports, newspapers, journals, the internet, and similar documents, to achieve its objective.

Secondary data were collected from the internet, publications by government and non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and libraries, among others. The secondary data analysis method involved the use of existing data, collected for other studies, to achieve the objective of this study.

Insecurity in Nigeria

The 2022 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) rated Nigeria as the sixth worst country with a high impact of insecurity among 163 countries rated across the world. In Africa, Nigeria has been rated the third worst country with insecurity behind Burkina Faso and Somalia (Sasu, 2022). Nigeria has several active militant groups that launch frequent attacks on civilians and security personnel. In addition, violent conflicts among herdsmen, farmers, and ethnic groups further increase the high impact of insecurity in Nigeria. Unfortunately, Nigeria's abundance of small and light weapons makes it challenging to combat the problem of insecurity in the country. It is regrettable to note that over 800 people died because of the usage of small and light weapons in the post-election violence that broke out in Nigeria after the 2011 presidential elections (Adele, 2012).

Despite the concerted efforts of numerous security agencies to uphold peace and the safety of people and property, crimes and insecurity have recently increased in Nigeria. In practically every region of Nigeria, there are now frequent occurrences of kidnapping, armed robbery, human trafficking, assassination, terrorism, and militancy (Osakwe, 2009). Undoubtedly, one of the main issues Nigeria has faced, particularly over the past ten years, is insecurity. Given that the government's priority under the 1999 Constitution is to protect the lives and property of Nigerians, this scenario has grown extremely concerning. Nigeria was one of the top 15 most vulnerable countries in the world in 2019 (Ocholi, 2009). This assertion indicates not just the deteriorating internal security situation but also the government's growing incapacity to carry out fundamental security and developmental duties despite repeated significant budgetary allocations and government expenditures on security.

By the fourth quarter of 2022 and a few months before the 2023 general elections, the northeast of Nigeria remains troubled by Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) terror groups. The North West is besieged by activities of deadly bandits that rob, rape, kill and kidnap (Nwosu & Nwokolo, 2022); Zamfara State alone has over 120 gangs with over 10,000 armed bandits (Correspondents, 2022). In the North Central of Nigeria, terrorists, ethnic militias and bandits hold sway, with 16 persons killed in the first quarter of 2022. In the South West, violence is also widespread with the recent massacre of worshippers in Owo, Ondo State. Kidnapping, armed robbery, and assassination are rampant in South-South and Southeast Nigeria. In the Southeast, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) imposed a successful weekly lockdown while unknown gunmen targeted facilities and personnel of the election management body (Nwosu & Nwokolo, 2022).

The weak policy and institutional response by the Nigerian government to these various security challenges have prompted concerns that Nigeria is unprepared to conduct the 2023 general elections. Olaniyi (2021) argued that the worsening insecurity may prevent the 2023 elections from being held.

The Nexus between Insecurity and Elections in Nigeria:

A Review of Literature

Empirical evidence has shown that in most elections contending parties engage in one form of electoral malpractice, which heightens insecurity (Joseph, 1987; Osaghae, 1999). In most instances, when a party loses elections, they are frequently prone to start one type of electoral crisis or another. These electoral crises can take the form of political propaganda, the use of militant or insurgent groups, and the arousal of religious or ethnic tensions, among other tactics. In more extreme situations, violent politics ensues in the form of political assassination, kidnapping, youth restiveness, and the bombing of public utility.

Onuoha and Ojewale (2022) showed that in Nigeria, rising insecurity corresponds with elections. The authors posited that "election security is a defining factor of Nigeria's electoral process". The findings of their study revealed that between January and July 2022, insecurity claimed the lives of 7,222 Nigerians, while 3,823 persons were abducted. In concurrence with their findings, previous elections in Nigeria have also demonstrated the same pattern. For instance, as the 2015 elections approached, Boko Haram increased the tempo of their attacks and made a dangerous advance in the northeast of Nigeria. Thus, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was forced to delay the scheduled February 2015 elections by six weeks (INEC, 2015). However, this decision raised several controversies. INEC (2015) had to explain that although it was substantially prepared to conduct free, fair, and credible elections as scheduled, security could not be guaranteed for the February 2015 elections. The delay was necessary because security personnel needed at least six weeks to execute a major military operation to neutralize the threat Boko Haram posed to the elections. It was also hoped that this delay would increase the voter turnout in the northeast, amid fears that Boko haram activities could disenfranchise many prospective voters (Blanchard, 2015).

Bukarti (2018) showed that in a build-up to the February 2019 general elections, Boko Haram also attempted to disrupt the elections by increasing attacks on Nigerian troops. In November 2018, the terror group attacked Nigerian soldiers in the Metele area of Borno State killing 118 soldiers while over 153 others were

missing. The following day, the terror group attacked a rescue team of Nigerian soldiers dispatched to comb the area in the aftermath of the previous day's attack. Ogundipe (2018) further showed that several soldiers were killed in the second attack, including the head of the medical team that went to recover the bodies of the slain soldiers. The terror group hoped to frustrate the February 2019 elections just the way it delayed the February 2015 elections. However, the February 2019 elections were held as scheduled.

Insecurity also threatened the 2021 off-season election held in the South East of Nigeria. As the November 6, 2021, governorship election of Anambra State approached, there were concerns and uncertainties around the elections. In a build-up to the election, unknown gunmen increased attacks on security personnel and facilities of the election management body. This left the residents of Anambra State confused and worried as to whether the 2021 election will be held and if the outcome of the elections will reflect the will of the people (Njoku, 2021). Although the election was eventually held, less than 11 per cent of the registered voters in Anambra State turned out to vote.

In April 2022, unknown gunmen released a video warning the Nigerian government not to hold the 2023 elections in the South East region of Nigeria (Ugwu, 2022). In the video, four masked gunmen claimed that they had come to make the position of Biafra known to the public. Their position includes the release of Nnamdi Kanu, continuation of the Monday lockdown of South East region, and no political posters in Biafra land. The terror group warned that there shall be no election in the South East region and anyone attempting any election in the region will be killed. It further threatened to deal with any election management body official seen holding an election in the region. The terror group is responsible for hostilities in the South East and some parts of South-South Nigeria.

Secessionist agitators in the South West of Nigeria have also threatened to prevent the 2023 general elections in the region. On 17 June 2021, Sunday Igboho issued a fresh eviction notice on herdsmen in the six South West States of Nigeria (Kabir, 2021). He ordered all Fulani to leave Yoruba land because he did not want to hear of any kidnapping in Yorubaland again. He argued that

the Yoruba Nation's agitation hopes to achieve an independent and sovereign country for the Yoruba race in Nigeria. Thus, he called on all Yoruba to join the secessionist agitation because the 2023 general elections will not be held in Yorubaland.

Insecurity, Voter Apathy, and Voter Turnout in the Anambra State 2021 Gubernatorial Election

Anambra State is in the southeastern part of Nigeria, made up of 3 Senatorial Districts, 11 Federal Constituencies, 30 State Constituencies, and 21 local government areas (Election Violence Mitigation and Advocacy Tool, 2021). Official statistics by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) show that the State had 2,466,638 registered voters spread across 326 Registration Areas (RAs) in the 21 local government areas for the 2021 gubernatorial election.

Pre-election issues in Anambra State revolved around the high rate of insecurity orchestrated by attacks on public institutions, especially INEC facilities, security, and para-military agents and infrastructure, as well as on innocent citizens. This was reinforced by the subsisting stay-at-home order imposed by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). The IPOB, a separatist organization executing the stay-at-home order across the Southeast, was the subject of grave worries regarding its operations. The Centre for Democracy and Development has issued a warning that the IPOB's threat of violence against those who disobeyed the order and the stay-at-home instructions could result in low voter turnout and violent elections (National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies [NILDS], 2022). NILDS (2022) revealed that the election atmosphere was tense and people were extremely careful, with many relocating to neighbouring states and others retiring to their homes early in the day for fear of possible gunmen attacks or breakout of violence. Meanwhile, and to the amazement of Nigerians, IPOB called off its stay-at-home order on Thursday, 4 November 2021, two days before the election (Sunday, 2021).

Apart from the security threat, there were also matters relating to litigations and campaigns of calumny that ensued as a fallout of political party primaries. Some contestants felt shortchanged by their political party leadership and

plotted against their party candidates. This resulted in mass defections in the state and was mainly attributable to the zero-sum game-like politics that pervaded the state in the build-up to the election. Further still, the election was unique as the sitting Deputy Governor, Mr Nkem Okeke, did not just decamp to another political party from the one that brought him and his principal to the office but also campaigned vigorously against his former political party - APGA. The winner-takes-all (Zero-Sum Game) contest pitched allies against each other and threw up physical and verbal attacks that culminated in the loss of lives and property at Uruagu, Nnewi, and Nnobi in the Idemili South Local Government Area (NILDS, 2022). It was within this general context of unstable electoral competitions that the gubernatorial election in Anambra State took place.

The unstable electoral competition and the threat of electoral violence during the Anambra State 2021 gubernatorial election accounted for the low voter turnout and high political apathy. From the INEC record, the total number of eligible voters in the 2021 Anambra State gubernatorial elections was 2,466,638 while 253,388 voters were accredited. Out of the accredited voters, 8,108 votes were rejected. Reports by NILDS (2022) confirm this abysmal voter turnout during the elections. The low voter turnout was partly caused by the prevailing security situation in the state and anticipated violent attacks by IPOB. However, there is a high prevalence of voter apathy historically associated with the State since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999. Except in 2007, the State has consistently recorded lower than 50 per cent voter turnout in governorship elections. This apathy reached its height during the 2021 governorship elections which saw only about 10 per cent of total registered voters in the state turning out to vote on Election Day (Yusuf et al., 2021). This trend continues to undermine the credibility of elections across Nigeria and further exposes political apathy as an impediment to Nigeria's democratic process. The table below shows the ratio of registered voters (RV) to voter turnout (VT) for elections in Anambra State from the beginning of the Fourth Republic, in 1999 to 2021.

2.5 2.22 2.06 1.84 1.84 1.8 1.5 17 02 B02 0.5 1999 2003 2017 2021 2007 2010 ■ Registered Voters ■ Voters Turnout

Figure 1: History of Voter Turnout in Anambra State from 1999 to 2021 (in millions)

Source: Premium Times (2021) and Okeke, C.C. (2018)

Figure 1 shows that there has been a steady decline in voter turnout in Anambra State and the 6 November 2021 gubernatorial elections revealed a sharp decline due to the threat of insecurity. The Figure shows that the total number of registered voters for the 1999 election was 2.22 million, while 1.02 million voters turned out to vote, which is about 46 per cent of voter turnout. In the 2007 election voter turnout was at its highest in Anambra State, with about 64 percent voter turnout. The total number of registered voters for the 2007 election was 1.84, while 1.17 million voters turned out to vote. However, the 2021 elections witnessed the lowest voter turnout in the history of the State, with a total registered voter of 2.4 million and a voter turnout of 0.25 million. This represents a 10.4 per cent voter turnout.

Electoral Violence and Militarization of Politics in Nigeria

In the build-up to the 2021 governorship election in Anambra State, there were a series of violence and assassination (Bankole, 2021), including a stay-at-home order by the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). This has led to projections of violent attacks on Election Day by various stakeholders, including the Independent National Election Commission (INEC). For instance,

on 8 August 2021, residents of Nnewi witnessed gunshots at Izuchukwu Junction as early as 6:00 a.m. that resulted in the death of two young men. In addition, unknown gunmen set three buses ablaze in the industrial city of the state (NILDS, 2022).

Given the apprehension as described above and the cancelled stay-at-home order imposed by IPOB, it was observed that the police had deployed 34,587 troops while the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) had deployed 20,000 personnel. However, the number of military personnel deployed by the Nigerian Army was not disclosed (Olokor et al., 2021). The National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies field observers reported that an average of eight unarmed security personnel were seen at most polling units. In addition, there were also roving patrols of armed mobile police officers stationed away from the polling units, who were called upon to provide security or restore order, whenever this was required (NILDS, 2022).

It is imperative to understand that in most nascent and young democracies across the globe, elections are accompanied by violent conflicts (Eme et al., 2016). Eme et al. (2016) argued that there is a strong link between elections and violent conflict/crisis such that in many instances voters willingly forego their franchise just to secure their safety. True to this, in the build-up to 2011, 2015, 2016, and 2019 by-elections in Bayelsa State, analysts and election managers have had security worries due to violent confrontations. However, the case of Anambra was the mother of all threats as the state was flooded with security personnel. Security presence was so heavy that most of the voters willingly forfeited their franchise resulting in a very poor voter turnout (NILDS, 2022). The assessment of elections managers, analysts, and scholars was that these elections were confronted with serious security challenges. Insurgency and banditry in the North, as well as separatist militancy in the Southeast and South-South geopolitical zones, are contributing factors to the country's growing insecurity. Yunusa et al. (2021) asserted that these inclinations took election administration in Nigeria beyond the simple duty of overseeing the electoral process.

Military Approach to Address the Threat to Elections in Nigeria

There are various approaches to address the threat of insecurity to elections, including dialogue and the signing of the Peace Accord. However, the Nigerian government has relied more on a military approach to addressing the threat to elections. Although elections are purely civil engagement in which the police should be able to provide security for the electoral process, military and paramilitary are deployed for elections in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the deployment of heavy security agencies, i.e. the police, military, and paramilitary, on election duties has implications for electoral progress.

Military men are sparingly deployed for election duties in advanced democracies and they do not enforce any form of restriction of movement on Election Day (Eme et al., 2016). However, the Nigerian constitution does acknowledge the military's role in elections. According to Nigeria's 1999 Constitution, Section 271, the military may be used to support the police in upholding law and order during elections. It is important to have a secured electoral process to prevent violence and other forms of electoral malpractice. However, the Nigerian experience is such that the incumbent party uses security personnel to intimidate political opponents. There are also instances where overzealous security personnel act in a manner that undermines the credibility and sanctity of the elections (Ebonugwo & Kumolu, 2019).

The role of the military in elections became a serious national issue following the over-militarization of the 2014 gubernatorial elections in Ekiti and Osun states. In these states, it was alleged that security personnel was used to intimidate the All Progressive Congress (APC) chieftains and supporters while aiding the People Democratic Party, PDP (Party in power at the centre) to manipulate the process to its favour. This led to several calls for the withdrawal of the military from election assignments (Onapajo, 2015). The case of Osun and Ekiti states is not different from what took place in Bayelsa and Kogi states in 2019 as well as Edo and Ondo states in 2020 as there was heavy security deployment by the police, military, and paramilitary. However, the case of the 2021 gubernatorial election of Anambra State presented an entirely different scenario as the State and indeed the entire South East geopolitical zone came under heavy insecurity

orchestrated by unknown gunmen attacks (Ovat, 2021). The role of military men in the Anambra State 2021 gubernatorial election and previous elections, especially off-season elections, calls for serious concern (Yunusa et al., 2021).

The Nigeria 2019 general elections are a good reference point for the deployment of heavy security on election duties and its implications for electoral progress. Due to the excesses of overzealous troops that damaged the legitimacy of the elections, election stakeholders have criticized the deployment of soldiers to secure elections as detrimental to electoral progress (Ebonugwo & Kumolu, 2019). Soldiers are alleged to have invaded INEC collation centres across the nation during the 2019 general elections and chased away reporters, poll observers, and authorized party agents. According to the INEC Head of Voter Education and Information for River State, some military entered the INEC headquarters on Aba Road, Port Harcourt, and began a partisan and selective screening of voters. INEC further stated that its officials were intimidated and arrested unlawfully by soldiers thereby disrupting the collation process (Ajayi, 2019).

Additionally, it is reported that soldiers participated in the violence that broke out during Nigeria's 2019 general elections, killing 58 people. Similar concerns were also expressed about the role of some personnel of the Nigeria Police Force during the elections. Security agencies were accused of being indifferent to the rampage of thugs and militant groups during the 2019 elections in some states (Ajayi, 2019). As a result of the security authorities' inaction in the face of roving hoodlums who hijacked and caused mayhem during the elections, electoral stakeholders gave them a vote of no confidence. These and other partisan acts by soldiers and other security personnel affected INEC's ability to conduct impartial elections in some parts of the country. Because the 2019 elections fell short of the standard of respectable international practices, many election observer groups criticized the role of security agencies (Ajayi, 2019).

Election stakeholders are therefore concerned about the heavy deployment of security personnel during elections. Specifically, stakeholders are disturbed that the military is playing a direct role in elections but not taking directives from INEC officials. They also noted that, in some instances, the officers of security services did not fully support INEC. Hence, it is recommended that either

the law should be amended to ensure that security personnel, including the military, deployed on election duties take directives from INEC or the military should be removed from involvement in the electoral process (Ebonugwo & Kumolu, 2019).

Despite the accusations made against military personnel serving on election duty, the Nigerian military has insisted that soldiers sent on assignment for election duty upheld the rules of conduct for military personnel and behaved well, even during the 2019 elections. Instead, the Nigerian military said that politicians had dressed criminals in military uniforms so they could threaten voters. In agreement, Election Observers also observed that hoodlums dressed as fake soldiers and other security personnel attempted to disrupt the election process in some locations during the 2019 elections (Ebonugwo & Kumolu, 2019).

Nevertheless, one may conclude that whether it was real or fake security personnel that disrupted elections, it does not bode well for Nigeria's democratic progress and consolidation. This is the position of several election stakeholders in Nigeria, including the British High Commission in Nigeria. The Conference of United Political Parties, an umbrella body of opposition political parties, accused the ruling party, All Progress Congress, of using the militarization of the electoral process to reintroduce military rule in Nigeria (Ebonugwo & Kumolu, 2019).

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

This study examined the nexus between insecurity and elections in Nigeria. The study interrogated the interconnectedness between insecurity, voter turnout, and voter apathy. In Nigeria, rising insecurity often corresponds and is correlated with elections. For instance, as the 2015 and 2019 general elections in Nigeria approached Boko Haram terror group increased the tempo of its attacks to disrupt the elections. This forced the election management body to delay the February 2015 elections by six weeks. Evidence from the Anambra State 2021 gubernatorial election showed interconnectedness between insecurity, voter turnout, and voter apathy. The unstable electoral competition and the threat of electoral violence during the Anambra State 2021 gubernatorial election

accounted for the low voter turnout and high voter apathy.

This study also reviewed the policy and institutional efforts to address the threat of insecurity to ensure smooth elections in Nigeria. Although there are several approaches to address the threat of insecurity to elections, including dialogue and signing the Peace Accord, the Nigerian government has relied more on a military approach. Unfortunately, the deployment of heavy security agencies, i.e. the police, military and paramilitary, on election duties has implications for electoral progress. Election stakeholders have faulted the excesses of overzealous security personnel, which affects INEC's ability to conduct impartial elections. In some instances, security presence was so heavy that most of the voters willingly forfeited their franchise resulting in a very poor voter turnout. Thus, election stakeholders in Nigeria, including the British High Commission in Nigeria, have faulted the heavy deployment of security personnel on election duties due to its implication on Nigeria's democratic progress and consolidation.

Flowing from the nexus between insecurity and elections, and the institutional response of the Nigerian government to address the challenges, it is recommended as follows:

- Section 271 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria on military deployment for election duties should be amended.
- The military should be removed from involvement in the electoral process.
- The security personnel/agencies deployed on election duties should take directives from INEC officials.
- Establishment of an ad-hoc joint task force on electoral security under the leadership of the INEC Chairman, with a comprehensive code of conduct and rules of engagement for security personnel on elections duties.

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DEWOCRACY, POVERTY REDUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Scholars agree that because of the nature of democracy which is pluralistic and inclusive, it has the potential to create a better society for all. This paper therefore examines the relationship between democracy the development in Nigeria from 1995 to 2022. The paper utilizes the Developmental State Theory as the framework for the analysis. Secondary data from the Central Bank of Nigeria, the National Bureau of Statistics and the World Bank Database on democracy and development were analyzed using descriptive statistics, stylized facts and a correlation analysis. The findings are that democracy has not led to development in Nigeria in the period under review. Rather, development and poverty outcomes have worsened during this time. Further, the perceptions of the citizens about democracy and the effectiveness of governance have not been positive either. The paper concludes that democracy has not proven to be a sufficient condition for development in Nigeria. The paper recommends a deliberate and consistent refocusing by all leading players towards ensuring that development is achieved through the instrumentality of state policy.

Key Words: Democracy, Poverty, Development, Nigeria

Introduction

Literature generally suggests that the intellectual debate on the relationship and nexus among democracy, development and poverty have evolved. The evolution has been driven by narratives about democracy being a prerequisite for development and poverty reduction or whether the relationship is vice versa and the bi-directional possibilities have been recorded.

Adejumobi (2000) refers to two dominant intellectual paradigms in the social sciences that shared a common ground in the interface between democracy and development in the 1960s and 1970s albeit from different standpoints. The Modernization and Marxist theories suggested that democracy is an outcome and not a cause of economic development (and poverty reduction added). According to Adejumobi, this line of thought was the intellectual crest on which political dictatorship and military rule were justified in Africa. Hence, the African leadership ideology of the 60s and 70s was a dictatorship of development rather than a democratization of development.

From the 1980s, another ideology centred on what Adrian Leftwich calls the 'Developmentalist Efficacy of Democracy', arose. Leftwich (1993) presented the core of that orthodoxy to be the assertion that good governance and democracy are not simply desirable but are essential conditions for development in all societies" (p. 605). This ideology turned the earlier argument on its head with the narrative that a particular economic system does not justify the presence or absence of democracy, and that democracy is not an end in itself but a means to an end, a necessary prior or parallel condition of development and not an outcome of an economic system.

Adejumobi (2000) further described the last two decades of the 20th century as having witnessed a renewed hope about the birth of democracy in Africa, actively supported and embraced by all segments of society. This embrace was heralded by the hopes of reversing trends of political tyranny and military dictatorship. These hopes seem to have been built on the expectations from Leftwich's new orthodoxy. Dagaci (2012) reiterated that the renaissance of democracy on May 29, 1999, raised the hopes and expectations of all Nigerians for a better life. The previous practices, though favoured a select clientele of

beneficiaries, suffocated the majority of the people. Democracy was embraced because of the promise it held to liberate the suppressed, allow for social pluralism, improve entrepreneurial activity, creativity and ingenuity and eventually broaden the political space for participation.

The expectations of democracy by Africans (and Nigerians) were not confined to the political dimension in elections and granting civil rights but extended to economic empowerment, improved living standards and enhanced social welfare. Corroborating this view, Kareem and Lawal (2017) assert that the desired goal of any democratic experiment the world over is to make life comfortable for the generality of the citizenry through the provision of food, adequate shelter and habitable housing, functional and accessible education, affordable and accessible health care among others. Wafure (2012) similarly stated that democracy is central to determining the quality of life of individuals globally and good governance drives the process.

From the opening thoughts on the expectations of the relationships between democracy poverty and development, the paper appreciates the evolution of the narratives and builds on the narrative of the new orthodoxy, thus justifying proceeding with examining the outcomes of democracy in Nigeria. Nigeria's fourth republic began in 1999 and an attempt is made to view the dynamics in the period preceding its commencement thus explaining the choice of 1995 to 2022 as scope. The main question the paper seeks to provide an answer to is, 'What has the experience and practice of democracy delivered as it relates to poverty reduction and development in Nigeria?' Specific questions which will support navigating the theme are: how have the rates of poverty and development indices in Nigeria fared within the study period and how have the democratic indices also fared within the same period?

The paper is presented in six main sections. Section 2.0 which follows the introduction is the literature review section, containing conceptual clarifications and empirical reviews. Section three discusses the theoretical framework and section four describes the method and materials. Section five contains the analysis and discussions while section six presents the conclusions and policy recommendations.

Literature Review

Democracy, like most concepts, has been variously defined by many scholars. Adjectives have been used and concepts have continued to flourish to qualify and examine democracy. From a conceptualization of democracy as polyarchy and majority rule (Dahl, 1989), to direct democracy, Marxist democracy and liberal democracy (Held, 1993, Mouffe, 2000, 2009) to illiberal democracy (Zakaria, 1997), delegative democracy (O'Donnell, 1994) and democracy as people's power (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1997; Ake, 2000). The general and central focus of democracy, however, is on the people. The most popular and well-known but not necessarily the most scientific definition of democracy remains that offered by Abraham Lincoln (1863) as "government of the people, by the people and for the people". This definition connotes that, democracy is a form of government in which authoritative power and sovereignty rests with the people to the extent that mechanisms, institutions and processes that exist are meant to benefit the people.

Within the same purview, Appadorai, (1975), states that democracy is a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by them. Therefore, a state is democratic if it provides institutions for the expression of their popular will on basic questions of social direction and policy. Appadorai, (1975), identifies the characteristics of democracy to include; periodic elections, equal eligibility for executive and judicial office and freedom of speech, publication and association. He goes further to identify the "conditions" for the success of democracy – there must be a culture of tolerance and compromise. There must be opportunity for the development of individuals in terms of access to knowledge through education, a minimum wage, fair conditions of work, leisure and some voice in determining the condition of work to guard against slavery.

For Imobighe (2006), democracy should not be confused with holding elections. In Africa, once a government emerges through an election, it is automatically adjudged to be a democratic government, irrespective of what it does with the political power so acquired. Thus, generally in Africa, the people's requirement of democracy is usually neglected.

All the foregoing conceptualizations see democracy as a people-oriented, people-driven, and people-deciding rule that recognizes the sovereignty of the people's decisions. In a related view, Nzongola-Ntalaja (1997), posits that the concept of democracy as a political practice presupposes the existence of institutions and procedures of government which are compatible with democratic principles. These institutions and procedures include; an independent judiciary, free and fair elections to be organized by independent electoral bodies, representative government, vibrant civil society and free press. Nzongola-Ntalaja further observes democracy as a value, a process and a practice. As a value, he states that democracy is a moral value, a basic human need and a necessity and therefore, a political demand of all freedom-loving human beings. As a process, he contends that democracy is a continuous social process of promoting equal access to fundamental human rights and civil liberties for all, expansion of rights and political space necessary for promoting and defending them effectively.

The paper aligns with this view and this justifies the use of the Political Stability and the Voice and Accountability indices as well as the Governance index to measure the progress of democracy in Nigeria.

The definition of development has evolved from simple increases in national income to capture a planned alteration in the structure of production and employment in such a way that agricultural shares decline as manufacturing and service sector contributions increase. In the 1970s, development was redefined, and the new definition arose because of the inability of purely economic outcomes to trickle down to improve living standards as expected. Dudley Seers posed the basic questions about the meaning of development succinctly, thus:

The question to ask about a country's development is therefore: what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all 3 of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt, there has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have worsened especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the resulting development even if per capita income doubled (Todaro & Smith, p.15).

Seers' definition implies that development is a measure of improvements in the quality of life that citizens can live. Whatever policies or investments are made, until the outcomes improve lives and livelihoods via employment opportunities to earn incomes, and access healthcare and education alongside basic amenities development has not been achieved.

Relatedly, Todaro and Smith (2009) opine that development be conceived of as a multidimensional process involving changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions as well as economic growth and poverty eradication. The reference to process in this definition is remarkable as it draws attention to the creation of a path to positive change.

Todaro and Smith further outline three core values of development sustenance, self-esteem and freedom from servitude. The presence of these in any society reflects the pursuit of development. One of the leading thinkers in the study of development, Amartya Sen introduces capabilities and functioning to the definition of development because according to him, the "capability to function" is what matters for status as a poor or non-poor person. Development has to be more concerned with enhancing the lives we live and the freedoms we enjoy. This narrative is what places nutrition, health education and inclusion at the forefront of developmental processes. To Stiglitz (2003), development can be understood as a 'transformation of society' that goes beyond economic growth alone to include social dimensions like literacy, distribution of income, life expectancy, etc. In addition, development must include some dimension of the (re)distribution of wealth as well (Leftwich 2005).

This paper adapts this definition by Sen and Stiglitz to describe a process of positive transformation in economic as well as non-economic structures which will reflect on the quality lives of the majority in terms of employment and incomes, health, literacy and education as well as income equality and social inclusion. This definition implies that poverty rates are included in the definition for development and so, will not be treated as a separate variable but as a component of development. This adaptation justifies the variables selected for study, economic growth, unemployment rate, poverty rate, literacy rate, life expectancy and the Human Development Index (HDI).

Democracy, Poverty Reduction and Development: An Empirical Review

The relationship between democracy and development has generated scholarly debates over time. Boyte (2004); and Guseh and Oritsejafor (2005), pointed to the fact that there is a relationship between democracy, good governance and development. However, they report that there is no empirical consensus to support the claim that any country that operates a 'democratic system' automatically enjoys development. In other words, a country can claim to be democratic (because its leaders are elected by the people) yet its citizens still experience bad governance and underdevelopment. Again, while good governance may not be the exclusive preserve for democracies, it is, however, a prerequisite for development to take place in any society. According to former United Nations (UN) Secretary General, Kofi Anan, "Without the rule of law, predictable administration, legitimate power and responsive regulation, no amount of funding of charity will set developing nations on the path of prosperity" (cited in Adejumobi, 2004).

For Pel (1999), there are political institutions that are critical to economic development and they are more likely to exist and function effectively under democratic rule. These institutions according to Pel include; the rule of law which protects property rights, and individual liberty which fosters creativity and entrepreneurship; the freedom of expression which ensures the production and unimpeded flow of information and institutional checks and balances that prevent massive theft of public wealth are often observed in democracies. Linz and Stephen (1997) opine that democracy guarantees development in any society. They argue that the basic elements of true democracy include its ability to regulate social conduct, the creation of strong political institutions, the presence of a strong civil society and pressure groups, a strong and rational bureaucracy and an economic regime with a strong private sector base, increased production and economic growth.

On the contrary, however, some scholars are of the view that there is a negative relationship between democracy and development and that regimes do not differ in their impact on the growth of society Przeworski and Lamongi, (2007). Chan, in Jamo (2013) argues in the same line that, democracy is not a prerequisite to development, rather what is important is social and economic rights and not

Western ideology. To Chan, development can be achieved irrespective of the type of regime once social and economic freedoms are available.

Similarly, Menocal (2007) referring to the pioneering work of Martin Lipset in 1959, posits that positive correlations between high levels of wealth and established democracies were recorded. However, he was quick to state that the correlations did not necessarily mean causation and there was the need to extend the conversations and the analysis. Menocal further suggests that the nature of expected correlations and causality are a function of the definition for development under investigation. For instance, when development is defined as economic, social and political freedom, causality can be expected, and other dimensions with other intervening variables could alter the dynamics. Because the analysis above is not reported for Nigeria but for the USA and Canada, this analysis is useful.

It is clear that conversations on the dynamics of democracy, poverty reduction and development remain relevant. This is because there are still differences in the perceived impacts which are also differentiated across regions and countries. This paper is an effort aimed at using statistics not reported in the reviews about Nigeria to conclude the meanings for her. The tools for analysis bring a fresh perspective compared to those reviewed here and the results will contribute to the ongoing conversations about the dividends of democracy.

Theoretical Framework

This chapter considers the Developmental State Theory as propounded by Chalmers Johnson, a political scientist and Japanese scholar. He introduced and popularized the concept in his 1982 book titled "Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975." The theory emphasizes the importance of coordination and cooperation between the state, the private sector, and other stakeholders. This collaboration is crucial for achieving development goals and fostering economic growth. Developmental states are seen as dynamic entities that can learn from their experiences and adapt their policies over time. This ability to adjust strategies based on feedback and changing circumstances is considered essential for success. Many developmental states focus on export-oriented

growth strategies, aiming to integrate their economies into the global market by producing and exporting competitive goods and services. In the early stages of development, the state may protect and nurture "infant industries" until they become competitive on the international stage. This protection can involve trade barriers, subsidies, and other forms of support. The main assumptions of the Developmental State Theory are as follows:

- i. The theory assumes that successful economic development is primarily driven by the state, rather than by the free market or external factors. In particular, it emphasizes the proactive role of the state in guiding and shaping the development process.
- ii. The theory posits that a capable bureaucracy is crucial for state-led development. These bureaucracies have the expertise and autonomy to formulate and implement effective industrial and economic policies.
- iii. Developmental states are characterized by long-term strategic planning. They do not focus solely on short-term political cycles but instead, develop and implement policies that span several years or even decades.
- iv. Developmental states intervene selectively in the economy, targeting specific industries and sectors that are deemed strategically important for national development. This may involve subsidies, incentives, and regulations to promote growth in these sectors.
- v. The theory assumes a certain level of political stability and continuity. Developmental states require a stable political environment to implement long-term development plans without constant disruptions.

Critiques of the Developmental State Theory have emerged over the years, offering a more nuanced perspective on its applicability and effectiveness in various contexts. One significant critique is that the Developmental State Theory may not be universally applicable. As Leftwich (2005) argues, the success of developmental states in East Asia may be context-specific and difficult to replicate elsewhere due to unique historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors. Critics contend that strong bureaucracies, which are a central component of developmental states, can become overly powerful and unaccountable. For example, in Japan, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) was accused of favouring certain industries and companies, potentially stifling

competition (Johnson, 1982).

Some argue that the rapid economic growth achieved by developmental states may not always be sustainable in the long run. Kim (2011) points out that the heavy emphasis on export-led growth can make economies vulnerable to external shocks and global market fluctuations. Critics highlight potential issues related to democracy and political freedoms in developmental states. The strong hand of the state in economic planning can sometimes come at the expense of civil liberties and political pluralism (Leftwich, 2005). The selective intervention by the state in the economy, which is a hallmark of developmental states, can create opportunities for corruption and rent-seeking behaviour (Khan, 2000). This can undermine the efficiency and fairness of development efforts.

Critics also argue that the narrow focus on specific industries and sectors by developmental states might limit economic diversification. Overreliance on a few key sectors can make economies vulnerable to shocks in those sectors (Woo-Cumings, 1999). Developmental states may concentrate power in the hands of a few elite groups and hinder the development of a competitive political landscape. This can raise concerns about the lack of political accountability (Leftwich, 2005).

Despite the criticism of the Developmental State Theory, it is still relevant in explaining the relationship between democracy, poverty reduction, and development in Nigeria. The theory's emphasis on selective state intervention and targeted policies could be relevant to Nigeria. Nigeria, like many other developing countries, faces the challenge of effectively allocating resources to tackle poverty and promote development. A strategic approach to intervention in key sectors could be beneficial. One of the key challenges in Nigeria's development has been corruption in the management of its vast natural resources.

The Developmental State Theory's focus on reducing corruption and ensuring efficient resource management aligns with Nigeria's needs. Nigeria has experienced political instability and frequent leadership changes, which can hinder long-term planning. The theory's emphasis on long-term planning

might encourage policymakers to look beyond short-term political cycles and develop sustained development strategies. The theory highlights the importance of coordination and collaboration between the state and other stakeholders, including the private sector. In Nigeria, fostering cooperation between the government and businesses could enhance development efforts. The paper proceeds to examine variables related to outcomes of democracy and development in Nigeria as a contribution to the ongoing conversation on the nexus under review.

Method and Materials

The paper adopts a descriptive design. Secondary data from 1995 to 2022 are analysed within a positivist framework. The data are compiled from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and the World Bank's WDI database. The analysis is supported by descriptive statistical tools (moving averages) and stylized facts (graphs). Also, a correlation matrix of variables is constructed. The specific data that have been analysed are explained and justified next.

Economic growth is captured as Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) instead of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) because RGDP is corrected for inflation, i.e. consumer price changes and this usually gives a better reflection of actual purchasing power (CBN, 2019 Annual Statistics). RGDP is a reflection of how economic fundamentals have worked together to achieve economic growth which is a bedrock for the pursuit of development. Poverty rates (POV) are defined as the number of poor people within a society but are expressed as a percentage. The Gini coefficient (GINI) is a measure of the distribution of income in a society. The values range between 0 and 100 per cent. A score of 0 indicates perfect equality and as scores tend towards 100 it reflects an increasing level of inequality. The unemployment rate (UNEMP)is the proportion of those in the labour force not employed. It is accessed from NBS 2019, statistics. The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index made up of Per Capita Income indicators, Life expectancy and Literacy rate. The value of HDI ranges from 0 to 1. The closer a score is to 1, the higher the level of development. This index is constructed by the World Bank and is used to group countries into tiers of development. It is also accessed from the WDI database.

The indices/variables of democracy examined in this study are the Index of Political Stability (POLSTAB) and the Voice and Accountability Index (VOACC). The POLSTAB measures the perception of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means including politically motivated violence and terrorism. Its value ranges from -2.5 on the weak end to 2.5 on the strong end. The VOACC captures the perception of the extent to which the citizens can participate in selecting their government as well as their freedom of expression, association and free media. Its values also range from -2.5 (weak) to 2.5 (strong). The third index is the Governance Index (GI), with values in the same range. It is a composite index of six indices including POLSTAB and VOACC. The other indices are Governance effect, Governance and regulatory quality, Government indicator of Corruption control and the Rule of Law. The justification for first isolating the two variables is their perceived relevance to the definition of democracy in the study despite being captured by the composite GI. All three indices are obtained from the WDI database.

Analysis and Discussions

In this section, trend and relational analysis are presented and discussed. Stylized facts on the trends of democracy and development variables are presented first. Further, the five-year moving average of these variables is presented to give room to assess which periods have produced better or worse outcomes in addition to what the general trends show.

Democracy Assessed: Political Stability (POLSTAB), Voice and Accountability (VOACC) and Governance Indices (GI) for Nigeria 1999 to 2022: The data on POLSTAB VOACC and GI scores in the study period are presented in Table 1 a chart of the five-year moving averages is presented in Figure 1 and discussions follow.

Table 1: Political Stability, Voice and Accountability and Governance Indices for Nigeria 1995 to 2022

Year	POLSTAB	VOACC	GI
1995	-1.06	-1.55	-0.90
1996	-1.06	-1.55	-0.92
s1997	-0.825	-1.32	-0.95
1998	NA	-1.08	-1.12
1999	-1.025	-0.78	-1.15
2000	-1.46	-0.48	NA
2001	-1.54	-0.56	0.00
2002	-1.62	-0.63	-1.03
2003	-1.63	-0.66	-0.96
2004	-1.75	-0.80	-0.94
2005	-1.67	-0.87	-0.89
2006	-2.03	-0.62	-0.97
2007	-2.01	-0.76	-1.04
2008	-1.86	-0.74	-0.98
2009	-2	-0.85	-1.21
2010	-2.21	-0.78	-1.17
2011	-1.96	-0.71	-1.10
2012	-2.04	-0.70	-1.00
2013	-2.09	-0.69	-0.99
2014	-2.13	-0.59	-1.19
2015	-1.93	-0.37	-0.96
2016	-1.88	-0.32	-1.09
2017	-1.94	-0.34	-0.96
2018	-1.82	-0.41	-0.99
2019	-1.75	-0.41	-0.99
2020	-1.87	-0.58	-1.12
2021	-1.78	-0.64	-1.00
2022	-1.69	-0.70	-0.88

Source: Compiled from WDI Database

Over the period under study, all three indices have remained negative i.e., in the weak zone. The values of the GI and VOACC in 2022 are better than they were in 1995 but the index of POLSTAB was better in 1995 than it is in 2022. Specifically, the values of POLSTAB and VOACC even though negative, the pre-1999 averages were better with values of -0.99,-1.26 and -1.01 for POLSTAB, VOACC and GI respectively. The reference to pre-1999 is important because these were periods of military rule. The possibility that the perception bout governance is better than the period of democracy is an indictment of Nigeria's democracy. Examining the five-year averages in Figure 1, the levels of these indices in 2005 have not changed significantly. The period 2015 to 2019 witnessed some improvements which seem to have been lost again.

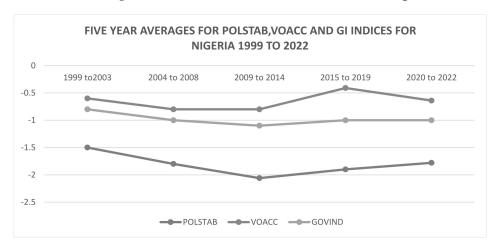


Figure 1:Five year averages for POLSTAB, VOACC AND GI indices for Nigeria from 1999 to 2022

While POLSTAB and GI have worsened, VOACC improved slightly before losing grounds again. The evidence suggests that the past 20 years of democracy have not been able to improve citizens' perception of the stability of the polity as is practised in Nigeria. It is unfortunate that twenty-four years later, the indicators are worse off. This is a clear statement about the way that democracy is practised in Nigeria. As an observer, it is clear that people and events have contributed to these unfortunate trends. It is beyond the scope of this paper to mention names and it will take a lot to enumerate incidents that have heated the polity over this time. However, some issues that have topped the list are

Herdsmen/ Farmer Clashes, Boko Haram insurgency and insecurity and calls for Restructuring of the Federation among others. Reflecting on these issues as they have unfolded, justifies the trend revealed. The process of the just concluded general elections which many stakeholders have complained about is likely to further worsen the status.

The VOACC index suggests that citizens are increasingly able to participate in selecting their government, are freer to express themselves, and associate and the media is also free. Even though the improvement still leaves performance within the weak zone, i.e., less than zero, the trends fit the observations and narratives of electoral and other political processes. The reason for losing this voice in the last three years may not be unrelated to the EndSars Protest and its sad outcome amongst others.

As far as governance goes, as shown by the GI, the Governance effect, Governance and regulatory quality, Government indicator of Corruption control and the Rule of Law are not at levels better than they were in 1999. The implication is that democracy in Nigeria has not been able to deliver on the tenets inherent in its nature, it is simply a situation of an isomorphic mimicry, delivering only the form and not the function to Nigerians.

Development Assessed: Trends in Real GDP, Unemployment, Poverty, the Gini Index and the HDI for Nigeria from 1999 to 2019: It can be seen from Table 2 that in 1999, RGDP grew at the rate of 0.52 per cent. As of 2019, it grew at 0.95 per cent. The average growth rate in the four pre-study years (1995 to 98) was 2.83 per cent. The lowest rate in the study period of -1.58% was recorded in 2016, while the highest of 14.60% per cent was recorded in 2002. The average growth rate in the period is 5.69 per cent. The growth rate is declining and this has implications for economic and other variables.

The average unemployment rate according to NBS for 1995 to 98 was 2.9 percent. By 1999, it was 17.5 per cent. It fell consistently until 2002. It fluctuated between 2003 and 2006, fluctuated till 2014 and has maintained an upward trajectory to date. The lowest rate of unemployment 11.9 percent was recorded in 2005 and the highest 26.5 percent was recorded in 2019.

Table 2: Trends of Real GDP, Poverty (PVR) and Unemployment (UMP) rates, the Gini Index and the HDI for Nigeria 1995 to 2022

	RGDP	PVR			
YEAR	RATE	RATE	UMP Rate	GINI	HD
1995	1.87	51.31	4.06	47.05	0.42
1996	4.05	50.94	4.03	46.58	0.42
1997	2.89	50.56	4.01	46.10	0.43
1998	2.50	50.19	4.00	45.62	0.43
1999	0.52	49.81	3.99	46.84	0.44
2000	5.52	49.44	3.95	45.16	0.44
2001	6.67	49.06	3.93	43.47	0.45
2002	14.60	48.69	3.88	41.79	0.45
2003	9.50	48.40	3.90	40.10	0.45
2004	10.44	48.00	3.88	40.58	0.46
2005	7.01	47.60	3.87	41.07	0.47
2006	6.73	47.20	3.86	41.55	0.47
2007	7.32	46.80	3.84	42.03	0.48
2008	7.20	46.40	3.82	42.52	0.49
2009	8.35	46.00	3.80	43.00	0.49
2010	9.54	45.64	3.78	42.12	0.48
2011	5.31	45.27	3.77	41.24	0.49
2012	4.21	44.91	3.74	40.37	0.50
2013	5.49	44.55	3.70	39.49	0.52
2014	6.22	44.18	4.56	38.61	0.52
2015	2.79	43.82	4.31	37.73	0.53
2016	-1.58	43.45	7.06	36.86	0.53
2017	0.82	43.09	8.39	35.98	0.53
2018	1.91	42.73	8.46	35.10	0.53
2019	2.27	42.36	8.53	34.22	0.54
2020	-1.92	42.00	9.71	33.34	0.54
2021	3.40	41.58	9.79	34.67	0.54
2022	3.10	41.20	10.42	34.19	0.55

Source: CBN 2019 Bulletin, NBS 2022 Bulletin, WDI Data Base

Democracy seemed to bring about improved fortunes in the Real GDP growth rate compared to the pre-democratic years. The growth rate peaked in 2002 at 14.02 per cent and fluctuated between 10 and 7 per cent in the following years. Unfortunately, in 2016 and 2020 the gains were reversed with negative growth rates recorded. The economic indices that led to the recessions had international dynamics so the effect was not completely internally driven but the effects could have been minimized if the economy had adequate buffers.

The poverty rate has fallen gradually from pre-democratic periods albeit marginally. Before 1999, the average rate was 50 per cent and over twenty years later, it has fallen by ten percentage points. Within this period despite these statistics, in other reports, "Nigeria has been classified as the poverty capital of the world. This is because while the population of Nigeria is growing, the poverty situation is also competing with the population increase in the country." Unfortunately, other reports project worsening indices. For instance, Nigeria was ranked 103 out of 121 countries in the 2022 Global Hunger Index (GHI), a position that signifies the nation has a level of hunger that is serious. The Global Hunger Index is published by the German-based Welthungerhilfe and Dublin-based Concern Worldwide. The report, which ranks countries by 'severity', gave Nigeria a score of 27.3 – a hunger level falling under the 'serious' category. Poverty rates still leave a lot to be desired in Nigeria, we seem to be speaking forward but moving backwards.

Levels of equitable income distribution, measured by the Gini coefficient higher in pre-democratic periods, with an average of about 45 per cent, steadily declined from 2019 to date. The fact that the inequality has reduced may be a confirmation that the majority of Nigerians are within the same income zones with many Nigerians falling into poverty. The inequality index measures the extent to which the distribution of income within a country deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. A coefficient of 0 per cent expresses perfect equality where everyone has the same income, while a coefficient of 100 expresses full inequality where only one person has all the income. At thirty-four per cent, there is still a lot of unequal sharing of incomes in Nigeria. The Unemployment rate has steadily risen i income earning opportunities are not

The HDI has remained largely unchanged as the change over the period from a score of 0.44 in 1999 to 0.55 after 23 years in 2022 is rather insignificant. This composite index of literacy, life expectancy and economic growth confirms that not much has changed to improve the index of development. The data speaks for itself, generally implying that these variables performed better before 1999. There is also evidence that within the period, some gains were recorded, and there were improvements in the variables' scores that surpassed pre-1999 levels. However, these improvements were not sustained but rather any gains seem to have been eroded. Apart from the index of inequality which is at a level in 2022 that was better than 1999, poverty, unemployment and economic growth rates have worsened. The level of inequality reduction might be related to the rising poverty levels as the disparities between income levels of the bottom strata continue to decline (my take is that more people are equally poor). More people are together in poverty. This is not a good review for a democracy that was embraced with a lot of hope and expectation by Nigerians. It is a result that allows one to agree with the opinion of Menocal (2007) that democracy on its own may not deliver the dividends, i.e., that democracy and development may not have a causal relationship after all. The findings here also align with the assertion by Przeworski, Lamongi and Jamo that what is required for development is not necessarily democracy but social and economic rights and freedoms. Unfortunately, the data depicts the absence of these fundamentals.

Next, the five-year moving averages are examined to see which years performed better, and how the variables have changed over the first, second, third and fourth five years. This structure is possible for the 20 years under review. Figure 2 is a representation of these.

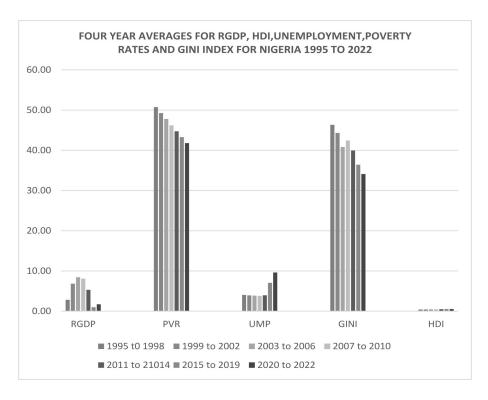


Figure 2: Four-Year Moving Averages for Economic Development 1999 to 2019

Figure 2 represents the trend of each of the indices separately in seven four-year periods corresponding to each four-year term of different administrations in the fourth republic and the story is very interesting, still confirming the previous dynamics. Democracy was expected to lead to a rising RGDP and HDI and falling PVR, UMP and Gini. RGDP recorded some rising seasons but the gains have been reversed in the last eight years. This downturn may not only be a result of democratic events but the country has dealt with two severe global economic crises of 2007/08 falling prices of crude oil in the international markets in 2016/17 and COVID-19 among others. Being an economy highly dependent on oil revenue, the shocks have left the economic freedoms and enterprises to diversify the revenue base was pursued in the interest of citizens, the buffers to absorb the shocks would have been stronger.

Poverty rates and inequality have steadily fallen over the period but on the contrary, unemployment has risen. It is "strange" what the source of the

poverty reduction might be as income earning opportunities did not rise. This may mean that the gains might be momentary and easily reversible as well. With Nigeria currently the World's number 2 Poverty Capital, the data might also be misleading. This is demeaning a reference for the 'Giant of Africa'. The HDI which is the composite index for development has remained largely unchanged in the period under review.

The data shows that the first ten years of democracy produced better outcomes than the last ten years have. Unfortunately, instead of remaining at levels that were reached ten years ago, gains are being reversed. These findings align with Przeworski and Lamongi, (2007). Chan, in Jamo (2013) asserted that democracy hurts development. Boyte (2004); and Guseh and Oritsejafor (2005) also posited that democracy does not automatically lead to development and these results confirm that. The at it is not automatic means that development will have to be driven by institutions and stakeholders. The questions that come to mind while looking at the data are: what was done right in the years that fortunes were better; what good to do has been ignored in the last 10 years; who is to blame; what lessons, if any, can be learnt?

The Correlation Matrix: One final analysis, the correlational test among the variables is conducted. The resulting correlation matrix is presented in Table 3. Positive signs show direct while negative signs portray inverse correlations. The size of the coefficient determines the strength of the correlation. When the correlation value is 0.5 or greater the relationship is strong. The apriori expectation is that improved indices of democracy will be positively correlated with indices of development. POLSTAB and GI positively correlate with RGDP and inversely with unemployment and these two variants conform to apriori expectations. The correlation with other indices of development, HDI, Poverty and the Gini index do not conform. VOACC's correlation dynamics with the development variables fail to conform to apriori for any one of them.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix for Democracy and Development in Nigeria

	RGDP	HDI	UNEMP	POV	GINI	POLSTAB	VOACC	GI
RGDP	1							
HDI	-0.6165	1						
UNEMP	-0.83742	0.489871	1					
POV	0.251778	-0.91706	-0.16777	1				
GINI	-0.11424	-0.6958	0.237241	0.916761	1			
POLSTAB	0.563357	-0.89087	-0.69624	0.800979	0.516837	1		
VOACC	-0.64675	-0.18702	0.47484	0.553713	0.764298	0.225542	1	
GI	0.470014	-0.92717	-0.55832	0.894807	0.663912	0.983317	0.357409	1

Source: Extract from Excel Output

The inconsistency and the lack of conformity to apriori expectations in the correlation results are a further confirmation of the inability of democracy to deliver development and poverty reduction. In this case, democracy cannot be said to be correlated to development as this has not been established by the data. As such there is confirmation that democracy in Nigeria has delivered only the form and not the dividends to Nigeria as it concerns her development.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The data that has been examined in this paper has failed to confirm that the experience of democracy in the last 20 years has led to development and poverty reduction in Nigeria. The results reflect more of a negative than positive correlation between democracy and development. The findings lend support to the thought that democracy is not a sufficient condition for development but rather any society that pursues economic and social freedoms for its citizens can achieve development.

This is because of the style and practice of democracy in Nigeria and not any flaws like democracy as a type of government. The paper indicts the groups and elites in control of decision-making and policy implementation. Their actions and inactions have steered the economy and society down perilous paths. Every present and past leader and every player in the space has failed Nigerians in some way, as far as delivering development in a democracy is concerned. As

Nigeria celebrates over 20 years of democracy, this kind of scorecard questions the justification for any real joy.

The leaders ought to be held accountable for their inefficiencies and ineffectiveness. Political leaders need to be awakened to a Nigerian Renaissance project as a matter of urgency to restore the fortunes of this great nation. The pursuit of development outcomes must be deliberate and consistent in all relevant sectors such that every progress that is being eroded can be restored. All hands must be on deck to build Nigeria and make her great again.

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THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA'S 2022 BUDGET AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING.

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Abstract

The study examined the commitment of Nigeria's 2022 budget to gender-responsive budgeting, focusing on the share of gender-related capital projects in key propoor ministries and the number and size of gender-related projects. The Resource Distribution Theory provided the framework for the study, with qualitative content evaluation and descriptive analysis used as analytical tools. The results showed that the share of gender-specific capital projects in the 2022 budget was far from being genderresponsive, with deeper gender gaps in capital projects across the pro-poor ministries investigated. The share of gender-specific projects as a percentage of the total budget in 2022 was only 0.11%, while the percentage of gender capital budget in the overall 2022 capital budget was 0.36%. These findings suggest that the government's commitment to gender-responsive budgeting is low, which could have negative consequences for women's participation and development in all spheres of Nigerian society. Therefore, the study recommends increasing the share of capital projects dedicated to genderspecific projects in the national budget, as well as a strong political commitment to gender-responsive budget implementation. These measures are crucial in addressing all forms of gender inequality in Nigeria and promoting women's economic and social empowerment, access to essential services, and freedom from gender-based violence and discrimination.

Keywords: Budget, gender, responsive Nigeria, Federal Government

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Introduction

Budgeting that takes into account the needs of both men and women is known as "gender-responsive budgeting," and it is a powerful tool for advancing gender parity and expanding economic opportunity (World Bank, 2021). Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is a method for creating fiscal plans and public policies that take into account the needs of both sexes (CGSHR, 2017). Another strategy for integrating the gender dimension throughout the budget cycle is called "gender-responsive budgeting.

The overarching goal of Gender Responsive Budgeting is to examine how monetary allocation and tax policy affect men and women differently. Gender-responsive budgeting involves conducting an impact analysis and then proposing changes to spending and revenue that account for women's and men's unique priorities and requirements. The primary goal of Gender responsive budgeting is, consequently, to guarantee an equitable distribution of resources to lower gender inequality. Over the past decade, most developed and developing countries have included gender-responsive budgeting as a key policy path in their growth plan.

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Finland, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, etc. are just some of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries that have implemented gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) (Ronnie *et al*, 2017). However, the idea is still relatively new as a policy framework in developing countries. Only South Africa, however, adopted GRB first among African nations. More than a decade ago, GRB was also adopted in the following additional African countries: Botswana, Egypt, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (Burn and Khan, 2017).

Nigeria, like many other African nations, has signed several major international treaties promoting gender equality, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Additionally, the country has established a Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (Aina, 2016). In addition

to the aforementioned, addressing the gender gap through GRB has become a priority for the Nigerian government in recent years. Unfortunately, Nigeria still has trouble developing budgets and policies that take gender equality into account, despite the country's adoption of the GRB framework. This research therefore assesses the gravity of GRB in the Federal Government's 2022 budget.

By signing and ratifying several major global treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and by establishing the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in each of the 36 States of the Federation and a Women's Department in the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria has made significant progress in closing gender gaps in nation building. Despite the significance of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) to Nigeria's economic growth, there is a lack of studies examining the topic. Therefore, a thorough analysis of the country's gender-sensitive budgeting framework is an essential part of this research. As such, this research aims to fill a significant void. There has been a recent uptick in the number of Nigerian states launching gender budgeting initiatives. Therefore, it is important to conduct timely analyses of the results and effects of such initiatives to bring about a reduction in the underlying causes of gender inequality.

This research not only adds to the policy discussion on women's economic empowerment through gender budgeting but also reveals the current imbalances in the budgeting system and suggests solutions. It adds to the dialogue in the literature on gender and public policy, particularly concerning the advancement and influence of public policy initiatives for women's empowerment.

Furthermore, the results of this study will serve as a policy guide for the appropriations committees in both houses of the National Assembly to ensure that the Federal Ministry of Budget and Planning adheres to the tenets of GRB in the formulation and design of future budgets in the country. Equally pervasive are gender disparities in Nigeria's educational opportunities, economic autonomy, and political engagement. Given that budget as a macroeconomic policy instrument must be planned to meet the different needs of men and women, this study identifies and addresses factors militating against the operation of gender-responsive budgeting in Nigeria. Women in Nigeria will

continue to face barriers to public goods, services, and opportunities unless there is an extensive study into gender-responsive budgets in the country.

This paper is divided into parts and subsections: this outline provides a clear structure for a research paper that analyzes the Federal Government of Nigeria's 2022 Budget and the Implementation of Gender Responsive Budgeting. Starting with the introduction and situating the analysis within a broader context of literature on gender-sensitive budgeting, theoretical frameworks, research methods and, Gender Sensitive Budget 2022 across ministries. The paper concludes with recommendations for improving the gender sensitivity of future budgets, emphasizing the importance of gender-sensitive budgeting for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

Literature Review

The United Nations (UN, 1995; UN Women, 2020), which has included "gender equality" as one of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, has made "gender budgeting" a central part of its agenda (UN, 2015). The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) both launched new initiatives in 2016 that aim to promote gender equality in economic policymaking (Stotsky, 2016). In 2020, a section on evaluating gender-responsive public financial management was added to the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) framework developed by international organisations and some developed countries (e.g. the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund, Norway, and the United Kingdom) (PEFA, 2020).

In the last 20 years, countries all over the world, both developing and developed economies, have begun gender budgeting. Some of these countries, like Austria, India, Nigeria, and Sweden, are just getting started (Khalifa and Scarparo, 2020; Klatzer et al., 2018; Polzer and Seiwald, 2021; Singh, 2018). According to other research, an increasing number of nations across all continents are having policy discussions about introducing gender budgeting (see, e.g. Ng, 2016).

Amid the debate over implementing gender budgeting, Marx (2019, p.245) argued that governments risk ignoring underlying structural problems by

allocating budgetary resources based on gender quotas because the traditional budgeting process reflects "the masculine politico-economic power relations in society." Steccolini (2019) argues that public administration scholars have ignored gender budgeting despite its significance; other academics have expressed the view that gender budgeting is absent because its gender-specific features are typically overlooked (Anessi-Pessina et al., 2016; Van Helden and Uddin, 2016). Governments, as noted by Bakker (2018), can take two different approaches to gender budgeting: one based on gender-responsive public financial management, and the other on adopting fiscal policies related to gender equality.

Several studies have stressed the importance of policy support from key stakeholders for the successful implementation of gender budgeting, arguing that GRB will not be successful without this backing (Manyeruke and Hamausw, 2013; Zakirova, 2014). According to Costa et al. (2013), this means that gender budgeting needs the backing of influential stakeholders who can take part in the legislative process and impact governmental decision-making. The alternative is that gender budgeting becomes a "feel-good" idea that is only put into practice when there are plenty of funds available or when it is used as a populist measure. When discussing solutions to the gender inequality caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, Viswanath and Mullins (2021) similarly emphasised the mainstreaming of gender budgeting. While the idea of gender budgeting stems from gender mainstreaming, few studies have connected it to topics like taxes (Khalifa and Scarparo, 2020; Morrissey, 2018).

According to Spehar's (2018) research, gender budgeting initiatives are generally well-received and accepted when they require few resources (in terms of money, time, and specialized knowledge), but they generate more controversy when these factors are high. According to Quinn (2017), "Gender budgeting has proven most successful in jurisdictions where it has been underpinned by legislation" (p. 120). Learn more about how to move gender budgeting from the margins to the centre of the gender mainstreaming agenda by studying how gender budgeting can be used as both a managerial and political practice (see Scholten et al., 2016).

On the other hand, scholars in Nigeria argued that to use public policy initiatives for the benefit of gender equality, policymakers must be well-versed in gender-responsive budgeting (Okeke-Uzodike et al. 2018). Others have argued that women would benefit from incorporating gendered and feminist perspectives into all policies and programmes (United Nations 1995, 2018) and that a feminist theoretical approach to entrepreneurship promotion policy would become a fruitful and powerful premise for policymaking and policy programme development. This is because gender-neutral policy programmes and initiatives would be good for both men and women and would encourage policy change (Vossenberg, 2014)

Nigeria has adopted policies and programmes to close the gender gap by empowering women in all spheres of society, including the economy, government, and politics. Yet, in many spheres of the Nigerian economy, women continue to face discrimination because of their gender (Mordi et al. 2010; Eniola 2018). For example, in March of 2016, the Nigerian senate declined to pass the bill of "gender and equal opportunity," which would have prohibited any form of abuse against women or men. This includes physical, psychological, sexual, verbal, economic, social, and cultural forms of mistreatment (Makinde et al. 2017). Gender recognition is an important and appropriate area of research study because it reflects how gender is gaining visibility in modern Nigerian society through social, cultural, and legislative developments.

However, there is a growing body of research that affirms the necessity of improved policy discourse on gender issues for Nigeria's national development (see Soetan and Akanji 2019). Studies have focused on the policy issues of women's underrepresentation in academia, politics, the economy, education, and the rights of women across Nigeria (see Aderemi 2019; Muoghalu and Eboiyehi 2018; Idike et al. 2020). Nonetheless, the gender equality concerns in Nigeria's budgeting framework have not been investigated in any of the aforementioned studies. This study aims to examine the gender responsiveness of the Nigerian 2022 budget in light of the available data and literature, with a focus on identifying and addressing any gaps in this literature.

Theoretical Framework

The research uses Gender Mainstreaming Theory (GMT) as its theoretical basis. The United Nations has long been a proponent of a theory called "gender mainstreaming" that seeks to advance women's rights worldwide. Beijing Platform for Action, established at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, was adopted by the United Nations. As a result, gender mainstreaming is now a part of the policymaking process in many nations. Gender mainstreaming is predicated on the idea that traditional policies are inherently sexist and seeks to combat this by using the power of established policymaking institutions to advance gender equity (Verloo, 2000).

In addition, the term "gender mainstreaming" refers to the incorporation of gender perspectives and needs in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes of laws, policies, and programmes in any field and at any level. Gender mainstreaming is an approach that uses gender-sensitive decision-making to guarantee that all members of society, regardless of their gender, enjoy the same rights and opportunities. However, Osagi (1997) argued that "while gender mainstreaming is accepted globally, it is not an end in itself but a strategy, approach, means to achieve the goal of gender equality," which runs counter to the common belief. It has been argued by Gita (2000, p. 1305) that "there is no set formula or blueprint to gender mainstreaming that can be applied in every context."

Gender mainstreaming is especially important in Nigeria's budgeting framework because it seeks to ensure that crucial social indicators on the different conditions of women and men are taken into account in day-to-day operations and policy decisions. It is useful for ensuring that men's and women's interests are considered equally when making decisions. It improves government by allowing for more well-informed decision-making with input from the right people and organizations. Many nations recognize gender mainstreaming as an innovative and progressive method of policy management. The goals of gender mainstreaming are advanced by catering to both genders. It is useful for pinpointing how workplace, educational, domestic, community, and societal contexts affect men's and women's needs, concerns, constraints, interests, and values.

One central tenet of the Gender Mainstreaming Theory is, therefore, a shift from focusing on quantitative measures of male and female participation to focusing on more transformative measures. Gender-responsive budgeting is one tool, but closing the gender gap in Nigeria requires changing the country's overall vision, mandate, policies, strategies, routines, organizational structure, processes, procedures, institutions, and culture.

Nigeria has made some strides in the general advancement and empowerment of women, particularly in the areas of gender-responsive budgeting, female school enrollment, female literacy, and female labour force participation since the country acknowledged the Gender mainstreaming theory. In Nigeria, a new national gender policy (NGP) has been developed to replace the country's previous national policy on women. The NGP's stated goals include "eradicating all such bearers, advancing gender equality, and reducing poverty levels by not only economically empowering women through income earnings, but also consciously empowering them to own production assets" (NGP, 2015, p.1).

Methodology

The study employed qualitative content analysis and descriptive investigation as the analytical framework. This research method is considered appropriate for this study because it helps to identify, describe and analyze the share of the 2022 budget to gender-responsive budgeting in pro-poor sectors. The rationale for using qualitative content analysis and descriptive investigation is to determine the extent to which the 2022 budget is gender-responsive. In particular, the study focuses on only the 2022 Federal Government Budget.

Gender-sensitive Budget 2022 across Ministries

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:

The total allocation to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in the 2022 budget is №291.42 billion, out of which №215.87 billion is budgeted for capital projects, implying that the share of capital budget amounts to 70% while recurrent expenditure constitutes 30%. Out of the №215.87 billion allocated to capital projects in the agriculture sector, only 0.98% (№2.11 billion) of this

fund is allocated to activities that are gender sensitive. In terms of number of projects, there are a total of 1024 identified capital projects for the agriculture sector. Out of this, only 32 are gender-sensitive projects, representing just 3.13% (Table 1). It is also important to note that the projects are spread among women and youths and are targeted mainly at empowerment.

Table 1: Number and Size of Gender-Specific Projects in the Agriculture Sector (2022 Budget)

S/N	Budget		Projects	
	Amount (₦)	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total Capital Projects	215,872,238,074	-	1024	-
Gender-Related Projects	2,113,807,506	0.98	32	3.13

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Youthsempowermentinagriculture and agribusiness and women empowerment in agriculture and agribusiness across the country, respectively received the largest allocations of ₹731.97 million and ₹569.29 million in the agriculture sector. If these projects are sustained, they would enhance job creation among youths and women as well as ensure food security in the country. They are also capable of raising the practice of agriculture from its current peasantry level to a more business-oriented level that is unarguably more beneficial to Nigeria. It can be seen from the above table that gender-related projects only occupied 0.98 per cent in terms of their budget and 3.13 per cent when compared to the entire projects. This unarguably indicated how insensitive the gender-specific projects in the Agriculture sector in 2022 were.

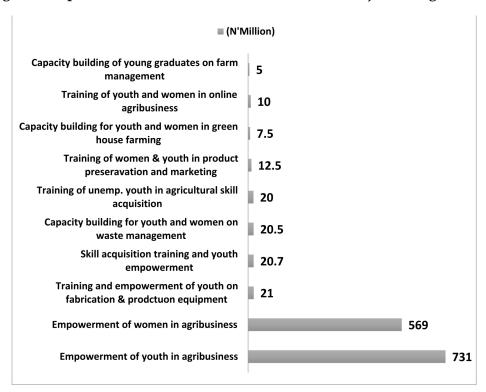


Figure 1: Top 12 Allocations that are Gender Sensitive Projects in Agric Sector

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

The above figure 1 to a large extent exhibit gender-sensitive projects where women and youth were been trained in various aspect of Agriculture.

The Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development: In the 2022 budget, the sum of №496.84 billion was allocated to the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development. This amount comprises №93.35 billion of capital projects, representing 18.8% of the total allocation to the ministry. The recurrent component of the budget to the ministry got an allocation of №403.49 billion amounting to 81.2%. Out of the total amount of №93.35 billion allocated to capital projects, only №364.55 million, representing 0.39% was allotted to gender-related activities (Table 2). This shows how insignificant the project is to gender-related activities in the 2022 Budget of the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster and Social Development.

Table 2: Number and Size of Gender-Specific Projects in the 2022 Budget of the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development

S/N	Budget		Projects	
	Amount (₦)	%	Num-	%
			ber	
Total Capital Projects	93,354,704,313		104	
Gender-Related Projects	364,554,540	0.39	4	3.85

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Table 3: Gender Sensitive Projects in the 2022 Budget in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development

S/No.	CODE	Project Name	Amount
	ERGP30160018	Gender And Development Pro-	10,054,540
		gramme for Women With Disabil-	
		ities	
	ERGP22174113	Empowerment Of Solar Powered	177,500,000
		Skills To Youth And Women in	
		Gubio LGA of Borno State	
	ERGP22178944	Supply of Empowerment Materials	2,000,000
		and Grants to Small-Scale Women	
		Traders in Ayaura, Abaji, FCT	
	ERGP22174096	Empowerment of Agricultural	175,000,000
		Skills Women &Youth of Aliero/	
		Gwandu/Jega Federal Constituen-	
		cy of Kebbi State	
Total			364,554,540

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Out of the 4 gender-related projects, the two major ones are for the Empowerment of Women, and boosting of the skills of the youths (Table 3). These three projects constitute 97% of the total capital allocation to the ministry.

Youth and women capacity building on solar power in Gubio, Borno State

Women and youth empowerment in Agriculture in Aliero/Gwandu/Jega, Kebbi State

Development programme for women with disabilities

10

Empowerment materials to small traders in Ayaura,

2

Figure 2: Gender Sensitive Projects in the 2022 Budget in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Abaji, FCT

Figure 2 above shows the chat representation of gender-sensitive projects in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development. Ninety-eight (98%) of the entire project targeted empowerment and skills development. Even though the budget was judiciously utilized when compared to the entire budget of the Ministry, it is very insignificant.

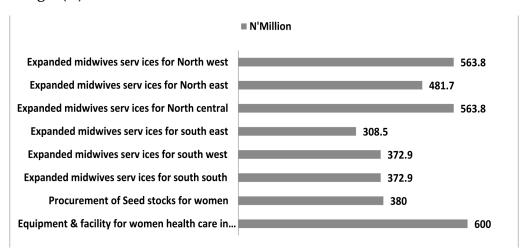
The Ministry of Health: A total sum of №711.28 billion was allocated to the Ministry of Health in the 2022 budget, of which №194.6 billion was for capital projects, representing 27.4% of the total allocation to the ministry. The recurrent component of the budgetary allocation to the ministry was №516.68 billion, representing 72.6%. Out of the №194.6 billion allocated for capital projects, only №7.3 billion was voted for gender-related activities. This is equivalent to 3.81% of the allocation for capital projects; when compared to the entire budget, it will still look insignificant. The above information can be summarized in the table 4 below:

Table 4: Number and Size of Gender-Specific Projects in the 2022 Budget of the Ministry of Health

S/N	Budget		Projects	
	Amount (Nai- %		Number	%
	ra)			
Total Capital Projects	194,602,904,514		1261	
Gender-Related Projects	7,300,102,510	3.75	48	3.81

Source: Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Fig 3: Top 8 Projects in the Health Sector that are Gender Specific in the 2022 Budget (N)



Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Figure 3 above shows the chat representation of a gender-sensitive project in the Ministry of Health. The entire project was geared towards advancing midwives and procuring equipment and facilities for women's health. Even though these projects are very gender sensitive when compared to the entire budget of the Ministry, it is very insignificant.

The Ministry of Education: The 2022 budget allocated the sum of №875.93 billion to the Ministry of Education. However, capital projects under the ministry got the sum of №174.35 billion, representing 19.9% of the total allocation to

the ministry. The recurrent component of the budget to the ministry has an allocation of ₹701.58 billion, accounting for 80.1%. The 2022 budget allocation to the ministry sees an increase of ₹133.41 billion compared to the 2021 budget, thus an increase of 19%. Out of the ₹174.35 billion allocated to capital projects, only ₹4.42 billion is meant for gender-related activities. This is equivalent to 1.21% of the allocation for capital projects (Table 5). This unarguably is very insignificant when compared to the overall capital project.

Table 5: Number and Size of Gender Specific Projects in the 2022 Budget of the Ministry of Education.

S/N	Budget		Projects	
	Amount (₦)	%	Number	%
Total Capital Projects	174,349,879,080		1848	
Gender-Related Projects	4,424,596,950	2.54	95	5.14

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Figure 4: highlights of top 5 projects in the education sector that are gender specific in the 2022 Budget.

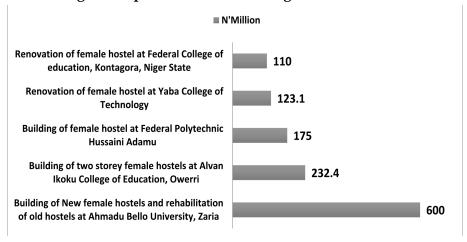


Figure 4 above shows the chat representation of a gender-sensitive project in the Ministry of Education. The entire project was geared towards providing good accommodation for female students across institutions. Even though these projects are very gender sensitive when compared to the entire budget of the Ministry, it is very insignificant.

The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment: The total allocation to the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment in the 2022 budget is N72.1 billion, of which N54.14 billion is budgeted for capital projects. Thus, capital budget accounts for a significant proportion of 75.1% while recurrent expenditure constitutes 24.9%. Out of the N54.14 billion allocated for capital projects, only N1.09 billion, representing 2.01% is mapped out for gender-responsive activities. In terms of the number of projects, there are a total of 351 capital projects, out of which, only 9 representing 2.56% are gender sensitive projects (Table 6). It is also important to note that the projects (2.56%) focused mainly on the empowerment of women and the youth. Like the other gender-sensitive project, this is also insignificant when compared with the entire budget allocated.

Table 6: Number and Size of Gender-Specific Projects in the Industry, Trade & Investment Sector (2022 Budget)

S/N	Budget		Projects	
	Amount (₦)	%	Number	%
Total Capital Projects	54,135,966,231		351	
Gender-Related Projects	1,090,528,545	2.01	9	2.56

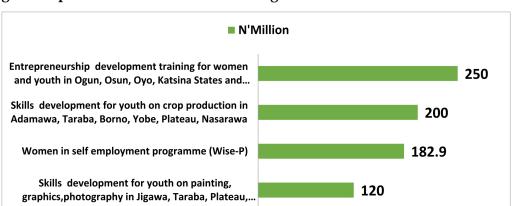


Fig 5: Top 5 Projects in the Industry, Trade and Investment Sector that are gender specific in the 2022 National Budget

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Figure 5 above shows the chat representation of gender-sensitive projects in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment. The entire project was geared towards skills acquisition for women and youth. Even though these projects are very gender sensitive when compared to the entire budget of the Ministry, it is very insignificant

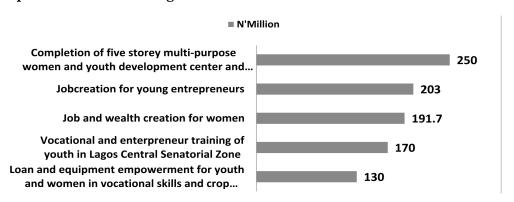
The Ministry of Labor & Employment: The total allocation to the Ministry of Labour and Employment in the 2022 budget was №35.13 billion, of which №20.68 billion representing 58.87% was budgeted for capital projects whereas recurrent expenditure constitutes 41.13%. Out of the №20.68 billion allocated to capital projects to the ministry, only №1.91 billion representing 5.27% was allocated to address gender responsive projects. There is a total of 310 capital projects listed for the Ministry of Labour and Productivity in the 2022 budget out of which, only 15 representing 1.61% are gender sensitive (see Tables 7). We can deduce from the information above that the Ministry of Labour and Employment did not put into consideration priority for gender-sensitive projects when preparing their budgets.

Table 7: Number and Size of Gender-Specific Projects in the Ministry of Labor & Employment (2022 Budget)

S/N	Budget		Projects	
	Amount (₦)	%	Number	%
Total Capital Projects	20,680,334, 429		310	
Gender-Related Projects	1,090,528,545	5.27	15	1.61

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Figure 6: Top 6 Projects in the Labor & Employment Sector that are Gender Specific in the 2022 Budget.



Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Figure 6 above shows the chat representation of gender-sensitive projects in the Ministry of Labor and Employment. The entire project was geared towards the empowerment of youth and women. Even though these projects are very gender sensitive when compared to the entire budget of the Ministry, it is meagre.

The Ministry of Youths & Sports Development: Total allocation to the Ministry of Youths & Sports Development in the 2022 budget, amounted to №193.32 billion, of which №7.83 billion was for capital projects. In other words, the share of the capital budget is 4.1% while recurrent expenditure constitutes 95.9%. Out of the №7.83 billion allocated for capital projects to the ministry, only №50 million (0.64%) was allocated to activities that have women in direct focus.

In terms of the number of projects, there is a total of 162 capital projects and only one project has a direct focus on women (Strengthening National Support for Young Women & men in Youth, health and Reproductive Issues). These account for only 0.62% of the number of projects in the Ministry's budget (see Tables 8). Thus, the projects in the Ministry of Youth and Sports Development are not gender sensitive.

Table 8: Number and Size of Gender (Women Specific) Projects in the Ministry of Youths & Sports Development (2022 Budget)

S/N	Budget		Projects	
	Amount (₦)	%	Number	%
Total Capital Projects	7,825,980,351		162	
Gender-Related Projects	50,000,000	0.64	1	0.62

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Table 9: Gender-Sensitive Projects in the 2022 Budget of the Ministry of Youths & Sports Development

S/No.	CODE	Project Name	Amount
		Strengthening National Support For Young Women & Men In Youth Health And Reproductive	
	ERGP22170248	Issues.	50,000,000
Total			50,000,000

Table 9 above shows the representation of gender-sensitive projects in the Ministry of Youth and Sports Development. The entire project was targeted at Strengthening National support for young women & men in youth health and Reproductive Issues. Even though these projects are very gender sensitive when compared to the entire budget of the Ministry of Youths and Sports Development, it is very insignificant.

The Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development

In the 2022 budget, the sum of №496.84 billion was allocated to the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development. This amount comprises №93.35 billion of capital projects, representing 18.8% of the total allocation to the ministry. The recurrent component of the budget to the ministry got an allocation of №403.49 billion amounting to 81.2%. Out of the total amount of №93.35 billion allocated to capital projects, only №364.55 million, representing 0.39% was allotted to gender-related activities (Table 10). This percentage (0.39%) is very insignificant when compared to the entire budgets and projects in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development.

Table 10: Number and Size of Gender-Specific Projects in the 2022 Budget of the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development

S/N	Budget		Projects	
	Amount (₦)	%	Number	%
Total Capital Projects			104	
93,354,704,313				
Gender-Related Projects	364,554,540	0.39	4	3.85

Table 11: Gender Sensitive Projects in the 2022 Budget in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development

S/No.	CODE	Project Name	Amount
	ERGP30160018	Gender And Development	10,054,540
		Programme for Women With	
		Disabilities	
	ERGP22174113	Empowerment Of Solar Powered	177,500,000
		Skills To Youth And Women in	
		Gubio LGA of Borno State	
	ERGP22178944	Supply of Empowerment Materials	2,000,000
		and Grants to Small-Scale Women	
		Traders in Ayaura, Abaji, FCT	
	ERGP22174096	Empowerment of Agricultural	175,000,000
		Skills Women &Youth of Aliero/	
		Gwandu/Jega Federal Constituency	
		of Kebbi State	
Total			364,554,540

Source: Author's computation from the 2022 Appropriation Bill

Out of the 4 gender-related projects, the two major ones are for the Empowerment of Women and boosting of the skills of the youths (Table 11). These three projects constitute 97% of the total capital allocation to the ministry as shown above.

Figure 7: Gender-Sensitive Projects in the 2022 Budget in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development

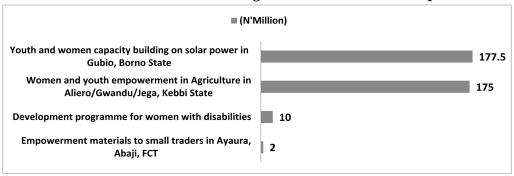


Figure 7 above shows the chat representation of a gender-sensitive project the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development. The entire project was geared towards empowering women especially those with disabilities. Even though these projects are very gender sensitive when compared to the entire budget of the Ministry, it is very insignificant.

Summary of Projects and Capital Budget Allocation to Select Sectors based on their Gender Sensitiveness

This section (see Table 12) summarized the gender responsiveness of seven select Ministries (mainly pro-poor) of the federal government. The Ministries are Agriculture and Rural Development; Health, Education; Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development; Youths & Sports Development; Science & Technology; Labor & Empowerment; and Industry, Trade & Investment. It was found that the share of gender-specific projects of the examined Ministries as a percentage of the overall FGN total budget in 2022 is 0.11%, while the percentage of gender capital budget in the overall 2022 capital budget is 0.36%. The Education Ministry has the highest number (1848) of gender responsive projects followed by the Ministry of Health which has 1,261 gender sensitive projects.

In terms of the percentage share of each ministry's gender-responsive projects in the total capital allocation to the Ministry, the Ministry of Labor & Employment maintained a clear lead with 5.57%. The next ministry in this regard is the Ministry of Health with a percentage share of 3.75%. The Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development which has a 0.39% share is the least in this regard.

Table 12: Summary of Number of Projects and Capital Budget Allocation to Select Ministries based on their Gender Sensitiveness.

	Projects in Capital Budget (Number)			Allocation (Amount)		
Ministry	Total	Number	%	Capital Allocation	Amount	%
	Number	of		to the Ministry	for Gender-	
	Projects	Gender-		(N)	Specific	
		Specific			Projects (₦)	
		Projects				
Labour &	310	15	1.61	20,680,334, 429	1,908,674,995	5.27
Employment						
Industry,	351	9	2.56	54,135,966,231	1,090,528,545	2.01
Trade &						
Investment						
Science &		9		70,354,885,918	445,944,058	0.63
Technology						
Education			5.14	174,349,879,080	4,424,596,950	2.54
1848						
85						
Humanitari-	104	4	3.85	93,354,704,313	364,554,540	0.39
an Affairs						
Health	1261	48	3.81	194,602,904,514	7,300,102,510	3.75
Youth &	162	1	0.62	7,825,980,351	50,000,000	0.64
Sport						
Agriculture	1024	32	3.13	215,872,238,074	2,113,807,506	0.98
Total	5060	203		810,496,558,481	17,698,209,104	
Total FGN				16,391,023,917,692		0.11
2022 Budget						
Total FGN				4,891,778,836,654		0.36
Capital						
Budget in						
2022						

Conclusion

One of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Goal #5) which Nigeria has ratified is the commitment to bridging the gender inequality gap. In this wise, Nigeria has adopted gender responsive budgeting as a means of promoting gender equality through various budgetary allocations and programmes targeted at gender development. However, this has not yielded much impact on bridging the gender inequality gap, as there still exists a high prevalence of gender discrimination due to a lack of access to socioeconomic opportunities, cultural and religious factors, poverty, and inadequate legal and policy frameworks.

These factors have adversely affected women's active participation and development in all spheres of Nigerian society. Therefore, increasing the share of capital projects of gender-specific projects in the nation's budget, as well as the strong political commitment to gender-responsive budget implementation are important in addressing all forms of gender inequality in Nigeria.

Recommendations

This study has successfully investigated the commitment of the 2022 National Budget to gender-responsive budgeting. Accordingly, in ensuring that this gender parity gap is bridged, Nigeria has embraced the framework of gender-responsive budgeting with an emphasis on achieving gender equality and women empowerment. However, based on the key findings from this study, the following recommendations are advocated to bridge the widening gender inequality gap through gender-responsive budgeting in the country.

First, there is a need for an understanding of how gender-responsive budgeting benefits and works for women and men. Understanding the needs of men and women concerning budget planning, formulation and appropriation is key to bridging the gender inequality gap in the country.

Again, there need for the government to provide for an inclusive, participative and realistic debate on budgetary choices, especially about gender-responsive budgeting; facilitating the engagement of parliaments, women leaders and representatives, citizens and civil society organizations in a realistic debate

about key priorities, will go a long way to formulation an inclusive and impactful budget.

Findings from the study indicated that the share of gender-specific projects of the examined ministries as a percentage of the overall FGN total budget in 2022 is 0.11%, while the percentage of gender capital budget in the overall 2022 capital budget is 0.36%. These percentages are too low to close the gender gap in the country. Against this backdrop, the government needs to scale up the amount of capital projects allocated to gender-specific projects.

There is also the urgent need to make gender equity a key objective in the implementation of budgets and the processes of preparing it at all levels of government. This can be achieved by appointing more women into the budgeting process at all levels of the budget phases-ranging from budget formulation to final implementation while ensuring women with the capacity to contribute to budgetary processes are elected into law-making houses at all levels of government. This will help in securing and protecting the welfare of women during budgeting.

The government should provide adequate scrutiny of gender-allocated capital projects at all levels of the budgeting process. This will help in ensuring that the amount allocated to gender-sensitive projects is judiciously utilized.

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TURBULENT ELECTIONS AND FEASIBILITY OF DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Elections provide a means for transferring political power, conferring supreme power of the people over their representatives and giving democratic legitimisation. The quality of the election determines the extent to which democratic development can be attained. There is no doubt with the emergence of electoral democracy in 1999, democratic space has been widely opened and the people's mandate to elect their representatives has equally been restored. This transformation was very much energised by expectations that the dream of Nigeria of becoming one of the strongest democratic nations in the world would be accomplished speedily with few difficulties. Twenty-four years down the line, this dream has not been realised partly because the country's electoral processes have been tainted by all forms of violence and fraud. The paper seeks to examine the dynamics and turbulent nature of Nigerian elections and the effects on the emergence of sound and viable democracy. This study is based on qualitative data generated from secondary sources. The paper found that lack of quality elections has prevented the emergence of strong and virile democracy. The study recommended that people need to be enlightened and empowered with democratic values. The quality of the electoral process needed to be enhanced, and this required commitment and changing the mindset of all political actors.

Keywords: Election, Violence, Rigging, Democracy, Democratisation

Introduction

The election has been perceived as the most critical and visible means through which citizens can peacefully choose or remove their leaders. It is therefore a viable means of transferring political power and has, undoubtedly, remained the founding pillar of democratisation and democracy (Mesfin, 2008). The significance of election to democratisation and democracy cannot be overstated. The quality of democracy depends on several attributes including the credibility of elections. Indeed, it may be difficult to ascertain the credibility of elections, but elements such as transparency, free and fair, the extent of citizens' participation and how courageous they are in voting for their conscience. Above all, the validity and acceptability of the outcome of elections, are among other factors, that determine the quality of elections. The credibility of elections indisputably constitutes an important index for measuring the development of democracy. To assess the development of democracy, one needs to take into account how freeness, fairness and credible elections are as these constitute rudiments for democracy. An election must be conducted in a festive environment, where citizens have the right to choose or elect their representatives without any hindrance. A credible election provides democratic legitimisation and forestall questionable dictatorial tendency. Thus, it has been a benchmark for assessing democratic legitimisation. The deeper the electoral violence and fraud, the bleaker the prospect of democratic development.

Arguably, there is no country anywhere in the world that can be full of pride in impeccable elections. Indeed, even in established liberal democracies such as the United States of America (USA), the conduct of elections is swindled as evidenced by the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections. Having said so, it is important to note that in some new and emerging democracies in Africa, the election has been reduced to administrative formalities for the legitimisation of regimes. In most of these countries, electoral misconduct and unethical practices have become widespread. Equally, parochial and sectarian slogans have become unquestionable means for electioneering campaigns (International IDEA, 2016).

In particular, the political and electoral landscape of Nigeria has been dominated by all forms of electoral fraud. For over twenty-four years, and still counting, of the return of democratic politics, electoral processes generally have suffered from string abuses and instinctively manipulation. The profound electoral irregularities such as election rigging, stuffing of the ballot box and other unethical conduct such as multiple voting and vote-buying have enchanted free, fair and credible elections. There is also an overt manifestation of violence and the outcomes of elections are always amenable to a series of litigations. This negative trend has kept rising as elections go by, which turns the political and electoral environment unhygienic for citizens to participate in and poses a danger to electoral legitimacy. These, if not drastically addressed, could prevent nurturing democratic culture and foreclose the development of steady democracy.

The objectives of the paper include the following: First, is to examine the dynamics and turbulent nature of the electoral process in Nigerian politics. Second, to examine the possibility of the emergence of stable and virile democracy. Third, to proffer some recommendations that could boost the integrity of and restore the confidence of the electorate in electoral processes. The paper is divided into six sections. Section one is the introduction, which is followed by the conceptual definition of democracy and election and the theoretical exposition in section two. The third section considers the theoretical framework. Section four is about the dynamics and the troubled nature of the Nigerian elections and electoral processes. Section five discusses how turbulent elections prevent the emergence of a healthy democracy. Section six offers a conclusion and recommendations.

Conceptual and Theoretical Exposition of Democracy and Election: Reviewing of Literature

The concept of "democracy" is hard to define concisely and providing a precise meaning of the concept is quite challenging and contradictory. It is the contradiction surrounding the meaning of the concept that led many scholars to conceive democracy in different contexts and views. Jega (2005, p.14) aptly noted that giving an exact meaning of the concept "democracy" is strongly doubtful and any effort to conceive or theorise it may be "too amorphous and imprecise". Adhering to this line of argument, Bassiouni (1998) established

that the meaning and substance of "democracy" as well as the conditions of its attainment differ, the variation depends on the proponents' philosophical, ideological, political, cultural, social and economic perspectives.

Ake (2000) provided a coherent and insightful explanation of the two forms of democracy: the Athenian and liberal democracy. The concern of Athenian democracy is the popular right, the direct participation in governance based on the principle of equality and the rule of law. The liberal democracy, on the other hand, stresses the significance of the supremacy of law above that of the people underlined by the Athenian democracy. The denunciation of the Athenian notion of democracy, according to Ake (2000), ends up repudiating popular power with the principle of individualism supplanting collectivism. This transformation insinuates that a form of government organised by the people is now substituted by the consent of the people. The broadening of liberal democratic practices across the boundaries of the Western countries, especially in many African countries or what is termed as the third wave of democratisation, entails that democratic culture is becoming a universally accepted norm of governance and it should no longer be seen as a distinct characteristic of the West.

From the 1990s onward, there has been remarkable political transformation in many of the African countries as many have now opened up and encouraged multiple-party electoral politics. This is by troubling the existing de-legitimised form of government mostly autocratic single-party or military regimes (Kaarsholm, 2006). Many reasons have been provided for this transformation. For Ibeanu (2016), the reason for the transformation is the eclipse of the two major contending Cold War ideologies in the world, the communist and capitalist. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the sphere-of-influence syndrome among the superpowers. In the context of the Nigerian experience, poor governance and the crisis of legitimacy, attributable to the country's dwindling economy and rising corruption, may also have some bearing on widespread condemnation that provoked demonstrations against military rule and the renewal of competitive electoral politics in 1999.

There is confusion and little knowledge of what democracy is, this has made many perceive liberal democracy as democracy. Even though as Ake (2000) noted both share a lot concerning political equality and inalienable rights, including the right for participation, the freedom of choice, the accountability of power to the governed and the rule of law. These until now are the most recurring themes in the dominant notion of democracy. These have been part of Western scholarly discourses on the liberal conception of democracy. Democracy calls for the presence of free and fair competitive elections contested by multiple political parties with equal opportunity to contest (Ake, 2000; Jega, 2005; Aluaigba, 2016; Ibeanu, 2016). Diamond (2004) shares a theoretical proximity with the above view by arguing that democracy consists of four basic elements. These are the selection and the replacement of government through free, fair and credible elections as democracy encourages active participation of the people in politics and civic life. Others are the protection of the fundamental human rights of citizens and guaranteeing the rule of law, where the laws and procedures are applied equally to all citizens. Thus, for democracy to thrive, there must be free, fair and credible elections where citizens have the freedom and right to choose their political leaders. Above all, political tolerance and accommodation.

It follows from the above discussion that, there is a connection between democracy and elections as elections remain a mechanism by which democratic government is formed. In the view of Nnadozie (2007), election is a universally accepted process through which members of communities participate openly in choosing their representatives. There cannot be democracy without elections. The rightful winners in an election are those that are chosen by the people. Elections, therefore, guarantee citizens the right to participate in the selection of their political leaders. For an election to be credible, it must be competitive and held at regular intervals as agreed by the confirmed law of the land or electoral law. Opposition political parties or candidates must be allowed freely to provide citizens with alternatives. The quality of elections of any country signifies the level of its political development.

To enhance the quality of elections, there should be adequate enlightenment and mobilisation of voters. There should be up-to-date registration of eligible voters, secure and timely distribution of electoral materials, peaceful election and declaration of the result. It is in this respect that Jega (2015) noted that the

quality of the election is ensured with the presence of an impartial, independent electoral management body (EMB). This body should build the confidence of the electorates and contestants to have a credible electoral process. The electoral management body should promote equality among all contestants by ensuring a level playing field. Concurring this, Oddih (2007) identifies four basic conditions necessary for free and fair elections. These are: first, there must be the presence of a competent, honest and non-partisan person with prudent integrity to conduct elections. Second, there must be enabling rules and regulations to guide how elections should be conducted. Third, there must be a well-functioning and developed system of political parties. Fourth, there must be an independent and morally upright judge to interpret the electoral laws.

Elections should be sufficient to yield democracy by promoting political equality and providing equal rights for every eligible voter at the ballot box. Of equal significance, is respect for one's views and for constitutional provisions or commonly accepted rules of the democratic game. The result of the elections must be credible for a democratic project to avoid beaming a hoax. When an election is credible, it tends to legitimise the government. Elections provide a mean where citizens not only select their representatives but also participate in the running of the affairs of the state by controlling those in positions of authority. The credibility of elections makes accountability certain by ensuring that those elected are bound to meet the needs and aspirations of the people. Failing which, would oblige people to withdraw their mandate given to them during the election period. Accountability and people's participation as Kuna (2013, p. 1) noted "...are crucial not just for political stability but they constitute some of the recurring themes in the dominant notion of democracy."

Election, in itself, does not make a country democratic as in some societies they are held to legitimise a ruling regime. More often than not elections in these societies are conducted without necessarily providing the citizens the opportunity to make their preference. Therefore, the fortune of democracy resides in the extent to which democratic culture, including issues of human rights, freedom of choice, transparency, accountability, and accommodation of opposition are put into practice and manifest in the political process of a country. Above all, how credible elections are and the extent to which the right

of citizens to participate and freedom of choice are guaranteed. Thus, the level of democratic development hinges on the success and quality or credibility of its electoral process. The health of the democratic project cannot be guaranteed in a scruffy political and electoral environment.

Election remains a vital ingredient for the attainment of democracy. It is a means through which peaceful change of government can occur. For a political regime not only to be legitimate but also democratic, a conducive atmosphere must be provided for citizens to participate in elections. This serves as an obligation required of them in the democratic setting. Indeed, it is because of the closeness of election to democracy that many believe that when an election becomes perfect and other things follow, democracy will be rightly achieved. The lack of a functioning democratic culture obstructs and concurrently endangers democracy. Therefore, Nigeria could only achieve its democratic ambition when elections meet a minimum standard of competitiveness and inclusiveness. This shall involve freedom of choice where voters would be conscious of their vote without suffering from any form of intimidation. Understanding the turbulent nature of elections on how they affect the possibility of healthy democracy is relevant. This underscored the need for the study.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts the Causal Drivers Framework developed by Sisk (2012) as its theoretical framework. According to the theoretical framework, electoral violence arose as a result of combined social and economic factors or the intersection of 'need', 'greed' and 'creed' (Cited in Yusuf, 2019). The stakes, incentives and expectations of elites by holding state power inform the violent nature of politics. Relevance points have been identified by Sisk (2019 as cited in Yusuf 2019, p.38) as central in understanding the analysis of the framework in electoral violence. These are the context of the country's democratisation or political change, the political economy of the state and the pattern of political mobilisation, the form of the electoral system and integrity of electoral administration; and lastly the effect of violence management efforts such as peace pacts and the performance of security forces.

These points are relevant in understanding the dynamics and fraudulent nature of electoral processes in Nigeria. first, it is important to note that Nigeria is by definition a fragile democracy, lacking experience and a pre-existence political culture of competitive electoral politics. It is a fact, that elections are held periodically, but they still lack quality as they have been soiled with many forms of irregularities, which have been perfected in every election. The inability of the country to have meaningful elections worth being credible enough could be tied to the attitudinal behaviour of politicians, who want to access state power by all means including the use of violence and negative mobilisation of identities, vote-buying, the use of money to bribe electoral officials and security agents. Indeed, as the state becomes relevant in accumulation, so also electoral fraud and violence. This is because those who have access to power have the opportunity to amass wealth and live in luxury. Thus, the struggle over state power accounts for the atrocities and illegalities committed by Nigerian politicians when it comes to politics.

Dynamics and Turbulent Nature of the Nigerian Electoral Process

From 1959 to 2015 ten general elections were conducted in the country. Most of the elections held were overwhelming by forms of electoral irregularities and scandals. During the politics of the 1950s and 1960s, political parties were formed along ethnic and regional bases. The Action Group (AG) is a party for the Western Region, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) for the Northern Region and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) as a party for the Eastern Region. Each party competed in the elections along ethnic, regional and religious divides, making politics ethnically and regionally based which sprung up violence and deepened hatred (Nnadozie, 2007). The repeated scale of electoral violence and the political rift that characterised the First Republic was to advance ethnic and regional interests (Ibodje & Dode, 2007).

This had profoundly shaped the dynamics of politics in the country which had left indelible marks that destroyed the development of democracy and polarised the nation along ethnic and regional lines. Since then, electoral politics in Nigeria has been afflicted by violence, uneasy inter-party relations, the absence of internal party democracy and the use of political thugs to fine-tune violence

(Ashafa, 2002). These have manifested in the Second Republic as those who lost in the electoral contest have no patience to accept defeat. At times, tend to exhibit the character of unforgiving losers, making provocative utterances, which occasionally mount violence that stains the political environment.

With the emergence of democratic politics in 1999, seven general elections have been held, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019 and 2023. Almost all of these elections were faulty because of violence, outright rigging and falsification of results. The 2003 general elections have been adjudged as one of the worst elections due to the unprecedented violence. There is a manifestation of violence during the pre-election periods. It was reported that during the pre-election period, more than 100 people were killed across the country. However, before the elections ended, the death toll rose to more than 3000 (Osinakachukwu & Jawan, 2011, p. 134). Also, a report indicated that 7 people were killed due to clashes between two opposing groups of political thugs supporting the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) between 11 to12 March 2003 in Lagos (HRW, 2003, p. 4).

Similarly, 7 people were injured after an attack on AD supporters by a group of political militias at a campaign rally on 15 March 2003 in Oyo. At least, 200 homes were burnt down when the People's Democratic Party's (PDP) and the All Nigeria People's Party's (ANPP) supporters clashed on 15-16 March 2003 in Kebbi (HRW, 2003, p. 4). The assassination of Henry Marshal and Bola Ige with the approach of the 2003 general elections and other numerous electoral misconducts expressed the ugly nature of the electoral process in 2003. The 2011 presidential election violence was sparked by a protest that arose with the assuage anxiety of the supporters of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari. Many of them believed that the outcome of the April 2011 Presidential election had been rigged to favour the People's Democratic Party (PDP) presidential aspirant, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. This violent incident left an unforgettable trait in the Nigerian democratic journey as over nine hundred and thirty-eight people were killed, seven hundred and thirty-five were injured, and properties worth millions of naira as well destroyed (Ibrahim, 2015, p.11).

Table 1: Some Incidences of Electoral Violence from 1999 to 2023

Year	Location	Nature of the Attack	Number of people
			Killed or Injured, and
			Property Damaged
1999	Lagos	Election-related violence	Reports indicated
			between eight to
			fourteen were killed
2003	Lagos	Clashes between two	Seven people were
		opposing groups of	killed
		political thugs supporting	
		PDP and AD	
2003	Oyo	Attack on AD supporters	Seven people were
		by a group of political	injured after an attack
		thugs at a campaign rally	
2003	Kebbi	Clashes between	At least, two hundred
		supporters of the People's	homes were burnt
		Democratic Party (PDP)	down
		and the All Nigeria	
		People's Party (ANPP)	
2007	Bauchi	Clashes between ANPP	Two people were killed
		and PDP	
2011	Across the	Violence attack resulted	Over nine hundred
	12 states in	from the outcome of the	and thirty-eight
	the Northern	April 12 presidential	people were killed,
	Nigeria	election	while seven hundred
			and thirty-five were
			injured. Properties
			worth millions of naira
			were destroyed
2015	Across the	Election-related violence	One hundred and six
	country		people were killed
2019	Across	Election-related violence	Six hundred and
	Nigeria		twenty-five people
			were killed

2023	In some	As a result of election-	One hundred and nine
	states in	related violence across the	people were killed
	Nigeria	country	

Source: HRW (2003, p. 4); Ibrahim (2015, p.11), Los Angeles Time (4 March 1999, para 2); Punch (12 May 2023, para1); Premium Times (30 July 2019, para1-4); Premium Times (18 March 2023, para 1); Report of EU Election Observation Mission (2007, p. 21) and compiled by the author

The frightening situation that the sloppy nature of the electoral process has displaced since the emergence of the present political dispensation has created a negative impression of building a sustainable democracy. Even though there were pockets of improvements in the 2015 general elections, which marked a turning point in Nigeria's transition to democratic governance and constitutionalism. Elections were seriously flawed as a result of violence in some states like Rivers, Bayelsa and Akwa Ibom. Even before the election, there was rising tension and scepticism about the likelihood of Nigeria's existence as a single political entity. The situation forced many Nigerians residing in places different from their original geographical location to flee back to their original localities. For this reason, many were disfranchised as they could not find their names in the voter register list sent to their states of origin since they did not register there.

Deducing from the above, it is can be argued that historically Nigerian politics has characterised by various forms of electoral fraud. These include compilation of fictitious names on voter registers; illegal compilation of separate voter lists; abuse of voter registration revision exercise; illegal orienting of voters cards; illegal possession of ballot boxes; stuffing of ballot boxes; falsification of election results; illegal thumb-printing of ballot paper; voting by under age; illegal printing of forms use during election; deliberate refusal to supply election materials to a particular polling unit; announcing results of election where it was not held; unauthorised announcement of election results; harassment of candidates, agents, voters and electoral official; change of list of electoral officials, box-switching and inflation of figures (Ibrahim, 2009). In addition, the trend of unguided utterances and inflammatory statements has

kept heightening the violent nature of the country's electoral process.

Today, the experience of Nigerians with competitive politics has not fundamentally changed as politicians still believe that winning is the only option in an election, even if it is obvious that the voters have lost interest in the candidate (Omoruyi, 2006). The inability of Nigerian politicians to work within the context of democratic tenets worsens the matter and bequeath violence. This can be seen in the inability of the politicians to have faith in the ballot box and believe that one could work for and earn votes in an election based on one's appeal. This has constituted a serious setback for the country's democratic journey because only a free and credible election can assure democracy and the rule of law. The indiscriminate use of money during elections has turned Nigeria's electoral politics into a preserve of wealthy individuals or political entrepreneurs. Politicians perceive politics as a business that offers a profitable productive environment for the investment of huge financial capital (Gusau, 2018).

This exacerbated the indiscriminate and unregulated use of money to manipulate the outcome of elections to reap the enormous amount of investment made by politicians. Indeed, since the main preoccupation of Nigerian politicians is the accumulation of wealth. This has made them compete in elections with one consideration, that is, winning by all means possible or spoiling the entire process. Thus, it is the intense competition for power among groups that bequeath violence and electoral fraud. The situation halts free and fair elections and blemishes its credibility, making viable democracy more quandary.

Democracy under Turbulent Elections: Any hope?

Despite Nigeria's widely envisaged potential of becoming a democratic nation which began with the restoration of the democratic process in 1999 following the exit of the military from the Nigerian political landscape. This is far from being realised due to the nature of the country's electoral processes. The anaemic violent nature of the Nigerian electoral processes has many implications for the development of democracy in the country. It has instigated ethnic hatred which further polarised the nation along regional and religious lines. The repeated scale of violence, which propelled ethnic rift has fundamentally destroyed the

principle of building sustainable democracy, which emphasises on strong sense of value, and avoidance of disorder and hostility among groups. Unless this is tackled it could be hard to guarantee democracy.

The unhealthy environment created due to the country's nature of electoral politics such as widespread rigging, intimidation and thuggery has made Nigerian politics unexciting and dreary. This has prevented the participation of people of high calibre and integrity. Their failure to participate constitutes a setback for the country's progress towards achieving a sustainable democracy as this constitutes the key to democratic development. Many of those elected under these devious electoral processes lack a democratic mindset and cannot propel the achievement of the country's democratic goal. Such kinds of people join political races just to gain political power for the sake of their self-aggrandisement. The integrity of the elections therefore needs to be restored else it would be difficult for such elections to institute a sound democracy.

Even though efforts such as the re-run election are introduced in the constitution to clean up the electoral processes and ensure that people participate in the selection of their political leaders, very little has been achieved. Many such elections have added myriad concerns about the credibility of elections. The huge electoral fraud and irresponsibility committed during the re-run elections have not only raised serious concern over the legitimisation of their outcomes but have also deluged the country's political environment. For instance, the 2019 re-run gubernatorial election in Kano, which was held basically to clean up the mess of the earlier election, proved to be more fraudulent owing to unfolding issues arising during the re-run election. The attitude of law enforcement personnel in most instances abetted the illegality by turning a blind eye at the time when the law was being broken with impunity. This is a winddown in mockery of democracy as credible elections guarantee citizens' will and preference. Getting the election right would be the first step in improving the country's democratic project (Umar, 2016).

It is a fact that with the emergence of electoral politics in 1999, new prospects for democracy have opened up. The opposition is not only legalised but allowed to participate in a multi-party election. Even with that, the ruling party in an attempt to seek re-election often than not devise means including the use of

state apparatus to decimate and muzzle the oppositions. Put differently, the ruling party in an attempt to secure electoral victory exploits the institutional advantages to deny the opposition a chance to win an election and by so doing it puts the destiny of democracy in tatter. For instance, the mounting intimidation and demonising of the APC presidential candidate and other stalwarts before the 2015 general elections by the ruling party, the PDP, was an attempt to frustrate the opposition. It should be recalled that before the 2015 general elections, the APC Data Centre in Lagos was unwarrantedly destroyed by Nigerian security on the accusation that it was producing fake Permanent Voter Cards (*Punch*, 23 November 2014). Similarly, its Presidential Campaign Organisation spokesman, Garba Shehu, was also arrested by the security agents. There was also a report of gunshots during the party governorship rally in Okrika, River State, leading to the death of some of the party supporters (*Nairaland Forum*, 13 February 2015; *This Day*, 18 February 2015).

The unguided statement made by politicians worsens the situation as a times this contradicts democratic principles. For instance, the frightening statement made by President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan on the launching of the PDP Wards Volunteer Scheme at the Presidential Villa - Abuja, that his government would not give the opposition a chance to rule (*Daily Trust*, 3 March 2015, para, 1). This signifies that by all means PDP would win the presidential election come 2015 election. The situation discredited the tenet of democracy, which guarantees the right of opposition to contest freely and mobilise voters for their mandate. Preventing opposition from operating freely is an attempt to sabotage Nigeria's democratic aspiration and political development. This is a fact because the development of democracy depends on an enduring opposition that would principally check the day-to-day activities of the ruling parties, and make alternative proposals for the benefit of the people.

There are still restrictions on citizen freedom to elect their political leaders due to the nature of the country's electoral process. This has over the years kept hurting people's thinking and emotions about democracy. When people lost confidence in their country's electoral processes for fear of violence and that the outcome would instinctively be rigged in favour of a particular candidate. Then, democracy would suffer for it as this will discourage wider popular

participation and nurturing of democratic culture. This is the fact because where freedom of choice has been denied, it would be difficult for a functioning democratic culture and hence vibrant and resilient democracy. Corroborating this, Diamond (2008) observes that there are two ways to attain democracy. First, is the flourishing of the rule of law, decent functioning and strengthening of democratic culture. Second, is the economic empowerment of citizens to better their living conditions. Both the former and latter are still troubling the country as there is no credible election and a lack of substantive dividend of democracy. This is evidenced by the increasing number of people in poverty. Many are disproportionately destitute and underprivileged as they cannot afford healthy food, access quality education and excellent health service.

Beyond doubt, free, fair and credible elections empower citizens with the opportunity to evaluate those they have given their mandate. It is through this that those in authority would be encouraged to pay more attention to the people's needs by fulfilling the promises made to the people for fear of losing elections (cited in Mesfin, 2008). By so doing, governance would be enhanced and democracy also deepened. It can be argued, therefore, that even though elections provide means for political contests they submit to multipartyism. But such a contest is between corrupt parties (Diamond, 2008), with a single mind to serve self-interests. The nature of the election has made it possible for Nigerian politicians not to believe that one can work hard and earn people's support simply by being committed and sincere. This is especially true in terms of delivering the mandate given to them by satisfying the needs and aspirations of the electorates. Nigerian politicians do not play politics with passion and excitement. This often than not pushes them to indulge in unfair and frightening activities that dissent to democratic principles just to win the election, thereby endangering the possibility of the emergence of virile democracy.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Democratic elections provide an adequate mechanism for the smooth transfer of governmental power, empower citizens over their representatives, secure votes and ensure that every vote is accounted for. Political system devoid of credible elections, the institutionalisation of democracy and constitutionalism has been quite challenging. Thus, the nature of elections in the country has provided weak and ineffective democratic institutions, making democracy only in form but not in substance, which has made it difficult for the country to be properly fixed as a democratic nation. The lack of free fair and credible elections has asphyxiated people's right to choose their representatives is not guaranteed, the rule of law strangulated, and the absence of accountability, transparency in governance, equity and justice.

The fortunes of Nigerian democracy therefore reside in the extent to which democratic values and culture, including free, fair and credible elections, political tolerance, individual liberty, popular participation and accommodation of opposition, have been put into practice and made part of the societal life. Violence-riddled elections obstruct the operational viability of democratic culture and, concurrently, make democracy flawed. The integrity and quality of elections assure the development of democracy because they encourage citizens' participation and ensure the legitimisation of government. Nigerians must continue to strive to contain dissatisfaction with poor electoral processes by committing themselves to democratic principles.

Nigerians remain hopeful that one day the country will have credible elections that will be envied by all. Such desire cannot be possible without commitment and sincerity, genuine efforts towards changing the mindset and the behaviour of the political actors, especially those aspiring for political posts to develop the right attitude towards making elections credible. As such, citizens needed to be enlightened and empowered with democratic values. Citizens must be encouraged to participate fully in an election. They should be given the chance to courageously vote for their choice without any hindrance as democracy guarantees people the right to elect their representatives. Oppositions should have confidence in the electoral processes as this would encourage their participation. The security should function and be enable to deal with electoral illegality and fraud.

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PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE OF THE LEGISLATURE: PERSPECTIVES FROM PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF TRUST AND PERFORMANCE OF THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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Abstract

This paper examined the public perception of the Nigeria National Assembly using two criteria: trust and performance. While several studies have assessed the performance of the legislature through their core functions of law-making, oversight, and representation, an assessment of the public trust of the legislature would contribute to the overall performance assessment debate of the legislature and make the legislature as an institution more sensitive to 'public trust' as a tool of public accountability of the legislature/legislators to citizens. Using data from Afrobarometer, online newspaper publications, Transparency International, and World Bank Development Indicators for the period 2019-2022, the paper also examined the performance of the National Assembly in the context of the country's corruption rating, economic performance, and its ability to hold the executive to account. It was found that public perception of trust and performance of the Nigeria National Assembly is higher in the first two years of a new legislative session but declines afterwards. The correlation coefficient also yielded a positive and significant level of association between trust and performance. It was also found that factors that influenced how the public rates the legislature in terms of trust and performance include the (in) ability of the legislature to effectively hold the executive branch to account for public financial management through summons and oversight hearings. Cross-country analysis also showed that in most countries where public perception of the legislature on trust and performance is favourable, such countries have cleaner corruption ratings and relatively higher real GDP growth rates.

Keywords: Public Perception, Trust, Nigeria, Legislature, Performance

Introduction

Public office holders and those elected into public office are the engine room for service delivery (Odewale & Benson, 2016). Studies that assess the relationship between input and output in the public sector can therefore serve as a premise for motivating increased performance in government institutions. For instance, Bucchianeri, Volden, and Wiseman (2020) developed legislative effectiveness scores for legislators across 97 legislative chambers in the United States based on the number of bills they sponsored, how far the bills moved through the law-making process, and their substantive importance. While this presents a way of evaluating legislative effectiveness, it presumes that the process of Bills going through the legislative process rests solely on the effort of the legislator. This shortcoming is also observed in other studies (see Odewale & Benson, 2016; Hedlund & Freeman, 1981; Raskind, 1992).

The relationship between input and output relating to performance is often associated with the private sector. While recent studies have extended the interrogation of this relationship to the public sector (Odewale & Benson, 2016), not many have examined the input-output relationship in the legislature. Other studies (Hedlund & Freeman, 1981) based their examination of the performance of the legislature on organizational theory, which focuses on measuring legislative performance based on attributes such as personnel, technology, product use, structure, and task. Other methods (Raskind, 1992) used for evaluating the performance of legislators rely on the individual evaluation of elected members based on the number of Bills passed, oversight activities, and level of constituency engagement. Reports on the National Assembly in Nigeria (Orizu, 2022) have also seen civil society organizations (CSOs) tilt toward this approach as a way of evaluating the performance of the legislature. For others, the effectiveness of the legislature is determined by the length of time a legislator spends in the legislature.

While there are several studies (see Hedlund & Freeman; Raskind, 1992; Olusanya, 1980; Osadolor, 2014; Egwu, 2005; Hamalai, Dan-Azumi & Shola, 2015; Miquel & Synder, Jr., 2004; Ekor, Katz & Iweala, 2014; Crosson, Lorenz, Volden & Wiseman, 2018; Volden & Wiseman, 2009) that have examined the performance of the legislature and legislators on several criteria, they present

gaps that new studies can fill using available and verifiable data sources. Debates around examining the performance of the legislatures based on the central Mezey question have also been criticized for their focus on examining the 'policy power' of a legislature, such as the power to constrain the executive and the degree to which the legislature can modify and reject executive proposals (see Arter, 2007). Using the data provided by the Afrobarometer, this paper extends the literature on the performance of the legislature using the gauge of the public. It investigates a central question: does the public trust the legislature, and how is the performance of the legislature related to the level of trust the public has in the parliament as an institution? The contribution to the literature from this perspective is that it takes away the focus on the performance of the legislature from the legislator and places a sense of responsibility on the need for all legislators to function effectively to enhance public trust.

This paper assessed the performance of the Nigeria National Assembly based on public perceptions of the level of trust and performance of the institution. Specifically, it examines the trend of trust and performance to identify the relationship between both variables. It also estimates the correlation coefficient to determine the level of association between both variables. In addition, the findings regarding the relationship between trust and performance in the National Assembly are discussed within the context of existing reports to identify possible factors that influenced public perception of the National Assembly and to draw lessons for subsequent legislative sessions. Lastly, crosscountry comparisons on how socio-economic and governance indicators relate to public perceptions of trust and the performance of the National Assembly are also presented.

Literature Review: Conceptual, Empirical and Theoretical Literature

According to the Open Government Network UK (2015), public accountability involves the obligation of an organization, public officeholder, or elected individual to provide performance information, explain decision-making, and justify conduct. For Bowens (2004), public accountability is the hallmark of modern democratic governance, as it serves as a tool to hold those in public office accountable for their decisions, policies, and actions. While the traditional

functions of parliament through lawmaking, oversight, and representation are channels of legislative performance of the parliament, a report by the Office of the Auditor-General of New Zealand (2019) showed that public trust in the legislature serves as a tool of public accountability. Using this perspective, therefore, this paper contributes to the discourse of trust and performance as a tool of public accountability of the legislature/legislators to the people.

Trust: There are two concepts in this paper requiring conceptual and theoretical clarification: trust and performance. There are many theoretical premises for measuring trust and performance in the political system. Two strands offer the most dominant theoretical framework: citizens' evaluations of the state-citizen relationship and rational evaluations of the state-citizen relationship. Both theories, however, examine the state-citizen relationship along four dimensions: competence, commitment, accountability, and reliability. Meer (2010) examined the level of trust in parliament using citizen evaluations. Both perspectives are anchored on the perspective that a basic level of trust in the political system is considered to be the cornerstone of modern-day democracy. As such, low or declining levels of trust in political institutions would serve as a barometer for measuring the growth of democratic institutions.

The theory of trust in political systems is anchored on the conceptualization by Zmerli, Newton, and Montero (2007) that people's trust in different institutions can either be for objective or subjective reasons. However, as Kasperson et al. (1992) and Hardin (2000) argued, trust is more likely to be relational, such as in social-psychological situations where 'A trusts B to do x'. Kasperson et al. (1992) further argued that a person who trusts (the subject) thinks that the object (the person to be trusted) meets certain requirements, such as being competent, intrinsically committed, extrinsically committed (accountable because of encapsulated interest), and predictable. Trust in a political system like the parliament, therefore, implies that those who voted for them (the people) assume that the objects are competent (have the ability to perform according to expectations or in the subject's interest), intrinsically committed (act in line with the subject's interests), and extrinsically committed (knowing that poor performance can be punished by denying future support). Accountability, the object of trust can be held accountable because the premise

is that the interests of the subject become the encapsulated self-interests of the object (see Hardin, 2000), while the fourth dimension of trust theory is reliability or predictability. The construction here is that the subject assumes that the object's past behaviour is consistent and should influence future performance.

Performance: Regarding performance, many institutional studies have paid attention to measuring the performance of the legislature using key benchmarks (see Dhar & Broom, 2009). The performance of the legislature plays a critical role in overall governance. According to Imlach, Dhar, and Broom (2009), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), World Bank Institute (WBI)/United Nations Development Plan (UNDP) benchmarks make use of indicators to assess the performance of the legislature. These indicators are divided into four main topical headings, namely General, Organization of the Legislature, Functions of the Legislature, and Values of the Legislature, and there are additional sub-categories listed within these main headings. This measure, however, does not include variables such as corruption and other governance indicators that reflect the overall outcome of legislative processes. Another framework for assessing the performance of the legislator, as identified in Lute (2009), is the National Democratic Institute Standards (NDI Standards). Unlike the CPA/WBI/UNDP approach, the methodology entails discussion between civil society groups and parliaments to determine the adherence of the parliament to core democratic values such as the bill's passage, participation in committee activities, and grass-roots engagement. This approach bears a close resemblance to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The perspective of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is that the five core values presented in their toolkit-representativeness, transparency, accessibility, accountability, and effectiveness – can be achieved by parliaments in different ways. As such, the IPU views parliamentary assessment as an action-oriented, demand-driven process whereby parliamentarians discuss their answers to the questions raised in the IPU framework.

Other approaches to assessing the performance of the legislature focus on the budget process and the performance of parliamentary audit committees used by the Parliamentary Centre (PC). According to Miller (2005), the PC also devised a Parliamentary Report Card, which examines parliamentary activity in four areas: legislation, budget, oversight, and representation. The approach is also in sync with that used by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE, 2009). The LSE approach extends the aspects included in the PC to include: lawmaking, representation, procedures, public engagement, oversight, and resources. Whereas other databases, such as MO Ibrahim and World Governance Indicators (WGI), provide data on aspects of overall governance, Afrobarometer provides data on the performance of the legislature in a manner that captures the various components identified by the framework reviewed above. Institutional data such as the Afrobarometer also use the public trust of democratic institutions such as the National Assembly as a means of assessing the performance of the legislature.

The Volden and Wiseman (2009) framework on legislative effectiveness is another strand of theory to examine the performance of the legislature (see Ekor et al., 2014). The approach, however, concentrates on examining the effectiveness of specific legislators and not the institution of the legislature as a whole. According to Carothers (2003), one of the determinants of effective governance institutions is the entrenchment of the rule of law. To examine whether or not democratic institutions comply with the practice of the rule of law, the pattern, according to Carothers (2003), is to translate the overarching idea of the rule of law into an institutional checklist against the observed practice of governance institutions. The gender distribution of members of parliament and the kinds of Bills they sponsor also determine the performance of the legislature. This is according to Volden, Wiseman, and Wittmer (2010), who examined the situation for the US Congress and found that the number of Bills sponsored is another factor that determines legislative performance. The study also found that Bills sponsored by female minority members are better able to live through the legislative stages of Bill passages than those sponsored by men in the minority party. The deduction from Volden et al. (2010) is that the ability of Bills introduced to get passed is also an effective measure of assessing the performance of the legislature.

According to Arter (2006), other ways through which the performance of the legislature can be assessed are the input stage, the 'withinput' stage, and the output stage. (1) The 'Input stage'. This stage focuses on the legislative capacity of parliaments/ parliamentarians as determined by a mix of macroconstitutional rules, structures, internal organization, and procedures; (2) the 'withinput stage'. The focus of this stage is on the way parliaments work in practice, for instance, the committee system and so on; and (3) the output stage. This stage is concerned with the overall performance of the legislature as an aggregation of its overall output system.

Empirical Literature: Whereas most studies on legislative studies seek to examine the performance of the legislature, what is often done is to examine the performance of the legislature at the first two stages, as identified by Arter (2006). Studies in this direction include Hamalai et al. (2015) and Ekor, Katz, & Iweala (2014). The present study seeks to examine the performance of the National Assembly using the output stage measure of legislative performance. While it is possible to carry out such assessments using indicators, most governance databases, such as the Mo Ibrahim Index and the Worldwide Governance Indicator (WGI), do not provide a specific data set that measures the performance of the legislature. One finds such a data set, however, with the data from the Afrobarometer.

Using data from the European social survey for 2002–2006, the study found that public trust in parliament in Europe differs across countries. Three factors were identified as responsible for why these measures differ. They are corruption, the electoral system, and the former regime type. Although the study also tested the role of economic performance in shaping the public view of trust in parliament, it was not related to trust in parliament. According to Meer (2010), to explain why some citizens trust and others do not, many studies on political trust predominantly focus either on the characteristics of citizens (i.e., their resources and values) or those of political systems (i.e., their economic performance). Meer (2010) argued that a more interesting approach would be to look exclusively at the subject of political trust (the one who trusts) or the object of political trust (that which is trusted), but at both simultaneously. This conceptualization by Meer (2010) is associated with a major challenge: the data from the Afrobarometer does not tell on the subject of political trust (the one who trusts) other than the country. However, it concentrates on the object of political tryst (that which is trusted). Duvsjö (2014) examined the effect of social capital and economic fairness evaluations on political trust in Europe and found a positive and significant effect of the explanatory variable on the dependent variable.

A related study that used the Afrobarometer data to measure trust is Iroghama (2012). The study noted that corruption perception is one of the indicators used to measure trust or distrust in government. However, the study also alluded to the fact that economic performance or political participation are also reliable measures of political trust. Using the round 8 data from Afrobaromter, the study, therefore, examined the level of political trust in Nigeria. Based on estimation from multiple regression analysis, Iroghama (2012) found that trust in governments' stems from a number of factors such as economic performance, media, interest in public affairs, religious membership, political participation, interpersonal trust, lack of basic needs, and management of corruption. The most prominent factors that influence trust in government the most are interpersonal trust and government management of corruption issues. While the study by Iroghama (2012) provided an empirical estimation of the determinant of trust, it did not relate trust to the performance of the government institutions it examined.

Several studies (Olusanya, 1980; Osadolor, 2014; Crosson, Lorenz, Volden, & Wiseman, 2018, etc.) allude to the fact that the legislature is the most important of the three organs of government in democratic systems. Yet public trust in this vital organ of government has not been favourable over the years. Since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, concerns about public trust in the National Assembly and its contribution to the governance process have remained a recurring subject in national debate and academic discourse. Not many studies, however, have examined the factors influencing public perception in terms of trust in the legislature and its performance. Examining the factors that influence the performance of the National Assembly would therefore provide insight into public engagement and reforms in the National Assembly that would position the organ of government for greater efficiency.

In assessing the performance of the House of Representatives from 1999 to 2019, Abraham (2021) used the core function of law-making and the changes

to the Standing Order of the lower chamber over the years. On the other hand, Udefuna (2021) assessed the performance of the Senate from 1999 to 2019 by focusing on how the upper chamber has delivered on its core functions of law-making, representation, and oversight over the years.

While several studies have assessed the performance of the legislature through their core functions of lawmaking, oversight, and representation, an assessment of the public trust of the legislature would contribute to the overall performance assessment debate of the legislature and make the legislature as an institution more sensitive to 'public trust' as a tool of the legislature/legislators accountability to citizens.

Theoretical Framework

This paper, therefore, adopts Hardin's (2000) perspective of trust and Arter's (2006) output-stage performance assessment to examine the relationship between trust and the performance of the National Assembly. The component of Hardin's (2000) conceptualization of trust adopted is trust as competency, commitment, and accountability. The aspect of reliability or predictability is left out, as each legislative session is influenced by different factors, thus making trust not transferable from one legislative session to the next. This partial adoption of Hardin's conceptualization fits into the caution by Warren (2010) that while political trust is good for democratic development, not all trusts are good. Hence, Warren (2010) adds that conceiving the kind of trust that is good and necessary for democracy and democratic institutions would help to enhance citizens' watch and entrench the culture of accountability. It is also consistent with the conceptualization by the UNDP (2021) that identifies trust as a key component of the social contract. For Dunn (2015), trust is also vital in assessing democratic institutions as it serves as a measure of voice and political representation. The legislature has the highest assemblage of elected persons working (presumably) for the interests of their objects. The assessment of trust in the legislature is therefore a measure of voice and representation. Duvsjö (2014) also argued that political trust is vital for creating system legitimacy, which in turn is vital for fostering stable and effective democracy.

Methodology

The measure of trust and performance as presented in the Afrobarometer data is a reflection of the public on the individual legislator and the legislature as an institution. The data on trust is examined from two perspectives: respondents who express that they do not trust the parliament at all and those who trust the parliament a lot. On the other hand, the performance of the parliament is assessed from two perspectives: those who strongly disapprove of the performance of the parliament and those who disapprove of the performance of the parliament.

The data from Afrobarometer (see https://www.afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis/) covered the period 2019/2021 to 2022 and represents rounds 8 and 9 of data collected by Afrobarometer. The size of respondents for the data within this period varies as follows: Round 8 (1,599) and Round 9 (1,600). The frequency of respondents is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3	Table 3.1: Respondent Frequency for Trust and Performance for Nigeria National Assembly							
	Trust			Performance	Performance			
				Disapprove	Disapprove Approve			
	Not	A lot	Sample	Strongly	Disapprove	Approve	Strongly	Sample
	at All			Disapprove			Approve	
2019/	636	112	1,599	267	634	517	66	1,599
2021								
2022	806	75	1,600	602	578	358	36	1,600

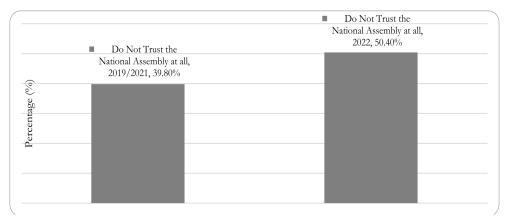
Source: Afrobarometer

Result and Discussion

Trend of Trust and Performance Rating of the National Assembly

The proportion of respondents who do not trust the national assembly increased from 39.8% to 50.40% from 2019/2021 to 2022. While the proportion is sensitive to the number of respondents, the absolute number reveals that the number of respondents who do not trust the national assembly increased from 636 (out of 1,599 respondents) in 2019 to 806 (out of 1,600 respondents) in 2022. This is an indication that the proportion of respondents who do not trust the national assembly increased within the 9th legislative session.

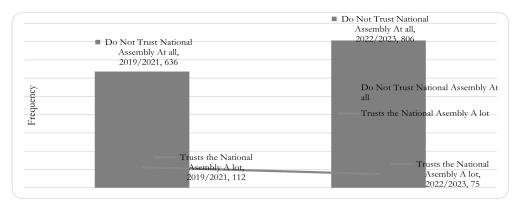
Figure 1: Proportion of Respondents who Do Not Trust the Nigeria National Assembly at all



Source: Afrobarometer

The trend analysis also shows that the number of respondents who do not trust the National Assembly is accompanied by a decline in the number of people who trust the National Assembly a lot. While the number of respondents who do not trust the National Assembly increased from 636 of 1,599 in 2019/2021 to 806 of 1,600 in 2022, the number of persons who trust the National Assembly decreased from 112 to 75 within the reference period.

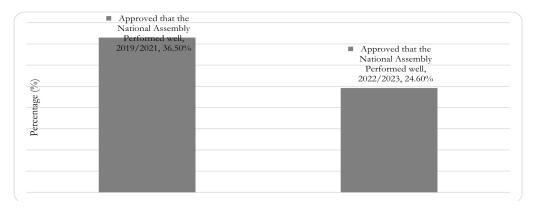
Figure 2: Frequency of Respondents that 'Do Not Trust' and who Trust the Nigeria National Assembly 'A lot': 2019/2021 to 2022



Source: Afrobarometer

Public perception of the performance of the National Assembly within the study period also declined, from 36.5% in 2019/2021 to 24.6% in 2022. Although the Afrobarometer data does not show the performance based on its core functions of laws passed, oversight activities carried out, and engagement at the constituency level, it does provide an overall insight regarding how the public assesses the performance of the legislature.

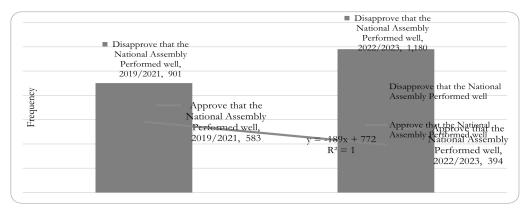
Figure 3: Proportion of Respondents who Approve that the National Assembly Performed well: 2019/2021 to 2022



Source: Afrobarometer

Further inspection of the number of respondents shows that the number of respondents who disapprove of the performance of the legislature increased from 901 (of 1,599) to 1,180 (of 1,600). On the other hand, the number of people who approve of the good performance of the law-making institution declined from 583 to 394. The perception of trust robs the perception of performance in the National Assembly.

Figure 4: Performance of the Nigeria National Assembly: Frequency of Respondents that 'Disapprove' and 'Approve'



Source: Afrobarometer

Trend analysis using the Afrobarometer data showed consistency in the disapproval rate of the National Assembly's performance within the study period. An increase in the number of persons who disapproved of the performance of the National Assembly was accompanied by a decline in the number of persons who approved of the performance.

Correlation between Trust and Performance of the National Assembly

The estimated correlation coefficient gives insight into the direction of association between trust and the performance of the National Assembly. The result showed that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between public perceptions of trust in the National Assembly and public perceptions of the performance of the legislature. The pair-wise correlation coefficient was 98%, and the result was significant at the 5% critical value. The choice of pair-wise correlation is informed by the small size of the data. This implies that a weaker level of trust leads to a lower public rating of the performance of the legislature. While the paper finds a high level of association between trust and performance, the data does not allow for estimating causality. This is one aspect that may be considered in further studies.

Table 2: 1	Table 2: Frequency and Pairwise Correlation for Trust and Performance						
Year	Frequency				Propos	rtion	
	Trust	Perfor-	Pair-wise	Trust	Perfor-	Pair-wise	
		mance	Correlation		mance	Correlation	
			(Frequency)			(proportion)	
2014/2015	656	729		0.27	0.30		
2016/2018	354	429	0.9946	0.22	0.27	0.98	
2019/2021	517	583	[0.0054]	0.32	0.36	[0.02]	
2022/2023	358	394		0.22	0.25		

Source: Afrobarometer | Authors Estimation. Figures in square bracket [] are statistical significance level

Factors that Influence Public Perception of Trust and Performance of the National Assembly

One of the findings of this paper is that public perceptions of trust in the National Assembly and the performance of the National Assembly are much higher in the first two years of the 9th National Assembly than in later years. In the first two years of the 9th National Assembly, respondents associated the parliament with a higher performance. By 2022, however, the rating on performance had declined. Using content analysis, this section discusses the findings from the paper in the context of documented reports to provide narratives around the possible factors that influence public perception of the National Assembly. It also suggests what can be done and lessons for subsequent legislative sessions.

The dwindling trust of the National Assembly found in the paper is consistent with the findings of other studies such as Olusanya (1980), Osadolor (2014), and Crosson, Lorenz, Volden, and Wiseman (2018), which show that the public trust in the legislature has not been favourable. While the Nigerian economy faced several challenges ranging from economic recessions in 2016 and 2020 to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and its associated demand and supply shocks, the Senate, for instance, considered more Bills in 2020 than it did for 2021 and 2022.

Keeping the Bill process open to the participation of the public through public hearings and committee-level hearings will enhance public trust in the process, which in turn will enhance the performance of the legislature as quality inputs will be made in legislative business.

Та	Table 3: Bills Received and Read (1st and 2nd Time) in the Senate of the						
	National Assembly: 2019 - 2022						
S/N	Status of Bills	2019	2020	2021	2022		
1	Bills Received	269	325	245	208		
2	Bills Read First (1st) Time	232	255	141	144		
3	Bills Read Second (2nd) Time	124	117	110	52		

Source: National Assembly

The 9th National Assembly also approved requests from the executive seeking new loans without making the process of how they arrived at the approval open to the public. For instance, in March 2020, the Senate approved a \$22 billion external loan requested by President Muhammadu Buhari after a closed session that lasted less than an hour. Requests from the executive for loans, supplementary budget, and tax amendment laws through the Finance Bill should therefore be opened to deeper debates and critical review to ensure effective scrutiny of all proposals.

Table 4: Newspaper Report on Loan Approval Requested by the President						
Buhari from the Nation	onal Assemb	ly				
Loan Request/ Purpose	Date	Source				
National Assembly resumes January	January	Punch Newspaper				
17 th , 2023; N23.7 trillion loan restructuring tops agenda	17 th , 2023	https://punchng. com/nassembly- resumes-today- n23-7tn-loan- restructuring-tops- agenda/				

The Senate on Wednesday approved	December	Thisday National
President Muhammadu Buhari's	29 th , 2022	Daily
request of N819 an .54bn domestic loan meant to fix the infrastructure destroyed by floods across the country. The President had through an executive communication last week, sought the approval of the National Assembly for N819.54bn supplementary budget.		https://www. thisdaylive. com/index. php/2022/12/28/ breaking-senate- approves-buharis- fresh-n819-54bn- domestic-loan- request-for-capital- projects/
National Assembly Passes Amended	April 14 th ,	Sahara Reporters
2022 Budget, Approves N965billion Borrowing	1 -	https:// saharareporters. com/2022/04/14/ breaking-national- assembly-passes- amended-2022- budget-approves- n965billion- borrowing

	The Senate has approved the \$6.1 billion loan request by President Muhammadu Buhari. The \$6.1 billion loan request, which is equivalent to about N2.343 trillion, was approved on Wednesday after the Senate considered the report of the Senate Committee on Local and Foreign Debts. The National Assembly already approved the borrowing of N4.6 trillion in the 2021 Appropriation Act. And that the new borrowing of N2.3	-	Premium Times https://www. premiumtimesng. com/news/ headlines/472129- breaking-senate- approves-buharis- 6-1bn-loan-request. html
•	trillion will part-finance the deficit in the 2021 budget. The Senate has approved a \$22 billion external loan requested by President Muhammadu Buhari, following an executive session that lasted for over 40 minutes. The approval was sequel to the consideration of the report of the Senate Committee on Local and Foreign Debts.		Premium Times https://www. premiumtimesng. com/news/top- news/380496- senate-approves- buharis-22-7-billion- loan-request.html

•	Buhari seeks approval for foreign	November	Premium Times
	loans rejected by the Senate under Saraki. The president had sent the same request to the eighth Senate in 2016. He had requested for about \$30 billion.	28 th , 2019	https://www. premiumtimesng. com/news/top- news/365612- buhari-seeks- approval-for- foreign-loan- rejected-by-senate- under-saraki.html

Although the 9th National Assembly (legislative session 2019–2023) ensured that the annual appropriation Bill was passed promptly to keep the budget calendar within the January 1st to December 31st timeline, the press release that accompanies every budget passage about how it was padded influences the trust the public has in the National Assembly.

Table 5: Newspaper Reports on Budgeting Padding Claims in Nigeria by the						
Natio	National Assembly					
Claims in Padded Budgets	Date	Source				
Nigeria: How the 2020	December	All Africa				
Budget Signed By Buhari Was 'Padded' With N264 Billion	27 th , 2019	https://allafrica.com/ stories/201912270068.html				
How the National Assembly 'padded' 2021 budget with over N500 billion	January 31, 2021	Premium Times https://www. premiumtimesng.com/ news/headlines/439685- how-national-assembly- padded-2021-budget-with- over-n500-billion.html				

•	How Nigerian Federal	December	Sahara Reporters
	Lawmakers Padded 2021, 2022 Budgets With Over 12,063 Projects Worth N1.8 Trillion	15 th , 2022	https://saharareporters. com/2022/12/15/ how-nigerian-federal- lawmakers-padded-2021- 2022-budgets-over-12063- projects-worth-n18

The number of times that public officials were invited to provide clarification on issues touching on the economy and national security but refused to honour the invitation of the parliament is another factor that borders on the trust the public bestows on the parliament. This point is amplified by the OECD (2012) report, which notes that the oversight functions of the legislature are not ends in themselves but should aim at providing a good regulatory environment that would in turn stimulate economic activity at both domestic and international levels. Refusal of persons invited to the parliament should therefore be checked in subsequent legislative sessions.

Table 6: Newspaper Reports on the l	Table 6: Newspaper Reports on the Refusal to Honour National Assembly				
Invit	ations				
Refusal to honour National Assem-	Date	Source			
bly Invitations					
• I won't honour the Senate's	March 21st,	Vanguard Newspaper			
invitation on Wednesday – Customs boss	2017	https://www. vanguardngr. com/2017/03/ wont-honour-senates- invitation-wednesday- customs-boss/			

•	Nigeria: Why I Ignored Senate Invitation - IGP Idris. The Inspector-General of Police, Ibrahim Idris, on Wednesday, described Nigerian senators as people who are trying to blackmail him into perverting the course of justice.	May 9 th , 2018	All Africa https://allafrica.com/ stories/201805100103. html
•	Senate Committee fumes over MDA's refusal to honour its invitations	,	Daily Post https://dailypost. ng/2020/02/11/ senate-committee- fumes-over-mdas- refusal-to-honour-its- invitations/
•	Buhari's failure to honour Reps invitation puts him in a very bad light — Minority Caucus		Ripples Nigeria https://www. ripplesnigeria.com/ buharis-failure- to-honour-reps- invitation-puts-him- in-very-bad-light- minority-caucus/

Why Executive officials ignore invitations by the National Assembly. The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the House of Representatives on Recovered Loots, Adejoro Adeogun, says lawmakers feel they are not getting enough support from Nigerians.	
• Frequent Disregard of National Assembly's Summons. Members of the House of Representatives expressed dissatisfaction with the attitude of heads of agencies invited over the recent attack on a train in Kaduna. The lower legislative chamber had invited the National Security Adviser (NSA), Major General Babagana Monguno (rtd.); Minister of Defence, Major General Bashir Magashi (rtd.); Chief of Air Staff, Ari Marshall Isiaka Amao; Director-General, Department of State Services (DSS), Yusuf Bichi; Inspector-General of Police (IG), Usman Baba; Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika and Minister of Transportation, Mr. Rotimi Amaechi.	

According to Carothers (2003), one of the determinants of effective governance

institutions is the entrenchment of the rule of law. To examine whether or not democratic institutions comply with the practice of the rule of law, the pattern, according to Carothers (2003), is to translate the overarching idea of the rule of law into an institutional checklist against the observed practice of governance institutions. The observed refusal to honour invitations or summons by the National Assembly by heads of agencies would therefore put the legislature in a bad light in the eyes of the public, thus attracting an unfavourable rating in any public opinion poll. On that premise, the performance of the legislature would also attract a low rating.

Not holding the heads of agencies to account in periods where the sector they headed manifested the most trouble is another trust and performance bubble buster. Within the period of the 8th and 9th National Assembly, the President doubled as the Minister of Petroleum. Despite the uncertainties that characterized this sector (fuel subsidy issues, oil theft, long queues for PMS, etc.), the parliament did not directly hold the Minister of Petroleum to account or summon him for an explanation. Subsequent legislatures would therefore need to be firmer in the process of screening candidates for ministerial positions to ensure that those willing to accept these positions would avail themselves of accountability checks.

In 2022, the Gender Equal Opportunity Bill could not scale through the National Assembly. While many reasons might have led to this undesired outcome, it resonates as a major factor that affected public perception of the legislature, especially as it touches on trust in the legislature.

Table 7: Headlines on the non-passage of the Gender Bill by the National							
Assembly							
		Date	Source				
•	Nigeria's parliament fails to break bias, frustrates moves for gender equality, and affirmative action. Nigeria's male-dominated parliament has always been against legislation that appears to give women equal rights as their male counterparts.	March 9 th , 2022	Premium Times https://www. premiumtimesng.com/ news/headlines/516319- iwd2022-nigerias- parliament-fails-to-break- bias-frustrates-moves- for-gender-equality- affirmative-action.html				
•	Condemnation of the National Assembly's rejection of bills seeking gender equality	March 8 th , 2022	Vanguard Newspaper https://www. vanguardngr. com/2022/03/ condemnation-of-the- national-assemblys- rejection-of-bills-seeking- gender-equality-by-funmi- falana/				

Cross-country Comparison of Socio-economic and Governance Indicators and the Legislature

Most countries with a high level of trust in the parliament have low levels of poverty and high real GDP growth rates. Years of approving additional spending plans for Nigeria and approving higher levels of government expenditure turned out to leave 133 million Nigerians in poverty. With regards to the economic situation of a country and the performance of the National Assembly or Parliament, countries with a higher 7-year average GDP growth had the highest performance approval. These countries are Cote d'Ivoire, Benin

Republic, Niger, Togo, and Uganda. Although Ghana had an average GDP growth of 4.6%, it had a high level of disapproval of its National Assembly. Nigeria, however, stood out on both indicators. Nigeria had a high level of performance disapproval and, equally, had a low 7-year average GDP growth of 1.12%. While this paper does not experiment with isolating the impact of legislative output on poverty reduction and economic growth, the general impression is that a low level of economic performance translates into a low level of performance for the National Assembly, especially for Nigeria.

Table 8: Corruption Perception Index (CPI). GDP Growth Rate, Trust Disap-								
proval and Performance Ranking in the Nigeria National Assembly								
S/N	Countries	Corruption	Do Not	Average	Strongly			
		Rating	Trust the	GDP	Disapprove/			
		CPI 2021)	National	Growth	Disapprove			
		(Rank)	Assembly/	Rate (%)	of Performance			
			Parliament	from 2015	(%)			
			At All (%)	to 2021				
1	Zimbabwe	157/180	21.5	1.12	73.8			
2	Nigeria	154/180	50.4	4.6	70.9			
3	Madagascar	147/180	28.3	5.48	68.2			
4	Cameroon	144/180	28.2	3.24	60.8			
5	Uganda	144/180	20.3	3.58	58			
6	Angola	136/180	28.7	2.5	54.3			
7	Kenya	128/180	23	4.44	52.8			
8	Togo	128/180	26.5	-1.19	49.6			
9	Niger	124/180	21.8	2.28	49.5			
10	Malawi	110/180	33.8	1.07	47.8			
11	Cote	105/180	24.5	4.62	46.9			
	d'Ivoire							
12	Benin	78/180	19.1	4.73	43			
13	Ghana	73/180	42.3	6.27	42.4			
14	Senegal	73/180	39.5	5.05	40.2			
15	Mauritius	49/180	26	4.75	34.4			

Source: World Bank WDI, Afrobarometer & Transparency International

The corruption perception index of the country is another factor that can rub off on public trust in the National Assembly. The corruption perception index (CPI) ranks 180 countries and territories around the world by their perceived levels of public sector corruption. The results are given on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). Based on the CPI data from Transparency International, there are a few countries where corruption is high but public trust in their National Assembly/ parliament remains high. These countries are Zimbabwe, Kenya, Niger, Malawi, Cote d'Ivoire, Uganda, Cameroon, and Madagascar. In Ghana, a low corruption rating also yielded a fair level of trust in the national assembly. The situation in Nigeria, however, was remarkably different. A high corruption rating was accompanied by a high level of distrust of the National Assembly.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

Although public perception of the trust and performance of the 9th National Assembly was higher in the first two years, it declined in 2022. Nevertheless, correlation analysis of the public perception of trust and performance yielded a positive and significant level of association. Content analysis of reports and events from 2019 to 2023 showed that several factors may have influenced how the public rates the National Assembly in terms of trust and performance. While several factors, such as the refusal of the executive branch to honour invitations by the National Assembly, stand out, analysis of secondary data also showed that Nigeria's high ranking on corruption, accompanied by lower levels of economic growth, also influences public perception of the National Assembly. Compared with other countries, Nigeria's National Assembly also performed poorly in terms of public trust and performance. Ensuring that the legislature puts in place processes that would enable it to play its traditional functions of law-making, oversight, and representation more effectively would inspire improved public perception of the institution. Other factors, such as the corruption perception index of the country and economic growth, also have implications for how the national assembly is rated. The paper recommends a commitment to the use of legislative agenda by subsequent legislative sessions, increased funding for public hearings and committee activities on referrals and

committals, a well-funded website for the National Assembly, periodic hosting of open week programmes for the National Assembly, and enforcement of resolutions for summons.

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