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IN THIS ISSUE

Participatory communication as strategy for promoting antenatal care among women with disability in Abuja

Prof. Emmanuel Samu Dandaura & Eboagwu-Ijah, Prudence Ifeanyi

Overcoming the effects of insecurity for entrepreneurial development in the South – East geopolitical zone of Nigeria

Prof. Dilichukwu A. Omemma & Innocent Osita Godson PhD, DBA

The role of philosophy in political leadership and nation-building in Nigeria

Paulinus Chikwado Ejeh, PhD

Political violence and democratic process in Nigeria: An appraisal of 2019 general elections

Duhu Joseph Okonkwo PhD

Policing isolated villages in Tivland amid farmer-herder conflict in Benue State

Benjamin Terseer Aveda

Influence of elites on democratic election in Nigeria, 2019-2023

Ugwu Ignatius C. PhD

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in Nigeria's work environment: Impact on employee behaviour and organizational goal attainment

Vitus Achu Amadi, PhD, Oliver Anayo Nnauko & Joshua Akaolisa Ojiochie

Interrogating the effectiveness of government responses to the menace of insecurity in Plateau State, Nigeria

Nwankwo Jonathan Chidi Ph.D

PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION AS STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING ANTENATAL CARE AMONG WOMEN WITH DISABILITY IN ABUJA

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Abstract

This study investigates the low utilization of contemporary health facilities for antenatal care (ANC) by women with disabilities in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria. It emphasizes the critical role of inclusive health communication in improving maternal and child health outcomes and advocates for participatory communication approaches to enhance service delivery. Grounded in Participatory Communication Theory—which highlights the importance of giving marginalized groups a voice—the study examines the barriers faced by pregnant women with disabilities in accessing ANC services. The research employed qualitative methods, including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), In-Depth Interviews (IDIs), and observations. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 20 participants, comprising 15 women with disabilities (including pregnant women and mothers) and five key informants (three women and two men). Findings reveal that the uptake of ANC services by this population is alarmingly low, threatening the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 3, which aims to reduce maternal and infant mortality. Key barriers identified include inadequate social support, inaccessible hospital facilities, limited resources, long distances to health centres, financial constraints, low literacy levels, and insufficient awareness among healthcare workers about the specific needs of pregnant women with disabilities. To address these challenges, the study recommends the provision of social support, improved accessibility in hospital design, the adoption of e-health technologies, and enhanced training for healthcare workers on disability-specific antenatal needs. Additionally, free ANC services and participatory communication strategies are essential to fostering an inclusive healthcare delivery system that meets the needs of women with disabilities. These measures are critical for increasing ANC uptake and promoting equitable maternal healthcare.

Introduction

Health communication, a critical aspect of public health, employs various strategies to inform, influence, and encourage individuals and communities to adopt healthier behaviours. Recognised as essential to addressing disease prevention, health promotion, and quality of life improvement, health communication has been pivotal in achieving significant public health milestones. For instance, it has reduced the stigma around HIV/AIDS, combated COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy, and raised awareness about maternal health, including antenatal care (ANC). Despite these achievements, gaps remain in addressing the needs of vulnerable populations, particularly pregnant women with disabilities, whose access to vital health information and services is often limited by their unique challenges.

Maternal healthcare delivery, especially ANC, is essential for reducing maternal and infant mortality. ANC encompasses the medical care and health promotion services that pregnant women receive from conception to the onset of labour. It is a proven platform for critical interventions such as disease prevention, health education, and the management of pregnancy-related risks. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends at least eight ANC visits during pregnancy to reduce perinatal mortality and improve care quality. However, pregnant women with disabilities face numerous barriers to accessing ANC, including inaccessible health facilities, economic constraints, and stigma. For example, women with physical disabilities may find it challenging to navigate healthcare facilities without ramps, while those with visual or communication impairments face barriers to unaided access and effective interaction with healthcare providers.

The challenges these women face contribute to alarmingly low ANC uptake. Data from the Federal

Capital Territory (FCT) Primary Health Care Board indicates that fewer than 50 pregnant women with disabilities registered for ANC services between 2020 and 2022. Additionally, many women in Karamajiji, a community for persons with disabilities in Abuja, rely on traditional birth attendants due to these barriers. The consequences of low ANC uptake include poor pregnancy management, lack of preventive treatments such as tetanus immunisation and malaria prevention, and increased maternal and infant mortality risks.

This study seeks to investigate how participatory and inclusive health communication strategies can promote ANC uptake among pregnant women with disabilities in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). Specifically, it aims to identify the challenges these women face, assess the current state of ANC service delivery, and propose communication strategies to bridge existing gaps.

Participatory communication, which emphasises dialogue and community involvement, has the potential to address these challenges. Defined by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) as an approach based on the exchange of information, beliefs, and ideas, participatory communication facilitates empowerment and fosters new knowledge aimed at positive change. Inclusive health communication, when tailored to the specific needs of women with disabilities, can ensure that this vulnerable population has equitable access to vital maternal health services.

Given the critical role of ANC in ensuring maternal and child health, this study underscores the importance of addressing the unique needs of pregnant women with disabilities. By leveraging participatory and inclusive health communication, policymakers and healthcare providers can foster equitable ANC service delivery and contribute to reducing maternal and infant mortality in the FCT.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative research design to facilitate an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives. The qualitative approach emphasises exploring reality, meaning, and purpose through the lens of participants, making it suitable for capturing nuanced impacts of inclusive health communication and participatory communication processes that may not be effectively expressed in numeric terms. The specific research methods employed include **observational approaches, focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews (IDIs), and key informant interviews (KIIs)**.

Population and Sampling

The study focused on pregnant women with disabilities residing in the Karamajiji disabled community within the Abuja Municipal Area Council, as well as others who registered for antenatal care (ANC) services between May 2021 and August 2022. According to data obtained from the FCT Primary Health Care Board, the total population of pregnant women with disabilities registered during the review period was twelve. Participants were purposively selected based on specific criteria: they must have been pregnant during or prior to the study period, have a registered disability, and be capable of providing insights into their experiences.

The purposive sampling technique ensured the inclusion of individuals who could offer relevant and detailed information for the study.

Data Collection

Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources:

- **Primary Data:** Data were collected through qualitative methods such as FGDs, IDIs, KIIs, and direct observation. These methods allowed for an immersive exploration of the participants' experiences with health communication and participatory processes.
- **Secondary Data:** Supplementary information was sourced from relevant documents, books, journal articles, and credible internet resources to contextualise the findings.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to examine qualitative data. The process involved transcribing interviews and FGDs, coding the data for recurring themes, and systematically identifying patterns and relationships. NVivo software was used to aid in the organisation and interpretation of data, ensuring accuracy and reliability.

Ethical Considerations

Given the sensitive nature of the study, ethical protocols were rigorously observed:

- **Informed Consent:** Participants were briefed on the study's purpose and procedures and signed consent forms prior to data collection.
- **Confidentiality:** Measures were implemented to ensure the privacy of participants, including the use of pseudonyms and secure data storage.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Participation was entirely voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any stage without penalty.
- **Approval:** Ethical clearance was obtained from the appropriate institutional review board, ensuring compliance with research standards.

Improvements

- **Detail in Data Analysis:** The inclusion of NVivo software for thematic analysis enhances transparency and rigour in handling qualitative data.
- **Expanded Sampling Information:** Detailed purposive sampling criteria ensure clarity on participant selection.
- **Ethical Safeguards:** Addressing consent and confidentiality strengthens the study's credibility and participant protection.

Data collected were analysed and presented thematically according to the research objectives checklist provided below.

The state of Antenatal Health Care delivered to pregnant women with disabilities

This theme is aimed at achieving the objective of establishing the peculiarities of the care rendered to pregnant women with disabilities in the modern health facilities in AMAC. In a key informant interview, a gynecologist at the secondary level of care Dr. ChuksChukwudeme states that;

There is no antenatal care tailored towards people with disabilities, the practice is that when women get pregnant, they decide where to register whether it is private or public hospital. When they register, they are placed on appointment every four weeks until they get to 28 weeks and start having two weeks appointment until 36 weeks and they now have appointment every week until 40 to 41 weeks. So for high risk pregnancies, they are given more appointments which is half the duration of those appointments. For example, a

sickle cell disease patient would be given more appointment. Disability doesn't make pregnancy high risk rather it depends on the cause of the disability. (*Interview with Dr Chuks Chukwudeme O & G Abuja*)

In a focus group discussion with women with disabilities in Karamajiji community, 85 percent of the discussants agreed that there is no difference between the ANC service rendered to women without disabilities and the care rendered to women with disabilities as they believe the care is more tailored to suit women without disabilities without any inclusivity for them.

Revised Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study underscore the significant challenges faced by pregnant women with disabilities in accessing antenatal care (ANC) in the Abuja Municipal Area Council. These challenges, as articulated by participants in focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews (IDIs), and key informant interviews (KIIs), reveal systemic barriers that hinder equitable health care access for this vulnerable population.

The primary issues identified include physical barriers such as inaccessible hospital facilities, lack of proper communication support for hearing-impaired individuals, and inadequate social support systems for visually impaired women. For instance, the narrative by Asabe Isah poignantly illustrates how neglect and lack of proper health system accommodations can jeopardize maternal and child health outcomes. Her experience aligns with broader observations made during the study, where the hospital layout and lack of specialised equipment were found to be significant impediments, as affirmed by Dr. Sandra Olihe of the National Hospital, Abuja.

Comparing these findings with existing literature reveals congruence with studies on health inequities faced by women with disabilities. For example, Grech (2016) emphasised that health systems in developing countries often lack the infrastructure and trained personnel to address the specific needs of disabled individuals. Similarly, a study by MacLachlan et al. (2018) highlighted that inclusive communication and accessible facilities are crucial for improving health outcomes for this population. This study contributes to the discourse by providing a focused analysis of the Nigerian context, particularly within Abuja Municipal Area Council, thereby filling a geographical gap in the literature.

The findings also reveal that health workers are unfamiliar with participatory communication approaches, as noted by Ayamasowei Comfort and Hope Yusuf. While health communication practices are in place, they fail to accommodate the specific needs of women with disabilities, particularly those with hearing and visual impairments. Participatory communication, which involves engaging individuals as equal partners in the communication process, was identified as a potential game-changer for ANC delivery.

The theoretical framework of participatory communication provides a lens through which these findings can be understood. As posited by Freire (1970), participatory communication fosters dialogue and mutual understanding, which are critical in addressing the unique challenges faced by marginalised populations. Adopting such a framework in ANC service delivery could enhance health workers' capacity to meet the needs of disabled pregnant women, thereby promoting equity and inclusion.

Despite these insights, the study is limited by its small sample size and geographic scope, focusing solely on pregnant women with disabilities in Abuja Municipal Area Council. These limitations constrain the generalisability of the findings. Moreover, while systemic challenges were identified, the discussion stops short of proposing innovative solutions beyond the recommendations section. Exploring community-based approaches, such as engaging local disability advocacy groups, or leveraging technology, such as mobile health apps with accessibility features, could enrich the discussion.

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical need for inclusive and participatory health communication strategies to address the barriers faced by pregnant women with disabilities in accessing ANC. Future research should expand the sample size and geographic coverage to validate these findings further. Additionally, intervention-based studies evaluating the implementation of participatory communication in ANC services would provide actionable insights for policymakers and healthcare providers.

Conclusion

This study reveals the systemic neglect and barriers that pregnant women with disabilities face in accessing antenatal care (ANC) services in Abuja Municipal Area Council. The findings underscore that physical inaccessibility, communication challenges, and inadequate social and institutional support significantly hinder their ability to utilise these essential healthcare services. These challenges are compounded by the lack of tailored participatory and inclusive communication strategies among healthcare providers, resulting in a healthcare system that does not adequately meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

The implications of these findings extend beyond the immediate context, highlighting broader issues of health inequity and the urgent need to integrate disability-inclusive policies within Nigeria's healthcare system. Addressing these barriers is essential not only for improving maternal and child health outcomes but also for advancing global health equity and meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

Promoting the uptake of ANC among pregnant women with disabilities requires a multidimensional approach. Health systems must prioritise the removal of physical and communication barriers while investing in capacity-building initiatives to equip healthcare workers with the knowledge and tools necessary for inclusive service delivery. Innovative strategies, such as leveraging technology for accessible health communication and fostering community-based support systems, should also be explored.

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical need for systemic reforms to ensure that pregnant women with disabilities can access equitable and quality ANC services. By adopting inclusive health communication strategies and participatory approaches, Nigeria can take significant strides toward creating a healthcare system that leaves no one behind. Future research should focus on intervention-based approaches to assess the impact of these reforms, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable healthcare landscape.

Recommendations

To ensure that pregnant women with disabilities can access and benefit from antenatal care (ANC) services, this study provides the following prioritized and actionable recommendations:

- i. Addressing Infrastructure and Accessibility Barriers:** Governments at all levels should prioritise the removal of physical and structural barriers in healthcare facilities. Hospitals and ANC centres should incorporate universal design principles, including wheelchair ramps, elevators, and accessible examination couches. Pilot programs for retrofitting existing facilities should begin in high-need areas like the Abuja Municipal Area Council, with a timeline for nationwide adoption.
- ii. Capacity Building for Healthcare Providers:** Healthcare workers should undergo mandatory training in participatory and inclusive health communication, focusing on understanding and addressing the specific needs of women with disabilities. These trainings

should be integrated into continuing medical education and nursing programs, with modules on the use of interpreters, communication aids (e.g., sign language), and sensitivity in caregiving.

- iii. **Implementation of Participatory Communication Strategies:** Participatory communication should be institutionalized within ANC guidelines. This involves creating platforms where pregnant women with disabilities can provide direct feedback on ANC services. Pilot participatory programs can be rolled out in selected facilities, monitored, and scaled up based on effectiveness.
- iv. **Partnerships with Civil Society and Advocacy Groups:** Collaboration with disability advocacy groups and civil society organizations is essential to bridge gaps in ANC delivery. These partnerships can facilitate awareness campaigns, community mobilisation, and advocacy for policy reforms. Community leaders should also be engaged to foster a supportive environment for women with disabilities.
- v. **Provision of Social and Economic Support Systems:** Targeted social interventions, such as subsidised transportation and healthcare costs, should be implemented to address the economic barriers faced by pregnant women with disabilities. Governmental and non-governmental organisations can establish support networks, including volunteer caregiver programs to assist visually impaired women.
- vi. **Dedicated Funding for Inclusive Healthcare Initiatives:** Governments should allocate specific budgets for inclusive ANC services. This includes funding for interpreters, assistive devices, and healthcare facility upgrades. Partnerships with international development agencies and corporate organisations can help secure additional funding and technical support.

Implementation Plan

An action plan with a five-year timeline is recommended:

- **Year 1-2:** Conduct needs assessments, pilot training programs, and retrofit selected facilities.
- **Year 3-4:** Evaluate pilot programs, expand participatory communication strategies, and develop funding frameworks.
- **Year 5:** Scale up successful interventions nationwide and integrate inclusive practices into national healthcare policies.

By addressing these priority areas, Nigeria can create a more inclusive healthcare system that ensures no woman is left behind in accessing quality ANC services.

Overall, promoting uptake of antenatal care among pregnant women with disabilities is an important task that can have significant benefits for the health of both the mother and the baby.

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OVERCOMING THE EFFECTS OF INSECURITY FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH – EAST GEOPOLITICAL ZONE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract:

The raging security challenges in the South East, Nigeria has undermined entrepreneurial development in that area. This has demoralized many entrepreneurs who are increasingly relocating to zones of comfort to save their businesses from collapse. Other entrepreneurs who chose to stay has resiliently devised robust strategies to navigate the turbulent security situation for their business survival. The study explores the effective modalities being put in by entrepreneurs to overcome the hurdles of insecurity in the south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria. In doing so, the study utilized both the primary and secondary data to how the entrepreneurs leverage internal and external resources to mitigate the impact of insecurity on their businesses. Findings reveal that in order to overcome the security challenges in the southeast, entrepreneurs in the area employed a variety of strategies to ensure the survival of their enterprises. Based the findings, the study adopted both the resilience and the resource-based view theories to examine the various strategies and recommend among others that intensive collaboration and knowledge-sharing among entrepreneurs is a desideratum to enhance collective resilience and sustainable entrepreneurial development in the southeast turbulent security environment..

Key words: *Insecurity, development, entrepreneurs, investments, community networks.*

Introduction:

Entrepreneurship plays a vital role in driving economic growth and development, particularly in areas facing security challenges. In the context of South-East Nigeria, where insecurity poses significant obstacles to business operations, entrepreneurs must navigate a complex landscape of risks to sustain their ventures (Nwokwu & Ogayi, 2021). The South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria is known for its entrepreneurial spirit and vibrant business environment (Ibecheozor, Oparaku & Augustine-Daddie, 2023). However, the prevalence of insecurity, including trends such as political unrest, kidnapping and extortion, armed robbery and ritual killing, and other social disorders present formidable barriers to viable entrepreneurship development. Omemma (2022) observed that entrepreneurs in the southeast, Nigeria are constantly confronted with the disruption of their operations through sit-at-home orders imposed by the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB). Through that pattern of separatist agitation, supply chains and workforce have been adversely affected, thereby requiring the entrepreneurs operating in the area to adopt resilient strategies capable to mitigate risks and enable their businesses to thrive in uncertain conditions. Ultimately, understanding how entrepreneurs in the South-East region of Nigeria navigate insecurity is crucial for fostering a conducive environment for entrepreneurship development and economic prosperity.

This initiative becomes necessary because the entire southeastern part of Nigeria has presently been besieged by heightened security crisis manifesting in the form of internal terrorism such as armed banditry, farmers-herdsmen clashes and kidnapping (Iyida 2024). Unfortunately, while this is resulting in desperate loss of lives in their numbers, it is equally taking a toll on businesses and undermining entrepreneurial development in that part of the country. Consequently, the mindless destruction of lives and properties associated with enforcement of the incessant sit – at – home order have greatly hampered the growth of businesses and hindered seamless communication due to the destruction of communication masts and other infrastructure, and destroyed acquired wealth,

which is itself the principal means by which businesses are developed. This tends to reinforce the fact that no business can thrive without adequate security (Omemma 2021).

The questions that crave for answers are first, who are the perpetrators of the raging insecurity in the southeast? Secondly, and most importantly, what are their motivations and why have the insecurities defied measures taken to tackle them? Apart from the IPOB/ESN ferment, majority of the security threats in the South East, Nigeria are being masterminded by the unknown gunmen and herdsmen. The unknown gunmen in the South East have been driven by a range of factors, including political grievances, economic marginalization, and the failure of the government to address the root causes of the conflict, which the release of Mazi Nnamdi Kanu and holding of referendum for the determination of the carving out of South East geopolitical zone as an independent state of Biafra. The unknown gunmen have frequently attacked police stations, military checkpoints, and other targets. Thus, their activities have been causing significant insecurity and uncertainty. The unknown gunmen are believed to be linked to various criminal organizations and political groups, and their activities are thought to be motivated by a desire for political power and control. On their part, the rise of militant herdsmen, bandits, and unknown gunmen has marked a new era of insecurity in the south-eastern part of Nigeria, one that is characterized by the emergence of new actors and forms of violence, and has had a profound impact on the social, economic, and political development of the geopolitical zone. As such the raging phenomenon constitutes a major concern for the government and citizens of Nigeria as a whole. In addition to the menace of the IPOB/ESN insurgents, the unknown gunmen, and the militant herders, the southeast geopolitical zone has also been experiencing a torrential rise in cultism and armed robbery, with various cult groups and armed robbery gangs operating in the zone. These groups are often involved in violent conflicts and have been responsible for numerous attacks on civilians and security personnel, including kidnapping and extortion as well as ritual killing and human organ harvest- spree.. The rise of cultism and armed robbery in the South East, Nigeria has been attributed to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons as the area heavily infested with several armed gangs. All these have been a heavy burden that the entrepreneurs have been bearing, while working relentlessly to keep their businesses alive through some individual and collective initiatives.

Against this backdrop, this study is motivated to explore the strategies employed by entrepreneurs in the South-East region to navigate insecurity and sustain their businesses. By delving into the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of entrepreneurs operating in sectors vulnerable to security threats, this study sought to shed light on the innovative approaches and resilience demonstrated by entrepreneurs in the face of adversity.

Contextualization of concepts

It is apposite in a study of this nature to contextualize key concepts. These are insecurity and entrepreneurship. The essence is to provide a comprehensive overview of existing research and scholarly works that explore the relationship between insecurity and entrepreneurship in the context of the South-East region. By synthesizing key findings and insights from relevant studies, gaps in knowledge filled to create opportunities for further research in this critical area. In this connection, there seems to be consensus among scholars that insecurity connotes threat to life and property. For instance, Galtung (1969) sees insecurity as a state of uncertainty, vulnerability, and fear arising from the presence or threat of physical harm, violence, or danger. It encompasses a broad range of concerns, including personal safety, property security, and psychological well-being (Hoffmann, 2010). In the context of business and economic development, insecurity can manifest in various forms, such as terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, and communal conflicts (Collier, 2000). According to Garuba (2012), insecurity in Nigeria is characterized by a pervasive sense of fear, anxiety, and unpredictability, which affects not only individuals but also businesses and investors. Scholars like Idowu (2015) and Okeke (2017) argue that insecurity in Nigeria is fuelled by factors

such as poverty, unemployment, political instability, and corruption. These underlying factors create an environment conducive to criminal activities and violent conflicts, which in turn undermine trust and confidence in institutions and the rule of law (Adebayo, 2018). Moreover, insecurity can have far-reaching consequences, including reduced foreign investment, decreased economic growth, and increased brain drain (Eboh, 2015).

Equally, scholars agree that insecurity unleashes adverse impacts on the ease of doing business, particularly in areas like the South-East. Okpe, Ijirshar, Ibrahim, & Ogodu (2024) observed that security threats, including crime, political instability, and communal conflicts, create a challenging operating environment for entrepreneurs, leading to reduced investment, limited market access, and increased operational costs. In the same vein, Uzor & Ikenga (2023) identified insecurity in the South-East region of Nigeria as a significant barrier to entrepreneurship development, with businesses facing threats such as theft, vandalism, and extortion, which hinder growth and sustainability. This was buttressed by Ede & Okafor (2023) in survey they conducted to assess the effects of the rising insecurity on businesses in the south east, Nigeria. They found that the prevalence of insecurity in the South-East region not only deters local entrepreneurs from expanding their businesses but also discourages potential investors from entering the market, resulting in a stagnation of economic growth and development. Lending credence to the findings, Ibecheozor, Oparaku & Augustine-Daddie (2023) in a related study revealed that the uncertainty and unpredictability caused by insecurity in the business environment of the South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria have led to a lack of confidence among entrepreneurs, affecting their decision-making processes and overall business performance. Nevertheless, some studies have revealed that entrepreneurs in the South-East region have demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability in the face of insecurity challenges. Raimi & Aslani (2019) explored how local entrepreneurs leverage social networks, community ties, and innovative strategies to navigate security risks and sustain their businesses. This resilience highlights the importance of contextual factors in shaping entrepreneurial responses to insecurity.

In a study by Obiefuna & Obidile (2022), it was observed that entrepreneurs in the South-East region often exhibit a high degree of flexibility and resourcefulness in adapting their business models and operations to mitigate the impact of insecurity. This ability to initiate robust strategies in response to changing security dynamics is crucial for business survival and growth in volatile environments. That is why Ugoani & Nwaubani (2014) in their work emphasized the role of entrepreneurial mindset and problem-solving skills in fostering resilience among business owners in the South-East, Nigeria. In other words, entrepreneurs who are proactive, forward-thinking, and willing to experiment with new approaches are better equipped to overcome security-related challenges and capitalize on emerging opportunities in the market. Apart from the resilience and great potentials for self – preservation, further studies have revealed that policies and institutional responses have equally contributed enormously in providing stability and confidence in the face of the surge of insecurity in the south east, Nigeria. In fact, in recent time, the role of government policies and institutional responses in addressing insecurity and promoting entrepreneurship development has been a subject of scholarly inquiry. For instance, Achumba, I. Ighomereho & Akpor-Robaro (2013) in their contribution examined the effectiveness of security interventions, regulatory frameworks, and support programs in enhancing the security environment for entrepreneurs in the South-East. Their findings underscored the need for targeted policy measures to foster a conducive business climate. In another study by Kenneth, Udeh, Ugwu, & Odo, (2023), they researchers highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts between government agencies, law enforcement, and business associations in implementing comprehensive security strategies that safeguard businesses and encourage investment in the South-East region. Effective collaboration and information sharing among stakeholders were identified as critical components of successful policy implementation.

Furthermore, study by Lambert, Deyganto, & Algasse (2023) emphasized the role of institutional capacity-building and governance reforms in strengthening the security infrastructure and

regulatory frameworks that underpin entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. By enhancing the capabilities of relevant institutions and promoting transparency and accountability in decision-making processes, policymakers can create an enabling environment for sustainable business growth and innovation.

Other studies have however focused attention on gender dynamics. For example, Ekwochi, E. A. (2020), highlighted the unique challenges faced by female entrepreneurs in the South-East region, including safety concerns, access to resources, and social barriers. Understanding the intersection of gender, insecurity, and entrepreneurship is crucial for promoting gender-inclusive development strategies. Furthermore, in a research study conducted by Obi, Okechukwu, & Egbo (2017), it was revealed that women entrepreneurs in the South-East region often experience heightened vulnerability to security threats due to their limited access to formal networks and support systems. Addressing gender disparities in access to security resources and business opportunities is essential for creating a more equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem. Hence, a study by Okafor & Abdulazez (2007). emphasized the importance of incorporating gender-sensitive approaches in policy interventions aimed at enhancing security and entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. By recognizing and addressing the specific needs and constraints faced by women entrepreneurs, policymakers can promote greater gender equality and empowerment within the business community, ultimately contributing to more inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

In another development, some studies have preferred to focus on the importance of community engagement in overcoming insecurity for businesses to thrive. In their work, Malachi & Ajibade (2022) have explored the role of community engagement, conflict resolution mechanisms, and social cohesion in building resilience against security threats and fostering entrepreneurial activities. Their work underscores the importance of grassroots initiatives in creating sustainable peace and economic opportunities. Similarly, Bichi (2021) highlighted the positive impact of community-led initiatives in mitigating security risks and enhancing the business environment in the South-East region. By fostering collaboration among local stakeholders, implementing conflict resolution strategies, and promoting social capital, communities can play a crucial role in creating a conducive ecosystem for entrepreneurship development. This view was reinforced by Arisukwu, O., Igbolekwu, Oye, Oyeyipo, Asamu, Rasak, & Oyekola (2020) in their emphasis for inclusive and participatory approaches to community engagement in addressing security challenges and supporting entrepreneurship in Nigeria. By involving diverse stakeholders, including community leaders, business owners, and government representatives, in decision-making processes and conflict resolution efforts, sustainable solutions can be developed that promote peace, stability, and economic growth at the local level..

Overall, the literature reviewed provides valuable insights into the multifaceted relationship between insecurity and entrepreneurship development in the South-East region of Nigeria. While existing studies have shed light on various aspects of this complex nexus, there remains a need for further research to deepen our understanding of the mechanisms through which insecurity impacts entrepreneurial activities, the effectiveness of policy interventions, and the role of social dynamics in shaping entrepreneurial responses to insecurity. By building on existing knowledge and addressing research gaps, future studies can contribute to evidence-based strategies for promoting entrepreneurship resilience and sustainable development in the face of insecurity challenges.

Theoretical orientation

Resilience theory serves as a foundational framework for understanding how entrepreneurs adapt and recover from security-related disruptions. Resilience is defined as the ability of individuals or organizations to withstand and bounce back from adverse events, demonstrating flexibility, resourcefulness, and perseverance in the face of challenges. In the context of entrepreneurship,

resilience theory emphasizes the importance of adaptive strategies, risk management practices, and leveraging resources to navigate uncertain and volatile environments. Entrepreneurs who exhibit high levels of resilience are better equipped to innovate, pivot their business models, and seize opportunities amidst adversity (Kumar, Rathakrishnan, Feranita, & Yi, 2023)

The resource-based view theory complements resilience theory by highlighting how entrepreneurs utilize internal and external resources to mitigate the impact of insecurity on their businesses. Resources such as financial capital, human capital, social networks, and technological capabilities play a crucial role in enabling entrepreneurs to respond effectively to security threats, diversify their operations, and sustain their ventures in the long term. By leveraging their unique resource configurations, entrepreneurs can build competitive advantages, enhance their resilience to external shocks, and adapt to changing market conditions (Martinelli, Tagliazucchi, & Marchi, 2018).

Moreover, institutional theory provides insights into how entrepreneurs interact with formal and informal institutions to navigate security challenges and regulatory constraints. Entrepreneurs operating in insecure environments must navigate complex institutional environments characterized by weak governance, corruption, and regulatory uncertainties (Muhammad, Ullah, & Warren, 2016). Understanding the institutional context in which entrepreneurship takes place is essential for entrepreneurs to identify opportunities, manage risks, and build legitimacy for their ventures (Sine, & David, 2010).

Additionally, social capital theory underscores the role of social relationships, networks, and trust in enhancing entrepreneurial resilience and mitigating security risks. Entrepreneurs who cultivate strong ties with diverse stakeholders, including other business owners, community leaders, and government officials, can access valuable information, resources, and support during times of crisis (World Health Organization, 2021). Social capital enables entrepreneurs to mobilize collective action, share knowledge, and collaborate on security-related initiatives that benefit the broader business community (Kumar, Kumra, & Singh, 2022).

Furthermore, the human capital theory emphasizes the importance of knowledge, skills, and expertise in driving entrepreneurial success and resilience in insecure environments. Entrepreneurs with high levels of human capital are better equipped to identify opportunities, solve complex problems, and adapt to changing circumstances. Investing in continuous learning, training, and skill development enhances entrepreneurs' capacity to innovate, navigate security challenges, and sustain their businesses in the long run (Rahman & Ahmad, 2024).

The effect of insecurity on businesses in South East, Nigeria

As the Positive Peace Report (2024) had rightly pointed out, strong and enterprising businesses are essential for employment and economic growth. This simply suggests that thriving private sector conditions equally ensure that there is a viable tax base upon which governments can fund other critical services which the business sector cannot. The implication is that an atmosphere of peace facilitates progress and makes it easier for businesses to sell, entrepreneurs and scientists to innovate, individuals to produce and governments to effectively regulate (Institute for Economics and Peace 2024).

But in an environment of violence, business activities will struggle or not develop. Some in volatile areas usually fold up and go into extinction while some others lucky to survive disruptions arising from insecurity would relocate to the zone of relative peace to pick up the pieces. This has been the experience of entrepreneurship in the southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Since August 9, 2021, businesses in the area have been intermittently grounded by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) insurgents who go on rampage, especially on Mondays to enforce sit – at – home order. In the course of the enforcement, many lives are lost and businesses including commuter vehicles are set ablaze.

Consequently, between 2021 and 2024 for which record is available, an estimated seven trillion naira has been lost in productivity, and potential investment (International Centre for Investigative Reporting 2024)

In fact, it is an understatement to assert that rising insecurity in the South East, Nigeria is adversely frustrating the ease of doing business and undermining entrepreneurial development in that geopolitical zone of Nigeria. For instance, according to 2019 World Bank annual rating on the ease of doing business, Nigeria was ranked 131 among 190 economies. Aghaulor (2021) attributed this to the security challenge across the country as it not only constitutes a threat to lives and property but also hinders business activities and discourages local and foreign investors. Consequently, insecurity stifles and retards socio-economic development (Iyida 2024). Onah (2021) reinforced this view in his assertion that insecurity in the South East, Nigeria had affected the cost of production, the level of foreign investment and prevented companies from planning for the future. He observed that the consequent effect would be the continuous emigration of companies and the closing down of local manufacturing. He also noted that the lack of constant electricity and other social amenities increased the cost of production and affected the profit margin of companies.

The insecurity in the south east geopolitical zone has also been undermining the level of investment in the area including the Gross Domestic Product as the internally generated revenues across the states within the geopolitical is in drastic decline. This stems from the fact that many industries have left the zone in droves. This is because no meaningful socio – economic activity can thrive in the absence of security (Omemma 2021; Omemma 2012). That may explain why the acting Director – General of the Enugu State Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, Mr. Uche Mba had to lament that hotels in the South East always lose eighty per cent of their bookings on any day of sit – at – home. More so, small businesses that depend on daily sales to survive often incur huge losses as a result of the expiration of unsold wares. Consequently, some of the affected entrepreneurs are force to take loan in order to put their business on life support. Similarly, traders of perishable goods such as vegetables, fruits and other farm produce lament increasing losses even as entrepreneurs find it difficult to meet up with sales volumes and re forced to retrench workers while those not retrenched face reductions in wages, compensation or bonuses. This is compounded by the change of destination by traders who usually patronize Onitsha and Aba markets as they leave in droves to places of relative security such as Lagos to make their purchases or sales. Their action is motivated by the need to save themselves and their businesses from the incessant attacks on traders and commuters who dare to go about their lawful businesses, while hotels, eateries and other businesses are wantonly invaded and looted by the enforcers of the illicit sit – at – home order across the South East/, Nigeria. Overall, the insecurity has been having a toll on transport, tourism, markets, industries, services and other businesses in the southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Even domestic investment is also adversely affected by the insecurity of the South East, Nigeria. For example, farmers cannot go to the farm and even manufacturers cannot plan for the future. This has invariably led to the reduction in agricultural and manufacturing output and the attendant adverse economic hardship (Ogundepa, 2022).

The murderous rampages and vicious onslaughts on individuals and institutions by the unknown gunmen and the IPOB/ESN enforcing illicit sit – at - home provide a highly unfavourable business environment for entrepreneurs and non-business owners alike. Foreign investment is a major factor in the achievement of sustainable development but rising insecurity serves as disincentive to prospective local and foreign investors. The overall implication for sustainable development is that the economy is fast deteriorating. The situation impinge on conducive environment for protection of lives, properties and the conduct of business and numerous economic activities, thereby leading to lack of interest and dissatisfaction among business investors (Okonkwo, Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbogu, 2015).

Yet the entire southeast geopolitical zone is still plagued with heightened security crisis manifesting

in the form of internal terrorism such as armed banditry, farmers-herdsmen clashes and kidnapping. Unfortunately, while this is resulting in desperate loss of lives in their numbers, it is equally taking a toll on businesses owners and non-business owners and the state's economy at large. Many raw materials and local food such as Okpa, Agbuga, Ayaraya, etc obtained within the state are now in scarcity due to the high rates of insecurity, which leaves the lands bare and sees a mass exodus of farmers and traders alike, seeking safety for their dear lives and what is left of their families. The mindless destruction of lives and properties has greatly hampered the growth of businesses and hindered seamless communication due to the destruction of communication masts and other infrastructure, and destroyed acquired wealth, which is itself the principal means by which businesses are developed. In the light of the foregoing, the study set out to examine the measures being adopted by the entrepreneurs to with the effects of insecurity on entrepreneurial development with a view to enhancing business development in the South East, Nigeria.

Coping with insecurity for entrepreneurial development in the South East, Nigeria

In the face of the turbulent security situation in the southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria, entrepreneurs in the affected domain of insecurity have individually and collectively employed a variety of strategies to cope with the challenges and ensure the survival of their businesses (Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpor-Robaro, 2013). Some common practice among these entrepreneurs seeking to protect their assets and safeguard their operations from external threats include investing in security measures, such as physical security systems, surveillance technologies, and security personnel, among others as discussed below.

- **Diversifying supply chains and distribution networks.** Mohezar, Mohamad, & Mohd Nor (2023) observe that this is another key strategy adopted by entrepreneurs in insecure environments to reduce tension and uncertainty as well as minimize dependency on vulnerable routes or sources so as to enhance operational resilience. By identifying alternative suppliers, transport routes, and market channels, entrepreneurs can mitigate the risks associated with disruptions to their primary business processes.
- **Building community networks and partnerships.** At another level, the entrepreneurs operating in the southeastern part of the country have equally resorted building community networks and partnerships which has enabled them to seamlessly access information, resources, and support from local stakeholders, government agencies, and other businesses (VanSandt & Sud, 2012). This particular initiative involves collaborating with community organizations, industry associations, and security agencies and has enhanced entrepreneurs' capacity to address security threats collectively and develop shared solutions to common challenges.
- **Application of digital technology.** Leveraging technology for remote operations and digital security is increasingly important for entrepreneurs in insecure environments to maintain business continuity and protect sensitive data from cyber threats (Demertzi, Demertzis, & Demertzis, 2023). Implementing secure communication platforms, data encryption tools, and remote monitoring systems can help entrepreneurs adapt to remote work arrangements and mitigate the risks of physical and virtual security breaches.
- **Public – private partnerships.** Policymakers and business support organizations play a critical role in creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship development in insecure regions. Obicci (Ed.). (2017) notes that strengthening public-private partnerships, enhancing access to security information, and providing training on risk management are essential initiatives to support entrepreneurs in navigating insecurity challenges and protecting their businesses.
- **Collaboration and knowledge – sharing.** Fostering a culture of collaboration and knowledge-sharing among entrepreneurs is key to enhancing collective resilience and

promoting sustainable growth in insecure environments. By facilitating peer learning, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities, policymakers can empower entrepreneurs to exchange best practices, innovative solutions, and lessons learned from their experiences with security threats.

The foregoing underscores the imperatives of a multifaceted approach to navigate turbulent security environment and this has been validated in the utilization of these array of operational and survival strategies by the entrepreneurs in parts of the southeast geopolitical zone of the country. The implication is that insecure environments require combined adaptive strategies, resourceful practices, and collaborative efforts to overcome security challenges and sustain business operations. By drawing on resilience theory, the resource – based theory, and the empirical illustrations from existing studies, it can concluded that experiences of the entrepreneurs in the South East, Nigeria provides a base for understanding how entrepreneurs can overcome security challenges and enhance the resilience in business operation.

Recommendations

The study examined the adverse effects of rising insecurity on entrepreneurial development in the South East, Nigeria. It was however, discovered that despite the overbearing effects of insecurity on businesses in that area, the entrepreneurs have deployed some enduring strategies to navigate the turbulent security environment for the survival of their businesses. But other measures are required to strengthen the existing efforts and fortify entrepreneurship against security challenges in the South East, Nigeria. Based on the findings and discussion so far, the following recommendations are proposed to support entrepreneurs, policymakers, and stakeholders in navigating turbulent security situations and fostering sustainable business growth:

- **Enhanced access to security information:** Policymakers should prioritize initiatives that improve access to timely and accurate security information for entrepreneurs in the region. Establishing communication channels, alert systems, and information-sharing platforms can help entrepreneurs stay informed about security threats, enabling them to proactively respond and adapt their business strategies accordingly.
- **Strengthened public – private partnerships:** Collaboration between government agencies, security forces, business associations, and entrepreneurs is essential for developing coordinated responses to security challenges. In the regard, policymakers should facilitate and strengthen public-private partnerships that promote information sharing, joint security initiatives, and mutual support mechanisms to enhance the resilience of businesses in the face of insecurity.
- **Training on risk management:** Business support organizations and industry associations should offer training programs and capacity-building initiatives focused on risk management, crisis response, and business continuity planning. Efforts should therefore be shifted to equipping entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills to enable them assess security risks, develop contingency plans, and implement preventive measures that can enhance their preparedness and resilience in insecure environments.
- **Fostering technological innovation:** Entrepreneurs should be encouraged to leverage technology for remote operations, digital security, and communication tools can enhance their ability to adapt to security threats and maintain business continuity. Policymakers and support organizations should equally promote innovation, provide access to technology resources, and facilitate training on digital security practices to help entrepreneurs navigate security challenges effectively.
- **Enhanced community engagement and networking:** Building strong community

networks, fostering collaboration among entrepreneurs, and facilitating knowledge-sharing platforms can enhance collective resilience and support entrepreneurship development in insecure regions. To this end, government responses should focus on encouraging community engagement initiatives, networking events, and mentorship programs to create a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurs facing security challenges.

- **Intensive monitoring and evaluation of policy responses:** It is deemed essential for the government agencies saddled with the responsibility to intensively monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policy interventions, support programs, and initiatives aimed at enhancing entrepreneurship resilience in insecure environments. Conducting regular evaluations, collecting feedback from entrepreneurs, and adjusting strategies based on outcomes can ensure that interventions are responsive to the evolving needs of businesses operating in volatile conditions.

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THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigeria is grappling with widespread poverty and underdevelopment, making it difficult for anyone to engage in philosophical or practical philosophy. This is made worse by current Nigerian political leadership, who have destroyed the national polity's values of hard work, human dignity, honesty, and integrity out of greed and materialistic tendencies. In such a scenario, some have questioned not only the relevance of philosophy to human development in general and nation-building in particular, but also its relevance to both. Philosophy, on the other hand, gives political officeholders and voters a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities within the polity because knowledge not only saves lives but also liberates them. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to provide an explanation of the theoretical and practical significance of philosophy to leadership and nation-building. It proposes and contends that philosophical thoughts have been answerable for molding great initiative and advancement of social orders through the channels of schooling. Thus, the paper explores how philosophical methods, including critical analysis and integrity, can serve as tools for nation-building.

Key words: Leadership, Nigeria, Nation-Building, Philosophy.

Introduction

A government's success is measured by its ability to achieve sustainable development such that its citizens would derive natural attachment to leadership and governance. But then, in order for a nation to be in a phase of development, she must meet up with at least two important pre-requisites, which are philosophy and good leadership, which ensure socio-political and economic stability. It is for this reason that Plato had insisted that a leader must be a Philosopher-king. Plato sees a philosopher king as a ruler who possesses both a love of wisdom, as well as intelligence, reliability, and a willingness to live a simple life. In other words, the philosopher is the best ruler or leader and the only person who can rule or lead the people with vision and wisdom for the actualization of socio-political and economic stability. Thus only philosophers, Plato thinks, will seek the good of the whole city when they rule. All citizens can be brought to accept that the rule of philosophers is in their own interest (Plato, 1997). Thus in order to overcome most of the developmental problems that characterize the Nigerian nation and also to grow, develop and actualize her rich potentials, good leaders with solid foundation in philosophy must be given opportunity to rule this country. Therefore, the place of Philosophy as a discipline in our world particularly in Nigeria today cannot be overemphasized, because good philosophy brings about good leadership.

Nigeria and other developing nations have continuously wallowed in the swampy and muddy waters of urban over-population, rural stagnation, acute unemployment and growing man-made inequalities. Consequently, the gap between the developed, developing or underdeveloped nations of the world like Nigeria has continued to grow larger, wider and deeper, instead of becoming narrower and closer. This is so because, unlike leaders in the developed worlds, the leaders in developing or underdeveloped worlds or nations, particularly Nigeria, have grossly failed to put the nation first before themselves, their interests, wants and inordinate desires. The failure of Nigerian leaders to put the interests of the nation before theirs is a clear manifestations and indication that Nigeria lacks philosophers in her leadership structure or composition. This results in two main consequences: first, Nigeria lacks a coherent national political ideology, and second, philosophy is excluded from the leadership and governance structures. And since national ideology has not been articulated due largely to the fact that Nigerian leaders know little or nothing about philosophy, good

leadership would continue to elude Nigeria. And without good leadership, meaningful and sustainable development can never be guaranteed. Hence, in order to successfully access and enhance meaningful development in Nigeria, effective strategies must be evolved. One of these strategies include inculcating the intellectual philosophic contributions of renowned philosophers which give room for and encourage good leadership.

From a more general perspective, philosophy can be regarded as the engine or the hub of human and socio-economic development. It was based on the understanding of the practical functions and relations of philosophy, leadership and nation-building that led notable philosophers and African nationalists leaders like Nnamdi Azikiwe, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah and several others into the philosophic discussions of African problems which later resulted into political freedom and independence from foreign, imperialistic rulers. The philosophic deliberations and works of these nationalists like *consciencism* by Nkrumah, *Ujamaa* by Nyerere etc, played significant roles in reshaping, remolding, sustaining and uniting the hitherto colonized African nations. The African nationalists and philosophers attempted to fashion a unifying political and economic ideology that would be practical, functional and at the same time indigenous to Africans. The philosophic cum political thoughts or ideologies of some of these African nationalists philosophers and leaders were instrumental to the rise in economic and political greatness of some African countries immediately after the independence. Nigeria in particular, following a well thought-out political and philosophical ideologies laid down by her founding fathers, became politically so powerful and economically so great that the whole world recognized her as the “giant of Africa”. This, however, was short lived, as some Nigerian leaders unscrupulously allowed egotism and ethnic sentiments becloud their judgments and consequently displace and replaced their national allegiance and patriotism. This gloomy situation should be the primary concern of all well-meaning Nigerians, as this has made it impossible for Nigeria – a nation endowed and blessed by God with enormously rich natural resources – to record and experience meaningful growth and sustainable development.

Indeed, development is very essential and highly necessary to growth and sustenance of any country. However, sustainable development can only be possible when the leadership of the country is driven or piloted by leadership imbued with philosophic wisdom. Sadly, on the scale of the world standard indices, African nations, particularly Nigeria is on the baseline or bottom line in development – politically, socio-economically, educationally, and technologically. Poverty, unemployment, hunger, starvation, crime, violence and terrorism now ravage the nation instead of meaningful and sustainable nation-building. Rather than producing, nurturing and enthroning good leadership that would be concerned with the formulation of practical and functional philosophic ideologies, which are the foundations of sustainable development, Nigerian leadership and governance have been condemned and abandoned to wander pointlessly and aimlessly in the radarless ship, on the ocean of underdevelopment, poverty, hunger, starvation, inferiority complex, and lose of identity and authenticity, without a seasoned captain.

In the midst of all these negativities surrounding Nigeria's very existence, there is still hope, if only Nigeria could give philosophers chance to pilot this wrecking ship called Nigeria. Philosophy is a veritable tool for any meaningful development. All the developed and progressive nations of the world were shaped by the philosophical reflections and applications of and by their leaders. Great nations like China, Japan, Britain, America and many others have well-thought out and well developed national philosophy or ideology which guides them in the formulation of practical and functional socio-political and economic policies, which today, is responsible for their enviable greatness and sustainable development. Unfortunately, Nigeria's developmental path ways are not anchored on philosophical principles and thoughts. For this reason, Nigerian philosophers have no place and are indeed excluded from policy making, implementation and governance. In fact, one can rightly say, though sadly, that the concept philosophy is quite strange and unfamiliar with Nigeria and her half-breed leaders. Hence, while world economies in the West and Asia are till date run by and based on more philosophical and scientific principles (Otonti, 2006), Nigeria is busy recruiting

mindless, senseless, clueless, visionless, egoistic, self-centered, half-baked politicians to think, rule, lead and decide the fate of Nigeria – the once great nation of Africa. It is against this background that this paper seeks to showcase, highlight and draw attention to the important and unarguable connection or nexus between philosophy, leadership and nation-building.

Importance of Philosophy to Leadership

Philosophy plays a crucial role in leadership by providing a foundational framework for ethical decision-making, critical thinking, and effective governance. Leaders who engage with philosophical principles develop a deeper understanding of justice, morality, and human nature, enabling them to make informed and rational decisions (Ciulla, 2014).

One significant aspect of philosophy in leadership is **ethical reasoning**. Leaders often face moral dilemmas that require them to balance personal, organizational, and societal interests. Ethical theories such as utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics guide leaders in making just and fair decisions (Northouse, 2021). Moreover, **philosophy enhances critical thinking**, allowing leaders to analyze complex problems, question assumptions, and anticipate long-term consequences (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Leaders who apply philosophical inquiry can develop a more strategic vision and foster innovation in their organizations. Additionally, philosophy instills **a sense of purpose and vision** in leadership. By understanding existential and political philosophy, leaders can inspire and mobilize people toward shared goals, creating a strong sense of identity and direction within their teams (Burns, 1978). Philosophy therefore, is integral to leadership as it strengthens ethical judgment, critical thinking, and visionary guidance, ensuring that leaders act with wisdom and integrity.

The Nature of Philosophy

The term philosophy is not a term that most people are familiar with. Hence, philosophy as an academic discipline remains an activity that many people know little or nothing about (Ejeh, 2009). Although, the task of defining philosophy is difficult, various prominent philosophers have variously provided us with some acceptable working definitions of philosophy. Generally, philosophy is literally defined as love of wisdom. It is a search for ultimate reality and an attempt to say what it is. Plato sees philosophy as that which gives access to true reality which lies in a separate world of ideas or forms (Omogbe, 1990). For Plato, philosophy also helps one to find a good way of life. He describes it as the only science which is the science of itself and of the other sciences as well (Ejeh, 2009). Wallace William on his part argues that, Philosophy in the full sense is only man thinking, thinking about generalities rather than particulars (Wallace, 1977). But for Aristotle, philosophy is the investigation of causes and principles of things. This investigation, however, does not refer to a separate world of forms, (as Plato held) but looks for explanations in the world of experience. Jaques Maritain says, “Philosophy is not wisdom of conduct, but wisdom of knowing with certainty why a thing is what it is, and cannot be otherwise” (Mariatain, 1930). J. Jaspers is of the opinion that the task of philosophy is not the same as that of science, but its task is to deal with human existence from a person's immediate inner experience. Taking a cue from Jaspers, Joseph Omogbe sees philosophy as a rational search for answers to the questions that arise in the mind when we reflect on human experience. (Omogbe, 1990). From the few definitions above, we can sum up that philosophy is a rational, critical, organized, and systematic discipline which seeks to provide solutions to the basic questions about the ultimate meaning of reality as a whole and human life in particular. Hence philosophy questions everything in search of truth. Its questioning begins with wonder and awe and proceeds to analysis. It raises some of the deepest and widest questions there are and tries to provide answers to so many human “whats,” “whys,” and “hows.”

Thus philosophy is a search, a continuous search for meaning, for intelligibility and for answers. It is a search that never ends, for by its very nature, philosophy is always on the way and never arrives at its destination. It is a continuous search for answers to questions, that accepts no dogmatic answers. The philosophical inquiry is a purely rational inquiry. Naturally, philosophy is both a reflective, speculative, critical, prescriptive and analytical discipline. It is a guide for living, because the issues it addresses are basic and pervasive, determining the course we take in life and how we treat other people (Ejeh, 2009). Philosophy studies the fundamental nature of existence, of man, and man's relationship to existence. It examines and tries to understand and interpret some natural phenomena as they affect human experiences or human beings. Thus, based on the various qualities of philosophy, Philosophers are not only well equipped to be aware of their surroundings; they also contribute actively to the positive changes, achievements, socio-economic policies, ideologies, identity, structure and progress of their nations. Hence, a nation's meaningful innovations and development can never be sustained until they rest on or are founded on solid philosophical ideologies and goals.

Concept of Leadership

Leadership is generally understood as the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal. In our context here, leadership specifically refers to, and simply means political leadership. Thus, **political leadership means the volition and ability of an individual or group to sustainably shape social processes, in adherence to human rights, common good prior to self interest and inclusion of all participants.** Political leaders are basically those who assume offices through the votes of the majority that conform to the rules and regulations of a particular setting. Although definitions of political leaders may vary, yet we appreciate that political leaders emerge from politic which simply refers to the community on which the leader is enshrined. Political leaders can be of varied categories. However, for the purpose of this paper we define political leaders through tracing how they come into being. Political leaders are basically from three categories:

- 1) those who exist through votes of the people and go by the names such as councilors, parliamentarians, governors, prime ministers and presidents.
- 2) Those who exist through direct appointments made by national leaders in the name of Presidents and prime ministers and they go by names such as ministers, ambassadors, regional commissioners and district commissioners pending the nature of the named country.
- 3) Those who emanate from political parties of any level.

They can be of national and or lower echelons of any political party be it ruling or archrival/opposition. In some instances, we do have mixed qualifications. Some political leaders are elected by the people, and in secondary stages the appointing authority would appoint them to discharge as government leaders in varied positions. leadership is a reciprocal, transactional and transformational process in which individuals are permitted to influence and motivate others to promote the attaining of group and individual goals (Barki and Ballow, 2007).

Since Nigeria's independence over sixty years ago, political leadership has remained a persistent challenge, threatening the country's political and economic stability. Plato had long talked about the "good life" which comes through good governance. Unfortunately, the Nigerian nation, and indeed the Nigerian people, it seems may never experience the much talked and much desired "good life" in their own country and in their life-time. This is due to the nature of political leadership foisted and imposed on the nation by successive political leaders over the years. As it were in Nigeria this day, the mention of the word leadership, evokes and rouses a conglomeration of all negative feelings in the minds of every rational and patriotic Nigerian. Nigeria leadership has failed the citizens both at

the national, state and local levels such that they (the citizens) have become very disillusioned, withdrawn, and alienated with the nation's leadership style of governance. The 2020 #EndSARS protests and the current #EndbadgovernnanceinNigeria protests are clear indications of the reality of bad leadership in Nigeria and its antecedent lose of hope in the reality of the Nigeria nation by the Nigerian citizens. Leadership failure, therefore, is identified as the cause of the myriads of problems besieging the Nigerian nation at the social, political, educational, economic, religious, and developmental spheres. Hence, Okolo rightly observes that:

When everything is said and done, Nigeria's as Africa's fate lies principally with her leaders: the type of people they are, their life style, values and the type of image they create for the people. For there is no question of changing the values of the society from below, so to speak that is to say, those of the common man, if little or no changes occur from the top: the nation's leaders. But in Nigeria, as in many African nations, the big problem is leadership (Okolo, 1989).

The cause or the reason for the leadership failure in Nigeria is neither obscured nor far-fetched. It can be clearly and unarguably traced to lack of philosophic foundations or backings. Contrary to Plato's demand for an ideal leader or ruler to be a Philosopher king, the Nigerian leadership seems to be devoid of and characterized by people who have little or no philosophical background or knowledge. Many Nigerian political leaders, particularly from certain regions, seem to lack a foundational understanding of philosophy and its implications for governance. This explains why Nigeria has continued to record leadership failures shortly after the independence till now. Because her leaders lacked the philosophic ideologies and orientations needed for the formulation of national ideologies towards a functional and sustainable nation-building. Having little or no knowledge of and training in philosophy, Nigerian leaders could and cannot rise above their various individual interests. This was what late Chinua Achebe decried when he stated that: “the Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership” (Achebe, 1983). The responsibilities of the leaders and the challenge of personal example here include a selfless commitment to ensure that the wellbeing of the citizens of their nation is guaranteed under every circumstance without fear or favour. Okaneme summarizes this issue succinctly when he notes that: “there are incontrovertible as well as overwhelming evidences to prove that political leadership has been a serious challenge in the country for so long” (Okaneme, 2018). The issue of poverty which threatens the lives of millions of Nigerians on daily basis is a serious example of the reality of leadership failure in Nigeria.

Leadership is inherently value-based and is concerned with fostering change. Unfortunately, the Nigerian political leadership has become valueless, and rather than become concerned with fostering change that leads to growth and long term development, the Nigerian leadership styles, chose to remain stagnant and egoistic.

Concept of Development

Development is a difficult word to define. As a concept, it has different definitions. According to scholars such as Gboyega (2003), development encompasses all efforts to improve human existence, while others, like Chaturvedi (2006), view it as a social, economic, and political process primarily focused on 'developing nations. For Agbakoba, development is a crucial issue in the world today and consequently, it draws the attention of philosophers. According to him, “development may be defined briefly as self realization within the context of society” (Agbakoba, 2003). For Chrisman, in Lawal and Abe (2011), development is viewed as a process of societal advancement, where improvement in the well being of people are generated through strong partnerships between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. Development also involves improvement in the material well-being of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, in a sustainable way to

ensure that present consumption does not jeopardize future resources. It also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. It seeks to improve personal security, livelihoods, and expand life chances. Sociologists such as Naomi (1995) believe that development is usually taken to involve not only economic growth, but also some notion of equitable distribution, provision of health care, education, housing and other essential services all with a view to improving the individual and collective quality of life. Hence development is seen as progress towards desired social goals. It is also understood as the process by which people create and recreate themselves and their circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choices and values. Therefore, development is something that people must do for themselves, although it can be facilitated by the help of others. If people are the end of development, as is the case, they are also necessarily its agent and means. Development should be approached with a realistic understanding of the current socio-economic and political realities in Africa and the global environment, rather than idealized expectations.

From the above, it is reasonable to note that development is not only an economic exercise, but also involves both socio-economic and political issues and pervades all aspects of societal life. Since development is supposed to affect all aspects of societal life, we therefore envisage and rather talk of sustainable development as opposed to non-sustainable development. Sustainable development therefore, is the consistent growth of all aspects of human society; the cultural, economic, socio-political, technological and environmental. It is “a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investment, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with the future as well as present needs” (Izunwa & Ehujuo, 2011). While Todaro (1980) describes it as continuous growth of social, political and economic systems, improvement in incomes and output, positive and radical changes in institutions, popular attitudes, social and administrative structures as well as customs and beliefs, Rodney (1990) speaks of it to involve in increment of skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material well being.

Generally, development is said to be multi-dimensional in its meaning since it covers economic, social, political, cultural, human or personal dimensions. Development involves increase in the quality and quantity of life of a people. It includes gradual removal of poverty, unemployment, social inequalities, bad leadership, and monopolization of opinion by the government (Babarinde & Farayola, 2005).

Nation-building

The term 'nation-building' refers to the collective process of developing a nation in social, economic, political, and even religious dimensions. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described as the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government.

Nigeria has had uncountable number of developmental plans since her independence. Unfortunately, a lot of factors have combined together to scuttle the nation's development. One such factor is the lack of effective leadership. In the absence of good leadership, development becomes increasingly difficult to achieve. Most Nigerian leaders have no sense of commitment to development. Lending credence to this, Mimiko (1998) noted that:

The decolonization allowed the crop of leaders that aligned with colonial power to take over Nigeria. This ensured the sustenance of a neo-colonial economy even after political independence. These leaders on assumption of power quickly turned up the repressive machinery of the colonial state rather than dismantling it. Significantly, they have no vision of development to accompany the efficient instrument of repression they inherited. All they were interested in was access to power and privileges and not development (Mimiko, 1998).

Apart from lack of commitment to development, another factor that seriously militates and undermines development in Nigeria is high level of corruption and indiscipline. Unfortunately, the Nigerian state is often governed by corrupt leaders who use it as a tool for personal gain and capital accumulation. In this context, no well-designed plan can succeed when overseen by a corrupt state. Corruption often disrupts the effectiveness of development initiatives and leads to inefficiencies in governance. The country's mono-economic base is another significant barrier to development. It is no longer news that Nigeria depends largely on crude oil for her survival to the detriment of other developed and undeveloped natural resources. Consequently, every other sector of the economy is unimportant and therefore neglected.

The Nexus between Philosophy, Leadership and Nation-building

Development is only meaningful when it is sustainable. And sustainable development is only possible if initiated, directed and managed by good leadership. Good leadership in turn is dependent upon a solid philosophical foundation. Philosophy is a human activity directed towards a goal. The goal is basically to help man discover, understand and develop himself and the universe for a better and more meaningful living. This is why great men and women, scientists and philosophers have consistently struggled to harness and employ their intellectual endowment towards making the universe a better and safer dwelling place. Scientific exploits and results notwithstanding, philosophy remains essentially relevant in human and societal development.

One of the most critical challenges Nigeria has faced since independence is the issue between politics and power. Evidentially, Nigerian leaders and politicians have not been able to understand the true meaning and implications of politics and power. They failed to understand that politics and power are twin engines and two important variables that can be used to construct or deconstruct, build or destroy, nurture good leadership or create tyrants, develop or under develop a nation. This inability to understand the nature and true meaning of politics and power by Nigerian leaders has occasioned several attempts by self-serving leaders to use politics and power very destructively. A look at how Nigerian government is run today leaves no one in doubt of the fact that politics and power have been and is still seriously misconstrued by Nigerian leaders. This calamity was brought upon Nigeria by the absence of Philosophy and philosophical ideologies in the nation's political, economic and social life. Many Nigerian leaders lack an understanding of philosophy and its potential contribution to national development. Those who may claim to have an idea of philosophy, at best regard philosophy as “the most abstruse and abstract of all subjects, far removed from the affairs of the ordinary life (Popkin & Avrum, 1973). But unlike Popkin and Stroll, we argue that philosophy permeates every aspects of human life and so cannot be far removed from the affairs of the ordinary life. Philosophy leads to self-knowledge and self realization and has contributed immensely towards the alleviation of human stresses. For this reason, we believe that the role of philosophy in the affairs of ordinary life and in the practical affairs of the nation is direct, indirect and advisory in nature, hence the need for philosophy in the national affairs of Nigeria, so that the leadership stresses or problems of Nigerian can be properly alleviated.

Indeed, philosophy is purely a human act directed towards some goal. It is for this reason that some notable Nigerian philosophers and nationalists staked their lives for the purpose of liberating the nation from colonial rule. For instance, late Chief Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe was a philosopher, a nationalist and one of the founding fathers of this nation. As a philosopher, Azikiwe understood properly the true nature and meaning of politics and power and so contributed immeasurably towards education of the Nigerian people in order to actualize a dependable and self-reliant, independent nation with good leadership. He established the first indigenous University in Nigeria – the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Azikiwe's political and philosophical orientations influenced him greatly in the struggle for a better “one Nigeria” even when his uninformed counterparts were clamoring for a division.

Also Dr. Chuba Okadigbo's contributions to the nation cannot be over-looked. Beside teaching philosophy in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Okadigbo was a key member of the Constitution Drafting Committee that was instrumental to the smooth take-off of the Second Republic in 1979. Okadigbo was later appointed the Political Adviser to the then president, Alhaji Aliyu Shehu Shagari. Some notable achievements recorded by Shagari's regime can be remotely attributed to the presence of good political advisers in his cabinet. Again, the contributions of Professor Uzodimma Nwala, a philosopher, social and political activist to the political history of Nigeria indicate the nexus between philosophy, leadership and nation-building. Apart from being an elected national delegate to the National Constitutional Conference which took place in 1995, Nwala was also among the strong brain behind the constitution of the G34 which later transformed into the party known today as People's Democratic Party (PDP) in 1998. Nwala – the philosopher has since then contributed and influenced the nation's social, political and educational systems in different categories.

Dr. Peter Obi, former governor of Anambra State and the recent Presidential candidate of the Labour Party, is another notable philosopher whose contributions have been documented, especially in his home state - Anambra state. As a philosopher, Obi is highly principled and full of vision. Many politicians including members of the then ruling party Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), saw him as a political role model because of his principled stand on national political issues (Okaneme, 2018). During his tenure, Anambra State experienced series of developmental activities. He carried out both infrastructural and educational development throughout his state. By the end of his reign, Obi left a legacy and a record in Anambra state that is still fresh in the minds of his people.

The lamentation of Bertrand Russell makes us to note without doubt, that the under-development the Nigeria nation is experiencing since independence is as a result of the utter neglect of philosophy in the country. This is because a nation without philosophy is bound to produce bad leadership. Russell had lamented that: “the man who has no tincture of philosophy goes through life imprisoned in the prejudices derived from common sense, from the habitual beliefs of his age or his nation and from convictions which have grown up in his mind without the co-operation or consent of his deliberate reason” (Russell, 1996). It is for this reason that we re-echo Plato's advice and maintain that if Nigeria must develop politically, her kings must become philosophers and her philosophers, kings. The undeniable truth is that philosophy plays a vital role in human society. Philosophy enables the human person to change some fundamental beliefs as well as articulate a new direction towards enhancing the quality of human condition. Thus, a dose of philosophy is not only necessary but quite expedient to enable Nigerian leaders to appreciate our political heritage. Our politicians need a little dose of philosophy in order to be truly rational in all their dealings. Ideas, they say, rule the world, and this is a pointer to the practical role philosophy plays and should play in Nigerian politics. Nigerian Philosophers are better trained and equipped to help Nigerian government to articulate good polices that will not only touch the lives of the people positively, but also help to institute good leadership for a sustainable nation-building.

Nigerian Philosophers can feature more meaningfully and effectively in the political sphere in Nigeria particularly in the area of policy-making. Economic and educational policies in Nigeria have hardly captured the socio-political ideology of the Nigerian nation. Philosophers can then help the nation connect the societal ideology with the goals and objectives adopted in education and economic policies towards nation-building. Because there has been serious mismatch between setting of goals and achievement of set goals, Nigeria has continually recorded failures in most if not all national economic and education policies. This problem can be fixed if Nigerian politicians can embrace philosophy and allow philosophers harness the goals and objectives needed for successful policy formulation, ensure and maintain a perfect harmony between goals/objectives and their implementation. This is because as Amaele rightly noted, “a well formulated policy on education built on a strong philosophical footing, is indeed a sure guide to getting things right in the world of education, and consequently in the development of a nation” (Amaele, 2005).

Philosophy, leadership and nation-building are inseparable kinsmen that have become obviously the marks of every successful nation. This is because Philosophy as a discipline is a human capacity builder that builds good leadership; and where there is good leadership, sustainable nation-building is guaranteed. Philosophy builds the human persons who become good leaders who in turn build nations with enviable and sustainable development. Thus, meaningful development with solid philosophical grounding is a *sine qua non* for the development of the Nigerian nation through good leadership. And since the development of most successful or developed nations of the world are strongly tied to and revolve around their vibrant national philosophies, it is imperative that Nigeria as a nation should develop a national philosophy with the help of notable and credible Nigerian philosophers. It is hoped that a national philosophy of Nigeria may practically address the apparent lack of patriotism among the citizens of Nigeria.

Therefore, for the Nigerian nation to experience good leadership and attain meaningful and sustainable nation-building, the contributions of philosophy and philosophers must not only be recognized but must also be put to full use since there is no nation-building without credible philosophical ideologies. The indigenous Nigerian /African Philosophers should be given a chance to make their inputs in governance, policy making and implementation in Nigeria. When this is done, Nigeria and Nigerian people should expect to enjoy good leadership and sustainable development.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the role of philosophy in political leadership and nation-building in Nigeria. It highlights that philosophy plays a fundamental role in national development by equipping leaders and policymakers with the critical thinking skills necessary for making informed and ethical decisions. Since ineffective leadership remains a significant barrier to Nigeria's progress, philosophy serves as a crucial tool for shaping visionary and competent leaders through its emphasis on ethical reasoning, justice, and holistic development.

The paper underscores the indispensable role of Nigerian philosophers in fostering national growth. Their training in logic, ethics, and political thought positions them as essential contributors to governance and policymaking. Philosophy, therefore, emerges as a driving force for effective leadership and sustainable development. While it does not claim to offer absolute solutions to all societal problems, it provides rational and pragmatic approaches to addressing Nigeria's socio-political and economic challenges.

To bridge the gap between philosophy and political leadership, it is imperative to integrate philosophical reasoning into governance structures. This can be achieved by institutionalizing philosophy in leadership training, establishing philosophical advisory bodies within government, encouraging philosophers' participation in politics, and incorporating philosophical principles into public policy development. Additionally, promoting civic education with a strong philosophical foundation can nurture future leaders who are more ethically conscious and critically minded.

However, several obstacles hinder the integration of philosophers into Nigerian politics. These include resistance from the political elite, public misconceptions about philosophy's practicality, lack of political will, economic constraints, and ideological divisions among philosophers. Overcoming these challenges requires deliberate efforts to bridge the divide between philosophical thought and political action. Nevertheless, for Nigeria to achieve sustainable development and effective governance, the nation must recognize and harness the transformative power of philosophy. Whether by fostering philosophically inclined political leaders or encouraging philosophers to engage actively in governance, the infusion of philosophical reasoning into Nigeria's leadership framework is essential for national progress.

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POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN NIGERIA: AN APPRAISAL OF 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS

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Abstract

High incidence of election failure, which emanated from severe political violence in Nigeria, raises serious alarm. It attracts growing interest and concern. The situation has contributed to the weakening of the country's democratic institutions, since elections seem to have aggravated the democratic issues, which motivated them. Political violence is used to influence election outcomes and impose unpopular candidates during the transition to a new government. The work addresses this phenomenon by making evaluation of the "Democratic Process and Political Violence in Nigeria's 2019 General Election" that represents the dark nature of the country's electoral process and demonstrates that election is like a war, and that everything used in war is fair since the end justifies the means, is destructive trajectory. The method used in gathering and analyzing data include documentary materials such as textbooks, journals, commission's reports and related publications by government agencies. Again we extracted data reports of different political parties. Relative deprivation: Frustration – Aggression Theory is used for the analytical framework. The study identifies deprivation as the major and immediate cause of political violence while colonialism and foreign orientations were discovered as the remote factors or problems. The work concludes that political violence and the election failure under investigation emanated from the mentioned problems. The study recommends among others: that government should address various sources of deprivation especially in electoral process through adequate provisions, preparations and mobilization of people for effective participation; allowing the people to be voting to the candidates of their choice and declaring the actual winner, effective enforcement of electoral laws to avoid rigging and thuggery, establishment of anti-deprivation law; training and professional orientation of electoral officials; provision for political education to electorates, registering them and providing necessary requisites.

Keywords: Government, Democratic Process, Election, Political Violence, Thuggery.

Introduction

The Nigeria elections in 2019 that brought President Muhammadu Buhari back into office for a second term were marred by political violence, some of it by soldiers and police officers, Human Rights Watch said. Buhari should take concrete steps to address the widespread political violence, and to ensure accountability for human rights abuses by soldiers and police as he begins his second term.

The election period included persistent attacks by factions of the insurgent group Boko Haram in the northeast; increased communal violence between nomadic herdsmen and farmers spreading southward from north-central states; and a dramatic uptick in banditry, kidnapping, and killings in the northwestern states of Kaduna, Katsina, and Zamfara. Security forces have failed to respond effectively to threats to people's lives and security.

“The lack of meaningful progress in addressing the prevalent political violence, as well as lack of accountability for rights abuses, marked Buhari's first term in office,” said Anietie Ewang, Nigeria researcher at Human Rights Watch. “He should put these issues at the front and center of his second term agenda and urgently take concrete steps to improve respect for human rights.”

Human Rights Watch interviewed 32 people, including voters, journalists, election observers, activists, and Independent National Electoral Commission officials in Rivers and Kano states, and documented 11 deaths specifically related to violent interference in the election process during the February 23 presidential election and subsequent state elections.

The national and state elections in February, March, and April 2019 contributed to the general

insecurity across the country. The politically related violence reported in many states was in contrast to the relatively peaceful 2015 elections that brought Buhari into his first term in office. According to a report by SBM Intelligence, which monitors sociopolitical and economic developments in Nigeria, 626 people were killed during the 2019 election cycle, starting with campaigns in 2018.

Kano state, in northwestern Nigeria, has the highest number of registered voters in the country. Rivers state, in the Niger Delta, receives the largest share of crude-oil-based national revenue, representing significant electoral value to any political party. The history of elections in both states is replete with violence by state security agencies and criminal elements. Human Rights Watch focused its research on both states in view of projections and reports of violence during the 2019 elections. Despite police claims of increased security measures to ensure peaceful voting, there seems to have been little or no police response to reports of threats and acts of violence by hired political thugs and soldiers against voters and election officials, Human Rights Watch found.

Voters and election officials said that policemen either fled or stood idly by, fueling allegations of complicity, as perpetrators stole election materials, disrupted voting, and harassed voters. Witnesses said that the police also shot live rounds of ammunition and used teargas to disperse people protesting voting disruptions.

Witnesses said that after a soldier was killed in the town of Abonnema, in Rivers state, on the election day, soldiers shot at residents, killing an unknown number of people. They also carried out sweeping arrests and arbitrarily detained several people. “The soldiers were on a rampage, shooting at anyone around,” said a 37-year-old man who witnessed the episode. “As I made my way to flee, I saw people dive into the river, many with gunshot wounds. The next day I saw three dead bodies riddled with bullets floating in the water... I heard many more bodies were later recovered from that river.”

The army said in a statement that on election day, unidentified people attacked soldiers, killing one, and that the soldiers killed six of the attackers in response.

On March 15, the spokesperson for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Festus Okoye, accused soldiers of intimidation and unlawful arrest of election officials in the state. The Nigerian Army on the same day announced the creation of a committee to investigate allegations of misconduct against its personnel during the elections. The committee was given two weeks to produce its findings, but it has not published its report.

Banditry and the recurring cycles of deadly violence between herdsmen and farmers appear to have taken the lives of thousands. According to civil society reports, over 3,641 people have died from deadly clashes between herdsmen and farmers since 2015 and at least 262 people have been killed by bandits since the beginning of 2019 in Zamfara State alone. The government deployed 1,000 military troops to the state in response, but few of those responsible for the violence have been arrested or held to account.

The northeast conflict with Boko Haram and its splinter groups also remains one of Buhari's pressing challenges. Although Boko Haram's territorial control has shrunk to small pockets of villages around Lake Chad as a result of sustained government military action since 2015, the group continues to carry out attacks against civilian and military targets in the region and in neighboring Niger, Cameroon, and Chad.

In recent months, renewed fighting between Nigerian government forces and a faction of Boko Haram, known as Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP), has led to secondary displacement of civilians.

Security forces have been implicated in serious abuses, including arbitrary arrests, prolonged detention without trial, torture, extrajudicial killings, rape and sexual violence against women and girls in camps for displaced people. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), more than 27,000 civilians have died and about 1.8 million people

have been displaced since the beginning of the conflict in 2009. Authorities have also failed to address impunity for killings by security forces elsewhere in the country. The authorities have yet to publish the report of the Presidential Judicial Panel set up in August 2017 to investigate the military's compliance with human rights obligations, allegations of war crimes, and other abuses by the military.

“Nigerian voters have entrusted Buhari with another opportunity to address the nation's serious human rights problems, including political violence,” Ewang said. “He should start by reforming the security forces to ensure strict compliance with human rights standards, and prompt investigation and prosecution of those credibly implicated in abuses.”

Conceptual Clarifications

Election

It is pertinent to begin here by saying that election is one of those concepts in social sciences that enjoy limitless definitions. The word “elect” implies selecting or making a decision. Ujo traced the history of election back to the history of ancient Greece and Roman societies, and also the medieval age when they choose leaders such as the Pope and Emperor (Ujo, 2012). Ujo went further to define election as a process of choosing individual or group of people to represent a larger population in the affairs of a given country, community, or nation, most commonly through voting and the process requires a given standard of acceptability in terms of credibility, freeness, and fairness of the conduct of the election (Ujo, 2012). Election is the official way of selecting someone who will govern the public, through electing or voting for that person or political party (Eulau, Gibbins and Webb, 2019). Alapiki (2004) views election as the manner of choice agreed upon by a group of people which enables them to select one or few people out of many to occupy one or more positions. This manner of choice usually involves rules and regulations designed to ensure a certain degree of fairness and justice to all participants. Election empowers electorates of a particular area and during a given period to decide who governs them. Election allows the citizens and residents of a given society to choose or elect their representatives who will fill vacant positions in government within a given period. This procedure should be carried out in a free, fair and conducive atmosphere without any form of intimidation or violence.

From the various perspectives of an election, one can generally agree that;

- Election deals with choosing of person or persons to fill governmental positions.
- Election presents the citizens or residents of a given country the choice to elect or select freely their preferred candidates to fill a position of authority in the country.
- Election brings about a peaceful and orderly transition of power from one person to another, thereby strengthening and deepening democracy in the country.

Thus, it is based on this general agreement that this study conceives election as a process whereby the citizens and residents (electorates) choose or elect candidates who will represent them in governmental positions for a given time frame, and this process must be carried out in a peaceful, free, fair and conducive atmosphere.

Electoral Violence

According to Sisk & Reynolds (1998) viewed electoral-related violence as threats of coercion, physical or bodily harm and acts of intimidation perpetrated to affect or hinder an electoral process in an electoral context. The scholar further stated that when these acts are carried out it affects the electoral process, thus may directly or indirectly influence the election process in a manner such

disruption voting pattern, and delay or derail of the outcome of the elections. Electoral violence is a form of political violence exhibited before, during and after election which often take the nature of political motivated kidnapping, killing, ballot box snatching, armed attacks on perceived opponent and the officers of electoral umpire as well as electoral stakeholders, burning of collation centers and offices for the purpose of gaining political advantage.

Political violence

Political violence is a sum total of violence that is associated with the political process. It could come from within or outside the country, and manifests in various forms. A summation of the array of definitions in the literature see political violence as the use or threat of physical act or a considerable destructive use of force carried out by an individual or group of individuals within a political system against another individual or group of individuals and/or property, with the intent to cause injury or death to persons or damage to property, and whose objective, choice of targets or victims, surrounding circumstances implementation and effects have political significance, that is intended to modify the behaviour of others in the existing arrangements of a power structure; or directed to a change in the politics, systems, territory of government and hence also directed to changes in the lives of individuals within societies (Honderich, 1989; Anifowose, 1982).

Theoretical Perspective

In examining the Nigerian state and electoral violence on the 2019 presidential elections, the study adopted the Marxian Political Economy approach as its theoretical framework of analysis. The Marxian political economy approach is most suitable for the study, as it analyses social formations and classes and their contradictory relationship. The approach is rooted in Karl Marx's social theory. The approach assumed a radical posture in the interpretation of the economic process. Its emphasis is on social classes, productive forces and social relations of production. Marx maintains that the substructure, which is the economy, determines the overall superstructure of society. Therefore, the economic base of the society determines the political, legal, cultural and other sectors of the society. It focuses on the society in its entirety through existing relations within it and essentially within the umbrella of social production. For Ndu (2001): the Marxian political-economic approach implies an analysis of historical economic relations, given specific tools of analysis which are classes in social action. This is to say that the approach presumes that the basic premise is economic development because it considers man as he is, not as he should be, and makes the fundamental assumption that the physical needs of man come first. It is because of this that the approach gives primacy to economic activity.

In other words, the approach focuses on man and how to meet his economic needs in society. Man must eat to survive; for him to eat, he must produce. In producing, he is linked with nature –that is, land – and he also enters into a social relationship with others. There emerge the class that owns and controls the means of production, and the class that does not own and control the means of production – the former is the exploiting class and the other is the exploited class. The approach sees production as very important in the proper understanding of the development of man and society and the analysis of the dynamics between it. There is an unequal exchange in the relationship existing between these two classes (exploiting and exploited class) that result in contradictions. And society must try to manage these contradictions to avoid falling into ruins.

In Marx's view, the substructure which is the economy determines the superstructure which is the political, cultural, ideological, social, and legal systems. Following the Marxian line of thinking, Ake (1981) argued that, once we understand what the material assets and constraints of a society are, how the society produces goods to meet its material needs, how the goods are distributed, and what types

of social relations arise from the organization of production, we have come a long way to understand the culture of that society, its religious system and even its modes of thought.

The Marxian Political Economy approach shows how the various parts of the superstructure are used as instruments of domination of the ruling class, and as a mechanism of oppression of the subject class. To Ake (1981) the approach explicitly analyzes the economic reasons, interests, and agenda behind political and social decisions in any social formation. He maintains that members of the exploiting class, that is, the advantaged class, are usually better educated, more cultured, have higher social statuses and are fortunate, not only economically but also politically.

The relevance of this approach to the study is that it exposes the fact that the violence that has plagued the 2019 presidential election in Nigeria was as a result of the violent struggle among political actors in the country to access and control the resources of the state. In Nigeria, the person elected president determines and controls the economic sector and other sectors of the state. Hence, the contest for the post of the president of the country is viewed as a do-or-die affair and a zero-sum game that must be won by all means. It helped in the understanding of the double standard of the Nigerian political elites whose key interest was to control power in order to enhance their economic interests without necessarily pursuing the collective interests of all.

The 2019 Presidential Election in Nigeria

The presidential election held on February 23, 2019, is the 6th presidential election conducted in Nigeria since the return to democratic rule in the year 1999. The two major contenders for the seat of the president were: Muhammadu Buhari (incumbent President), the flag bearer of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and Atiku Abubakar (former Vice-President), the flag bearer of the People Democratic Party (PDP).

Studies have shown that elections in Nigeria have for long been associated with violence, but the February 23 presidential election has added another phase to the unfortunate record. The presidential elections saw problems such as thuggery, rigging, and vote-buying, etc. The election also witnessed a voter turnout of 35.6% according to the INEC announcement. Two of the reasons for this low turnout may be connected to electoral violence leading up to the Presidential election and then, the subsequent postponement of the election from February 16 to February 23, 2019. By close observation, we saw both the state, private actors and other electoral stakeholders influencing the electoral process for their preferred outcome through disrupting voting, intimidating electorates and the officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The Civil Society Situation Monitoring Unit reported several cases of disruptions in Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Ebonyi, Lagos, and Rivers States. Incidents of attacks on INEC offices were equally observed. For instance, the INEC office in Ijesa, Oriade Local Government Area in Osun State was attacked on Saturday, February 23, 2019. Perpetrators of the attack were reported to have burnt down the card readers and ballot papers used in the presidential election.

The Civil Society Situation Room Report (2019, p. 33) further stated that: there were 96 verified incidents, which resulted in 361 deaths between the period of November 16, 2018, and Presidential Election Day of February 23, 2019.

During a period covering 104 days a daily average of 3.5 deaths of Nigerians were recorded, with an incident occurring almost every day. Incidents that resulted in fatalities were recorded in 29 of the 36 States (including the Federal Capital Territory). These incidents occurred in each of the six geopolitical zones. There was a very pronounced spike in the number of incidents as well as the number of deaths per incident as the elections approached, with incidents peaking on Election Day, 23 February 2019, and tailing off thereafter.

Further breakdown by the Civil Society Situation Room shows that the average death count per incident was four, while the north-west, north-east and north-central had death tolls that exceeded the average. In relation to absolute figures, the south-south, north-west, and the north-central zones led the pack.

The south-east had the minimum figure of deaths, incidents, and the lowest death rate. An analysis of national violence and deaths during the elections show Benue, Borno, Kaduna and Rivers States as the leaders. It was equally reported that 15% to 20% of all election-related deaths occurred on election day, with pre-existing tensions prompting the clashes to more deaths. While incidents in the north were fewer, they were bloodier. Most of the violence attacks in Southern Nigeria were mainly in Delta, Lagos and Rivers States in the election day (Civil Society Situation Room, 2019).

S/N	Geo-Political Zones	No. of Incidents	No. of Casualties
1.	North – Central	23 incidents	111 people killed
2.	North – East	16 incidents	146 people killed
3.	North – West	20 incidents	172 people killed
4.	South – East	7 incidents	14 people killed
5.	South-South	59 incidents	120 killed
6.	South – West	36 incidents	63 killed

On the state-by-state basis, the Civil Society Situation Room (2019) stated that Benue, Borno, Kaduna, Rivers, and Zamfara, ranked highest in the number of casualties recorded. Violence caused by state actors, that is, the security agencies were recorded in Abia, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bayelsa, Benue, Delta, Kwara, Lagos, Plateau, and the Rivers States while incidents in the North East were few but more fatal because of Boko Haram menace.

In examining the just concluded 2019 presidential election, the Niger Delta Watch (2019, p.4) stated that the Niger Delta region alone recorded; 116 cases of bribery, 159 violent incidents, 103 fatalities, 38 incidents of destruction, manipulation or theft of campaign materials (such as billboards and posters), 36 cases of detention, intimidation or disappearance of party candidates or supporters, 35 cases involving detention, intimidation or disappearance of voters or civil society members, 31 incidents involving delays or irregularities in voting preparations or processes, 29 riots or protests, 16 incidents of destruction, manipulation or theft of voting materials or systems, 12 incidents involving campaign misconduct or irregularities.

According to the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) (2019, p. 5), the 2019 presidential election faced various challenges that affected the election. The challenges observed in the election were: “INEC missteps and misconduct, deliberate denial of access to observers and media, logistical shortfalls, intentional disruption by politicians, political thugs, and party agents and intimidation of collation staff by security agents”.

INEC was not unaware of the violence that took place in the election as it stated during the announcement of the result that voting was cancelled in many polling units across the country due to disruptions, such as violence, snatching of ballot box and polling officials' refusal to use the smart card reader, as well as for over-voting (National Democratic Institute/International Republic Institute Report, 2019). On Wednesday, 27th February 2019, INEC announced and declared Muhammadu Buhari of the APC who polled a total number of 15,191,847 votes as the winner of the 2019 presidential election while Atiku Abubakar of the PDP, pooled 11,262,978 votes. The other political party presidential candidates (71 of them) that participated in the election had a total of 2,159,365 votes (INEC, 2019).

The Nature and Causes of Electoral Violence in Nigeria

The 2019 elections indicate no significant progress in Nigeria's democratic politics. The issues that have characterised politics and impacted negatively on democratic consolidation featured prominently. The contributions in the present special issue have compellingly illustrated how the elections produced the recurrent problems Nigeria has faced over a period of time. Before delving into the detailed studies focusing on the topics, we provide a summary of the dominant issues that characterized the 2019 elections below:

Weak democratic culture: The elections show that the political elite are yet to fully embrace the ethos and values that underlie liberal democracy. Elite behaviour remains a challenge in Nigeria's democracy. Driven by the 'do-or-die' mentality, the elite engaged in practices that undermined and frustrated efforts established by the EMB to strengthen the electoral process. The party primaries for candidate selection were overwhelmed with large-scale violence and unresolved controversies. There were arson attacks on INEC's buildings and election materials with a deliberate aim of sabotaging the elections. The elite recruited political thugs to intimidate voters and developed sophisticated strategies for vote buying and other malpractices, despite an intense campaign against them before the elections.

Weak and non-neutral state institutions: The elections bring to the fore the popular discourse on the weakness of state institutions and their vulnerability to manipulation by the political elite. Election-related agencies that are germane to ensuring electoral integrity could not meaningfully display sufficient independence and impartiality in the elections. The EMB and security agencies cannot be totally absolved from many allegations of bias for the ruling party. There were numerous cases of vote cancellations by the INEC in areas considered support-bases of the opposition. INEC's sudden postponement of the presidential election a few hours to its commencement has also been alleged to have been engineered by the political actors – although with no substantial proof. The massive deployment of security personnel to opposition areas has been claimed to have discouraged voting in the area and limited the chances of the opposition presidential candidate.

Low public trust: The citizen's trust in democratic institutions and processes has been on a downward trend since democratic transition in 1999. Surveys demonstrate rising public dissatisfaction in the Nigerian state due to bad governance, failure to deliver on promises and perceived partiality of state institutions, including those related to elections (Bratton & Gyimah-Boadi, [Citation2016](#)). This has accounted for growing political apathy and aversion to democratic principles by the citizens. The 2019 general elections experienced the worst voter apathy in the history of the country. In fact, President Muhammadu Buhari was re-elected by just 18% of registered voters, while only 35% registered voters voted in the election (Akinyemi, [2019](#)).

Cleavage-based voting: The voting pattern shows that Nigerian voters are not yet sophisticated in their voting decisions. Their choices are still driven by primordial sentiments, particularly ethnicity and religion, and attest to social divisions that have enveloped politics in the country since its independence. Notwithstanding the reality that the principal candidates for the presidential election shared many identities in terms of religion and ethnicity, the geopolitics of support for their parties reinforces ethno-religious factors in voter behaviour. The All Progressives Congress (APC) won in the geo-political zones with a huge population of Muslims and the northern Hausa-Fulani group, while the People's Democratic Party (PDP) attracted more votes in areas more inhabited by Christians and southern ethnic groups.

Election violence: Violence has been a hallmark of elections in Nigeria. It was responsible for democracy breakdown in the previous democratic experiences. Since the transition to democracy in 1999, elections have been marred by violence due to a low level of democratic culture. A similar pattern of violence occurred in the 2019 elections, although with lesser cases of post-election violence experienced in 2011. The Situation Room, a local civil society group, reported that 626 lives

were lost in the election process, including the pre-election campaign period and during the election (Sanni, 2019)

Electoral violence in the 2019 general elections, the threats and the triggers

Nigeria's history of electoral violence is, for many, an unfortunately accepted fact of life, and cannot be viewed in isolation from the many social and economic inequalities, ethnic and religious divisions, and structural weaknesses such as corruption and weak state capacity. Religion has been variously defined as a body of truths, laws and rites by which a man is subordinated to transcendent being (Adeniyi 1993). To Bellah (1970) religion denotes a set of symbolic forms and actions that relate man to the ultimate conditions of his existence. Drawing similar concern, Peter (1988) conceptualized religion as a system of symbols which act to establish powerful, pervasive and long-lasting mood and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.

Since the Independence era, elections in Nigeria have been characterized by the high scale of electoral malpractices, money politics, electoral violence and the use of ethno religious divide to influence the voting patterns of the electorates. Electoral violence is one of the strategies employed by Nigerian politicians during the electioneering period (Olowojulo, Rasak, Ake, Ogundele & Afolayan, 2019).

According to Albert (2007), electoral violence involves all forms of organized acts of threats aimed at intimidating, harming, blackmailing a political stakeholder or opponent before, during and after an election to determine, delay or influence a political process. Similarly, Igbuzor (2010) define electoral violence as any act of violence perpetrated in the course of political activities including, pre, during and post-election period, and may include any of the following act; thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapon to intimidate voters and other electoral process or to cause bodily harm or injury to any persons connected with electoral processes.

In Nigeria, all of the elements of Timothy Sisk's expansive definition of electoral-related violence have occurred:

Acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arise in the context of electoral competition. When perpetrated to affect an electoral process, violence may be employed to influence the *process* of elections—such as efforts to delay, disrupt, or derail a poll—and to influence the *outcomes*: the determining of winners in competitive races for political office (Timothy Sisk, quoted in Sarah Birch and David Muchlinski 2017).

On violence, the EU EOM affirmed that 2019 elections

became increasingly marred by violence and intimidation. This harmed the integrity of the electoral process and may deter future participation. Party leaderships did not take sufficient steps to rein in their supporters. Based on information available, around 150 people died in election-related violence during the campaign period and over the election days. INEC reported attacks on its offices, and also fatalities, abductions and sexual assault against its officials. During collation of the federal results, EU observers directly witnessed or received reports of intimidation of INEC officials in 20 states. During the 23 March supplementary elections, EU observers saw groups of men with weapons intimidating and obstructing the process, and security agencies were ineffective at protecting citizens' right to vote (EU EOM, 2019a).

The non-enforcement of the provisions of the Electoral Act on the prohibition of the use of violence and electoral malpractices results in a pervasive culture of impunity, which risks continued electoral problems and consequent voter disillusionment (EU EOM, 2019a).

The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM, 2019a) Summarized 2019 election thus:

Nigeria's 2019 general elections were marked by severe operational and transparency shortcomings, electoral security problems, and low turnout. Positively, the elections were competitive, parties were overall able to campaign and civil society enhanced accountability. However, the last-minute postponement of the elections put an undue burden on voters, results' collation procedures were not sufficiently robust, and inadequate information was provided to the public. Fatalities escalated and the role of security agencies became increasingly contentious. The leading parties were at fault in not reining in acts of violence and intimidation by supporters, and in abusing incumbency at federal and state levels. Except for federal radio, state media primarily served the interests of the president or the governor at the state level. Journalists were subject to harassment, and scrutiny of the electoral process was at times compromised with some independent observers obstructed in their work, including by security agencies. The suspension of the chief justice of Nigeria by the president a few weeks before the elections was seen to lack due process and reportedly undermined judicial independence. The number of women elected fell again. These systemic failings show the need for fundamental reform so elections better serve the interests of the Nigerian people (EU EOM, 2019a).

Human Rights Watch interviewed 32 people, including voters, journalist, election observers, activities, and independent National Electoral Commission officials in Rivers and Kano State, and documented 11 deaths specifically related to violent interference in the election process during the February 23 presidential; election and subsequent state elections. According to an intelligence report which monitors sociopolitical and economic development in Nigeria, 626 people were killed during the 2019 election cycle starting with the campaigns in 2018 (SBM intelligence (2019) cited in Human Rights Watch, 2019). In a different report, coming from security forces and in the media, it was stated that between approximately 20 and 35 people were killed on polling day in election-related incidents (EU EOM 2019b).

As enumerated, the 2019 General Election was laden with political rivalries, religious colouration, and electoral violence in the face of ill-equipped security and health apparatus. According to Mbah, Nwangwu & Ugwu (2019), the democratisation of politics in Nigeria and indeed, other jurisdictions like Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, Zanzibar and Zimbabwe has been adversely affected by the preponderance of hate campaign, especially during the prelude to general elections. By hate campaign, Mbah, et al. (2019) presume that it means any speech, gesture, conduct, writing or display which can incite people to violence or prejudicial action. Study shows that elected officials, political parties, candidates, other opinion makers, and members of "civil" society are all among the influential purveyors of hate speech; because, of the authority wielded by them and amplified by mass media and social media (Denton, 2000; IFES, 2018).

According to The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2013, cited in Ojebode, 2018) noted that hate speech includes:

- (a) All dissemination of ideas based on racial or ethnic superiority or hatred, by whatever means;
- (b) Incitement to hatred, contempt or discrimination against members of a group on grounds of their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin;
- (c) Threats or incitement to violence against persons or groups on the grounds in (b) above;
- (d) expression of insults, ridicule or slander of persons or groups or justification of hatred,

contempt or discrimination on the grounds in (b) above, when it amounts to incitement to hatred or discrimination;

(e) Participation in organizations and activities which promote and incite racial discrimination.

One important point that this broad definition or description misses out is religion as a basis of hate speech; it notes race, colour, descent, and national or ethnic origin but sadly misses out religion (Ojebode, 2018). Ojebode (2018), noted sadly the non-inclusion of religion as a means to hate speech and deliberately describe that hate speech emerges from a deliberate act of reducing the humanity in a person or a group, a process of making them a thing, an object of much little worth. It follows a process of essentialisation: collectively sizing up a group of people, selecting what annoys us most about them, and tagging it on their forehead as their name or identity or word by which they should be known. This tagging is then fuelled by relentless repetition until it sticks.

Ojebode (2018), affirmed that hate speech comes in two clear forms. One is the clear spewing out of bad and demeaning words. Like referring to a person as, cockroaches, mosquitoes, snakes, rats, infidels, unbelievers, monkeys, baboons, barbarians, bush meat and many more are the demeaning and bad expressions that have been used to describe people in Nigeria, and by Nigerians. Nigeria itself has been called a zoo and those citizens from five of the six geopolitical regions have been referred to as animals. This brash shearing of people of their humanity occurs in casual conversations, in songs and recitations, in official communications and even books and treatises.

According to Ojebode (2018), the other form of hate speech is far more subtle and dangerous. Bad and demeaning words may form the major vocabulary of hate speech, they are not the only expressions of hatred. More dangerous than these are words that are ordinarily pleasant but have overtime attained a demeaning status. He gave the following, examples: *aboki* (ordinarily, friend), *onye ofe manu* (the one whose soup has oil); *Nyamiri* (give me water). He did raise the question, on how does the look of a person's soup become an expression to insult her or him? The process of essentialising is indeed a complex one. It is euphemistic and yet caustic, in Ojebode, words:

So we need to be alert, and I think we already are. Nigerians understand what the word “friend” means in the expression “Police is your friend”, and they react appropriately when they hear or read that. Not all harmless words are indeed harmless. This is why we must create a national directory of hate speech, to be constantly updated and reviewed. Those who are in doubt as to the hate content of expression can at least conduct a check (Ojebode, 2018).

Hate speech is heightened during the campaign period, going back to history, Ojebode cited two examples from the Northern and Eastern parts of Nigeria. The example as cited is one from the Eastern Nigeria outlook describing Midwest Democratic as “Prodigal sons with unyielding contempt because of their treachery, double-dealings and deliberate hypocrisy” (Eastern Nigeria Outlook describing Midwest Democratic Front in March 1964).

Similarly, the Northern Region newspaper described some NCNC members as:

an impressive assembly of intellectuals...in display in Kano...But they are intellectuals who are good in political jingoism and rhetoric but useless in council. We are referring, of course, to the strange characters, wolves under the cloak of gentility who are attending the NCNC convention which opened in Kano yesterday ... irresponsible and irrational, a conclave of disunited people, a pack of rebels, carpet-crossers and crooks”. (Nigerian Citizen, 23 Feb 1964).

History, they say do repeat itself, all elections including the 2019 elections did toll the line of hate speeches as candidate tried to weep up electorate emotion through the use of religious bigotry and ethnocentrism. Religious leader, traditional rulers, political stakeholders and the masses are not spared in the use of hate speech. It is atrocious that political parties have continually adopted a worrisome political campaign of calumny aimed at instigating the politics of hatred and division of Nigerians along ethnic and religious lines (Emeaku, 2019) through the use of hate speech. Coincidentally, the majority of the places won by APC were Muslim dominated areas, why PDP clinch to areas that are majorly dominated by Christian (see Table 1). There could have been other factors that account for this apart from religion, hate speech and ethnicity. We suggest, therefore, that other social scientists researchers may need to carry out further research on election triggers and identify other factors related or different from our submission in this chapter.

Incidence of Post-Electoral Violence in Nigeria's 2019 General Elections

Election day February 23rd, 2019 in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria electoral violence claim the life of an ad-hoc staff in River state according to the chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission by political thugs while a number of electoral staff sustained a various degree of injuries (Ajayi, 2019). Equally, in Delta state, South-south Nigeria five persons were confirmed killed five days to the general elections during a clashed between supports of major political parties contested. In Rivers State six persons where confirmed killed by political thugs while one suspected ballot box snatcher was shot dead in a polling unit in Ikot Udo Ossiom village, Ukanafun council of Akwa Ibom State in South-South Nigeria (Oladele, et al 2019). In Delta state Ughelli South Local government political thug opens fire on voters killing one person and juried several people during the governorship and state house of assembly election (Oladele, et al 2019).

Premium Times reported that in Anambra Southeast Nigeria police confirmed the death of two persons in Obosi area during the State House of Assembly election when armed political thugs attempted to snatch electoral results, while 47 people were equally arrested for disruption of elections, thuggery, and assault during the March 9th election (Premium Times, 2019). A stray bullet killed an electoral observer at Umuida Community, Enugu state, Southeastern Nigerian during the governorship and house of assembly election (Oladele, et al 2019). Imo state, Southeastern Nigeria the police confirmed the arrested of 105 suspected political thugs for electoral offenses such as disruption of elections, ballot boxes, impersonating of policemen and harassment of members of an electoral umpire during the governorship and house of assembly election (Adepegba, 2019). The Imo state, Southeast Nigeria the Independent National Electoral Commission office in Ngor Okpala Local Government council was burned by political thugs during the governorship and House of Assembly elections (Thisday, 2019).

In the South-West political thugs and hoodlum burnt down the office, ballot papers and ballot boxes at the Independent National Electoral Commission in Oriade Local Government Area of Osun state (Adeniyi, 2019). In Oba Akoko area of Akoko South West Local Government Council of Ondo State, Southwest Nigeria two persons were lost their lives and the others were critically injured during the House of Assembly elections, while three vehicles were vandalized and depot set ablaze by political thugs as they attempted to attach and snatch results at Akoko South West collation center (Sowole, 2019).

On the same day of the governorship and house of assembly elections in South West Nigeria, a serving member of House of Representative from Lagelu/Akinyele of Oyo State was confirmed killed by political thugs (Oladele, Anthony, Olaniyi, Sunday, & Ojo, 2019).

In Nasarawa State, North-Central Nigeria one party faithful who attempted snatching ballot box narrowly escaped being lynched as the angry mob left he in the state of coma in Akwanga Local Government Area of the State (Odama, 2019). In Nasarawa state a serving senator and Senate

Committee Chairman of Information representing Nasarawa South Senatorial Zone was attacked by political thugs and hoodlums a day after the elections in Lafia but survived the assailant (Sha'ban, 2019). Daily Nigerian, February 24th 2019 reports indicated that in Kogi state North-Central Nigeria Police Command the murder of three persons during the presidential and national assembly election in the state, it shows that two days were killed on election day while the third person happens to be an inspector in the police service was killed on the eve of the general election. The supplementary governorship election in Ukum local government of Benue state witnessed burning of electoral materials for Azendeshi Ward by political thugs and causing bodily injuries to electoral officials in the state (Premium Times, 2019).

In Taraba North-Eastern Nigeria the Police Command confirmed the murder of five persons by political thug a day after the presidential and national assembly election in the state who were returning from election monitoring exercise (Alhassan, 2019). The violence that marred the February 23, 2019, presidential and national assembly elections in Nigeria led to arrest of 128 people for various electoral offenses ranging from ballot box snatching, malicious damage of items, voting trading and homicide, while 38 and a number of explosives were recovered (Yahay, 2019). In Kurmin Gwari, Kaduna state, Northwest Nigeria clash between the two main political parties in the country was recorded few days to the governorship and state house of assembly elections during a political rally with a number of people injured (Busari, 2019). In Katsina state, Northwest Nigeria report confirmed three ad hoc staff of the electoral umpire were declared missing, while voting was disrupted while ever other person fled different direction in Danmusa Local Government Area of the state as resulted of the activities of political thugs while a Police Corporal loss his life during governorship and house of assembly election (Oyelude, 2019). On the 22nd March 2019, a day before the supplementary election in Kano state a number political thugs wielding various kind of weapons dispersed electorates and journalists in Suntulma Gama Primary School in Nassarawa local government of the state (Shuaibu, 2019).

According to Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), the supplementary governorship election held on 23rd March 2019 in Kano state witnessed widespread electoral violence across the 62 designated polling units, massive deployment and use of hoodlums as well as the loss of life (Onyeji, 2019). The main opposition party National Chairman in the 2019 general election the Peoples' Democratic Party opined that no fewer than 50 persons died during the Presidential and National Assembly election in the country (Nwogu, 2019). While 13 Nigerian lost their lives during the governorship and state house of assembly elections in various parts of the country (Oladele, et al 2019).

While 323 persons were arrested across Nigeria by the Nigeria Police for various electoral offenses during the Presidential and National Assembly election of 23rd February 2019.

Implications of Electoral Violence on Democratic Development in Nigeria

It is evident that the analysis of electoral violence in Nigeria examined in this study overtime has shown how the country has wobbled democratically; hence, how the country has remained a mere civilian government not a true democratic government. Therefore, this has adversely affected democratic development in Nigeria. It is obvious that for a country to be democratically developed, it must adherent to some of the cardinal principles of democracy. Thus, election violence in Nigeria overtime have prevented the country from adhering to these principles, and subsequently has negatively affected the country's democratic development in the following areas:

- **Destruction of Lives and Properties**

Nigeria since independence has had a chequered political history mainly by its inability to form a government that is a product of conducting free, fair and credible elections devoid of sentiments. Virtually all elections since independence have been hotly contested, crises ridden and characterized

by bitter electoral disputes. Similarly, all the elections that have been conducted by the various electoral bodies since independence have been marred by serious allegations of fraud and violence. In the present Nigerian democratic dispensation, elections have been characterized by violence and the destruction of lives and property. For instance, over 800 people died in the post-election period of 2011. Furthermore, house and other property have been destroyed in various incidents of elections related violence reported since the beginning of the Fourth Republic. If democracy is designed to provide and promote good governance and the protection of life and property, election, which is the cardinal principle of democratic process, should not be characterized by violence, which in turn claims lives and destroys property. The violence that occurred in Jos after the 2007 election is a typical example.

The attitude of Nigerian politicians to appropriate more of the nation's wealth, and their desperation to retain power is not entirely altruistic; in fact, the quest for political power is driven in most cases, by the morbid desire for material gains are motivating factors to use all avenues most especially violence to manipulate the electoral systems. Thugs hired to scare voters and electoral officials in connivance of security agents to perfect riggings, and the snatching and stuffing of ballot boxes. This is a strong motivating factor why succession into political offices is not a smooth but rather a very problematic process. The incumbent pre-occupied their mind for all avenues to defend their atrocities or plan not to leave the office if possible.

For instance, during the governorship polls in 2015, heavy gun shots were reported in Ozuoba and Rumuolumeni in ObioAkpokor Local Government Area of the State. Soldiers moved into Buguma in Asari Toru Local Council where two persons were feared dead amid shooting by political thugs. Unknown arsonists also razed a police patrol vehicle, the house of the State Commissioner for Women Affairs, and the state's INEC polling centre in Kalabari National College. INEC had been accused of colluding with security operatives to compromise the integrity of the electoral process in virtually all the 23 local governments of the State. In addition, electoral officers in almost all the LGAs were reported to have withheld the unit, ward and local government result sheets and handed over ballot papers to the PDP thugs allegedly guarded by armed soldiers, police and Department of State Service operatives (Ibrahim, 2015).

▪ **Disregard of the Rule of Law**

Since independence, Nigeria has failed to achieve democratic standards as an essential element of democracy. This shortcoming can be attributed to the violation of the rule of the game through violence. This is attributable to the misuse of power by the political office holders before, during and after the elections, which eventually results to crises. Election violence emanates from disputes over the election results and the inability of the judiciary to handle election disputes fairly. Thus, violence might occur where the judiciary is perceived to be partial. This might be as a result of the low level of confidence in the judiciary by the aggrieved candidates who would prefer to take laws into their own hands instead of wasting time with a corruptible judicial system. The frustration and fear of partial judgment then leaves them with the hard option of electoral violence, leading to higher scale of violence beyond the elections. This development has a great adverse effect on the democratic system as the use of violence to obtain power amounts to the disregard of the rule of law. In sum, electoral violence emanates from voting or the attempt to violate the rules of the game.

▪ **Denial of Popular Participation**

Election violence prevents the attainment of the principle of “one man one vote” which promotes political equality where each member of the community will be given an equal opportunity to participate in the nation's political decision-making process. In Nigeria, where elections are

characterised by violence, people cannot freely stand for election. There are cases of thugs employed by the politicians scaring voters in order for them to easily manipulate the results of the elections. Furthermore, the principle of majority rule which requires mass participation of the citizens in government and the protection of minority interest are denied of the people through violence.

▪ **Disorganization of Electoral Processes**

Another implication of electoral violence is the disorganization of electoral process. Violence in pre-election period usually occurs during the party primary elections and campaign, which are an essential part of the electoral process. Many campaigns in Nigeria's fourth republic democratic dispensation have been disorganized by thugs from the opposition party. For instance, in 2007, the campaign team of Bukola Saraki was attacked and dispersed in Offa, leading to the death of some people and others wounded. Furthermore, the convoy of Senator Baba Tela, the gubernatorial candidate of the Action Congress of Nigeria, ACN, was attacked by thugs sponsored by PDP stalwarts. Seven people were injured Albin-Lackey (2007). Additionally, Crisis Group African Report (2014) reported that in many local government constituencies, preparation for the 2015 elections, led to the candidates' struggles for nomination, degenerated into attacks on individuals and factional violence around the party's primaries.

▪ **Promotion of Thuggery and Proliferation of Arms**

It is widely evident that violence is a characteristic of Nigeria's democratic elections. Thugs are used to perpetrate these illicit acts sponsored by the politicians. This development is an indication of the encouragement of thuggery and the promotion of insecurity in the society. For instance, the use of transport unions in Lagos and Oyo state since the beginning of Fourth Republic have led to the production of the highest number of thugs in these states and also subjected them to insecurity. A series of violence erupted even after the elections in the course of fighting for supremacy between and among different factions. The ammunitions used during the electoral process to foment violence are used in many occasions to threaten people and also to rob. This kind of activity was witnessed in Kwara state when thugs used by Saraki political empire and Governor Lawal were terrorizing people in Ilorin township after the 2003 elections. It was not until the government reacted with the use of military men to disorganize and arrested some of them that the town could regain its peaceful character. In Lagos and Oyo states, "Agbero boys" now become terrors and were legalised to collect certain amount of money from their fellow transporters. In Nigeria, vehicles and money distributed to thugs, before, during and after the elections by politicians are used to motivate the thuggery acts and promote their course

Conclusion

We consequently conclude that the political violence which culminated in the failure of 2019 General Elections in Nigeria emanated from deprivation suffered by different political parties, groups and individuals who were severely frustrated such that some of them resorted to violence as a means of demonstrating the injustice, oppression and intimidation mounted on them from various sources especially the ruling class which as well uses a different form of political violence in manipulation of the electoral process.

We also establish that colonialism and foreign orientations nurtured and sustained the values for deprivation in case of the remote cause. But most modern civilized societies include U.S.A. suffered the same colonial problem and eventually succeeded in institutionalization of democratic principles based on rule of law and social justice. In the light of that, we state that deprivation in Nigeria is a

consequence of self inflicted problem of the privileged groups whose behaviours and action are dominated by selfish interest as opposed to the welfare of the society or public goods. The postcolonial Nigeria can only develop through restoration of justice, equity, fairness and truth in all things especially in the electoral process to avoid deprivation, frustration, aggression and political violence.

Moreover, the study attempted to analyze the cases and causes of 2019 post-electoral violence witness during the Nigerian general election. The opined that the 2019 general election in Nigeria witnessed one most violence post-electoral outcome ever witness in the history of the democratic dispersion in the country. The leading causes of this violence are ethnicity and sectional politics, in-depth ignorance, political impunity, lack of internal democracy, negative perception inflammatory campaign. Article urgent need for amendment of the electoral act thereby making provision for electronic voting system and straightening provision and enforcement of the electoral offenses section as well as re-strategized the security architecture for elections in the country.

Recommendations

Based on the above observations and findings, we recommend as follows:

1. Provision should be effectively made for registration of electorates, voters card and other requisites for voting in few months before election to avoid anxiety and frustration in election.
2. Government should provided free political education in form of seminars, conferences and publications and through political parties for preparation and mobilization of the electorates for effective and successful participation in elections.
3. Electoral officials should be properly trained and oriented towards the job like other professional in different fields.
4. Electoral laws should be seriously enforced to avoid thuggery, rigging, assassination e.t.c that engender political violence.
5. Anti-deprivation law should be established to guide the ruling class and other various privileged groups whose behaviours and actions nurse and sustain deprivation.
6. The security agencies especially the Nigerian Police and Civil Defense should have a greater role to play in order to curb electoral violence.

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POLICING ISOLATED VILLAGES IN TIVLAND AMID FARMER-HERDER CONFLICT IN BENUE STATE

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Abstract

The Tivland in Benue State, Nigeria, is primarily rural, with isolated village habitation pattern shaped by land tenure systems, agricultural practices, and socio-economic dynamics. This study investigates the challenges and opportunities for law enforcement amid escalating farmer-herder conflicts in this agrarian region. As a central hub for crop production in Nigeria, Tivland's stability is critical but increasingly threatened by disputes over resource allocation and land use, compounded by environmental changes and population growth. This research explores the historical roots of these conflicts and examines the roles of law enforcement agencies, traditional leaders, and community organizations in maintaining security and fostering coexistence. Combining quantitative data on crime rates and policing activities with qualitative interviews from key stakeholders, the study evaluates the effectiveness of current policing strategies. Particular attention is given to the geographic and socioeconomic challenges posed by Tivland's rural settlements. The research also examines traditional dispute resolution methods and community-driven initiatives as complementary approaches to formal law enforcement. Key findings underscore the need for adaptable and context-sensitive policing strategies that leverage local knowledge and foster community engagement. The study highlights the importance of trust-building and interagency cooperation to enhance security and reduce tensions. By integrating traditional and formal mechanisms, the research identifies practical pathways to improve law enforcement effectiveness and promote lasting peace in Tivland.

Keywords: Policing, villages, Tivland, farmer-herder conflict, community policing, security challenges, conflict resolution, rural communities, Nigeria

Introduction

In the verdant landscapes of Benue State, Nigeria, nestled within the Middle Belt, lies Tivland—a region celebrated for its agrarian traditions and vibrant cultural heritage. Here, the Tiv people maintain a profound connection to the land, relying on agriculture as a cornerstone of their identity and livelihoods. However, this picturesque region faces a persistent and escalating farmer-herder conflict that profoundly affects the socio-economic and security dynamics of its remote villages.

The farmer-herder conflict in Benue State reflects broader tensions across Nigeria's Middle Belt, rooted in historical grievances, competition over land and resources, and ethnic dynamics exacerbated by climate change and demographic shifts (Duruji and Yongo, 2020). In recent years, the conflict has intensified, leading to frequent outbreaks of violence, displacement of communities, and economic disruption (Oladele, 2021). Isolated villages within Tivland are particularly vulnerable due to their remoteness, limited infrastructure, and restricted access to basic services, making them susceptible to clashes between farming communities and nomadic herders (Ojo, 2019). This has created profound challenges for security, socio-economic stability, and communal cohesion.

Policing these isolated villages presents a formidable task for law enforcement agencies in Benue State. The Nigerian Police Force, tasked with maintaining law and order, faces numerous obstacles, including logistical constraints, inadequate resources, and the complexities of navigating local dynamics and allegiances (Ukah, 2022). Moreover, historical distrust between communities and security forces complicates efforts to mediate conflicts and restore peace (Ibrahim, 2018).

The farmer-herder conflict in Benue State, Nigeria, has escalated into a critical security challenge, particularly impacting sparsely populated and isolated villages in Tivland. These conflicts have

resulted in significant loss of life, displacement of communities, and destruction of property. Policing these areas is hindered by geographical isolation, limited infrastructure, and inadequate law enforcement resources. Traditional policing methods have proven insufficient, perpetuating a cycle of violence and instability.

Key research gaps include localized factors, as most studies focus on broader regional or national perspectives, often neglecting the unique socio-cultural and economic dynamics of isolated villages in Tivland that exacerbate tensions (Blench, 2010). Existing literature rarely evaluates the effectiveness of policing methods—such as community-based, technology-driven, and traditional approaches—in sparsely populated and geographically isolated regions (Adamu & Ben, 2015). While much research emphasizes the causes and impacts of the farmer-herder conflict, few studies explore how the conflict affects law enforcement's ability to operate effectively in isolated areas (Okoli & Atelhe, 2014). There is also a significant gap in understanding how resources for policing are allocated to isolated villages compared to more accessible areas. Studies often generalize resource needs without considering the specific challenges posed by geographic isolation (International Crisis Group, 2017).

Previous studies, such as Blench (2010), provide a broad overview of the conflict but fail to examine localized variations and socio-cultural factors specific to Tivland. Similarly, Adamu and Ben (2015) discuss herder-farmer dynamics in West Africa but do not assess the effectiveness of enforcement tactics in isolated regions like Tivland. These gaps underscore the need for research that investigates tailored law enforcement strategies suitable for addressing the unique challenges in these settings.

This research delves into the challenges of policing isolated villages in Tivland amid the farmer-herder conflict in Benue State. By examining the strategies employed by law enforcement agencies, their impact on community relations, and the effectiveness of current approaches, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the obstacles and opportunities in maintaining security and fostering peace in these vulnerable communities.

Additionally, the research evaluates the broader implications of the conflict on socio-economic development, human rights, and prospects for sustainable peacebuilding in Benue State. By shedding light on these critical issues, this research aims to offer policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders' actionable insights into enhancing policing strategies, improving community engagement, and advancing inclusive development initiatives in Tivland and similar regions across Nigeria.

Historical Context

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, has faced numerous sociopolitical challenges over the years, reflecting the complexities of managing its diverse population and vast geographic expanse. Among the most pressing and persistent issues is the farmer-herder conflict, particularly pronounced in the Middle Belt region, which includes Benue State. This conflict is deeply rooted in historical grievances over land use and resource allocation, reflecting longstanding tensions between sedentary farming communities and nomadic pastoralists.

The origins of this conflict can be traced back to pre-colonial times, when land was communally owned, and access was determined by traditional practices. However, with the introduction of formal land tenure systems during colonial rule, these arrangements began to erode, creating competition and disputes over ownership and use. In Benue State, where fertile land is a cornerstone of the agrarian economy, these disputes have been particularly acute.

In recent decades, environmental changes such as desertification and erratic rainfall patterns have intensified the competition for arable land and water resources. As northern grazing lands become less viable due to climate change, herders have increasingly migrated southward, encroaching on farmlands in the Middle Belt. Population growth has further compounded this issue, leading to

greater pressure on finite resources.

Research by Blench (2010) and Okoli & Atelhe (2014) highlights a significant escalation in violence associated with these disputes. What were once sporadic skirmishes have evolved into more frequent and organized attacks, resulting in widespread loss of life and property, displacement of communities, and a climate of pervasive insecurity. This violence has had far-reaching implications, disrupting livelihoods, fracturing communities, and undermining the socio-economic stability of the region.

Governance Challenges

The Farmer-Herder conflict reflects broader national struggles in Nigeria, including competition for resources, ethnic tensions, and significant governance deficits. These challenges are deeply intertwined with historical inequalities and systemic inefficiencies that hinder effective conflict resolution and governance. In Benue State, the impact of these national issues is particularly pronounced due to the region's socio-economic vulnerabilities and its strategic importance as an agrarian hub.

Weak state capacity is a major factor exacerbating the conflict in Benue State. Local and state governments often lack the financial resources, infrastructure, and trained personnel needed to address the complexities of the farmer-herder crisis. Law enforcement agencies, such as the Nigerian Police Force, face logistical challenges, inadequate equipment, and insufficient personnel, making it difficult to patrol vast rural areas effectively. This has left many communities in Tivland and beyond vulnerable to attacks and reprisals, with perpetrators often escaping accountability.

The Nigerian government's approach to managing the conflict has been widely criticized for being reactive rather than preventive. Security forces are often deployed only after violence has erupted, leading to short-term containment rather than sustainable peace. This reactive strategy not only fails to address the root causes of the conflict but also risks further alienating affected communities, many of whom perceive security forces as biased or ineffective.

In addition to operational inefficiencies, governance deficits are evident in the lack of coordinated policies and initiatives to address underlying issues such as land tenure, resource management, and inter-ethnic relations. The absence of comprehensive frameworks for conflict prevention and resolution perpetuates cycles of violence. For instance, poorly implemented grazing laws and inconsistent enforcement of policies have heightened tensions rather than alleviating them.

According to the International Crisis Group (2017), the scale and complexity of the violence frequently overwhelm security forces, further exposing governance failures. The interplay of local politics and national interests also complicates efforts to achieve meaningful interventions. Political actors often exploit the conflict to advance their agendas, undermining trust and collaboration among stakeholders.

Tackling these governance challenges requires a varied approach that prioritizes building institutional capacity, fostering transparency, and ensuring equitable resource allocation. Long-term strategies must include improving the capacity of law enforcement agencies, enhancing community participation in decision-making, and developing preventive measures that address the socio-economic and environmental drivers of the conflict.

Humanitarian Impact

Benue State, situated in Nigeria's Middle Belt, is home to diverse ethnic communities, including the Tiv people, who are known for their agrarian traditions and cultural heritage. Agriculture forms the

backbone of Benue's economy, with farming communities heavily dependent on fertile lands for their livelihoods. However, the escalating farmer-herder conflict has disrupted the socio-political and economic stability of the region, particularly affecting isolated villages within Tivland. This has led to widespread displacement, economic hardships, and strained communal relations.

Key Insights

- The conflict stems from historical land disputes, compounded by environmental and demographic changes.
- Weak governance and inadequate law enforcement exacerbate the violence.
- The humanitarian toll includes loss of lives, displacement, and economic instability.
- Isolated communities in Tivland face heightened vulnerabilities due to their remoteness and dependence on agriculture.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Understanding the dynamics of policing isolated villages in Tivland amid the farmer-herder conflict requires a theoretical framework that elucidates the complexities of security, governance, and conflict resolution. This section explores and justifies the use of conflict theory and community policing as lenses for analyzing and addressing these challenges, while also discussing their limitations within the unique socio-political context of Tivland.

Conflict Theory

Conflict theory provides a foundational lens for analyzing the farmer-herder conflict in Benue State. Originating from the work of Karl Marx and later developed by sociologists such as Lewis Coser and Ralf Dahrendorf, conflict theory posits that society is characterized by competition and inequality over scarce resources (Coser, 1956). In Tivland, this framework is particularly relevant as the farmer-herder conflict revolves around competition for land, water, and grazing rights, exacerbated by historical grievances, economic disparities, and demographic pressures (Dahrendorf, 1959).

The application of conflict theory is justified in this study because it highlights the structural inequalities and resource-based tensions that underpin the farmer-herder conflict. By addressing these systemic issues, law enforcement strategies can go beyond maintaining law and order to promoting equitable resource allocation, fostering dialogue between conflicting parties, and mitigating socio-economic disparities. However, the limitations of conflict theory must also be acknowledged. Its broad focus on structural factors may overlook localized cultural nuances and immediate security needs, which are critical for effective policing in Tivland's isolated villages. Thus, conflict theory should be complemented by other approaches that account for the unique socio-cultural dynamics of the region.

Community Policing

Community policing offers a pragmatic approach to addressing the unique security challenges of isolated villages in Tivland. This model emphasizes collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local communities to co-produce security and address the specific needs of rural areas (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 1994). In the context of Tivland, community policing can enhance trust between police officers and villagers, improve intelligence gathering, and facilitate early intervention in potential conflicts (Ekundayo, 2020).

The justification for employing community policing lies in its ability to adapt to the socio-cultural

and geographic realities of Tivland. By encouraging proactive engagement with community leaders, traditional authorities, and civil society organizations, this approach fosters localized strategies that align with the lived experiences of rural communities. Additionally, community policing empowers residents to take an active role in their security, promoting sustainable peacebuilding and resilience against external threats.

Despite its strengths, community policing is not without limitations. The effectiveness of this approach may be hindered by inadequate resources, logistical challenges, and historical mistrust between law enforcement and local communities in Tivland. Furthermore, the success of community policing depends on consistent engagement and mutual accountability, which can be difficult to sustain in the face of external pressures or governance shortcomings. Addressing these limitations requires tailored implementation strategies that prioritize capacity-building and trust restoration in Tivland.

Research Method

This research employs both secondary and primary data collection methods.

For the secondary data, the researcher reviewed a range of sources, including textbooks, government documents, academic journals, and newspaper publications. These sources provided background information on herders' attacks and security governance challenges in Tivland.

For the primary data, a field survey was conducted to gather perspectives from key stakeholders in Benue State, particularly from areas most affected by the farmer-herder conflict (Guma, Gwer-West, and Makurdi local governments). A total of 125 participants were interviewed, including:

- 25 law enforcement officers
- 25 traditional rulers
- 25 community members
- 25 religious leaders
- 25 state government officials

These interviews provided in-depth insights into the local security challenges, stakeholders' experiences, and the potential role of state police in mitigating attacks. The data collected through these interviews was analyzed using thematic analysis, with responses coded into key themes related to security governance, the frequency and severity of herders' attacks, and the effectiveness of policing strategies.

Quantitative analysis was also used to present statistical data on the frequency and severity of herders' attacks, drawing from official reports and other documented sources. The analysis quantified the patterns of violence and aimed to understand the current security situation. This mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data, provides a comprehensive understanding of the security issues in Tivland and offers insights into potential interventions by state authorities.

Analysis of Policing Strategies for Isolated Villages in Switzerland, Norway, Canada, India, and Australia

Securing isolated villages, especially in remote or challenging environments, is a complex task that many countries have approached with various strategies. Below is how Norway, Canada, India, and Australia have successfully developed strategies that can be applied to improve the security governance of rural villages in Nigeria, particularly in regions like Tivland, Benue State, where

villages face persistent security challenges.

Switzerland

Local Militia and Community Involvement

Switzerland's security approach blends local militia with community involvement, featuring a well-armed civilian militia and compulsory military service. This system prepares locals to manage security threats, which is particularly beneficial for isolated villages. The emphasis on community involvement in emergency preparedness and security fosters local ownership and vigilance.

In the context of Tivland, a similar model could involve strengthening local community policing structures and integrating them with the existing security apparatus. Drawing from the Swiss system, Tivland could benefit from engaging local militias or volunteer security groups in defending their villages, alongside traditional law enforcement. This would empower communities to take a more active role in their security, potentially mitigating some of the criminal attacks that currently affect these areas.

Decentralized Security Structure

Switzerland's highly decentralized security system, where each canton has its own police and emergency services, allows for quick responses at the local level. For Tivland, decentralizing policing efforts to ensure local control and rapid response in rural areas could prove beneficial. Ensuring that rural communities in Tivland have direct access to law enforcement resources could increase their resilience to attacks and improve response times during emergencies.

Norway

Integrated Local Defense Systems

Norway employs a defense strategy that integrates local police forces with national defense, ensuring that communication and response capabilities are streamlined, even in remote villages. The use of technology, including surveillance, enhances monitoring capabilities. For Tivland, adapting Norway's strategy could mean investing in technology such as surveillance drones and improving communication networks in isolated villages. By integrating national defense capabilities with local security forces, Tivland could bolster its response to insecurity in remote areas. Additionally, community training in basic emergency preparedness, like Norway's model, would ensure that villagers are well-equipped to handle immediate threats while awaiting external assistance.

Canada

Remote Area Surveillance and Rapid Response

Canada uses aerial surveillance and ground patrols, often employing drones and satellites, to monitor and secure its remote regions, including the Arctic and northern areas. In addition, partnerships with Indigenous communities enhance local knowledge and security efforts. For Tivland, employing a mix of aerial surveillance and partnerships with local communities could enhance security measures. Given Nigeria's vast size and remote areas like Tivland, a similar strategy could be implemented with aerial surveillance using drones and partnerships with local community leaders to improve intelligence gathering and response capabilities.

Indigenous Partnerships

Canada's collaboration with Indigenous communities offers valuable insights. In Tivland, leveraging traditional leaders and local knowledge would be essential in addressing the unique socio-political dynamics of the region. Indigenous partnerships can help bridge gaps between formal law enforcement and local communities, fostering trust and improving security measures.

India

Village Defense Committees and Surveillance

In conflict-prone regions, India has set up Village Defense Committees (VDCs), which are armed groups of locals trained to defend their villages. Surveillance technologies such as cameras and drones further enhance security in remote areas. Adapting this approach to Tivland could involve forming locally organized defense committees that are trained to protect villages from criminal elements. These committees could work in collaboration with formal law enforcement agencies to ensure rapid and coordinated responses. Given the challenges in Tivland's rural areas, incorporating surveillance systems would enhance security monitoring and response times, particularly in areas that are hard to access.

Community Policing

India's community policing initiatives involve locals in security efforts, building trust between communities and police. This approach could be beneficial for Tivland, where there is often a disconnect between communities and formal security forces. Strengthening community policing in Tivland would create a partnership that allows locals to actively engage with law enforcement, improving cooperation and information sharing.

Australia

Remote Area Patrols and Community Programs

Australia's approach includes regular patrols and community programs in remote areas like the Outback. Regular check-ins and community engagement foster a sense of responsibility and cooperation, ensuring that villagers play an active role in maintaining security. For Tivland, adopting regular patrols by both local and external security forces, alongside community programs, could encourage locals to take ownership of their security. Community-based programs could include training in first aid, emergency response, and crime prevention, which would help locals act quickly in the event of a security breach.

Technology Integration

Australia uses advanced technology like satellite communication and surveillance to manage security in vast remote areas. Integrating such technology into Tivland's security framework would enable better monitoring of hard-to-reach villages. This would be particularly helpful in the region's unmotorable terrains.

Common Elements in These Strategies

Community Engagement

Across all models, community involvement is crucial. By involving local populations in security efforts, countries like Switzerland, Norway, and India have empowered communities to take

ownership of their safety. For Tivland, this means strengthening community-based security structures such as village patrols and local defense committees.

Technology Utilization

Technologies like drones, satellite surveillance, and digital communication are key to monitoring isolated villages. In Tivland, the integration of these technologies could dramatically improve security measures and allow for rapid responses to threats.

Integrated Systems

Coordination between local, regional, and national security forces is another consistent feature. In Tivland, fostering better communication between community leaders, local police, and national security agencies would ensure a more cohesive and effective response to security challenges.

Result and Findings

To carry out this research, the researcher distributed 130 questionnaires to military personnel who are on a peacekeeping mission in Guma and Gwer-west LGs, police, and Civil defense (law enforcement) officers in Guma, Makurdi, and Gwer-West local government areas (LGAs) of Benue State. The questionnaires were also distributed among traditional rulers, community, religious leaders, and government officials across the 3 LGAs. However, only 125 copies were returned. The completed copies were subjected to statistical analysis.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1: Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	52	41.6
Male	73	58.4
Total	125	100

Source: Field survey, (March 2024)

The majority of respondents were male (58.4%, $n = 73$), while females accounted for 41.6% ($n = 52$). This gender disparity in participation could reflect broader societal trends in Nigeria, where men are often more accessible or available to participate in such surveys due to existing gender imbalances in access to opportunities.

Table 2: Age

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
0-25	24	19.2
26-35	28	22.4
36-45	22	17.6
46-55	14	11.2
56 and above	37	29.6
Total	125	100

Source: Field Survey (March 2024)

The data indicates a broad age distribution, with the highest proportion (29.6%, n = 37) of respondents aged 56 and above. Young adults (26-35 years) followed closely with 22.4% (n = 28). A substantial proportion of respondents (41.6%) are aged 36 and above, suggesting that older and more experienced individuals may be more involved in community leadership and decision-making, particularly in rural areas where the impact of herder attacks is most pronounced.

Table 3: Residence

Residence	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	68	54.4
Urban	57	45.6
Total	125	100

Source: Field Survey (March 2024)

Over half (54.4%, n = 68) of the respondents reside in rural areas, which are more likely to be affected by herder attacks. The higher proportion of rural residents may suggest direct exposure to security challenges, including those posed by herders. These communities are often harder to reach by security forces, which could explain concerns about the effectiveness of law enforcement in such areas.

Knowledge and Experience with Herders’ Attacks

Table 4: Have you experienced or witnessed herders in your community?

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	104	83.2
No	21	16.8
Total	125	100

Source: Field Survey (March 2024)

A majority of respondents (83.2%, n = 104) reported having either directly experienced or witnessed herder attacks in their communities. Many described these incidents as traumatic, with attackers often arriving unexpectedly from neighboring Nasarawa State, particularly during the night. These attacks frequently result in the deaths of community members, including men, women, and children. Some respondents suggested that certain local communities in Nasarawa may be aiding these attackers by providing shelter and guidance.

Perception of the Current Law Enforcement Architecture

Table 5: How effective do you think the current Law Enforcement Agencies are in solving Herder’s attack on Benue Communities?

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Very Effective	7	5.6
Somewhat Effective	9	7.2
Ineffective	107	85.6
Not Sure	2	1.6
Total	125	100

Source: Field Survey (March 2024)

The overwhelming majority of respondents (85.6%, $n = 107$) believe that current law enforcement efforts are ineffective in addressing herder attacks in Benue communities. This sentiment was echoed by law enforcement officers themselves, who identified logistical challenges, such as the distance between police stations, military bases, and rural villages, as significant barriers to effective response. Additionally, officers admitted to lacking familiarity with local communities and relying on limited intelligence about herdsman's movements.

Table 6: Do you trust the current law enforcement Agencies to Handle Herders' Attacks Effectively?

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	3.2
No	119	95.2
Unsure	2	1.6
Total	125	100

Source: Field Survey (March 2024)

Most respondents (95.2%, $n = 119$) expressed a lack of trust in the ability of current law enforcement agencies to effectively handle herders' attacks. Concerns centered around delays in response due to bureaucratic processes and the centralization of decision-making, which many believed hindered the ability to act swiftly during emergencies.

Table 7: Perception of a Decentralized State Police

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	98	78.4
Support	9	7.2
Neutral	3	2.4
Oppose	9	7.2
Strongly Oppose	6	4.8
Total	125	100

Source: Field Survey (March 2024)

A significant majority (78.4%, $n = 98$) of respondents strongly supported the idea of decentralized state police, with an additional 7.2% expressing general support. Respondents believed that decentralized police forces would be better equipped to respond quickly to herder attacks by being more familiar with local dynamics and establishing stronger community ties.

Table 8: How important do you think community involvement is in preventing herders' attacks?

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Very Important	111	88.8
Important	6	4.8
Neutral	0	0
Not Very Important	5	4
Not Important at All	3	2.4
Total	125	100

Source: Field Survey (March 2024)

A vast majority (88.8%, n = 111) of respondents emphasized the importance of community involvement in preventing herders' attacks. Many participants expressed a strong willingness to engage in local initiatives aimed at addressing insecurity, citing the inadequacy of current law enforcement in providing adequate protection.

Table 9: Would you be willing to participate in community initiatives aimed at preventing herders' attacks?

Opinion	Frequency	Sum of Percentage
Yes	87	69
No	8	6.4
Maybe	30	24
Total	125	100

Source: Field Survey (March 2024)

A majority (69%, n = 87) of respondents expressed a willingness to participate in community-based initiatives aimed at preventing herders' attacks. Only a small proportion (6.4%, n = 8) indicated they were unwilling to participate, while 24% (n = 30) were uncertain.

Centralized Policing System and Its Limitations

Nigeria's policing system is centralized under the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), which is federally controlled and allows minimal autonomy for state governments. This structure has faced significant criticism for its slow response to local security issues, leading to a disconnect between law enforcement and the communities they serve. In Benue State, particularly in Tivland, the NPF's response to herders' attacks has been widely regarded as insufficient and reactive rather than proactive. The challenges faced by the NPF in addressing the persistent security threats in the region can be grouped into several key areas:

Bureaucratic Bottlenecks and Resource Constraints

The NPF operates within a rigid hierarchical system, which often leads to slow decision-making and delays in addressing urgent security threats. For example, in rural areas of Benue, where herders' attacks are frequent and often occur without warning, delayed responses from law enforcement can exacerbate the scale of violence and loss of life. The limited personnel and stretched resources of the NPF further complicate matters. With understaffed units and insufficient surveillance infrastructure, it becomes difficult to deploy officers effectively, particularly in hard-to-reach villages in the Guma and Gwer-West LGAs.

Political Interference and Lack of Local Knowledge

Centralized policing makes the NPF vulnerable to political influence, which can distort priorities and divert attention away from local security concerns. This is particularly evident in Benue, where there have been reports of political interference in the allocation of resources and personnel to areas affected by herders' attacks. For instance, the distribution of patrol units to high-risk areas like Tivland has sometimes been delayed or reduced in favor of other regions deemed politically more sensitive. Additionally, officers assigned to rural areas often lack the necessary knowledge of local customs, geography, and socio-political dynamics, which are critical in addressing the root causes of the herders' attacks. This lack of local insight can lead to poor strategic decisions and a failure to engage effectively with communities, making it harder for the NPF to gain the trust of the people they are supposed to protect.

Limited Accountability and Transparency

A centralized policing system can hinder accountability and transparency, which are essential for fostering trust between law enforcement and local communities. In Benue, many residents, particularly in rural areas, express frustration with the police's slow responses and perceived ineffectiveness. The lack of clear mechanisms for holding law enforcement accountable for these delays or failures has led to a breakdown in cooperation with local populations. Communities often feel neglected and marginalized, which only intensifies the already fragile relationship between citizens and the police.

Inadequate Training and Equipment

While the NPF's challenges are well-documented, the specific issue of inadequate training and equipment is particularly pressing in regions like Benue, where herders' attacks frequently involve sophisticated weaponry. Officers often lack the proper training to handle such security threats, which diminishes their ability to effectively respond. For example, in one incident in Guma, police officers were unable to neutralize an armed herder attack due to insufficient tactical training and a lack of modern equipment. The inability of law enforcement to match the firepower and organization of the attackers further undermines the police's credibility and effectiveness.

Inflexibility in Adapting to Local Dynamics

A further limitation of the centralized policing system is its inherent inflexibility in adapting to the evolving security landscape. In Benue, herders' attacks have become more frequent and violent, but the policing strategies employed by the NPF have remained largely unchanged. The NPF's centralized decision-making process often means that officers in rural areas lack the autonomy to quickly implement adaptive strategies or adjust tactics based on real-time intelligence. In Tivland, where the terrain is difficult and communities are dispersed, this rigidity can result in outdated responses that fail to address the root causes of conflict, such as competition for land and resources between farmers and herders.

Recommendations

- **Establishment of Specialized Community Police Units (High Urgency and Feasibility):** Create specialized community police units that include local personnel and engage local leaders in efforts to resolve conflicts between farmers and herders. This will enhance local trust and ensure more effective conflict resolution through localized policing. Establish communication channels between community police officers and traditional/community leaders to foster collaboration and resolve conflicts proactively.
- **Strengthening Conflict Mediation and Dialogue Platforms (Medium Urgency and Feasibility):** Facilitate structured dialogue between farmers and herders through organized platforms and conflict mediation programs. This will address the root causes of conflicts and promote peaceful coexistence. Establish mediation committees with equal representation from both farmers and herders.
- **Improved Infrastructure and Resource Allocation (High Urgency and Feasibility):** Invest in improving transportation infrastructure and communication networks in remote areas to ensure timely law enforcement responses and effective resource distribution. This approach will enhance accessibility and communication between law enforcement and communities, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas. Government should prioritize the construction and

maintenance of roads leading to high-risk areas such as Guma and Gwer-West. Set up mobile communication units (e.g., satellite phones) in remote villages to improve emergency communication. Partner with local governments and NGOs for joint funding of infrastructure projects.

- **Capacity Building and Training for Law Enforcement Personnel (Medium Urgency and Feasibility):** Provide focused training for law enforcement personnel on cultural sensitivity, rural policing techniques, and conflict resolution to better manage farmer-herder conflicts and operate efficiently in rural areas. Equip law enforcement officers with the skills needed to understand and address the unique dynamics of farmer-herder conflicts. Develop a tailored training curriculum in partnership with experts in conflict resolution and rural policing. Conduct mandatory training sessions for all officers deployed to rural areas, focusing on de-escalation tactics, understanding local customs, and establishing rapport with communities.

5.2 Conclusion

This study highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive and adaptive approach to addressing the farmer-herder conflict in Benue State. The findings underscore the critical limitations of the current centralized policing system, including delays in response times, lack of local knowledge, and political interference. These challenges necessitate a shift toward more localized and community-driven solutions. By establishing specialized community policing units, fostering direct government-community cooperation, and integrating both traditional and modern security measures, we can enhance local security and trust between law enforcement and communities.

The study also emphasizes the importance of addressing the root socioeconomic factors driving the conflict, such as resource competition and lack of rural development. Developing comprehensive rural development programs, alongside investing in infrastructure improvements like roads and communication networks, is essential for creating sustainable peace. Moreover, the introduction of state policing offers a promising solution, enabling law enforcement to operate more effectively and responsively in local contexts.

As a forward-looking strategy, implementing decentralized policing could significantly reduce the time it takes for authorities to respond to security threats, improve intelligence gathering, and build stronger community relationships. Future research should explore the potential of state-level police reforms and further investigate how socioeconomic development can complement security efforts in conflict-prone areas.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on conflict management in Nigeria, offering practical recommendations for improving security and fostering long-term peace in Benue and other conflict-affected regions. By taking actionable steps toward enhancing community policing and addressing the underlying causes of the farmer-herder conflict, the region can move toward a more secure and prosperous future.

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INFLUENCE OF ELITES ON DEMOCRATIC ELECTION IN NIGERIA: 2019-2023

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Abstract

The problematic influence of the role of elites as a major factor for the position of Nigerian State in the lower rung of the United Nations Development Index has continued to raise severe alarm and unanswered questions why the elites being the custodians of State's power for channeling peoples' actions along purposeful areas of development especially democratic election have failed to transform the society. Despite wielding significant power and influence, elites have failed to leverage these assets for societal development; all elections have been characterized by crisis, hence the predominant lack of free and fair election. In our attempt to address this phenomenon, we employed documentary research method for gathering and analysis data while Elite Theory was used for the analytical framework. The elites' bureaucratic authoritarianism with the associated imperialist features were identified, they are incompatible with the principles of democratic election which are oriented towards real development that is difficult in the context of foreign culture. A radical policy option in form of socialist transformation; restructuring the economy along socialist line, capable of dismantling the bureaucratic authoritarian (power pyramid) structure to engender decentralization and distribution of power on the basis of equality as the fundamental factor for democratic election is recommended. Socialist transformation is the ultimate panacea for the elites' bureaucratic authoritarianism and imperialist features, it would revive the political economy of the State towards restoration of indigenous culture necessary for various institutions, especially the electoral process and holistic development of the Nigerian State as a post-colonial type.

Keywords: *Elites, democratic election, political violence, democracy, development, free and fair election.*

Introduction

Plato described Politics as an elitist science (Mbah, 2006). Consequently he advocated for government by the elites or aristocrats known as Aristocracy. The reason for his condemnation of democracy is highlighted by Appadorai (1974; 194) that; "Plato has shown for instance, that ignorance, injustice and political selfishness are the great defects of the democracy. On account of these hindrances, democracy is not practiced based on its etymological notion of equality. This is responsible for various problems of development especially electoral crisis. Though Aristotle opted for democracy but concurred with Plato that it is a perversion of polity. He gave democracy its first definition as a system of government in which the whole body of citizens share power but in which they use it for selfish purpose Okafor (2002:223).

According to Mbah (2006:15) "the founders of many modern democracies of the world met him (Aristotle) halfway. They had not only read his works, they applied a good many of his political principles". In the last two decades, the world experienced rapid growth of democracy, it increased from 48 in 1989 to 95 today (Monty and Benjamin, 2011). Concerning Nigeria and Africa generally, Saliu et al (2016:47) observed that "democracy was perceived by Africans as a panacea for the continent's multifaceted developmental crises orchestrated by the protracted experience of military authorization". But the perception of democracy as the panacea for liberation in Africa especially Nigeria has been truncated by the negative role of the elites, through various social institutions especially the media controlled by the elite for perpetuation of dominance to the detriment of the masses.

Ogochukwu et al (2023:74) in a study about Nigeria's 2023 presidential election, observed that "in most countries of the world certain discuss top the media agenda prior to national elections." The media plays a pivotal role in upholding democracy by serving as a check on state power and

amplifying the voices of marginalized communities. However, in Nigeria, the government, along with numerous politicians, consistently harass and obstruct the media's ability to fulfil its essential function. (Olaito, 2023). The elites employ and manipulate religion (Muslim/muslim tickets of 2023 issue) and ethnicity during election campaign, through cunning and force akin to Machiavellian fashion to mould voting behavior as a function of myriads of interfacing and intervening variables that determine preference between competing candidates and political parties to ensure that the elite maintains itself in power as proved by both the Nigeria's 2019 and 2023 Presidential election victory. According to Oluwakemi (2019:5) "the Nigerian political milieu witnessed a fierce horse race between the two major candidates and political parties during the 2019 Presidential election campaign – incumbent Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressive Congress (APC) and the opposition Alhaji Abubakar Atiku of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). The phrase fierce horserace above; description or peculiar style of the Nigerian elite cliques in form of foxes and the lions premised Osah et al (2019:312) statement that "Nigeria's 2019 Presidential election witnessed significant inciting campaign across political climes and among political elites, prime political appointees, political thugs and political loyalties. The extent of the inciting campaign carried before the final election gave way to the high level of violence in some sections of the country".

The scenario exaggerated during the subsequent 2023 presidential election characterized by elites' demonstration of fierce force and might to win election through diverse methods especially engagement and manipulation of the press to achieve the personal interest. This premised Ajetunmobi (2023:1) statement that "the Nigerian press (Newspapers) lean more towards war and ethnic journalism than peace/solution driven journalism". War and ethnic journalism constitute a dominant feature of Nigeria's democratic election.

Arising from this prevailing background is the task of this paper to amongst others examine the impact of the elite class on the country's democratic election. The challenge for us, in this study is to evaluate the role of the elites in 2019 and 2023 Nigeria's Presidential elections covered by the period of the study (2019-2023) as a means of addressing the phenomenon and proffering panacea for reformation and effective orientation of the elites towards restoration of the dignity of democratic election in Nigeria.

Conceptualization

Elites

Udenigwe (2007:147) stated that "elite theory of politics rests on the premise that policy is the product or handwork of the elites that reflect their values and preferences which serve as their ends which may be to make provision for the welfare of the masses or otherwise". Elites are the people who exercise both power (force) and authority; those who exercise disproportionately the greatest influence; those who hold positions to make authoritative decisions; those who actually exercise political power; the custodian of political power in any given society or state; elite class implies the leadership class. According to Akam (2024:18) "in *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Achebe (1984:1) famously declared, "the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. He criticized Nigerian leaders for prioritizing personal gain over the nation's welfare, the Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example. Unabated years of bad leadership have left chronic wounds on the country's conscience and the populace social psychology" A dominant feature of the elite as a class is how the elite maintains itself in power through the advantage of its monopoly of power for personal interest.

Democratic Election

This implies election in democratic institution or democratic system, hence democracy and election as dependent and independent variables. Concerning this Mmaduagwu et al 2023:66 stated that “elections is the hallmark of democratic process and government”. Onyenekwe et al (2023:74) observed that “in most countries of the world certain discourses top the media agenda prior to national elections. This is the case in Nigeria where such discourses on religion or ethnicity still play a major role capable of swinging election victory in any direction”. The two indicators religion and ethnicity are used by the elites (for selfish interest) as the basis for framing issues that cause incitement to violence that characterize Nigerian elections.

Empirical Review

A study carried out by Nwagwu (2013) titled “The Elites and the Masses in Contemporary Competitive Societies” sought to establish the impact of the elites in democratic societies especially in democratic election since election is the hallmark of democratic process. The study which adopted qualitative method and elite theory as a theoretical framework established that the social relation that exists between the elites and the masses is severely imbalanced against the masses that are weak and unorganized, therefore lack the required capacity to proclaim basic rights including electoral victory, hence the cause of suppression, exploitation etc inflicted on the masses. Recommendation was that the masses should organize themselves in a coherent manner, articulate needs, apply and utilize the force of collective will and exercise the power of this to bargain seriously for their common good in democratic society.

In a related study carried out by Madubuegwu et al (2023) titled “Voting Behaviour: A Theoretical Analysis”. the study examined popularized models in the study of voting behaviour purposely to identify relevance and limitations of it's assumptions. The study which adopted qualitative research design established that sociological, psychological and rational-choice models are useful in the scientific analysis of voting behaviour. The study concluded that the applicability of these models in developing democracies like Nigeria faces severe challenges by adverse relative realities. (A major reality is the negative role of the elites in Nigeria's democratic election) The study recommended new models and paradigms for depth study of Nigeria's peculiar voter environment.

Theoretical Framework

Myriads of theoretical explanations exist to conceptualize the issue of elites and democratic election in Nigeria but for the purpose of this work, the Elite Theory appears more appropriate. The Elite Theory was propounded by Vilfredo Pareto 1848-1923 and Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941) (both Italians) while the exponents of the theory in the fifties include Schumpeter (economist), Lasswell (Political Science) and C. Wright Mills (Sociologist).

According Udenigwe (2007: 148) “Pareto goes on to say that the circulation of elite and how the elite maintains itself in power through the combined efforts of cunning and force is akin to Machiavellian fashion of the governing cliques of the “Foxes and the Lions” The animals of this description premised Osah et al (2019:307) observation that “The Guardian Newspaper reported in October 2018 that the nomination of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar as the preferred candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), put all doubts to bed and concluded that the Nigerian Presidential election of 2019 would be a two-horse race. The horse in this context used to represent both Muhammad Buhari and Abubakar Atiku”. This description is basically on their severe competitive force (The predominant feature of Nigeria's democratic election) which characterize animal behaviour, unlike human behaviour that is rooted in intellect or reason as the fundamental factor for civilized political behaviour.

Eze et al (2016:68) highlighted the thrust of the elite theory thus: “Pareto maintained that the society is divided into different strata which he called the higher stratum and the lower stratum.

The higher stratum which is the elite class is sub-divided into the governing Elites and non-governing elites. The governing Elites are those who directly or indirectly take part in decision making process of governance while the non-governing Elites are those who do not take part in decision making though they are still Elites. The non- Elites according to him are simply classified as the masses”. The masses being the majority suffer domination, suppression and exploitation inflicted on them through fierce competitive method used by the elite to maintain itself in power in the process of democratic election. For example, Osah et al (2019:214) observed that “the 2019 General Elections was watered by the blood of Nigerians”. The circumstance of this premised Salu et al (2018:47) statement that “soaring elite greed under the present democratic experiment has blurred the relationship between the state and the individuals”. The dominant feature in Nigerian democratic society were highlighted by Nwagwu (2018:192) observed that “the striking characteristics of the elites is that a sneeze within their hierarchy reflects political instability, national insecurity, social feud, and political parties divide within the large society The poor and the weak masses are readily accessible army who are quickly mobilized on ethno religious sentiments, parochial and primeval political ideologies”. Nigerian's predominant electoral failure is predicated on the above facts.

In view of the foregoing the elite theory has demonstrated how the elites nurtured and sustained crisis of the country's democratic election which has significantly contributed to the structure of poverty. The poor masses consciousness of the factor responsible for their deplorable condition is portrayed and demands collective efforts towards governance reforms that would engender liberal democratic election for the Nigerian society.

The elites and the media

Concerning the 2023 Presidential election, Madubugwu et al (2023:70) stated that “measurement of media content turned out to be a little use in accounting for voters choices, most of which seen to be based upon strong brand loyalties rooted in religion and social class”. Media coverage of elections lead to patterns of news narratives through framing that instigates violence. According to Oriola (2019:3) “interactions between reporters and political gladiators (elites) resulted into patterns of framing of the 2019 presidential campaign in Nigeria in a way to promote certain party/candidate”. Illustratively, Guardian Newspaper, 17 March 2019 reported about elections of death, this resulted from incitement to violence (by the elites) recorded by Osah et al (2021:34) that “this Day, the Punch and Guardian Newspapers reported that Muslim rioters targeted and killed Christians and citizens of other tribes from Southern Nigeria who were believed to be in support of MuhammaduBuhari, the All Progressive Congress (APC) Presidential candidate, burning their churches, shops and homes, the rioters collectively attacked Police Stations and electoral commission office, mosque and properties”. He further reiterated that “after announcement of MuhammaduBuhari as President in 2019, the challenger in person of AlhajiAtikuAbubakar rejected the results and this led to the high death toll post-election as reported by The Guardian Newspaper”. Again, Oriola (2019:8) reported that “the narrative devices journalists used in packaging news stories about the 2019 Presidential election in Nigeria became frames that set the boundaries for understanding the issue, the problem related to it”. Osah et al (2021: 307) identified the problem by stating that “there is a direct link between political violence and media framing in Nigeria”. The issues framed by the media to favour the elites who employ them cause electoral violence, unrest and instability which culminate in conducive environment for the elites' severe competitive force to achieve election victory as demonstrated during both 2019 and 2023 Presidential elections in Nigeria.

The elites' personal interest

Certainly, the 2019 Nigeria's Presidential election demonstrated that only the interest of the elites is being sustained and protected in the contemporary fierce competitive democratic dispensation. It is fierce competitive especially within the realm of the elite for example, Osah et al (2021) stated that “the Guardian Newspaper reported in October 2018 that the nomination of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar as the preferred candidate of the People's Democratic party (PDP), put all doubts to bed and concluded that the Nigerian presidential election of 2019 would be a “two horse race”. The horse in this context used to represent both Muhammadu Buhari and Abubakar Atiku. This strife and struggle for power was relatively evident all through the political campaign as political actors took the mantle to win at all cost on their shoulders.

In 2023 Presidential election, the severe struggle exaggerated. Journalists who played a pivotal role in upholding democracy by serving as a check on fierce competitive force of the elites or political actors faced serious oppression. For example, Olaito (2023) stated that fine was imposed on channels Television for broadcasting the opinions of Yusuf Datti, the Labour Party vice presidential candidate regarding the 2023 Nigerian election outcome, claiming his comment could disrupt public order'. The method employed by the Nigerian elites to maintain their power resemble the format used by ancient tyrants according to the prescriptions outlined by Aristotle in Appadorai (1975:242) “the tyrants should lop off those who are too high, he must put to death men of spirit; he should endeavor to know what each of his subjects in a war so that they may have something to do and be always in want of a leader”. Engagement of subjects in a war stated above characterizes Nigerian democratic elections especially the 2019 and 2023 presidential election in which the elites demonstrated through fierce competitive force that election is like a battle and that whatever used in battle is justified.

According to Osah et al(2021:314) “after announcement of Muhammadu Buhari as President in 2019, the challenger in person of Atiku Abubakar rejected the result, and this led to high death toll post-election as reported by Guardian Newspaper”. The reason for Alhaji Atiku Abubakar's rejection of the result probably was connected with steers (2019:6) observation that Abubakar emerged successful from PDP primaries in October, 2018 but was not able to defeat Buhari in the Presidential election held on 23 February, 2019 after last-minute week-long delay-winning 41.2% of the vote to Buhari and 55.6% . Vanguard Newspaper of 27th February, 2019 stated that “the 76-years-old-one-time military ruler's victory was confirmed late on Tuesday after rescheduled polling blamed on logistical difficulties. The last-minute week-long delay-winning above manifests the level of political interference, fierce competitive force and corruption. The problem aggravated in 2023 general election. Punch May 7th 2023 stated that: “Weeks after the 2023 general elections, political parties are enmeshed in series of crises, creating instability and unrest. The 2023 general elections may have come and gone but the aftermath of the keenly contested polls is still being felt across the land” This manifest in lack of peaceful co-existence, hostility, legal battle etc., as the predominant features of Nigeria's democratic election.

Conclusion

The paper profoundly interrogated the analysis of the elites and Nigeria's democratic election and successfully spurred intellectual debate concerning the role of the elites in Nigeria's electoral process. Our investigation revealed that all elections since the inception of Nigerian's democratic election as a product of colonialism were characterized by severe violence, hence, persistent lack of free and fair election. This is why the study situates itself within the framework of elite theory to critically observe how the behavior of the elite shapes the structure of electoral violence. This paved way for the study to reveal that the elitist-conspiracy and struggle for power caused high occurrences of voting and vote buying, voter disfranchise, deficient election management, gross inadequacy of

electoral logistics, malfunctionality of election technology and cases of terror which culminate in electoral failure used by the severe competitive force of the elite to maintain itself in power. The elite is usually in monopoly of power built by the mass organizations, hierarchically structured with the elite on top of the pyramid that is not under any pressure from lower echelons.

A radical policy option in form of socialist transformation; restructuring the economy along socialist line that would dismantle or destroy the power pyramid to engender decentralization and distribution of power on the basis of equality as the fundamental condition or requirement for democratic election is strongly recommended. Again, emergence of a vanguard by revolutionists is of paramount importance. The vanguard would articulate and prioritize the needs and collective interest of the masses in a manner that would challenge the domineering disposition of the elites that has severely overwhelmed the power of the majority.

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INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION IN NIGERIA'S WORK ENVIRONMENT: IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOUR AND ORGANIZATIONAL GOAL ATTAINMENT

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Abstract

Every organization pursues two major goals—those of the organization and those of the individual employees. Thus, just being a member of the organization alone does not automatically imply that the employee must accomplish its goals. Attainment of organizational goals is dependent on the behaviour choice of the employee which in turn is a function of motivation. This paper attempted to x-ray intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in Nigeria's work environment and their impact on employee behaviour and the attainment of organizational goals. The paper is of the view that an employee will be motivated to work to achieve some goals to the extent that he/she expects that certain actions on his/her part will assist him/her attain these goals, of course, not losing focus of the available motivational instrumentalities to him. The paper made the following findings in line with its objectives, that: employee behaviour and organizational goal attainment are a function of worker motivation; extrinsic motivational strategies positively influence employee performance in Nigeria's work environment more than intrinsic motivation strategies; motivation interacts with work milieu and employee behaviour to stimulate job performance in Nigeria's work environment. The paper, therefore, concluded that the ways the employee can express his satisfaction or dissatisfaction, obedience or disobedience in the work environment vis-à-vis his motivation is by indulging in positive or negative behaviour or attitudes against the attainment of organizational goal. To overcome these negative behaviour tendencies in the Nigeria's work environment and promote productivity, employers of labour both in public and private sectors should emphasize monetary rewards and incentives more than non monetary rewards.

Keywords: *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Employee Behaviour, Organizational Goal, Productivity.*

Introduction

The growth and development of a country's economy is based on its efficient management of the endowed resources. These resources by simple economic terminology are called factors of production. These, of course, are anything found by man in his environment that he may utilize to produce goods and services for his development. Given the resources that are available for the nation to utilize, the level of production obtained is going to be greatly determined by the amount, skill and the welfare of the human resources.

Adam Smith (1961 in Okonkwo, 2007), in his book entitled "Wealth of Nations" talked about the annual labour of every nation. By this, Smith contended that it is the produce of his labour, which constitutes a nation's opulence. Karl Marx (1975 in Amadi, 2014) also made it clear in his words when he said,

Labour is in the first place, a process in which both man and nature participate, and in which a man of his own accord starts, regulates and controls the material actions between himself and nature. He imposes himself to nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appreciate nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time, changes his own natures. He develops his slumbering powers and compels them to act in obedience to his way.

This expression of Marx sums it all, that the entire national income of any nation is the product of human resources. It is at this point evident that among the factors of production, human factor

requires greater and more careful management since an efficient management of human resources ensures an optimal growth of national income and wealth (Marx and Engels, 1979). From the organizational point of view, the focus of human resources management is people since every organization is human oriented, a factor without which the organization is reduced to nothing. In other words, the human element is the king factor in any organization. The process of acquiring human services, developing skills, motivating them and ensuring their loyalty in the organization are vital instruments for achieving organizational objectives and goal, be it public or private.

Our society is a changing one, therefore, work organizations and work relationships are dynamic, they change along the line of the economic trend of the business–circle of the economy. As a result, managers must change the style of their management. They must keep in tune with changes outside management, changes in people's ideas and expectations, and changes in the environment of work within which managers manage. At the same time, they must learn about, recognize and understand changes in management and human desires and expectations. Some of these are direct responses to environmental changes, others represent new ideas, theories, policies and practices generated by managers within the management process.

All through the ages, philosophers, writers, managers and researchers have differed on the nature of work and the man on the job. Many have suggested or theorized on different productivity and motivational models. At the turn of the century, for instance, Fredrick Taylor (1967 in Amadi, 2014) the father of 'scientific management', concentrated his efforts mainly on man–machine relationship as well as the one best way, which the foreman can design the job to ensure the highest level of efficiency. Taylor perceived the worker as an economic man who would always toe the line of work incentive method to give the highest level of productivity to the organization. Some management writers and practitioners, George Elton Mayor (1933 in Amadi, 2014), for instance, opposed Taylor's assertions and argued that the key to high productivity and indeed efficient management was the satisfaction of the man in the work place. This satisfaction, they further suggested, can be brought about not necessarily through work incentive programmes but rather through some human relations devices, which can give the worker a sense of belonging. However, a critical evaluation of the key arguments of the advocates of Taylor and Mayor reveals that both schools of thought were discussing two key essential determinants of productivity. In other words, the modern view on productivity proposes the use of both the extrinsic (financial) and intrinsic (non--financial) rewards and remunerations.

This paper however, focuses at the analysis of the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and employee behaviour towards productivity and organizational goal attainment in Nigeria's world of work.

Research Questions

The paper is guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent are employee behaviour and organizational goal attainment in Nigeria a function of motivation?
2. How do intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies influence employee performance in Nigeria's work environment?
3. How do motivation, work milieu and worker behaviour interact to stimulate job performance in Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The paper set out to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the extent employee behaviour and organizational goal attainment in Nigeria are a function of worker motivation
2. To find out how intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies can influence employee behaviour and job performance in Nigeria's work environment?
3. To ascertain how motivation can interact with work milieu and employee behaviour to stimulate job performance in Nigeria's work environment.

Theoretical Framework

Many motivation and organizational behaviour theories exist that offer reasonable approaches to the understanding and explanations of the concept of motivation and employee behaviour in an organization in relation to goal attainment. The existing theories relevant and most appropriate to this study as its framework of analysis, therefore, is the “Expectancy Theory” and its related Path--Goal Model” of Victor H. Vroom et al, (1970 in Amadi, 2000) and Basil E. Georgopoulos, et al (1957 in Okonkwo, 2007) respectively.

The essential element of the expectancy theory is that an employee will be motivated to work to achieve some goals to the extent that he/she expects that certain actions on his part will help him achieve the goal. In other words, that among alternative causes of action, an individual chooses that which he has naturally or subjectively perceived as likely to lead to the accomplishment of his needs. Put succinctly, that action is a choice behaviour.

In an attempt to theorize a more dependable approach to the concept of human motivation vis--à--vis his behaviour and organizational goal attainment, Victor H. Vroom et al (1970 in Amadi, 2000) offered an expectancy approach to the study which is based on choice behaviour and which he argued is indicated by such variables as valence, instrumentality and expectancy. He suggested that a person's (i.e., employee's) motivation towards an action at any time would be determined by his or her anticipated values of all the outcomes--both negative and positive--of the action multiplied by the strength of that person's expectancy that the outcomes would yield the desired goal. Put differently, he argues that motivation is a product of the anticipated worth to a person of an action and the perceived probability that that person's goal would be achieved.

Valency, of course, according to Vroom, denotes people's effective orientation towards particular outcomes, that is, the strength of an individual's performance for an outcome. Additionally, it expresses a situation whereby an individual chooses between alternative causes of action to satisfy his needs. Valency can be said to be positive, zero or negative. A positive valence occurs when attaining the outcome is better than not attaining it, it is zero in the case of indifference, while negative valence results when attaining the outcome is worse than not attaining it, that is, would rather not attain the goal at all. Instrumentality is the capability of the first level outcome to lead to the realization of other outcomes desired by the individual employees. For instance, high performance could be seen as instrumental to the accomplishment of such other outcomes as promotions, enhanced prestige, status and pay rise, etc.; just like membership of a particular organization such as social club, could be instrumental to the elevation of one's social status and prestige in the society.

In the same vein, expectancy, indicates the existence of uncertainty regarding the possibility of realizing certain ends desired by the individual worker. The implication of the expectancy theory of motivation to the employee is influenced not only by his preferences among different outcomes but also by the degree to which he believes those outcomes to be reliable.

By this theory it, therefore, follows that there is a correlation between the existence of a motivational instrumentality and the behaviour tendencies of the employee vis-à-vis the attainment of organization goals. This is the basic assumption of this paper. One of the most attractions of Vroom's theory and which makes it relevant to this study is its recognition of the importance of various individual employee's needs and motivations in relation to his behaviour tendencies in the organization. By this recognition Vroom avoided some of the simplistic characteristics of the Maslow's and Herzberg's approaches. In all, the "Expectancy-Path-Goal" theories serve as an appropriate analytical tool for examining various processes and outcomes of motivation and , provide a framework for the study and understanding of human element or employee behaviour in an organization in relation to need-goal attainment in Nigeria's work environment. Put simply, motivation which is need satisfaction leads to employee behaviour which leads to goal attainment. When motivation is adequate it will stimulate a positive behaviour from the employee thereby, leading to the attainment of organizational goals and vice-versa (Wankel, 2016; Kisser, 2020).

Methodology

The qualitative method of data collection and analysis constituted the methodology for this paper. To this end both theoretical and empirical data were sourced from books, journals, magazines, online materials, newspaper articles and other relevant documents, while it relied on content analysis based on this secondary data source.

Literature Review

Motivation, Employee Behaviour and Organizational Goal Attainment

In principle the concept 'motivation' is as simple as it sounds, but in practice it is more complex than it is conceived. It is in utmost recognition of the complexities associated with the practical application of motivation that various management and administration as well as industrial relations theorists adopted varied approaches to the study of the concept. This can be seen in the works of Abraham H. Maslow (1970 in Okonkwo, 2007), Fredrick Herzberg (1966 in Okonkwo, 2007), Douglas, M. McGregor (1957 in Okonkwo, 2007) and a host of others.

At any given point in time, people vary in the extent to which they are willing to direct their energies or behaviours towards the attainment of organizational goals. The performance of a person on a job is considered a function of two different kinds of variables (Wankel, 2016). One of these refers to the skill or ability of the individual to perform the job, and the second refers to his motivation to use this skill or ability in the actual performance of the job. It is the second of these two variables—motivation— (extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation) and its impacts on the behaviour of the worker in an organization as well as its implications for productivity and organizational goal attainment in Nigeria's work environment that is the focus of this paper.

The problem of motivating employees is as old as organized activity itself, but it was only recently, about half a century ago, that the scientific method has been brought to bear on its concerns. Also this relatively short period of time has seen the beginnings of attempts to apply the conceptual and methodological tools of the behavioural sciences, particularly psychology, to the relationship between man's motivation and his work as well as to the managerial issues involved in that relationship.

According to Rue and Byars (1983 in Okonkwo, 2007) and Kisser (2020), motivation is a causative sequence illustrated thus: Need=Drive (motives)=Achievements or goals. Viteless (1953 in Amadi, 2000), agreeing with Rue and Byars, stated thus: motivation represents an unsatisfied need which creates a state of disequilibrium causing the individual employee to behave (move) in a goal directed pattern towards restoring a state of equilibrium by satisfying the needs. These definitions imply that

the greater the extent to which an employee's needs are satisfied in his job, the greater the extent to which he will respond, presumably with gratitude or loyalty, by producing effectively on that job. Put differently, the greater the extent to which a worker is motivated, in his job, the greater the likelihood that the worker will manifest a positive behaviour towards his job by producing effectively and efficiently. (Wankel, 2016; Nightingale, 2018; Duffey, 2018).

Mohammed et al, (2012) in their views, corroborated the positions of Rue and Byars by arguing that it may be virtually impossible to establish a perfect solution that would optimally promote motivation and elevate work performance and productivity all the time. However, they suggested that adequate pay may be the factor that would have the most significant impact on workers' motivation. Similarly, Muogbo (2013) in his study revealed that most workers are motivated by financial incentives no matter how engaged they are. As a general term applying to the entire class of drives, desires, needs, wishes and similar forces which directs or channels behaviour towards goals, motivation is of paramount importance in any work environment especially in Nigeria. No employee will be willing to serve in an organization that does not provide opportunities, inducements and incentives which will singly or combinedly motivate him adequately for the attainment of the goals of that organization. This then brings to focus the obvious need for all those responsible for the management or administration of any work organization in Nigeria, be it private or public, not only to recognize the pertinence of effective motivation as a 'sin qua non' to eliciting expected behaviour from the worker, but also, to accomplish organizational goal, and in like manner and most especially, to build into the entire system, factors capable of inducing employees to contribute as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Effective Motivation and Job Satisfaction as Imperatives for Improved Productivity

It has been observed that productivity as the goal of every organization, is the product of effective motivation (Duffey, 2018). Therefore, any organization that wants to operate within a certain degree of productivity must make adequate provisions for employee motivation otherwise that organization would, of course, produce a wholesome disappointment to its owners and a wide-spread dissatisfaction and disaffection to its employee (Fashoyin, 1983; Rue and Byars, 1983 in Okonkwo, 2007). This is because, to workers, motivation serves as a source of inspiration as they would be very proud of their organization and appreciate the fruits of their labour at the end.

According to Bowditch (2013), employee's performance and compliance or otherwise in an organization, constitute the totality of his behaviour, and are predicted on two variables. First is the professional and technical competence of the worker which involves possession of relevant knowledge, skills and techniques. Second is motivation. It, therefore, follows that for a worker to sincerely and totally pledge or volunteer his willingness to serve effectively and efficiently in his organization, he must be highly and adequately motivated apart from the obvious fact that he must possess the necessary and relevant knowledge and technical skills. Barnard (1938 in Okonkwo, 2007) had earlier noted the same by saying that, if all those who may be considered potential contributors to an organization are arranged in order of willingness to serve it (i.e., produce), the scale gradually descends from possibly intense willingness through neutral or zero willingness to intense unwillingness or opposition or hatred; the preponderance of the persons in a modern society, he continues, always lies on the negative side with reference to any existing or potential organization. People's participation in an organization and in all kinds of groups, is goal-oriented, but this does not necessarily mean that they will always work and contribute all they can for the accomplishment of these goals unless they are adequately motivated towards the satisfaction of their individual personal needs. There is no gain saying this fact because, the individual needs of the worker serves as the 'nerve centre' of his motivation.

However, it is strongly generally believed that motivation is the willingness to expend energy in order to achieve a desired goal or reward. It could also be said that it is the act of stimulating the worker to

take the course of action desired by management; it is the product of the interacting forces in the physical conditions of the job, the social conditions of the job and the individual needs of the employee. While the physical conditions of the job have to do with the office infrastructural facilities and adequate and appropriate working tools and equipment, the social conditions of the job, otherwise called social and psychological factors, involves formal and informal organizational factors (Luthans, 2018). The size of the work group, the cohesiveness of the work group, and the goals of the work group account for the informal factors, while organizational structure, leadership climate, organization efficiency, personnel policies and communication system account for formal organizational factors (Luthans, 2018).

The individual needs of the worker has to do with the basic human needs as contained in Maslow's hierarchy of needs such as physiological, safety and security needs (Maslow, 1970 in Amadi, 2000), and these constitute the material needs of the worker. The foremost position of these needs in the needs hierarchy, according to Abraham Maslow, shows their importance as forces of motivation. Maslow (1970 in Okonkwo, 2007) further contends that human motivation in an organization is a number of basic needs graded in hierarchical order and which can be achieved in that order. He classified human needs into two categories, basic and post basic needs. While the basic needs are physiological, safety and security needs, the post basic ones, accordingly to Maslow, are social, esteem and self-actualization needs. The post basic needs represent the higher--order needs, while the basics represent the lower--order ones. Still, according to Maslow, the basic needs are related to one another being arranged in a hierarchy of prepotency. By this he means that, while the most prepotent needs (i.e., goals) will monopolize consciousness and will tend to of itself dominate, control and direct the various capacities and capabilities of the worker, the less prepotent needs are minimized even forgotten or denied in some cases, and that when a need is fairly well satisfied, the next prepotent (i.e., higher) need emerges to dominate, control and direct as well as to serve as the center of organization of his behaviour. In the Nigeria's context, the basic needs of the employee include food, shelter clothing. This implies that the Nigerian worker will be motivated essentially by good pay which would enable him provide these basic needs. Olusadum (2018), Nnaeto (2018) and Abimbola (2019) found in their studies that Nigerian workers generally, value pay more than anything (basic salary and bonuses) as a motivator, while women place more value on respectful treatment by supervisors, interpersonal relationships at the workplace and a good work environment. Additionally, Muogbo (2014) believed that there is a relationship between monetary rewards (extrinsic motivation instrumentalities) and workers' performance.

A worker's behaviour in the milieu of work is purely psychological (Daniel and John, 2017). In the findings of renowned personnel psychologists, Ian C. Ross and Alvin Zander (1957 in Amadi, 2000) on the relationship between need satisfaction and employee turnover, it was established that the degree of satisfaction of certain personal needs of the worker such as recognition, autonomy, feelings of doing work that is important and evaluation by fair standards supplied by a person's place of work or employment has a significant direct relationship to and impact on his continuing to work for that organization and his overall behaviour. It was further proved that some people resign their membership of organizations for reasons that the job itself does not satisfy needs, and that workers whose personal needs are satisfied on the job are more likely to remain in the organization and to produce more effectively and behave positively (Robert, 2019).

The views of Arthur Kornhauser (1965 in Amadi, 2000) in his book entitled 'Mental health of the Industrial Worker: A Detroit Study', who researched on job satisfaction in relation to mental health of the worker, did not deviate much from the findings of Ian C. Ross and Alvin Zander (1957 in Amadi, 2000). The study revealed that jobs in which workers' needs are better satisfied are conducive to better mental health and vice versa. This evidence accords with the hypothesis that gratifications and deprivations experienced in work and manifested in expressions of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction constitute an important determinant of workers' mental health (Wankel, 2016; Moment and Fisher, 2018).

Fredrick Herzberg (1966 in Amadi, 2000), in his motivation-hygiene theory, made a critical study on “Work and the Nature of Man” with special emphasis on “The Motivation to Work”. According to his findings, five factors stand out as strong determinants of job satisfaction: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement with the last three being of greater importance for a lasting change of workers' attitudes and behaviours. These factors, Herzberg called “satisfiers” and, therefore, motivators, and are all related to job content. Their existence, continued Herzberg, will yield feelings of satisfaction or no satisfaction among employees, but not dissatisfaction. He went further to list another group of factors called “maintenance –hygiene” factors: organization policy and administration, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations, salary, status, job security and personal life. These he tagged “dissatisfies,” meaning that their existence in an organization does not motivate employees in the sense of yielding satisfaction but will only remove a feeling of dissatisfaction among them, while their lack or absence of existence will however, result in a feeling of dissatisfaction. Herzberg contended that motivation will not be very effective if hygiene factors are absent.

It is pertinent to observe at this juncture, that Herzberg's “two factor theory” does not rigidly apply in all circumstances and situations. In some circumstances, Herzberg's maintenance–hygiene factor model appears to be classified as “satisfiers”, id est, effective motivators, while the motivators model seems to fit into the “dissatisfies”. Taking the employees in an underdeveloped or developing economy such as Nigeria, for example, where much emphasis appears to be on the satisfaction of the basic needs of life such as the provisions of food, shelter, clothings, mobility, personal life, working conditions and job security which form the bulk of the Herzbergian maintenance–hygiene factors with little or no regard for the higher–order needs such as the so–called “motivators”, the reverse will be the case. Specifically speaking, to the workers in Nigeria as a third world economy, money (i.e., salary) and monetary compensations still remain most effective motivational factors. How the money is paid, when it is paid, and in what quantity, play a significant role in employee motivation. This view agrees with that of Arch Patton in McClelland and Winter (1961 in Amadi, 2000), who identified money as one of the effective motivators in any work environment. He observes that, most often, it is more than mere money, being generally a reflection of other motivators. By this argument, therefore, Arch Patton, in McClelland and Winter (1961 in Amadi, 2000) had put money in proper perspective as applicable in Nigeria and being far more than a “maintenance” factor as suggested Herzberg et al. “Money can never be overlooked as a motivator whether in the form of wage(s), piecework or any other incentive pay, bonuses, stock options, company paid insurance or any other thing that may be given to people for performing”. “Money is important”.

Solomon et al (2012) in their study of employee motivation and organizational performance in multidimensional companies using Cardbury Nigeria Plc as a study found a positive relationship between motivation and employee productivity vis-à-vis organizational performance. They, therefore, recommended that the senior management staff of the organization should strive for continuous improvement in their motivational program in order to sustain the employees high organizational performance.

Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Strategies and Employee Performance

Most of the motivational theories formulated in the advanced economies within the twenty past decades have persistently emphasized the role of intrinsic motivators such as achievement and self-actualization. The three most important content theories are quite agreed on this. Both Herzberg (1966 in Okonkwo, 2007) and McClelland and Winter (1961 in Amadi, 2000) see achievement as generally the most important motivators. Contrarily, in Nigeria, for instance, the observation is that about 70 percent of our population spends their entire life time trying to find ways and means of feeding themselves, their families or extended families. In Nigeria generally, the most important motive is not the social or love need rather, to satisfy the basic needs of life. Even Taylor (1967 in

Amadi, 2014) emphasized that financial motive had strong support and considerable success today. Even for the small percentage of the work force which has fairly satisfied the lower level needs, money motive appears much stronger because: it provides the means of satisfying physiological needs; it helps to ensure against possible financial disaster and satisfies security needs; it provides the avenue for socialization, such as membership in social clubs and partly entertainments; it is frequently a symbol of person's worth to an organization and to society (Taylor, 1967; Muogbo, 2013). In these functions, money is capable of satisfying a person's status, power, and self-esteem needs; when money or pay is tied to performance, it serves as a measure of personal achievement (self-actualization).

It is in these regards that the Nigerian system anchors its motivation on financial rewards. Economic theory implies that, in a competitive economy, wage rates tend to be equal to labour value of marginal products. This theory has occupied a great deal of the attention of economists for some reasons one of which is a concern about how well labour market functions to allocate labour among alternative employments and concomitantly to determine wages. These concerns are certainly not related, if we wish, to alter income distributions, a knowledge of how it is generated is essential. Moreover, our evaluation of the desirability of an existing wage structure may depend in part on the degree to which workers seem to be paid according to their productivities.

While wage determination involves very complicated procedures, in practice, in Nigeria however, wage setting is an administrative process, which strongly reflects economic, social and political circumstances and realities. From independence, Nigeria had instituted not less than ten wage review commissions. One singular information that runs through the reports of the various commissions is that additional pay or incentives do not seem to bring about proportionate increase in the productivity of public sector employees. It thus appears that besides the factors covered in the recommendations of orthodox management theories (i.e., the presentation of incentives and wages), other items yet to be identified probably exert equal if not greater influence on labour productivity in Nigeria. Research has indicated that productivity of labour might in practice be difficult to define and especially difficult to measure. Nevertheless, productivity is usually defined as the relationship between the amount of output per unit and resource input. Above all, it is a measure of efficiency and effectiveness. Measurement difficulties with reference to productivity notwithstanding, certain factors and practices have been identified in the development literature as contributing negatively or positively to the yield of labour. All factors have a claim on the total product of an employee. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to isolate productivity due to labour alone. Productivity, obtained by holding the effects of other production inputs constant. This could be attempted for each employee separately, for an organization, an industry, a sector of the economy or even the whole economy of a country.

In Nigeria, employees are faced with various motivation related challenges in the workplace including lack of promotional opportunities, delayed payments of salaries pensions and gratuities to retired workers, retrenchment (Chukwdi et al, 2012). Employees in a workplace can be motivated through various means such as timely payment of wages, salaries and incentives. Lack of this can have a negative impact on employee performance and the output of the organization. According to Chukwdi et al (2012), an average employee in Nigeria sees job satisfaction in terms of monetary rewards. Nigerian employees ranked monetary rewards first, followed by job security, promotion and growth. This is because of the nature and conditions of the country's economy where there is high inflation rate occasioning hardships and privations experienced by the workers and the entire Nigerian populace. The inflation rate in Nigeria rose from 32.2% in May to 33.6% as at October, 2024 (Family Love 99.9 FM Enugu, 2024; Urban Radio 94.5 FM Enugu, 2024).

The link between motivation and productivity at work has received considerable and sustained attention in recent years from both practicing managers and organizational researchers. Several theories of motivation have been presented in the literature, but the upsurge of theoretical interest is

both a blessing and a curse. On the one hand, the theories do offer a better understanding of work behaviour and an appreciation of its complexity. On the other hand, a number of diverse theoretical orientations have evolved. For instance, in the search for motivation models or techniques, some researchers have focused on variables such as job factors (Herzberg, et al, 1959), motivation factors and hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970). Others are McGregor's Theory X and Theory y (1960 in Okonkwo, 2007). Despite the number of motivation theories, the answer to productivity problems in Nigeria's public and private enterprises seems elusive. Attempts to give employees a psychological boost by training, do not appear to be achieving the desired goals either. For instance, possibly because of an absence of commitment, where training has been provided, non--performance results because some of the trained managers may not have been properly placed in the jobs for which they were trained (Amadi, 2000). There have also been cases where negative outcomes result from training (dysfunctional consequences). According to Olumorin (1981), this is a consequence of behaviour substitution, where the job--enriched personnel becomes over bearing in his/her new position, feels less disposed to attend to essential matters, or takes his/her duties. This again points to the failure of training as an incentive to motivate for higher performance in Nigeria's public and private enterprises.

Another factor that constrains productivity in the public sector in Nigeria appears to be the view that the cost--reward structure does not provide attractive inducement or punitive cost to yield higher performance. According to Vroom (1970 in Okonkwo, 2007), a worker will be motivated to perform efficiently if he is made to have a strong belief that a particular reward (attractive in size) will result (expectancy) if he performs well. Thus, given the inflexible, unattractive wage structure in the Nigerian public service, it is not surprising that the public sector employees do not see higher remuneration resulting from distinguished performance. The rigid wage structure would appear to be impeding a higher performance.

Another factor which probably affects the productivity of the public sector enterprises in Nigeria is connected with the possibility of the diversion of property rights by the workers. This argument postulates that public sector employees and managers have opportunities to amass pecuniary benefits (corruption , embezzlement) even without performing the statutory functions of their organizations, subject to the probability of being caught and punished if caught. The case of Maina an officer in the office of the head of service of the federation accused of embezzling over six billion naira pension funds by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) (Alli, 2017; Itua, 2017; Jibueze, 2017; Adodo, 2017) and the former Account General of the Federation who was also accused of embezzling over one hundred and nine billion naira (Family Love 99.9 FM Enugu News, 2022) besides numerous other cases of embezzlement of public funds by serving public officers at federal, state, local government levels and other government establishments are relevant examples. Additionally, the reports of several commissions of inquiry into financial mismanagement in parastatals serve to support this hypothesis. This is coupled with the dysfunctional structure of cost and reward systems, especially ineffective pension policies, for both serving and retired civil and public services employees, diversion and misappropriation of public funds meant for payment of salaries, pensions and gratuities (The Leader, 2019; Mbah, 2020; Obogo and Orji, 2024); opportunities for misappropriating property rights on the job (corruption) and outside the job (e.g., multiple job holding) (Fajana, 1989 in Okonkwo, 2007). These days a lot of Nigerian public service workers seem to have private contractual obligations elsewhere, most professionals divert clients to their private outfits and end up putting in more hours at their private outfits than at their places of primary responsibility in the public service.

Of a general factor which borders on the welfare of the average Nigerian employee is the lack of basic infrastructure within the habitat of the employee such as transportation. Workers commute quite a distance before getting to work, and arrive the place of work exhausted, weak and disconnected. Related to the transportation problem is the "School Run" syndrome, where every worker that has tender children leaves his work place to pick children from school. Once the worker

takes off by that period he or she hardly comes back to work. This is responsible for the numerous man-hours lost in the public sector and hence on productivity. In most work places in Nigeria, recreational facilities are lacking hence workers contain with work drudgery through the working hours without sources of dissipating job oriented frustrations and tension. Having reviewed some factors that impede productivity in Nigeria, it stands to reason that alternative strategies should be advanced for productivity improvement. To achieve productivity gain, there must be improvement in the motivational strategies in the work environment. The top managers of public and private enterprises must be committed to structuring motivational factors that elicit employee performance which emphasize monetary rewards and incentives. The study carried out by Okorie et al (2019) on extrinsic motivational factors and job performance of library personnel in Universities and Institutes of Agriculture in Nigeria revealed that there is a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation such as financial rewards including pay, bonuses, fringe benefits and promotions and employee productivity. Similarly, Ubom (2010) in his study found that extrinsic incentives such as merit pay or effective service rewards to affect the library personnel job performance and effectiveness in Nigerian university. In a related study by Adomi and Famola (2012) which examined the extrinsic motivational factors used in developing 50 cataloguers in National Library of Nigeria, Abuja, it revealed that staff development improves the quality of library personnel service delivery, job performance and competence of staff which was seen as equaled to reward both to the organization and the employees.

Al-Aufi and Al-Kalbani (2014) in a similar study on the extrinsic motivational level of professional librarians and quasi-professional librarians in Nigerian university revealed a general dissatisfaction with training opportunities, professional development, work environment, sabbatical leave, communication and management style which represent intrinsic motivational factors, while the most important reason for productivity loss was poor working morale, which included the absence of productive team spirit, low motivation, poor sense of belonging and people feeling undervalued and poorly rewarded. The findings of this study clearly indicated that job performance of library personnel was highly due to the application of extrinsic motivational factors. Contrarily, a survey of research findings on work motivation have generally suggested that intrinsic rewards are ranked as better motivators than extrinsic rewards (Kovach, 1987; Harpaz, 1990 and Linder, 1998). However, the reason for this is because in the developed industrialized countries where majority of these researches were conducted, satisfaction of the basic needs of life such as food, shelter, etc, are taken for granted by a large majority, hence emphasis has shifted from the extrinsic motivation instrumentalities such as pay, incentives, promotions, and so on to the extrinsic motivational factors such as interesting work, achievement recognition challenge and self-esteem and self-actualization. The same cannot be said for the less developed and the developing world such as Nigeria. According to Ekhaton (2003), Nigerian workers have a high aspiration for money and wealth and are only motivated to perform by financial incentives and rewards.

The essence, therefore, is giving the Nigerian worker the opportunity, first to accomplish most of his primary desires and basic needs right on the job before he will go all out for the accomplishment of organizational goals. However, for this to be effective, you must endeavor to identify what is important to each worker, what his wants are, and you must help him satisfy such wants. Don't expect anything in return unless you do something for the worker first. The secret is, that you must give to get. Thus, the primary desire of virtually every Nigerian employee presently and for which he spends most of his money off the job include the provision or satisfaction of his basic needs including job security, promotions and opportunities for growth before the other secondary needs such as feeling of belonging, job enrichment and job enlargement, recognition, achievement, self esteem, etc.

Apart from motivational factors, productivity in the Nigeria's public service, for example, is apparently inhibited because of the character of the managers of that system who introduce policies that encourage perpetration and perpetuation of inequity, inequality, unfair and exploitative tendencies against the workers. Every employee in the Nigeria's public service expects and is

expected to live in a descent house, ride in a descent car, eat decent food, but these basic needs appear elusive and unattainable. The experience of the Nigerian workers during the 2020 COVID--19 palliatives meant for public servants and the entire Nigerian populace, but reportedly hurded, diverted and misappropriated by the chief executives of different states, and exposed by the October, 2020 'End--SARS' protesters is also a typical example of those ills that encourage inefficiency, corruption and unproductivity in the Nigeria's public sector organization. Additionally, the misappropriation of the Federal Government's bailout funds to States meant to defray backlog of unpaid salaries and pension arrears to public servants (Odoshimokhe, 2017) by some chief executives of some states is yet another few example of numerous such incidences.

Therefore, the only way the worker can express his dissatisfaction, disaffection or disobedience in the work milieu is by indulging in negative attitudes and behaviours that impact negativity on productivity. To overcome these negative behaviour tendencies and manifestations, such workplace motivational factors which emphasize monetary compensations, just, fair, equitable and employee--friendly policies and practices that promote employee need attainment vis-à-vis organizational goal accomplishment should be encouraged in Nigeria's work environment. Thus, attention should be on monetary rewards or extrinsic motivation instrumentalities than intrinsic (i.e., non monetary and non material) motivational instrumentalities because of the peculiarities of the Nigerian economy being a third world country where basic needs cannot be taken for granted. For example, in a study by Muogbo (2013), which investigated the influence of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation on employee's performance of selected manufacturing firms in Anambra State, it revealed that that there exists a relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance of employees, while no relationship existed between intrinsic motivation and employee's performance. This finding was in line with the equity theory of pay which emphasizes that fairness in the remuneration package tends to produce higher performance from workers. Based on this finding, the researcher recommended that all firms should adopt extrinsic motivation rewards in their various firms to increase productivity. The significance of the findings is that employee-employers of labour in Nigeria are continually challenged to develop pay policies and procedures that will enable them attract, motivate, retain and satisfy their employees.

Findings

The paper made the following findings:

1. Employee behaviour and organizational goal attainment in Nigeria are a function of worker motivation.
2. Extrinsic motivation instrumentalities or strategies such as money and monetary compensations positively influence employee behaviour and performance in Nigeria's work environment.
3. Motivation interacts with work milieu and employee behaviour to stimulate job performance and improved productivity in Nigeria's work organizations.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the paper that employee behaviour and organizational goal attainment are a function of worker motivation, that extrinsic motivation instrumentalities or strategies positively influence employee performance and that motivation interacts with work milieu and employee behaviour to stimulate job performance and improved productivity in Nigeria's work organization not only provided plausible answers to the guiding research questions, but also satisfied the target objectives of the paper. According to Bowditch (2013) and Wankel (2016), the performance of a person on a job is considered a function of two kinds of variables. The first is the ability or skill of the individual to perform and the second and most important refers to motivation to use this ability or skill in the

actual performance of the job. In the view of Viteless (1953 in Amadi, 2000), motivation represents an unsatisfied need which creates a state of disequilibrium thereby causing the individual employee to behave in a goal directed pattern towards restoring a state of equilibrium by satisfying the need. Similarly, Nightingale (2018) argues that the greater the extent to which a worker is motivated in his job, the greater the likelihood that he will manifest a positive behaviour towards his job by producing effectively and efficiently.

For Taylor (1967 in Amadi, 2014), financial motive has strong support and considerable success today and the desire for economic motivation; money is presently very strong because it provides the means to satisfying both physiological and social needs of the worker. Okonkwo (2007) agreed with Taylor by stating that the primary desire of every employee and for which he/ she spends most of his/her money off the job include: a feeling of security, a feeling of pride or satisfaction of ego, a material gain, a feeling of comfort. If these needs can be provided on the job, workers' satisfaction with their jobs and with the organization will no doubt be enhanced and productivity improves. These views in totality support both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational instrumentalities as strategies for eliciting positive employee behaviour towards improved productivity and the achievement of organizational goals. Rewards that individual employees receive at the workplace are very much a part of the understanding of motivation. Researches both theoretical and empirical highlighted in this study have clearly indicated that that rewards have always caused employees satisfaction to be affected which directly influence their performance as well as the productivity and goal attainment of their work organizations. For instance, in the empirical study by Jibowo (2007) on the effects of motivators and hygiene factors on job performance using basically the same same method as that of Herzberg et al (1959), the results showed some support for the influence of motivators on job performance. Contrarily, in an empirical research by Mohammed et al (2022) which assessed the effects of motivational factors both extrinsic and intrinsic on employee performance in selected SMEs in FCT-Abuja Nigeria, it revealed a positive and significant relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation strategies on SME's employees' performance.

However, Ekhaton (2003) found in his empirical study that Nigerian workers are have high aspiration for money and wealth and are only motivated to perform optimally by financial incentives and rewards. The same was applicable in the research findings by Al-Aufi and Al-Kalbani (2014), Chukwudi et al (2012), Olusadum and Anulika (2018), Nnaeto and Ndoh (2018), and Abimbola et al (2019) which indicated that employees in Nigeria's workplace are motivated by such means as timely payment of wages and salaries and their increases mainly which according to them are the major problems and challenges faced in Nigeria's workplace including lack of regular promotions, delayed payments of salaries and pension and gratuities to retired workers and abrupt retrenchment.

Recommendations

The paper recommended as follows:

1. An effective system of motivation that ensures organizational efficiency and effectiveness should be provided and sustained in Nigeria's work organizations both public and private sectors. Employers of labour and Managers of organizations in Nigeria should strive to identify and implement good wage policies and structures for their employees.
2. Motivational instrumentalities consisting mainly extrinsic strategies which are known to exert preponderance positive influence on employee performance and consequently on productivity should be constantly provided to Nigerian workers. These include such incentives as pecuniary rewards, improved pay, regular promotions, conducive work environment, accountability, reward for performance, besides non financial incentives such as job--feed--back, identity, sense of belonging, development and training on the job, collective bargaining and respect for collective agreements, etc.

3. Managers of organizations in Nigeria both public and private should be cognizant of the fact that the attainment or otherwise of organizational goals is the resultant effect of employee behaviour choices which in turn are dependent on availability or otherwise of effective motivation. Therefore, they should ensure that only those factors that can positively influence employee behaviour to stimulate job performance are emphasized, while others perceived to have negative effect on productivity should be eliminated.

Conclusion

Employee behaviour, especially in complex organizations, is not a simple matter and, as such, must be viewed as a system of variables and interaction forces of which certain motivational factors are important element. In consequence, therefore, the attainment or non-attainment of organizational goals is the resultant effect of employee behaviour. Thus, the only way an employee can express his dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction or disobedience in the work milieu is by indulging in negative attitudes and behaviours that are antithetical to effective performance as a protest demonstration against the organization. Therefore, to overcome this, motivational strategies which emphasize financial rewards and incentives should be made to dominate in Nigeria's workplace. Also, fair workplace practices such as conducive, befitting, dignifying work environment, etc, (i.e intrinsic) should be provided, be it in public or private sectors in Nigeria.

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INTERROGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO THE MENACE OF INSECURITY IN PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Conflict between individuals and groups of people is part of human nature because of individual/group differences, interests, emotions and temperament. Disputes engendering insecurity in Nigeria have been aggravated by an escalation of religious, ethnic and inter communal conflicts, particularly in the North central region of plateau state. The conflicts between different groups in plateau state have long been in existence but they have tended to be increasingly violent in recent years resulting in unprecedented death tolls and destruction of properties. Several policy measures and actions employed by both federal and state governments have failed to put a stop to the carnage on the plateau. This study, employing documentary research method and psychological frustration-Aggression theory tried to explore the trajectory of the upsurge of criminality and violence in plateau state and effectiveness of government response to the menace. The study revealed that the conflicts, violence and insecurity in plateau state were exacerbated by religious, unemployment, inter-ethnic and inter-communal disputes, particularly the conflict between farmer and nomadic Fulani herdsmen over land and water resources access and this will continue until an amicable solution is found for the intractable problems. Admitted both Federal and State governance have articulated policies and measures aimed at tackling the insurgency and violent clashes on the plateau implementation remains a mirage. The study therefore recommended decentralization of Nigerian police force for effective maintenance of law and order, prioritization of job creation for the teeming population of unemployed youths and regular conflict resolution dialogue between the government and stakeholders in the conflicts as panacea to the problems of insecurity in the state.

Key word: *menace of insecurity, North Central Region, Trajectory of insecurity, Government Response.*

Introduction

Nigeria is undoubtedly confronted with numerous and tragic security challenges in recent years which threaten the survival and existence of the country. As a matter of fact, for the past three decades, right from the emergence of Boko Haram Insurgency in 1990, till date, Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented spate of insecurity in all its constituent parts. The situation has become so worrisome and frightening that it has assumed the center stage of Nigeria's political discourse especially since the advent of the fourth Republic (Chuka 2011). The frequent occurrence of bomb explosion orchestrated by the religious extremists and those campaigning for the establishment of Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) in Northern Nigeria created a heightened sense of insecurity, actual loss of lives and property and gave birth to other security challenges which have plagued the northern region and its neighbors till now.

The North central region otherwise known as Middle Belt region of the country which shares proximity with the core northern region appears to be one of the most hard hit by multidimensional security challenges like violent attacks, insurgency and other forms of organized crimes. Hardly does a day pass without reports on the pages of national dailies and televisions of violent attacks, and killings, banditry, kidnapping, communal clashes as well as farmers/herdsmen clashes in one community or the other in the region. In fact, the alarming level of insecurity in the region has manifested in the high rate of organized banditry and terrorist attacks, with unpalatable consequences for the region's economic development and human security. Large area of the North central region of Nigeria has been enmeshed in what looks like a theatre of war mainly as a result of armed attacks on the local populace resulting in unwarranted killings and maiming of people and burning of houses as clearly manifested in the middle belt states of Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Niger and Taraba States. In Plateau State alone which is the focus of this study, over 52,000 christians and

34,000 Muslims have been killed since 2009 and 18,000 churches and 2,200 christian schools have been destroyed (European parliament Report, 2024). The constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended states inter alia that “The security and welfare of the people of Nigeria shall be the primary purpose of government” (*Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution 1999*). Unfortunately, the government has failed on its constitutional responsibility to protect lives and property, not only in the north central region but also all over the country.

The Federal government appears to be overwhelmed by the Security Challenges confronting Nigerian State. The lack of breakthrough by successive national governments in adequately responding to the growing threats to stability across much of its territory is increasingly challenging the capacity and legitimacy of the state itself. According to IFIT, (2022) insecurity predicated on such factors as ethnic and religious conflict, banditry, secessionism and insurgency in an ever growing number on local populace suggests that Nigerian states may be gradually collapsing. Anyanwu (2005) opined that failing states are invariably the product of a collapse of the power structures providing the political support for law and order, a process generally triggered and accompanied by anarchic forms of internal violence, chaos and collapse of state institutions. Indeed, any state that cannot protect its people is a failed state. Nigeria is not only a collapsing state but also a failed state.

Insecurity of overwhelming and diverse dimension are not peculiar to Nigeria. They are global phenomenon threatening national and global peace and security. But the ability of a state to tackle the menace of insecurity and protect its people and property is what makes the difference between a successful and failed states. In Africa, for example, violence conflict and crimes within state borders have had disastrous consequences on lives and property. Millions have died and many more have been displaced either within the borders of their own states or in neighboring territories. The flow of refugees often including the militias and ex-state forces who retained their weapons, has destabilized the whole continent. In contemporary African conflicts, both state and non-state actors prefer to use small and light weapons (SALW) to prove their military might. Consequently, SALW are contributing to a culture of criminal and political violence that is underlining the complex picture of interrelated conflicts and crises that characterize the recent history of the continent where insecurity holds sway (Isiaka 2005). Combating insecurity with state power has been a failure. The result is that non-state actors like Al-Shaba, ISWAP, Boko Haram and other Criminal elements terrorized some states of North Africa, West Africa and East Africa where they are domiciled with impunity.

In the pre-colonial period and two to three decades of post-colonial period, the plateau area which was largely made up of several independent geopolitical communities was a peaceful environment. The communities numbering over 50 chiefdoms that were organized politically independent of one another with their crowned chiefs appointed or chosen in accordance with traditions of the people (Goslut, 2007). According to Changwak, (2014) “Plateau state has over forty ethno-linguistic groups but no single group is large enough to assume the majority position”. A situation which ensured relative internal peace and security on the Plateau for a long time before the recent outbreak of security challenges in the state, as there was no struggle between majority and minority ethnic groups.

The existential reality of Nigerian people is that they move from one place to another in search of means of livelihood, hence people from other parts of Nigeria have settled in plateau state to make a living and generally co-existed peacefully with the indigenous peoples of the states. The settlers include the Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, Igbo, Yoruba, Benin, Tiv, Igala, Idoma and a host of others. Although Plateau State is also a religiously diverse area with predominantly Muslims in the north and predominantly Christians in the south, religion never posed any serious threat to peace and security in the past. There was peaceful co-existence between the two major religious groups.

In recent years, the horrible sights of burnt buildings and desolate communities littered with charred remains of decomposing bodies of victims of violent attacks with putrefying odds are the defining characteristics of the middle Belt states of which Plateau is one, after each violent siege by their assailants. Since 2009 till date, the assailants have coordinated unchallenged and sometimes

unwarranted attacks on villages and communities in the area which led to massive loss of lives and properties. The precise data on the death toll due to these horrible attacks is difficult to quantify. But the European Parliament Report (2024) puts the estimate at 86,000 souls killed between 2009-2024. Thousands fleeing their homes for safety has become recurrent and frequent and refugee camps established for them in the areas considered to be safe heaven.

It is in the light of the above that the attacks and killings in the Plateau State in recent years have become very worrisome and compelled us to interrogate the trajectory and consequences of insecurity on the Plateau.

Conceptual Clarification

There is a plethora of interpretations of the concept of insecurity by scholars which reflects their extensive views on the subject matter of this paper. Most Social Science concepts are so fluid that they offer diverse meanings in intellectual discourses, hence the need for clear conceptual analysis to be given for proper understanding of the central thrust of this work. Dambazau in a public lecture delivered in 2015 defines insecurity on the basis of threat perceptions that may impact on our physical body as individuals or group, psychological thoughts or behavior, our properties, means of livelihood, socio economic needs, environments, fundamental rights or freedom and sovereignty or territorial integrity. We all share the consequences of these threats or the benefits of their absence or avoiding them, either as individuals, groups, state, region or even the world as a whole. It is therefore apt to view security as a “public good”. As a public good therefore, once attained, whether in the state, region or global, the advantages of being secure are distributed equally to all within the public space they relate to or find themselves. From the point of view of Osimen and Akintunde (2015) insecurity could be seen as actual or potential threats to national existence which could arise either as a result of human actions or inactions or from natural disaster such as flood, earthquake, famine, drought, disease and other natural calamitous events resulting in death, human suffering and material damage. Commenting on the realist view that survival is the first instinct in life and that states should promote national security, Taylor (1978, in Ukaeje, 1988: 71) is of the view that “unless a state is secure, it cannot be sure that it will survive and if it does not survive, it will not be able to fulfill any other goals favouring its citizens”. The above assertions underscore the importance of security and the danger of insecurity in a state. The implication of the latter is that no progress is made in the atmosphere of insecurity and survival is threatened by lack of secured environment. It is on this note that Beland (2005) asserted that “insecurity is the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection”. Achumba et al (2013) conceptualized insecurity as the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger that could lead to destruction of lives and valuable properties. For us in this paper, the concept of insecurity connotes any form of disorder that poses a fundamental threat to peace and stability within or around an individual, group, community or state. For example, intractable conflicts with very tendency to escalate and at the great cost of human lives and resources have been the experience of Nigerian state. So pervasive has violence and insecurity become that there is hardly any part of the country that is not affected (Imobighe, 2003). These conflicts are not external attacks or aggressions from Nigeria's hostile neighbours but internally motivated.

The popular perception of security among most scholars is the state military capacity to quell external aggressions. Walter Lipman, a philosopher captured the term national security among scholars in a more explicit definition when he stated that “a nation has security when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war”. (Lipman in Braithwaite, 1988: 8). In other words, security was previously considered in predominantly military term as the maintenance of territorial integrity or national sovereignty. Consequently, security in these states is invariably perceived in terms of military build-up and equated with military strength of nation state at the expense of other urgent national priorities

(Braithwaite, 1988). Thus, when confronted by internal security challenges, the state and state actors are usually overwhelmed because in the first place, they are not prepared to deal with internal insecurity and secondly, they cannot use kinetic approach in dealing with issues of internal insecurity as in inter-state warfare because of causality implication.

Therefore, in contemporary times, the concept of insecurity and how to address it go beyond military protection of the territories of the state from external incursion. It must be perceived in terms of the security of the individual citizens to live in peace within his country with access to the basic necessities of life while fully participating in the affairs of his society in freedom and enjoying all fundamental human rights (Egunjobi, 2004). This paradigm shift from the traditional concept of security gained-recognition from the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report. The report equated security with people rather than territories, the proper referent for security should be the individual rather than the state; with development rather than arms. Human security holds that a people centered view of security is necessary at all levels – national, regional, and global. The new concept expanded the scope of global security to include threats to economic, food, health, environment, personal, community and political issues. The former UN Secretary- General, Kofi Annan consented to view when he examined human security in its broadest ramification and noted that it embraces far more than the absence of violent conflicts. According to him it also encapsulates other threat agenda such as hunger, disease, and natural disasters, because they are inseparable concepts in addressing the root of human insecurity, and that they kill more people than war, genocide, and terrorism, combines if not addressed through good governance, poverty reduction, access to education and healthcare. It is in the same vein that Al-Mashat (in Braithwaite 1988) argued that:

Thus, for a long time now, the concern for national security in its military strategic dimensions, particularly in terms of defending political independence and sovereignty has pushed most third world countries including Nigeria towards military build up. However, and ironically too, the failure to resolve their social, economic and political problems is the one singular factor that has led to their present security dilemma (Almasbat in Braithwaite, 1988: 9).

One of the far-reaching problems confronting African states today is insecurity. This has been a major impediment to human existence, economic progress and development. NEPAD in its relations with African Countries, realized the imperative of addressing political dimension of insecurity as means of tackling other dimensions of insecurity such as social and economic in order to make progress. According to NEPAD, insecurity or security is essentially a governance and public issue, “political exclusion, abuse of human rights and poor governance, have been major contributors to insecurity in many African countries” (NEPAD in Egunyobi, 2004: 126).

However, the greatest source of insecurity to modern states is terrorism, perpetuated by non-state actors within and outside the confines of state boundaries. Terrorism is popularly seen as the unofficial or unauthorized use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims. Prof. Osuntokun conceptualized it as “violence directed at innocent people or institutions without rational reasons and for no cause or purpose other than those known to the terrorists and even if there is cause for such violence there should be respect for laws of military engagement protecting children, women, the infirm and old people as contained in the Geneva Convention” (Osuntotoun in the Nation Newspaper, June 11, 2015). A more comprehensive definition of terrorism is adduced by USA code of Federal Regulations which asserts that it is the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property, to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives (US Code in Osuntokunu 2015). A special UN report issued by the office of the Secretary – General in 2004 described terrorism as any act intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or noncombatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing an act; such acts are carried out deliberately and with conscious disregard for safety of non combatants, the civilian population and other innocent people and bystanders (Egbo, 2012:19).

Terrorism engendering insecurity is not new. Terrorism of different types have existed in the history of ancient societies in the past. The pages of history are replete with pogrom against the Jew, the Turkish Massacre of the Armenians, the killings of Igbo in Northern Nigeria, the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the various inter-tribal attacks and killings in many parts of Africa and Asia, the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina by the Serbs, etc constitute acts of terrorism and insecurity in the past. Since the emergence and growth of terrorist networks and groups across the world in 21st century manifested operationally in form of suicide bombing, kidnapping, sudden armed attacks, causing mayhem destruction of lives and property, and gross violation of human rights, the world has not known peace. According to Okolie & Nnamani (2016), the groups operate with such names as Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Islamic States of Iraq and Syria, with base in Yemen, Iran, Syria, Nigeria, Mali, Somalia, Niger, Chad, Afghanistan and Pakistan and different cells across the Middle East, Europe, America and Asia. The Al-Qaeda terrorist group is believed to have given birth to Boko Haram in Nigeria which since 2009 attacked public institutions, western education and civilization. Islamic state of West African Province (ISWAP) is yet another offspring of Islamic Militant movement terrorizing Nigeria and other West African Countries. Terrorists, in the recent decades have expanded the scope of their operations of insecurity, escalated the casualty figures and wrecked monumental havocs and destructions of lives and properties (Bremer, 2001). Corroborating this assertion, Okolie (2005: 2) noted that “between 1st January 1968 and 18th October 2005, thirty two thousand, six hundred and sixty-six (32, 666) people had been killed and eight-three thousand, three hundred and ninety-eight (83,398) people had been injured in all terrorist attacks worldwide”. The figure is still on the increase because of the rise in spite of terrorism engendering insecurity. However, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons has been implicated in the escalation and intensification of insecurity globally.

Numerous cases abound of insecurity in America, Middle East, Africa and Europe, orchestrated by the terrorist groups and their networks and decedent elements within these areas. In USA, for example, apart from September 11, 2001 incident that was masterminded by Al-Qaeda from outside, the rest of terrorists attacks on USA have been by gun bearing individuals who unleashed mayhem on public schools, shopping malls and streets of the states of America. The Middle East is a hotbed of terrorist wars between sit-tight and authoritarian regimes and those desirous for regime change. In Africa, Al-Shabaab terrorist group holds sway in Somalia, inflicting harm on the local population, in Nigeria, the indigene – settlers dichotomy, ethno-religious and groups sentiments have resulted in the growth of militia groups fighting against each other. Typically, the Ezza-Eziro, Ife-Modakeke, Fulani Herders and host community farmers clashes as well as Boko Haram insurgency, Niger Delta insurgency, Kidnapping and separatist attacks have been identified by scholars as the sources of insecurity in the country leading to loss of millions of lives (Ukkeje, 2010, Olabanyi & Ese, 2014, Igbuzor, 2011, Chuka, 2010, Nwanegbo & Odigbo 2013, Omemma, 2016, Onuoha & Ochuba, 2018).

In particular, Onuoha & Ocluba (2018) averred that the long brutal conflicts between herdsmen and farmers is a major driver of insecurity in West Africa. The rationale for the conflict being struggle over resource control and usage especially grazing land for cattle in recent years.

The herdsmen attacks have assumed a dreadful transnational dimension, eventuating into a co-ordinated transborder militancy banditry and terrorism. It is believed that some attackers possibly recruited from Mali and the Central African Republic and even from some failed states like Somalia were fingered in violence in parts of Nigeria. Mali, Niger Ghana and Cameroon (Onuoha & Ochaba 2018).

The porous nature of the borders of these countries situated at the fringe of Sahara Desert with arid and semi-arid environment, easy to navigate by the terrorists made this trans – border network of terrorism possible. Global Terrorist index (GTI) report of 2017 asserted that between 2010 and 2016 “the deaths from Fulani extremist rated by the GTI report of 2015 as the 4th deadliest terror

group after Isil, Taliban, al-shabaab and Boko Haram, exceeded “3,000 deaths across four countries with 92% of fatalities taking place in Nigeria (Onuoha & Ochuba, 2018). The above scenario underscores the brutality of perpetrators of insecurity and vulnerability of victims who are usually unaware of the impending attacks by the terrorists.

Theoretical Framework

A good number of contending theoretical perspectives exist as explanatory causation framework or assumption for conflicts and violence in different societies. This study is anchored on one of these theoretical perspectives, the psychological Frustration Aggression theory propounded by John Dollard et al in 1939. The theory postulates that conflicts and aggressions are always the consequences of frustration. In other words, when people are deprived of expected benefits and opportunities, they tend to resort to aggressive behaviours. Mba (2014) defines aggression as an action with the intent to harm which could be physical and non-physical harm and identified areas of manifestation of aggression in societies as domestic violence, abuse, school bullying, attacks and war. The theory tried to provide a common explanation for violent behaviors arising from inability to attain expected goals. The failure to get a desired or expected goal leads to aggressive behavior. This is what Ted Robert one of the apostles of the theory asserted in his relative deprivation thesis where he stated that when expectation does not meet attainment, the tendency is for people to confront those they hold responsible for frustrating their ambitions. In the words of Ted Robert, the “greater the discrepancy, however marginal between what is sought and what seem to be attainable, the greater the chances that anger and violence will result” (Ted Robert in Chuka, 2011:205).

The other apostles of Frustration Aggression theory who tried to amplify the theory include Feirerabends, James Davies (1962), Ted Gurr (1970) and Yates (1962). While Feirerabends assert that the revolutionary gap between want-get-ratio (ie distance between expectation and achievement) leads to frustration and aggression; Davies anchored his explanation on what he termed the difference between the “expected need satisfaction and actual need satisfaction” as basis of aggressive tendencies. Perhaps, the most comprehensive analysis of the theory was made by Ted Gurr who emphasizes relative deprivation gap between expectation and capabilities to meet these expectations as the causes of aggression (Anifowose, 1982).

The common denominator in all these explanations of this theory is that aggression is the outcome of frustration and that anytime and anywhere individuals or groups legitimate desire is denied in their social, political and economic relations with other persons or groups or by the way the society is structured, they resort to violence. However, Mba (2014) observed that not all frustrations lead to aggression and identified factors that can lead to potential outburst of aggression as the magnitude of frustration (ie the intensity of blocking of goal directed behavior); aggressive cue resulting from barrier to goal attainment; arbitrariness of frustration (ie when frustration is perceived to be unjustified or intentional or unmitigated); and individual cognitive and emotional state (ie when emotional state is negative, aggression occurs).

Quite a good number of empirical verification of the theory exist in Nigeria, the political violence in western Nigeria (Yoruba land) in 1960s due to electoral infractions, the Niger Delta insurgency which resulted from frustration over neglect of the oil producing area by federal government and multinational oil companies in terms of infrastructural development and job creation; the recent ENSARS Violent protest and ENDBAD Governance protest and the ongoing Fulani herdsmen/farmers violence in most parts of the country, terrorism, kidnapping, banditry etc are crimes and threats of insecurity prevalent in the country as a result of frustration. In any case, these violent criminalities are not surprising when 70.82 percent of the total population in the country lives under extreme poverty (ie less than \$1 dollar a day) and Nigeria is the home of 8.03 per cent of the world's poor; many out of school children in the Northern part of the country and human

development index is one of the lowest in the world (Dambazau, 2015). This is in spite of the fact that Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural resources, especially crude oil which fetches billions of dollars in oil revenue annually. More significantly is the youth unemployment, as graduates pour out of tertiary institutions, Nigerians unemployment rate becomes astronomical exceeding 50 percent for young youths in urban and rural areas and thus driving discontentment, crimes and violence due to frustration. The theory is therefore appropriate as analytical tools for the study.

The Trajectory of Insecurity in Plateau State

Plateau State is a sub-national entity in Nigeria's political configuration with diverse independent ethnic composition and multi ferrous socio-cultural complexities. The State has been a hotbed of numerous violent conflicts and persistent terrorist attacks in recent years. The dynamics of the upsurge of security challenges in the plateau is as complex as composition of the state. An essential feature of insecurity in the state is historical grievances arising from inter-ethnic relations among the constituent elements in the state. As noted above the state is characterized by multi ethnic and social formations which include: Anagatu, Birom, Chip, Gerka, Irigwe, Jara, Kaleri, Rukuba, Wur, Montol, Angas, Plapum, Kanum, Doka, Miriam, Dimmuk, Kwolla, Bwol, Gworom, Ladan, Bogolon, Thai, Pai, Choktieu, Sura, Lere, Ankwe, Jukun, Jarawa, and Yergem (Abubakar, 1980, Eduwobi & Iwuagwu, 1997). These ethnic groups fall into two broad categories: Those who claimed autochonus to the area and those who claimed their ancestors migrated to the area (Abubakar, 1980). For instance, the Wur, the Montol, Angas claim origin in the area from time immorial. The migrants, on the other hand claimed their movement into the plateau is of ancient antiquity spanning the period before 18th century. Perhaps the largest concentration of ethnic groups in plateau state are the migrant settlers. They settled mostly in small non-centralized autonomous communities and their traditions of origin, where they are still remembered, speak of migrations from outside with different conflicts among the groups of people in the course of migration and settlement. For example, the Ankwe in shendam, the Jukun from Dampar, Yergams, Lere, and Jarawa from Bornu were migrants who settled in plateau in search of farm land or as a result of pressure or conquest by their neighbors in the previous places of abode (Abubakar, 1989). The Bwol ethnic group is said to have migrated into plateau under pressure from Tal clan, but on moving down to the Bwol valley, they fell into conflict with the Dimmuk who forced them out for a short while. The Dimmuk, had been occupying the northern parts of Shendam but were also forced to migrate south wards. Similarly, the Kwolla inhabited the hills to the south of the border between Bauchi and Plateau till 19th century when they moved south following the activities of Amir Yakubu movement (Abubakar, 1980).

Generally, the histories of various ethnic group in Plateau state were fraught with conflicts over settlements and deprivations of farm lands as was the case between the Dimmuk and Bwol clans, Zar and Lere clans and other groups (Abubakar, 1980; Oduwobi & Iwagwu, 1997). While the disputes between the aborigines and migrant settlers and different ethnic groups have existed for a long time, it took a new dimension since the turn of the 21st century in particular, the period between 1999-2024 has been the worst period of violence in the existence of Plateau state, with its attendant massive destructions of lives and properties and displacement of people in the communities that have been ransacked by terrorists and ethnic militiamen, particularly in Jos and most part of Plateau state, there were crises in 1994, 2001, 2004, 2008, and 2010 (Okolie & Ugwu, 2011). The other periods of inter-ethnic conflicts in recent times were 2011, 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2023. The main inter-ethnic conflicts are the Irigwe-fulani conflicts, the Irigwe-Yelwa violent clashes in Shendam plateau, Mangu-Bokos, Fulani and other ethnic groups etc. With such a complex mix of ethnic groups in the state with overlapping interests rooted, among other things, in territorial disputes, inter-ethnic mistrust, contestation for political power and access to scarce resources, such violent clashes are to be expected in an environment like Nigeria where ethnicity engender primordial sentiments and

social conflicts. Social conflict operationalized as the struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aim of the conflicting parties are to neutralize, injure and or eliminate others who are contesting to secure political power and scarce resources. Political alienation and exclusive dominance of some ethnic groups, particularly the Birom and Hausa/Fulani at the corridor of power is essentially the root cause of the crises. In plateau state, groups seek control of the state in order to ensure that their needs are met, usually to the disadvantage of other groups. This conflict is often seen as a zero-sum conflict or-do-or-die conflict in which total annihilation or victory over the opposing group is the acceptable condition (Okolie & Ugwu, 2011). However, in a highly polarized state, like Plateau, there are other intervening variable of conflict and insecurity but the contestation for political power and scarce resources by these social formations in plateau is one of the factors responsible for violent attacks in the state.

To buttress this fact, the post-election violence in Jos North Local Government in 2010 was a direct reflection of the contestation for power by the Birom, Afizere, Rukuba and Hausa settlers (Chamgwak 2014). The attempt to enthrone Birom man as local Government chairman proved counter-productive to the peace, security and development of the state as the conflicts lasted. As a matter of fact, since 2001, Jos North has been an epic centre of crisis, massive killing and destruction of lives and property because of its domination by Fulani migrant settlers. According to report by Human Right Watch (2001) more than 1,000 people were killed, villages burnt, school, churches, mosques, shops, residential homes in the city and vehicles were completely razed. According to Obi (2004), Ngwodo 2008 in Okolie & Ugwu 2011, the relative peace enjoyed by ethnic groups in Plateau state before 1999 was due to long period of military rule which suppressed the cumulative effects of bottled-up grievances and frustration. The outbreak of series of communal violence in Jos and other parts of Plateau state in the present democratic dispensation is attributed to pent-up emotions arising from frustration of the minority ethnic group over their domination by Fulani migrant settlers in politics and resource access. According to Okolie & Ugwu (2011) between 2002 and 2004, fighting between February and May 2004 alone generated mass killing and some 250,000 internally displaced persons (International Crisis Group, 2006 in Okolie & Ugwu (2011). This compelled the Federal government under president Olusegun Obasanjo to declare a state of emergency in Plateau state and appointed General Chris Ali as the sole administrator. But this measure had no salutatory effect.

Religious Extremism: It is widely believed that the insecurity that swept through Northern Nigeria in 2009 emanating from Boko Haram insurgency was later exported to the North central region of the country and in particular, plateau state. The north east region has been under persistent attacks by the Boko Haram Terrorist group for over a decade with millions of people displaced, and this area of Insurgency is geographically contiguous with North central region where plateau is located. Therefore, what affects North Eastern states could have spillover effect in the North central states. This explains how Plateau state contracted the contagious inferno of religious extremists' attacks. Plateau state has received several outburst of these attacks with other North central states that share border with the North east region, particularly in areas with predominantly Christian communities. Indeed the infiltration from a radical group that fought policemen with guns, bombs, bows and arrows in 2009 in Borno state, Boko Haram, into the Plateau with amorphous operational character that has become a terror in different parts of Nigeria, put the state in jeopardy. The group descended and unleashed mayhem in different Nigeria communities in a bid to install an Islamic caliphate (Obikeze. et al, 2016).

Plateau state is predominantly a Christian state, that is why the Jihad to Islamize the State is not surprising. Gbadamosi and Judnaid, (1997) asserted that the most prominent area in Nigeria where Islam gained recognizable influence during the Uthman Dan Fodo Jihad or holy war of 19th century were Kanem Bornu, Hausa land and Yoruba land; Plateau state and greater part of North central areas of Nigeria were not Islamized. Perhaps, because of the difficulty of penetration of the terrain by the Jihadits who fought on horse backs. This fact is further buttressed by Eluwa et al (1988) where

they stated that much of Northern Nigeria was the scene of the Islamic revolution of the 19th century, “only the peoples of present Benue Plateau and parts of Kwara state escaped the Jihad.” Some other historical accounts of the 19th century revolution observed that the North central area of Bauchi and Adamawa states successfully resisted the Jihad. Christianity therefore percolated into the Plateau much earlier and gained greater acceptance than Islam which arrived late by virtue of cross-cultural interface of the area as part of the former Northern region, sharing political economic ties and monolithic language culture (Hausa language) with the dominant Hausa /Fulani elements of Northern region Nigeria.

Many Scholars have alluded to the Islamization agenda in the persistent terrorists attacks in the predominately Christian Communities in Northern and North Central Nigeria (Obikeze, etal, 2016) Eluwa etal 1988, Onuoha & Ochuba, 2018 etc) Thus, the current terrorist attacks on the Plateau is part of the grand design by the Islamic fundamentalism by whatever nomenclature they bear, Boko Haram,” Islamic state of West African province (ISWAP)” or “Fulani Herdsmen” to Islamize the area. The religious extremists in Plateau state are groups seeking to detestable the society in the name of some abstract beliefs or ideology. Their ideology is based on a virulent brand of Islam with international links and supports in the form of arms, money, intelligence reports and logistics from other radical groups like Al-Qaeda, private donors within the country and abroad and even foreign government.

The other contributing factors of radicalization of the extremist groups are socioeconomic conditions of Nigeria State in recent times and competition for resources access, which more often than not, engender, frustration and aggression on the sub-national and national entities. Typically, individuals or groups lacking in resources are usually the perpetrator of terrorism acts or violence. The targets they go after are the defenseless as means of humiliating the state. They vent their anger and frustration against the state through extremist religious ideologies.

Furthermore, the Muslim who felt that they were marginalized in the old plateau state and fought for the creation of Nasarawa state out of the then plateau state in 1996 for greater political participation and freedom, still make incursions into plateau state in the guise of herdsmen. In the wake of December 24th and 25th, 2023 herdsmen attacks on 54 villages which claimed more than 195 lives, the Middle Beth Forum (MBF) issued a statement condemning the heinous murder of innocent people and identified the militia hideout as the Mahanga forest on the border between Bokkos and Nasarawa state from which the launch their attacks on the states of plateau, Benue, Taraba and Southern Kaduna (online source). A similar assertion as made by Hon Peter Ibrahim Gyendeng of the Plateau State House of Representatives in an interview with Arise Television, “These people are coming from three villages in the same location” noting that the militia are usually armed with more sophisticated weapons than the security that are there to protect the people, “they meet, then attack and go back.” The attacks are perpetuated with impunity as the militia could resist the Nigeria state security agents on ground with their sophisticated weapons. One would have thought that the split of old plateau state into Muslim dominated Nasarawa state and Christian dominated current plateau state would have solved the problem of religious divisions, skirmishes, wrangling and violence. The reverse is obviously the case from the picture of what is going in plateau state now. The truth is that the conflict with Fulani pastoralists in the plateau has religious under-tone, as the Fulani herdsmen are reported seen by the villagers in plateau state, moving with their cattle, destroying crops and increasingly engaging in kidnapping as part of neo-jihadist mission

Insecurity, Unemployment And Bad Governance: It is difficult to extricate insecurity in the country from the socio-economic challenges affecting the nation with attendant unemployment of youths. In Plateau State and wider North-central region of Nigeria, unemployment is a key driver of insecurity. Unemployment and insecurity are governance issues which stem from internal contradictions and gaps between promises made by the politicians to the people at the time of

election, to provide essential dividends of democracy such as millions of jobs for the youths and infrastructural development and the failure to fulfil such promises several years after assumption of office. The growing number of criminality in the state involving banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery and sometimes, killing of rural residents has been increasing tremendously over the years due to the youth population. The recent report from Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) put the population of Nigeria at about 200 million people and 150 million are youths. The official figures from the Bureau of statistics puts the figure unemployment at about 30% mainly Nigeria youths (ie about 40 million) but this figure does not include about 40 million other Nigeria youth capture in the world bank statistics in 2009. By implication, it means that if Nigerian's population is 200 million, then more than 50% of Nigerian are unemployed, or worse still, at least 71% of Nigeria youths are unemployed. This is particularly disturbing and counterproductive because at least 70% of the population of Nigeria are youths (Ogumosunle, Nation Newspaper, 30th Dec, 2011)

In view of the havoc caused by unemployment and poverty in the Middle East where the twin problems were responsible for revolutionary uprising of Arab spring led to the overthrow of leaders of Algeria, Egypt, Lybia and Yemen, one can also extrapolate that insecurity arising from armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom and youth restiveness are reactionary measures of disgruntled unemployed youths against Nigeria state and it's subnational entities. This could devotail to revolutionary change of leadership in Nigeria as ENDSARS movement of 2022 attempted to do but was crushed by Federal government might The logical follow up to this is the emergency of criminal enclaves where dangerous bandits, miscreants find a safe haven to operate freely. As the menace of militancy in the Niger Delta began to abate, the spate of bombings, kidnapping, banditry and terrorism in the states of North Central Nigeria including Federal capital territory of Abuja have heightened the level of insecurity that has pervaded the nation in the last two and half decades.

However, in plateau state in particular, the once peaceful state capital of Jos and other parts of the state have continued to be volatile places and nobody knows when the carnage on the plateau will be put to an end. The untold genocide going on in the tourist center and once serene environment of plateau state is scary. Unemployment, particularly, among the youth population of the state has been implicated in the menace of insecurity in the state, due to the inability of successive governments to create jobs they promised as democratic dividend and available employment in plateau state has been noted to be not evenly distributed by successive administrations in the state. And Federal government policy on job creation like N-Power has no tickle down effect on the Pletaeu Preferences were usually given to ethnic affinities leading to alienation, frustration and violence. According to changewak, (2014:405)

Since the inception of present democratic dispensation, employment and appointment was characterized by Ethnic affinities. By implication the direction which employment took was determined by the ethnic group which the governor and other top government officials came from.

This is purely ethnic favouritism in Beaucratic institutions which negates merits and promotes mediocrity and contribute to frustration which manifest in crimes and violence. To buttress the above assertion further, changewak (2014)is of the view that most of the people employed during the governorship of Joshua Dariye (1999-2007), Jonah Jang (2007-2011) and Solomon Lalong were people from their ethnic or local government extraction. The administration of Governor Jang was profoundly in favor of Birom ethnic group that the ethnocentric bias has been described as “Biromization policy” or “ Biromization of the state civil service”. The concept was conceived to describe the degree of ethnic fouritism that pervaded plateau state beaucracy in favor of Biron at the expense of other ethnic groups. The other governors that ruled plateau state govern probably toed this line of action favoring their ethnic groups in appointment and distribution of other values. It's origin and manifestation are traceable to 2007 when Jonah tang, a Birom became governor of the state. Any appointment and employment that were not favorable to Birom were cancelled through the intervention of Birom Youth Movement (BYM) which had great influence on the governor's administration. A clear manifestation of this was when the appointment of over 50 people into the

various department of Plateau Radio and Television Corporation were terminated at the instance of BYM (changwak, 2014). The implication of this on inter-group relations was the growth of fresh wave of ethnic consciousness, inter-ethnic mistrust and division and antagonism of Birom by other groups that felt marginalized which is detrimental to peace, security and development of the state. Thus, this feeling of alienation by governments that are supposed to serve the interests of all the people, coupled with high rate of unemployment of youths in the state breed various criminal tendencies such as political thuggery and violence, kidnapping for ransom, armed banditry, and drug abuse which make them to be readily available for recruitment into criminal gangs that terrorize the state.

Fulani Herdsmen/ Farmers Conflicts: Conflict is inevitable wherever there is human relations, particularly where two different groups or more with socio-cultural diversities co-exist and exert influence on each other in the context of land resources and cultural differences. Perhaps, the most significant source of violence and insecurity in the North central state of plateau is the conflict over land resource access between the Fulani herdsmen and the farming communities in the state. The two groups can be distinguished from each other by their various characteristics. The Fulani are mostly nomadic people who engage in pastoralism or animal husbandry, especially cattle rearing. History has it that the Fulani migrated from the Senegal-Gambia area of West Africa across the Sudan and settled in the Northern and middle zone or North central Nigeria around 12th century A.D. However, there are large concentration of the Fulani in Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe and Sokoto. The pastoral Fulani in the early period of arrival in Nigeria were cattle breeders and rearers who followed a wandering ways of life or nomadism. They are not aborigines and therefore as soon as settlers encroaching on the land belonging to other ethnic groups. They are predominately Muslims and follow Islamic ways of life. The farming communities are aborigines who live sedentarized life and survive by cultivating crops for self-subsistence and commercial purposes. They are mostly Christians and therefore socio-culturally different from the Fulani.

The intermittent disputes over the use of land for grazing of cattle and cultivation of crops have often pitches the Fulani herdsmen and farmers against one another leading to violent conflicts involving loss of hundreds of lives and displacement of thousands of people. Several scholars have argued that climate change has a lot to do with the increase in migration of Fulani herdsmen from the core northern Nigeria to the north central states of plateau, Benue, Kogi and Nasarawa and kwara. This resulted in prolonged competition and conflict between the Fulani migrants and their host communities as the Fulani settlers forcefully try to occupy lands belonging to the natives without their consent or approval (Onuoha, and ochuba, 2018, Omotola and Hassan, 2015, Onuoha and Chigozie, 2014, etc. Similarly, some other scholars like Adisa and Adekunle, (2010), Abba and Usman (2008), Tona (2002) and others have blamed environmental resource scarcity for the several clashes between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria. This is also implicated in the crises in plateau state. The migratory nature of the Fulani herdsmen in search of pasture has often brought about conflicts with the people they come in contact with and these conflicts are mostly over grazing land and other resources available in the territory. The availability of pasture and water for cattle are paramount to the herders and their cattle cannot survive without them. In the course of pasturing their cattle the herders allow the animals to eat up some growing crops and vegetables with impunity and trample on other. The farmers' reaction to the damage done to their farms usually attract unprecedented reprisal from the Fulani herders. Onuoha and chigozie (2014) have identified the push and pull factors of Fulani herdsmen migration. The push factors that compelled them to move out of their own territories to encroach on other areas include drought, desertification, sand storm, disease, hunger and unusual weather. The pull factors that attracted the Fulani herdsmen to the north central area of Nigeria with lush green savanna vegetation include moderate weather, green vegetation, forage market opportunity and hope and aspiration. The result is unavoidable crises due largely to pressure on land and socio-cultural and religious differences. This state of affair has been exacerbated by the activities of various terrorist and militant groups operating on the plateau.

Since the attacks and riot in 2001, 2004, 2008 and 2010 which claimed hundreds of lives and displacement of communities there have been series of attacks in places like Hakke attack, Nkiye, Dongoro attack, Kpaclundu attack, Nzhwienbo, Tagigana, Rikwe Chongu, Taegbe. Most of these attacks occurred at mid-night while victims were murdered in their sleep. Some of the survivors alleged complicity of security agents in their comments, thus: while no single attacker have been arrested by the security agents, they rather arrested and detained helpless natives on suspicion of possessing weapons despite handset being found on the ground during the attack.” The most recent attacks were the deadly attacks coordinated by militant Fulani ethnic group on communities in plateau state on 24th December, Christmas Eve, 2023 which claimed 195 lives, while around 300 people were injured and thousands displaced. The attacks were unleashed on 25 communities in three local government areas. The survivors have described how the militant men descended on their communities in large numbers, killing indiscriminately and destroying homes, vehicles, farmland and other properties(NTA, Channel TV, Dec 25.2023). The plateau state governor Caleb Mutfwang has described the series of attacks by Fulani herdsmen as “pure terrorism” (Daily Sun Newspaper, Nation Newspaper). The United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Turks expressed deep alarm at the series of attack in Plateau state, noting that the cycle of impunity fuelling recurrent violence must be urgently” broken by Nigeria government.

Below is table of some incidences of insecurity in plateau state.

TABLE OF NOTABLE VIOLENCE IN PLATEAU STATE WITH DATE

DATE		NATURE OF VIOLENCE	LOCATION	CONSEQUENCES
1.	2001	Riots	Jos	Several loss of lives/destruction of properties
2.	2004	Fighting in Plateau state capital between February and May 2004	Jos and other parts of the states	The conflict led to loss of lives and generated 250,000 Internally displace persons
3.	2008	Conflict over land resource between Fulani herdsmen numbering 23, 000 and farmers. The Fulani fled Eastern Taraba to avert fighting going on between them and farmers	Mambilla plateau	Death of several people and destruction of public facilities
4.	2010	Post-election violence in Jos North Local Government Area involving Birom and Afizere Rukuba, and Hausa	Jos North Local Government	Hundreds of deaths and displacement of communities
5.	2011	Fulani herdsman attacks on Barkin ladi and Riyom Local Government Areas		Several casualties which made the federal Government to impose a state of emergency on both Local Governments

6.	2014 21/2/2014	Gunmen attacked people in Rapyem village, Fan District of Barkinladi Local Government Area of plateau	Rapyem village Fan district of Barkinlada LGA	The death toll from attacks by gun men was about 134 in less than two months
7.	Dec 15, 2015	Gunmen believed to be Fulani Herdsmen attacked kwata village in Jos South Local Government Area at night	Kwata village Jos south Local Government Area	14 persons were killed and several others injured most of the victims were women and children, six houses were destroyed
8.	Sept 7, 2017	Herdsmen attacked Nkiedonwhro village in Irigwe chieftdom in Bassa Local Government Area at night	Nkiedoawhro village Bassa Local Government Area	29 persons killed Mainly women and children 3 person sustained various degrees of injuries. state government impose curfew
9.	Oct 16, 2017	Gruesome attack on Ncha village and Hukke		More than two persons were killed
10.	Oct 11, 2017	Gruesome attacks on Nzhwienbo and Tafigama		Three persons dead and several houses were razed
11.	Oct 12, 2017	Rikwe Chongu attack		Houses razed but no lives was lost
12.	Oct 14, 2017	Tagbe attacks by vandals		6 persons killed, five injured and houses razed
13.	Oct 16, 2017	Herdsmen attacked Nkyie Doghwro village in Irigwe Chieftdom at night hours	Nkyie-Doghwro village is Bass local Government Area	29 people killed, three injured at a school used as camp for protection of displaced people by security men, state governor Simom Lolang imposed curfew at the local government.
14.	Dec 24, 2023	Highly coordinated attacks by militia of Fulani origin on 25 communities in three Local Government Areas, killing indiscriminately and destroying homes, vehicles farmlands and other property.	Nisham community in Mongu LGA; Dares community in Bokkos LGA and Barkin Ladi LGA.	Fatalities ranged from 195-250 dead, while 300 people were injured and thousands displaced. Farms, properties including churches were burnt, state government impose curfew.

15.	March 2024	Herdsmen attack on communities in Wase Local Government Area	Wase Local Government Area	45 people were killed and several others injured with thousands displaced
16.	Sept. 4, 2024	Fresh attack broke out on Bokkos LGA leading to loss of lives	Bokkos Local Government Area	7 people killed and community ransacked

Source: compiled by the author

THE CONSEQUENCES OF INCESSANT ATTACKS IN PLATEAU STATE AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The security challenge in the North central region of Nigeria (or middle belt zone) has been aggravated by an escalation of religious, ethnic and inter-communal conflicts, particularly the conflict between the nomadic Fulani herdsmen and sedentary farmers over land and water resource access. The attacks of the herders on their host communities, and various inter-ethnic and inter-communal violent clashes have detrimental effects on the security of lives and properties in Plateau state. These crises have led to an unprecedented death toll not only in plateau state but also in the entire region that has been engulfed by the inferno of violent crises in the last two decades. According to Nigerian NGO, in European parliament, (2024) over 86,000 people have lost their lives since 2009, 34,000 were Muslims while 54, 000 were Christians. According to European parliament report on December 24th -26th 2023 attacks by herders on three local government areas of Bokko, Barkin Ladi and Mangu, the death toll was over 335 dead. (European Parliament Resolution 2024 online). Among them were women children and disabled who were unable to flee and were burnt to death in their ancestral homes and properties worth millions naira looted or destroyed in the attacks that affected 54 villages. It is estimated over 209 communities have been affected by the conflicts and over two million people who managed to escape the deadly attacks in the North central region have been displaced and rendered homeless, seeking refuge in internally displaced refugee camps (IDP) provided by government or homes of relatives and friends outside the hostile zone, with the burden of feeding, clothing and health care born by the government and NGOs, humanitarian organization and philanthropic individuals (INPSS report in NTA, 2024). The comfort of living in their own homes and eating when they want have been lost as they now depend on handout from public spirited individuals and organizations and management of IDP camps, which may not be regular.

According to recent Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) report more than 18 million Nigeria children are out of school due to internal displacement arising from violent conflicts in the country. Most of them are from the core North and North central states like Plateau is riddled with crisis, displacement of people and disorganization of social institutions (NTA, 18, August, 2024). The numerous out of schools children in the state is the direct result of destruction of several primary and secondary schools during the attacks, estimated to be about 2,200 primary and secondary schools in the affected areas. Alongside this is the destruction of other social institutions such as hospitals, clinics, maternity homes and other public facilities.

Abundant agricultural production in the country is synonymous with food security and lack of it amount to food insecurity. Disruption and disorganization of rural farming communities by armed conflicts can lead to food insecurity and dependence on food import from other countries. It is worrisome that the most volatile area of inter-ethnic conflicts in the North central region of Nigeria is the food basket of the nation, over 70 percent of the country's food crops comes from the region. The crop farmers in the region, especially in Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa and Taraba states and some states in the southern part of Nigeria no longer engage in cultivating large acres of land outside their

homes for fear of being attacked and killed in the bush by Fulani herdsmen who infested their farmlands with sophisticated weapons. Most people in the rural Communities of Plateau state now do more of garden farming instead of extensive commercial farming which hardly provides enough food to feed their families, let alone sell to the consumer public. As the president of Irigwe Development Association Sunday Abdu put it while commenting on the attack on Irigwe Community by the herders on 16th October, 2017,

we urge the government, if it must sustain the curfew, to do the needful and stop these nightly attacks on our people; our people cannot go to their farms anymore, even as harvest is near for fear of attacks by herdsmen, who openly graze on ripe crops (Vanguard Newspaper, 17 October, 2017).

The implication is that the more the incidences of herders attacks occur, the greater the propensity of the rural farmers to shrink to household farming rather than commercial agriculture. The impact on food security or food shortage is noticeable in Nigeria via reduction in food production, high cost of food items in the market and increase in youth unemployment and violent crimes. Agriculture contributes about 42 percent of the country's Gross Domestic product (GDP), provides employment and means of livelihood for more than 60 percent of the productivity engaged population. The volatile nature of present rural environment in Nigeria contributes greatly in undermining government efforts towards increased agricultural production and sustainable food security.

Generally, in an environment where insecurity is rife and daily state of affairs is risky and uncertain like in Plateau state, it is usually difficult for business to thrive. According to Okonkwo et al (2015) insecurity anywhere is a risk factor which business owners and managers dread and wish to avoid by closing their shops or organizations. Insecurity in Plateau has discouraged both local and foreign investment as the hostile nature of the environment makes investment unattractive to business investors who do not want to lose their money. Insecurity also retards the development of the state.

The federal and state government efforts at arresting the ugly trend of insecurity in Plateau state and other flash points of terrorism in Nigeria have not been encouraging. The state governments have often imposed dusk to dawn curfew restricting movement of people at night hours when the terrorist had struck while appealing to Federal Government for maximum security. The state institutions have limited capacity to implement major initiatives, transmit authority into rural areas, and enforce laws and policies in the troubled areas. For example, there is an anti-open grazing law passed by the state House of Assembly, but the implementation has not been effective. The Federal Government has two main tools at its dispose to address violence and grievance at the local and state level the deployment of special joint military-police taskforce and intelligence agency like National Center for Counter/Terrorism (NCTC). It uses these to respond to violent outbreaks of conflicts in different parts of the country, without addressing the underlying sources or causes of violence (IFIT, 2022). These agencies have been notorious for corruption, ineffectiveness and allegations of human right abuses have levelled against them (CSW report, 2024; IFIT, 2022; president of IDA). One of the critics of the security agencies is the president of Irigwe Development Association (IDA), Sunday Abdu who criticized the joint military police task force assigned by government to maintain peace and security in Plateau state known as “Operation Safe Haven” and state police command, at the time of Irigwe attack on October 16th, 2017, for failing to provide adequate protection to the victims at public primary school in Irigwe village to be annihilated by the terrorists (Vanguard Newspaper, 17 October, 2017). In the same vein, Meryn Thomas, the founder of CSW criticized the government security agencies for ineffectiveness when he noted, with respect to December 24-25, 2023 herders attacks and killings of 195 people in three local government areas, that:

The fact that such enormous loss of lives and property occurred before security forces responded in sufficient numbers is indicative of the lamentable ongoing failure of successive federal and state authorities to uphold the Nigeria constitution by ensuring the security and welfare of citizens as their primary purpose.

Similarly, the Middle Belt Forum (MBF) in their statement following the December 24-25, 2023 attacks strongly condemned the government inability to stem the tide of insecurity in the region and identified the militias hideout from which they have launched several attacks on the states of Plateau, Benue, Nasarawa, Taraba and Southern Kaduna as the Mahanga forest on the border between Bokkos and Nasarawa state. However, they noted regrettably that the Nigerian authorities who were already aware of this criminal hideout for decades “have deliberately fortified this evil theatre from any destruction, thus providing a safe haven for these terrorists to smuggle arms, train their Mercenaries and unleashed unimaginable terror on innocent citizens without any provocation whatsoever” (Nation Newspaper, 2024).

The accounts given by the survivors of Nkyie Doghwro attack of 2017, in which several lives were lost in a primary school used as refugee camp for survivors protected by Nigeria security agents is indicative of their frustration with lackluster attitude of government security forces commitment to the protection of the people. The accounts indicted the security agents for deliberately abandoning the refugee camp where the escapees from the previous attacks were settled to avoid impending attacks by the terrorists. One of the survivors captured vividly their resentment of the security operatives in this statement.

When they attacked us first time, the military was stationed here(their community) to avoid a repeat. When we got wind of likely attack yesterday evening, we reported to the military and they told us to come and stay in the classrooms that have been provided for them as operational base. We obediently went into the classrooms to sleep. Not long after we entered the classrooms, the military left and not long after, the attackers came and we were trapped. They unleashed mayhem (vanguard Newspaper, 17 October, 2017:7)

It is regrettable that this happened despite useful and timely information provided to security personnel regarding movement, mode of operation and impending attack by the assailants. This probably underscores the fact that the terrorists operate with sophisticated weapons and the Nigeria security agent, having realized that they could not contend with the superior military weapons at the disposal of the terrorists, tactically chickened out.

Conclusion

The study acknowledges that North central region of Nigeria is currently overwhelmed with overgrowing insecurity of human lives and properties, notably in rural communities with complex and often remote terrains default for state authorities to exercise influence. About 90 percent of the rural labour force engage directly or indirectly in agricultural production or food production for subsistence, increased household income, improve standard of living and poverty reduction. Unfortunately, the country sides have been the hardest hit by violent inter-ethnic and religious conflicts. These range from disputes over land ownership and land resources access/between communities and between ethnic groups, boundary disputes banditry, kidnapping to farmers/herdsmen clashes over the use of land for farming and grazing.

The security challenge in plateau state, North central Nigeria is predicated on the escalation of religious, inter-communal and inter-ethnic conflicts between the nomadic Fulani herdsmen and rural farmers over land use for grazing, sedentarization and agriculture. Competition for this scarce natural resource and environmental resources there in is implicated in most of the attacks on the plateau and unless this is addressed the violent conflicts in plateau state will continue to be intractable.

The reality is that the state and federal governments have not mustard the political will to put a stop to cycles of attacks with impunity by Fulani herders, banditry and intercommunal clashes in plateau state. Admitted the governments at both federal and state levels have articulated and enunciated measures and policies aimed at tackling insurgency and violent farmers/herders attacks; what is

lacking is implementation. The state government has often declared dusk-to-dawn curfew in the local government areas affected by violent attacks but enforcement has often remained a mirage hence there have been “back to back” attacks. It is difficult and impossible to enforce curfew where the state governor has no control over security personnel and the security agents are inadequate or unwilling to confront the terrorists. The security agencies must wake up to their constitutional responsibilities of protecting lives and properties in the state. The plateau state law against open grazing is a piece of legislation lying farrow and needs to be activated and implemented; and to do so requires effective operational security force on ground controlled by the state government. There is need to decentralize Nigerian police for as part of the quest for restructuring for security efforts to be meaningful and allow state governors to maintain security in their domains as constitutional responsibility. The country should return to the constitutional arrangement at independence which made the maintenance of law and order a current responsibility between the Federal and sub-national governments for greater effectiveness. The sub-national police force would be more reflective because of their knowledge of terrain, culture and norms of the people which would aid them to investigate crimes, and trace criminals than the national counterpart who comprised more of strangers in the environment. The centralized nature of Nigerian security apparatus is overwhelmed by the country's ever-growing violence and criminality and therefore cannot provide adequate security in remote terrains of communities in plateau state and other states in Nigeria, only state police with knowledge of the environment can effectively handle conflicts peculiar to each state. The federal security agencies - the Nigerian Army, Navy and Air force can only come in to assist the state police when called upon to do so.

Furthermore, the federal government should prioritize job creation for the teeming population of unemployed Nigerian youths. The failure of successive federal and state governments in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and in-adequatable distribution of wealth of the nation among ethnic nationalities is one of the major causes of insecurity in the country (Nwagbosa, 2012). It is symptomatic of bad governance for a country like Nigeria that is blessed abundant oil wealth and natural resources to fail to provide employment for its people. There are little or no factories in plateau state and most rural states in Nigeria and limited economic opportunities beyond farming. Destruction of crops by the herders' cattle amount to depriving rural farmers their means of livelihood and hence their impoverishment. This is the major source of conflict in plateau state. Since Nigeria constitution allowed state government to control all lands domiciled all lands in each state under the control of state governor, the Plateau state government should strike a balance or compromise between the farmers and herders interests by providing ranches for the nomadic herders in accordance with the best practices of modern pastoralism obtainable in advanced societies of Europe and America, and even South Africa where Dutch settlers have made ranching lucrative business to avoid clash of interest. The pastoralists must be made to understand that they have to pay rent on lands leased for ranching and settlement to the natives through government. The tendency to forcefully grab land for sedentarization in the ancestral lands of other ethnic groups by the nomadic pastoralists' amount to encroachment and denial of property right as enshrined in Nigeria constitution and should be discouraged by the government.

Finally, the state government should evolve conflict resolution mechanism involving regular consultation dialogue and negotiation between stakeholders in inter communal and inter-ethnic disputes, mediated by the state government with a view to resolving such dispute amicably. The mediatory role of the state can be assigned to an institution created by the state domiciled in the state ministry of local government and chieftaincy matters with responsibility to settle inter-communal and inter-ethnic disputes amicably.

All these will go a long way to minimize or totally eradicate violent conflicts in plateau state.

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